

WE HAVE A SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

On January 6th, we will share our own
Epiphany
with all of you!

I do not believe in coincidences, but I do believe that the Holy Spirit aligns particular happenings in our life with historical events of the past. Whether its been personal events, like the birth of my children, or events surrounding HOMH, like taking in our first resident on the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, I seem to always be able to draw some kind of correlation with our faith. Maybe it is just a means of entertainment for the heavens, but to me, it has always translated as a 'nod' of affirmation from the Lord. The first Epiphany celebrated the revelation that Jesus is the Son of God. I do not believe that there has ever been a greater message shared than this! However, I believe announcements, such as the one I will be sharing on Tuesday, are only made possible because of the paschal mystery and the hope that came with the birth of our Lord.



Much like the first Epiphany, we also take this as an opportunity to proclaim the good news of God to every creature!

According to Pope St. Gregory the Great in his Homilies on the Gospels, the three gifts given by the three wise men represent gifts that we are to present to God in our daily lives.

M E L C H I O R

The gift of gold was a treasure of great value and I am certain that it came as a useful gift to the Holy Family who would soon be fleeing for their lives to a strange land.

The donations we receive are a reflection of the gift of gold to the Christ Child. They are given and received in His name! Donors give their treasure knowing it is from Him, through Him and to Him.

In truth, there is a greater gift that we have all been given and it is much greater than gold! It is the Word of God, His incarnation! All of the gifts that the Lord gives us are to be surrendered to Him and used according to His will.



B A L T H A S A R

The gift of frankincense was the main ingredient for incense used in the biblical Temple. It was made from a dried resin drawn from the craggy trees of the Arabian Peninsula (the land of Mt. Sinai). It is the



scent of worship and is used in the book of Revelation to represent our prayers ascending to God.

Intercessory prayer is when another person intercedes on our behalf in the from of prayer to the Lord. These prayers come from all of you here on earth, and we also have intercessors in heaven. All of the prayers are offered in His Holy Name for HOMH are heard and answered in His time.

We have been given the tremendous gift of your prayers; recited prayers, mass intentions, and personal offerings, have all been given to the Lord in our name.

These prayers are what carry us and sanctify our work by making our intentions to do the work of God holy and pure.

C A S P A R

The gift of myrrh was used, along with other spices, for preparing the bodies of the dead, and it was also used for healing wounds, and as a painkiller.

This gift to the Holy Family as preparation for the dead may have been a foreshadowing of the Christ Child's death. After all, Christ was born to die for each and every one of us. In reference to the gift of Myrrh being used for healing wounds and as a painkiller it can be seen as the Christian call of showing mercy to others. The same mercy shown to us by the Lord.

Both of these examples point to our volunteers and caregiver staff who show



an endless amount of love and mercy to our residents. They quite literally use their gifts to prepare our residents for their death, and they offer each moment they spend at our home in the service of others as a true gift of charity in the name of the Lord!

HOW DO WE RECIPROCATE THESE TREASURED GIFTS FROM GOD?

~One~

by accepting and acknowledging the gift as being from Him.

~Two~

by living our daily lives with the intention to love others with the same love He has shown to us.

The three wise men can serve as wonderful models for us as we continue each day on the journey of seeking Jesus Christ and offering Him our gifts in word, deed and in prayer.

Look for part 1 in your inbox tomorrow!

 - Kim

Swiftly and in God's Perfect Timing!

(Isaiah 60:22)

PART 1

A little over a year ago, I was walking through the house at 6107 New York Ave. I was all alone. The house was stale, lifeless and cold, but I could see the warm, fresh life that was soon to come. There were great risks in moving over to the new house; would we be able to afford the \$3,000/month rent and the increase in utilities? While we would be able to increase the number of residents served, would we also be able to manage and afford the increase in staff? Would the new house have the same humble vibe as the basement at St. Edward did?

In all honesty, this was familiar territory for me. Similar risks present themselves when you are raising a large family. I have learned over the years that the situations that seem absolutely crazy, are usually just puzzle pieces that the Holy Spirit is handing you, and it is best not to run away from these or cower in fear.

Experience and faith have shown me that it is best to pick one up, and then pick up the next one and see if they fit together. And all the while, surrendering



all of those thoughts like: "This is nuts!" "This is not realistic!" "We cannot do this." And then putting your entire trust in God, alone.



As I think about this year, I see it as a collection of puzzle pieces (I could stretch far beyond a year, but the focus right now is on 2025). The first piece was when Tasha Kinnard, CEO of Thistle Farms, mentioned (insisted) that I should see a home they were selling.

