



The Center of Hope, Inc. is a homelessness prevention program and 100% of your contribution is used in direct service to the poor.

peace

Christmas is always such a special time. A time for Peace &

Joy. But the world as we know it is a place that seems to have little peace or joy. When we reflect on the birth of Jesus, the nativity scene somehow brings us an overwhelming feeling of peace and a certain quiet joy. Still, the world at the time of the birth of Jesus was probably not a lot different than it is today, with much strife, conflict and anxiety. On the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, most likely St. Joseph led the expectant Blessed Virgin Mary on a donkey over the difficult and dangerous road. It is interesting that Jesus chose to arrive at Bethlehem on a donkey which is a symbol of peace and is associated with those living in poverty. I believe that both St. Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary had a special inner peace in their hearts. This Peace was truly a gift from God, not something one can obtain on one's own, although we do have a major role in attaining this special grace of Peace.

When experiencing the stress of finding the Virgin Mary was with child, it was in peace that St. Joseph could hear and follow God's will to care for the child Jesus and the Blessed Mary as a chaste husband and father. Without doubt St. Joseph was under tremendous stress accompanying the Virgin Mary and the unborn Jesus on the long journey to Bethlehem. He was unable to find appropriate lodging in a house for the birth of our Great King, but he listened to the inner voice of God calling him to the stable as He wanted to show His solidarity, respect and His special love for the poor.

When the evil king Herod ordered the death of the Holy Innocents, St. Joseph again followed the call to



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make the journey to Egypt. Even the journey to Jerusalem for Jesus to be circumcised had to be guided by God's inner call to St. Joseph

as it had to be dangerous to enter the very city where Herod resided. Truly St. Joseph had a great inner peace that allowed him to discern God's call and will amid all the chaos and dangers of the world, to bring about the birth of Jesus, and to care for Jesus and the Blessed Mary.

I recently helped a 64-year-old man who is definitely not at peace. He is really struggling emotionally at this time and fights a severe depression on a daily basis. He feels his life is out of control and he has no way to resolve his situation. He has little if any hope left. He owes \$700 on his electric bill, \$345 on his water bill and is behind several months on his monthly mortgage payment of \$888. The amount of his mortgage exceeds the fair market value of his house, so he has no equity in the home. He could file for early retirement but is waiting to draw his full retirement benefit six months after he turns 66-years-old. His only source of income is a monthly pension of \$82. He has a college degree and applies for numerous jobs daily but is turned down continually after the prospective employer finds out he is 64-years-old.

He broke into tears as we were discussing his options. He has a great fear of becoming homeless as he knows his Social Security benefits, even at full retirement age, will not be sufficient to cover his monthly bills. He truly has no peace or joy at this time. How can he or the many persons that come to us for help realistically find peace?

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give unto to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." (John14:27) Peace is something in our heart, in our soul, that no one,

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Continued from pg. 1

nor any circumstance or anything can take away from us. This is the true Peace we all seem to more clearly perceive and long for every Christmas. The Peace that only God can put into our hearts. We pray for all our clients that have such broken and troubled hearts. We pray that God will take their little broken hearts into His own Divine Heart and fill them with His Peace, His Love and His Joy. God spoke to St. Joseph through an Angel in his dreams. God speaks to us in our hearts. How much closer, how much more direct, how blessed we truly are. St. Francis often used the salutation: "May God's Peace be with you." This truly is a special peace.

God's peace within our hearts.

Just prior to the consecration of the Eucharist at each Mass, the Priest recites the prayer that "by the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled to share in our humanity. To be united with the divinity of Christ is a Peace which this world cannot begin to understand or overcome.

May God's Peace be with you and your family and all those we serve, especially the homeless this Christmas. "Let the Peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts." (Col 3:15) !!!!!

George Dinkel, Executive Director

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

J is a 61-year-old lady who works for a local grocery store. She has no income as she has been sick and in the hospital. She owes \$450 on her rent and \$1335 on utilities.

D is a 59-year-old lady who was laid off after her hours were reduced due to COVID. She has no income and owes three month's rent totaling \$1500 and \$904 on her utilities.

A is a 29-year-old mom with three children. She lost her job at a fast food restaurant and currently owes \$614 on her rent and \$1522 on her utilities.

S is a 56-year-old man who lost his job a month ago. He has various health issues and had a stroke. He owes one month rent of \$625 and \$352 on his utilities.

T is a 60-year-old lady who works for the school district. She has no income at this time and is behind two months on her mortgage payment totaling \$1580 and owes \$522 on her water bill.

S is a 39-year-old mom with three children. She recently lost her job and has no income. She owes \$987 on her electric bill which has been shut off, \$194 on her gas bill which has been shut off and \$374 on her water bill that is in danger of being shut off.

A is a 30-year-old mom with three children. She has been off work for two weeks because her child's daycare was closed due to COVID. She owes \$655 on her rent.

S is a 34-year-old mom with four children who lost her job at a nursing home and has no income. She owes \$972 on her water bill which has been turned off.

M is a 51-year-old mom who lives with her daughter. M broke her leg and has been unable to work for the past six weeks. She owes \$1000 on her rent and \$1619 on her utilities.

E is a 55-year-old lady who was laid off three months ago due to COVID. Her electric service has been turned off and she owes \$1600.

