

Franciscan Daughters of Mary

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The Rose Garden Home Mission
Center for Hope and Healing
Friends of the Rose Garden Home Mission



Summer 2011

Heritage banks on mission

'Friends' buy Rose Garden a home

In God's world anything can happen, even finding a bank that will loan \$300,000 to 'friends' of an order of nuns, who own nothing.

After a long journey of knocking on banks' doors, Heritage Bank decided to bank on the Rose Garden Home Mission last month, loaning the Friends of the Rose Garden Home Mission enough funds to purchase the Rose Garden Mission property at 2040 Madison Avenue in Covington. The Friends closed on the mortgage July 22. This group of benefactors and volunteers' new goal is to pay off its new mortgage, allowing the Friends to fulfill their sole mission to provide the Rose Garden Mission with a home in Covington, run by the Franciscan Daughters of Mary.

"We are so grateful to Lytle Thomas and heritage Bank for working with us when no one else would," said Mother Seraphina Marie.

"We are a community bank and the Mission is something that the community needs badly," said Lytle Thomas, Heritage Bank's CEO and president. "We just felt like we needed to do our part."

"After working with the Mission, meeting Mother Seraphina and seeing what the sisters do down there, we did say 'we need to make this happen,'" Lytle said.

Lytle said the Friends deserve some credit too. "We worked with them for about nine months to get them in a position where they would be able to get a loan," he said.

When an early appraisal showed the property's value was over \$250,000 less than the loan they were seeking, the Friends sent out word that repairs were needed to increase the property's value.

"It was a miracle," said Gloria Ionna, secretary of the Friends. "We had plumbers and construction workers just showing up. They hung dry wall, painted, redid walls where there had been a fire. Word got out to the Holy Name groups and the Knights of Columbus and others. In about a two month period, the repairs were done."

"It was truly the hand of God using people," Mrs. Ionna added.

A new appraisal was returned well over the amount needed, and the 'Friends' raised enough money for a required \$100,000 cushion as a guarantee.

"The Friends really worked well with us to get their loan," Lytle said.

Greg Ionna, president of the Friends and a longtime businessman, credits God for all of these blessings.

"The Friends of the Rose Garden is new and we really didn't have a history to show them when applying for our loan," said Mrs. Ionna.



Mother Seraphina with "Friends" Chairman, Greg Ionna finalizing mortgage transaction with Senior VP Goetting

"My husband and I say that even though this didn't make much business sense, it made a lot of 'God sense.'"

Although the Franciscan Daughters of Mary are grateful to the Friends and the group's hard work, the Friends say they are the ones who have been blessed.

"This place has changed our lives," says Mrs. Ionna. "We see miracles happen daily there, like the diapers, food and other supplies multiplying just when they're needed. God's hand is truly in it."

New mission: pay off Mission

The Friends of the Rose Garden Mission have begun the *Partners in Hope for the Poor* campaign to raise \$300,000 - enough to pay off the Mission's new mortgage.

Every dollar raised goes toward paying off the mortgage—and a long way in reducing the Friends' monthly mortgage payment.

The Friends are seeking 300 New Friends to donate \$1,000.

However, any amount is always welcome and *everyone* can be a friend.

To donate:

- Mail donation marked *Partners in Hope for the Poor* to P.O. Box 122089, Covington, Ky. 41012-2089
- Pay Pal donations can also be made on the website: www.fdofmary.org

The Dark Night

Food flows from freezers after donation draught

By Mother Seraphina

As one progresses in a relationship with Jesus Christ, we go through a very necessary – and sometimes painful – experience called the Dark Night.

Many saints and spiritual writers have written extensively about the Dark Night. No one can prepare a soul to experience it.

We can, however, try to identify the signs that accompany the Dark Night. We can pray more and talk more to God, even though our efforts seem empty and dry. The Lord, who we know is never outdone in generosity (Malachi 3:10), gives an abundance of fruit to those who persevere through this purgation and learn what it is supposed to teach.

Recently at the Rose Garden, we experienced a Dark Night, a day of purgation. One particular Wednesday, we had no food to give to our friends and neighbors. We wound up turning 575 families away who had come for food. In the 7 years our Mission has been open in Kentucky, we can count the number of times that this has happened on one hand. That was a small consolation, however, and did not make it any easier to experience that July day. We must recognize, however, that in spite of the fact we had no food, almost 200 families wanted “holy items,” rosaries, holy medals, prayer cards and prayer booklets. Praise the Lord!

