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Spring 1935 OUR STORY

It was in the fall of 1935 that I met ~~Miss~~ Dorothy Day. Of course I had heard much about her and the very wonderful things that she was doing in New York. For a long while I really had hoped that at sometime I would get a chance to meet and talk to her, because she was doing what I wanted to do very much — that was to operate a house of hospitality in the Catholic way of life. When I met her, I was greatly impressed by her manner and appearance; which was most unassuming. She told me much of the beginning of her movement. She spoke of being voluntary poor and the mystical body of Christ. This was also new and strange to me, but as she spoke my heart seemed to jump and all of a sudden I could see the thing I wanted to do was much easier than I had thought. I did not need several hundreds of dollars in new equipment, nor did I need a modern large building. How easy and simple it was now, almost in my grasp!

Miss Day spoke of the difference between poverty and destitution. I was soon sold on the idea, and after our talk she said "Here is five dollars, it is all that I have; take this, as I want to be the first to give you a donation on your new house that you will start."

I had never been able to see anything good in poverty before, but it was all different after my talk with Miss Day. I seemed to see with a fervent and different set of eyes. What I had thought of as awful poverty, was now dire destitution, and poverty was just being poor, but it could be orderly, clean, and good. I began to think now that our Lord had always been poor and was always found with poor people and had carried it all with dignity.

At last I had found myself. I did not need to start some kind of a drive for funds, neither did I have to go out and try to get some influential men to back me up. All I needed was a stronger faith in our Lord and the will to be of service to him and his poor.

So, the next day, armed with the five dollars that Miss Day had given, and a happy determination in my mind, I started out to hunt a building that would be the first House of Hospitality in Washington, and would be known as "The Blessed Martin de Porres House of Hospitality."

This was a real job, because first there was to be considered the neighborhood. Such a house must certainly would do a greater service in what we call a run down section or slums, as that would be the most likely place for the homeless man, where things are congested, and cheap. Then, too, in a different neighborhood where the standard would be a little better there would be all sort of complaints from the residents if these men were brought in their section, as the general idea is that this particular type of man is worthless. So under these conditions I really was not looking for anything very fine, but there were some things that a building must have if it was to be useful. It must have electricity for light and facilities for baths and in the very low rent bracket, as I would have the sole responsibility of paying it from a very small salary from which I had to pay living expenses for my Mother, who was none too well; a sister who had to be cared for and a nephew. I spent many days looking for a place that embodied all of these very necessary possibilities.

Sometimes I would find a house for rent — the price would be just right — when I would secure the key to go in to see it, there would be no wiring for electricity, or no bath, and when the bath and electric lights would be fine, the rent would be too high. It was sometimes hard to keep my determination strong. One day as I walked up Seventh Street from work, feeling full of despair, I happened to look across the street and up over a Barber Shop and a Lunch Room I saw a sign in the window which read "FOR RENT." I went over to get a closer view. I knew the spot too well; it was one of Washington's worst northwest sections. The part of the house that was to be rented was the two upper floors and the ground floor back. The entrance to this part was in an Alley. It was a very bad spot as people were often found either dead or dying there. Once a woman brought the arm of a man out on the street that had been murdered and his body dismembered.

The little four room houses were places of all kinds of illicit doings. In front of ~~the~~ door that was about ten feet up in this Alley, my blood ran both hot and cold; I stood glued to the spot for a full five minutes wondering how I got there. After living in Washington all my life I had never been on that side of

the street at the end of that Alley. When I finally got myself together I found the lock had been broken and the door standing wide open. I came back to Seventh Street sick at heart; I most certainly did not want this place. Yet, something told me this was the place.

The next day at work I asked a friend of mine if he would go some place with me after work. He said "yes," so when the day was over we started out together. As we walked, I told him about the house I was planning to start. When we got to the alley I turned in — he looked at me queerly and said "Where the Devil do you think you are going?" I said, "I want you to go into this house with me to see how it looks." "This is where I am going to start." So, pushing him ahead of me, I stepped into the doorway. The walls were broken and dirty, there was a strong smell of questionable food from the lunchroom.

As we started up the stairs my heart sank, and I thought, "O, Lord, how can I do anything with this place? The walls on two sides were broken, and dirty paper was hanging from almost every part of them. There were pieces of tin over large rat holes. At the top of the stairs we stopped again to look over the situation. There were three rooms in front of us and the doors leading from them into the hall were either off hinges or panels knocked out, window panes broken out. The walls cracked and broken. In one room, nearly all of the plaster from a side wall was off. What paper there was on the walls was dirty and old and showed unmistakable signs of The Red Rovers. The boards in the floors were old and warped, the floor boarding was leaving the floors in some places and the walls in some other places; as a result the floors sloped in any direction that caused you to stumble until you learned the hang of them. There was a bathroom on this floor, but there was only a cold water spigot. Then there was a stoveless kitchen. Just a sink and cold water spigot. Next there was a room that we made a dining room of and the next room was in turn a bedroom, a relaxing room for our drunks and a store room. The tenants who moved out left every old thing in the house they did not need and the floors were littered. We found the two rooms on the top floor were in just as bad a condition, except perhaps the floor sloped in a different direction than those on the floor below. On the ground floor rear there was a room that I found I could use also. All the plaster had left; only the bare bricks were there.

I left the house not depressed as I was when I first entered it, for suddenly something passed over me and I saw it all papered and painted and scrubbed; and in fact I was jubilant as I stepped out of the door and said quite glibly to my friend "My, this is just fine, I was so lucky to find such a nice place." He did not say a word, but the look he gave me said volumes.

The next day I went to the office of the Real Estate Dealer who was agent for this house, to see just what terms I could make as to rent, for as yet I only had the five dollars given me by Miss Day. The Agent said that he would put in some repairs and that the rent would be thirty-five dollars (\$35.) per month. So I bargained with him to let me make my own repairs and have the building for twenty-five dollars a month. He compromised by adding a dollar a month for water. And so, I got the use of the building for twenty-six dollars. I left five dollars as a deposit without having the faintest idea where I was going to get the other twenty one dollars; but I had a whole week to get it and I knew many things could happen in that time.

Then I started out to beg things to sell to get this first months rent, and it was surprising how things came — everything — clothes, furniture, articles of all sorts, sizes and conditions. In that week's time I was even given some money. The response was wonderful. I was so elated over the fact that almost everyone was so kind, I hurried down to sign the contract and get authority to move in two days before the week was up on my deposit. Armed with the receipt for one month's rent, I was now ready to begin real work.

Through searching I found out that this had been among the early houses built in Washington. This particular building was built in 1835 by a young man to carry his Bride. Never was it thought to have been used as I was planning to use it, or as some of its users before I came along. Long before I was ready to move in I know much of its questionable history from people who saw it being repaired and wanted certain rooms, thinking it was going back to its old habits. It was a structure of frame and brick. Later the frame was pebble-dashed; but at this time there were deep cracks in the frame and pebble-dash. In one corner of the room you could sit and look, through a crack, out in the street. On the back the mortar was falling from between

the bricks. Some of my acquaintances were constantly prophesying when the whole thing would collapse. However, I never had any such fears.

