



COMPañEROS

Companions on the Journey

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATION FOR CHILDREN AND AGING

Spring 2010



Many sponsors are unaware that sending a simple greeting card or letter can have a tremendous impact in the life of their sponsored child, youth or aging friend.

CFCA volunteer Matthew Potter was surprised to learn about the impact first hand when he and his wife traveled to meet their sponsored friends.

“When Sherry and I visited our sponsored friends during a mission awareness trip, we discovered that they kept every letter we have sent them,” Matthew said. “Our friend Castulo in Honduras brought out a stack of letters we sent and showed them to us. They had obviously been read many times and showed the deep affection Castulo and his family have for us, and how much they treasured news about us and our family.”

As Matthew and Sherry discovered, sponsorship does not merely mean giving money, it is a friendship, a connection built through letters.

Help sponsors in your parish send a ‘Message of Hope’

During a letter-writing event, sponsors discover the impact their letters can have. By organizing an event, you are helping more children, youth and aging persons receive messages of encouragement from their sponsors. These events also provide an opportunity for camaraderie with other CFCA sponsors, and can be a great way for families to involve their children in learning about other cultures.

To make an event more successful, packets are available upon request. They include letter-writing stationery, event planning guide, bulletin announcements to personalize with details of your event, and handouts for sponsors explaining the journey of a letter.

To receive your event packet or to learn more, contact Jean Morley at (800) 875-6564, (913) 384-6500 or by email at cfcaoutreach@cfcausa.org. ■



Letter writing ...

Why receiving a letter means so much.

“Despite not personally meeting my sponsors, they have been a very strong support and encouragement for me. In distance we are far, but in spirit we are close.”

- Sponsored child Cruz,
Santa Ana project, El Salvador

“Letters are the lifeline of the sponsorship program. Every letter is a love letter written from the heart and with sincerity.”

- Father Mathew Vettukallel,
Bhagalpur project, India

“When the word ‘hope’ appears in the letters, it revitalizes the desire and conviction for tomorrow to be a better day for everyone.”

- Rafael Villalobos, coordinator,
San Jose project, Costa Rica

“Words have power, power to change not only nations, but hearts.”

- Henry Flores,
CFCA communications center,
Santa Ana, El Salvador



Sponsor meeting sparks feelings of solidarity

CFCA volunteers Jim and Dola McNown make letter writing easy for sponsors at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Overland Park, Kan. Jim and Nola host letter-writing potlucks twice a year.

They invite parishioners to gather for a potluck lunch following the Sunday service and send greetings to their sponsored friends. Jim shared these details about the last event they hosted.

“Every person brought photos of their sponsored friend and talked about their growing relationships,” he said. “Sponsors also shared what they had learned from their sponsored friend, about life in a developing country and how it compares to our life in America.

“As each person shared how much their CFCA sponsorship meant to them, a pin was placed on a world map showing where their sponsored friend lived. It was gratifying to see the pins stretch across the globe as we listened to sponsors’ stories.

“Mother Kelly Demo, CFCA presenter and member of St. Thomas, answered questions from current sponsors and helped new sponsors sign up. She also touched on the importance of communicating through letters, since it is the primary way of developing a relationship with sponsored friends. CFCA provided an activity sheet that



Sponsors Jack and Judy Dutra, write their sponsored child, who lives in Brazil.

helped increase our awareness and build feelings of solidarity.”

This event helped sponsors feel more comfortable writing to their sponsored friends because they were able to share ideas, topics and possible questions to ask their sponsored friends with other CFCA sponsors. ■

Volunteer coordinator supports sponsor gatherings in parishes

In March of this year, CFCA welcomed Jean Morley to the U.S. Outreach department as the volunteer coordinator. You may hear from Jean as she contacts volunteers and sponsors to ask for help at the sponsorship table during CFCA weekend events. Jean also helps volunteers organize sponsor activities in their churches and works with our diocesan reporters.

Recently, Jean attended a letter-writing event at Church of the Ascension in Overland Park, Kan., hosted by CFCA volunteers Rose Thorsky and Ellen Johnson. Rose and Ellen help raise awareness of CFCA by hosting sponsorship tables

and providing opportunities for sponsors at Church of the Ascension to socialize and write messages of encouragement to their sponsored friends.

Sponsors are at the heart of the CFCA movement, and are key to helping raise awareness in their communities of sponsorship and its impact.

“CFCA volunteers can be especially effective within their own parishes,” Jean said. “By raising awareness of our brothers and sisters in need they

can help parishioners put social justice teachings into action. I

look forward to assisting our current and potential volunteers with their activities, especially letter-writing events.”

If you have questions about hosting a letter-writing event or want to

receive an event planning packet, contact Jean at (800) 875-6564 or (913) 384-6500, or email her at cfcaoutreach@cfcausa.org. ■



Jean Morley is one of our two new U.S. Outreach volunteer coordinators.