



News...

from Bethany Retreat House
Nazareth Home
Sojourner Truth House

Charitable IRA Gift Opportunity

Until December 31, 2009, donors age 70 ½ and over have a unique opportunity to help the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ ministries. The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 extended the IRA Charitable Rollover legislation retroactive for 2008 and continuing through December 31, 2009. This legislation allows tax-free lifetime distributions from an IRA directly to charity. Here's how:

- You must be age 70 ½ or older as of the date of distribution.
- You may transfer up to \$100,000 on or before December 31, 2009.
- Distributions must be made directly from a traditional or Roth IRA to a qualified charity and must be for outright gifts; trusts and other planned gifts do not qualify. *Note that distributions from qualified plans such as those established under sections 401(k) or 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code will not qualify for this special treatment.*
- Distributions will be excluded from federal taxable income. Depending on where you live, you may avoid state income tax on the distributions as well. *Note that you will not receive an income tax deduction for your distribution; the amount is simply eliminated from your income tax calculations.*
- Distributions will count toward your minimum required distribution.

Tax-free charitable IRA distributions are an ideal way to share the enjoyment of your charitable gift with one of our ministries. These gifts give you a unique opportunity to substantially save on taxes because unlike other assets, your IRA can be taxed at the top federal rate of 35 percent. Furthermore, IRA distributions are one of the most expensive assets to pass to your heirs, but one of the least expensive to give to charitable organizations.

Tax benefits of distributions under this provision will vary based on individual circumstances; therefore we recommend that you consult your tax advisor to learn how distributions will affect your particular situation. *Ancilla Systems Incorporated does not provide legal, tax or financial advice.* If you would like to learn more about making a gift from your IRA, **please contact Trish Alt, Director of Development Services at Ancilla Systems at 219-947-8560.**

Bethany Retreat House

OPEN HOUSE

What to buy for that special someone on your Christmas gift list? It's the perennial question. We all have someone who has everything. Or maybe it's a friendship that calls for a unique and meaningful present. Perhaps it's a child, teen or young adult who simply doesn't need another video game or pair of pajamas.

Bethany Retreat House bookstore will be hosting a holiday open house and shopping event from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, December 19. We welcome you to stop by at your convenience and browse

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www.bethanyretreathouse.org
2202 Lituanica Avenue
East Chicago, IN 46312
(219) 398-5047

Nazareth Home

Gala, A Great Success

On October 16, 2008, Nazareth Home hosted the largest and most successful fundraiser in its history raising \$145,000.

Sister Barbara Kuper, PHJC, the staff, and children of Nazareth Home wish to offer their heartfelt gratitude to all who made the 2008 Gala a tremendous success. The kind and generous donations

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www.nazarethhome.com
c/o St. Catherine Convent
4325 Elm Street
East Chicago, IN 46312

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Sojourner Truth House

Be Aware

Given that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, I was excited to facilitate a group entitled "Be Aware." Initially, I was reluctant to disclose my history of battling cancer at the age of 29 that reoccurred at age 32. However, being a 14 year breast cancer survivor, I found clarity and undeniable peace in the opportunity. I wanted the women to "Be Aware." ***Early detection is the best possible treatment for Breast Cancer.***

After losing my mother to breast cancer fourteen years ago, I began to research the subject for a better understanding. In my research, I found out that people do not

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www.sojournertruthhouse.com
410 West 13th Ave.
Gary, IN 46407
(219) 885-2282

BETHANY HOLDS ANNUAL APPEAL

by Debbie Bosak

In this Advent/Christmas season we are reminded of God's generosity manifested through all of creation and in the precious gift of God's son, Jesus - the most profound expression of God's love for all humankind. With that spirit of love and giving, Bethany Retreat House once again holds its annual appeal from Thanksgiving through Christmas.

The work of the retreat house continues to grow, even after being flooded in September. The house provides a safe haven for those seeking a break from the noise and movement of a frantic world. Participants find spiritual nourishment and renewal through private or individually directed retreats. Others seek a deepening intimacy with God and greater understanding of themselves through spiritual direction.

People in ministry, both ordained and lay, glean support and share their ministry experience through monthly reflection groups at the retreat house. Still others in the dream group explore how the Divine guides us through our dreams, and women gather monthly for support and sharing around a spirituality book.