Allow me to come back to my preparation for moving into the house. First, I was forced to have the dirt and waste taken out of the house. It costed seven dollars to have the dirt taken out and away; that did not include cleaning the back yard. In the cleaning and repairing of the house I was forced to call on friends and relatives. Again in those early days, my friend Vernon Jackson who was the person who went in with me to look at the place, came to my assistance. I had to sell things at a rummage sale one day, then the next day I would spend all the money getting needed things to work with. So every other day found me having a rummage sale and every other day found me working at the house. The first day of cleaning we had to go a lot of sweeping and Jack was helping me. He looked at me through a cloud of dust and frowned. Then he said, "Hey Scotty, don't you have something to do outside?" I answered I did. "Well," he said, "Go get out of my sight before I get mad and bat you over the head with this broom." Since he was a friend and an excellent helper I cleared out until he felt better. After we had the building all swept, every hole and corner, Joe Miller, a German, who was later destined to come there to live, offered his services to scrub floors. And with the aid of lye and good strong powders and disinfectant he did a wonderful job. The floors were so nice and clean it hardly seemed possible. Seeing those same floors in that awful condition just a few days before. Our next thought was our walls. Again I was at my wits end what to do. I got some old window shades and this I pasted over the large spots where the plaster was broken off, and after the walls were all mended I bought wall paper in what is called bulk. That is, a large bundle of paper cheap, usually a lot of odds and ends. Sometimes not two rolls alike. This we put on, alternating patterns. Having to work all the week, afternoons and Sundays were the only time that I really could give.

So my Uncle, Charlie Sayles and another friend, Fred Reid came in and took over the job of papering. They were good workers and both got along fine together. They manoeuvred the paper and got some very good effects, and when they grew tired they played cards. It was very gratifying each day to come to the house and find it being transformed into a really livable place.

It was very difficult for me not to be nervous in this neighborhood, because of the reputation of this section, coupled with my own environment. So if ever I went in the house to do anything alone I was sure to lock and bar the doors; because they were loud and noisy and drinking, and I was just a little afraid they would wonder in. But I soon found out that this was unnecessary and that I really had nothing to be afraid of.

After some few days my Uncle and friends had transformed the dirty, dingy rooms into nice clean places. We were then ready for new paint. We got gray paint. Deck paint, it was called. Now for painting. We needed some men volunteers, and these were not lacking for very soon there were Friars and Brothers from some of the religious houses and professors from one of the leading Universities painting doors, windows, chairs, boards, banisters, stairways. It took us just one month to get things in order for the opening. In the meantime I had been trying to get some furniture to go into the place. Of course all this time we had been having rummage sales, writing letters and asking everyone to send us all of white elephants, any and every thing they did not want. The first thing that came in was a large statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, sent to us by Father David. Then, through Father David, came three barrels of dishes from one of the best Hotels. Dishes that were no longer useful in a first class hotel; but were luxuries in a house of hospitality. Plates with gold bands; plates with flowers; cups and saucers; glasses, goblet style. Knives, forks, teaspoons, soup spoons were picked up in second hand stores for small sums of money, as our rummage sales were sometime small, as I have said before, that all purchases were regulated by the Rummage Sales carried on the day before. Just a few days before we had planned our blessing and opening, furniture came from everywhere. Through a Mrs. Brown came a nice ice box, some nice single beds, book racks, tables, a kitchen cabinet. From a Chinese girl came tea. Burchell's delivery came to our door one morning and there was five pounds of coffee and five pounds of sugar.

Soon the day arrived for the blessing and opening of the house. Mimeographed letters had been sent out to a lot of people, which read: "1215 7th Street, N. W., April 29, 1923. Dear Friend: You are cordially invited to attend the opening of a shelter for homeless and destitute worthy men, Sunday, May second from two to five P. M.

The object of the house is to care for men from the hospitals who have no home or family; worthy men, recommended from penal institutions and any man who finds himself without resources.

The house will be known as "The Martin De Porres House," named for an humble Negro lay-brother of the Dominican order who spent his life helping those whose lot in life was full of destitution.

The house has been made possible by voluntary contributions.

Hoping that you will come and help in such a worthy cause.

Sincerely yours,

Brother Martin

(Llewellyn J. Scott)

There were about fifty or seventy-five persons. Father ^{Quinn} said the prayers and blessed the house. Each room at a time, followed by everyone else. It was a wonderful sight, such as that end of Seventh Street had never seen before. Priests, Sisters from various orders, Seminarists, white & colored lay people. We served tea strained through the table cloth, as no one at that time had given us a tea strainer. It was real Chinese tea, too. Very tasty, and there was cake made by a good friend of mine. There were talks by several people and every one was saying so many nice things. After a few hours of serving tea, everyone left, and again I was alone. But everything seemed so different now. I can't recall ever having quite the feeling of knowing that there was no one else in the house except myself, and yet having the feeling of people being around me, a lot of them. Alone I walked from one room to another room readjusting things and wondering who my first occupants would be like. After satisfying myself as to the order of the things in the house, without any fear, I went to bed. The room that I took for my room was a small middle room; being in charge I thought it wise that I should be where I could see as much as possible of things that might go on in the house. So, from my room I could see who came in the front door and if they were going up or down stairs into the kitchen, or any part of the house. After falling asleep I was awakened by what sounded like someone on the stairs. I could not tell if they were going up or down. I had left the door open and my bed faced the stairs, so nervously I pulled on the light quickly, and on the stairs was just about the largest rat I had ever seen. He made no effort to run away. To me it made no difference about him not running; it was such a relief to know that it was only a rat.

The next morning about eight o'clock someone rang my door bell, for as yet I did not have quite the nerve to leave the outside door open like a real house of hospitality. Hurrying to answer it I found out that my mission in the neighborhood was known for there stood a woman who wanted to know if it was anything I could do for a sick friend of hers. She lived in one of the little houses in the alley. I left with her, so that she might show me where this friend was. Going a short distance up the Alley she entered a house. As we stepped off the alley into the front room there sat a lot of sullen looking men. At first there passed over me a feeling of fear. Trying hard not to show any fear I spoke to them very cordially and from the tones that answered me I was sure they intended no bodily harm to me. Upstairs I followed the woman and there in the front room I found another poor woman groaning with pain. The room was dirty and upset. There was only a bed, a chair, a stove that looked like a laundry stove. There was a box standing on end with a piece of old lace curtain on top of it. There were a few hair pins and a comb and brush.

There was only one thing to do and that was to call a doctor. This I promised her, and I did just as soon as I could get out. I called the city doctor; then hurrying back I carried my scrub bucket, soap and rag and washed the floor and tidied up the room. I asked two of the men to come to my house and help me to bring something over. I had one bureau in the house. The man in my house did not really need this, so I got these men to carry it to the woman's room. I put a scarf on it and then put her other little articles on it. She thanked me, and the others in the house thanked me. I felt no goodness; it was only that I wanted to serve God through giving service to my fellow brothers. I asked them please not to thank me; but to thank God.

The first man to come to Blessed Martin de Porres House of Hospitality was a man that I had met often at the Campion meetings, he was slightly cripple. I think he had been in the Army; but through some misunderstanding he was not able to receive any of the benefits given to honorably discharged soldiers. I really never knew the details as a man's past life had nothing to do with him entering The Blessed Martin House.

