

*Martin de Porres House of Hospitality*  
225 Potrero Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
415-552-0240

"As I search for wild orchids in the autumn fields, it is the deeply-bedded root that I look for, not the flower." Izumi Shikibu

Thanksgiving 2003

Dear Friends,

We could never imagine the changes we would go through this past year at Martins. The winter rains and deep-felt storms whispered of the seasons ahead. This past spring the world held its collective breath asking, "would we be here in summer?" Simultaneously, at Martins, with both volunteers and funds scarce, we wondered would we make it through the summer and the future.

At Martins we did what we always do during difficult and mysterious times; we dug deeper in our faith. For us it was a leap in which we sought faith's deeply bedded roots: the faith of compassion, the faith of justice, the faith of love, the faith of service.

Having made slight adjustments to our hours we continue to serve ten meals a week. In addition, we offer showers twice a week, we give out hygiene products, we celebrated our holiday meals together and we grieved collectively at our annual memorial. We also went to a baseball game and held a number of Open Mikes where we shared creative outpourings of both guests and volunteers. We watched the ebb and flow of people gracing us with their presence and then moving on. We are never sure what the coming seasons will bring but we are reassured by the Great Creator's plan that each season unfolds and blooms into the next.

In Love's Garden, and all over San Francisco, a plant called Canterbury Bells bloomed for the first time in ten years. What do these flowers know? Who are they rooted to? Why did they bloom this year? Is this not the great divine plan of which we are all a part? Throughout Martins' thirty-two years we have been rooted in compassion, all the while mindful that the flowers of justice and peace might not bloom in our lifetimes, but we live in the faith that they will bloom.

Each one of us is a small miracle, a tiny seed, a ripple in the universe; each one of us a small part of the divine; never apart from the love rooted in us. We must have faith in ourselves for each of us is the root and the flower that blooms and grows! In the stilling of our tears and the calming of our hearts we can cherish both.

We are very grateful for all your generous and faithful support. You are always in our work, our prayers and our hearts.

In God's light and love,

*Barbara*