



In the past two years, 18 homeless pregnant and/or parenting young women have lived at the Diocese of Buffalo's Mother Teresa Home. That means a dozen and a half women were sheltered and fed, and received prenatal care, parenting advice, and connections to services and classes to assist them and their children. Residents have been referred from various agencies, organizations, and churches from the inner city, South Buffalo, Williamsville and even from Chicago.

The home celebrates its second anniversary this week, where at Pope Francis' suggestion; it was designated by Bishop Richard J. Malone, as an "Institutional Expression of Mercy" within the Diocese Buffalo as a standing memorial in the "Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy".

Located in the former rectory of St. Adalbert at 208 St. Stanislaus St. on Buffalo's East Side, the Mother Teresa Home was blessed and dedicated by Bishop Malone on Aug. 25, 2016, the Vigil of her birthday and one week before her canonization in Rome, which was held on the vigil of her death on September 4.

Cheryl Calire, director of Pro-Life Activities for the diocese is the driving force behind the home for pregnant women. She spent countless hours determining how she could fill the need that was out there for these young women. Most homes with this mission require the moms to be homeless for 30 days before being placed in a home or on a list. Along with the home's coordinator, she is able to prepare the young women for a successful life, to be with their children, and live as a family.

"We connect them with life skills, connections to services, and give them the opportunity to re-group," Calire said. The average stay at the home is six months though residents can stay for up to 18 months.

In addition to setting up the house, Calire and her husband agreed to live in the home for six years, even during the year-long renovations. Residents assist in meal preparation and household chores. On paper that sounds great, but when emotions and personalities are in the mix, things don't always go as planned.

"Admittedly," she said, "Though we've had many, many success stories, we have had a few bumps in the road where some of the ladies wouldn't comply with the rules." That doesn't weaken her resolve to live out the home's mission of promoting safety, stability and well-being for people who have experienced or been exposed to pressure in regards to their pregnancy.