Living out our Vow of Poverty as a Franciscan Daughter Mary can seem foolish to some. In our Rule it states that, “Everything we have belongs to the poor, we use what we need, but if they need it more, we (like St. Francis) are to give it to them. (Mt. 5:42).” So whenever we saw there was a need and we had the means to do it, we would purchase food for our pantry.

Well, for some time now, some of our friends and helpers have been encouraging us to be more frugal with our finances. They suggested we hold some money back for different reasons. Taking some seemingly good advice, this is what we began to do.

“Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”
Luke 6:38

But after having to turn 575 families away who had come to us for food, we knew that we couldn’t let that happen again. By the time the weekend arrived, we were resolved to give to the one who asks (Mt. 5:42) without counting the cost (Mt. 10:8) as we have always done, and trust that the Lord, Who is the one Who called us to Love Him in this vocation would provide for all of our needs - as **He** has always done.

The Lord in His mercy always gives us signs and clues about how to trust Him more, if we have the eyes to see (Mt. 13:16). It was no surprise that the readings at Mass that whole week were the parables of Jesus about the sower and the seed (Mt. 13:1-9), and St. Paul’s teaching on reaping a “bountiful harvest” (2 Corinthians 9:6-10). When the following Monday came, we had enough food donations for about 360 families, but at the end of the day we realized that we had given food to 932 families! We instantly knew that the Lord was giving us an abundance in anticipation of our generosity.

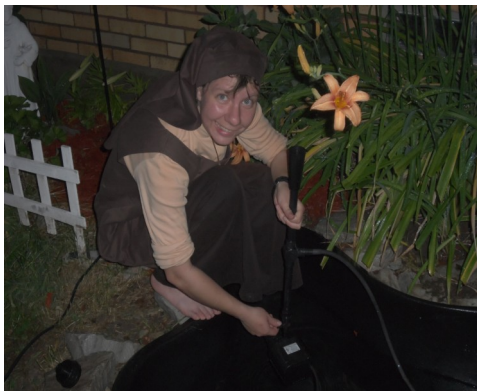
The next day, we realized 30 minutes before opening we once again had no food. Remembering our promise to the Lord, we purchased enough food for about 300 families. At the end of the day, 711 families received that food! On Wednesday we had food for about 320 families, but we had no large-sized diapers. The sisters bought all the size 4, 5 and 6 size diapers that a local store had on hand, and once again, the Lord multiplied everything. That day, 841 families were given food. Then again on Thursday, we gave out far more than what was donated!!

As followers of Jesus Christ, we have learned to look for the fruit that comes from suffering and trials. There was some immediate recognition of fruit the day of our Dark Night, where we were able to get done much more work – paper work, cleaning, organizing and sorting – than we would normally have been able to do if we had been assisting our friends and neighbors with food.

The most abundant fruit, however, came in the lesson we learned about trusting in God and His generosity; to think not how the world thinks, but learning the ways of Him, whose ways are far above our ways. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Gardening sisters

When the sisters aren’t praying or working hard at the Mission, sometimes you can find them working in their garden. At left, Sr. Annette works barefoot to set up their fountain, while Sr. Catherine is busy with a rake.



Garden places fresh produce on plates of the hungry, poor

Doug Bray moved to a Campbell County farm more than two years ago. Being in the real estate holding business, he wanted to devote a portion of his 39-acre farm to grow vegetables for the poor. Thus was born the Giving Gardens. Says Bray, "I am just trying to give back."

Bray certainly has given back.

He and volunteers from five Campbell County churches have put about 50,000 pounds of produce on the tables of area residents in need of food. Bray's vegetables are distributed to six different agencies that serve the homeless and hungry. The Rose Garden Home Mission is one of them.

Zucchini, potatoes, green beans, broccoli, cabbage, eggplant and kale, are a sampling from Bray's operation. It is often more expensive to buy healthy food, limiting the poor on the fresh produce they can get into their diet. "This was a way to offer them healthy, fresh food," Bray said.

