

The Gift of Yourself

For the Children Who Wait

Christmas is a time when most of us think of sharing: gift-giving, meeting the material wants of our family, our friends, our spiritual brothers in need. There are, of course, always many in the community who need our material aid and we have been asking you to remember them with gifts of food, clothing, household goods, money.

There is another kind of gift, though. The gift of yourself. Sharing your time and your energy, your love and your home meets equally important needs and is truly a gift that returns to you in fulfillment.

In the spirit of Christmas, we'd like to draw your attention to a very special way of giving, to one of the most needy groups of love and patience and security, their potential for joy in living and achievement can be fulfilled.

You have probably heard that there are very few babies for adoption. This is true. You may also have heard that adoption is difficult, expensive and limited to the financially well-off. Not so — many requirements have been changed in recent years.

Did you know that in New York State alone a minimum of 2132 children are waiting for families of their own?

Most of these youngsters are healthy and of average or better intelligence. A great many are white, a few mixed-race or Puerto Rican; 1094 of them are full black. Whatever the race, with the majority the only handicap is age — that is being older than seven and "too old" to fit the requirements of the average adopting parents.

There is also a smaller number of children between four and

seven years old with possible adjustment problems; but with love and patience and security, his potential for joy in living and achievement can be fulfilled.

And they, in turn can give his adoptive families all the satisfactions of parenthood.

Sometimes children are "hard-to-place" because they are in pairs or sets — brothers and sisters. Many are normal and well-adjusted in every way but are intellectually slow, in need of parents who will not only encourage and stimulate them, but also accept them as they are.

Like these, but requiring special understanding and care, are the educable and trainable retarded and the physically or emotionally handicapped. Unlike the healthy normal youngsters, those children with more severe problems may be waiting even though they are toddlers, or infants. When physical handicaps are likely to be costly to correct or care for, adoptive parents may qualify for medical subsidy, regardless of income. There are also supplemental subsidies available for children handicapped in other ways, including age, which are granted annually according to income.

Could your family circle expand to take in another child? This Christmas give the gift of love and make next Christmas a truly blessed one for Kimberly who is 12, for 9-year-old John, for black and beautiful Paul and Yvette.

For information about adopting the children who wait, contact Catholic Family Center, 50 Chestnut St., (716) 546-7220.

Neediest

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58 Mrs. S. is a mother with five children. She is in the hospital at the present time and an aunt is caring for the little ones. Any gifts to help the aunt out at Christmas time would be appreciated. St. Martin de Porres Center.

59 Mrs. D. is a mother caring for her three children and her husband who is ill. The husband has cancer and there are heavy medical bills with nothing to look forward to for Christmas. St. Martin de Porres Center.

60 Mrs. H. is living on welfare assistance. Her husband left the home and she has six boys, ages six to 16 years. Any help given to her at Christmas time would be sincerely appreciated as she is struggling to get along in the home and keep the family together. St. Martin de Porres Center.

61 Two years ago four children were left with Mr. and Mrs. A. by their parents who were friends of the A. family. Neither parent has been heard of since. This family is receiving assistance from Monroe County Department of Social Services and the four children are included in the budget, but they do need clothing for school. The children are a girl, 10, a boy, 9, a girl, 7, and a girl, 5. The family needs toys and food for Christmas; they badly need a refrigerator also. Catholic Family Center.

62 Mr. C. is employed but does not earn enough to fully support his family consisting of his wife and five children, a boy, 18, a boy, 15, a girl, 11, a girl, 4, and a girl, 1 year. Monroe County Department of Social Services gives supplemental assistance. This family really tries very hard, but problems keep coming up: gas and electric service was cut off. When the family paid the bill, the rent could not be paid on time. The C. family needs two beds and clothing for the children and a Christmas dinner. Catholic Family Center.

63 Mrs. D. is a widow with six children. She receives financial assistance from the Monroe County Department of Social Services as does her aged father who lives in the home. Her children range in age from 4 to 17 years. Mrs. D. does well in rearing her children but at times things get overwhelming. Even so, when her sister died on Nov. 7, 1973, leaving six children without parents, Mrs. D. without hesitation took these children into her home. The children range in age from 8 to 18. They are supported by a grant from the Monroe County Department of Social Services. This entire family is in need of items to bring some cheer at this holiday time — a big dinner, toys for the younger children and clothing. Catholic Family Center.

64 Mrs. J. is the mother of seven children. It is difficult at times being both mother and father but she is doing a fine job and this is a close family. Catholic Family Center.

[More cases next week]



ALL IN THE FAMILY Sarah Child

In a recent newspaper there was a story about a young girl going to court to get permission to change her name from a two-syllable Anglo-Saxon surname to a four-syllable family name that was her father's before he came to this country.

She told the judge that she "has developed a strong feeling of pride in the land of my parents' origin and would like to carry the name that my father was known by in his native land."

Her father and mother had changed the family name to an easily pronounced name when they emigrated from Poland to this country.

Added the young woman: "It is no longer inconvenient and embarrassing to have a foreign name" and she said she "would carry (her family name) with a great deal of pride."

We can look forward to a great deal more of this kind of reasoning by the descendants of those who came to this great melting pot and changed their names for a variety of reasons.

Some European immigrants had no choice in the matter of name changing. Upon arriving at Ellis Island they were greeted by authorities who could not or would not pronounce the polysyllabic European names.

The officials took it upon themselves to change names, simply informing the newcomers that that was the way it would be.

Today, third and fourth generations, secure in their place as Americans, well-educated and proud of their heritage, are embracing their forbears' land of origin.

The more homogenized and blah the American culture becomes, the more they seek the ethnic differences that make them individuals.

Name changing will not be the only way of expressing the discontent with being one of a faceless crowd.

There will be a resurgence to traditional dress, foods, language, music, literature, and even recreation.

It is not unlikely that these same people will attempt a return to the kind of religion their great grandparents practiced.

For those who see such a trend as just another fad as those currently perpetrated and run into the ground by some young people, it must be admitted that manias often precede established practice.

In the long run, however, after the cult makers have tired of the ethnic we should still be left with a residue that can only enrich all of us and our country.

MRS. BLAKE DIES

New Canaan, Conn. [RNS] — Mrs. Eugene Carson Blake, wife of the retired general secretary of the World Council of Churches, died here on Nov. 15. She had been in poor health for several years.



Photo by Susan McKinney

Christmas Shopping

Lorna Aponte makes her purchase at the checkout counter during the Rochester Jaycees' annual Christmas shopping trip. Standing behind Lorna are [left to right] Glendoly Blance, Mrs. Joyce Lockwood, Mrs. Gordon Lewis, Felix Long and Cynthia Ortiz. The Jaycees assisted 35 children from Mt. Carmel School with their Christmas shopping.

Whatever You Do For The Least of My Brothers...



CHRISTMAS FUND

SEND DONATIONS TO

Catholic Charities 50 Chestnut Street