

# The JOSEPH HOUSE



## Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary

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### Dear Friends of Joseph House:

*I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me. . . . whatever you did for one of these least brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.*

From the time of Jesus to the present day, these words have driven people to open their eyes and change their ways.

This famous passage is recorded in the twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. Referring to it, Pope Francis said, "Our treatment of the poor is the criterion on which each of us will be judged." Our own Sr. Mary Elizabeth, writing in this Newsletter in 1974, shared the following:

"Our age seems to me an age of complexities and clutter, so God has to simplify our final exam for us. The whole exam is there in Matthew 25: 31-46. Best of all, God gave us the answer along with the questions, so we have no real excuse for flunking."

These are admonitions to take seriously: the one thing that really matters — judgment before God — is at stake. But there is more to this Gospel passage.

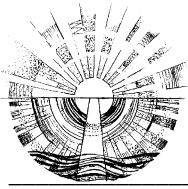
We see the love of God reaching out across every chasm of despair, leaving behind no one. Those who are rejected by society, treated with disdain, ignored and forgotten, are first in line in God's Heart. In *The Joy of the Gospel*, Pope Francis pointed out that the poor are a prolongation of the Incarnation for each of us; accompanying them "teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other." God is not far away, He is here. Matthew 25 is the seed for the creation of a new outlook, a new community, one rooted in the intrinsic dignity of every individual on earth.

In the womb, we were the least of the least ones. As babies, someone fed and clothed us. Human existence is based on selfless giving. Through charity our lives reach the perfection God intended.



**One must see God in everyone.**

- St. Catherine Labouré



Prayer Requests: use return envelope or e-mail to [LSJM@comcast.net](mailto:LSJM@comcast.net)

**Lord, all creation sings your praise. In your mercy hear my prayer:**

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**Beth** has reached the point where she depends on the charity of others, although she wishes it were not so. She had been a crab picker for most of her adult life. Now at age 54, arthritis has curtailed her means of support. Her son helps with some of the bills, but he is limited in what he can do. Thankfully, Beth has a subsidized housing voucher and does not have to pay rent for her modest apartment. She does, however, have to pay for utilities, and if she fails to do so, she will lose her subsidy. At the moment, Beth receives \$194 per month in food stamps; without that, she would have nothing to eat. The Joseph House paid \$180 toward her electric bill. Beth has applied for Disability, and that may be her only hope.

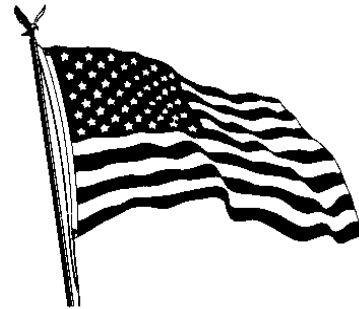
**Christina**, 37, lives with her six children deep in the Eastern Shore countryside. The road they live on is nearly deserted and surrounded by salt marshes. Christina works part time and brings home about \$800 per month. She also receives \$200 monthly in temporary cash assistance from the state. Christina lives without cable television and a phone. Her biggest monthly expenses are for her car payment and insurance; the total is \$500 each month, but she needs the car to get to work.

Christina made the trip to the Joseph House because the electricity had been turned off in her home. We paid \$200 toward the large amount she owed. Two weeks later, we heard from the electric company that Christina had been able to raise the remainder of the money due.

**Lloyd** is another person who traveled far to receive help (there are few options for people in need). He is 50 years old, married, and has four children.

Their home is a humble trailer. Lloyd owns the trailer and the lot beneath it, which is a lifesaver given his present situation. He was laid off from his job a few weeks ago and has yet to find new work. His income is zero except for \$200 monthly in food stamps — hardly enough for a family of six. The Joseph House sent \$175 to the electric company so Lloyd and his family will at least have electricity during this trying time.

**Butch** and **Madelyn** are a married couple in their seventies. After Butch suffered an injury, a series of events led to them losing their home. They are now renters at a cost of \$900 per month, 71% percent of their Social Security income. Paying the rest of their bills is a struggle. Madelyn came to the Joseph House with a cut-off notice from the electric company. We paid \$300 to get Madelyn's account out of arrears.



For Americans too the wide and general dream has a name. It is called "the American Way of Life" ...

These dreams describe our vague yearnings toward what we wish we were and hope we may be: wise, just, compassionate, and noble.

The fact that we have this dream at all is perhaps an indication of its possibility.

- John Steinbeck

**Rochelle**, 52, is supporting herself by baby-sitting. She earns about \$500 per month. With no car or unnecessary expenses, she is able to manage. Rochelle recently had a heart attack. She is recovering, but she lost some of her baby-sitting jobs for a while. Rochelle is always teetering on the edge in terms of money. The loss of income resulted in unpaid rent followed by an eviction notice. We paid the landlord \$200 to keep Rochelle from becoming homeless.

**Marla** is 36 and starting a new life with her four children. Marla had to take them and flee their father because, as she put it politely, "he is not a nice person." They are now living in a protected location, far away from their troubled past. Marla proudly told us that her children are doing well in their new school. She herself hit a bump in the road when her job at a hospital ended. Marla, however, is an optimistic and upbeat person; those traits will always serve her well. She found a new job and just finished the training period. Marla came to the Joseph House because she fell behind in the rent while she was out of work. We sent her landlord \$225 so Marla and her children would not get evicted.

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**July 7** was the **42<sup>nd</sup> anniversary** of the founding of the Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary! We are thankful to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us over the years. Joyful memories brighten our spirits and keep us hopeful about the future. We pray that more women may hear and respond to God's call to be part of our little family.

Our ministry to the needy would not be possible without you. Your financial support, prayers, and friendship keep us going. Our services to the poor continue throughout the summer, plus the **Joseph House Workshop** is in full operation; it's doing an outstanding job of housing homeless men and preparing them for employment. Your generosity is always appreciated.

We are in the height of summer and life is in full bloom. May this season bring you a chance to do the things you love. With our prayers for your health and happiness,

**Your Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary**