



Joseph's Coat

Newsletter
DECEMBER 2009

Carol at the Manger:

*Holy Child within the manger, long ago but ever near;
Come as friend to every stranger; come as hope for every fear.
As you lived to heal the broken, greet the outcast, free the bound,
As you taught us love unspoken, teach us now where you are found.*

*Once again we tell the story, how your love for us was shown,
When the image of your glory wore an image like our own.
Come enlighten with your wisdom, come and fill us with your grace,
May the fire of your compassion kindle every land and race.*

*Holy Child within the manger, lead us ever in your way,
So we see in every stranger, how you come to us today.
In our lives and in our living give us strength to live as you,
That our hearts might be forgiving and our spirits strong and true.*

- Marty Haugen

St. Nicholas Day!

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your amazing generosity to us. You continue to gift us with the things we most need; we feel truly blessed. We are grateful beyond the telling for your loving care and your great kindness.

We feel so very fortunate! It seems as if everyone is offering something! Businesses in the community call asking how they can help. The smallest school children are gathering hats and mittens and the older teens are organizing clothing drives among their peers. A lovely family that has been helping us for years has made about fifty St. Nicholas Day bags filled with candy, crayons, small toys and other goodies for our smallest shoppers who just love them. A little bit ago, a group from a local business came and worked much of the day filling hygiene bags so we could have them ready for our shoppers by the first of the month. A wonderful family we know has an opportunity to obtain gently used tennis shoes. They pick them up at a Minneapolis location, launder each pair in their home, air dry them and bring them down to the store for us to give away to those who need them. Numerous churches have collection boxes on the premises and faithful volunteers bring the donated items down to the store each week.

THANK YOU!

Both businesses, schools and individuals have dropped off a wonderful supply of jackets and handmade scarves and mittens for everyone!! The West 7th Business Association has been doing a jacket drive for us and they have contributed many new and gently used jackets for us to give to those in need. Local businesses have helped facilitate this by placing a box or bin on site for collecting these much needed items. We are very grateful for the generosity of the business association as well as the whole Twin Cities community.

THANK YOU!

Today, we were blessed with a tremendous number of beautiful hand made quilts that not only keep our clients cozy and warm through the night but also beautify their rooms/spaces. We so appreciate this unique and fabulous gift.

THANK YOU!

Many who can, gift us monetarily so we can pay the rent, heat the store, turn the lights on and pay for other services. We are truly grateful for these funds and use them very carefully on behalf of those we serve.

THANK YOU!

I am certain that none of your generosity goes unnoticed by our God and I pray each day, that you too, will be blessed beyond your imagining for your wonderful kindness to Joseph's Coat.

A LITTLE BIT OF KINDNESS

It was mid morning when I saw him. I noticed him because instead of coming in and picking up a bag to put his things in, he just sat down in the big blue chair. I approached him and asked if I could help him with anything. He looked up at me and told me that his feet were so sore, that he had a lot of big blisters and that his shoes were all worn out. He asked for different shoes. I said I would get some, but thought we should tend to his feet before we thought about shoes. I invited him to the hygiene area which is big and roomy, and unlike the store just then, there weren't many people back there. We had a group of women from a Burnsville church working that day, who had offered to remove the packaging from dozens of packages of new socks and underwear that had been recently donated so we could give them away more quickly and easily.

While he was taking off his shoes and socks, I filled a basin with warm water and added a little liquid soap. I had brought some clean towels for drying, and put one under the basin. He slipped his feet into the warm water. I could see him slowly began to relax. He told me he was homeless at the time, and that he walks a lot because he doesn't have money for the bus and thinks the exercise is good for him. I offered him a cup of coffee which he gratefully accepted and I went to get it along with antibiotic salve. I asked if I could see his feet so I would know what was needed. He had quarter size blisters on the front parts of his feet and some on his heels. Several were black and puffy.

While he rested and sipped his coffee, I went to get some new socks and a gently used pair of tennis shoes. After removing his feet from the water and drying them off, he slathered the antibiotic cream carefully over the blisters and I helped him get the socks on. I gave him a second pair of socks so he would have a clean pair. Immediately put it on over the first one, "for cushioning", he said. He stood up, said his feet felt a lot better and looked as if he were about to leave. I mentioned that he could use our public restroom to clean up a bit if he wished. I assured him that a lot of our homeless guests do this and suggested that it might make him feel better. While walking to the restroom, I selected a wash cloth and towels from the cubby where they are kept, gave him a comb, soap, deodorant and other essentials. I left the room, closed the door and went to help some other clients find what they needed. About 20 minutes later I saw him standing on the sidewalk right outside the store. He looked like a new person! He had shaved, washed and combed his hair, put on his clean clothes and had a smile on his face. He claimed he felt terrific and told me that even his feet weren't hurting. I gave him a hug and sent him on his way. "I'll be back to help you out one of these days. You sure have helped me. I feel like a new person", he said. He walked up the street, not quite dancing yet, but looking great and obviously feeling much better.