I never question any man closely about his past life when he first came; because I soon learned that they were suspicious about the place, not being accustomed to real kindness they thought that it was a trick, it was just something they were not so sure of. I recall one day on my way to the Blessed Martin House on the street car I observed a man stop a well dressed man and say something, this man only shook his head and walked on, the first man looked back at him and there was disappointment all over his face. Thinking that perhaps this man was in need of something that I perhaps could give to him through Blessed Martin I hurried off the car at the next stop. Catching up with him I asked him if he was a stranger, and if was in some kind of trouble. He said that he had been promised a job but he was so hungry that he would not be able to work if he did get it. I told him to come with me that I would see that he got some food, he looked at me with a queer expression and then started up the street with me. The entrance to our house then was in the alley, arriving to the house I turned in this alley and pushed opened the door, he peeped into the hall and then said to me "that is alright Mr. you need not bother" and started out of the alley. I tried to assure him that it really was alright; but he was not convinced until a policeman who knew me chance to be passing told him that it was the place for him. He afterwards told me that he had never heard of anyone doing such things for people; unless it was some sort of a racket and that he did not want to get into any trouble as he had a wife and children to support.

However most of the men after they knew me, and knew my interest would come and tell me all about themselves, and sometimes I almost wish they would not, for so often it would involve so much there was little that I could do.

One Thursday at one of the Campion dinners another man came or was sent, he was most dejected looking and our hearts went out to him. We gave him food and what other things we had to help him. He sat and talked to us we were edified by the things he said, then he talked on and after a while we were doubting every thing he had said before and when he was through he had talked himself both in and out, nevertheless he was allowed to go to Blessed Martin House to live. After a short while I began to notice little things about him, when ever any one came to visit the house after a little while he would come in dangling his rosary in his hands and say that he was going to the church to say his prayers. Sometimes he did not go near the church. He would sometimes try to impress the priest and Brothers of a certain church by going to communion often kneeling where they would be sure to see him, but never staying to say his thanksgiving. One day I was visiting a house in the alley I saw some dishes that looked very much like some that I had, I asked the woman where she got them from she said from Mr. Jones. Returning to the house and looking in a box that was thought to have been put away I found it more than half empty, this man had been taking them out and selling them to the people. Later he started throwing a few drunks, and picking arguments with the other men in the place, he threaten to stab Charlie with an ice pick that was the last straw, I was forced to ask him to leave. He did but went every place he could spreading criticism of the house and the work it was trying to do. To date as I think of him he was about the worse man that we ever had at Blessed Martin House, he broke about every rule we ever made and it seemed hopeless to do any thing with him because he was no longer young he was in his late fifties. After all he was only one of fifteen hundred men who have found shelter if not hope at The Blessed Martin de Porres House of Hospitality, and among them can be found all types. Some were good, some not so good; every one worth taking a chance with to help, even sometimes when it seemed all but hopeless. Many stories could be written about these men almost as different as there were men, for there was something in each of their lives different than the other. Space or time would not allow for a story of each man even if I had the ability to write it which I do not.

I will try to tell of some of the boys that were really very intimate parts of the Blessed Martin House who few people visiting The Blessed Martin House did not see or know. Those who were my real aids, they furnished the jokes and the fun that made our house never a dull spot.

No story written or told about The Blessed Martin de Porres House of Hospitality would be complete unless you heard of Charlie, O yes there were other Charlies who came to the house at times. But none were ever like this Charlie every visitor to Blessed Martin House knew Charlie.

When I first met Charlie he had only recently come to Washington from St. Joseph's school in Clayton Delaware. I found him very ambitious, alert, highly sensitive, over self conscious, quick tempered, irritable, honest and bound up with many idiosyncrasies. In fact one of the men at our house summed Charlie, he said, "Charlie has no real disposition, he just makes up something as he goes along". And if you knew Charlie you would see that he was not far wrong, because Charlie never reacted to anything the same way twice. One moment he could be in the throes of darkest despair, and the next five minutes he would be just laughing his head off.

But Charlie was one of the most capable people I have met, he could do a little of almost any thing, he could invariably offer a good suggestion to many problems that were constantly coming up. And it was not long before he was my most loyal friend and assistant. Sometimes he was cook if there was no one around to do it again he would do all the carpenter work that had to be done around the place, he was organist, and altar boy. And if for any reason I could not be there to any of the daily prayers, Charlie would lead them and give to the men a very instructive talk. I often thought how could I ever have gotten along if Charlie had not come my way. He was an accomplished player of the French horn and Trombone and the neighbors around Blessed Martin House often complained of many sleepless nights while Charlie was enjoying himself in the chapel playing a Bach organ prelude on our organ. This was his greatest joy.

Charlie continued to school after he came to stay at our house and was always a welcome visitor to my home as my mother was very fond of him also, and he came every Sunday to breakfast where she would stuff him as if hoping to make it last until he returned the next Sunday.

After three years Charlie was ready to graduate I saw him dressed in my tuxedo a privilege I never gave any one else; but I wanted to be sure that he looked as well groomed as all the others. But with all I did for Charlie, he always made himself feel beggarly, I wanted him to feel that he was the part of a great movement that he was an instrument in a great cause working for our Lord and the glory of his Kingdom. Charlie would not see the effort, instead I had been kind to him he was perfectly contented to help me to put over my project, that was all. Of course I am the one to be blamed if I do not have the ability to put a thing over with enough fire to draw others then. I can not complain if I find my self alone. This has been one of my chief sorrows that I have been unable to put over the idea that we want to do something for the good of our fellow men. I do not want people doing things for me because I have been kind to them, I want them to catch the vision and work with me and not for me.

However Charlie was never just one of the men for he was never homeless, it was just that my house offered a more convenient way for him to finish school which he was very anxious to do, to prepare him for some sort of work, and not having any money no one else was willing to help him. So Charlie got the first of anything good that came to the Blessed Martin House as he was the youngest person there. He was particularly fond of good food, and when something good came into the house he would walk around me and sing and smile, for he was sure that would be the first to get very generous portions.

The first altar we ever had Charlie built it from a few pieces of board given to us by one of the Christian Brothers, and some corrugated paste board he had. With out doubt it was a very beautiful thing all done up with gold and cream paint. There was a shrine built to Blessed Martin, in the chapel also, of gold and cream paint, and in the yard he built a shrine to The Blessed Mother where in summer we said our evening prayers

The altar that Charlie had built for the chapel we all felt it to be a master piece, we were always very proud to show it to visitors who came to our house.

And when Mass was said at our house Charlie was always the Acolyte to the delight of the officiating priest and edification of the men in the house who felt a great pride in the ability of Charlie to answer the priest so smoothly in Latin. Charlie lead in the making of soap, he just seemed to be the axis on which the doings of our Blessed Martin House revolved. In every way Charlie was truthful and loyal to me, and even when he did not share my views, which he seldom ever did, he would nevertheless carry out my orders.

