What It’s Like
A Message from Co-Founder, Steve Smith

In 1998 a song was released by Everlast that has haunted me to this day. The song is entitled “What It’s Like”. It tells three stories of people going through trying times. The singer asks us to put ourselves in the shoes of each of the people and their situations. Here is part of verse two:

“Mary got pregnant from a kid named Tom that said he was in love
He said, “don’t worry about a thing, baby doll I’m the man you’ve been dreaming of.” But three months later he say he won’t date her or return her calls.”

There’s obviously a fourth line but I didn’t print it. Honestly because the emotion expressed is raw. As it is with people who find themselves in these situations. This young women finds herself in an unimaginable place. She’s alone, pregnant, and rejected. The song continues:

After 8 years of hearing the stories of women who have come to St. Raymond’s Society, I may not be able to “walk in their shoes” but I understand better than I ever could have before meeting these amazing women. We want to be the people that understand and help them through a process of first coming to terms with their current situation. Second we want to be there to help them transform their life and that of their children. Over the last 8 years we have helped the women do both of those things. Our services are expanding. We are doing more work in the communities with women who don’t need to be in one of our homes. Oh, our houses stay full, we’ve just expanded. That’s what your generosity helps provide.

Let me finish with a different story than the one the song represents. I attended a presentation for St. Raymond’s at a friends home. It was a way to educate the public on what we do and to raise funds. We had one of the women who lived with us for several months there to present. When we were almost done a question came from one of the guests. The question was “Do you know of any cases where an abortion was forgone because of our work”? In unison our speaker, two St. Raymond’s employees and myself all said at once “YES”. I gave a couple of examples. Next our young mom who had been with us (whom I’ll call Sarah)shared a story. Recently a friend of Sarah’s discovered that she was pregnant. Because this woman already had an older child, she was ready to abort. Our fearless ex-resident Sarah told her friend that abortion was not the answer. Sarah explained to her friend how much she would regret the decision. But it wasn’t just talk, Sarah helped her friend resources in the community. Sarah, had been there. She knew how to help. Sarah introduced her friend to St. Raymond’s Society. She wasn’t able to move into the house because of the older child. However we are helping her with our outreach program. Then Sarah ended with “and my friend had her baby on August 15th and she couldn’t be happier”. Sarah’s friend will be aided. She will make it. We rejoice with her in the birth of her baby. We rejoice that a young woman who had been in the same situation a little over a year stepped up. We rejoice that we have supporters like you to make these transformational dreams come true!
THE ALPHA SERIES: Hope, Love and Encouragement for SRS Moms!

Columbia embarked upon the ALPHA Series once again and is pleased to share news on a successful time of empowerment. ALPHA is a biblically based video series that allows participants to explore Christianity and gain support on their spiritual journey. Although every mom enters the series with different expectations or in pursuit of diverse personal goals, collectively moms, staff and guests never leave the same! ALPHA takes the time to dive into biblically based principles, unveil scriptural foundations and restores hope through powerful testimonies. The time is well spent each week covering intimate discussion points and provides a time for healing, introspection and fellowship. During this summer’s ALPHA series, we were joined by amazing families and volunteers to helped prepare dinner for SRS moms, provide childcare while the moms engaged in sessions or took the time to join in for the evening. At the conclusion of ALPHA in Columbia, moms retreated for an entire day joined by St. Raymond’s Society Founder Mike Hentges and our Jefferson City CSV, Luetkemeyer. We could not be more pleased that ALPHA continues to make an impact in the lives of our mothers on their road to self-sufficiency!

OUR TOWN: COMO Volunteers Lend Helping Hands!

St. Raymond’s Society Columbia campus was blessed this quarter with much needed support from local families and friends! Whether it was receiving the warmth of Travis and Amber Condict with their amazing daughters who cooked meals and provided childcare during the ALPHA series, starting Fall service projects around the St. Raymond’s house with Tolton Catholic High School students, completing a staff training with business guru Dan Kliethermes or taking care of our moms with Warren and Lucy Zahler we are grateful for all of the effort everyone has pitched in to keep programming and services going to local mothers and children.
“Her Story: Meet SRS Resident Anita!”

“I am so grateful for the help of St. Raymond’s Society. I did not ever dream that I would be a single mother, to raise a child alone. It has been hard to prepare for this and I don’t know what I would have done without St. Raymond’s. I am so thankful that I have a very nice place to stay and prepare to have my baby. in my country, this is really rare. There are not many services that would help me if this were to happen in my situation. Thank you to everyone for your help and care for me.”

St. Raymond’s Society is excited to introduce one our newest residents Anita to the resident program. Anita is an amazing new mom and recently gave birth to son Lucas. Anita has hit the ground running towards success. As she prepared for her bundle of joy to arrive, Anita continued her academic studies at the University of Missouri - Columbia. She is earning her bachelor degree in Psychology with the support of the International Studies departments at MIZZOU. Anita is originally from China and has expressed her gratitude for the support of St. Raymond’s Society. She is working toward preparing to pursue a career in the health professions field while she balances her new journey into motherhood.

The SRS Way: Reaching 7 Pillars of Self-Sufficiency!

In preparation for 2018, Columbia staff had a few major goals including increasing access to monthly programming for moms to strengthen support in reaching personal and program goals across St. Raymond’s Society pillars of self-sufficiency. Programming this year not only provides moms flexibility to personalize coaching and life planning pursuits but also bring quality opportunities to the moms to help focus on specific targets each month for diverse learning. Also it creates awareness and exposure to positive mentors in the local community and alum for a strong safety net while that are in residency. We could not continue to provide and strengthen quality program services without our amazing friends and community partners.

A special thank you to Friends of St. Raymond’s Society Diana Brady for teaching an awesome career and professional development seminar to our moms and to Shadonica Cheatum for providing group and personal empowerment seminars through the “GLOW-UP” program along with local career services for supporting SRS moms.
SRS Partners with Local Churches

SRS has a proud history of partnering with area churches of all faiths to support single moms in the community. We recognize that all Christians are called to serve, and we have been blessed and humbled by the volunteer and financial support we have received from many churches in the Central Missouri area. During the month of October, recognized by Catholic churches as Respect Life Month, SRS will be speaking at masses and organizing youth group activities in several parishes to encourage support for women who choose life for their babies.

SRS Co-founder, Steve Smith, and Program Director, Mary Chen, recently met with Bishop Shawn McKnight of the Jefferson City diocese, and were very encouraged by his expressed support for our organization. “He has a clear understanding of the need for services for pregnant women and new moms in our community and is sincerely committed to supporting our efforts. Partnering with area churches during Respect Life Month was a natural fit.”

Any churches interested in supporting the work of SRS should contact Headquarters at (573) 893-2067.

Our Tax Credits

A Great Return on Your Donation

Any donation to St. Raymond’s Society over $100 qualifies for Missouri State Tax Credits. The chart below demonstrates the power of these tax credits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donation Amount</th>
<th>Out-of-Pocket Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$50  $100  $250  $500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$80  $160  $400  $800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$110 $275 $550 $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$125 $450 $800 $1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HERE’S HOW IT WORKS: 50% State Credit + 6% State Deduction + Federal Deduction