



Christmas Fund

Christmas Fund: Time Is Short

The Courier-Journal/Catholic Charities Christmas Fund has but two weeks to go.

Despite the increasing number of claims on their compassion and charity, the people of the diocese have given more and more each year to this fund, since its inception in 1969, providing a measure of relief to more and more of the poor, sad and lonely, the ill, the victims of misfortune.

It was noted last week in this regard that "We exercise responsible stewardship when we look and care for the needs of one another, especially the neediest, to enable all people to be fully alive and in love with life."

Each of the stories of the neediest cases is true. In order

to protect the dignity of the individuals and families whose plight is revealed, some identifying information is not given.

In each story is an invitation to ease the burdens of our fellow diocesans.

Each week the Courier-Journal will publish these true stories of suffering, stories of people who deserve our special consideration:

Checks should be written to the Courier-Journal/Catholic Charities Christmas Fund, and mailed under that name to

Courier-Journal
Catholic Charities
Christmas Fund
50 Chestnut St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14604

Neediest Cases

51 I has been unable to work for the past two years because of persistent poor health due to a back injury. She finds it difficult to support her four children and often has to seek donations of food and clothing. She encourages her children in school so that they will be able to earn higher incomes than she ever has been able.

52 M lives with her seven children in a rural area in a house so dilapidated it is almost beyond repair. She cannot move because of her limited

income, and struggles to meet her family's food and clothing needs.

53 B lives with her son. She works but is unable to meet routine expenses. She has mental problems and often misses work because of her bouts with depression. Other members of her family have turned their backs on her.

54 M is an elderly woman without either family or friends. Though she is in fair health physically, her emotional state is such that she rarely

can bear to go outside her home; and when she does, it is a distressing experience.

55 E's wife was taken ill several months ago and is now in a nursing home. He is completely lost without her. The tasks of shopping, cooking and managing their small fixed income seem to overwhelm him in his grief.

56 The Ys are a young married couple with a two-year-old son. Mrs. Y is pregnant. The family barely has enough money to meet basic needs and has recently moved to a smaller apartment to save money.

57 L is single, family-less and friendless. He is presently living on a disability check, an income which barely meets his few needs.

58 Mrs. B is a widow whose Social Security income is stretched to meet the needs of the following people who live in her home: two teenage sons, a mentally retarded older woman for whom she has cared the past 27 years, a toddler neglected by its natural parents and two teenage girls and their babies.

59 M, in her 70s, had been living with her child's family, but moved to her own apartment when she felt the house was too small. She is living on a fixed income and has begun to feel overwhelmed by the expenses of setting up housekeeping and rent. She runs out of money for food.

60 L, nearly 70, lives alone in a disadvantaged neighborhood. Once an active and outgoing person, the financial, emotional and physical problems of growing old have made her almost a recluse. She lives almost entirely in the past. She frequently does not have enough money to eat properly.

61 V, his wife and his daughter speak little English, and as a result have encountered many problems. V worked a number of years as a cook, but serious medical problems have forced him to relinquish his employment. His attempts to obtain public assistance, despite his doctor's declaration of total disability, have so far proved fruitless, largely because of the language barrier. In addition, without an income in the house, the family faces a foreclosure on the mortgage, a shutoff on the utilities and difficulty on the other bills.

62 K is a senior citizen, alone and ailing. She loves children very much and used to work with them in various homes and family centers. Her fixed income is such that she is having difficulty paying her bills. She qualifies for neither Medicaid nor food stamps.

63 D recently moved into the area with her two children from another state. She is on a fixed income, and although she has found an apartment, is unable to purchase furniture for her family.

64 Because of his limited educational opportunities J works for the minimum wage to support his wife, himself and their four children. As a result they may be unable to buy

either adequate food or fuel this winter.

65 The Ms live in an area where there is no running water because of jurisdictional disputes. They are both out of work and often in need of food. Their sole entertainment is a radio.

