

HOMEtown News

The Official Newsletter of the House of Mercy and Encouragement

Summer 2016



From the Director

It's hard to believe that summer is here and the school year is over. Where does the time go? My husband Allen and I have been blessed to have welcomed the Spring and Summer seasons with a trip to Rome. We found the trip mentally, emotionally and spiritually renewing. It was a pilgrimage of sorts.



Although we had many experiences, the one which touched my heart and my spirit the most was being present at a service at St. Peter's Basilica called "To Dry the Tears" presided over by Pope Francis. Anyone who has experienced the loss of a child knows that the tears never run dry. A song, a scent, a word or phrase, a thought, a gesture, can at times, all be reminders of our child. So, I carried in my heart all of those who have experienced the loss of a child through cancer, a car accident, suicide, accidental overdose, choking, sudden infant death syndrome, the result of war or violence, being trapped in a house fire and so many other tragic ways.

Although we had tickets to the service, Allen and I waited in line for 4 hours. Even that was a blessing, as it was a time of prayer and reflection. Specific names and families came to mind as I waited in line. I carried in my heart those not personally known to me, but who are my brothers and sisters in Christ. Even those who do not know Christ came to mind, as they are still my brothers and sisters in sorrow. We are all connected as we all share a deep understanding of an unwelcomed heartache known as grief.

The experience of the service was overwhelming. Being inside the Basilica, seeing the beauty of artistic geniuses, tradition, history, hearing the voices of the angelic choir, watching the Swiss Guard prepare for the coming of the Holy Father, seeing the faces of individuals and families from every part of the world! You could feel the excitement in the air. Then, the solemn service began with the procession of Pope Francis down the aisle. I had seen him on TV waving, smiling, blessing babies, and patting the checks of the infirmed. Something was different. His eyes were cast down, his face was solemn. I sensed the presence of sorrow within him. It was as if he could

In this Issue:

- From the Director
- My Story
- Services
- Events
- Thank You!

2030 Main St.
Dunedin, FL 34698



From the Director (continued)

feel the pain of all who were present and those who were not present. It made me think of Jesus, in the Garden of Gethsemane. He took on all our sorrow, our pain, our mistakes, our grief, our regrets and our sins. Looking at Pope Francis, I felt I was in the presence of a Saint, someone who really knew, understood, and has experienced the pain of many children and families all over the world.

His words were comforting and brought hope to us living in a world so full of suffering and heartache. I have reprinted it in my newsletter today. My hope is that all who read these words understand that God does not bring pain and suffering, no matter what our devastating circumstance or circumstances may be. But we are not alone. God is full of mercy, compassion, grace, and love. And when we weep, He weeps, too.

In His Peace,
Dolores

“To Dry the Tears” by Pope Francis

At times of sadness, suffering and sickness, amid the anguish of persecution and grief, everyone looks for a word of consolation. We sense a powerful need for someone to be close and feel compassion for us. We experience what it means to be disorientated, confused, more heartsick than we ever thought possible. We look around us with uncertainty, trying to see if we can find someone who really understands our pain. Our mind is full of questions but answers do not come. Reason by itself is not capable of making sense of our deepest feelings, appreciating the grief we experience and providing the answers we are looking for. How much sadness we see in so many faces all around us! How many tears are shed every second in our world; each is different but together they form, as it were, an ocean of desolation that cries out for mercy, compassion and consolation. The bitterest tears are those caused by human evil: the tears of those who have seen a loved one violently torn from them; the tears of grandparents, mothers and fathers, children; eyes that keep staring at the sunset and find it hard to see the dawn of a new day. We need the mercy, the consolation that comes from the Lord. All of us need it. This is our poverty but also our grandeur: to plead for the consolation of God, who in his tenderness comes to wipe the tears from our eyes. In our pain, we are not alone. Jesus, too, knows what it means to weep for the loss of a loved one. In one of the most moving pages of the Gospel, Jesus sees Mary weeping for the death of her brother Lazarus. Nor can he hold back tears. He was deeply moved and began to weep (John 11:33-35). The evangelist John, in describing this, wanted to show how much Jesus shared in the sadness and grief of his friends. Jesus' tears cannot go without a response on the part of those who believe in him. As he consoles, so we too are called to console. The tenderness of his gaze comforts us; the power of his word supports us and gives us hope.

My Story

We never know how we have touched the lives of another individual. A mother sent an email that I thought was heartwarming and very funny. The name has been changed to keep confidentiality but Mom has given permission to reprint her email. Thank you so much!

Thank you so much for all of your help. From supporting me and guiding Martin, it is very much appreciated. This has been a very rewarding experience, and I am eternally grateful. Thank you for taking the time to address me personally. I agree that continuing with group will be helpful. And I have to let you know that Martin has named several things "Mortimer", you have made an impression!

*Thank you again,
Grateful Mom*

"My Story" is a true story written by a parent or guardian who found help through HOME. Our deepest gratitude to the author!

Did you know?

- **One in every four to five youth (20-25%)** in the general population meet criteria for a lifetime mental disorder that is associated with severe impairment and/or distress.
- **1 in 4 parents** find it difficult to obtain specialized mental health services for their child and waiting lists to see a mental health professional can be 3 months to a year.
- According to the CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, **Suicide is the #2** leading cause of death in the **10 year old – 24 year old age group** in the United States.

Call the House Of Mercy and Encouragement if you or someone you know needs help. (727) 786-7951.

Our Volunteer Angels...

There are so many things that need to be done "behind the scenes."
A big thank you to Sharyn Gildea and Sharon Gardner for your desperately needed support!



How Can You Help?

The following items are always needed:

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Liquid hand soap
- Bottles of water
- white multipurpose letter size paper for copying and printing
- gift card to Michael's as we use lots of art materials.

Thank you for your consideration.

Events

Celebration of Mercy/Family Life Conference

We were deeply honored to be able to team up with Fr. Gary and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish to celebrate the Year Of Mercy last March. It was a joy to see so many people interested in attending and an honor to have volunteers from the church community to help out that day. Thank you, Fr. Gary, for allowing us to host a day for so many to benefit from the valuable information they received. Many blessings upon you and the people of the OLL community.

Upcoming...



Friday September 9, 2016

Sterling Art Center will be sponsoring another art exhibition called "The Creative Spirit – Creating From the Heart" facilitated by Laura Vincenti to benefit the House Of Mercy & Encouragement. There will be a reception from 5:30PM-8:00PM with refreshments, a silent auction and awards for the artists. **ALL** are encouraged to submit your artwork. The reception is open to the public. Family, friends and community members are invited to attend this special event to benefit HOME. Contact Laura Vincenti for details at vincenti_laura@yahoo.com



HOUSE OF MERCY & ENCOURAGEMENT
HOME Foundation – a 501(c)3 non-profit organization
What is HOME and how can help it help me and my child?

The House Of Mercy & Encouragement (HOME Foundation) was founded in February 2007 and is dedicated to promoting the social, emotional and mental health well-being of children and families. Services include but are not limited to individual and group counseling, social skills groups, play therapy, behavior modification, family counseling, and positive parenting workshops.

HOME has a fully equipped play therapy room, a sand tray room, an adult therapy room and an activity room for the convenience of children and families. Snacks, water and juice are offered as an extension of hospitality and to promote a welcoming atmosphere. Some of our most popular programs are:

- **Social Skills, Impulse Control and Understanding Emotions** – a play and behaviorally based social skills group for children in PreK, K, and Grade 1 who need help with focusing and following directions and expressing emotions appropriately. Friendships are easily made!
- **Character Development, Impulse Control, Understanding Anger and More** – respect, responsibility, cooperation and team building are emphasized in this play and behaviorally based social skills group for children in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade. Kids love this class!
- **Art Sensation** – the combination of a licensed therapist and professional art instructor provides a unique approach to help middle school kids enjoy learning art techniques that promote creative and emotional expression. Clay, paint, and other mediums will be used to encourage positive self-esteem.
- **LEGO® MINDSTORMS®**- this middle school aged social skills group focuses on problem-solving, communication, and cooperation through an introduction to robotics using LEGO® MINDSTORMS®.
- **Parenting Support Workshops and Professional Workshops** – relax and de-stress while learning more about some of the following topics: “Junk Behavior,” “SOS for Parents,” “Depression, ADHD, and Anxiety: At your location or at HOME. Refreshments served in a comfortable environment.
- **Homework Helpers Program** - Is homework a battle ground for you and your child? Let us help your child do their homework without tears or arguing. Trained tutors will assist your child to complete their homework. Call for more information regarding days, times and cost.
- **Individual Therapy/Play Therapy** - Does your child need individual counseling or therapy? Anxiety, depression, anger, mood swings, adjusting to a divorce or death, and many other situations can be helped with counseling. Call to find that help you or your child needs.
- **Family/ Couples Therapy** - Marriage & family therapy, communication skills and more to help your family live in peace.



