

The JOSEPH HOUSE



Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary

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Dear Friends of Joseph House:

Most of our days are ordinary. We follow a routine in familiar surroundings with familiar people and do the things we do. It may seem there is nothing special about days like this, but that is not true. An ordinary day is an unappreciated treasure. They tend to pass by without notice, but paying attention to them can be revealing.

Before His public ministry, Jesus lived many ordinary, routine days in Nazareth. In discussing the importance of Jesus' hidden life, author Bonnie Thurston makes this observation:

The truth is that our spiritual lives are in the details: how we dust the house, respond to coworkers, or treat the check-out person at the grocery store. Quite a lot of life, and thus spiritual life, is taken up with routine and repetitive tasks like doing the laundry and cleaning the bathroom. How we do them, with what attitude we approach them, is who we are. (from *Hidden in God: Discovering the Desert Vision of Charles de Foucauld*)

It's in the everyday tasks of living that we acquire habits, and these in turn develop into character and bear fruit in virtue. Or vice. The choice is ours in the million little things we do each day.

There's a reason why life in a convent or monastery is called the "school of charity." These are places where men and women can smooth away their rough edges. They learn what it means to put on the heart and mind of Christ. That way, ministry and service done in His Name becomes more loving, more credible.

The same is true with families and home life. Our ordinary days can teach us so much, how to forgive and be patient and selfless. They give us plenty of practice.

An ordinary day at the **Joseph House Crisis Center** follows an established routine. People form a line outside by 8:15 a.m. After we open the door, some go to the right to sign up with the Food Pantry, others go to the left for Financial Assistance. The Soup Kitchen has a hot meal ready by 10:30. Over in the Hospitality Room, men and women who are homeless come inside to wash up, launder a set of clothes, and get something to eat.



You can live your life of Nazareth everywhere: live it in the place where it is most useful to your neighbor.

Charles de Foucauld



Prayer Requests: use return envelope or e-mail to LSJM@comcast.net

Jesus, to Your Loving and Most Sacred Heart I commend my prayers:

Some feel like talking, some don't; others watch a movie.

Ordinary days, but never ordinary people: each person shows to us the face of Christ present in the lives of the poor and suffering. It's our responsibility to honor their intrinsic human dignity.

Aliyah, 40, is homeless and undergoing treatment for cancer. She is doing OK with the radiation. Aliyah has four children, one of whom is disabled and receives a monthly SSI check. In the past, Aliyah has worked as a licensed hairdresser, and she hopes to do that again. Right now, she faces a daily struggle of finding shelter for her children.

Recently, Aliyah had cause for great hope: her name came to the top of the waiting list for subsidized housing, and she was approved. Subsidized housing is hugely beneficial for families like Aliyah's. There are restrictions, and for Aliyah that meant paying off an old electric bill of \$795 before she could move into a subsidized apartment. She didn't have enough money, but thanks to your support the Joseph House was able to contribute \$200. This family will no longer be homeless.

Imelda is 57 and has a difficult life, but she does what she has to do to survive. In the summer she does seasonal work on local farms. The rest of the year she tries to get work cleaning rooms. Imelda lives in a boarding house with shared bathrooms and no kitchen privileges; she cooks in her room on a hot plate. It is home for her. Her monthly rent is on the low end of the scale (\$347), but she sometimes has trouble paying it if she hasn't found enough work. She came to the Crisis Center with an eviction notice; we sent \$200 to her landlord to stop the proceedings.

Gene, 45, has become the primary caregiver for his mother, who has Alzheimer's disease. They live together in a tiny house in a rural community. Gene was laid off from work, but thankfully qualified for Unemployment. It is not enough to cover the monthly rent (\$850) and other basic expenses, so Gene has filled out an application for the state's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or "food stamps"). His mother's care is stressful; she rejects most people who try to help. Since Gene was not able to pay all of the rent, the Joseph House paid his landlord \$170 to prevent an eviction.

Terry was just a few days from being evicted when she came to the Crisis Center. She is 40 years old and lives alone. For three weeks Terry was unable to work because she had shingles all over her face. She feels better now, but she did not receive any paid sick leave. To make matters worse, her hours have been dropped to part time. We made a payment of \$200 to the landlord to stop Terry's eviction. The news that Terry has found a new full-time job makes us very happy.

Chelsea, 27, has two young daughters. Her hours at work are almost full time, and she brings home about \$1,000 per month. Half of that goes for rent, and then there are the utility bills, transportation, food, and laundry. Chelsea previously worked on the production line in a poultry facility. She had to leave after suffering a hernia. She was out of work for a while, and during

that time her gas bill fell into delinquency. The Joseph House paid \$200 to prevent the gas from being turned off in Chelsea's apartment, which is one half of a decrepit subdivided house.

When we are close to the poor, at least in spirit, we begin to treat their needs as our own.

Joseph House in the News: Both the *Salisbury Daily Times* and *The Dialog* (newspaper of the Diocese of Wilmington) recently published articles about the Joseph House. To read them online, visit our Facebook page for the links: www.facebook.com/TheJosephHouseSalisbury You don't need to be a member of Facebook to access our page.

Gratitude Department: The Market Street Inn in Salisbury is hosting Vinny Bellia (from Vinny's La Roma) every Tuesday night. Vinny is cooking some of his signature Italian dishes, and 10% of the proceeds are being donated to the Joseph House. If you haven't tried Vinny's cooking, you don't know what you're missing. Our thanks go to Vinny and the Market Street Inn for their generosity. What a great example of caring for the less fortunate!

www.marketstreetinnsalisbury.com

And we wish to thank everyone who came to our 50th Anniversary Open House last month. Despite the rain, we welcomed a good number of people to tour the Joseph House. We were delighted to show our humble facilities built and cared for with love over the years. It was our pleasure to meet everyone, share some ice cream, and pray together, to give thanks to God for His unending provident care.

We see this care every day in the many ways people like yourself show their support of our ministry. By working together we can be good neighbors to those going through a hard time.

With our prayers for an abundance of blessings,

Your Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary