

The JOSEPH HOUSE



Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary

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Volume 51 Number 11

November 2016

Dear Friends of Joseph House:

In the novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*, the protagonist experiences a moving realization of the humanity he shares with his enemy:

Comrade, I did not want to kill you... You were only an idea to me before, an abstraction that lived in my mind and called forth its appropriate response. It was that abstraction I stabbed... Forgive me, comrade. We always see it too late. Why do they never tell us that you are poor devils like us, that your mothers are just as anxious as ours, and that we have the same fear of death, and the same dying and the same agony — Forgive me, comrade; how could you be my enemy? If we threw away these rifles and this uniform you could be my brother. (Erich Remarque)

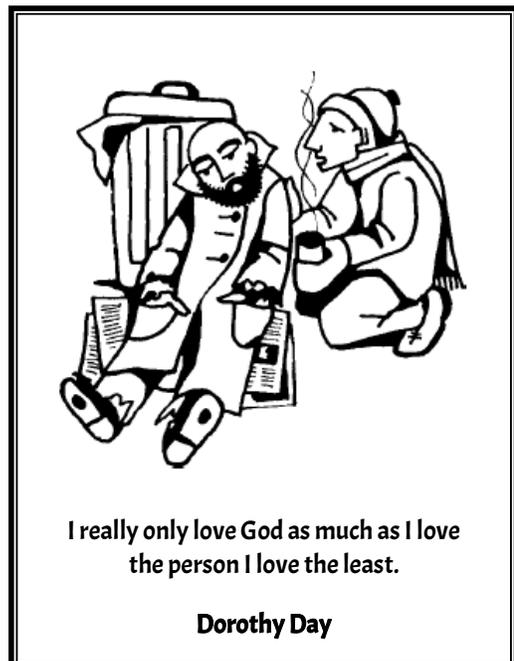
What is true in war is true in life: rendering people to abstractions is common. We have all seen how widespread it is in political discourse. It also happens when we talk about the poor. They can seem like just another statistic.

"You say you care about the poor? Then tell me, what are their names?" This soul-searching question comes from theologian Gustavo Gutierrez. As Little Sisters, our work at the Joseph House gives us many opportunities to know the poor on a first name basis. The same is true for our volunteers. For those who are not able to do this, there is one thing that can be done: avoid speaking of people who are poor in terms of stereotypes. We can always recognize people in less fortunate circumstances as being individuals. Each has his or her own uniqueness and dignity, dreams and heartbreak.

Our Newsletter tries to convey the personal nature of our ministry to those in need. Here is a report from Sr. Virginia on a recent visitor to the Hospitality Room at the Joseph House Crisis Center:

Alice is a 77-year-old widow living on small fixed income. She came to the Crisis Center because she needed cataract surgery and had no one to take her to the appointments. She drives an old car, but would not be allowed to drive while recovering from the operation.

But that was just one of her many challenges. Her legs were swollen and covered with running sores. She appeared to us to be physically neglected (she needs





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

Heavenly God, Your goodness is so abundant. Please hear my prayers:

major dental work) and without any kind of support system. We made some calls and discovered that she had been evicted more than once because of her therapy dogs and unsanitary living conditions. For a while she was living in her car.

We also found out that she has a homeless son who was so verbally abusive that he wasn't allowed in her apartment complex. And in fact recently he physically attacked her and also took a substantial amount of money from her against her will. We persuaded her to tell the police and we went with her to court. With the help of a *pro bono* lawyer she was granted a yearlong order of protection from her son.

We have also met with her doctor and described her situation. The doctor arranged for home nursing and physical therapy.

With the help of wonderful volunteers and people from MAC (the local senior citizen agency), we have begun to help Alice with laundry, house-cleaning and separating her belongings from those of her son.

Alice said that she had been forced to postpone cataract surgery "a couple of times" because she didn't have the \$400 co-pay! She was diagnosed two years ago and so her cataracts had become thick, especially in one eye.

Her first eye surgery was a success; the Joseph House paid the \$200 co-pay. She later had the second cataract removed. Through the efforts of MAC, another agency (HOPE) was able to cover the additional co-pay. It is so heartening to see the community caring for a vulnerable individual.

This care and attention seems to have lifted Alice's spirits. She is taking better care of herself and her apartment. "Sister," she said to me, "I think I'm going to make it!"

Veterans Day is November 11

Blessing of a Soldier Home from War

Good and gracious God, we praise you and thank you for bringing our brother/sister home. We have missed him/her and have prayed for his/her safe return, and you have heard our cry.

Bless him/her now in this time of homecoming. Let him/her be embraced by strong and gentle arms, that he/she may feel again the love of family and friends. Let him/her see only thanks and pride in the eyes of those around him/her, that he/she too may give thanks for the gift of sacrifice.

And let him/her be surrounded by beauty each day, that he/she may remember the goodness of life. Heal the wounds that war has inflicted on his/her body and the scars of violence etched on his/her spirit. Strengthen any bonds weakened in his/her absence, and forgive anything that needs to be forgiven.

When memories too painful to bear enter his/her thoughts, may he/she find comfort in the presence of those who understand. And when the faces of the fallen fill his/her dreams, give him/her the peace only you can bring.

Lord, make us all your instruments of peace, so that one day we may study war no longer and live together free from fear and rejoicing in your kingdom forever.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Diana Macalintal
The Work of Your Hands

Joan is another senior lady going through a difficult time. She is 82 years old and mourning the loss of her daughter, who suffered from years of illness and dialysis treatments. Joan and her daughter lived together and shared income and living expenses. That is not foremost on her mind, however. Joan came to the Joseph House asking for help with the funeral costs. A simple but dignified burial was the final act of love she wanted to give to her daughter. We were able to contribute \$200.

Your support allows the Joseph House to help the poor individually, face to face. Thank you for opening your heart to those less fortunate.

Holiday Distribution Schedule:

Another holiday season is approaching quickly. Any assistance you can provide to make this time of year a little brighter for the poor is greatly appreciated.

Our Food Pantry will be giving out frozen **turkeys and chickens** on November 22 and 23.

Christmas toys will be given out on December 20, 21, and 22. Donations of new and unwrapped toys for children up to the age of 14 years are needed by December 18. Toys that do not require batteries are preferred. We also ask that toy guns not be donated. Please wait until after Christmas to donate used toys.

All donations can be delivered to our convent at 411 North Poplar Hill Avenue in Salisbury. Our phone number is 410-742-9590 and our email is LSJM@comcast.net if you have any questions.

Happy Thanksgiving to one and all! We hope you have many reasons to be thankful this year, and that you can celebrate the holiday in a way that makes you happy. The help that we give to each person at the Joseph House is due to your generosity. We appreciate every donation and every prayer. You fill our hearts with gratitude.

We pray for you every day.

Your Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary