

## Triennial 2009

A gift is something that is given to someone to make them happy or to show gratitude. To give means to present or deliver something that someone has to another person to keep or use. To receive means to take or accept that something. At Triennial, 52 Junior Daughters, and many Directresses and helpers working with them, focused on giving and receiving gifts. The Triennial theme gave us the opportunity to focus on the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself given to us by our loving Father in heaven. His presence was always with us, even when we texted Him.

During our time at Triennial we learned about the gift of Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Counsel, Fortitude, Piety and the Fear of the Lord, what they mean and how we can apply them in our lives (to see our meditations and prayers on these gifts please check out the DOK website). Each day the Juniors received a small gift to remind them of the Seven-Fold Gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Directresses and all the helpers gave their time to support the Juniors and all our many projects and activities. For example, Terry Krawitz, the Diocesan Directress of Dallas, led us in a workshop about Mendalla T-shirts and we each made one and learned about their spiritual significance. She also shared her Prayer Bear Ministry. Small cloth bears made with love and prayers are given to the men and women of our military, firefighters and cancer victims to name few. The Junior Daughters decorated and prayed over 200 of these bears and gave them to the Orangewood Children's Home (for their beautiful acknowledgement letter please check out our website). Rev. Sue Beck came and talked with us about the children's home and took the bears to them.

Connie Becker, Diocesan Directress of Florida and a member of the Order of St. Luke's, shared with us scriptures on healing and led us in a discussion about healing ministry then trained some of the young women who volunteered about laying on of hands and praying for that person. The Juniors then gave the gift of healing prayers to one another and to the adults. It was a most beautiful, spirit-filled time and incredibly emotional.

We were blessed by the gift of music shared by two talented ladies, Kathy James and Kate Pettit. Their voices and Kathy's guitar playing enhanced

and deepened our prayer, praise and worship time and really helped bring us closer to God.

We were blessed by all the wonderful speakers and guests, by our activities the music of Kathy and Kate, our healing service and worship time, our trip to Mission San Juan Capistrano and by being in fellowship with one another.

But perhaps the greatest gift was the gift of friendship. We made lots of new friends both young and old. We all bonded, we had fun and we drew close to our Lord Jesus Christ and that's the gift that will stay with us the rest of our lives.

Of course the Junior Ministry was given a tremendous gift in the establishment of the Alpha Fund. It will be used to support the work of Junior Daughters and Directresses and help grow new chapters (for more information on the Alpha Fund as well as an application and information on and prayers by Mother Teresa please check out our website).

I was so impressed, overwhelmed really, by the spiritual depth and maturity of these young ladies, our Junior Daughters. Even our youngest at nine years old was wise beyond her years. I was moved by their willingness to share, by their honesty and sincerity. I am so glad to have met them and spent time together because it made me realize, or more appropriately, confirm, how important this ministry is and how significant the call is to be a Junior Directress. It is humbling and it comes with a lot of responsibility but sisters, it is so rewarding. And the fruits of our labors were seen in those bright shining faces on fire for God serving Him in so many varied and wonderful ways. In fact, for a complete list of all the activities and service projects undertaken by our Junior Daughters please check out the minutes of our Junior Business Meeting found on our website.

After receiving a gift it is customary and polite to say thank you, yet that seems truly inadequate for all that we received. I pray that our thanksgivings are offered in living our lives worthy of our calling, whether young or old, to be a Daughter of the King; to pray and to serve and to make our good and gracious Lord known by everyone by our words and deeds.

Yours in Christ,  
Jen Mariano, National Junior Daughters Chair