"Sister Says . . ."

"I long, as does every human being, to be ***at home*** wherever I find myself." M*aya Angelou* again instructs us.

Here at Bethany House we all strive to see that each person is ***at home*** when within these sheltering walls or seated at this welcoming table. There is a deep sense of peace here – and safety, and security. In the truest meaning of the word, Bethany provides ***shelter*** to those who come to us ravaged by the storms of life and often hardened by the bitter cold of indifference. But Bethany is *more* than just shelter – Bethany is ***being at home.***

Recently, one of our young women spoke about "feeling ***at home***" for the first time in her life, even though she had lived in good, decent places and wanted for nothing. She said she did not know what was missing in her life until she found this vague and elusive reality called ***being at home*** here at Bethany, among strangers who soon become family.

That longing to be ***at home*** surges up from deep within us . . . we all know the feeling. And so, at this sacred time of Christmas when ***home*** becomes far more important to each of us, we thank you for all you do for our families who struggle with the crisis of homelessness – and the pain of not feeling ***at home*** in this world. Your kindness, your generosity and compassion make *all the difference* to our children and their moms and we thank you for providing the gift of ***being at home*** to all of us! Christmas Blessings on each of ***you*** and on each of ***your homes!*** Sister Aimee

What's in a Word: Responsibility

In today's world, one familiar phrase appears and is repeated often: *"Who's responsible?"* Who will take responsibility for a problem, a situation, a homeless family? Anyone? Who cares about duty, obligation or trust, when acting *without responsibility* is easier than accepting the consequences of one's actions and decisions?

The answer is a challenging one for all. When *irresponsibility* prevails, many of its innocent victims are children. They are not *responsible* for the situations they have to face in their childhood – their lives are often affected by choices and decisions made by others, often without any awareness beyond a present moment. Innocent children suffer the repercussions of decisions made by others. These little ones cannot yet care for themselves. They need **someone** to take *responsibility* for them and for the nurturing and restoring of their spirit.

That **someone** is often *Bethany House*. *The Little Prince* instructs us, "When we become **aware**, we become **responsible**." Bethany House has been **aware** of the needs of others for more than thirty years. From the beginning, it has been our responsibility to provide shelter, safety and services for those who are not able to provide these for themselves. During this *Year of the Child* at Bethany, we are coordinating our efforts and programs to ensure our children's well-being and development for a secure future. With help from all of us, our mothers become **aware** that they **can** return to a life where **they will be able to be responsible for themselves and for their children**.

Isn't it our Mission to help our young families become successful citizens who are capable of meeting their obligations and being accountable for their actions? Isn't that the real meaning of *responsibility* for Bethany? Jessie Fentnor

Random Acts of Kindness

Bethany House was a familiar name to **Dot Knipscher**. On several occasions, the ladies in her church group had sent clothing there for the children, and Dot passed Bethany's wonderful house on Prospect Street each day when she went to work in the Baldwin Library.

Dot remembered Bethany House again when she received her Stimulus Check. It was an unexpected surprise, and because there wasn't anything she really needed, she thought that someone else perhaps might need it more. And so, Dot donated *half of her check* to Bethany House to be spent on durable goods that were needed by our families.

The "super shoppers" at Bethany researched online and found the best buys for the money*: 4 new high chairs and 6 full-sized strollers!* And now, six of our moms are especially happy because they badly needed strollers for their children but could not afford them until Dot made it possible. Their little ones are also enjoying their wonderful new "seats" at mealtimes, thanks to Dot! Dot Knipscher's thoughtful generosity has assisted many families, and will continue to do so as these high chairs and strollers are quite sturdy! We truly appreciate Dot's kind heart that resulted in this wonderful blessing and **all of the moms and children at Bethany sincerely appreciate our DOT for her wonderful and loving Random Acts of Kindness!**