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Penance

The Center of Hope helps people facing eviction to remain in their homes and helps keep utilities on if they are in danger of being disconnected. We often also help those who are homeless or have just lost their homes to move into a new home. In these cases the landlord typically requires that they pay both a deposit and the first month's rent. Since the majority of those we help are living at or below the poverty level, they often do not have the funds to pay both the deposit and the first month's rent. Since our mission is to prevent homelessness, we especially try to help those who are currently homeless to be able to move into a home, a place of security. We help many single moms with children who are homeless and we help many elderly or mentally disabled persons living out on the streets or in the shelters to secure an apartment. We help in most all cases except when we have two adults who are not married who are trying to move into an apartment together. We truly value the sacrament of marriage and since cohabitation would be considered sinful, we would not want to contribute or facilitate someone moving into this lifestyle.

The first miracle Jesus worked was at the wedding of Cana (Jn 2:1) and clearly communicates the blessedness and sacredness of marriage. St. Anthony stated that the union of the bridegroom and the bride represents the marriage of the Holy Spirit and

the penitent soul. The Holy Spirit actually infuses Himself with the soul by the way of love. (St. Bernard) I find it interesting that St. Anthony did not just speak of the marriage of the Holy Spirit and the soul, but the "penitent" soul.



Lent is a special time for us to take up our cross and follow Jesus, a time to make amends, a time to hope.

The Lenten Season of the Church is traditionally known as a time for penance, a time for preparation, a time for self-sacrifice. The story of Lazarus is the story of a poor starving beggar who lay at the gate of a rich man who was clad in purple and ate sumptuously every day. Lazarus was taken to heaven and the rich man, whose name which is unknown and forever forgotten, was buried in hell. (Luke 16) This story clearly calls us to open our eyes to the needs of our neighbors and provide for their needs which hopefully leads to our salvation. One thing I



have often overlooked in this story of Lazarus was that at the end of this parable, the rich man asks father Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers so that they *might do penance* and not also come to hell, the place of torments.

Without doubt, penance, along with love of neighbor and love of God are critical to our salvation. The definition of penance is 1) a sacrament of the Catholic Church whereby sins are forgiven, 2) an act of self-mortification, and 3) an act of devotion. These three means of practicing penance during the Lenten season are imperative to our salvation. In a way the Lenten observance can almost become mundane. I give up treats and help lose weight and have fulfilled my Lenten obligation, but really, penance is much deeper, a spiritual exercise whereby I can become more holy, more pure, more united in love with God through the Holy Spirit, and there is a certain urgency to this. "Delay not your conversion to the Lord, put it not off from day to day". (Sirach 5)

If God has given us a heart, it is in order that we might love Him with all the force of our heart. Love is gained by penance, it is sweetened

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by the joys of sacrifice. Love attains all virtues. It presupposes self-denial, and by its nature includes the gift of self, forgetfulness of self, the emptying out of the heart, and the breaking of our ego. (From Franciscan Mysticism)

God loves us so much that He gave His Son Jesus to endure the suffering of the Cross for our salvation. (John 3:16) The Blessed Virgin Mary also loves us so much that She gave her Son, Jesus, in atonement of our sins. We know the suffering of the Virgin Mary was so great at the Crucifixion that it was as if a sword had pierced Her heart. We know of the great suffering Jesus

endured out of love for us and love of His father, but how can we come to fathom the great suffering and love of God the Father who too was present at the Crucifixion seeing His only begotten Son Jesus suffer so unjustly.

Lent is a special time for us to take up our cross and follow Jesus, a time to make amends, a time to hope. Let all them be glad that Hope in Thee: They shall rejoice forever and Thou shalt dwell in them. (Psalm 5) May God always be the Center of our Hope and may our penitent souls always be united with the Holy Spirit in love.

Your friend in Christ!!!

PRAYER REQUESTS



• *Please pray for J & C* who live with their two young children. Their 5-year old daughter has cancer. J works for a temp agency but does not make sufficient income to cover their bills. They currently owe \$962 on their rent and \$1700 on their utility bills.

• *Please pray for R*, a 50-year-old man who got infection in his leg which resulted in amputation. He is not able to work and owes \$1900 on his rent and \$1600 on his utilities.

• *Please pray for A*, a 48-year-old lady who is homeless and living in the shelter after fleeing a domestic violence situation. She just started a job and hopes to be able to maintain an apartment.

• *Please pray for C*, a 19-year-old girl who lives with her 44-year-old mom. C is working for a local retail store and made \$800 this past month. She is trying to support her mom who hasn't worked for the past 2 years and has no income. Their rent alone is \$573 per month.