One morning as usual I went to The Blessed Martin House, coming down the street I noticed that the house was yet closed up, even the window shutters were still closed. I opened the door and not a sign of anyone, just the night I had left sixty-five men there, I went to the kitchen no cooking had been done there it was just as we had left it the night before. Humming up stairs; ~~there~~ there was no one on either of the two floors, bursting into one of the rooms I found one old man who was sick. Breathlessly I asked him if he knew where every one was. He told me that the police had taken all of the men out and locked them up the night before and that he was left only because he was sick in bed. "Where is Charlie?" I asked, to my amazement I found out that Charlie had been locked up with all of the other sixty-five men. I was sick to think of him being subjected to finger printing and a police line up and all the other indignities heaped on those who are unfortunate enough to fall into the hands of the law, and especially so if they happened to be colored people. Here the very thing that I had worked hardest to prevent had happened my people were being humiliated unjustly for no real purpose only because it can be done with much less publicity than any other group. They took Charlie even after he had told them that he was in charge of the house, and would not give him the chance to get in touch with me.

What really had happened, it seems that two of the men had an argument and to make himself win one man struck the other over the head with some sort of a hammer and instead of calling the police precinct, a little fellow who lived in the house and who had been dubbed "Little Than Me" because he was smaller than I was and who always assumed far too much authority when I was not there called the Headquarters. As a result got himself and all of the other men locked up.

I hurried down to the police station, but when they found out that I was not a lawyer they would not even consider me. So off I went to contact a friend who was a lawyer, and as we got to the station house the lawyer and I, out came some of the men handcuffed two and two guarded closely by two officers with pistols and night sticks, why you would have thought from the actions that these men were the worse criminals, when really they had done nothing more than been caught sleeping on the floor of a charity home; because ~~the~~ the Lords of the Lands and the Bosses of the Buildings had cheated lied and broken faith with them. As they had also done the fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers and so on back for more than three hundreds of years. Until now these after so many generations of such treatment are bewildered and jobless.

I stood there looking at them their eyes caught mine, and I read in their eyes that certain something that only colored people can see in the eyes of other colored people. No white person could have ever read the abject disillusionment in those eyes; because no white man has had to live under the code of casual cruelty, of brutal kindness, and of genial despotism for so many years as have these people. And yet all of these men were being herded off to be finger printed, their records checked, other precincts were to be questioned in all parts of the city to see if something could be found on some of them, and then put in the police line up to see if someone can't dig up something on some of them.

My heart was heavy for these my people, such indignities heaped on them. I knew they would attempt the same thing on me if ever there was a chance, in spite of my honorable living and that of my ancestors. For there is right that a colored man has that a white man must respect. This is his law as far back as "The Dred Scott Decision".

As I stood watching these men I could see the African chained together and herded in to slave ships like so many cattle. Then as slaves driven in droves by brutal overseers, then driven from their homes and lynched. I knew it to be always the same, in any age, and in any climate. Then a thought came to me what a wonderful reward God has laid away for the colored man if he can continue to bear it all with dignity, and never allow it to get him morbid, never indulge in self pity, never stoop to race hatred. Just keep on singing his songs for it is a real contribution to this country, dance and laugh to his own music, and snatch his few moments of fun in spite of all the things they do to him, and continue to climb up. ~~the things they do to him, and continue to climb up.~~ This what they can't understand, and never will.

And many other things were passing through my mind, until the lawyer touched

on the arm and brought me out of reverie, by saying "I do not see Charlie in this Group" sure enough I was looking for Charlie, I had quite forgotten him for the moment in my thoughts of the misery of these poor people. I inquired and found out that Charlie had been sent over with another group of men, and that he should be returning very soon.

We talked for some time to the captain a very fine catholic gentleman, and I found that he had a very great respect for my lawyer friend. So that it was not hard to have Charlie released in my custody. I wanted to get all of the other fellows out too, this was not so easy, I was assured that they would be released very soon and they were. However every day that they were there we at Blessed Martin House made sandwiches and something to drink and carried it to the prison. The captain said that never before had he had such well cared for guests.

Charlie stayed with me for about five years and then one day when I came into the house I found some seminarians waiting for me as I had many good friends among them. Charlie came into the room with a little bundle under his arm and said "Well Mr. Scott I think that I will be leaving you now, thank you for what you did for me! When I could find my voice, I said "Oh an alight Charlie, he turned on his and out of the room. One of the Brothers said "What Charlie walking out on you like that?" I said I suppose so, it is the first I have heard of it." I was hurt to say the least, not at the leaving but the way it was done. Surely Charlie's life after all was his not mine. It was his way of doing things, I could never understand. This was his great fault he could do nothing to hurt his pride. I soon learned that he had planned to leave without saying any thing to me, he wanted to leave a message for me with one of the men, but he picked the wrong man. This man knew that this was not the right thing to do, and threaten him with bodily harm unless he told me himself. And then he stood at the door so that he could not get out until I got there.

For a few days after he left I just did not want to ever see him again, and then I thought Charlie meant nothing that was really wrong or mean. He just did not know how to do things nice. Charlie's incredible ego was his main besetting sin, he could do nothing that would clash with the opinion he had of himself. I had often heard him say to some of the men, who may be telling him how to do something "Aha so you will even tell Charlie what to do." So after a few days Charlie started visiting us and we were soon good friends again.

Of course I could not name and write of all the more than fifteen hundred men who have passed through The Blessed Martin House but to speak of the house it would just mean that you must know and meet some of them, to get the proper picture of Blessed Martin House. That makes it the place that it is and why we love it as we do. Another one of the fellows that meant a lot around the house was Brown he was as well known around the house as was Charlie and they were arch enemies. Charlie did not like Brown at all, and Brown could only mildly tolerate Charlie. My position was hard as it always called for much diplomacy to keep both of them good in proportion. Brown was the only person that I have ever known who had a perfect combination of mental and physical laziness, and then added to this was the best disposition I have ever seen. If you can arrange these traits you then have a fair picture of Brown. I am sure that Brown was the only one like that in the world. He could be very alert and smart when you first met him, and then after awhile or after he knew you the lazy streak would start, and if you did not know him as he really was you would become disgusted with him. I am sure the pattern was thrown away after he was made as not being feasible, but really I would not have wished him any other way for he was a very helpful person to me and I am sure he aided me greatly at Blessed Martin House. Brown was a born nurse, when ever any man became sick we at once looked for Brown. He could appear out of thin air with a basin of water, a towel, and a spoon, and would just naturally do the right thing until the doctor arrived if it was necessary to have the doctor. The profession met a great loss when he did not become a doctor or nurse. That was the one thing he had a knack for. He would very often pinch hit for Charlie at prayers as his title in the house was second assistant, as Charlie was the first assistant.

He would do most of my errands, for he was honest to a fault with me. Charlie would be very embarrassed to sometimes go places to ask for a loan or gift of money that was sometimes needed, but Brown would go and answer all questions and tell them just how much that money meant and how important it was that I got it until it was little doubt in my mind if Brown went to get some money that he would ever leave until he had it. *He had the air of a Catholic Scrooge.* There was much that he could not do more I believe because he did not like to do certain things than because he did not know how to do them. He would sometimes play and sing with great gusto to entertain the men he was very fond of an audience. And like Charlie the idea of poverty did not hold any thing that he wanted. But he stayed with me until the war took him away, simply because I was kind to him.

