



Photo By: Andrea Breeze of Breezey Photography

## *Queen of Angels Activity Center*

BY JULIE OVERLEASE

St. Mary's Home for Mothers will soon dedicate a new facility full of exciting potential, the Queen of Angels Activity Center. The dedication Mass will be held **Wednesday, July 12th at 9:30 am** in the SMHM chapel. This special community-based resource center will benefit moms who currently reside at St. Mary's Home for Mothers, past residents, Gabriel Project moms, remote moms in need of therapy or educational services, SMHM volunteers and community visitors.

The lower-level 3000 square feet SMHM space scheduled for June 2023 completion will feature a comfortable area to receive guests, a mudroom wall with bench and hooks, a multi-station instructional kitchen, art studio, two

bathrooms, and an open-concept classroom space with multi-media capabilities for moms to connect, receive group therapy and learn remotely. A new door on the rear of the building opens to a spacious patio in view of the playset and four plots of gardens. Dr. Matt Loehr, Executive Director for SMHM has had years of practice using experiential activities to help heal trauma. Therefore, SMHM will utilize the full outdoor potential of the acreage as part of an effective treatment plan for moms. This includes endeavors in four, 30' x 24' fenced garden plots and the orchard, time spent on trails and spacious physical grounds – engaging with the true beauty of our natural world – to help residents emotionally regulate.

### *IN THIS ISSUE*

Queen of Angels  
Activity Center

Staff Spotlight:  
Rosemary Overstreet

Deacon's Corner

Current Needs &  
Donations

St. Mary's Home  
for Mothers Happenings:

- Moms & Babies
- You're Invited!
- Rebranding

Saturday mornings will be an opportunity for volunteers to assist moms with gardening, cooking and food preserving endeavors. Under the direction of Sr. Doris Engelman, tomatoes, cucumbers, butternut squash, watermelon, cantaloupe, zinnias and more have been planted from seed. SMHM moms, Gabriel Project moms with Angel volunteers, and other volunteers may weed the gardens, pick what is ripe, then move into the kitchen space to wash vegetables and prepare or process the harvest into food to enjoy. Those interested in volunteering may contact Lori Rauber, Volunteer and Donation Coordinator, rauber8@yahoo.com.

The Queen of Angels Activity Center will be used weekly by Wednesday 9:30 am Mass attendees as a lovely meeting space for fellowship. SMHM is blessed to have three priests committed to providing the sacrament of the Eucharist: Fr. Thomas from St. Charles Borromeo Parish in Gladstone, Missouri; Fr. Michael of St. James Catholic Church in Liberty, Missouri; Fr. Drew and Deacon Alan of St. Ann's Catholic Church in Excelsior Springs, Missouri. Growing Mass attendance at the SMHM chapel makes the Queen of Angels Activity Center even more important. Weekly Mass in our chapel is one of the most important activities that takes place in the home, since continued gratitude to Christ and the Holy Spirit, expressed through the Mass, is essential for the success of SMHM and the families we serve.

A goal at SMHM is to help moms heal from past trauma (grief, abuse, loss) so that they may be the best parent possible. Queen of Angels Activity Center will be the location for Trust Based Relational Interventions and Seeking Safety classes, retreats, parenting education and seminars to better equip moms for success in the realms of family life, personal wellbeing, workforce success and meaningful spiritual life. The beauty of the technologically advanced setup in Queen of Angels Activity Center is that resident and non-resident moms alike will have their lives touched by trauma-informed, evidence-based therapy methods that exhibit a statistically significant efficacy supported by scientific evidence. The counselors at SMHM use research validated curriculum because it works! St. Mary's Home for Mothers will spread outreach and wonderful therapeutic treatment interventions to so many more moms through remote capabilities than will ever reside at St. Mary's Home for Mothers. The Queen of Angels Activity Center will expand our reach to help additional moms in the community, and beyond, find real support to better raise their young families. The future is bright and beautiful. Thank you for supporting our impactful endeavor through your continued prayers.

**Have faith. Hope on! God is good.**



## *Staff Spotlight: Rosemary Overstreet*

### *Art Teacher*

*How have you used your professional background as an art teacher to help moms at SMHM?*

After graduating from NWMSU with an Art Education degree, I taught at a small, K-12 school district in

Pickering and Hopkins, MO. After a move, I substitute taught in Mayetta, KS until our first baby was born. I started a small, licensed home daycare so I could be with my baby and earn income. Eleven years later, we had three children of our own and four daycare children

that easily blended into our family. Then, my husband's job changed, requiring a move to Liberty, Missouri. \* I taught K-12 art classes at Missouri City School. At the end of the school year the town celebrated with a parade and an open house at the school for all to see student projects and art. Over my 21 years in Kearney, Missouri I taught a wide variety of high school art classes, such as Drawing I, II and III, Painting I and II, Photography, Ceramics I and II, and AP Art courses. I absolutely loved my classes. Many students were exceptionally talented and every year many students scored in 1st, 2nd and 3rd places against many other districts. \* I found the mothers who were scheduled to participate in art classes at St. Mary's very different from students in high school. The pregnant moms seemed lost, depressed and unsure when they arrived at St. Mary's. Many preferred to sleep or stay in their rooms most of the day and evening. \* I wanted to begin by teaching easy art processes, such as learning to draw simple shapes or how to develop a variety of shades, etc., like I did with the beginning high school art classes. The women weren't interested, so I let them make a variety of things using many materials. They built and painted birdhouses, made coiled bowls out of rope covered with different colors of yarn, and they used sewing machines to make useful pot holders. They made several decorative snowflakes, plus Christmas tree ornaments of cute bears formed out of dough colored with instant tea. We hope to have some electric potter's wheels and a kiln installed in Queen of Angels Activity Center. Making art with a potter's wheel is very therapeutic. Eventually, the moms will learn the process of making many beautiful things!

*The SMHM chapel is a spiritually uplifting space. How does the chapel enrich the faith of the moms in residence? What roles do you serve in the chapel?*

The chapel is a beautiful and serene space with a high, wooden ceiling. The altar and tabernacle are surrounded by colored glass windows. A beautiful view of the land is visible on two sides of the chapel from large windows. The chapel's individual pews with kneelers were brought back to the chapel after the Queen of Angels Monastery had to close. Deacon Kevin and I replaced the old padded kneelers and the chair cushions. A tall crucifix and statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary hang on the wall. A grand piano from the 1940's is played beautifully by one of our moms and Ruby, an employee. \* Those familiar with SMHM often attend 9:30 am Wednesday Mass. Some live near, while others drive 45 minutes to an hour to attend. Following Mass all are invited to visit over coffee and enjoy warm, homemade cinnamon rolls. Some of



our moms choose to attend Mass. Others choose to spend quiet time in the chapel with their babies. Moms will read and often pray. Not all SMHM residents are Catholic, but they sometimes attend our Mass and also attend their own church services. \* My spouse Jerry and I have prayed the Rosary together every day for several years, except for the four times that we missed. Dr. Matt Loehr thought it would be a good time for us to start saying the Rosary together after lunch every Thursday during Lent. Since I had been saying the Rosary for a long time, he thought I should be the one praying aloud for all attending. Now we invite different people to lead each decade. We kept praying the Rosary every week beyond Lent. \* It is my responsibility to keep the chapel clean and to serve as a sacristan. I launder and starch the fabric used. I make sure we have the hosts, water and wine, the bowl for the washing of the hands and the chalice. The candles need to be lit on the altar to start Mass and put out after Mass. Holy water needs to be replaced and blessed by a priest or deacon when the font is dry.

