



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Mary & Joseph Find No Lodgings in Bethlehem  
Jan Matsys, 1558

Among the evocative scenes recounted in the Gospel narrative of the Expectation of Mary, whose Memorial is December 18, of special significance to the Center this year is the arrival of the Holy Family in Bethlehem where there was "no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:7)

Increasingly, families are relying upon the Center to help them survive intensifying economic misfortunes. This year we have assisted an unusual number of mothers and babies in crises of homelessness and unsafe residential situations. These challenges could be insurmountable without your dependable support giving us the confidence and means to act unreservedly on their behalf.

The compassion of our client advocacy being practically without bounds means that we do everything we can to help them find appropriate lodging. To that end and with much difficulty we have helped place one mom with two children (ages 8 years and 3 months) in shelter housing in Providence.

In mysterious and magnificent ways the Almighty guides them to the Center whereby the essential support you provide, without which we cannot function, gives them hope and helps them choose life.

St. John Vianney said, "Man is a beggar who needs to ask God for everything." In our prayers we beg God to bountifully bless the compassionate people who uphold our mission. During Christmastide and beyond, may the Holy Family rest in your capacious hearts. *Laudate Domine!*

*Hail Faray-Musleh*  
Executive Director

## LIGHTS AND ANGELS' WINGS

Rose Gala 2023 was a festival of love—the most frequently heard word during the event—wherein the charity of our supporters manifested in the extraordinary presence of three beautiful clients, two of whom were visibly pregnant—one whose baby was due in two days and the other baby in January—and the third client introducing her two-month-old son.

Through streaming tears of joy, Denaysha, Karmalich and Tina, each in their own way, bravely told 400

guests that their experiences of being cared for by Mother of Life Pregnancy Center's loving staff led them to the realization that "people who don't know us do love us," and that with the assurance of such support they are capable of nurturing their babies.

Each also spoke of how sorely that love has been missing throughout their lives. Accustomed to abandonment, uncertainty, poverty and numerous other trials and circumstantial deficiencies, they



Clients Tina, Denaysha, and Karmalich

see **Gala**, page 2

## WITH EVERLASTING GRATITUDE...

Affectionately, we remember and honor a true gem of a man: our friend, board member, and multi-faceted supporter James E. Gilcreast Jr., who completed his virtuous earthly journey on September 5, 2023.

Jim and his beloved wife, Mary, throughout decades of involvement, contributions, actions and prayers in a great variety of Catholic, pro-life causes, including the Knights of Columbus, have always been dependable and generous advocates for vulnerable mothers and babies.

With distinction Jim served on the Board of Directors for 16 years, as steady a rudder as they

come. With vigorous clarity he assisted fellow board members in maintaining the orderliness of meetings, evaluating objectives, setting goals, and supporting the staff.

Famously, Jim was our outstanding and entertaining paddle raise caller at our Rose Galas. His integrity, intelligence, passion and wit will be missed by everyone.

Words alone cannot adequately express our appreciation and deep sense of loss. With all our hearts and assurance of our prayers, we offer condolences to Mary Gilcreast and to the many friends of Jim who are reading this note.



Jim Gilcreast  
*Requiescat in pace.*

**Gala, from page 1**

could not envision a positive outcome to pregnancy. The power of your compassionate hearts working through the Center is what gave them the courage to choose life.

Everyone was enamored with Tina's baby, Ezekiel, who spent more time in the arms of Gala guests than he did with his serenely smiling mom. "They all deserve to know and love my son. He loved it as much as they loved holding him. He was really at peace because the whole room was full of lights and angels' wings, and people raising him up. That's why he didn't cry all night."

In addition to our Rose Gala being a great spirit-lifter, it was a very successful fundraiser, even beyond its doors and hours. A few days



Tina with her son, Ezekiel, held aloft by Gail.

*"Thank you so much for loving us! I am grateful for you saving my son and for the opportunity to be part of this loving night."*

later, we received word that an attendee told her father about the special event and what a great time she had, to which he reacted by making a substantial donation to the Center.

This great wave of affection and action always generates miracles. Collaboration itself is a God-send. We are so grateful for everyone who contributed their hearts, hands and philanthropy to our vital annual event.

Boosted by your spiritual and material support, we are confident that we will continuously, gently and effectively serve our Heavenly Father and His children, especially the most vulnerable—precious babes in the womb and their joyful mothers. Thank you for your prayers, your donations, your love!

## A RECORD YEAR FOR ROSES

With our Rose Gala our biannual Rose Sales constitute our three most important fundraisers; therefore, the bigger the better for the sake of the good we can do when bouquets are converted to benevolence.

We conduct our rose sales during the two months particularly devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Rosary. Saint Louis de Montfort wrote, "The word Rosary means 'Crown of Roses,' that is to say that every time people say the Rosary devoutly they place a crown of 153 white roses and 16 red roses upon the head of Jesus and Mary."

We moved 12,325 roses through fifty-seven churches in May, and 5,850 roses through thirty-seven in October; that's figuratively equivalent to more than 107 Rosaries!

The results tell us that many people are including our need for success in their Rosary prayer petitions, for which Saint Louis de Montfort assured us that, "Being heavenly flowers

these roses will never fade or lose their exquisite beauty."

Many details are involved in these projects. However, our tasks would be to no avail without the phenomenally generous and industrious participation of pastors and their parishioners, and the scores of volunteers who coordinate and manage the sales in their churches, to whom we owe an immense debt of spiritual gratitude.

We petition Our Lady of the Rosary for special graces and blessings upon everyone who facilitates, participates, and contributes!



Mother of Life Pregnancy Center roses on the altar at Saint Michael the Archangel Church, Pawcatuck

### WHEN ASKED WHAT SHE LIKED BEST ABOUT THE CENTER'S SERVICES, D.M. SAID:

*"Thank you for blessing me with seeing our baby!"*



### WHEN ASKED IF WE CAN PRAYER FOR HER, J.A. SAID:

*"Yes, for everyone in the beautiful world!"*

### WONDERS & DESIGNS

We constantly pray for the grace and wisdom to allow and to do God's will in our work because we are here to facilitate the exchange of love between supporters and clients. Nevertheless, we are amazed every time overt evidence of His providential presence is demonstrated.

It happens frequently. As recently as this week a client called about her need for a crib. Julie Lamin Sparling, the Center's Family Advocate, had to reply that we did not have one available, but she would let her know when we received one.

And then quietly, without anyone noticing until it happened, the divine clock advanced about an hour in human terms, the doorbell rang, and long-time, constantly active Center supporters Eugene and Claire Berard were standing at the threshold with a crib.

So, whenever you have an inkling about whether today is the day to deliver a donation, it probably is! God blesses both receiver and giver.

## OONAGH'S BIKING FOR BABIES® JOURNEY

During Spring and early Summer, with your prayers and pledges, you joined us in encouraging Missionary Rider Oonagh McNally as she prepared for and then embarked upon the National Ride that was orchestrated along 8 routes in various states. After training in County Tyrone—her home in Ireland—Oonagh pedaled 659.3-miles from Plymouth, Michigan to Manchester, Missouri.

She admits to beginning quite fearfully on day 1. "The National Ride was very difficult... there were so many struggles, but the support given the riders and camaraderie of the team were so great that my fear dissipated."

Trepidation was not her only internal challenge. "All along the way, I felt like the pregnant mothers you serve. I had nausea, discomfort, tiredness, and loneliness; but, I feel so blessed to be able to suffer like that because since then I have felt much more peace about embracing and enduring hardships."

Exertion also brought exultation. "Among the greatest joys I experienced was telling people about Mother of Life Pregnancy Center at various events along the way. People showed great interest and concern." Even when she was soliciting pledges before the Ride family members in England sent donations to her \$3,500 goal "expressing more amazement regarding the Center's work than about my upcoming ride"; her six-day, 100+ miles/day commitment to pain, sweat and prayer.



Oonagh, center of photo, cycling and smiling for babies.

She also experienced elation in hearing the stories of others, such as a Biking for Babies teammate whose parents, when he was developing in his mother's womb, were told by her doctor that he would be born severely disabled and therefore they should abort him, an insinuation "which they, of course, rejected because of their faith that the Lord can work in mysterious ways. He was born healthy, and is a bicyclist, runner and engineer. That story affirmed my faith that life is worth defending at every stage," Oonagh declared.

Summarizing, she said, "My experiences as a Missionary Rider have touched every part of my life. They have brought special insight and inspiration to my job in Ireland as a nursing home activity therapist. It is hard work, but I feel a deeper sense of purpose and love for my work promoting quality of life for the elderly."

In her second year of university studies in medicine, Oonagh also volunteers for a bereavement service, calling to console families that have lost loved ones. "My commitment is 1 hour per week, but sometimes a call can run to 3 hours."

