

Christmas 2016 ~~ Gifts of the Heart



What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring him a lamb,
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part.
Yet what can I give him;
give him my heart!

Christina Rosetti

As the beautiful feast of Christmas draws near, we prepare to celebrate God's greatest gift to us, the gift of His son, Jesus. What can we give in return? When we open our hearts to others we become the presence of Jesus to them, loving them as he loved us. This has always been part of the philosophy, the essence, of Birthright, to love.

As we look back over the past year there are many gifts and blessings for which we thank God. Uppermost is the blessing of our wonderful and dedicated volunteers and Board members. They truly exemplify Rosetti's poem, lovingly giving of their hearts. Not only do they support Birthright with their time and talents, but were it not for them, there would be no Birthright, literally. We owe them so much. A simple "thank you" just does not seem adequate, but it is wholeheartedly given. Their care and concern for distressed parents and their babies is the motivation that keeps Birthright's spirit alive.

We are thankful for the support of so many others who open their hearts to us throughout the year, whether helping with our yearly fund-raising events or keeping our clothes closet well stocked for moms and babies. This brings to mind a young married couple who came in earlier this year. They expressed embarrassment for having to ask for clothing for their baby as they had never had to ask for any kind of help before. They would only accept what they felt was absolutely necessary as they did not want to deprive another parent in need. A beautiful couple; surely God will bless them for thinking of others during their own time of need.

We are blessed by many generous and faithful supporters who contribute financially and make it possible to keep our doors open. These donations are essential to cover our basic everyday expenses. Each individual gift is received with much appreciation and gratitude.

Thanks to a generous grant received from the Bishop deGoesbriand Appeal for Human Advancement this year, we are renewing our efforts to connect with potential clients through the use of modern media technologies. This grant is targeted specifically for outreach and work has already begun. This fall, UVM student and theater major Samantha Laverture graciously volunteered her time to work with us and Crossworks to produce a video to be broadcast on YouTube and other media channels. Since potential clients are likely to look for help on-line, we are also in the process of developing a website for our local chapter and investing in Facebook advertising to increase our visibility. The website is scheduled to be up and running in early February, and will be in addition to our exposure on Birthright International's website. Among other possible avenues we are pursuing are advertising on Burlington area city buses and local newspapers to reach new clients who may not have access to the internet.

We still have need for a social media volunteer who can concentrate on this aspect of our outreach efforts. If this is something you feel you can contribute to help Birthright of Burlington move forward into the cyber age, please contact our office. We welcome every new volunteer, media savvy or not, with open arms.



We extend to you our very best wishes for a
Joyful Christmas Season & Peaceful New Year!