*St. Mary's Home for Mothers operates with limited staff to make the most of financial resources. How did you come to mow the property?*

This spring, I decided that I would love more time outdoors. I often mow our acreage at home, so when a need arose, I offered to mow at St. Mary's. I found out that I needed to mow 14 acres! That is a lot! So far, I'm doing fine and I get to see wildflowers. I found a Killdeer running away from its nest making lots of noise to save four baby birds that live inside each of the eggs! I found lots of crawdad holes and one huge black snake!

*What other unique roles do you play in day-to-day operations?*

I do some cleaning when I have extra time and see that something needs cleaned. The moms are scheduled to do specific cleaning jobs. Usually, at least once a week, I volunteer to wash the dishes. It gives someone a little break. Sometimes dusty footsteps from the construction in the basement must be cleaned up on the main floor. I sweep the garage, trim bushes and hold babies when a mom needs a hand. \* The most enjoyable task I have completed at SMHM is re-painting two statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary. One was moved to an area near the front gate set up by an Eagle Scout with colored rock and two large, beautiful potted plants.

## Deacon's Corner

BY DEACON KEVIN CUMMINGS

Last month we celebrated Mother's Day in our homes and churches. The month of May has been reserved in the Catholic church to venerate Our Blessed Virgin Mother, often with a May Day crowning of flowers and songs in memory of Our Lady. The Mother's Day festivities have long been celebrated in families as a way of thanking our mothers for the considerable commitment of love and dedication our moms make in our lives. All can recall the special memories held for our mothers throughout our lives; yet, not all memories are the same.

Our residents at St. Mary's Home for Mothers also have deep recollections of their moms growing up, but may not currently enjoy the connectedness as they begin their own family. There may be distances or other physical space that separates them during this special time in their lives. Or, there may be an element of the mother-daughter relationship missing as they begin their journey of motherhood. On occasion, circumstances may have occurred that make re-uniting a difficult time for these young mothers. St. Mary's makes every effort to reach across these lines, by bringing comfort and hope to our expectant moms, reinforcing how important families are for growth and purpose in our lives and the lives of our newborns.

We'd like to thank and honor with prayers and gratitude all mothers who have courageously accepted the role as the most important person in their child's life. We know this can be a daunting vocation, even in the best of times, yet, through the intercession of Our Blessed Virgin Mary and her beloved son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the challenges of motherhood can find women growing even closer to the child that God has entrusted to them and has called them to love! We continue to pray daily for ALL who have made this home one of hope and love for our mothers and their newborns.

We will not let you, or our new young families, down. By the grace of God, we will protect and nurture our most precious gift of God, and continue to raise up all that God has given us!

### CURRENT NEEDS & DONATIONS

#### Donate

- **Mail:** 9508 El Monte Overland Park, KS 66207
- **Online:** [www.smhfm.org](http://www.smhfm.org)
- **Registry:** Find us on Babylist.com & Target.com

#### Volunteer:

Contact Lori Rauber  
[rauber8@yahoo.com](mailto:rauber8@yahoo.com)

## St. Mary's Home for Mothers Happenings:

### MOMS & BABIES

**Baby Girl:** 7lbs. 6oz., born to a community mom SMHM is assisting

**Baby Girl:** 5lbs. 7oz., born to SMHM resident

**Mom:** started a 6 month job training at Pawsperity.

### YOU'RE INVITED!

- **Mary Queen of Angels Activity Center Grand Opening**
  - **Date:** July 12th
  - **Time:** 9:30 am
  - **Location:** St. Mary's Home for Mothers
  - **Cost:** Free!
- **Angel Training**
  - **Date:** July 22nd
  - **Time:** 8:30 am
  - **Location:** St. Mary's Home for Mothers
  - **Cost:** Free!
- **1st Annual Gala**
  - **Date:** September 14th
  - **Time:** 5:30 pm
  - **Location:** Belvoir Winery
  - **Cost:** \$100/ticket; \$1,000/table

Contact Eileen Lambert for more information on events at 913.370.0531.

### REBRANDING

St. Mary's Home for Mothers is excited to announce that we are rebranding! Be on the lookout for the new design soon!