

Franciscan Daughters of Mary

Newsletter Autumn 2009

Love Freely Given

From time to time we get asked if we run a “home” for unwed mothers because of the name of the Mission. The reason it is called the Rose Garden *Home* Mission is because we are missionaries to our “home” people here in the Greater Cincinnati area, our “homies,” if you will.

At the Mission, the most important thing we do is to give people the love of Jesus Christ by upholding their God given dignity as members of our human family. We do this by treating each person as a good friend who has come to us for help; we greet them with a smile to convey the message that we’re glad to see them, ask them how they are doing and are genuinely interested in the answer.

There are two scripture verses that guide us in giving assistance to our brothers and sisters in need; **Matthew 5:42** “*Give to the one who asks of you.*” No questions asked, no matter who you are, or from what walk of life, we will try to serve you to the best of our ability. Being Franciscan, we will never turn someone away who is hungry or in need, what a loss of dignity that would be. The only time we ask for I.D. or any kind of paperwork is if someone needs something for their child—we love to give things for the babies, they just have to prove that the child is theirs.

The second Scripture is **Matthew 10:8** “*Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.*” Everything we receive is given to us freely by those who love Jesus by giving to us and to His poor. We’ll never accept any kind of payment or ask anything from the people we serve. And as Franciscans we embrace radical poverty—everything we have belongs to the poor, we simply use what we need. Yet if someone’s need is greater, we have given even these to them.

O the Mercy of Jesus

A friend who is very generous has from time-to-time given us boxes of 8x10 and business-sized pictures (with the prayers on the back) of the Divine Mercy image to be given out to our brothers and sisters at the Mission.

Recently, a woman came to us for assistance and after walking in and finding a rosary on our “take table” sat down and began crying. When we were finished with the people we were helping she dried her eyes and came forward asking for something to eat. Upon seeing the image of Jesus in front of her, she began crying again. So we asked her if she was O.K. Her reply was, “Oh sister, I’ve been away from the Lord for a long time. I don’t know why I do the things I do, but I don’t want to do them any more.”

We spoke to her of Jesus’ love for her and His Divine Mercy, and how He desired that she repair her relationship with Him. Finding out she was Baptized, we explained that she had been

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given the gift of Fortitude at her Baptism to help her resist temptation. We asked her which church she had been baptized in, and encouraged her to speak with her Pastor. We told her that her Pastor would *want* to speak with her, and we even gave her his telephone number. She thanked us and asked us to pray for her, so we prayed with her right there and then. Sister then told her that we would keep her in our daily prayers.

Hope & Healing

We are very pleased to share with you that we have partnered with the Health Ministries Outreach at St. Elizabeth Medical Center, and on October 27th we will open the Rose Garden Center for Hope and Healing, where we will be offering health care services to the people we serve once weekly. Staffed by volunteer health professionals, we will begin offering our neighbors, most of whom don't have medical insurance, assistance free of charge.

We will begin initially with health screenings, i.e. blood pressure, pulse, respiration, temperature, blood sugar, flu vaccine, etc. Then in 2010 we hope to open a free medical clinic that offers a wide range of services, including ultrasound exams, women's health screening, physical exams, etc.

All medical volunteers will be required to uphold our pro-life convictions according to the teachings of the Catholic Church. The only mention of abortion or contraceptive usage will be education regarding the adverse effects it has on the physical, spiritual and emotional well-being of the person.

If you know any medical professionals who would be interested in using their God-given talents in serving the needy in our area, please have them contact us at the number above. Please pray for this exciting new ministry.

Volunteer Blessings

We are so grateful to the Lord for our volunteers, it would be next to impossible to do our ministry without them. There are no special requirements or skills that one must possess to be a volunteer, except that they must love the Lord Jesus Christ with all of their hearts so they in turn may *give* His love to our friends at the Mission.

Many of the people who come to us for assistance have no experiential knowledge of love, not from their family, nor from their "friends." Love to them is someone who makes them "feel good." This is not love. This is someone using another human being for their own personal benefit. True love is a total mutual gift of self to another; to love is to give. Our Lord Jesus Christ loved us literally to death.

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Through the kindness the sisters and our volunteers give to our needy neighbors, they know that *somebody* cares. This gives life to the soul and can move them to the graced knowledge that God loves them. Even our littlest neighbors who come with their parents to visit us get this loving treatment and are made to feel special.

We are currently in need of volunteers. The Mission is opened from 11am until 4pm, Monday thru Thursday. We welcome families of volunteers, and even find work for the youngest ones to do. If you or someone you know is available to help us, either call us or make a visit, everyone who loves Our Lord will be welcome.

Miscellaneous

Mother Seraphina had the honor of speaking to the youth at CREDO, a three day Eucharistic event for young people in Cincinnati, about Archbishop Schnurr, who had come to offer Mass for them, and his ministry of Shepherding the Sheep. Mother asked him what was most important to him in being a shepherd of Cincinnati. He replied, "Getting to know the flock so that they recognize the shepherd's voice as one who leads out of love."

135 people from St. Timothy Parish in Union participated in a baby blanket making event to fill our New Baby Welcome Baskets. Also donated were hand-made burp cloths, "tabbies," baby hats and scarves. Their gift was very well timed—we had just run out of baby blankets!

With the work at our Mission, we often are dealing with very serious life issues, so the sisters make sure to spend some time relaxing and having fun. Some of the sisters' favorite ways to relax are in the garden, walking the dogs, sitting with a cup of tea, playing cards, watching the sunset, or taking some alone time to sit and meditate on Jesus.

*Please take note of our **new mailing address**, (PO Box 122070, Covington, KY 41012-2070). After not receiving some of our mail (and finding some of our neighbors with going through it) we thought it best to get a Post Office box. Our apologies to anyone whose mail got redirected or sent back to them during this transition. We also were able to obtain a new (shorter) domain name for our website, due to the generosity of one of our friends. This also is printed on the front page.*