The work of Bethany Retreat House is primarily funded through fees, bookstore sales, the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, and the generosity of our friends. Last year, the Bethany Fund was founded to assure the continuation of Bethany's mission into the future -- to serve as a quiet place in the midst of demanding lives where people can find both space and resources for prayer and reflection.

There are several ways to contribute to the work of Bethany Retreat House. Contributions may be made to the Bethany Fund in the form of direct donations or memorials. Or perhaps you'd like to contribute to something more specific like the upkeep of the gardens or library, or to retreat scholarships for those unable to fully pay for retreat and spiritual direction. During this holy season of love and generosity, please remember the work of Bethany Retreat House. All donations, big and small, will help us continue our mission. Contributions may be sent to 2202 Litanica Avenue, East Chicago, 46312. For more information, contact Sister Joyce Diltz, PHJC, at 219-398-5047.

BETHANY OPEN HOUSE AND CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENT

by Debbie Bosak

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through the hundreds of books, CD's, gift-wrap and tote bags, and other gift items. Enjoy a cup of tea while you take time to pick out that perfect something for that special someone.

The bookstore holds a trove of spiritual treasures for all ages and interests. You'll find bibles, books on spirituality, much-loved authors such as Henri Nouwen, Thomas Merton and Joyce Rupp, and a variety of daily meditations. For those special occasions, there are items appropriate for newlyweds as well as those who have recently made their First Communion or received the sacrament of Confirmation.

Look closer and you'll discover music CD's that will lift the spirit, relieve stress, or simply provide a gentle background for meditation. Handcrafted sweatshirts and bags can make a perfect accompaniment.

This year, make your gift-giving personal and special with a gift from Bethany Retreat House bookstore. We look forward to your visit!



Sister Kathy Haas, PHJC, browses the Bethany bookstore.

When you come for the Annual Shopping Event, we invite you to tour the retreat house so you can see the renovations made as a result of the September flood.

IN MEMORY OF...

In honor of PHJC Sister Jubilarians
by St. Catherine Convent, East Chicago

In memory of Edith LaHayne
by R. Louie and Martha Gonazalez

In memory of Josephine O'Balle and Rudy O'Balle
by Vickie Machalak

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

by Sister Joyce Diltz, PHJC



We have survived the September flood and are again able to welcome overnight guests to Bethany Retreat House. Heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped repair and restore Bethany's lower level. We were blessed with many generous volunteer hands who helped move things to safety from the water, then outside to the storage unit, and then back into place after the reconstruction. Others helped put furniture together and install shelving on the new walls.

Seasons mark our lives, and the flood and its aftermath are one season in this year at Bethany Retreat House. Happily, there are other seasons as well. In this Advent season we focus our attention on our longing for God's coming. We do this in three ways – recalling the world's longing for a savior in the pre-Christian era, longing for God's coming into our daily experience, and longing for God's coming at the end of time.

As I am privileged to listen to people's stories in the ministry of spiritual direction and retreat, it is the second of these that emerges as most important for us. We long for tangible signs of God's presence among us. We long to have God help make sense of the events and relationships of our lives. We long for God's light and comfort and encouragement in the dailiness of life.

The gift of this Advent/Christmas season is the reminder again each year that God is truly with us. We are not alone. God's Christmas name is Emmanuel, God-with-us. God comes in Jesus to join us in this human experience of life. And Jesus reveals to us again and again that we are creatures of a God who loves us deeply, tenderly, extravagantly as the various gospel stories describe.

May you discover God-with-us in your life's unfolding during this special season and in every season you are blessed to live.

WISH LIST

Volunteer Painters (small touch-up jobs)

Gifts to the Bethany Fund

Carry-in Supper for two to four people once/month

BRH BOOKSHELF



We offer the following as some very worthy resources for your spiritual reading, reflection, and gift giving:

