All too often the women referred to us at St. Raymond’s Society find themselves with no place to live. The reasons are many but the one constant is that they need a place to call home until they can get their feet on solid ground and have the means for a place of their own. From its inception, St. Raymond’s Society has had a vision of having a house that could provide mothers and their children with a temporary and safe transitional housing. We are excited to announce that at the beginning of 2012 we were able to acquire such a home.

The events surrounding the opening of this home confirm that God’s hand is guiding us and providing what we need to carry on with His plan for our organization. It started with the house finding us and continued in the many efforts of volunteers who generously gave of their time to get the house ready for its purpose. Today, we continue to see God’s blessings in the wonderful people who give of themselves to make this a reality. To all those who have given of their time, talent, and treasure, we extend a sincere thank you.

(continued on page 2)
you for making this home possible.

St. Raymond’s Society has been blessed with a group of women who have stepped up and accepted positions that are vital to the success of this house project. The compassion, character, and dedication they possess make it possible for us to be successful in our mission. To those who serve on the House Committee, we thank you. A special thanks goes out to our Housemother.

The housemother lives at the home on the first floor. The major role of the housemother is to keep order in the house. This consists of making sure that the house rules are being observed and that everyone is doing their part to keep the house running smoothly. With five large bedrooms for our guests, we have the ability to house up to five mothers and their children. At the time we are writing this newsletter, all the rooms of the home are occupied. We did see a need for this resource, but are still a little surprised at how quickly we reached capacity. While we don’t want to rush anybody out of the home before they are ready to leave, our goal is to help the house guest be in a position to be able to move out as soon as she can.

There are requirements for a house guest to be welcomed into the home (please see the box on page 1).

There are also requirements that need to be met by a house guest to continue their stay in the home. Monthly reviews provide them the opportunity to meet with members of the house committee. In general, with each review they are able to earn an extension to their stay by showing that they are making progress toward their goals. Putting forth effort, making progress, and abiding by the rules are all requirements for them to stay in the home. Stays can last up to one year.

In an effort to increase our chance of success, a mentor is partnered up with the woman we are helping. A mentor will meet with the woman on a regular basis to offer direction and support at this time in her life. Mentors use the knowledge they have gained through life to offer guidance in decision making and other life skills that might be deficient. The mentor is encouraged to communicate to St. Raymond’s any resource that might be needed by the one they are mentoring.

Ω
From among our houseguests, we would like to share the inspiring story of Jamie Morris.

Jamie came into the home in the same way she was able to leave, very determined to succeed. She found herself pregnant and not able to stay where she was living. When she was referred to St. Raymond’s Society, she was very hopeful that the transition home would be able to take her in, but was afraid it might not be an option for her.

Fortunately for both Jamie and St. Raymond’s, we were able to invite her into the home. She immediately felt a sense of gratitude and relief.

Jamie’s willingness to work toward her goals made her an ideal houseguest. She held a job at McDonald’s and was a dedicated employee; she always made it to work and got to and from work by walking. She was once spotted walking home from work in the rain, and in typical fashion, had a smile on her face while singing. Her dedication and positive attitude were inspiring to all those she was around. “Moping and complaining won’t get me anywhere. I am looking forward to things getting better and I know they will be soon,” she stated. Jamie diligently worked to get things in order to be ready to provide for herself and her child. She realizes this might have been very difficult, if not impossible, were it not for the help of St. Raymond’s. “The time at the home has allowed me to focus on myself and realize what I needed to do.” Jamie said, “I don’t know where I could have done that any place else.”

During her stay at the home, Jamie made good use of the opportunity given to her. Not only was she able to save her money she earned, but also she received her GED while living there. It was an eight minute walk for her to a place that offered the classes and since classes got over late, she would often catch a ride home with the house mother. Jamie was very excited when she passed the test, and said it gave her a huge confidence boost.

In speaking of her time at the house, Jamie mentioned that the encouragement and support was more than she had ever received. She is very grateful for this opportunity and for having met so many wonderful people while living there.

Jamie was able to move out on her own in November and is looking forward to the arrival of her baby girl due at the end of December. She states that her immediate goals include learning to be a good mom and continuing her education. Looking into the future, she has a passion to become a teacher and will work hard towards that goal. Also, she looks forward to the day she can come back and give her time and money to St. Raymond’s Society for all she has been able to receive. She already comes back often to offer what she has to give at this time ~ her friendship and infectious smile.

Ω
LONG TERM GOALS FOR THE HOUSE

We want to provide resources that will help our residents for the rest of their lives; skills that are essential to self-reliance. With that in mind, we plan to provide instruction on life skills such as:

- Faith
- Parenting
- Cooking
- Nutrition and health
- Budgeting
- Job interviewing
- Basic car maintenance
- ... and more

CONTACT US
St. Raymond's Society
P.O. Box 1491
Columbia, MO 65205

Visit us on the web
www.straymondssociety.com
and join us on Facebook

For further information please contact
Steve Smith or Mike Hentges,
co-chairmen,
at (573) 219-6111 or e-mail:
raymondssociety@aol.com.

Beyond words…beyond nine months.