

CATHOLIC COURIER SOCIAL MINISTRY
**Christmas
APPEAL**

Shawna is a teenage mother of three children. The youngest is receiving treatment for lead poisoning. Shawna is determined to finish her high-school equivalency degree so she can go on to job training. It is a struggle for her to pursue her studies while caring for a sick infant and raising the other two children, but Shawna has the will to succeed. She and her children have some special personal needs this winter.

Veronica's apartment was burglarized, and her few belongings were stolen or destroyed. She moved into safer quarters and is trying to establish a new home for herself and her three children. She has been very resourceful, gleaning furniture items from other people's trash. She needs to purchase and replace a few personal items for herself and the youngsters.

To help support her family, JB dropped out of school at 13 and took a job on an assembly line. She married young, but wound up abused and abandoned before her third child was born. Since then, she has been trying to get education and training that will enable her to get off public assistance. The children all need shoes and winter coats this year, and some warmth for their Christmas.

Abby, 19, has a 13-month-old daughter and another baby on the way. Her children's father is serving a lengthy prison sentence. The separation is difficult, but Abby is trying to provide a good home for her children. She needs some personal items, a baby stroller, vacuum cleaner and a blanket for her bed.

Nina ran away from abusive, alcoholic parents at the age of 15. She has been on and off public assistance for the last seven years, working whenever she could until her first child was born. The child is now 15-months-old, and Nina is expecting another baby in the spring. She needs baby items, especially a double stroller, and winter boots for the toddling daughter.

Gary is a young man who asked the American Red Cross for help in obtaining extensive dental care. That agency is unable to cover the entire cost. Christmas Appeal funds could make up the difference.

Josie got off public assistance and for the last year has managed to support herself, her mother and three children on her modest income. Last month, Josie's employer cut her work hours. Medical bills for her mother and her child, meanwhile, have used up her small savings. She needs help to avoid eviction and put some groceries on the table.

Susan, a 30-year-old parent of two children, lost her minimum-wage job after working for eight months. Although her earnings were low and she had no health insurance, the job had allowed her to afford decent housing.

Success stories ...

★ A former city resident back in town for a court appearance, Jorge spent his last dime to pay off the judgment against him, rather than go to jail. \$8.50 from the Christmas Appeal got him back to Elmira in time for work the next day.

★ Abandoned by her husband, left with no income and old debts, Mrs. S. couldn't find or keep a job in her rural area of Tioga county without a reliable car. \$200 from Christmas Appeal made it possible for her to support herself and her three children.

She is waiting to learn whether she will receive public assistance, but her rent and utility bills need to be paid now. Even if her application is approved, Susan will need almost \$200 to make ends meet this month.

John and Mary have two sons and a daughter. They barely get by on their combined incomes. Then John's company relocated to the South. The family lost not only John's income, but his medical benefits as well. One child's chronic medical condition requires medication that costs about \$45 per month.

Michael and his wife live in a rural county of the diocese and have a small child. He works to support his family while his wife stays home because the couple cannot afford child care. Michael works three part-time jobs for minimum wages, and receives no health benefits. He and his wife managed to live within their means until their car broke down. The cost of the repairs is beyond their financial resources. But without a working automobile, Michael will lose his job and be unable to support his family.

David is looking for a job. He has found an opportunity, but can't afford to purchase the special protective shoes that are required.

Michelle is the sole support of her two small children. She drives 20 miles each day to her nursing job. Michelle's hours were cut back recently. Now, her car insurance is due, and without use of her car Michelle will not be able to keep her job.

Tom, Julie and their children left a meager existence in Texas because a New England factory had assured them of employment. But when they arrived, they learned that the promised jobs had been given to others. On their way back to Texas, the family ran out of money in the Finger Lakes region. Food and gas money would enable them to make it back to Texas where family members will take them in until they can support themselves.

Judy, a 30-year-old single mother of three school-age children, is trying to finish a two-year college degree so she can better provide for her family. She receives public assistance and student grants. Judy has the opportunity to move out of substandard housing and into a place more suitable for her family. Public assistance will help with the rent, but will not provide the security deposit. The landlord is willing to take only half now and let Judy pay the rest over the next year. Just \$225 stands between her and decent housing.

Mildred, 65, is a recent widow. Her husband had very little in Social Security benefits. Mildred needs help with daily expenses so she can pay her property taxes this year.

Bill is a 68-year-old widower whose late wife handled all the family finances. After her death, Bill began receiving bills from medical institutions demanding payment for his wife's expenses. Bill didn't know how to work with the insurance companies or with the hospital billing departments. He tried to pay all the bills in full, and nearly bankrupted himself in the process. Now Bill is unable to meet some of his own basic needs and is still facing some major bills.

James, a young father of four preschoolers, suffered a serious injury that keeps him from working as a home improvement contractor. He faces several months of recuperation with no income. James has asked for grocery vouchers and help in providing "some kind of Christmas" for his family.

Stan suffers from diabetes and needs frequent checkups, but has been unable to afford a visit to the doctor for more than a year. His former physician retired and the only other doctor in his rural area will not take on uninsured patients. Stan cannot afford insurance on his earnings as a part-time dishwasher. Often he doesn't even have cash to refill his \$37.95 prescription. He has been promised full-time work within the next few months, but until then, he relies on emergency aid.

Mary's husband of 18 years died a few months before their fourth child was born. Mary works at night in a nursing home to support her family. Her two older children, ages 16 and 15, watch the five year old and the baby while Mary works. She regularly accepts overtime. All her earnings go toward rent and overdue bills. She has very little left for food and other basic needs. Mary isn't even thinking about the holidays. Her primary concern is surviving today.

What can your gift do?

- \$8.67 will buy formula for a newborn infant left in her grandmother's care by the baby's mother, who is addicted to drugs.
- \$10 will put food on the table for a family of four for four days.
- \$10 will pay for an antibiotic to cure the ear infection of a child whose parents have no health insurance.
- \$10 will buy new shoes for a child whose feet are growing faster than is the income of his single mother.
- \$20 will provide a telephone for the young mother of a sick infant.

**I want to help the needy of the Diocese of Rochester.
Here is my contribution to the 1991 Appeal.**

MAIL TO:
Christmas Appeal, Diocese of Rochester
1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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