

Martin de Porres House of Hospitality

225 POTRERO AVE • SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103 • 415-552-0240

Spring 2011

Dear Friends,

It has been a year since we've written. We are grateful to be here, a year later, with the roses in bloom, the garden a testament to the vision of a place of refuge that feeds not only the body but also the spirit. The roses are also a testament to those who garden, tend and nurture and to resilience, blossoming even when neglected, taking you by surprise, taking your breath away. Martin's is, in many ways, like a garden. It yields great beauty with hard work, and nourishment. And sometimes, even when neglected, the flowers bloom anyway.

Barbara was our letter writer for so many years. She had a gift for correspondence, a gift for writing and for wanting to share the fruits of this garden. She spent hours at her desk, looking out on her garden, watching the birds, writing to many of you, acknowledging the transitions and seasons of your lives. Martin's volunteers often take on the responsibilities that best suit individual temperaments. Writing to you often is postponed because, well, that was Barb's joy. She would want you to know, though, about the Fifth Sunday and other phenomena that make Martin's a special and necessary place here on Potrero Avenue.

Fifth Sundays are relatively infrequent in the calendar. This Fifth Sunday in May also happened to fall on a long weekend yet enough people showed up to prepare, cook and serve hundreds of meals. Repeatedly, guests came back for seconds saying this was *the best meal* they had eaten in ages. Pasta, salad, fruit and bread, mint tea; it *was* particularly delicious.

In this land of plenty many have less and less. There are new and familiar faces everyday, some filled with despair, some with hope, some with resignation. On this particular Sunday one guest had left General Hospital to come for the meal and hoped to return to his hospital bed before he was missed. He wanted to break bread in a place where he felt like he belonged. Another guest had been asked to leave the hospital, likely for good reason. We could offer this guest, too, the same opportunity to break bread in a place where she felt she belonged.

Your continued and faithful support provides the seeds and the soil, the air and water, for this amazing place.

With love,
The Martin's Community