



Franciscan Daughters of Mary

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The Special Love of God

Many people are surprised when they find out that I was not always pro-life. Abortion wasn't a "hot topic" until I was in Junior High School - the year they legalized abortion. I remember all of the hype swirled around women's rights and that there was a lot of propaganda about the "conceptus" being nothing but a bunch of cells. I also remember very explicitly that my Catholic High School in New Jersey had a Planned Parenthood (PP) across the street from the church, and they had one of their representatives come and give us a presentation. Their approach was that, "abortion is a horrible thing, but it's there if you need it." This drove home the message that abortion is acceptable when pregnancy is a burden. Included in the presentation was a comprehensive education on contraceptives and the importance of their use. As a sort of naïve teen, I bought this propaganda hook, line and sinker; although I was personally opposed - I could never destroy my own child - I thought you should have a right to choose that for yours. At this point in my life I thought abortion to be an intellectual question, and after all, nobody knew when life began anyway!!

I persevered in this erroneous way of thinking until a friend from church was talking to me about my youngest brother Sean who has Down's Syndrome. She was telling me how special he was, and agreeing with her, I



Mother Seraphina and her brother

Sean Patrick

told her that he was the heart and soul of our family, that he came along at a time when there was real stress in the family and brought us together and taught us the true meaning of love and how to love each other. She responded, "Wow, people really need to hear that! Would you be willing to say that in front of people?" After saying that I would, she informed that I had two weeks to prepare before the pro-life prayer vigil across the street from an abortion clinic! Well, I've always been a woman of my word, so I decided that I would go through with the presentation, but that I should do some research to see what this "pro-life thing" was about. The morning of the prayer vigil, after spending two weeks praying to the Holy Spirit and seeing gruesome

pictures, reading what the abortion procedures were and seeing pro-life videos, my heart was still not moved...until it was my turn to speak. I'd made up my mind just to tell people how special my brother was, and as I started to speak, it was as if scales dropped from my eyes and I realized for the first time that the very excuse pro-abortionists give to keep abortion legal is that they might be like my brother! I was absolutely outraged! That, to me, was like giving the very love of God away! At that moment I knew I'd been lied to all my life, and I knew then that I would dedicate the rest of my life to bringing people the truth. Praised be Jesus Christ!

Looking for True Love

As many of you know, when upholding the dignity of every human life you rarely get to see the fruit of your labor, one simply plants and the Lord cultivates and grows the seed. But then there are the rare instances when God lets you see His work in action.

While greeting people who come in for assistance, I recognized a young teenager who received a pregnancy test one month earlier. Asking how she was, she replied, "Great!" And pressing a little more, I asked her, "But how are *you* doing?"

"Great!" she said, "Do you remember me?" Nodding, she continued, "I was here last month. I broke it off with him and I've been 'working' it for 4 weeks."

I knew exactly to what she was referring. Each time we have a woman come to us for a pregnancy test we help her to understand that true love waits until marriage to be intimate; that it's not about what we're going to get out of a relationship that matters, for this is nothing short of selfish, but what we are willing to put in to it. It is the difference between someone loving them for the person they are, or loving what they do for them by giving them a few minutes of pleasure.

If they stay with someone because they make them "feel good," they are settling for what we refer to as "cheap love," which is always utilitarian. Well, what happens when someone comes along who makes them feel better than they do? Where does that put them? Do they like being used?

Our hearts were created for loving by Love Himself - St. Augustine said

it best, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in God." We know that these women and the men they fall in to relationships with are searching for the love that satisfies, the love we were all created for. Unfortunately, they look for this love in places that the *world* tells them it can be

found, in moments of intense emotional and/or physical pleasure, which, in the end, always leave us empty and wanting. Yet, if we simply honor and include Him Who IS Love in our search for "wholeness," He will bless it. If we choose to leave Him (Love) out of our search, how is it possible to find anything but what falls short, what some have referred to as imitation love?

Well, this young girl truly got the message, and she's willing to "work it" for the sake of finding that true love. She now understands that in order to find a "good man" she needs to be a "good girl." So we encouraged her in this conviction and told her it probably wouldn't be easy, but it would be worth it. We also gave her a novena prayer of St. Therese of Lisieux, who has been known to intercede in helping someone find a spouse, which is the desire of her heart.

Please keep this teenager and all of people we help in your prayers.



Mother Seraphina with teens from Credo 2010

Rose Garden Mission 2010 ~ A Blessed Year

New Baby Welcome Baskets

- 71,446 - Total number of families assisted
- 1,257 - Babies on file who we help on a regular basis
- 699 - Moms receiving assistance
- 182 - Pregnancy Tests
- 153 - New Baby Welcome Baskets
- 7,286 - Religious Items Distributed
- 640 - Children who received Christmas Toys



Thanksgiving



A bunch of turkeys!



The turkey keeper



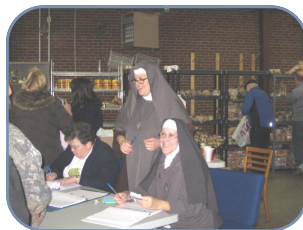
What a line!!



An abundance for everyone



A grateful Mom



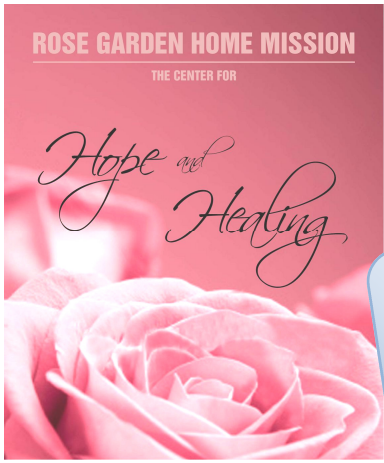
Give thanks to our greeters



A very thankful man gets a turkey



Smiling Sr. Catherine Mary



Blessed Moments

Healthcare is not always about physical conditions. We in the healing arts have many poignant moments to recall as we interact with God's people I have to share some of these.



Some people are comical – like the person who took the wallet and keys out of his pocket while being weighed, but held them up in his hand!

While completing a physical examination on a 66 yr. old mentally challenged gentleman. I asked him if he worries much. His immediate reply was "Worry? No! Worry is an insult to God! He has us always in his hands." It took me a minute to recover from this affirmation of faith.

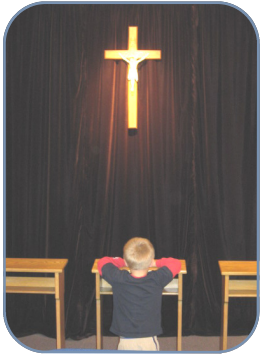
"Lonnie" came in with a medical appliance we purchased for him. It was in his hand instead of in his ear. He said it quit working and didn't know why it didn't work. So I agreed to go across the street to the store and see if they have batteries and/or another product. We talked some about his health problems while walking to the store when he told me that, in truth, someone stepped on it. I told him I couldn't ask for the money back knowing what happened to it, my personal honesty would not allow me to do that. Shortly after returning to the Mission, he left. Only a few minutes later, he returned quickly across the room asking me to pray with him, which, of course, I did.



Another mentally challenged gentleman, 65 yrs. old came in for a health screening. I said "Hello" and asked him how he was doing. He squirmed in his chair and shyly said "I have a secret. But, I will tell you." I smiled and asked what it was. With the biggest grin possible, he pointed to his chest and said, "I have God in me." Then he pointed to me and said "And you have God in you, too." Again, I had to pause before I could say, "I can see God in you very well, Leroy." He was so pleased. I wanted to cry with joy!



Christmas



A volunteer who knows what's really important



Santa loves the little ones



Baby Jesus came to be with us for our Christmas Give-Away



The Reindeer Posse



Mother Celeste joins the posse



St. Sarah with hospitality



Two of Santa's biggest helpers



Our musicians



Having Christmas fun

What a Beautiful Baby!!



We are so grateful to each of you for way you love God through your kindness and generosity toward us. We pray for your intentions each day.

May Our Lord bless you and keep you; may He let His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord grant you His peace!

Mother Seraphina & the Sisters



You are invited : Rose Garden Nights of Prayer & Praise

7pm Wednesdays at the Mission
2040 Madison Ave., Covington

*Come praise the Lord
with the Sisters!*

Refreshments & Fellowship following prayer

You and Your Family
are Invited to Join the
Franciscan Daughters of Mary
for

Prayer & Reflection

- * Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- * Vespers & Compline
- * Holy Hour for Priests
- * Reflection & Devotions

2nd & 4th Fridays of Every Month

7pm—9pm

Convent Chapel

336 East 16th St., Covington

RSVP: 859-491-3899

Wish List

- Diapers—Large sizes
- Baby & Adult toiletries
- Toddler Clothes—2T to 5T (new or like-new)
- Infant friendly toys
- Bibles & religious jewelry
- Candy for kids
- Cleaning supplies