Any rational person would have said, "No. I won't waste your time. We do not have the money to purchase a home, nor do I foresee this happening any time soon." Now, I am a rational person, and I am also a realist, and I had a strong sense that the Holy Spirit was up to something.

I picked up this puzzle piece and went and looked at the house in early October of 2024. I could clearly see the vision the Lord had put before me. The house had great potential to serve as our next home. The only question was... how?

Over the course of the next few weeks, we worked on getting funding, but it was not happening and it did not look like it was happening any time soon. It would have been perfectly logical to say, "Well, maybe this is not God's will after all. Maybe He does not actually want us to have this house." But there again, I felt the Holy Spirit was saying, "Do not get caught up in the monetary needs. There are more pieces coming! Just trust me. I will not abandon you!"

Look for part 2 in your inbox tomorrow!

♡ - Kim

PART 2



My realtor and dear friend, Ann Marie Strickmaker, went with me when I looked at the house. She walked alongside me as we were trying to figure out a way to come up with a down payment and purchase the house. We had 30 days. After a couple of weeks had passed, it became clear that Heart of Mary House was not purchasing the house. I knew for certain that God was not going to just throw out this one puzzle piece. I knew there were more pieces; I just couldn't see them yet.

A friend knew about the circumstances we were facing, so she and her husband swooped in and fronted the money to purchase the house until we could get the financing that we needed. We expected this to be a short term need. This couple insisted that we treat the house as if it were already ours and do whatever we needed to make it a home. We signed the lease on November 1, 2024.

It took a while to get all of the proper insurance in place. While we were waiting, I sought out the two most generous and knowledgeable guys I know (they are also the most patient and tolerant of me), Hugo Novoa and Keith McGrady. We pieced together a game plan and just after Christmas, we got to work. We had two full weekends

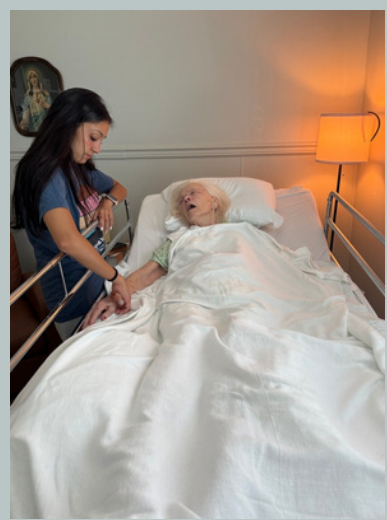


of countless volunteers. We gutted, painted, laid floors, changed out some plumbing and electrical, and more! I could not believe how quickly and efficiently everything was moving along.

I kept the plans pretty loose. I did not want to follow a rigid plan for fear I would not make room for God's plans. The puzzle pieces seemed to never end. The Lord was putting all of the right people in our path. Our needs were being met before we even knew we had the need.

I have always had a gift of being able to do a lot with very little. I wanted the house to function efficiently, have a sense of simplicity while also being beautiful. Most of all I wanted it to be a peaceful refuge for all who would enter. The colors were chosen with purpose and intention. Even the wallpaper down the hall, which reminded me of St. Mother Teresa was chosen with purpose. I enlisted the help of skilled professionals who were either related to me or were people I knew in the community. I put my own kids and their friends to work as well!

The result was a home that we were all proud of and a home that everyone who contributed in any way, felt a part of. Once we were done with the front part of the home, we brought over our resident from the St. Edward House. Richard crossed the threshold after passing through a red-ribbon entrance on February 17, 2025. And a couple of



weeks later, we welcomed Peggy, and then Patricia, Edna, Bill.... 22 total.

The momentum never seemed to stop for our helpers. These folks could not stand to see the rooms that still needed renovating. At some point, we picked up another go-getter, Patrick Smith. He started showing up twice a week and volunteering over 15 hours a week to get our punch list completed.

The Holy Spirit was sending people to the house left and right. So many of them enter the house, kind of bewildered, as if to say, "I do not know exactly why I am here, but the Holy Spirit would not leave me alone until I came."

It has been one of my favorite things to watch the glazed over look, the wheels turning in their minds, and the churning of their heart as I give them a tour and tell them our story.

Nearly all of them will voice, "I am not sure how God wants to use me here, but I will do whatever I can to further this mission."

I like to call many of these folks 'the gatherers.' God has chosen them to gather the harvest and bring it to Him. They bring others to the house, they invite others to the fundraiser, they share the message with others in the community who they think would have an interest in the mission, and they seem to constantly be working behind the scenes.

