St. Margaret's House

Report to 2003 Diocesan Convention

The Board and staff of St. Margaret's House are pleased to announce that the major building renovations projected in our 2002 report are nearing completion. In short, the Petersen Building is now completely handicapped-accessible and in compliance with all state and local building and fire codes. As of this writing (mid-September) offices and many activities are moving upstairs, leaving the first floor, the "original St. Margaret's" with expanded kitchen, dining and laundry facilities. And with the exception of three weeks in May, St. Margaret's remained open and continued to provide most of its usual services to guests. We will be hosting an open house for donors and other community and diocesan friends in November.

Our meal program is still the focus of the day. During the summer it is not unusual for St. Margaret's to serve a substantial lunch to100 or more people, including many children. An informal breakfast (cereal and toast) is also available most mornings between 10:00 and 11:00. The clothes closet on the second floor has been expanded from 70 to120 sq. ft., allowing both additional shelving and elbow room. We no longer have to limit individual "shopping time" and there is more eye appeal. Guests have remarked that our closet now looks more like a boutique!

Assistant Director Pat Marvel continues her parenting sessions, "A Child's Place in the Family." Beginning this fall, she will conduct a second support group, open to those who have completed the original series. Grants from Child Abuse Protection, St. Joseph County are helping to support this program. The additional space will enable St. Margaret's to offer such programs, as well as individual counseling, in greater comfort and privacy.

For several years we have enjoyed the services of an art therapist who came once a week (after lunch, as soon as tables were cleared and available) to work with both adults and children. 20 to 30 women and children usually participate in these activities. The second floor provides work space for participants as well as expanded facilities for storage of materials and cleanup. I am sure Mary Fran will appreciate not having to share her space with the spaghetti.

The Winter Walk continues to be St. Margaret's most important source of funds for operating expenses, and will be held again on a Sunday in February, 2004. The date is not yet set, since we work around the Notre Dame basketball schedule, but you will be hearing about this event later in the fall. $35,000 was raised in 2003 for operating expenses.

Your Blue Boxes are at work - Last year St. Margaret's received an award of $40,000 from the United Thank Offering of the Episcopal Church toward the cost of the new passenger-freight elevator, the key component in providing accessibility to the building. Together with the support we enjoy from St. James and other churches and individuals throughout the Diocese, St. Margaret's endeavors are truly blessed. A big

thank you to you all, and please consider this an open invitation to visit St. Margaret's and see what you are helping us to accomplish.

Kathryn Schneider, Director
Mary Pyles, Board Secretary