

The JOSEPH HOUSE



Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary

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Dear Friends of Joseph House:

Down the street from our convent in Salisbury is **The Boundless Garden**. It is a community garden, where the vegetables are free for anyone to take what he or she needs.

The garden coordinator is Nicole Long, a youth minister at St. Francis de Sales parish. She is not alone: volunteers from across town have built the raised beds, donated supplies, raked the soil, planted seeds and seedlings. The City of Salisbury is also involved, charging only \$1 per year for renting the lot and covering the cost of the water being used.

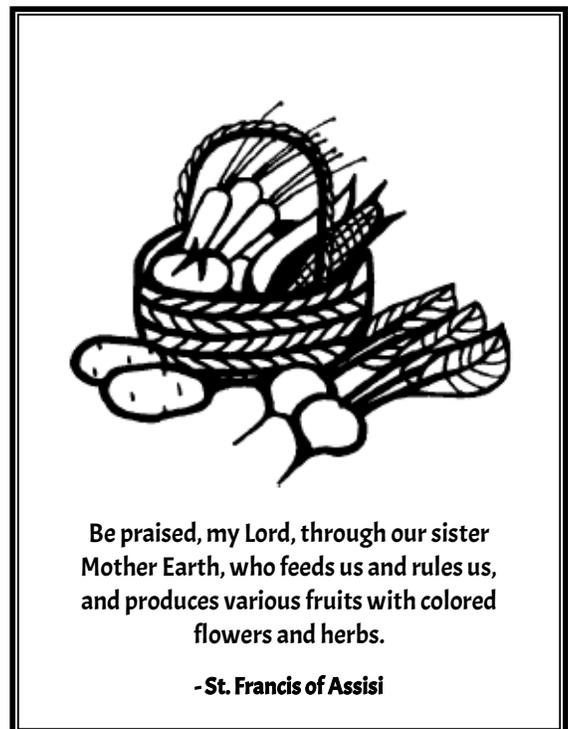
Anyone who gardens knows that a garden is never finished. Nicole and her volunteers do the daily work of watering and weeding. There are rows and rows of broccoli, snap peas, and more. Everything is organic. It all looks so enticing, just a stone's throw from the traffic on Route 13.

The Boundless Garden is bringing people together — all ages, all backgrounds. Children are especially fascinated by it. They are learning about the wonder of growing one's food. A few youngsters have been to our door with gifts of turnips and other veggie delights. This is another lesson they are learning: generosity.

St. Ignatius prayed to give without counting the cost. To give without expecting anything in return is equally blessed. Everyone living has received so much from other people. Giving back keeps the world going round. It sets us on the right path, acting more like God Who is so lavish in giving us a new day each morning. The Boundless Garden — so simple, so humble, so life-giving — is a beautiful reminder of this.

The **Joseph House** also exists because of selfless-giving. It has been our mode of operation for the past 50 years. People give to us from their storehouse of love, and with the tremendous help of our volunteers we share the blessings with those who need it.

Julie was a recent visitor to the Joseph House Crisis Center. She works hard cleaning hotel rooms for a living, earning \$8.75 per hour. She pays someone \$30 a week to drive her back and forth to work. Julie has no free-time: when she is not working she is babysitting her grandchildren because their mother (her daughter)



Be praised, my Lord, through our sister
Mother Earth, who feeds us and rules us,
and produces various fruits with colored
flowers and herbs.

- St. Francis of Assisi



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

O Lord, enthroned in glory, I entrust to You the prayers of my heart:

is working **three** jobs. Just getting by is difficult for the working poor. Julie has no room for little extras in her budget. She is careful with her money, but sometimes she doesn't have enough for the rent. An eviction notice was the reason for her visit to us. We sent her landlord \$300 to stop the proceedings.

Mackenzie, age 41, has three children. Her husband is a drug addict and has no involvement with his family. This is always a tragic situation; so many other lives are affected by someone's addiction. Mackenzie is doing her best to raise her children. Her bills are a constant source of stress. A car accident left her certifiably disabled and she can no longer work. Her only income is a monthly check for \$794.

Mackenzie and her children are trapped in a life of poverty. Her fixed limited income and her husband's absence seem to guarantee it. We can help with some of her bills, which we did by sending \$200 to the electric company. Is the door to a better life closed permanently? We pray that it is not.

Sherrie is intellectually disabled. She is 40 years old and under the care of a mental health outreach service. Sherrie needed a new place to live; her apartment had recurring mold issues which triggered her asthma. The apartment was also on the third floor, and Sherrie was having a hard time going up and down the stairs. Fortunately, Sherrie received a subsidized housing voucher for a ground-floor apartment in another building. The utility and rent deposits, however, totaled \$752! This is unbelievable for a poor person on a fixed income. Sherrie did not have enough money, but with help from the Joseph House (\$170) she was able to get the new apartment.

Rashida, 23, came to the Joseph House five days after giving birth to her daughter. She traveled 35 miles looking for help. Rashida needed \$550 to stop her eviction. She did not want to be homeless with a newborn, and we did not want that either. The maximum we could give that day from our budget was \$250, but one of our wonderful volunteers stepped in with the remaining \$300. This on-the-spot generosity saved the day. God sends us the best people to help the poor!



Whenever food is thrown out, it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor, from the hungry! ...

Jesus fed the multitude with five loaves and two fish. And the end of this passage is important: "and all ate and were satisfied. And they took up what was left over, twelve baskets of broken pieces" (Luke 9:17).

Jesus asked the disciples to ensure that nothing was wasted: nothing thrown out!

And there is this fact of 12 baskets: why 12? What does it mean? Twelve is the number of the tribes of Israel, it represents symbolically the whole people.

This tells us that when the food was shared fairly, with solidarity, no one was deprived of what he needed, every community could meet the needs of its poorest members.

- Pope Francis

Flora is a widow in her sixties. She pays 82% of her Social Security on rent. If it were not for Food Stamps and food pantries, Flora would have nothing to eat. A necessary car expense put her behind in the rent. We paid her landlord \$220 so Flora would not be evicted.

Feeding people is an essential part of our ministry. To that end, our **Soup Kitchen** has been a mainstay of the Crisis Center since it opened in 1984. Local churches and religious groups take turns preparing and serving the meals. We would like to give recognition to our current roster:

Hindu Temple of the Eastern Shore, St. Alban's Episcopal, Servants of Jesus, Korean Presbyterian, Bethesda Methodist, Asbury United Methodist, Trinity United Methodist, Wicomico Presbyterian, St. Peter's Episcopal, St. Francis de Sales Roman Catholic, Parkway Church of God, Faith Lutheran, Hibernian Ladies Guild, and St. Matthew's United Methodist.

More than 11,000 meals are served each year! We deeply appreciate the dedication and hard work of our Soup Kitchen members. They are diverse yet united in a common cause, truly an inspiration. We are happy they have a home at the Joseph House.

A prayer from author Edward Hays:

As the sun pours forth its life that we on this earth may live, may I pour forth my life this day in service to others and in love of You, my beloved God. Remind me in countless ways as I walk the sunlit hours of this day that I am on a sacred journey; along with the stars traveling through space, I am on a pilgrim path.

And one from us:

Eternal God, let Your peace on earth begin with me. Amen.

You are in our hearts every day. Thank you for all that you do for us and for the poor. May the blessing of a joyful life be yours.

Your Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary