



Dedicated to: *Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Unborn*

# St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center NEWSLETTER

Website: <http://www.jdswomenscenter.org>

*We welcome any comments or suggestions that will improve this newsletter.*

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## Multi-Musical Benefit Concert -- A Great End to the Year! By Elizabeth Shearer

In October, we held our first ever Multi-Musical Concert benefiting the life-saving work of the Center. Because this was the first event of its kind for Juan Diego, in many ways the night felt like it was the Center's "reintroduction" into the community after almost 25 years! To that end, one of our volunteers, Beth Maddatu (see Beth's article below), spearheaded and exceeded the event securing a line-up of performers who graciously donated their time and talent for the concert. Their talent ranged from classical music performers and soloists to Contemporary Christian musicians.

For those unable to attend, here's what you missed:

Musical guests, The Friends of Jesus "FOJ" ([fojministries.com](http://fojministries.com)) began the night by injecting a huge dose of energy into the concert with Praise and Worship songs such as *Alabare* and *Praise Song Medley*. Next, The Abalos Sisters, Hannah and Theresa, charmed and delighted us with Bach/Gounod's *Ave Maria* arrangement for flute, and two amazing pieces from the 2005 version of *Pride and Prejudice* soundtrack. After the concert Hannah Abalos shared, "To hear all these amazing people be filled with the Holy Spirit and glorify God through their music was such an illuminating experience; combined with the fact that we were all there to support the Juan Diego Women's Center's wonderful cause, this concert truly touched us and our family."

Also performing classical pieces during the concert were the youthful and talented San Jose Classical String Ensemble who performed beautifully together and the 2010 Chopin National Competition Finalist, Rhed Shi, who played a moving rendition of Chopin's Sonata Op. 58, 4th movement. Two surprises for the night were the additions of performers Carmelite Postulant, Matthew Lambrecht who shared his rendition of "I Can Only Imagine", and soloist, Rachel Rauwolf, who, accompanied by violinist Joseph Christianson, wowed the audience with the aria *Ave Maria* by Vavilov.

(continued on page 2)



*Elizabeth Shearer*



**Merry Christmas**

## Jeanne by Beth Maddatu, JDS volunteer

It is no wonder I have dedicated my time at St. Juan Diego Women's Center on Wednesdays. Meeting and counseling Jeanne through her challenges and hardships followed by friendly calls thereafter to stay connected resulted in saving her baby girl.

The first time Jeanne was pregnant 4 yrs ago she decided to place her baby with adoptive parents because of financial difficulties. She had the courage to do what she did for the sake of her Unborn child. This time in spite of life's many interesting and unexpected challenges, including financial difficulties still and lack of family support, she opted to keep her baby girl despite pressure from the father of this baby! How awesome is that?!

It was during the 40-days for Life campaign when I first met Jeanne on a late Friday afternoon back in February outside the JDS/PP shared parking lot. She was coming out of the PP facility. I saw her clutching a return appointment card scheduled for an abortion procedure the following Monday. She was 2 months pregnant. After talking with her for nearly an hour I invited her to meet me instead at JDS the scheduled day of the abortion. I also made sure that Patsy was present to counsel her further. Rather, she showed up on Tuesday with \$600 in hand, the fee necessary to medically abort. She was distraught and crying. Patsy intervened by talking to her boyfriend who had provided the money and was very insistent on having Jeanne go through with the abortion procedure. Later that week, Jeanne was thrown out of her shared apartment with her boyfriend, with no place to go because of her decision to keep the baby. Several calls were made to refer her to some local women's housing that would accommodate and help in the situation that she found herself in.

JDS provided her with the funds to get drug tests done and completed prior to going to several women housing facilities, ensuring she would be allowed to live there. This is one of the prerequisites for housing. I remember two other days that Jeanne visited the center prior to receiving the proper housing accommodations telling us she had been sleeping in her car! The volunteers at JDS extended the caring compassion she needed at that time, feeling alone with no close family to turn to. She was provided some home made food for nourishment the times she visited the center. One other volunteer went out to buy additional food for the next several days while trying to sort things out pending obtaining the proper housing.

(continued on page 2)



*Beth Maddatu*



**HAPPY THANKSGIVING**

## Multi-Musical Benefit Concert (continued from page 1)

One of the biggest draws of the night, was Immaculate Heart Radio 1260 host and Christian musician, Elizabeth Campisi. Elizabeth performed songs from her newly released album *Sing Your Name*, including the title song, *Sing Your Name*. Elizabeth shared with the audience what led her to Christian music and also how she came to be involved in the pro-life movement. She, Bernadette Capuyan, and producer, Don Koch, wrote *Have Faith*, about a woman dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. This song deeply affected and touched many people at the concert that night, so much so, that we're still hearing about it! After the event Elizabeth said, "...what a blessed night it was! Thank you for including me in your first benefit concert for Juan Diego Society - what an honor!!" You can find more on Elizabeth Campisi online at [elizabethcampisi.com](http://elizabethcampisi.com).

*It started out like any other day  
An ordinary girl with hopes and dreams to last a lifetime  
But then the news that shakes her perfect world  
She's gonna be a mother to her own little girl  
She hides the shame  
And that's the way life is  
Sometimes the cards you hold are just too hard to play  
But love is always waiting, even when you've lost your way*  
-Lyrics to "Have Faith" by Elizabeth Campisi, Bernadette Capuyan and Don Koch



Elizabeth Campisi

The concert came to a harmonious end with a wonderful performance by Fr. Thomas Koller and The 12:15 Choir, performing angelic contemplative choral music. It was a wonderful night!

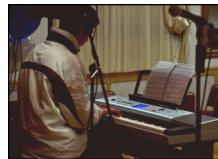
A BIG thank you to all of the volunteers there the night of the concert, especially the teens and families of the Regina Pacis home school group who worked tirelessly to make the concert a success. The latest numbers for the concert put us at an attendance of just over 200 people and over \$6000 raised for the efforts of the Juan Diego Women's Center! This concert is hopefully just the beginning of a new chapter for the Juan Diego Center. Please join us in 2011 for our other events and fundraisers to support our life-saving work!



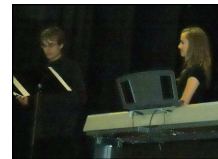
Cherry & Matthew



Friends of Jesus



Rheda Shi



Rachel & Joe



SJ Classical String Ensemble



Sheila Palazzo



Crowds Dancing



Future Pro-Life Defenders



Tom & John, JDS Board Members

## Jeanne (continued from page 1)

There was one other time that Jeanne showed up at the Center, crying, very hungry and Willie called me on my cell to check my availability of stopping by because Jeanne asked for me. I was driving to an appointment and turned around in the direction of JDS. Since then, I gave her my cell number for emergencies and offered her rides as she was having problems with her car. I called on her every so often to keep in touch. Jeanne truly felt very comforted and cared for by everyone at the center.

During the latter part of September Jeanne returned to visit the Center bringing her newly born baby girl, hoping to thank Patsy and me personally. I was out of the country on my Eastern European Pilgrimage. This was the best news I heard upon my return from our blessed journey. Interestingly, her boyfriend, who was not as supportive and very difficult in the beginning, has embraced fatherhood well. He even came with Jeanne when they visited JDS to show us their baby. What a wonderful ending to this story. Thanks be to God as we continue to pray for more of these story endings.

Another experience worth noting that just happened last week was meeting Monica, saved 19 yrs ago from abortion. The 3-generation family visited the Center, Monica, her mother, and Monica's 2 yr old daughter showing true testimony to the incredible work JDS has provided over the years since its doors opened 24 years ago.

I can already picture Jeanne's daughter, 20 years from now, returning to JDS, just like Monica, for a visit with her mom to thank the volunteers for the gift of life given her and the chance to be somebody because the people at JDS cared enough for her life.

It is no wonder, I will continue to bring my efforts, time and talents to JDS as I have become more and more passionate about saving the next unborn child and sharing more stories like that of Jeanne and Monica.

Come Holy Spirit Come! St. Juan Diego, pray for us! Our Lady of Guadalupe, protect and save the Unborn! And May God continue to be Merciful to all Pro-Lifers and the wonderful St. Juan Diego Women's Center!

## Thanks be to God

As this year comes to a close, I would like to pause and reflect on the abundant blessings Our Father has showered on the St. Juan Diego Women's Center. So far this year, there are at least sixteen babies and their mothers who have been spared the horrors of abortion thanks to the life-saving work of the Center. What a privilege and honor to be part of the pro-life movement at this time. How can one thank God enough for the joy that fills your heart when abortion-bound mothers return to show off their precious babies?

This year several mothers have done just that, returning to a place where they first encountered the love and support they needed to choose life for their babies. In fact, one mother who came to the center 20 years ago, visited us and brought with her, her "Juan Diego" daughter and her new "Juan Diego" grand daughter! Seeing the three generations of people helped through the work we do here, clearly impresses in our minds that what we do has implications that ripple through the ages and into eternity.

In 2010, we were blessed with a wonderful new group of volunteers. I am very grateful for all the new people that Our Lady (our Directress) recruited to be part of the St. Juan Diego Center Family. The love, energy, ideas, and talents infused by these good people have brought the Center a higher level of enthusiasm and conviction for our common cause.

Twice this year, the Center was on the brink of closure. But through the intercession of Our Lady and St. Joseph, not only did the center survive, but we also are currently in a better position due to the new donors and friends who came to our rescue. The Multi-Musical Concert held for our benefit also generated much needed funds. May God reward them for their generosity.

Thanks to our other intercessor, St. Catherine of Sienna, we have been able to spread the *Gospel of Life* in greater ways. We have been invited to speak at several parishes, seminars, organizations conferences and were even featured twice on the *Gift of Life* radio show on Immaculate Heart Radio (1260 AM).

Next year the center will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary. To have survived that many years solely on private donations is a miracle and a testament to God's Divine Loving Providence. As we close the year 2010, we thank Our Lord for all the graces we have received and for the 9,880 families helped and 670 babies saved these past 24 years. *Gratias tibi Deus.*

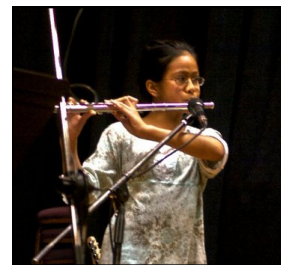
### *Additional Concert Photos:*



*Concert Audience*



*Regina Pacis Home School Helpers*



*Theresa Abalos on the flute*



*Fr. Thomas and the 12:15 Choir*

## National Adoption Awareness Month by Sheila Palazzo, JDS volunteer

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. What is adoption? Adoption is the permanent, legal transfer of all parental rights from one person or couple to another person or couple. Adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as parents whose children are born to them. Adoptive parents are real parents. When speaking about adoption it is important that we use the best and most accurate language. When someone chooses adoption, they choose to make an adoption plan for their baby. May we not use the outdated she 'gave her baby up'. That is NOT what is taking place. The correct thing to say is the birth mom placed her child with loving adoptive parents. This is important because using the language, "gave her/him up" brings all sorts of wrong notions as to what is actually happening.

Women and men in crisis pregnancies tend to see adoption through a totally negative lens. We need to share adoption and all of its positive aspects. Being adopted myself and having counseled women who have chosen adoption for their babies, it is a difficult, painful BUT LOVING option. Love requires sacrifice and along with the Cross comes some pain. When a woman says "I can not give my baby up" it is because of the strong, strong bond between mother and child. Women know this instinctively. Placing a child with another set of parents is difficult. But it is genuine love that gives men and women the grace to make adoption plans for their children.

Abortion is ending their child's life. Abortion is the antithesis of love. A mother and father will be the parents of a **dead** baby or a **living** baby.

Adoption has changed tremendously over the past 50 years. Today adoption can be either closed or open. *In the past the pain that came with placing a child for adoption was very much due to the secrecy of it. Many women placed their children with adoptive parents and have not told a soul. They were sent away to convents and maternity homes and forbidden to tell anyone! This is sad and very wrong indeed. The adoptions were closed with no information given to the birth mothers. Similar to abortion, secrecy takes a heavy painful toll on people. We need to share adoption with others with our heads and hearts held high.*

In open adoptions the mother chooses the adoptive parents. She meets with them. Together they decide about the future, how much visitation, how many pictures, if any, etc. It is rather beautiful actually. With closed adoptions the records are kept sealed. The identity of the parents involved is kept confidential to all parties involved. It is important to be educated about adoption. It is a loving option. WE are ALL adopted children of God the Father through Jesus Christ, His Son. Romans 8:14-17. Legal adoption is a reflection of the profound way God made all of us His children, members of God's family.



*Rachel & Joseph*

*Juan Diego Society*  
*(St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center Newsletter)*  
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**An Appeal to All the Friends of the  
St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center**

***We urgently need your help to continue our mission.***

***The survival of the St. Juan Diego Women's Center rests solely on your generosity.***

***Your gift will save another baby.***

***No amount, accompanied with love and prayers, is too small.***

Make checks payable to: Juan Diego Society  
12 North White Road # 5  
San Jose, CA 95127  
Phone (408) 258-2008

\*\*Credit Card and PayPal donations can be made thru our website: [www.jdswomenscenter.org](http://www.jdswomenscenter.org)  
All donations are tax-deductible.