Clearly, Oonagh is gifted in her ability to sacrifice for others. Her fundraising success, combined with those of other riders and distributed among 80 pregnancy resource centers, resulted in a \$4,010 donation to the Center from Biking for Babies. *Thank you and God bless you, Oonagh. Come visit us someday to see the fruits of your labors!*

## NOTES & NEWS

**Did you know** that mothers are not allowed to take their newborns home from the hospital unless they have an approved car seat? The equipment is expensive and the women we serve usually cannot afford them. Thank God, then, that the Rhode Island Foundation approved our \$5,000 Basic Human Needs Grant application to support our purchase of these and other essential maternity goods for newborns and toddlers. Although the Center gratefully receives many gently used and sometimes new car seats and cribs donated by its supporters, the need among the vulnerable populations we serve too frequently outstrips the supply. It is a great relief to have this cushion for those times, and we thank the Foundation for bolstering our budget.

**When we hosted a baby shower** for Denaysha a month before her due date, the aforementioned grant enabled us to present her with a new car seat and a variety of lovely supplies from our donated baby goods, alongside gifts from sidewalk Life advocates.



Effusively, she expressed how deeply touched she was by the generosity of the many people who are always the support system behind the layettes that we give to our client moms. The occasion was also a great example of charity which kept her teenage son speechlessly smiling. You never know how many lives will be positively affected by your gifts!

**After six years of service** at the Center, Counselor/Client Advocate Colleen Earnshaw has retired to a sweet life of assisting with family childcare needs. In light of the positive feedback she received from clients throughout the years, it's a perfect segue. "My fondest memories include daily prayer and weekly Mass in the chapel, counseling and teaching our amazing mothers-to-be, and working alongside our loving caring and inspirational staff," Colleen remarked. "May the Lord continue to guide, direct and bless this special ministry."

**Having served for two years** as Office Manager, Julie Lamin Sparling is our new Family Advocate, a role that includes assessing and addressing clients' needs, conducting parenting classes, plus management and



Colleen and Julie

distribution of baby goods. A leader in the local chapters of Silent No More and Rachel's Vineyard for over 20 years, Julie is eminently qualified to counsel the abortion-vulnerable women we encounter; and, if they are considering adoption for their child, she personally addresses that topic, too. Just before our Rose Gala, the family court awarded Julie and her husband, Ed, full parental custody of a child whom they fostered since shortly after his birth. We turn to Our Lady of Guadalupe to pray for perpetual blessings upon their family and Julie's work in the Center!



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## BISHOP HENNING CELEBRATES MASS, TOURS THE CENTER



On June 22 we received a very special guest. His Excellency Bishop Richard G. Henning offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the Center's Chapel of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and then enjoyed a reception and tour we hosted in his honor.

Expressing great appreciation for the Center's sweetness, beauty and resources, Bishop Henning very generously remained a long

while, listening to thorough descriptions of the work we do and the lives we touch.

In our parenting classroom Bishop Henning and the staff sat around the table where so many at-first trepidatious mothers and fathers have learned skills and gained the confidence to joyfully and responsibly parent their babies. In this setting, he encouragingly shared his pastoral thoughts and intentions regarding pro-life concerns in the Diocese of Providence.

Thereafter, we returned to the chapel wherein Bishop Henning imparted his blessing upon us. On behalf of all whom we serve and everyone who supports our work, we praise the Holy Trinity for the significance of this graceful occasion!

## PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUPPORT

Both sacrifices and shared bounty sustain the vital work of the Center. When considering year-end and other tax-deductible contributions, please bear in mind our clients' critical needs for goods and services.

Contributing is easy at [motheroflife.org/donate](https://motheroflife.org/donate). Select **Give Now** in the drop-down menu of the **Donate** tab, then choose **One-Time** or **Monthly**. Alternatively, use the inserted donation form and pre-addressed envelope.

Monthly gifts stabilize the Center, so please consider them. You can also strengthen our work by donating:

**Gifts of Stocks** which avail you of tax advantages while you provide the Center with life-saving infusions of aid.

**QCDs from your IRA** enable you to reduce taxable income provided by Required Minimum Distributions.

**Life Insurance Beneficiary** and **Bequests by Will** are poignant ways of turning the passage of life for one into the chance for life for many.

**Please seek professional advice** when determining how to make the best use of these opportunities, then contact Executive Director Gail Faraj-Musleh for transactional information, at 401-421-0821.

**Thank you for your special considerations.** Daily, we give thanks to God and implore His blessings upon all our donors, without whose support we cannot function!