This is a true story from last September. I couldn't help but think about the miracle of transformation that occurred with a little bit of kindness. I even gave pause to wonder if he might be Christ visiting Joseph's Coat.



Joseph's Coat shoppers, having a good time!



Cheryl, Mary and Vicky along with Liz and our Board of Directors wish all of you and your families a very happy and peace filled Christmas and New Year. Thank you for your wonderful care of Joseph's Coat. We are truly grateful for your great kindness to us.



A few of our treasured long time Tuesday volunteers: Lillian (left) works at the linen table. Marcella (right), is our oldest volunteer at 94!! Both of these wonderful women have been coming almost weekly to sort donated clothing and linen since 1990!!



Rich works the door and the men's department on Tuesdays when he can. He is a smiling presence and so helpful at the door.



Todd takes names at the door on Mondays. He has a birthday this week, so Happy Birthday, Todd!



Marilee helps with shoes and at the present time, is also working at the table where we display Christmas decorations.



Tara sorts donated clothing on donation days and works some shopping days as well.



Suzanne comes when she can and works where needed.



Bonnie works in the toy area and the shoe department.



Konnie comes in later on Tuesday and helps us sort and clean up.

We have a great crew of 146 volunteers!! They make Joseph's Coat the fabulous place that it is. We are grateful for every one, for every minute of their precious time and for their kindness and care of our dear patrons. They are without doubt, FABULOUS!



Left to right: Cheryl (volunteer). Nikolay, Janet, Ricardo and Angela were in the store shopping the day I was taking these photos, wonderful people, dear friends, each one very special!!

FOR ALL THESE GIFTS AND FOR YOUR WONDERFUL CARE OF JOSEPH'S COAT, WE ARE TRULY GRATEFUL.

All of us at Joseph's Coat wish all of you and your families a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.

"Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and over-flowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you." ~ Luke 7:38

MANY THANKS...

To the church communities, foundations, businesses and individuals who support us financially. We could never manage without your generous help.

To our faithful donors who continue to gift us with clean seasonal clothing, household items and hygiene products. We are very grateful for your generosity.

To our wonderful volunteers, my dearest friends, extraordinary people. You are the heart of this ministry. Our doors would never open without you.

To my husband Larry, for his constant help, support and encouragement.

For these and for all our blessings, we are truly grateful.

NEEDS LIST FOR JOSEPH'S COAT

Clean **seasonal** clothing for men, women and children

T-shirts, socks and underwear, new or gently used

Outerwear appropriate for the season

Adult backpacks, sleeping bags, duffle bags

Shoes and boots, especially for our men

Books for adults (novels, mysteries)

Children's games, toys and books

Candles

Hygiene products: soap, toothpaste and brushes, deodorant, lotion, shampoo, conditioner, shaving soap, razors, foot powder, etc.

Household items: pots and pans, glassware, dishes and silverware, small electric items, sheets, blankets, towels, bedspreads, rugs for the bathroom and kitchen, etc.

Brown paper grocery bags



Cecelia



Jim & Brad



Sue & Tim

FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS FULLY TAX DEDUCTABLE. YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAY BE DESIGNATED TOWARD PURCHASING ITEMS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE WE ARE SERVING. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

SHOPPING HOURS: MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY, 9:00 - 4:30 & THE 2ND SATURDAY OF MOST MONTHS FROM 9:00 - 1:00

DONATION HOURS: TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, 9:00 - 2:00 & THE 2ND SATURDAY OF MOST MONTHS FROM 9:00 - 1:00 **OR BY APPOINTMENT.**

PLEASE CALL AHEAD FOR LARGE DONATIONS.

MAILING ADDRESS:

Joseph's Coat
P.O. Box 2202
St. Paul, MN 55102

CLOSING DATES FOR HOLIDAY TIMES:

December 21st - January 3rd for Christmas and New Years
March 29th - April 2nd for Holy Week and Easter

STREET ADDRESS: 1107 West 7th Street - On West 7th Street, 1 block West of Randolph, 1 mile East of 35E

PHONE #: 651-291-2472 **WEB:** josephscoatmn.org

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