



# St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter

For Homeless Families

## Everybody Loves Kate....

In case you haven't met Kate Garges, we are delighted to introduce you to her. Kate is our Director of Resident Services, our chief cook and bottle washer, our go-to person when a shift change is needed, the person who always says, "Is there anything that you need." She is the voice you often hear on the phone, the face you are likely to see when you ring our doorbell and the carrier of the gifts, donations and treasures that you bring to our door. Kate not only is everywhere in the shelter, but she also remembers everything about the day to day needs and the ancient history of days long gone.

As we celebrate persons moving on, graduating, beginning their time with us at St. Mary's, It dawned on me that the person who doesn't get a special celebration is the one who steadfastly keeps the shelter alive and well....that would be....our very own Kate.

Sister Christine Kranichfeld first met Kate and hired her 18 years ago. In her words, *"When Kate came to work for us in 2001, we knew God had sent us an angel. In short order she adapted to our schedule, our staff and our residents. She was always respectful and helpful and a listening ear for families in need. Over the years she has greeted new employees and clients and the number of people she has helped must number near the thousands. May she be blessed for all that she has done for us".* - Sr. Chris

Once you come to work at St. Mary's there is always a helping hand or two to guide you along the way. One of our newest employees captures Kate special skill as a colleague and mentor. *"The first time I met Kate, I was struck by her warmth and charm. I enjoyed talking with her about St. Mary's. Kate is thoroughly professional and dedicated in her role.. She sets an excellent example for all of the staff and residents. We all appreciate Kate's guidance and support. She really is a joy to work with."* K.B. co-worker



Not only is Kate a day to day person but she is also our special occasion person. *"I admire the job that Kate does all year for both residents and staff to make the shelter a great place. But I would like to express my special appreciation for what Kate does during the Christmas season. Her mission to bring joy to the children who are current and former residents of the shelter is especially heartwarming. Everyone is grateful for her efforts to make Christmas a wonderful time of the year."* J.H. coworker

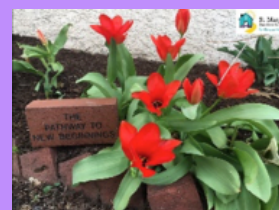
Kate's friends and co-workers are happy to sum up our feelings: *"When I think of Kate I think of a person full of compassion and I see her as a true champion for the children."* D.J. *"Kate is ALL Heart, a true friend, and a Great co-worker!"* F.M. We hope to have Kate's energy and dedication with us for many years to com. Thanks, Kate.



St. Mary's Springtime House Tour  
Enjoy food, friends, and visit our lovely restored home!

Date: April 28, 2019 Time: 11:00 - 1:00

Please contact us if interested in attending at [SMFS@stmarysfs.org](mailto:SMFS@stmarysfs.org) or  
610-933-3097



## From Crisis to Hope..... Many Grace filled moments

After unfortunate circumstances led her landlord to sell their home in a short sale agreement, Amelia was surprised to find herself in a tough spot without much time to look for suitable housing options. Amelia arrived at St. Mary's with her 1yr old daughter and determination in her eyes. She had a plan, outlined what her pressing needs at the time were, and worked with her case manager to help check accomplishments off of her list. Within a short time after arriving, Amelia was able to transfer her benefits over to Chester County, secure daycare for her daughter, meet with Wings for Success for a dressing appointment, renew her license, go on multiple interviews, and accept an offer for a job!

Getting that phone call from her employer with an offer made her feel great and Amelia breathed a sigh of relief as she could finally cross "job hunting" off of her goals list. Amelia has been focused and on the path toward a successful outcome and is excited to start work soon and save up for a new place. She also plans to partner with local Chester county agencies to assist her with security deposit payments and rental assistance once she finds a suitable housing option.

Amelia is self-driven and has worked hard to achieve her goals. She is supported by her family here at St. Mary's and we wish her continued success in her housing search as she spends the remainder of her time with us.



Amelia & her daughter

## The Road Ahead.....

Here we are 90% of the way to restoring our lovely home and preparing it for the next step of increased services. We have been moving along with great hope and faith in all of our friends and we have delighted in the journey. We are now on the last leg of this journey.

- Kitchen is finished and being put to good use. Serviceable and beautiful for all of us to enjoy.
- Family room is home away from home for our children... a place to hang-out and relax a bit.
- A new powder room, laundry and office for case manager. This give residents a new area to meet with their case manager in private...easily accessible and large enough for families to gather.

## So what next?

Remember the garden we promised when the school building was removed? We now have the funding and are ready to start creating an outside oasis of beauty! Families will soon be able to take a few moments to relax and enjoy some fresh air. Sod, fencing, trees, plants, pathways, benches and a lovely gazebo will be installed this spring. Stay tuned, stop by and enjoy this final step as we complete the last piece of this preparation stage for Saint Mary's added residency.