J is a 51-year-old mom with two children. J recently had surgery and will need another operation soon. She owes \$2100 on her electric bill and \$623 on her rent.

D is a 61-year-old man who was homeless and had a stroke. He currently is in the hospital but will need to move into an apartment when released. He currently has no income but has filed for Social Security benefits.

K is a 52-year-old man who is on oxygen and his electricity has been turned off. He owes \$1198 on his electric bill and \$800 on his rent.

L who is 73-years-old and lives with her 72-year-old husband. Their electricity has been turned off and they owe \$520. Both of them are in poor health and it is getting cold in the house.

M is a 39-year-old mom with one child. She was in the hospital due to COVID and has not been able to work for the past two months. She owes \$650 on her rent, \$2004 on her utilities and \$14,000 in hospital bills.



CASE MANAGEMENT Spotlight

Tina, a 51-year-old participant of Sr. Becky's case management program wrote this reflection when she completed the program in May 2021. She remains gainfully employed with a valid driver's license, is actively involved in the Kairos prison ministry and continues to faithfully work her recovery program.

When I started working with Sister Becky, I had no clue as to how to go from a drug addict culture or society to mainstream society. The rules are very different in the "streets". They are so different that when a person tries to come from that lifestyle, it is almost impossible to fit in as very few of us have had much experience in mainstream society and therefore we fall back because we simply cannot function in a world we do not know.

Also, I was completely overwhelmed when a problem would arise and not know how to negotiate the life I had started to build. I would let everything go as I was consumed by the emotions the problem evoked.

Another step forward that I made was in how to relate to people as I had only related to other drug users and mentally challenged people. I constantly attracted people of that nature and could therefore not forge ahead in a "normal" lifestyle.

There was growth in the area of goal setting. I had heard about goals and even set them many times in my

life but had NO idea how to achieve them. With Sister Becky, I was able to accomplish goals I set because we started out small; hence, I learned how to set goals and accomplish them instead of starting out so big and failing.

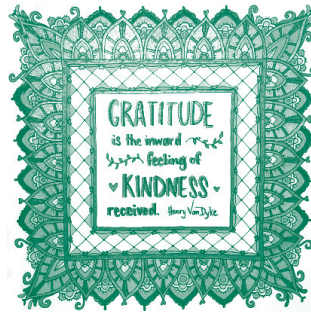
I stabilized so much so that everyone around me could tell a substantial difference in me as compared to five decades of aberrant and failing behavior...always falling back into drugs and mental illness.

I was able to complete the first chronicle of a six chronicle book set which is possibly on its way to a publisher. If not this one, I am reassured to keep trying until it does get published instead of giving up at first rejection.

Which brings me to the greatest accomplishment...the total buildup of my self-esteem because I was able to start, commit, and complete our program and its accompanying

goals and lessons.

Thank you Center of Hope and most of all Sister Becky as there is definitely a new foundation upon which to build a solid structure.



Tina created this special message in appreciation to Sr. Becky and COH.



PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH FOR EMPLOYMENT

Dear St. Joseph, you were yourself once faced with the responsibility of providing the necessities of life for Jesus and Mary. Look down with fatherly compassion upon all those we serve in their anxiety over their present inability to support their family. Please help them to find gainful employment very soon, so that their heavy burden of concern will be lifted from their heart and that they will soon be able to provide for those whom God has entrusted to their care. Help guard them against bitterness and discouragement, so that they may emerge from this trial spiritually enriched and with even greater blessings from God. Amen.

(An adaptation from the Pieta)

Center of Hope Recognition Gifts

In Honor of

- Sr. Sara Dwyer ASC, 50th Anniversary
- Adrian Palma, US Citizen
- Anthony Sota
- Mary Jobe Waddill, Birthday
- Sr. Susan Welsby ASC, 50th Anniversary

In Memory of

- Jacqueline Kristean Beckley
- Pauline Bertha
- Glen Bindley
- Mendell Butler
- Monsignor John Gilsenan
- Jerry Larson
- Roberta McDonald
- Mary Lou Sherman

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...they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

“Life is a gift that God gives to the universe and to humanity.” Acts of the Adorers’ 18th General Assembly

CENTER OF HOPE, INC. MISSION STATEMENT

The Center of Hope listens to the cries of the poor with compassion and love, and without judgment, seeing all who present themselves as Children of God. A loving presence to those in need and advocates for the powerless, we offer hope to families, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or gender, as they deal with life’s daily challenges. We help them with emergency financial support for rent and utilities, provide case management toward resolutions of on-going difficulties, and assure the dignity and self-respect of each individual.

VISION STATEMENT

Offering hope for tomorrow
through assistance today

CENTER OF HOPE, INC.

Celebrating 38 years of service to
the Wichita community

Because You Cared

For the past fiscal year, the Center of Hope prevented **3,622 families** from having to experience homelessness. Included in those families were **9,090 persons**.

\$1,781,791 was dispersed for rent, utilities and emergency needs. Utility assistance for Project Deserve of \$462,447 was provided for 1,901 households.

We would like to recognize St. Cecilia Parish for their continuing contributions of food and supplies throughout the pandemic.



Center of Hope is a United Way funded agency



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Coordinator, Mary Jobe-Waddill