



**Sisters of Notre Dame**

California Province

## **Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos, *caring for the needy***

Sr. Jan Marie Villalobos SND is an alumna of Notre Dame Academy from the Class of 1976. Sr. Jan Marie felt an interior calling to religious life in the second grade at St. Augustine elementary in Culver City. As she says, “I had a feeling of being called to religious life when I was in the second grade at a school Mass. The community aspect was solidifying. I had confidence that God was going to take care of me.”

She had many encounters with the SNDs during her formative years of high school, having been taught by Sr. Joanne Wittenberg (Social Studies), Sr. Antonine Manning (Biology), Sr. Sheila Fay (Psychology), Sr. Richardlyn Jones (Math) and the late Sr. Carlann Paganelli (Religion).

Sr. Jan Marie went on an overnight visit to the SND community in Hidden Valley, affectionally called “The Ranch” in those days. Her most distinctive memory of the time spent with the sisters was their community life. She asked to join the congregation on May 13--the day when each sister received her yearly ministry assignment--a very fitting time to express her desire to become an SND! After graduating from Notre Dame Academy, she entered the convent and made her first vows in 1979. Sr. Jan Marie graduated from Cal State Northridge with a B.A. in Liberal Studies.

In her years of ministry, Sr. Jan Marie has had the opportunity to touch many lives: as a Eucharistic Minister to the sick, a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, and a tutor for “School on Wheels,” an organization that educates children

living in homeless shelters. She also served as emergency night manager for survivors of human trafficking in Los Angeles County through CAST (Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking).

While attending an SND leadership meeting in Kentucky in 2011, Sr. Ann Carla Costello, provincial superior, toured the DCCH Center for Children & Families (formerly known as the Diocesan Catholic Children’s Home). Since 1848, this agency has served more than 3,500 children in Northern Kentucky, providing healing and therapeutic care to children who are wards of the state. Sr. Ann Carla knew that this ministry would resonate with Sr. Jan Marie’s compassionate heart—and the rest is history.

The state refers an average of 300 children (from infancy to age 17) each month to DCCH for foster care or adoption. Regularly, the DCCH residential treatment facility hosts 40 children between the ages of 6 and 15.

As an outreach worker, Sr. Jan Marie recruits foster families and other volunteers. She works directly with the children by tutoring, supporting equine therapy, gardening, playing sports, supervising and providing transportation.

Sr. Jan Marie experiences many aspects of the SND spirit and mission as she connects her religious vocation to her everyday duties at the Center. “The SND spirit and mission have always been centered on concern and care for the needy and the poor. And that is at the heart of everyone at DCCH.”