

# House Of His Creation Giving Birth To A New Life

BY PAT PURCELL

LITITZ (Lancaster) — As spring arrives and delivers the green lush new life to fields, pastures and forests, the rebirth of land is evident and a welcomed sight. The signs of new life of birth and rebirth are joyful times full of hope for the future.

Many expectant mothers greet the news of new life with happiness which spreads contagiously among family members, but for thousands of teenage girls each year who become pregnant, unwed, forsaken by family members, and unable or incapable of caring for themselves and their child, there is little happiness. The news of birth brings sadness, hopelessness and frustration.

At the heart of the one of the most fertile and productive garden spots of the world is a home and refuge and a chance for a new life for unwed mothers between the

some seeds and hope they have a better life for being with us."

The House of His Creation with a home in Lititz and in Coatesville, Chester County, was begun in 1973 by a couple from Washington, D.C. who were concerned with the lack of care facilities for young women who found themselves pregnant, unwed, sometimes unwanted and unable to care for themselves. It was the first of its kind in this country and since then has served nearly 400 young women between the ages of 11 and 25 from 34 states and several other nations.

This is a Christian home where the girls are encouraged to learn more about Jesus and come to meet Jesus in a personal way. Bible study is required of every girl once a week. It is non-denominational and girls of the Jewish, Moslem, Buddhism and even the New Age faiths have been family members at one time. One member of the family was from an Abut'habi, an Islamic country where pregnancy outside of marriage is punishable by death.

"We have had girls who have never walked in a church in their whole lives. We have had girls who have no idea who Jesus is," explained Barbara Pizzarelli, House of His Creation Director. "We had a little girl in here once. She had just gotten in and I was talking to her about the family life here and the way we like the girls to feel about their new home and in the discussion I said to her, 'Do you know who Jesus is?' and she turned and said to me, 'Look, I don't know who nobody is, I just got here.'"

"Well, when the girls leave here we want them to know who Jesus is," added Barbara.

Robert and Donna Pry joined the Lititz home in March as house parents. The house belongs to the organization and most of the furnishings have been donated, but the Prys have added their own brand of warmth and welcome to make this house a home that says, "Welcome to our family." Each home is operated by a Christian married couple who serve as role models and parents and teach the girls how to take care of themselves and a baby.



House of His Creation was the first Christian, maternity home of its kind in the country for young women up to the ages of 25. The home in Lititz sits on a hill overlooking the beautiful and fertile farmland which surrounds it. Nearly 400 girls have called the House of His Creation home since it was begun in 1973.

*"We all must take time to talk with our kids. By doing that you are showing them you love them. This is really important for us," added Donna.*

ages of 11 to 25. And while some of these troubled young girls come from broken homes, big cities and are victims of abuse and neglect, for the most part those girls who call the House of His Creation home are from all walks of life.

"The girls who come to us are from wealthy families, poor families, troubled families and just normal homes, but when they become pregnant either they chose not to stay at home or their family won't allow them to," explained Donna Pry, house mom at the Lititz House of His Creation. "And that's why we're here. To love them where they are at in their lives now. We have them for such a short time. Their minds have already been plowed by the things which have happened to them in the past and we can't do anything about that. But maybe we can plant

Teenagers. The mention of the word usually initiates moans and groans and stories from parents who have one, had one or is going to have one. The teen years are full of emotional changes and upheaval, frustrations, heartbreak, and sometimes immense feelings of hopelessness and sadness. There is no parent which needs to be reminded of the changes teenage girls go through. In the most loving and secure family relationships, it is a difficult time for both parents and daughter.

But for a distressed, displaced, teenager under the stress of pregnancy and her situation, emotions

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must be at the breaking point, when she is suddenly thrust into a home with strangers, without the comfort of familiar faces or surroundings. The strain on both the surrogate parents and other members of the extended family is increased.

"We just have to let the love of Christ show through all the time. We must react the way Christ would have us react," said Donna. "What has worked for our children I feel will work for these children. When you are coming in as substitute parents you are coming in without their love. You might have ones who are hard to love and some that need more loving than others."

Added Robert, "We are having a closer walk with God ourselves."

Robert and Donna raised five of their own children and have eight grand children, but even with all that experience, being housepa-



House of His Creation director, Barbara, depends upon God to touch the hearts of people and lead them to supporting the homes through their donations and contributions and said the homes have been very blessed.

rents is a brand new ball game for them. It is a challenge and one they aren't always sure they can meet.

"When our kids were at home we always had a lot of kids around the house and I guess I kind of mothered them all. I read a newspaper article about so many of the girls getting abortions years ago. It upset me," explained Donna. "And I felt this was something that I wanted to be involved in."

"But as we got closer and closer to becoming involved with the actual program, I thought 'God, I don't know if this is for me,'" said Donna. "I prayed a lot. Then an inner voice said to me, 'Donna, its only for a year.' I know we were called by God. I'd rather be doing what is God's will. We are totally dependant upon God."

Added Robert, "God is still training us, everyday."

Only twelve girls live at the home at one time. The Prys are there fulltime with one evening off a week, one weekend off a month and two months annual vacation. They live there around the clock and when they are not there someone from the extended family is there with the girls.

"The girls never have to wonder, 'who will be on shift when I have my baby?' This is not an agency. This is a home and their (the houseparents') whole heart is there with the girls to love them and care for them," said Barbara. The girls and house parents do

everything as a family. They go to church, go bowling or to the movies or shopping together. Each girl is interviewed before being permitted to live at the home and she must agree to abide by certain

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written rules. Most girls stay. Some do not.

"We had one girl who couldn't make the adjustment to life here," explained Barbara. "She broke some rules several times and I finally had to sit down with her and tell her that she couldn't stay with us anymore. After she left, she called me up one time to say that a friend of hers needed to live here. She said that although she could not accept the love she was given



Robert and Donna Pry, house Dad and Mom, have brought warmth and welcome to the spacious House of His Creation Home in Lititz. Individual mailboxes line the wall along the staircase to keep the lines of communication always open among family members.