

# The JOSEPH HOUSE



## Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary

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### Dear Friends of Joseph House:

It is not uncommon for Very Important People to have others at their beck and call. Their status is an exercise of power, and they correlate their importance with the number of people attending to their needs.

Jesus was the polar opposite. "I came to serve, not to be served," He said (Mark 10:45). Jesus placed **Himself** at the beck and call of others. The poor, lowly, and suffering came to Him with their needs, and Jesus was **obedient** to them.

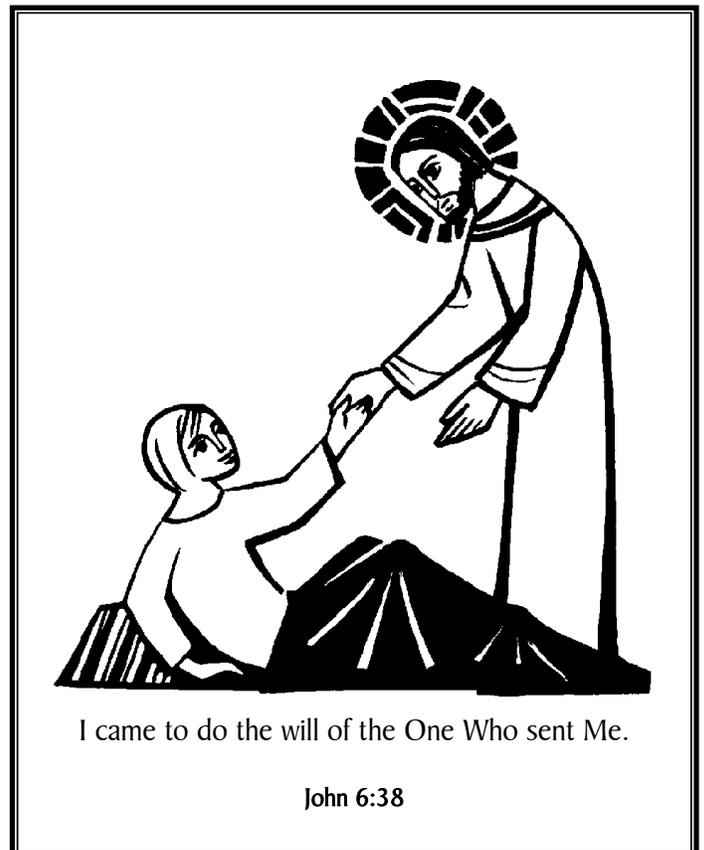
The vow of obedience that we profess as Little Sisters helps us to realize this aspect of Jesus in a concrete, visible way. And like the vow of poverty, which we referenced in our previous Newsletter, the spirit of the vow can benefit anyone who desires to follow Jesus more closely.

All of the religious vows are multi-faceted. Sr. Lynn, a member of another community, wrote the following about her experience with temporary workers in a hotel kitchen in Washington, DC:

I enjoy the work in the kitchen and the atmosphere of working as a group, even though the "temps" often receive the more unpleasant jobs while getting paid much less than the regular employees. In *Followers of Christ*, Johannes Metz states that obedience as an evangelical virtue of religious life is the radical surrender of one's life to God, and "it impels one to stand close to those for whom obedience is not a matter of virtue, but the sign of oppression and of being placed in tutelage, and to do this in a practical way." (Little Sisters of Jesus, *News Notes* February 1991).

Sr. Lynn discovered for herself that the vow of obedience also means to be in solidarity with those who have no other choice than to obey someone else.

The key to obedience is **listening** — to God and to the cries of the poor. As a friend of the Joseph House, the ear of your heart is open, and through your generosity you give us the means to reach out to the less fortunate.



I came to do the will of the One Who sent Me.

John 6:38



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

**In your charity, please remember my special prayer intentions:**

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**We need your help.** Our spirits are lifted by the arrival of Spring, but the season of new life does not take away the problems of the poor. The lines of people at our Crisis Center are always long.

**Louis**, 69, is in declining health due to kidney failure. His wife left him when his health started to go downhill; we don't know the full story, but the situation has left Louis without support during a time of need. He came to the Crisis Center after receiving an eviction notice. We paid \$262 to stop the proceedings.

The only income Louis has is \$533 per month from Social Security. Without subsidized housing Louis would be homeless. His rent will be reduced once he can verify his wife's departure and the loss of her income.

**Esther**, 62, is also experiencing a loss. After paying her husband's funeral expenses her car broke down. She had to use rent money to pay for the repairs. Esther explained that she needs the car for her new job as a caregiver for the homebound. The pay will be \$200 per week.

Life goes on and Esther is taking a step to provide for herself. We sent \$250 to her landlord so Esther would not get evicted before she received her first paycheck.

**Janice**, 76, recently had major heart surgery. She is physically weak, and from talking with her it is evident that she gets confused easily. The source of her money problems is also clear: she receives \$815 each month in Social Security and pays \$595 for housing (73% of her income). **The widespread lack of affordable housing is a calamity.** We were able to help Janice with \$300 toward her delinquent electric bill, enough to keep the power from being turned off.

**Mona** is 45 and has a limited education. She cleans motel rooms for a living, although the work is sometimes sporadic. The only place Mona can afford to live is a room in a boarding house in a rough part of town. If residents are late with the rent they are put on the street in a heartbeat. Mona was going to be short on the rent money because of a lack of hours at work. To prevent her from being evicted we forwarded \$150 to her landlord.

**Elizabeth**, 74, called us from the hospital where she was being treated for pneumonia. Her speech was slow and labored but we got the story: while she was away from her apartment a relative moved in with her children. After a few days they moved out, but they left behind an infestation of bed bugs. An exterminator was called and determined that the mattress and box spring needed to be discarded.

Elizabeth could not afford to get these replaced on her fixed income. We confirmed the story with a social worker and agreed to pay \$240 for a new mattress set. It was delivered before Elizabeth was discharged from the hospital.

**Allison** and **Neil** have three children. Their youngest, a three-year-old son, has leukemia. They drive him back and forth to Baltimore frequently for medical treatments. The gas money and medical bills eat away at their budget. Neil works in construction; when he was out of work for a time the household bills became past-due. Allison came to the Joseph House with a cut-off notice from the electric company. She had \$350 of the required amount. We paid \$175 toward the remaining balance.

**W**ith great affection we remember all mothers as we celebrate **Mother's Day this month**. We pray that motherhood will always be respected as a beautiful, life-giving vocation. The month of May also brings Memorial Day, and we pray for all men and women who died in service to our country. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the entry of the United States into World War I. Perhaps a clear-eyed look at the carnage that conflict produced will inspire us to work harder than ever for peace.

Remember that it is always the right season to plant kindness. Thank you for your support and may God bless you.

**Your Little Sisters of Jesus and Mary**



**IN MEMORIAM**  
**Dale Jefferson**

Dale passed away on March 27, 2017.

Dale was a loving and devoted husband to Mary Ellen Jefferson for 35 years. He had been a volunteer at the Joseph House for many years. He stood for and with the Little Sisters in their work with the poor, in order to show the world that the way to know and love God is to find and feed His lost, lonely and struggling sheep. Dale helped the helpers, just like an angel.

Dale was a true Christian and gentleman. One of his legacies is the "Joseph House Annual Charity Golf Tournament" which he began in 2006. He put his heart and soul into this work.

Dale was a friend and a true man's man. He loved his friends and was there for them should they ever need his ear, a hug, or 18 holes of his companionship and counsel.

His love was in his humble spirit — silent, present and true.

There are not enough good men in the world. Dale was truly special. We will miss him dearly.