

Founders' Day Proclamation 2006



Dear Sisters,

Happy Founders' Day! It is so strange to me that I would be writing the Founders' Day Proclamation as the National President almost to the date of my Initiation 20 years ago.

Who would have imagined 20 years ago that I would still be involved with the Fraternity, not to even mention that I would have the honor of serving as the National President. Interesting how our journey in life takes us to many destinations along the way.

This past year has been one of many events. In last year's proclamation, I wrote about the tragedy of the Tsunami.

Proclamation 2005 excerpt:

"The world has seen much turmoil this past year ending 2004 with the tragedy of the Tsunami. As I watched the videos of loved ones being taken so suddenly, it caused me to reflect on my family and so many important people in my life, so many of them being Theta Phi Alphas. I had to stop and be thankful for the people in my life and how blessed I am to have the opportunity to share my journey with such amazing individuals. Do you ever stop to think about the Theta Phi Alphas in your life? How you interact with one another, and how fortunate we are?"

Never would I have imagined how real those words would be to me one year later.

Let me put into perspective our world this past year:

The death of Pope John Paul II and the inauguration of Pope Benedict XVI
The London Bombings
The War in Iraq Continues
Pakistan Earthquake
Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma

As a result of one of the greatest natural disasters in the history of the United States, the power of the National President had to be transferred to the First Vice President, Alpha Beta Chapter did not attend school together as a chapter at Loyola University – New Orleans, undergraduates and alumnae from various chapters who lived in Louisiana and Mississippi who lost their homes and most of their possessions and the list goes on. Some of you may be thinking this is not a happy Proclamation, but I

thought that I would put into perspective what this year has been like for many around the world and within our sisterhood. Ironically, out of all of this, amazing examples of sisterhood have been shown in so many ways. The Winter Edition of *The Compass* tells a story that is truly heartwarming and an example of what sisterhood and living our ritual really means.

With that being said, I hope that today is an opportunity for each of us to take a moment and to reflect upon all that we do have to be thankful for. In our lives, we all have good times and challenging times. This Founders' Day gives us an opportunity to reflect on the question – am I living the best life that I can? Do I take time to enjoy the people that I love? Do I live my commitments to family, work, school, civic responsibilities and Theta Phi Alpha? On my life's journey, am I using all my talents and gifts to serve others in the way that I was intended?

I ask these questions of each of you today, because I have asked myself these very questions during the past year. There are days when we all want to say, enough is enough; on those days, find someone to lift you up and help you get back on track. Other days, life seems easy and full of great things.

Theta Phi Alpha gives each one of us the opportunity to grow and to learn. As one of my favorite songs says, "If There Hadn't Been You, Where Would I Be?" If there hadn't been Theta Phi Alpha, I don't know where I would be today or where most of us would be today.

As we close out the 2004-2006 Biennium, and begin anew in Atlanta in June, my hope for our Fraternity is that she continues to grow and become all that all of the sisters throughout the years hoped that she would be. As the 2004-2006 Grand Council ends our time together, it has been an honor to serve you. Thank you to all of you who give to and love our Fraternity. It truly is a gift that we were given the day of our Initiation into Theta Phi Alpha.

My thoughts and prayers are with you all always.

Yours in the bonds of sisterhood,

Mari Ann Callais

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National President

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Fraternity
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