

 **Letter from the President**

Dear Friends of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System,
Last school year, 2005-2006, I found myself at a disadvantage. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would need emergency quadruple bypass surgery. As a result, I was out of commission for approximately three months in recuperation. This recovery period became a time for healing body and spirit after nearly 23 years of round-the-clock service to the Oratory Schools, beginning in 1983. However, with the help of family, friends, loved ones, and the prayers of our beloved school children, I was able to return and continue “to serve” the Catholic community of our region.



For years, prior parents urged me to build in order for the children to be on one campus and not two. For years, parents who worked hard on fund raising asked why it was that everyone did not do their share, and yet expected to receive the same benefits. For years, parents urged me to raise tuition to help obtain the needed funds to pay competitive teacher salaries. In time, I realized they were right and that we could not depend on fund raising and galas, as successful as they were, to be sufficient to afford a campus worthy of our children and God’s work. And so it was, the time had come to listen to the “wise voices” of those who were willing to sacrifice for the greater good of all. As a result, the Governance Board and the Oratory Congregation made the decision to move forward with construction plans. My responsibility as President soon became the initiation of a Capital Campaign for building.

The following is a brief description of the different categories of **giving** that come by means of special projects, programs, fund-raisers, etc., and not tuition and fees:

The **Annual Giving Program** is primarily to help support tuition assistance and the development of sacred spaces such as the “grotto”. Many parents participated in the private donations for the construction of the grotto to “Our Lady of Guadalupe” and received recognition on the plaque that stands in the rose garden adorning her space.

Special Event money and annual fund-raisers are used to assist the operating budget. Combined, these funds help to make up the difference of what it actually costs to educate a student enrolled at the Oratory, a Christian dual-language school system. **Tuition and fees pay 83.31% of the actual cost of their education. (See graph p. 5)**

Major Gifts are the annual gala, “Noche de Alegría”, the newly established Capital Campaign, “Prophet of J.O.Y.”, along with private ventures such as the Lorenzo Negrete Mini-Concert, BBQs, breakfasts, and T-shirt sales done by caring parents on their own initiative. These major gifts are for the construction of our new campus that will serve the needs of our students and expand the services and class offerings. The Capital Campaign continues for another four years inviting new and returning families to make a loving sacrifice for their child.

During the year 2004-2005, **Grant** money had not been sought from foundations. This past year however, after the establishment of the President and Development Office, we were successful in being awarded a total of \$206,175.00. Not bad for a first year in development.

In closing, please ask yourself, “Am I one who is content chipping away at stones, or am I a builder of cathedrals?”. I pray that you will join me and other Oratorians in the building of “cathedrals” for the honor and glory of God.

Yours in Christ Jesus and St. Philip Neri,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G. Yvonne Pérez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

G. Yvonne Pérez
President, Oratory of St. Philip Neri School System