1. ***Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*** by Joyce Rupp. Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2008, 212 pages, paper, \$17.95.
2. ***The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*** by Joan Chittister. New York: Blue Bridge, 2008, 222 pages, cloth, \$19.95.
3. ***Seven Sacred Pauses*** by Macrina Wiederkehr. Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2008, 203 pages, cloth, \$18.95. Accompanying music CD of same title by Velma Frye: \$17.
4. ***This Little Light: Lessons in Living from Sister Theo Bowman*** by Michael O'Neill McGrath. New York: Orbis Books, 2008, 96 pages, cloth, \$20.
5. ***Being Catholic Now: Prominent Americans Talk About Change in the Church and the Quest for Meaning*** by Kerry Kennedy. New York: Crown Publishers, 2008, 247 pages, cloth, \$24.95.
6. ***Acedia and Me: A Marriage, Monks, and a Writer's Life*** by Kathleen Norris. New York: Riverhead Books, 2008, 234 pages, cloth, \$25.95.
7. ***Praying the Way Jesus Prayed*** by Mark Link. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2008, 154 pages, paper, \$11.95.
8. ***The Selfless Way of Christ: Downward Mobility and the Spiritual Life*** by Henri Nouwen. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007, 96 pages, cloth, \$18.
9. ***Using the Enneagram in Prayer: A Contemplative Guide*** by Suzanne Zuercher. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 107 pages, paper, \$11.95.
10. ***Thomas Merton, Master of Attention*** by Robert Waldron. New York/Mahway, NJ: Paulist Press, 2008, 101 pages, paper, \$16.95.

These books are available through Bethany Retreat House bookstore.

Gala, A Great Success

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of sponsors, underwriters, chefs, advisory and planning committee members made the Gala possible. The support of contributors and volunteers is deeply appreciated, and a special “thank you” goes to the staff of the Hammond Federal Courthouse for the use of their lovely venue.

Popular items in the Live and Silent Auctions produced some vigorous bidding among the guests. A highlight of the Live Auction was the auctioning of Nazareth Home “miracles,” an opportunity for guests to make an unrestricted \$500 contribution to Nazareth Home. Successful “miracle” bidders were presented

with a gift packaged bottle of sparkling wine (donated by Nick’s Liquors), with a custom Gala label (created by Dan Novakowski) along with a beautiful sterling silver “baby” charm (donated by Joyce & Kurt Koch). Guests were also treated to the jazz sounds of the Billy Foster Trio. Proceeds from the Gala will support the operations of Nazareth Home. See some highlights from the Gala in the photos below. To see more of the Gala recap go to www.nazarethhome.com



Taste of Nick's

Thanks to Liz Kikalos, and her daughter Angela Lukowski for hosting an incredible Taste of Nick's event on November 20th, at Dynasty Banquets in Hammond. Guests were treated to an array of hors d'oeuvres as they sipped and tasted a wide array of spirits. Thanks to all who attended. Your support is deeply appreciated!

All Seasons Room Nears Completion

After more than a year of anticipation, the all seasons room at Nazareth Home is about to be completed. In August, a contractor began the demolition of the old deck to make way for the new addition, an enclosed, and heated addition, giving the children a year-round play area regardless of weather conditions.

Major contributions for the porch renovation came from First Midwest Bank, Citizen's Savings Foundation, as well as donations from many other supporters. Deb Trelo, a Nazareth Home staff member, spoke for many, saying, "The space is a wonderful new addition, providing an expanded area for the therapists to work with the children on developing their motor skills. And it will be a bright and cheery room in which the staff and volunteers can play with the children, as well." Sister Barbara said "I'm excited to see it finally finished, so that the kids have more room to explore."

Many of the children require regular physical, occupational, and speech therapy. This expanded space will allow NHI to incorporate equipment and special toys that will enhance the sensory and motor skills development of the children, in an open, airy, and sunny environment.

Nazareth Home Wish List

See the complete wish list & gift registry at:

www.nazarethhome.com

Volunteer Story

When Gretchen Bray went to work at St. Catherine Hospital in 1996, she found a rewarding career in healthcare. She was content with her job and life with her daughter, until a colleague mentioned that the hospital had a foster home for babies.



Gretchen has seen more than eighty babies come and go while volunteering at Nazareth Home. She confesses that her "first baby" was Justin. "Being a "Cuddler" has added so much joy to my life, she says." At one time, her daughter even accompanied her on her volunteer visits, and also formed attachments with several of the children. In addition to "cuddling" once/week, she has been actively involved in various fundraising events to support Nazareth Home, particularly the luncheons and the Galas (if you've attended the Gala, Gretchen is one of the first people you'll see, assisting at the registration table). She also faithfully attends the birthday parties, blessings (when the children leave to go back to their families or an adoptive home), and of course, the reunions.

Staff and volunteers alike often speak about the children who have been at Nazareth Home, and Gretchen voiced everyone's continuing desire—to hear more from the children who have gone back to their families or to adoptive homes: "They don't know how many people have fallen in love with them while they lived at Nazareth Home, and how they touched our lives, while we were thinking we were doing something for them. The children here often get a better start in life than children growing up in their own biological homes. I laugh when people say the children are spoiled (with love)—they're supposed to be loved!"