As the months went by, the renovations were taking center stage, but even

more, the residents were our top priority! Keeping them the priority meant hiring additional staff, which added a dramatic amount to our budget. The purchasing of the house seemed to be drifting further and further from our grasp. All I knew to do was to just keep picking up the puzzle pieces that were right in front of me.

Leading up to our annual fundraiser on November 2, the momentum was building to secure the purchase of the house. I had been planning on doing a paddle raise as a way to open the door for donors to have a better understanding of what it costs to operate the home. Simultaneously, I knew we also needed to have a focus on purchasing the house. Even though this seemed to be an impossible task, I felt very strongly that the Holy Spirit was going to use this night for the glory of God and show up BIG TIME!



Look for part 3 in your inbox tomorrow!

♡ -Kim

PART 3

Jim Bauchiero learned about us when he attended the fundraiser in 2024, and since then he has been a dedicated volunteer and donor. He comes every Tuesday from 8am to noon and if he ever has to miss, he does everything he can to find a substitute. I saw the Holy Spirit at work in him even before I had met him in person. I can only describe it as something I just knew in my heart.

After I began spending time with him on Tuesdays, I quickly realized he was just another piece to the puzzle that God had chosen to use at the beginning of time to 'gather in the harvest' at the Heart of Mary House.



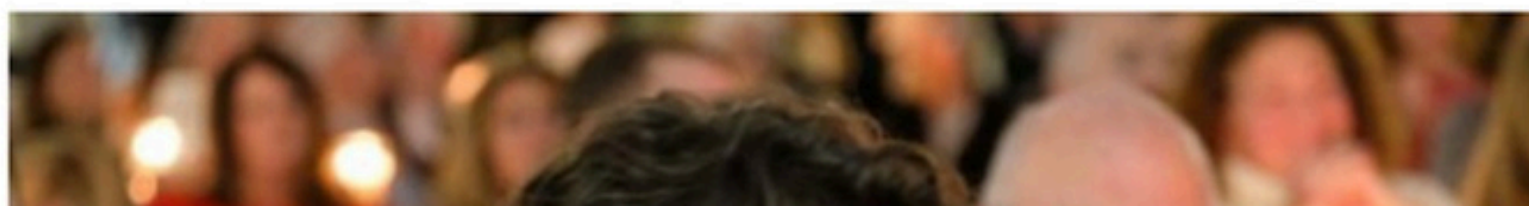
Jim is not only a volunteer, he has also become a great mentor to me. He is a retired CFO and a savvy businessman, but more so, he is faithful, prudent and wise. From the start, I knew he was someone I could completely trust.

The purchase price for the house was \$450,000. At the beginning of the process in purchasing the house, we had obtained a matching grant of \$45,000 from an Anonymous Foundation. All throughout the process of trying to finance a loan, we were also trying to accumulate the matching \$45,000 needed to complete the downpayment for the

loan. This was a tremendous challenge as we were also trying to manage our rising operating costs. In our conversations surrounding the 2025 fundraiser, I mentioned to Jim that I wanted the first ask in the paddle raise to be about securing the down payment for the house. I explained that we would ask 9 people to raise their paddle to donate \$5,000. He looked at me with a look that said.... "Are you sure you have 9 people attending that will donate \$5,000?"

I grinned, and with reassurance said, "I am not certain of anything expect for my trust in the Lord, but I have great hope that this can be done!" From that moment, he was in full support and Jim's belief in me was all I really needed to hear. It was another one of those crazy ideas, which confirmed to me that we were on the right track. I did not know a large majority of the people attending the fundraiser. I honestly had no idea if anyone would have the ability or the desire to open up their heart so deeply to our needs. It was also a risk, because we still needed funding for our operational needs.

The moment our emcee, Jennie Guinn, asked who would raise their paddle for \$5,000 to go towards the downpayment, I felt the world stop. I was breathless as I could see from the corners of my eyes, paddles going up left and right! I buried my face in my hands in tears.





Kim Derrick, founder and director of the Heart of Mary House, reacts to the support shown during the paddle raise when 14 guests committed to donating \$5,000 toward the mission of Heart of Mary House.

Photo creds: Katie Peterson (Tennessee Register)

Mind you, I was not surprised. I knew the Holy Spirit was in every nook and cranny that evening, and I had no doubt that all of our needs would be met. However, I was completely overwhelmed.

***I was overwhelmed by the
goodness of God!***

***I was overwhelmed by the
charity of everyone there!***

***I was overwhelmed by the
affirmation that people believed in me and
they believed in all of the people He had
raised up to do this work!***

The fundraiser ended up raising over \$140,000! Simply incredible! Following the fundraiser, we got to work right away to complete the processes of purchasing the house. As we were running the numbers for our year to date finance reports, we were in disbelief! The generosity from donors was unbelievable and unheard of in a young organization such as ours.

Looming in the back of our minds was the question of, "would we still be able to afford the down payment and also secure our operating costs for 2026?" I knew that we would continue to move forward until we couldn't and I had no doubt that God's grip would not loosen up. He would continue to send His Holy Spirit. I knew this because as we were looking back on the 2025 year, all of the countless puzzle pieces that I was picking up throughout the year were now coming together to make the most beautiful work of art! There were just a few more pieces remaining.

Look for part 4 in your inbox tomorrow!

♡ -Kim



PART 4

On November 18, Jim was at the house working his regular Tuesday volunteer shift and he nonchalantly tells me that he has been communicating with a donor who wants to donate the funds for the house.

Of course I am like, "What? Who? Do I know this person?" He tells me they would like to remain anonymous for now. I respect this and I do not ask any other questions. He tells me that they are checking on a few things but they will know in the next couple of weeks. He said that he could not say for certain, but it looked like they were going to give \$350,000 for the purchase of the house.

"No!?! What!?! You're kidding me?" Were just some of my reactions. He made it a point to temper my excitement and reiterated, "this is not a done deal. Keep praying!"



Pope Leo XIV

I'm so convinced that if we open our lives and our hearts to serve others, we indeed, like the Gospel says, receive a hundredfold, in this life.

Just before Thanksgiving, Jim let me know that the donors fund had received approval for the sale of security and they were looking for a buyer. He felt confident that it would all be resolved after the holiday. The day after Thanksgiving, he messaged letting me know that things were a 'go' for the donor fund to monetize an investment and transfer the \$350,000 to Catholic Comfort Care Homes.

Jim and his wife, Nanci, wanted to meet with me the following week to

tell me about the donor. I knew the moment he said this... In fact, I knew the first moment he shared about even the possibility....I saw it in his eyes. I saw it in his heart. I knew that He and Nanci were the donors. (There is a great story behind the funding, but it is a story for them to tell, not me.)

I knew with all of my being that God was going to use Jim and Nanci in a big way, but I also knew that they were going to listen, and that they were going to stretch and sacrifice in ways they may not have anticipated when they were sitting in the crowd at the 2024 fundraiser. Once again, this news did not surprise me. It overwhelmed me!

How was I blessed with this tremendous grace to see time and time again the outpouring of God's love through the generosity of people like Jim and Nanci?

Because of the Bauchiero's generous donation, the home at 6107 New York Ave now officially belongs to the Heart of Mary House!! When I reflect back to the 2024 fundraiser, I recall the energy and the excitement as I first announced the news that we had just signed the lease on the house and hoped to purchase it in the near future. I recall my complete unawareness of how the purchase would be made, but my complete confidence in the notion that it would in fact happen. I think about how I did not know Jim and Nanci, and I specifically remember when the pictures came back from photographer, Lisa Link, and thinking, "Who is this stunning

couple?" It was Jim and Nanci (pictured below) sitting at the table. But it was not important that I knew who they were, because God knew them and He knew their hearts and He knew they would be at the fundraiser. He knew that Jim would open his heart to become a



weekly volunteer. He knew that Nanci would be just as struck by the interest Jim had taken and his fervor for the mission.

The plan for Jim and Nanci to allocate funds to be moved around, bought, sold, etc... did not happen directly after we announced the need in 2024, but it came

swiftly and in God's perfect timing!

(Isaiah 60:22)

The Lord is using the Heart of Mary House for so much more than just a place for the dying poor to call home and be cared for 24/7. I am not kidding when I say that I am just trying to stay out of His way! I am an ordinary person. Jim and Nanci are ordinary people. Hugo, Keith, Patrick, and all of the volunteers, are just ordinary people. Our caregivers are just ordinary people. But God is doing extraordinary things through all of us!

Though, I must add, this is not through passivity. We are all actively seeking to know and do God's will each day. We are all allowing ourselves to be stretched beyond what we think we can do. We do not hesitate to heed His call, for fear of making a mistake. We have hope that when we do our best, and a tad more, we can make a difference in this world!

Thank you for reading along! I know you all are celebrating with us!

I have felt your prayers and especially the prayers of our past residents.

We remain devoted to the care of the dying poor and hope you will continue to find ways to support the mission of HOMH.



*Jim and Nanci,
We are so grateful for you! Your love
and support will always be remembered
as a great act of virtue and a work of
mercy! Know of our prayers for you and
yours.*

*Love,
Kim and all of HOMH*