• *Please pray for B*, a 58-year-old man who works at a fast food restaurant to pay his bills. He had surgery for cancer and is receiving chemo treatments. He will not be able to return to work for a few months. He currently owes \$552 on his rent.

• *Please pray for S*, a 45 year-old- mom who lives with her 9 children. S works for a fast food restaurant where she only made \$473 in the past month. Her husband just passed away a month ago and she had to pay the funeral expenses. She owes \$800 on her rent and \$1600 on her utilities. Her gas service is currently disconnected.

• *Please pray for R*, a 59 year old man who lives by himself. His water is off as he has a leak from the water meter to the house and it will cost \$3000 to \$6000 to fix, which he does not have. His only source of income is Social Security income of \$1293 per month. His mortgage payment is \$600 per month. His gas is off and he has been using a heating blanket to keep warm.

• *Please pray for K*, a 36-year-old mom with 4 children. She was not able to work due to her disabled child being sick. She has to take her to the Children's Mercy Hospital monthly. She currently owes \$2100 on her rent and \$700 on her utilities.

• *Please pray for C*, a 31-year-old mom who lives with her 9-year-old daughter. C broke her ankle last month and will not be able to work for the next 2 months.

• *Please pray for G*, a 52-year-old lady who lives by herself. G works for a fast food restaurant but is currently in the hospital for congestive heart failure. She owes \$1876 on her rent and \$400 on her utilities.

• *Please pray for D*, a 42-year-old mom with 2 children. Her son is autistic and now has been diagnosed with epilepsy. Her water is currently off and she owes \$735 on her rent and \$715 on her Evergy bill.

• *Please pray for C*, a 55-year-lady who has been homeless for the past 10 months and was just approved to move into an apartment.

• *Please pray for B*, a 47-year-old man who is homeless and has been sleeping in his car. He has a job and just was approved for an apartment.

A Note to Center of Hope from a Client

Thanks for giving me a chance to talk to you about my situation. My world has been rotating 360 degrees. I thought I injured my foot and sought treatment for it. I found out that I didn't need an orthopedic doctor, I need a neurologist. My birthday present was to find out that I was diagnosed MS and that my life will always be different. My daily life is struggle and just walking to bathroom can be challenging. Not being able to provide for my family is a crushing blow to my psych. I have had a job since I was sixteen. I often feel helpless and even hopeless some days. I'm keeping my positivity high because I know there are people and an organization out there that care.

Sincerely, C

Center of Hope Recognition Gifts

In Honor of

Darrell Ary

In Memory of

Linda Batchelder

John Didier

Kathleen Frasco

Jeannie Rosenhamer

Sr. Stella Rosenhamer, ASC

Eldon Schumacher

Wayne Wenthe

Truly a Great Loss



I'm very sad to report that our long-time Project Deseve volunteer Eldon Schumacher has passed away. Eldon loved coming to volunteer at the Center of Hope so much. He was one of the leading health care financial

experts in the state providing guidance to many hospital and health care providers. When he retired, he graciously and humbly offered to share his financial talents to our little ministry over the last 8 years providing assistance to many poor, elderly and disabled families in Kansas struggling to pay for their electric service. We truly appreciate all he did for our little ministry. He will be greatly missed. Please keep Eldon, his wife Jo and his family in your thoughts and prayers.



HELP WANTED

The world is indeed full of words of love, but very few works of love. (IVE Spiritual Exercises)
The Center of Hope is seeking a staff person to help in our little ministry of homeless prevention. We are seeking an individual that would function as an operations officer/case manager. We are such a small ministry, all of our staff help in the case manager duties by helping those in need. The person would need to have some accounting background, strong Microsoft Excel skills and a kind and loving heart. If you know of someone that would be interested, please have them call me at 316-267-3999 or email me at: george@centerofhopeinc.org.

Center of Hope, Inc.

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“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 41 years of service to
the Wichita community

*Editor, George Dinkel
Writer, Mary Jobe-Waddill*

Because You Cared

For the past 7 months, the Center of Hope prevented 1,263 families from having to experience homelessness. Included in those families were 3,331 persons. \$580,557 was dispersed for rent, utilities and emergency needs. Utility assistance for Project Deserve of \$177,265 was provided for 995 households across the state of Kansas. We would like to recognize Mike & Connie Hotze, Phil & Darla Voegeli, Wayne & Pat Wirths, Susan Sloan, and St. Cecilia Parish for their continuing contributions of food and supplies.



*Center of Hope is a United Way
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