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Nazareth Home, a ministry of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, to care for poor and powerless infants and children, those unable to speak for themselves, by providing them with a loving, caring and stable beginning.

Volunteer View

Sojourner Truth House is graced with interns from Indiana University Northwest Social Work Department, from Purdue-Calumet Behavioral Science Department and from the Urban CPE Program located in Chicago. Three of them share their insights with us here.

Dorothy from IUN states: "I've become more aware of how STH operates and what services are provided by the agency. Observing Calumet Township and Medicaid, my eyes were opened to the process of those funding systems and how slowly they work with the clients who are in a time-limited situation. My heart changed when I began working with the clients, hearing their various stories. The most rewarding part of my internship is being able to assist the clients in different aspects of their lives and see the ray of hope in their eyes as they move forward."

Crystal from Purdue-Calumet: "Interning at STH has made me more aware of how many women and children are homeless and the various ages and races that they come in. I was surprised at how much support and aid FEMA gives to individuals who need disaster relief. I was also surprised at the variety of possessions that STH provides to clients when they move into their own residences and how the clients are able to come to STH and use the phones to take care of business as well as mingle, eat and take classes. My heart is still the same; I've always wanted to help the homeless and people with any kind of disorders or disabilities, and I want to continue to work with them in the future."

Kristin from Urban CPE: "I have become more aware of the various supports and hurdles that the women move within trying to secure housing. It is a very difficult system to understand and learn, and, therefore, easy for them to get confused. I see that STH tries to help navigate these systems so this doesn't happen. My heart continues to be saddened when I see women who are trying so hard to move forward keep hitting wall after wall."



CLIENT CORNER

By Pamela Key, MSW

Nine women from Sojourner Truth House were selected to be special guests for the 1st Annual Women in Business Seminar hosted by Indiana Minority Enterprise at the Gary Genesis Convention Center on September 15, 2008. The purpose of the event was to promote business-to-business networking. Unbeknownst to the nine participants, they were the VIP's for the event. The ladies were provided clothing for the event and were driven to the event by limousine. Upon their arrival, they were escorted on the red carpet to the door. All of the participants were then given full spa services consisting of manicures, massages, new hair styles and gift bags that included \$100.00 gift certificates. All of the gifts were donated by the businesses who participated in the event as well as other community organizations. Two participants even received savings accounts from Harris Bank.

In order to attend, interested clients had to write an essay explaining how they have benefited from services at STH and what they do to give back to the community. Of the nine participants selected, the top four winners were given the opportunity to present their essays at the seminar. I watched as the audience gave full and undivided attention because these were the real voices of those who had first hand experiences of homelessness. They were bold in their presentations informing the audience of other barriers that exist in their lives along with being homeless. Some were not ashamed to shed tears as they told of their lives before becoming homeless. More than anything, they talked about the camaraderie and treasured friendships they had developed among STH participants. Lastly, they were able to express their freedom in knowing that they were not the only ones going through this tragedy and that they have the support of the staff of Sojourner Truth House. These ladies were truly honored and they learned that others in the community were willing to help.

Those in attendance were able to see the true faces of homelessness and also come to a deeper awareness of a major social problem in our community. As a result, members of the event's steering committee have followed up, providing services that include assistance with NIPSCO bill payments, employment opportunities and housing prospects. Other service sponsors who attended the event have contacted STH to make donations as well.

WISH LIST

Most Needed Items:

Winter Coats	Sanitary Pads
Canned & Frozen Meats	Tampons
Pasta & Sauces	Deodorant
Canned Vegetables	Toothpaste
Canned Tuna & Salmon	Toothbrushes
Bread Products	Large Combs & Brushes
Juice & Drinks	Shampoo/Conditioner

Thanksgiving Gala

Thanks to all who supported the non-event Gala. We sincerely hope that you enjoyed your evening of relaxation. Proceeds are used for operation of the Food Pantry, the Clothes Closet, providing counseling services, support groups and many other services to clients. We value your continued commitment to our mission.

Be Aware

by Alice R. Dawson

Office Coordinator
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know what cancer really is. Often, when we think of cancer, we think of pain, sickness, hair loss and death. I wanted the participants to know the facts and that it is not a hopeless battle.