HOME is located at 2030 Main Street in Dunedin (just across from the Neighborhood Wal-Mart). Many insurances are accepted and a sliding fee scale is offered. Depending on financial need scholarships and partial scholarships are granted. Check out our website www.houseofmercy-fl.org .
For more information call (727) 786-7951

HOME Foundation is a non-profit 501 c 3 charitable organization directed by Dolores Mortimer, Licensed Mental Health Counselor #5480, Registered Play Therapist/Supervisor, National Certified Counselor.

The School is neither endorsing nor sponsoring this event nor approving or endorsing the views of the organization sponsoring the activity.

Thank You!



THANK YOU, THANK YOU, AND THANK YOU AGAIN! **Kiwanis Club of Dunedin**

Our deepest appreciation from all of us at the House Of Mercy and Encouragement for your generous donation of **\$1,500**. This donation is allowing us to purchase updated and desperately needed assessment materials. We have many children preschool age who need developmental assessments and others who need to be assessed to rule out or determine the diagnosis of ADHD. The assessment materials are very expensive and this generous grant will help us to provide the help that children need. God bless each and every member of the Kiwanis Club of Dunedin. We love you!



MORE THANKS AND MUCH GRATITUDE extended to the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Advisory Board** for awarding us a grant of **\$1,000** to use for scholarships for those children in need who would not otherwise be able to obtain services. Many children have been able to join our social skills group and have been tutored through your generous support. All of your members and our dedicated sheriffs of Pinellas County remain in our prayers. Thank you for all you do to help keep our community safe.



UPDATE AND CONTINUED THANKS to **Faith Mission Christian Fund of the Pinellas Community Foundation** who has previously awarded us a **\$7,000** grant in December 2015. The grant allowed us to fund children who would not otherwise be able to attend our Brain Gym class and social skills group. The grant was also used for individual counseling and play therapy for children in need. Funds were also used for initially assessing the needs of children. A combination of these services provided a total of **201 scholarship sessions**. Without your help, these children would not have been able to access the care that they needed. Many blessings to all of you for recognizing the needs of the children in our community!

THANK YOU to our **GENEROUS DONORS!**

We would like to express our deepest appreciation to the individuals and families who have given contributions in the last 5 months. We simply could not exist without you! You remain in our prayers:

Nick and Marcia Albanese
Tony and Joyce Bennett
The Boitmann Family
Gary and Theresa Brown
Linda and John Castorino
Don and Rosemary Chill

Amy Coleman
Curt and Lori Fuller
The Mansfield Family
Ryan Mortimer
Allen and Dolores Mortimer
Frank Naclerio

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Community
Jim and Claudia Rowe
Chris and Toni Salemi
Martin Petruzzi
Rosemary Trexler
Laura and Len Vincenti

If you don't see your insurance please contact us. We also offer a sliding fee scale and scholarships. Please call for more details.

BayCare • Cigna • Humana (Lifesynch)
MHNet Behavioral Health • New Directions
Tricare • ValueOptions • Vocational Rehab

Currently a Provider for:

Need Help??

Our vision is to compassionately serve as a resource for those children and families who are affected by mental health, learning, emotional, or behavioral issues. We are a faith-based provider who believes in the God given dignity of every child and family. All families are treated with respect and kindness.

HOME is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to helping children and families.

Website:
www.houseofmercy-fl.org
Email address:
info@houseofmercy-fl.org

Phone: 727-786-7951
Fax: 727-786-7951

2030 Main Street
Dunedin, Florida 34698

*play therapy, counseling, tutoring
help for children and families*

House of Mercy and Encouragement

HOME*


House Of Mercy and Encouragement
2030 Main Street
Dunedin, Florida 34698

