

Mary's Mantle

A Year of Courage, Trust and Life



Fiat!

Have courage, be not afraid...and Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water towards Jesus. Courage. Trust. Here was a simple, common person who responded to the grace of our Lord, finding the necessary courage and trust and stepped into turbulent waters. True enough, Peter became afraid, but the Lord's hand was there to help. His hand is always there, just trust.

It is that same courage and trust fueled by God's grace that brought about Mary's Mantle. A simple, common, faith filled person heard the whisper of the Holy Spirit to step into uncharted waters and create a haven for homeless, pregnant women. Like Peter, and like Mary herself, Beth Collison our Board President, responded, and embarked on a journey that she had little experience with. As with any journey, the first full year of Mary's Mantle presented many beautiful moments along with many humbling lessons. The one constant that was astoundingly witnessed was the presence of the Holy Spirit working within the halls of Mary's Mantle. Repeatedly our trust in doing God's work was reinforced by the various, interwoven miracles...miracles when we needed them most.

Charity through volunteering and donations, again another thread of trust. The response from our extended community provides the life blood that allows Mary's Mantle to exist. The response in our first year has been overwhelming.

There is a two-way trust in play here: the trust Mary's Mantle has in the charity of our community and more importantly the trust that our donors have in Mary's Mantle to be good stewards of their contributions. We hope that we are meeting your expectations. However, the most courageous of those among us and those who have to reach deep to grasp trust are the precious women who become residents of Mary's Mantle. These women are often faced with numerous challenges in their personal lives as they wrestle with their decision to give birth and provide a loving life for their baby. To step out of a life where perhaps trust was hard to find, and put trust in a family of strangers takes great courage.

Those of us who use and trust in the gifts that God gives each of us, are repeatedly inspired and moved by the courage of our residents. It's a beautiful circular gift seeded by God's love for us, starting with the courage of a single person, Beth. I personally, and I am certain I speak for the members of the board, our staff, our many volunteers and supporters, our residents and newborns, thank you Beth for responding to God's whisper....you inspire us with your courage and trust.

Barry Doherty - Mary's Mantle Board of Directors

Mary's Mantle

P.O. Box 115
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303
Phone: 248-376-5338

*And Mary said, "Behold, I am
the handmaid of the Lord;
let it be done unto me according to your word."
Luke 1:38*

www.marysmantle.net

Our First Reunion

Former Residents Gather Together
at Mary's Mantle

This past July, about half of our former residents gathered together for a backyard barbeque. These mothers had the chance to mingle with one another, and for most of them it was the first time they met each other's babies. The staff was pleased to see how nurturing these mothers were and how beautifully their babies have grown. Not only that, but we were able to see a real change in these girls' lives as they are maturing into the women that God has created them to be. We found out through the girls' personal testimonies that most of them had jobs and were self-sufficient. One mother has even started her own baby clothing line and her items can be purchased at Sweet Repeatz, a local boutique in Northville, Michigan.

At the end of the event, the girls were greeted with aftercare gift baskets containing diapers, wipes, clothing, books, and toys. The baskets even included a few things for the moms such as lotions, shampoos, make-up, dental products, and snacks. Indeed, the afternoon was filled with many laughs and much happiness. The common question that was heard throughout the day was "when is the next reunion?" The staff immediately started planning for our Christmas reunion with great joy! Truly, the fruit of all your prayers, material goods, and financial support were evident that day!



A Carriage Full of Babies

You can't imagine the difficulty we had in taking this sweet picture. The babies were falling all over the place and crying... but we'll do anything for a cute picture!

Baby Jeremiah,
born September 5th



Carolyn Weidenbach has stepped down from her role as Executive Director of Mary's Mantle to retire once again. She graciously left retirement to help us get the program up and running in February of 2010. Carolyn worked tirelessly to help set a solid foundation for Mary's Mantle.

The Board of Directors, the staff and all the residents are very grateful for all that Carolyn did. We pray the Lord will bless you Carolyn, with many years of good health and joy with your family and friends.

For the interim Beth Collison will be filling in as Executive Director. Please contact her at 248-250-9216 with any questions.



We Welcome Our New Case Manager, **La Donna Combs**

La Donna is an adjunct professor of Psychology for Spring Arbor University and a curriculum specialist for the Department of Social Work at the University of Minnesota. She is the previous Program Director of the Aware Shelter in Jackson, Michigan, along with mentoring the *Sisters of Strength of Jackson Community College* and the *Daughters of Promise of Michigan*. She is the author of "Does Till Death Do Us Part Include Domestic Violence?" and is currently working on a project called "Cover Yourself; Emotional Abuse & Spiritual Interventions." Through a grant from the Office of Violence Against Women and the Attorney General's Office, she has traveled the country collaborating with other PhD's and faith-based leaders to create The African American Peace Project. La Donna received her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Spring Arbor University and is currently a Doctoral Candidate of Psychology in Pastoral Community Counseling at Argosy University. She is the founder and president of the *Sisters Against Abuse Society* a 501©3 organization.

Through God's grace and help, La Donna works tirelessly to help women achieve their fullest possible potential. We are so excited to welcome her here at Mary's Mantle!



Fr. J.J. Mech gives Carolyn a blessing after Mass.
Also pictured is future Deacon Don Baross.

Board Members:

Rev. J.J. Mech, Pastor of St. Anastasia
Beth Collison, St. Anastasia & Ss. Cyril and Methodius
Don Baross, Sacred Heart of the Hills
Lynn Coburn, St. Irenaeus
Barry Doherty, St. Joseph

Deacon Don Leach, St. Aloysius & St. Patrick
Ellen Salter, Divine Child
Thomas Murray, Shrine of the Little Flower
James Kempa, Christ the King



It is time for Mary's Mantle \$30,000 in 30 days!

Goal: 1,000 supporters willing to donate \$30 each during September.

Mary's Mantle, a Catholic Residential Program, lovingly takes care of the lost and forsaken of our community. Homeless, pregnant women are given food and shelter during their time with us, but most importantly they find hope and are truly loved. During our first year we housed 11 women and we were blessed with the arrival of many healthy, beautiful babies. We can all make a difference by just giving a little. Mother Teresa once said "do small things with great love". We greatly appreciate each dollar that is donated and we understand it to be a sign of your love for these young moms and their babies.

**Please consider donating through paypal on our website www.marysmantle.net - donate tab,
or drop off a donation at Faith @ Work Catholic Bookstore, 1977 E. Wattles in Troy,
or mail a check to Mary's Mantle, P.O. Box 115, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303.**

Our Wish List: Meyer and Target gift cards, SMART bus passes, stamps, and most of all your good prayers!

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