

## Woman born at Social Works Center returns 21 years later as nurse in the maternity ward

Senorita Nellie Santiago is one individual among thousands whose lives have been profoundly influenced by the existence of the Social Works Center.

Nellie made her entrance into this world on January 27, 1968 — the feast of St. Angela Merici whose benefaction includes those struggling with illness, disabilities and loss of parents. Unbeknownst to her family at the time, being born under the prayerful eye of St. Angela would portend wonderful things for Nellie.

With the assistance of Dominican Sister Margaret Mary Birchmeier, Nellie was delivered at the Maternity Hospital at the Social Works Center. The third of six girls in her family, Nellie was raised in one of the most destitute sections of Chimbote. Her primary and secondary education were provided by Fe y Alegria (Faith and Happiness), a community based education movement founded in Latin America by Jesuit priests more than 40 years ago. With more than 32 years of experience working in Peru, Fe y Alegria locates its schools in the slums and impoverished rural areas and provides free quality education, including vocational training in a variety of specializations, to the poorest, most marginalized parts of the country.

Nellie was a good student and excelled in her studies. Her post-secondary education was completed at the National Academy, a state institution in Chimbote, where she studied nursing aide courses for three years. She came to the Maternity Hospital in January of 1989 to complete her clinical practice. During this time, Nellie demonstrated impressive dedication to the nursing profession and displayed great adaptability and dedication to her work and the values of the Center. She circulated through all of

the programs at the Maternity Clinic during her clinical experience and was willing to help wherever needed, even washing dishes in the Maternity kitchen. It was during this time that Nellie learned that she had been born at the Maternity Clinic and had come full circle!



Dedicated nurses care for the numerous people who pass through the doors of the Social Works Center each day.

She was hired in January 1990 and continued to circulate through the different programs, including the maternity ward. In September of 1994 she was transferred to the newly opened ultrasound unit where she continues to work. Nellie is well-known to all of the patients who pass through her department and maintains interest in all of the programs, helping whenever and wherever needed — but demonstrating a special love for the orphans.

She is greatly admired and respected by her co-workers and loves working with the “madres” in the place where she was born — a work dedicated to

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As our Savior says: “A good tree is not able to produce bad fruit.” *Mothers of children, even if they have a thousand, carry each and every one fixed in their hearts, and because of the strength of their love they do not forget any of them. In fact, it seems that the more children they have the more their love and care for each one is increased.*

— From *Spiritual Testament* by St. Angela Merici

— Mary Ann Knochel

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“...a bridge of love and hope.”

Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh

“The Chimbote Foundation is a response to the call of Jesus to make His kingdom come to be, to manifest through our works of faith and love the power of His love.”

— Bishop Donald Wuerl

### Annual Peru Mission Dinner

October 28, 2004  
Sheraton Station Square  
Tickets \$125

For information  
call 412.456.3085

August 2004



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— Mary Ann Knochel

### Generosity continued

goal was not merely exceeded but more than doubled. Our Lady of Lourdes is indeed “a small school with a big heart.”

✱ An Easter Basket Raffle, P. J. Day and Hat Day at St. Maurice School in Forest Hills resulted in a gift of \$160 for the Nutrition Program, while students at St. Titus School in Aliquippa raised \$550 during their “Piggies for Peru” event.

✱ The students at St. Gabriel of the Sorrowful Virgin School in Whitehall held a Dress Down Day in celebration of the end of the school year. In the process collected \$450 to benefit the missionary effort.

Space does not permit sharing the stories of all of the schools that have sacrificed to relieve the plight of

God’s beloved children in Chimbote. Through ingenious events such as “Souper” Bowl Lunches, Lenten Mite Boxes and Pastor Appreciation Day, Catholic students are sharing their abundance with those less fortunate and responding to the words of St. Paul “So faith, hope and charity abide...But the greatest of these is charity.” (1 Cor 13:13)

On behalf of the children of Chimbote we thank each and every student.

— Mary Ann Knochel

### Sprinkles continued

treated for six cents per week — or \$3.12 annually. It is anticipated that 3,000 children who utilize the services of the Malnutrition Clinic will be nurtured to health in one year through this \$10,000 gift.

For more information about the Malnutrition Clinic or to learn how you may participate in the *Supplefer Sprinkles* program, please call The Chimbote Foundation at 412-456-3085.

\* Professor of pediatrics and nutritional sciences at the University of Toronto and chief of gastroenterology and nutrition at the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Canada. Dr. Zlotkin’s research has earned him the H. J. Heinz Humanitarian Award and a recent \$1.9 million CIDA Nutritional Information Project award for a research initiative with CARE Canada and PATH Canada, two non-governmental organizations.

## Pediatric malnutrition focus of new Foundation program

With the current media focus on our nation’s obesity epidemic, it can be easy to forget that there are those in impoverished countries suffering from the ravages of malnutrition and iron deficiency anemia. Hair loss, fatigue, maternal and fetal morbidity, intra-uterine growth retardation and premature birth are common symptoms of a poor and inadequate diet.



micronutrients, such as vitamins A, B-12 and/or D, folic acid, zinc and iodine may also be added. *Sprinkles* is intended to be “sprinkled” on or stirred into any food, including rice, barley, congee or porridge. Each sachet is a single dose and does not require special measuring or handling.

The Social Works Center has addressed this problem in Chimbote through its malnutrition clinic. Now, through the exemplary generosity of its donors, The Chimbote Foundation is able to enhance the nutrition program by setting aside \$10,000 to implement the distribution and use of *Supplefer Sprinkles* in the diets of the most vulnerable children and expectant mothers.

Developed by Stanley Zlotkin, MD\* and manufactured by H.J. Heinz Company, *Sprinkles* is an inexpensive, cost-effective alternative to traditional malnutrition treatment methods. The single-serve sachets of tasteless dry powder consist of encapsulated iron and vitamin C. Other

Studies were undertaken by Dr. Zlotkin in the west African country of Ghana in conjunction with the Ghana Ministry of Health and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In that tropical region, iron intake from the mostly vegetarian diet is very limited. More than 80 percent of the infants suffer from anemia. During the first study, more than 1,000 infants were given *Supplefer Sprinkles*. Within two months, 60 percent of anemic infants recovered from anemia.

By the end of 2004, mothers in Chimbote will be encouraged to use one sachet packet daily per child, three days a week. At a cost of two cents per sachet, one child can be

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## 'Average' morning at Center greets physical therapist

Earlier in 2004, Ellwood City native Bill Shuttleworth journeyed to Chimbote to aid the physical therapy program at the Social Works Center and the Maternidad (Maternity Hospital). While he was there, Bill chronicled some of the daily life at the Center. Below is an excerpt of his writing. Bill also captured the images featured in the box below this story.

### 8:32 am

I never know what to expect when I arrive at the Maternidad each day. This morning was no exception. I just sat down to continue work on a virtual tour of the clinic when Sister Maggie approached asking, "Do you want to see something very special?"

I have come to know that answering that question in the affirmative could mean going to see one of the orphans playing in the yard or taking a 30-minute ride to some barrio. However, sensing Sister's obvious excitement I quickly agreed. We strolled toward the maternity ward while Sister excitedly told of the seven new births which

occurred since we left the clinic last night at 9 p.m. She was particularly excited to show me one of the new children.

Donning medical gowns, we proceeded into the neonatal intensive unit where Sister directed me to an incubator containing a very tiny baby. The baby was not significantly larger than my hand and was breathing on a respirator which was necessary to sustain his life. This little life was born the evening before in somewhat unorthodox circumstances.

His mother reported that while sitting at home she had a pain, followed immediately by the spontaneous birth of her second child. Home alone and tending to her toddler she managed to get a cab to the Maternidad from San Luis. During the 20-minute ride the mother tended to her toddler while holding the newborn who was still attached to the umbilical cord. Minutes after the trio arrived, the baby's umbilical cord was cut, the placenta delivered and the baby weighing just 88 grams was intubated and

placed in the incubator. (*The infant is pictured below in the hat.*)

Were it not for the Maternidad, this child would be dead. Migal Santarico Avila, born January 27, 2004 is yet another one of the thousands of miracles that take place here every year.

### 8:49 a.m.

Still buzzing from the excitement of the story and viewing this intimate struggle for life, Msgr. Jules approached and asked me to document the "emergency baptism" of Migal. Once again donning a medical gown, I followed Msgr. Jules to the unit where I was able to document the most incredibly tender moment I have ever experienced. As the holy water fell on the tiny forehead, my tears fell on the viewer of my camera. Msgr. Jules blessed the young life as those who witnessed, prayed.

I struggle against my inadequate vocabulary as I try to

put into words what can only be felt. This baptism was only one second in time. A second as delicate as the powder on a butterfly's wing and as strong as an ocean storm. What intense power and humility!

I witnessed one single second when the universe stopped spinning and the Divine touched the humble. I witnessed the smallest, most fragile, most innocent and most humble of human life being united with the awesome power of God. To realize that God Himself was reaching out to this child at this moment and was choosing the person of Msgr. Jules to carry out His work made the experience awe-inspiring. At no point in my life have I ever been so filled with humility, respect and joy.

— Bill Shuttleworth

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## Generosity of diocesan young people continues

The "Kids Share a Lunch Nutrition Program" encourages students in Catholic education to learn about their brothers and sisters in Peru, to pray for them and to learn the value of making sacrifices to help those in need. Since the program's inception diocesan Catholic school students collectively raised \$45,000 for the Pediatric Malnutrition Program at the Social Works Center.

Nearly 100 percent of diocesan schools participate in the program, raising funds through various and unique activities and events held throughout the school year.

\* Student Council members at St. Ursula School in Allison Park were inspired by a visit from Mike Clark of WTAE to "build a house" in Chimbote. Each Wednesday during Lent, students "shared a lunch" with the children in Peru and purchased a "brick" with their lunch money to begin "construction." By Easter, they had raised a total of \$500, enough to build two houses!

\* Students at Our Lady of Lourdes School in Burgettstown set out to raise \$400 through their annual service project "Our Lady of Lourdes, Making a World of Difference In...Chimbote."



Through the efforts of the student body who worked hard to gain donations by doing chores and services for the administration, the faculty and the community, students reached a new goal of \$700! In the end, the original

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## A Glimpse of daily life at the Social Works Center



**CHILDREN AT PLAY:** Three of the orphaned children residing at the Social Works Center use an ordinary cardboard box for play one day. The Center began accepting orphans in 2001 and is currently home to 22 children.



**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION:** Msgr. Roos prepares to administer the Sacrament of Baptism to a newborn child in an incubator at the Center. Premature births and low birth weights are common in Chimbote where health conditions are poor.



**A MIRACLE:** A baby born prematurely rests inside an incubator at the Center. *The baby's miraculous survival is chronicled in the story above.*



**TEST RESULTS:** Technicians conduct various medical tests in the Center's laboratory. The modern laboratory is the best in the region and is often used by area hospitals.



**LINED UP FOR CARE:** Local residents wait patiently to be seen by a nurse at the Center joining the 185,000 patients who were cared for last year. Medical care ranges from maternity and pediatric services to laboratory analysis, first aid and vaccinations.