As I explained to the women about cancer and how it spreads, I asked for a show of hands if anyone knew someone who had cancer. One woman raised her hand and said "My mother," while another woman mentioned a friend. I explained that if there is a family history of cancer, the risk is greater. One woman asked, "...my aunt on my father's side had it. Am I at risk?" The answer to that question is yes.

After sharing with the women the last few days of my mother's life as she battled breast cancer and how bravely my five year old daughter handled her death, their tears mirrored their reflections on their own mortality.

I went on to state that doctors cannot tell why one person develops cancer and another does not. But there are some ***NEW*** common risk factors for cancer: ***growing old, certain hormones and chemicals, certain types of radiation, alcohol abuse and, again, a family history of cancer.*** Having one or more of these risk factors does not mean that you will get cancer. In fact, most people who have these risk factors never develop cancer. But avoiding risk factors, whenever possible, can help prevent cancer. I asked the women not to lose their perspective, but to take a few minutes to remember those they knew who lost their lives to cancer; to remember those who have been diagnosed and are struggling; to remember those who have survived; and to pray for those women in the future who are at risk. I asked them to hope and pray for a cure. I ask the same of you.

Know that fighting cancer is a mind set. If you give up in your mind, your fight is over and you lose. If you fight in your mind, you **increase your ability to survive** and you win. I leave you with a portion of a song written by "Destiny's Child" that has been changed to fit my situation.

"My Story"

"I'm a survivor, I'm going to make it; I will not stop, I will work harder; I'm a survivor, I'm going to make it; I will survive and keep on surviving".

I believe the group participants got the point.

Reflection

by Sister Peg Spindler, CSA

Reflecting on the holiday season marked by so many faith traditions, the word GIFT comes to mind. However we image God, we all can identify blessings in our lives, some of us more than others. Please note the various gifts given through our staff, volunteers and community partners as you read Volunteer View, Client Corner and Staff Strength. Please realize the gifts we all receive each day in the course of the services we provide. Please know all this giftedness flows into the community in myriad ways through our participants, through our advocacy efforts and through the hope engendered in many hearts. In the magnificence of these holidays, let us give thanks for the richness and the giftedness swirling at Sojourner Truth House.

Reminder...

With the end of the year quickly approaching, many are thinking about what year-end gifts they will be making to their favorite charities. A gift of \$100 or more to Sojourner Truth House has the added bonus of an additional tax credit, thanks to Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA). Earlier this summer, Sojourner Truth House was awarded NAP (Neighborhood Assistance Program) Tax Credits from IHCDA. These tax credits act as an incentive to help leverage more contributions from individuals and businesses for programs such as the Emergency Food Services provided at STH. You can receive a tax credit of 50% of the contribution amount, to be subtracted from your state income tax liability.

Contributions can be made via:

Cash • Check • Credit Card • Stock (that has been sold) • Donations designated to the recipient through United Way • In-Kind Donations (limited to building materials) • Property Donations (that will be used for or pertains to current NAP activity).

Donations totaling \$100.00 or more, made from July 1, 2008 - June 5, 2009 are eligible for the tax credits. For more information, call 219-947-8559.

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*Send all comments to above address
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ksiuba@ancilla.org*

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*Rena Brantley; Editor
Kristen Siuba; Layout & Design*



Ministries of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ



Online Donations



Are you passionate about partnering with us in our work? Gifts to support Bethany Retreat House, Nazareth Home and Sojourner Truth House, ministries of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, may be made online using your credit card through the **SECURE** PHJC website. The process couldn't be easier. **100%** of your gift will go directly to support the work of the ministries. You may select multiple ministries for your gift. The donation may be divided among those ministries in the amount you designate on the donation form.

Where do I Start?

1. Visit the website of your choice for information about your donation. *Websites are listed on page 1.*
2. Click on the **"Donate Now"** link for donation details.
3. Click on the **"Make your Donation"** link to be forwarded to the PHJC website to begin your **secure** donation.
4. Complete the form and click **"Process Donation"**.
5. You will receive immediate confirmation that your donation has been completed.

Calendar of Events

November - December

- November 29**
(STH) Thanksgiving Non-Event Gala
- December 19**
(BRH) Open House & Christmas Shopping Event

Retreat dates available at Bethany Retreat House

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Bethany Retreat House, Nazareth Home, and Sojourner Truth House join in wishing you and all those close to you a Joyous Holiday season and Best Wishes for the Gift of Faith, the Blessing of Hope, and a New Year of Peace and Happiness in the World!