66 K holds down two jobs to support his family of 8. Traveling to and from his rural home to work has caused such wear and tear on his car that it had to be replaced recently, putting an added strain on a budget already strained with the expense of providing constant medication for two of his children.

67 W is the mother of three teenage daughters, two of whom have babies, each less than a year old. The family is on a fixed income and their apartment is both rodent and roach infested.

68 B is an elderly woman who has both high blood pressure and a heart condition. She recently set up housekeeping, but, on a fixed income, B is unable to buy many standard household items, and hasn't even a winter coat.

69 M is six years old and lives with his disabled grandmother, dependent on SSI for their entire income. The two are desperately in need of clothing, but cannot stretch their budget enough to include that item.

70 T is nearing 90. She lives alone in a small, dark apartment in a deteriorating neighborhood. She has outlived her family and friends and so is isolated and lonely. She never leaves her quarters because she is ill and has only limited mobility.

71 Y recently moved here from Puerto Rico. She is 16 years old, living with her brother, his wife and two children. Her brother is trying as best he can to support the whole family, but is finding it very difficult. Y attends high school, but is ashamed of her clothing.

72 L has recently separated from her husband. She has three children. Because of illness she is unable to work and must try to make ends meet on her small public assistance check.

73 The Gs have four children, three of whom are retarded. Their income is such that providing a suitable environment for the handicapped youngsters has severely straddled the family's budget.

74 The H family of eight lives in a run-down house which they rent. The children are often sick and miss school a great deal. The father is mentally retarded, the mother supports the family. Each day is a struggle to survive with so little money.

75 C is the mother of four children. She receives monthly public assistance. The major part of the time C is bed-ridden due to a serious back problem. She is scheduled for surgery, but that may have to be postponed because her general health is so poor. It is occasionally necessary to seek aid for help with cooking and cleaning.



Sister Mary Jean Smith welcomes the congregation in the name of Sister Jamesine Riley.



Sister Judith Heberle, RSM, was present at the reception, as was Sister Mary Matthew, to the right.

SSJs Celebrate 125th 'A Wonderful Occasion!'

Canandaigua— More than 900 people crowded into St. Mary's Church here on Sunday to pay tribute to the diocesan Sisters of St. Joseph who are observing the 125th anniversary of their foundation in the area.

The festivities included a Mass with Bishop Matthew H. Clark as principal concelebrant and homilist, and a party in the school hall.

According to Sister Mary Jean Smith who attended the celebration in the place of Sister Jamesine Riley, superior general, who was unable to attend because of illness, more than 450 sisters from the diocesan foundation were present. She said that other foundations of the congregation also sent representatives to the event.

Also present were sisters from other congregations in the diocese.

In the course of the Mass celebration a brief spiritual history of the congregation was recited by Sister Evelyn Connolly, who recounted the story of the first foundation in Le Puy, France, in 1650, through the first American foundation in St. Louis, Mo., to the Canandaigua settlement on Dec. 8, 1854.

In his homily, Bishop Clark spoke highly of the congregation and its work. He challenged the entire

assembly at the Mass to recognize that, as individuals, they are as yet "unfinished persons," and he encouraged them to continue the pursuit of perfection on the personal/spiritual level.

It was evident in the celebration that many of those attending were especially stirred by the music which was used during the Mass. During the offertory, a polyphonic hymn, Te Joseph, was sung in Latin by the sisters; and a second Latin hymn, the Magnificat, was sung at Communion time. Approving comments were heard from laymen present about both songs.

The music also included pieces written by Sister Mary Florian, SSJ, and a hymn with guitar accompaniment and a closing hymn with organ, bass and trumpet accompaniment.

Following the Mass, the crowd gathered for a reception at the school hall. There, the parish, under the direction of Msgr. William Roche, pastor, had prepared a luncheon for the large gathering. On display were accounts of both the ministries and the history of the congregation.

"This is just a wonderful occasion," said Sister Mary Jean, "there is so much joy here."



Bishop Clark accepts the offertory gifts from Sisters Agnes Cecelia Troy and Miriam Monaghan.