One day a good friend of mine called me on the telephone and asked me if I would take in a man who had been a very good friend of her father's, who was having a bit of a hard time. And because of his relations with her father she felt that she should try to do something to help him. I promised that I would do the best I could for him and to send him over to the house.

Not long after, this man appeared at The Blessed Martin House, he seemed about sixty years old he had a very disagreeable expression. I did not wonder that he was having trouble. Talking with him I learned that he was taking treatments for a heart ailment and that his stomach was also causing him some trouble. After a few days he was quite a friend to Charlie and me. He was never very friendly with the men as a whole, however he did pick himself one real buddy a fellow by the name of Gelson and together they were real pals. Smackum as I always called him soon became one of those that I depended on, as I have said he was not a young man when he came to Blessed Martin House life had not dealt very easily, he was a hard drinker and that was the secret of his trouble just did not seem to be able to control it and under the influence he was very cross and ugly in his disposition. Although he was never too drunk to be anything but respectful of me and was a most useful man around the house. When things needed repairing around the house I would simply say Smack fix so & so please, and when I saw the thing again it was fixed. He never came to me to get any thing he just had away of getting the same thing himself to do his work, most of the men if I asked them to do something I would have to see that they had the things to do it with, but not so with Smack he would just fix it.

Once I sent Smack to carry some things to a lady, he left the house about noon late that night the lady called my house telling me that the things had not arrived, I could not think what had happened two days later I found out that Smackum was in jail for being drunk. When his time was up he came back to the house very repentant, he and Brown had a big fight over who was going to burn some sulphur candles in the house for me. He never liked Brown anymore after that. A little later he died with a cancer.

Then there was Gernie a fine clean type of a boy from South Carolina, when I asked him why he came away from his home he said there was no work there and that he had heard he could get work in Washington. He said that he was only twenty years old, and a little anxious to get along on his own. His mother was dead and his father had married again. He had almost no education, could scarcely write his name, but he did have an intense desire to be good, and honest, and clean. I first found him standing in the hall of our house one very cold night close to the radiator all to himself, someone had told him about the Blessed House and he had just crept quietly in, he had only a paper sack for a hat summer slacks, shirt and coat no underwear and just the tops of shoes, a pathetic figure on such a cold blustery night. I gave him some food and then let him get a bath and gave him some warm clothes. He did not seem as old as the other men so I made every effort to find a bed for him that he would not become too disillusioned. The very next day I made him feel that he was a very important part of the house to make him have faith in himself and in other people.

After he had been there a short while some sisters who had very good friends to our house needed a man to do the work around their place and right away I sent Gernie. He was all to them that I had told them and they were so pleased with him, they found him a very fine young fellow, but very often God seems to take many of the good very early before they become sinful and so it happened to Gernie he was drowned while out fishing on one of his days off from work.

Then there was a young fellow who was sometimes Clyde and sometimes Eddie, some places he gave his name as something and then somewhere else he would give the other and he was constantly in a stew as to what name he had used. He even had a social security card under both names the girls knew him by both names, he was two people everywhere except at our house. If there were any kind of bad men in the house I always felt better if I knew that Eddie as I always called him was in the house, he would watch around to be sure that no new comer ever did any bodily harm to me, not that I ever expected it but when people are new and do not know one we must be careful. Eddie was not a very large person, but he was strong a very quick and I was always making him give me his switch knife, they were just his second nature.

Life had been none too kind to Eddie from what I could learn of his past life. His mother had died very early in his life and his father had remarried, Eddie had been placed in an orphanage, and when he came out he was just on his own no one really cared about him, he had done a few stretches down the way for minor offenses, he was too worldly wise for his age, he had a great admiration for rackets and racketeers he was just a little on the light side of life, there was a fondness for flashy clothes. But under all of this I found a good heart and a nice disposition. He had a great confidence in my judgement of things and would always come to me for any advice. He told me often told me that I was the only real friend that he had ever had. I liked him too and tried to give him what he had never had a friendly understanding and that certain pride that comes when you feel that the things you do count for something. And he stayed around until the army took him also, and now in the army he writes to me regularly.

One day the door bell rang I went to the door and there stood a white man he said that he was of Canadian parentage, but that he really had grown up in Boston. I noticed the he was crippled one leg was longer than the other he was wearing a built up shoe. I asked him in and made him feel welcome, he said that he had been told about the place and was wondering if he could stay there until he could do better, said that he was a catholic and would do what ever he could to help the place. There were other ~~xxxx~~ white men there so it did not raise any problem in my mind. He said that he was a cook by trade he was just what I wanted as at that time Charlie was going to school allday. So I asked him about taking over the kitchen and seeing that the house was kept clean. This worked liked a charm the floors & stairs were scrubbed every day the place to on immaculate appearance, the food was nicely cooked and served it was like a nice middle class hotel, and every thing was fine for awhile every who visited the place in those day was impressed by the cleanliness and order. ~~xxxx~~ Then I was forced to notice little things that for awhile I tried not to see, but more things would pop up he started off by segregating the men in the house putting the white to sleep on one side of the house and the colored on the other side, then after I would leave at night and the colored men had gone to bed he would go back into the kitchen with just the white men and have a midnight feast on the food that we needed for our regular meals. Then once on a very cold snowy day I came in to the house earlier than usual and found that the colored men had been put out and were all shivering ~~xxxx~~ in the cold, while all the white men were sitting inside amusing themselves where it was nice and warm. Then he had been getting whiskey and drinking it in the kitchen, So after this we did not get along so well, until he had one of the men arrested and went to court and appeared against him without letting me know any thing about it. I told him that as far as getting any man arrested that was wholly my privilege and I did not share it with anyone.

The men no longer had any respect for him even some of the white men no longer liked him one of them smacked him one day and then told me some of the things that he was trying to do to me. I put another man in his place, but I allowed him to stay until he could adjust himself some where else. He found another man who thought that he too had an ax to grind and together they went every where trying to see who really had charge of the house they told all sorts of tales on me, they ~~xxx~~ did not believe that I was solely responsible for the house. They were unable to stir up any thing as no one paid any attention to men who would go around talking against a person who had been as kind to them as I had been to these two men, even the men in the house soon became disgusted and wanted to throw them out of the house, because there never was any trouble between the white and colored men. I did for one just what I did for the other that is I never did anything for colored men that I did not do for the white men too I have never been able to see the color of any man's skin. These two men stayed for some time after this for I not let any man say anything to them or molest them, for there was nothing that they could do to harm for I was responsible to no one in my dealings with the Blessed Martin House only God. Finally one of them found work with a private concern and the other got on the W.P.A. and when his case worker found out where he was living she urged him to move as she did not think it proper for him to live in a colored house however the W.P.A. was such an uncertain thing until he came back several times as there was no other place that would have him when he had no money to pay.