Bray got his Giving Garden idea after visiting the Rose Garden Home Mission. The sisters, with help from volunteers, gave him the names and telephone numbers of contacts at local churches that might be able to help. They also introduced Bray to Dave Perry, who runs the community garden at St. Timothy Church in Union. Perry offered many pearls of wisdom.

St. Timothy Church and the Giving Gardens now are the only two community gardens in Northern Kentucky.

Bray is often joined by wife Sheila, their two daughters and three grandchildren, as they welcome volunteers from a diverse group of area churches.

Bray is hoping his efforts and idea will cultivate an interest in others. "When I was doing research I discovered that our area is



Volunteers sort produce from Doug Bray's Garden.

far behind other areas in across the country and what they do to feed the poor," he said. "I am hoping others will do similar things.

Every other week, Bray gets to deliver food to the Rose Garden, where he can see some of the recipients of his bounty. "It is a wonderful experience," he said.

Mission needs

If you are able to donate any items or make a contribution toward the purchase of an item, please contact Mother Seraphina

Always needed at the mission:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Food
- Baby food & formula
- Shower items for a New Baby Welcome Basket, as well as toiletries for Mom
- Adult toiletries
- Cleaning supplies
- Bibles
- Refrigerator



A family grateful for donations.



Hope and Healing ready for new home

By Shelia Carroll
 Director,
 Center for Hope and Healing

It is hard to know where to begin, with so much happening at the Rose Garden

Center for Hope and Healing.

In August, the St. Elizabeth Healthcare Mobile Mammogram came to the center. Because so many women needed a mammogram, we were able to get additional time. Forty women tested. St. Elizabeth also provided a \$10 Kroger gift card. While working with our friends, we discovered that women are aware of the need for self care, but without insurance or the necessary funds, they tend to neglect these services.

During the first six months this year at the center, the Health Ministry saw 1200 friends and neighbors. Each week, 4-15 of these visits are with “new” friends. Approximately one third have untreated hypertension. Because of this, we made 119 referrals for primary care. We also referred friends for dental care and mental health. In addition, we paid for \$120 prescription medications.

Sadly, our registered nurse and diabetic educator, Jana McElroy retired. We wish her a happy retirement in Florida. Diabetic educators from St. Elizabeth’s Diabetic Center in Covington will fill her shoes. They come monthly for small group and/or individual education.

A grant from the Gift of Health through St. Elizabeth Foundation enabled us to give bus tokens for medical visits.

Through the generosity of the Friends of the Rose Garden we have passed our fire inspection and we are applying for our license for the clinic. Hopefully, we can move into our permanent home



Sheila Carroll, Earlene Barker, Mother Seraphina, Debbie Truesdale and Joan Ziegelmeyer in front of the Mobile Mammogram

this month.

It has been nearly two years since we began the Health Ministry. Through the working of the Holy Spirit and the generosity of our volunteers, we are now seeing the beginning of our dream. Lack of access to primary health care results in increased morbidity and early mortality. The Center for Hope and Healing will be granting uninsured people access to good healthcare, while keeping the presence of God in their healing.

We are sad to share with you that a patient who won our hearts with her sweet, honest nature, passed away this month. It was because of her serious health issues, and her inability to get medical care, that we were inspired to begin paying co-pays to a local medical office for primary care. Please keep “Mandy” and her family in your prayers.

A volunteer writes:

My children and I have enjoyed helping out this summer. My children actually ask when we can return to help, usually soon after leaving. Helping at the Mission has enabled them to not only give of themselves, but also to gain a better appreciation for what they have and everyone living around them. My daughter looked at a picture of Jesus in our house, and said it reminded her of Rose Garden. How sweet!

Jenny Notton

*The Lord bless you and keep you!
 The Lord set His face upon you
 and be gracious to you!
 The Lord look upon you kindly
 and grant you His Peace!
 The Franciscan Daughters of Mary*

You are invited:

**Rose Garden
 Nights of
 Praise & Worship**

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

*Come praise the Lord
 with the Sisters!*

*A few of
 the babies
 who stop
 by the
 Mission.*



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

Prayer & Reflection

- * Vespers in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament
- * Spiritual Reflection
- * Holy Hour for Priests
- * Devotions

2nd & 4th Fridays of Every Month
 7pm—9pm

