

**UPDATE ON MOM (As of 5/31/07)**

I was praying that this update would be more positive than it is. It is a hard letter for me to write. Sandy was discharged from Select Specialty Hospital on Monday, May 21. She had been

in the hospital for 6 weeks. This had been her 8th admission this year and her 24th since March 2005. She has been in the hospital 128 days this year alone and is still in the hospital since Friday, May 25th. She was taken by ambulance to St. Joseph Hospital in Lexington. She had an appointment at the Cancer Centers of America in Philadelphia, PA on Monday, June 4th. But this is an outpatient clinic and she is far from being an outpatient. We also made an application to MD Anderson Cancer Clinic at the University of Texas in Houston. Word was received back that she was denied as her condition is too severe and there is nothing they could do for her. We also requested admission to the Markey Cancer Center at University of Kentucky in Lexington. They said they would admit her but would not be able to do any more for her than St. Joseph was due to her condition. We also have application in at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota, the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio, and Sloan-Kettering Clinic in New York. As of now she remains under good care at St. Joseph. Her cancer has spread and she is too

**NEEDS LIST**

- ✓ **Adult Medium Diapers**
- ✓ **Ibuprofen or generic Aleve**
- ✓ **Powdered Infant formula**
- ✓ **Baby Food and Juice**
- ✓ **Adult Shampoo**
- ✓ **8 oz. Bottle Liners**

weak to undergo any surgery or chemotherapy. The doctors are keeping her pain under control and as comfortable as possible. She is also on numerous IV antibiotics. Along with our dedicated staff and married children, we keep the Home, School, Café, and Trading Post running smoothly, as Mom wants us to do. We have someone with her 24 hours a day to help with some of her needs and for companionship. Even with medical insurance (Blue Cross) we have large bills to pay that are not covered 100%. I thank God daily for the grace and peace He gives us in times as this. We appreciate all the love shown to us over the past 2 years of Mom's illness.

—In Christ We Will Continue,  
Jerry

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## Raised by Angels – Part 2

Part 2 of a two-part series, written by Kevin Martin, a journalism student, reprinted with his permission

The hallway is a cool blue as the sun rises. The approaching day sends shades of yellow and orange across walls and

through windows. "Go to Sleep" chimes from a musical mobile in a bedroom crib. A rocking chair creaks at a sleep-slow pace in the playroom. A woman hums quietly while changing a diaper. A squeal erupts from a crib. The squeal becomes a shriek loudly echoing through the house. Across the hall another infant begins to cry. Two women dressed in long flowing skirts dart from the kitchen to the sound of crying. One worker stops rocking in her chair. Holding two infants in her lap, she listens intently to the chorus of screaming down the hall. One of the babies, a six-week-old boy, begins to cry in her lap. "This too shall pass," she says. "The Lord wills it." The sounds of streaming tears are soon replaced with laughter. Infants push walkers and scoot in roller chairs, bumping

caregivers as they go. The playroom is alive with the sounds of rubber balls bouncing and oversized Lego blocks clanking loudly on the floor.



Later in the morning the morning shift supervisor feeds two 11-month-old boys while bouncing a baby on her lap. She has been a Christian since 1991 and says religion played a role in her coming to the Angel House. "The Lord's what brought me here," she said. "I said if the Lord gives me the peace that God can give, then I'd take the job. I fell in love with the kids here." A mother of a 16-year-old son, she has a difficult time balancing her work, family, and religious life. "The joy of the Lord is my strength," she said. "God is first and my family should be second, but it's hard to put family and God's

calling in the right order. I have a very understanding husband. " She believes she was born to be a mother. "I feel that I am a mother to

these babies," she said. "Everybody here has a love for the babies, but I feel God has placed that in me. It's special." She is often heard telling the infants "This too shall pass." She believes God leads people through hard times. "The Bible tells us that in this world you will have tribulations, but live in good cheer, because this too shall pass." "The trial I'm facing today, tomorrow, won't seem like nothing, cause God's faithful, even when we're not." A staff member at the Angel House for six years, she says the infants know the difference between her and their real mothers. I do think that God has placed in every baby a bond with their mother. As young as they are, they feel a connection. Once they leave here, they'll never remember me, but they'll always know the love of God."

The sun has crept behind the hills. The glow of the Angel House nursery lights up a purple sky. The morning shift is long gone. Each shift is comprised of volunteers and staff members. The evening crew will work until 10pm when the mid-night workers will arrive to stay with the infants until 6am.