But our place did catch all kinds of people, I remember one dear old fellow seventy-nine years old lost his home in South Carolina and came to Washington with out any money trying to find his daughter that he had not heard from for many years but who at that time was living here. He said she did not approve of his second marriage and just did not write to him any more. I tried to ~~xxxx~~ help him find her through the papers, and through the churches but no success. I kept the old gentleman three years and when he would do things because of his age that caused me not to be able to keep him longer I had him put in "Blue Plains"

Another old gentleman sixty years old came from Oregon to see the President ~~xxxx~~ because some one out there had cheated him out of some money and he wanted to see that the President made him lose his job.

One Day one of the men call to the door and there stood an old man that could have been Rip Van Winkle himself, he was just about as ragged as he could be, he had a long beard and bushy hair, he carried a stick staff like, there was a profusion of news paper bundles under his arm with a lot of note books sticking out. He was at least eighty years old, and his story was both amusing and sad these books were full of figures that were very hard to read dating many years back. He said that the whites owed him a lot of money for lumber ~~Mississippi~~ that he had sold them and would not pay him and had threaten his life after lynching one of his sons and he had come to see if there was'nt some one who could gox to Mississippi and help him get what was his. Something had happened to the old man but there was nothing that I could do for him but get the Travlars Aid Society send him back home as he had a son there able to care for him.

On a certain Sunday afternoon in 1937 I was on my way home to change clothes to attend a meeting at the Campion House, as I crossed an avenue I saw a man sitting on the coping of the fence of a friend. I was startled by his likeness of my grandfather who had been dead for a number of years. The likeness was so striking that I forced to talk to him. He told me that he had just come from a hospital, that he had no place to go because he had no money, and that he had had nothing to eat since the day before. I wanted to attend the meeting ever so bad, but I knew then that my duty was much more important, reaching out my hand to help him up I found out that he was crippled and that he was in a very bad condition his clothes were wet and distorted I had no money, so helping him to sit down again, I went to see what I could get from my friend. As I hurried up to his door he opened it having seen me coming from his window, I blurted out "give me some old news papers and twenty cents and don't ask any questions" He looked at me as if he thought I must be a little more out of my head than usual, but gave me what was requested. Taking these things I hurried away leaving him standing looking questionably at me. Stopping a cab I put these papers on the seat so that the old fellow would not dirty it, and helping him into it we were off for the Blessed Martin House. Arriving at the house I paid the cab driver with the twenty cents, and helped the old gentleman in to the house and up stairs.

There was only an oil stove in our house, so putting some water in the stove to heat in a large Kettle I started out to find him some clothes, for the poor fellow needed every thing in the line of clothes that is necessary for a man to wear. He had been using corn meal where and when he should have used some sort of powder and now his body was sore and chafed. After he was bathed and powdered some nice clean clothes on he looked more like my grandfather until I was almost tempted to believe through some trick of fate he was my grandfather. I asked him where he was from and where he lived to see if there could be any connection with my family. There was nothing that I could connect as this man had come from South Carolina and my grandfather had always lived in Virginia. He then gave him plenty to eat, after he was very full Charlie gave him a new pipe and some tobacco then a bed that he could rest on, he just beamed at us he was so happy. He was thanking and blessing us every time we came near him. Needless to say I did not get to the meeting that day, but I was very happy. His name was Middleton and he stayed with us for more than a year, then sent him to a home for the aged as he was growing more helpless each day and we were not equipped for a permanent home for any one.

Up in the alley near us there was a garage and in it lived a little fellow who had suffered from Infantile Paralysis in both legs; he was just a little body that sat on the wagon and was pulled about by his friends. He eked out a lively hood selling shoe strings, soap and pencils. He was a hard drinker, but I was always in sympathy with him he was so terribly deformed, inspite of his very bad temper when under its influence.

As the winter came on I felt that he should be given a place that was a bit more comfortable, so I invited him to come into our house to live, he was in a very great need of a bath, so the boys fixed up for him nice hot water and soap and gave him a bath, the poor fellow was sick for a week from it. He stayed with us until summer, one day as I came up the stairs I heard such swearing when I entered the room there was this little fellow hanging of the side of his bed trying to reach another man with a long knife. The fellows at my request gave him another bath and got him sobber after this every time he got drunk he got a long bath which he did not like.

After a long time we were forced to let him go out again with his friends, however I always kept contact with him to be sure that he was never hungry or without warm clothes. He had gone back to the garage and one night he sent for me, I found him very sick this time. I had sent him to the hospital before he asked me if I would go with him this time. The boys got a cab for us and helped him in, when we got to the hospital he was examined and the doctor told me that it was pneumonia, and the he was afraid that it was serious, and sure enough he died about two days after. His father and some other members of his family came forward and took charge of his burial.

Then there was a young fellow who we will call Taylor who came to the Blessed Martin House on another cold rainy day, he was a very quiet sort of a fellow, I soon found out that he did not care for the others too much, but was fond of me I felt that he was worried about something. He would come and help me with any thing that I might be doing. I fixed him a bed in what we called the sitting room it was next to my room. We always made him feel comfortable and wanted when he was around, he said to me one day, "I am so glad when you come in the house things seem so different, I wish that you could stay here all the time! Every day he would go out trying to find a job, many times we would tell him not to go out to walk so much as he looked as if was not well but he would go just the same. And then one day I found him in my bed when I came home as I walked into the room the tears to run down his face and he said to

"I hope that you wont mind me getting into your bed, Mr. Scott but I felt so bad to day the only place that I could feel a little relief was in your bed". I told him that I did not mind at all if he was feeling better from being there. The next thing was to call a doctor for he was a very sick man, and he looked so thin and frail as he lay there I wanted to do something for him, I tried to get him to eat some food, but he seemed too weak to even to open his mouth and soon did not try. The doctor came in and examined him and then told me to get him to the hospital as quickly as possible. And then I stayed with him until he was put to bed in the hospital, he begging me all the time not to leave him.

The nurse gave him some medicine after awhile, he later fell to sleep and while he was asleep I came home, planning in my mind to return early the next day at the visiting hour. But before I was ready to leave home a policeman rang the bell to say that Taylor was dead. I wired his sisters who lived in Virginia and they came with another brother and carried his body home. They were very nice people and were grateful to Blessed Martin for this brother the said did not write to them for a very long and they did not know where he was.

Taylor had told me that he did not write because he had not been as successful as he had wanted to be and just could not write to them and admit that he had failed as they had said he would. This poor fellow had told me all of his many disappointments, so I just listened to his family and tried to console them by saying that I was very sure that he loved them so much that he did not really mean to hurt them.

Many months after when it was time to harvest Taylor's sisters and brother came back bringing to our house potatoes, onions, apples, asbage, and hog meat.

The house was a very old one as I have told you before, there was always repairs needed, but never any done except by us the owners never did anything more than to demand their money in advance or served notices. I was forced to go to court about every month, because it was almost impossible for me to get the rent on the small salary that I was earning and pay the necessary bills that must be paid out of them.

The first time that I had to go to court was an awful day for me, I worried about it the night before I could not sleep. Next morning about 8.00 am with lagging feet I arrived at the court as I was due there at 9.00. Taking a seat I began to observe the people around me, they were for the most part poor judging by their dress and their manner. There was a woman with several children who was behind in her rent because she was unable to get the work that she needed to keep things going. Then an old man and wife who would just as soon as they were able to receive their old age pensions. There were others who for one reason or another were delinquent in their payments. As I sat there watching I forgot all about my own troubles and thinking so much for the others until when my name was called I hardly heard it, and all of that awful feeling had left me, now I was glad to be among these poor ones, and had not Christ always been with such as these? all of the other times that I went to court after this, and they were many I was not the least bothered any more.

Our house was sold many times during our stay in it, and each time the new owners would come to look the place over and then raise the rent on us each time, all because of the little repairs that we made our selves. It finally could stand this no longer we could not pay so much for so poor a place, so we started out to find another place not new place but just another place was all that we were after. We found a place that was not much better than the place we were moving from, there was one bath-room in this house of twelve rooms it was a very old style affair and the pipes were old and cracked and were always leaking after we moved in we found that when ever the water in the boiler in the kitchen got hot it would run all over the floor, also when we made the first fire in the furnace and the radiators got hot the hot water came out in such streams that it cussed us out of the chapel from saying our prayers ran all down in our best sitting room. The walls in the hall were cracked and broken, the balustrade on the stairs were short many supports and so made it weak and shakey, the floors were old and worn, the back yard had no fence between our house and our neighbor, there was no back entrance and all trash and garbage had to be put out on the front. And for all this we were forced to pay sixty dollars a month.

We made ourselves a very pretty little chapel in the front room on the second floor. On the one side wall and ceiling there was put a blue paper with gold stars, against this side wall Charlie built our altar from a few pieces of board and some corrugated paper, then over on the other side Charlie took the closet door off and used the closet as a niche for a shrine for Blessed Martin de Porres. Of course our chapel was much too small they were always too small some of us sat in the room and some in the hall, our places have always been much too small; but we are praying that God will see our need and in his own time give to us the things we need with which to do a much better bit of work his kingdom.

We have ever been pushed around in small old worn places that are very hard to keep up a nice appearance, which is so necessary in this type of work. Most people who visit our house are curious and judge from surface. Lady a very nice lady who paid us a visit one day, she said to me "I want you to show me every bit of this place Llewellyn, every little closet and corner. I intend to get you some help and must know all about the place".

We started on our tour of the house starting on the third floor, I let her see the rooms so full of beds and

so full of beds that there was barely any room to move about in. Then I let her see the poor bath facilities, the cramped chapel, the over crowded recreation room, the messy dining-room, the very dark kitchen. I asked her if she would not stay until the men came in so that she could really see the Blessed Martin House in action, but she said that she had seen quite enough. She never returned and I never heard from her again.

We felt that we were really trying to do something that was the work of our Lord because were constantly being criticised, of course we knew that we were far from doing anything that was perfect, but our ideas and intentions were right. We were criticized for not doing certain things and then when we did those things we criticized for doing them.

Some said that the house was so dirty, others said that the house made the men lazy that there was nothing for them to do. Some found fault with the type of man that stayed there.

They just did not see that I only had a very little money and very little help, that because of this I was forced to work all of the time to keep even what I did have. So people came to the house to visit once and never came back. Very often some one would come to visit us and say they were at some meeting and our house was being discussed, and so they came to see for themselves. Sometimes I made some very good friends this way.

We never worried what people said about us for if our Lord was on earth around with his Apostles they would say the same things about him.

We set up an office and sitting room for guest, a recreation room for the men. In our chapel Charlie built a little Shrine To Blessed Martin. We held two Retreats a year in our house. It was always a very happy time for me to hear Mass at the Altar in our house, all catholic men in the house were always urged to go to communion at these times Charlie was the altar boy and Brown played organist. To me this was always a little world that was different one that I should like to live in always. I very often would think of this as a lay order of men consecrating their lives to just this kind of work, which I am sure is most pleasing to our Lord.

In our effort to help we tried to help anything that came to us regardless of who or what. One day a little black kitten was given to me by one of the men who knew that I was very fond of cats, I think he had seen me feed some many cats in the alley. This one was very black not a spot of any other color was on him, just a little ball of black shiny fur an right away I was fond of him and named him Hannibal, he soon knew that his name was Hannibal and all I would have to say "where is Hannibal" and he would jump out from some place little tail in the air and all ready to play, he was a nosy little fellow was always into something. He after awhile even knew my voice and as soon as I came in and spoke he would start playing. He was a little regular fellow he was very fond of most of the men he would sleep with different ones each night, not even forgetting those who did not have a bed but were forced to sleep on the floor, you could find him curled up close to one and then another. Once before there had been a kitten that Charlie called Buddy we were fond of him to but one of the men became angry one day and threw him out of the second story window. Of course there were a few around sometimes who did not like cats, but they were few and they were not liked much by the other men either. Hannibal grew to be such a fine sleek looking fellow every one who came to our house liked him. And when ever we had to move we carried Hannibal. When we moved into the house on E. E. Street we carried Hannibal. The cat from next door moved in as soon as she saw Hannibal, so we named her Jezebel. Hannibal soon learned that I would permit him to do certain things that the other men would not stand for one of these was sitting on the table and looking around where he could see much better so as soon as I get into the kitchen he would come out and sit on the table and look around to see if there is any one object there. The boy would say "Just look at that cat, just knows that Mr. Scott is here!"

One afternoon I was sitting in the office of our house I heard a meow and there was a little gray kitten coming in the door, he was so small and under-fed my heart went out to him and I carried him straight to the kitchen and fed him and then gave him the name of Scipio. Sometime later Jezebel presented us with five little ones, the boys hid them until they were month old. I had always said that I was going to send them away but when I saw them so big and playful scampering all over the floor I was sold on them too.

The Blessed Martin House never had room for more than twenty-five beds all single, we could never afford those double decker kind. as a result a large portion of our family sleep on the stairs, and in the hall on the floor. When Blessed Martin is bedded for the night it is a sight to make your heart ache, mensitting tandum style on the stairs for two flights, and on the floor of three halls, in chairs and the floor of the recreation room. all laying on paper and covered with perhaps and old coat of some kind if they were fortunate. Yes this was blessed Martin House of Hospitality, and what hospitality it was human beings asleep on the floors like some many homeless dogs. And yet we say that we are christians, that we love God, and that we are guided by his teachings, sure we love our neighbor, we even dare to pray "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us" that prayer is not for such people, but should be prayed by those men asleep on the floors at Blessed Martin House where the floors are hard and cold, where there is insufficient clothes and food. He should pray for these people who say that he is no good they should starve should be cold and hungry and neglected with no where to sleep because they are lazy and shiftless they should go to work, or they should have saved something when they were working.

The running of the blessed Martin House was ever a one man effort, I have wished often for some one to come along and help, but as yet I am still alone there has been some doubt in the minds of some, I dont blame them. Yet the struggle has continued people are still being fed, clothed, and sheltered and some times at tremendous sacrifices And not once has there been time to deny or confirm anything that any one has said there is no time. There are too many people who need me and I know that in his own time God will enlighten every one much better than I could, so I shall wait, and work, and pray.

For time will tell, the real truth we never try to defend ourselves.

I recall a breakfast at Blessed Martin House where the coffee had been boiled until there was not ~~enough~~ enough strength to even color the water, the bread too had given out and still the men came in asking for food, every effort that I knew was exhausted and there was nothing else to give. So I told Charlie to shut the door as there was no more food, I was hurt and perhaps a bit angry and Charlie did not move quite enough for me, so I tore ~~back~~ to close the door myself. As I hurried down the stairs I saw standing just inside of the door a large shopping bag full of something. I went over to it and to my ~~own~~ surprise it was full of sandwiches all wrapped in tissue paper and smelling as ~~luscious~~ luscious as basket of fruit. For moment I was speechless, a sort of sick feeling. The men were just as amazed as I was they wondered where I had gotten so many sandwiches, on their faces I could see they expected some kind of an explanation and all that I could say was that I had found them at the door, who put them there? I did not want to think what human being was the messenger of God. The only thing I could ever think of was, how gracious God was to us. It was always this way when there was nothing to eat in the house we were never hungry for when it was time to eat there was always plenty, sometimes I would be worried that something might be wasted. We once had to buy all of our bread at a dollar a barrel of about fifty loaves, on this particular day there was no dollar to buy bread, the only Baker that I had not asked to give us bread was the one in the very block where our house was, so this day I thought that I might as well get his "No" along with all of the others, but again God was there ahead of me. For when I asked him he said that he would be glad to give me bread every day, I was really speechless. A bit later a good friend of ours got another baker to give us some bread and soon we had more than we needed.

There was one fellow whose name was Sam ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ who was a perfect wizard in stretching food, he could take almost nothing and make a meal of stew or soup. It happened one day as it sometimes did that we had ~~only~~ only a very small amount of meat, but we had a lot of pompermickie bread, ~~So that Sam XXXXXXXX and I had bread and meat~~ ~~to make the same size as the meat and after we cooked, but we could not find it hard to do the party that night, every one was forced to supper time, I prepared dinner and put out the meat. Sam shut down XXXXXXXX That night at supper time I peeped into the pot and wondered where Sam had found so much meat, but I did not question ~~Sam~~ providence I just accept I always do. Yet never had I seen ~~bread float~~ meat floating in the pot, the boys started lining up for supper and seeing the pot with so much good looking stew they ~~smiled~~ had broad smiles, and I heard one of them say to "Hille me heavy Sam with plenty of that good meat", and Sam was just gilding it on his plate. They were just tickled until they started eating and then they found that it was not meat they were eating but pompermickie bread cut the same size as the little meat and put in just before serving and all well seasoned. Sam told me one day never to waste time ~~wasting~~ worrying as long as there was some water and pompermickie bread there would always be a pot.~~

So after we were known we were never hungry, for we were always sending us food. A lot of potatoes from one place, some large sacks of flour from some other large cans of lard from some other. There were some institutions that saved all of their left over foods for us then once or twice a week send it to us, we always had lots of good food things to eat on Sundays, there were some good sisters that saw to that every Saturday night or Sunday it would be to our house, for at blessed Martin House know what it really means to depend wholly on God for our needs. Even the very people who did not want us so near them, for our Lord was for us who could be against us. It is such a queer feeling to find those who do not like you sending you food and you know ~~that~~ that they do not really like you and do not want you to be so near them.

Our greatest need is a suitable building now and always has been. And I do feel that in his own time God is going to send to us that person or persons who will see that we get the sort of building that is the proper for our needs, so I am perfectly willing to wait for I know that it is coming when the Lord is willing. Our rectory was always too small, the chapel was never more than a bedroom, there was always ~~xxxxxxxx~~ unnecessary corners and closets in the houses that took up so much of our room.

In this last house ^{there was} came one day and complained that there were too many men in so small a house I told him that I certainly did agree with him, and if he could let me have a larger building that I would be deeply grateful to him. Then he wanted to know why I allowed them to come in so dirty and shiftless looking. I could have answered but some how I just did not feel that it was the thing to do there, so I just listened to him.

I knew too well what they thought about the men, it was the same old thoughts that had come down through many generations and if they false and over worked nothing that I could have said to him would have changed his ~~opinion~~ because I knew that he did not want to be changed. So after saying every thing he wanted to say about them and about me for keeping them he then told me that I would just have to move them out, or he would have them put out. We were paying sixty dollars a month and there we stayed until one I recieved a notice telling me that I must be out by Friday, it was then Wednesday evening we sent them the check in payment for the rent but they would not accept it. I had only one day to try to get a little help, I either called my self or got some one else to go to see all those who I was very sure could have help even to the owner of the house but no one would do anything to help.

Yes promptly on Friday morning at 10 o'clock the Marshall came to our house to put us out of our house. I was called from work by one of the men and told what was being done when I arrived at the house the things from the Blessed Martin House were being rowed along the sidewalk, my heart was sick for a few minutes there was my work for five years lost I should be forced to start all over again. The first thing I noticed was the statue of the Sacred Heart standing on the sidewalk, entering in the house the Marshalls men were just in the act of tearing down our altar where ~~mass~~ had been said many times, the altar that Charlie had built and that we were so very of, the altar that I had stood in front of each day to pray and talk and teach they ~~said~~ that God loved them, how much like ~~me~~ life theirs ~~was~~ as he too was homeless, and that they must conform ~~to~~ their lives to his holy will. And now all of this was being torn down, how could they believe the things that I had told them?

Many other things that we cherished were broken or lost, things put out before they properly packed, we had some little kittens they too were stepped on and crippled and two were even killed. The men who were employed by the Marshall to put the things out were angry because there was so much to be put out on the street and some of them were very heavy. Some of my men in the house trying to look out for my interest before I got there had taken hold of the agent and Marshall and had thrown them out ~~xx~~ of the house so that when I did get to the house the police was there also, it was the only way the could put the things out..

It was night when the things were finally out of the house and stored in a garage. The men many of them came home that night expecting a meal and a place to stay for the night, and after seeing what had happened, wandered away. There were sixteen who stayed and helped me and without whose help I could never have gotten the things stored.

After every thing had been finished we all went to a place and had some food, then I started out to find some place for them to stay until I could secure a place of our own. All night we walked the streets and no place would they take us in even though we ~~xxxx~~ the money to pay and for once was not asking for charity. Several times some of them would tell me to just leave them and go home, but I could not and we walked some more. Near ~~xxxx~~ morning we went to the home of a woman that had been helped by us long before, the only thing that I knew about her was that she could neither read nor write, and that she was very poor. So I went to her and asked her if we could rest there for awhile and get ourselves some breakfast, she was very glad to help us and put what she had at our disposal such as chairs, plates, knives and forks.

~~That next day was Saturday~~

The next day being Saturday all Real Estate Offices closed at noon, so after getting some breakfast I left to see if I could find a place in that half day. After searching for a long time all that I could find was an apartment in a worse condition than any house that we have ever had, and into this place we moved in a few things and started up again. There ~~xxx~~ were a lot of other people in the house and a lot of children, so right away we started out to help them and their families, we shared our food and clothes with them. The little ones I very often would take some of the little ones to my house they were always very happy and wanted to know just when I could take them there again. That ~~xxxx~~ we had a party for more than seventy five children right in the hall of the building and had a very nice time.

We are always trying to make children happy and to bring comfort to the older people.