

Missionary Mom



By Michelle Marciniak

A few years ago, when my husband Dave was in nursing school, we had to get some help to provide for our family. We had four children and one on the way and Dave had a year left in nursing school. We knew God would provide for us, and He always did.

For awhile we did have to depend on things like food stamps to get us through and it was at this time that I learned an important lesson. Food stamps do not buy shampoo, toilet paper or laundry detergent. If it is not a food item, it is not covered. But we still needed those things. Now even though we didn't have much at the time I always bought an extra canned good to give away. When I had a bag of things I would give it away. Once I realized that food stamps didn't cover other basic necessities I started buying extra shampoo or toilet paper to give away. I always felt that no matter how poor we were we could always help others in need, one bottle of shampoo at a time.

Is this a miraculous way of thinking? It shouldn't be. Jesus told us to do it. So does everyone? No. Some people think that the poor made their own bed so now they need to lie in it. But their children, innocent children, suffer too. And who are we to judge why that young mother is in the situation she is in? Jesus didn't say we need to help only the poor who deserve it. He said to go feed people. There was no contract, no zip code to be followed. In James Chapter 2:15 it says, "If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and no food for the day and you say to them, 'Good bye and good luck! Keep warm and well fed,' but do not meet their bodily needs, what good is that?" INDEED! Bodily needs include things like soap, diapers and tissues.

We need all of these things at the mission. Daily my missionary sisters, Sue and Joann, and my associate sister Barb, answer the door of the sacristy. Standing on the other side are people in need. They can't always give a person something they need, but they feel better if they can at least give them a little bag of personal items. Our beautiful spiritual mother, Amy, sits at her desk and hears sad stories all morning long. I know it really saddens her when she has to send them away empty handed. But often they leave with a spirit of hope and the knowledge that God does love them and will care for them.

How can they go away thinking that? It is because the woman behind the desk permeates the love of God to them. She will tell them to come back, that she will see what she can do another day. It's because Amy trusts that God will come through, that He will take care of us all.

One day a few weeks ago I was sitting in Adoration and I was having a little talk with Jesus. I was praying for Amy and I said, "Jesus, she loves You and trusts in You. Don't let her down. Please Lord, for the rest of us who are inspired by her, reward her faith in You."

You see, my mother's heart sees right through Amy's loving heart. She has such a great love for the poor that is not an act, it is her sincere love for God's poor. It is as real as you and I. She has the biggest heart I have ever witnessed, and the greatest faith and trust I have ever seen. I pray for a smidgen of that trust.

May we all ask our Blessed Mother, Mother of us all, to help us have that same trust in Him. And let's see what He can do in our families as well. God bless you all during this upcoming Christmas season.



Listen to your guardian angel...He's telling you to help out our brothers and sisters in need at St. Luke's Mission of Mercy!

Sponsor a Needy Family for Christmas



Everyone has memories from their childhood of magical Christmas mornings...the tree, the gifts, family gathered lovingly together, and a fresh coating of snow! For so many of our community, Christmas morning can be a painful reminder of their poverty. Mothers and fathers in and around St. Luke's would like so very much to give special gifts to their children, and yet that is a reality that can't be realized without our help.

Brighten Christmas morning by sponsoring a family this Holiday Season! We will match you up with a wonderful family and provide ages, sizes and their own personal "wish lists" to help you pick the perfect gifts!

Individuals, businesses, organizations, parishes and groups are invited to embody the spirit of Christmas by helping us to bring joy to the families of our community facing the cold hunger of poverty. Your generosity will help to create wonderful memories for families in need!

**Call Sue Gilhooley today
to sponsor a family this
Christmas!
894-4476**



**Guess what we are
all out of...**

Yup, good old mister T.P.! We are out of tissues, paper towels, and other paper products, too. Won't you pick up a pack or two for us next time you are out shopping?

We sure do appreciate it!