A 16-month-old smiles and splashes with a rubber duck in the bathtub. He is one of five infants who get a bath at night. The younger babies are bathed in the morning. The afternoon shift supervisor peaks in to check on the little boy. "Are you splashing?" she playfully says to him. She resumes checking off which children need medication before bed. From Nicholasville, she has been a caregiver for three years, working in a Christian school in Mexico before coming to the Galilean Home. She worked in the main house with the older children before coming up to the Angel House. She says that the older children, like the one in the bath, need more than just diaper changes. "They need a little relational learning on how to deal with no-no's and temper tantrums," she said. "The kids need not just the physical help but the emotional and the spiritual and everything



else." She hopes her care for the babies sets an example for their mothers. "The Bible does say that God's kindness does lead to repentance," she said. "Maybe just seeing a little bit of God's kindness will help them realize that they do want to do something different."

In the doorway of a dimly lit kitchen, an 18-month-old boy is handed between four women. He cries and squirms as each caregiver attempts to say good-bye. Several days have passed since he was supposed to leave. His belongings are kept in the hall, wrapped in black trash bags. After living in the care of several women since birth, he is going home to his mother. He is the oldest of the ten infants at the Angel House, is the only child able to walk and turn doorknobs. He can be trusted to sit in a small chair by himself, happily slurping away on his juice. Michael Burt arrives to drive him to meet his mother at a gas station in London, KY. She requested to meet him halfway because of the distance from the Angel House to her home. As Michael loads the van with his belongings, several women take pictures of the little boy. Women file along the long wooden front porch, clinging to their cameras in the wind. Michael fits him in a child car seat, but decides the current arrangement won't work for the duration of the trip. As he searches for a new seat, another worker kneels inside the van

for one last farewell. "Bye bye, we'll miss you, We love you."

He is quiet during the drive. His bright brown eyes reflect the countryside passing on a two-lane road towards London. Every few minutes, Michael will peek over his right shoulder and smile. "Hey there bud, almost time for mom," he said grinning. The van pulls into a gas station near 1-75 on a blustery day. The boy's parents are parked near the entrance beneath a shaded overhang. Moments later mother and child are reunited. With a kiss and a hug, she is a free woman and a free mother. Dad buckles his son in his child seat while Michael and the mother go inside the gas station to fill out all the necessary release paperwork. Before leaving, she stares through the glare of her car window at her son. Touching the car door, she smiles and makes eye contact with her baby. Michael beams from the sidewalk. "Take care of that boy, he's special cargo," he said.

Weeks later, the little boy is settled in at his new home near Manchester in Clay County, KY. His mother says he has adjusted very well. "He sticks right with me, and he plays and laughs all the time," she said. "He hardly ever cries, I don't believe he's the kind of baby that cries. He's a happy baby." His departure from the Angel House was delayed due to his mother's adjustment to life after prison. She was in the Kentucky Correctional Institute for Women for 10 months before being transferred to Otter Creek Correctional Complex for six months. "It was different, everything seemed funny, odd to me," she recalled. "I had to get used to being away from that place." She kept her son at the Angel House because her family members could not care for him. She couldn't help but worry about how her son would react to her. "I worried about everything in the world," she said. "Just wondering how he's gonna act towards me, if he's gonna get scared being with us all of a sudden." She said it was hard to be without him for the first 16 months of his life. "It was awful, all I did was



think about it, I was missing out from him," she recalled. "Everything that he was doing, starting to walk and growing up."

#### A LETTER FROM ANOTHER THANKFUL MOM

*I just wanted to write and say thank you and God bless you for being there for me and my little daughter during my time of incarceration. She has been with you since she was born and she is 8 months old now. I know she is loved and well cared for there. I have been so blessed with the Galilean Home. I don't know what I'd do without you. You have touched our lives and our hearts with kindness. Something so rarely seen out of people these days. A lady asked me if I worried about my daughter there and I could honestly say "no, I do not" I encourage the girls here at KCIW that are pregnant and needing a good home for their babies while they are locked up. I know they couldn't be in better hands than good Christian people like you. Our children should not have to pay for our mistakes. You are all in my prayers and thank you for putting me in yours. God love and bless you all. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.*

—an inmate at Kentucky Correctional Institute for Women