## Be Sure to Keep in Touch



Info@stmarysfs.org



610-933-3097



Go paperless.... Visit our webpage:  
and sign up for the newsletter on line.

[www.stmarysfs.org](http://www.stmarysfs.org)

## Help us Fundraise!

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your AmazonSmile purchases to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.

**amazon**smile  
You shop. Amazon gives.

*Providing and serving meals for the families living at our shelter is a large task. We are always, every day, thankful to our amazing helpers who have been faithful throughout the years.*

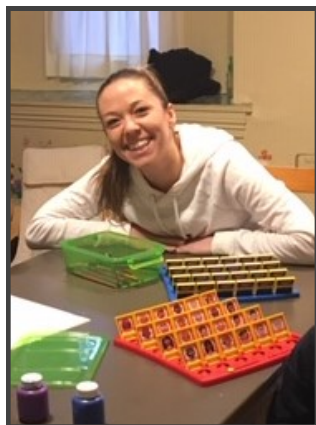
Bethel Baptist  
Centennial Lutheran Charlestown  
United Methodist  
East Vincent UCC  
First Presbyterian Church  
First United Methodist  
First UCC, Royersford  
Glasko Smith Kline  
Grace Lutheran  
Holy Ghost Church  
Ironworks Presbyterian  
Providence Corner  
Royersford Baptist Church  
Sacred Heart Royersford  
St. Ann, Phoenixville  
St. Basil, Kimberton  
St. Eleanor Church  
St. John's UCC  
St. Michael Archangel  
St. Matthew Lutheran, Chester Springs  
St. Peter Episcopal  
St. Peter Lutheran  
St. Teresa of Calcutta  
St. Vincent UCC  
Valley Forge United Methodist  
Zion Lutheran



Carolyn Zimmerman with gifts from our friends at First UCC Royersford and East Vincent UCC.

## Volunteer Spotlight: Brooklynne Younker

This is a story about Brooklynne Younker, whose name is pronounced "BROOK-lin YON-kur." That's right friends. Her name sounds like two of the boroughs in New York City (minus the "s" in "Yonkers"). But even more ingenious than her name, is the generosity of Brooklynne's heart. The beneficent Brooklynne quickly became one of our best volunteer friends at St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter.



It all started three years ago. That's when Brooklynne Younker moved to Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. Brooklynne would pass by St. Mary's every day on her way to work. She would think to herself, *Hey, I wonder what they do there?* One day she finally decided to look it up. After returning from work, she logged on to the internet and did some research. Brooklynne found a few videos that St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter had posted online. The videos were about a few of the families who had come through the shelter. They detailed how the shelter had helped

those families. After that, Brooklynne was hooked!

Brooklynne Younker has been helping the playgroup at St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter for over a year, since February of 2018.

Playgroup is a volunteer option that currently occurs five nights a week, Sunday to Thursday, from 7:00 to 8:00 PM. On Monday nights, playgroup gives shelter parents the ability to attend parenting classes and house meetings. The rest of the nights, it gives adult residents the freedom to accomplish housework tasks they couldn't *during* the day. For volunteers, it gives them freedom to accomplish service tasks that *makes* their day.



When asked what her favorite memory of volunteering at St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter in Phoenixville is, it's hard for Brooklynne Younker to decide. But finally, one of them, Brooklynne says is, "Every time I'm leaving St. Mary's Shelter, one of the kids runs up to me and gives me a huge hug. He or she thanks me for spending time with them. It's always the highlight of my day!" Brooklynne's smile is glowing.

So, yes. Even though volunteering can make others' lives better, it can also make *your* life better. Brooklynne Younker's glowing smile is a shining example of that.

**COMING SOON:** Gardening Day #2 at St. Mary's - May 4, 2019

Please consider joining us as we prepare our new open space  
for a Beautiful future....

For information contact Ashley at [ashley@stmarysfs.org](mailto:ashley@stmarysfs.org) or call

St. Mary's at 610-933-3097





## *Simple Ways to Help This Month*

Looking for a way to engage your kids in giving back? Next time you're at the store have them pick out one or more of the items below and drop them off at Saint Mary's. It's an easy way for them to make a big difference!

- Coffee
- Iced Tea mix
- New pillows
- Bath towels and wash cloths
- Juice boxes
- Individual snack packs



Questions about donations? Interested in hosting a drive?  
Contact [Ashley@stmarysfs.org](mailto:Ashley@stmarysfs.org).



**St. Mary's**  
Franciscan Shelter  
*For Homeless Families*

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