

*DECEMBER 2006 REFLECTION FROM SR. JACKIE*

The recent senseless violence in schools in Colorado, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania and, closer to home, the incidences of guns on campuses in Picayune, Bay St. Louis, and Pascagoula have called all of us at OLA to review our Emergency Management Plan, renew our vigilance, and re-think school security. Although I am not particularly worried about an incident at OLA, all faculty, staff, and members of the administration are mindful of the need for calm action in the event of a crisis.

These events have also reminded me of my obligation to be a peacemaker in our violent world. Mahatma Gandhi said, "We must become the world we want to be" - that is, a world full of peace, understanding and love. In order to accomplish this, each of us must strengthen our resolve to give witness by the way we live. We need to join estranged hands in friendship. We need to pray for understanding that puts an end to strife. We need to practice mercy that quenches hatred. We need to exercise forgiveness that overcomes vengeance. We need to live God's law of love.

Perhaps, during this Advent season, each of us can begin to create a new vision for our world - one in which people listen compassionately to each other, offer forgiveness for wrongs, bring healing to those who are suffering, and create new ways to sustain our earth. Let's bring peace to our world and let each of us start with ourselves, our families, and our friends and acquaintances.

On another note, I would like to wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving. We have lots to be thankful for; let us take a few moments on Thursday to thank our God for His love and concern for each of us. He truly is an AWESOME GOD (to use the girls' phrase)!