

Agency funds offer help for variety of needs

By Barbara Ann Homick
Staff writer

GENEVA — This hasn't been a good year for James Milliman, to say the least.

In the summer of 1989, Milliman suffered severely torn ligaments in his ankle when he slipped on some rocks at Cascade Falls in Attica. At the time, Milliman worked as a home-improvement subcontractor in Rochester so his injury prevented him from working.

Since that time, Milliman has worked for his current landlord, painting and doing odd jobs. Although he said he also does work for friends to keep busy, Milliman makes little money.

In addition to his accident, Milliman, 29, and his girlfriend, Rebecca Sullivan, 22, had their second child together on Aug. 15, 1990. Little James Milliman was born with the bones in his forehead fused together,

CATHOLIC COURIER SOCIAL MINISTRY Christmas APPEAL

buy Christmas gifts.

To help Milliman with his Christmas shopping, Adams instructed the Canandaigua man to make a list of the gifts he wanted to get his children. After scouring a department store flyer, Adams said the two men decided \$75 would be a sufficient amount of money to meet Milliman's needs.

Christmastime is no busier than any other time of the year for Adams.

"There's no rhyme or reason to people's needs. People have to relocate, they get sick or their utilities get shut off," said Adams, who has worked at FLOSM for four years. "It's a year-round job."



The Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry gave Angela Stratton enough gas money to get to her place of employment to pick up a paycheck.



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
James Milliman of Canandaigua will be able to provide a Christmas for his family thanks to funds he received from the annual Catholic Courier-Social Ministry Christmas Appeal Fund.

which caused pressure on the optic nerve. After surgery in November, the baby's vision was corrected — before the operation he could only see shadows — but his father said he will most likely be handicapped for life.

Milliman and Sullivan, a full-time business student at Community College of the Finger Lakes, also have a 21-month-old daughter, Sabrina, and two children from Sullivan's previous marriage (5-year-old Thomas and 4-year-old Kasey).

Even though his children have been a financial strain on him, Milliman said he wouldn't trade them for anything. His lack of funds, however, made Milliman realize that he would not be able to provide Christmas gifts for his family this year.

A friend of Milliman's referred him to the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry. After a Dec. 13 visit with Bernard Adams, the human service specialist at FLOSM, Milliman got help.

Due to funds from the annual Catholic Courier-Social Ministry Christmas Appeal, Adams was able to give Milliman

several bags of food, diapers and money to Much like other agencies that receive Christmas Appeal funds, FLOSM is given its money in mid-January and must budget the money for the remainder of the year. To meet his clients needs, Adams said he exhausts at least \$1,000 a month, even though in November his expenses totalled \$1,446.

In November, appeal funds helped 40 families with such expenses as rent, medical assistance, transportation, utilities, clothing and furnishings. FLOSM issues check vouchers to clients instead of handing out cash to ensure that the money is spent for the intended uses, Adams said.

Like Milliman, Stanley Jackson did not know where to turn for help. Jackson — who suffers from diabetes — needs frequent checkups, but he has not been able to afford a visit to the doctor for more than a year. His former doctor retired, and a new physician refuses to see him without insurance. Jackson said he cannot afford insurance because he only works part-time as a dishwasher.

Jackson — who is paying child support for his two children — had also been unable to pay for the medication necessary to control his condition. He said he had been feeling very sick and knew he had to get help. He sought assistance from the Department of Social Services, but they told the 33-year-old Geneva man that he made too much money to get any aid.

After being referred to FLOSM, Jackson was issued a check for \$37.95 to fill his prescription.

Thanks to the Christmas appeal, Jackson said he is feeling much better. "I didn't think I was going to get the help I needed. My luck had been so bad, and I was worrying all the time about getting my medicine," he said.

Jackson plans to obtain full-time work after the new year at a car-parts manufacturer in Lyons.

Although FLOSM generally works on a one-time assistance basis, Adams said he would help Jackson again if necessary.

Angela Stratton, 38, has returned to FLOSM several times because she said she is comfortable with the agency. Adams helped Stratton with a \$425 rent payment in October, and gave her \$10 for gas this month so that she could pick up her paycheck at her place of employment — Taylor Brown Nursing Home in Waterloo.

The mother of 11-year-old Julie and 9-year-old Robert, Stratton receives no sup-

port from her imprisoned ex-husband. She said she will just barely make it financially for Christmas.

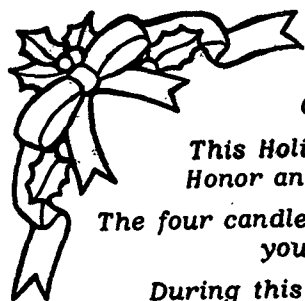
For Maria Pollot, 27, this won't be a fairy tale Christmas. But the Geneva resident is happy that she still has running water in her home.

Pollot's troubles began when her wallet — containing \$283 from her welfare check — was stolen in a supermarket. "I just turned my back to look at the meat, and when I turned around, it was gone," she explained.

Pollot receives food from FLOSM every third or fourth month. But when she couldn't pay her water bill, she turned to Adams, who gave her \$30. A pregnant mother of three, Pollot rents her home from the Geneva Housing Authority, and said she couldn't imagine how she would have taken care of her family if her water had been shut off.

Pollot said she appreciates the respect she receives at FLOSM. "They don't hassle you. The other places ask you 20 questions. Here they don't get in to your private life," she commented.

Milliman said that no one appreciates the assistance from the Christmas Appeal more than he does. "I'd really like to thank them for helping me provide somewhat of a Christmas for my kids. I don't know what Christmas would be like this year if they weren't helping out," he said.

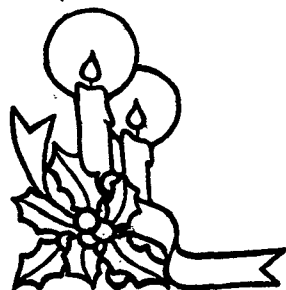


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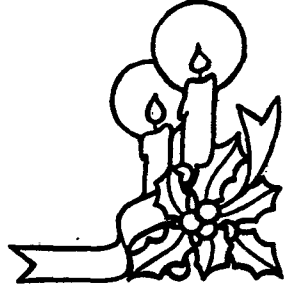
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The four candles represent your Grief, your Courage, your Memories and your Love.

During this Season of New Hope, may you find Peace and Joy in Remembering.



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