



CHILDREN OF THE IMMACULATE HEART

Restore All Things in Christ ~ Serving Survivors of Human Trafficking

Volume 4 Number 8 September-October 2018

A Message from the President

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

May the holy hearts of Jesus and Mary be ours forever! As I write this, it is the 5th anniversary of the founding of Children of the Immaculate Heart on October 11, 2013. This is a source of great joy for us at all God has done for us over the past five years, in addition to the year and a half of preparation that went into our founding beginning in the summer of 2012! Today my prayers are all of gratitude that words cannot express! Of course, our clients are the real treasure of all that has been accomplished thus far, and I cannot help but think of the words St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians 2,000 years ago that seem so applicable to us today: “You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”

This is truly the work of God being accomplished here and I must give credit where credit is due - this is also the work of the Blessed Virgin, whose feast we celebrate today under the title of “The Maternity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.” This feast commemorates the Council of Ephesus which defined the dogma of Mary as the Mother of God, not just of the man Jesus, affirming the two natures of Christ, human and Divine. I find it very fitting that our founding coincides with the day we celebrate Mary’s motherhood, because it is in light of her being the mother of Him who is true God and true man that she receives all of her particular graces, most especially that of her spiritual maternity of all those redeemed by Christ. And she is



our patroness precisely for this reason – because the girls we serve need a true mother who will love them unconditionally, with perfect charity. May she be so for all of us!

We are also pleased to announce that less than one week ago we found out that we will soon be receiving our license from Community Care Licensing to open The Refuge, our Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program for 6 trafficked minor girls ages 12 to 17! Please read on inside to learn more about what will be happen-

ing over the next few months as we prepare to open! Please feel free to contact us if you would like more information about this program if you are seeking placement for a girl who has been trafficked.

We wish you all a very happy Thanksgiving and blessed Advent and Christmastide! I love this time of year because for once in our busy society, everyone seems to slow down a little and spend more time on those things that matter most – prayer, gratitude, family, and friends. I cannot thank each of you enough for your support over the last five years and for making it possible to serve the women and children we currently serve and to get to this point of receiving our license for The Refuge! We are the first new residential treatment program to be licensed in San Diego County since 2015 and are grateful and proud to have made this huge step. Thank you for all you do for us! Let us pray for each other!

Grace Williams

President/Executive
Director



CIH's 1st Annual Oktoberfest

By Jenna Christakis, Office Manager



Our Oktoberfest event on Saturday October 6th was quite a success! The food and homemade German beer was given much praise and the guests were pleased to be the first to hear about our BIG NEWS - that we are soon to receive our license from Community Care Licensing to open The Refuge, our residential treatment program for trafficked minor girls!

Our guests also had the pleasure of hearing from a survivor of human trafficking who is one of our former clients who is now pursuing her degree and is working on expanding the nonprofit she started last year. We also had the pleasure of having Kim Williams, our Case Manager, speak about her work with the women; we were touched by her kind words about how much she enjoys working with CIH!

Thank you Alex Graham for taking photos throughout the night and to all of our other volunteers and staff for their part in making this event wonder-



ful! Thank you especially to Marty Franklin and her beautiful family for opening their home and hosting the event. Their home and backyard looked fantastic with the Oktoberfest decor!

And last, but not least, thank you to our guests for coming to show your support for our apostolate! Your continued prayers and financial support is much appreciated. We look forward to next year's 2nd Annual Oktoberfest! May God reward you all!

Update on The Refuge

By Christina Vasquez, House Manager

Hello Friends and Benefactors!

Thank you for all the support and interest you have taken in The Refuge! We are very close to receiving our license to become a Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program serving 6 girls ages 12 to 17. We have taken all the steps to complete our application and are waiting on a response from Sacramento. As soon as we are licensed, we will apply for a contract with the County of San Diego to be able to receive girls from Child Welfare, Probation, and the Department of



Behavioral Health. Once the contract is received, we can start accepting girls into our program. We have the facility ready to open, thanks to the help of many volunteers. We will be holding an open house in November to bring in placement agents from around the county to view the facility and hear about the program and our mission to help these young women. We are almost completely staffed, and have a great team of women who are passionate about the work and are strong women of faith. It has been a long journey for CIH, and we are thrilled that we are so close to opening our home! The Refuge is truly a beautiful place to heal and will be a wonderful opportunity for these young women to encounter a positive community full of love and support. Please keep us in your prayers as we embark upon this new chapter.

God bless,

Christina Vasquez
The Refuge House Manager/Administrator

Update on the Adult Women's Program

By Kim Williams, Case Manager

The CIH adult women's program continues to grow and celebrate each milestone and accomplishment of our survivors (9 women; 16 children). Our women have made progress in counseling, continue to work part-time/full-time jobs, juggle the demands of parenthood, and work on completing their education. One of our ladies just finished her High School Equivalency Exam and is consistently on the honor roll at her dental assisting program. We celebrated her accomplishments this last weekend with a little party!

Survivors have shown commitment and compassion to their sisters at our weekly survivor class/support group. They tell us things like, "We learn about topics like BOUNDARIES that help us build a healthier life." "We share joys and hurtful setbacks of the week." "Group is the one place that I can be myself and share how I'm honestly feeling with no judgement. I can cry and let negative things go." "Even if I've had a really bad day or week, I always leave group with hope, encouragement, and HUGS. It reminds me that I'm not alone."

Our women and children continue to be blessed by the loving, generous CIH family of staff, volunteers and benefactors. Yet with the holidays soon approaching, many of our survivors struggle with powerful and overwhelming emotions such as the loss of a sense of family, reminders of past trauma and abuse,



poverty, and profound sadness in remembering their childhood neglect. The merry media advertisements depicting joy, happiness, and the warmth of a cozy fire surrounded by family is often in stark contrast to the reality a survivor experiences.

CIH will partner with the community to assist our women in overcoming these emotional triggers and holi-

day "blues." Our women and children will be surrounded by LOVE, COMPASSION, and SPECIAL EVENTS that honor and bless them, along with opportunities to remind them that there is HOPE in the midst of their pain

and childhood disillusionment.

We are grateful to all of you who have already offered to provide gifts and meals for our families during this time!

Thank you CIH

and partners, for your many prayers and blessings on behalf of the women and children that we serve!



For our 5th Anniversary, we had a party with our clients, staff, and some of the future staff of The Refuge. It was a wonderful time of celebration, as you can see from the photos on this page. Each of the attendees had the opportunity to paint a commemorative mug of the occasion to either keep or give to our benefactors as gifts. What a grace to all be together and celebrate the blessings God has given us! We also had the opportunity as a staff to reconsecrate the work to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a tradition started by Fr. Carl Gismondi, FSSP back in 2013 as the first bricks were being laid for the founding of CIH!





CIH Wish List

Adult Program

- Cars for clients
- Diapers: size 5
- Gift cards to grocery stores
- Hygiene products
- 2X - 3X women's clothing
- Dry and canned food

Minors Program

- Alarm clocks
- White board cleaner
- Microfiber towels
- Duffle bags (5)
- DVD Player
- New sleeping bags

The Office

- Paper shredder
- Gift cards to Office Depot & STAPLES
- Underwriter for marketing literature
- All-in-one microphone/amplifier system for events
- PowerPoint projector

Save the Date!

Children of the Immaculate Heart
will be holding its
6th Annual Gala and Silent Auction at
Our Mother of Confidence Parish
3131 Governor Dr.,
San Diego CA 92122

February 22, 2019, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Cy Kellet, Host of Catholic Answers
Live, will be our MC!

Grace Williams, CIH President, will
speak about our apostolate and vi-
sion. *Stay tuned for an invitation in
January!*



Children of the Immaculate Heart has a meal train for our weekly women's group. We hold a support/development group for our clients every week, giving them the opportunity to be together, support each other, and grow in their personal human development. If you are interested in cooking for our ladies, please visit this link!

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/q3nk71>

CIH Has a Car Donation Program!

Please consider donating your vehicle to CIH! *Car Easy* will come pick up your car, boat, or trailer whether it is running or not! Cars can be donated from anywhere in the country. To start the process just call **855-500-7433** or type <http://careasy.org/details?4567> into your web browser. Proceeds go to support our programs!



**On behalf of all of us at
Children of the Immaculate
Heart, we would like to
wish you a Blessed
Advent and Merry
Christmas! May we
approach the crib with
the trust and joy of
a child!**



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