

SEEDS OF THE KINGDOM

Seed Sower Award



*The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. Matthew 13:24
And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Hebrews 10:24*

In this series, we intend to highlight the work of those who are currently busy introducing the seeds of righteousness, peace, and joy into this sin-filled earth, with the hopes that at least a few lives will receive the Word and be eternally changed. The purpose in turning the spotlight on these works is not to glorify those men and women who are actively advancing the kingdom of God, but rather to stimulate YOU, the reader, into doing YOUR part in YOUR corner. Neither is the purpose meant to be that of asking the readers to donate financially or personally participate in these projects, although that is certainly an option in some cases. Take these ideas, tweak them to fit your situation, and begin to plant the kingdom of God in your environs. The inclusion of any person or church in these articles is not an endorsement by *The Heartbeat of the Remnant* of every doctrine and practice that the spotlighted individuals or churches may represent in other areas of their life. As well, the spotlighted person/group may not endorse all aspects of *The Heartbeat of the Remnant*.

This issue focuses on Mary Hursh, a single sister who lives near Ephrata, Pa. Mary has recently taken in two foster children.

(THR) First, let's start with an introduction. What are the names and ages of your family here?

(MH) My name is Mary, and I am 42 years old, and the two children I am currently providing care for are Brendan, who is 16 months old, and Jeanna, who is three years old.

(THR) So Mary, just what was the inspiration for you, as a single lady, to begin foster care?

(MH) Well, there were basically two things. First, I have experienced some difficult things in my personal life that have given me a heart for children whose parents are not able to adequately meet their needs. And, my family loves children, and I have two sisters, also unmarried, who do foster care. That encouraged me to try it also.

(THR) And how long have you been fostering?

(MH) I started about ten years ago doing respite care for mentally handicapped ladies and children, which I did for

about six years. Then I moved into respite care for normal children for about three years. And now I have had these foster children for about six months. I moved away from respite care partly because I had some other single sisters living with me at times, and they preferred something not quite so "in and out" as respite care.

(THR) Have you had any major hurdles in this ministry?

(MH) I would say that my own feelings of insufficiency probably sums up my biggest battle.

(THR) In connection with the hurdles, have you felt the hand of God in this anywhere, Him working a miracle or opening seemingly closed doors?

(MH) Absolutely! A few years ago when I checked into doing foster care, I was struggling with some bondages in my life. I was pretty open with the agency on this, and they felt it would be best for me to stick with only respite. Later, a friend told me the same thing.

But last Spring God moved someone to share a book with me on God's fatherhood. His work in my heart brought me

freedom. Then, at the end of a summer of deep heart searching, a worker from the agency called me one day. "Would you be willing to take Jeanna and Brendan as a placement?" she asked. I could hardly believe my ears! I called a friend and told her, "This can't be happening!" She replied, "Yes it can!" It was an affirmation, a special blessing from God at that point. The timing could not have been planned by anyone other than my Father!

(THR) So do you have an outstanding lesson that fostering as a single lady has taught you?

(MH) I would say it has helped me understand God, and how He wants a relationship with us. Children need someone to value them, just like we as adults want to be valued by God. It is like I can now see myself as under God's foster care, valuing me and taking a personal interest in me.

(THR) Let's suppose there is another single sister out there who feels led to begin singlehood foster care. What would be your main advice for them?

(MH) Well, I suppose I would encourage them to study into the special needs of foster children, as they usually are dealing with relationship problems in their past. But on the other hand, not taking things to the point of seeing them as a "need," rather than a "child." In other words, understanding their special needs, but not taking it overboard and expecting them to be abnormal and watching them closely just waiting to see them fail.

(THR) Mary, have you experienced many problems in relating to the State in regards to the difference in values

and child-training views that we as Christians would hold, compared to what a secular State would hold?

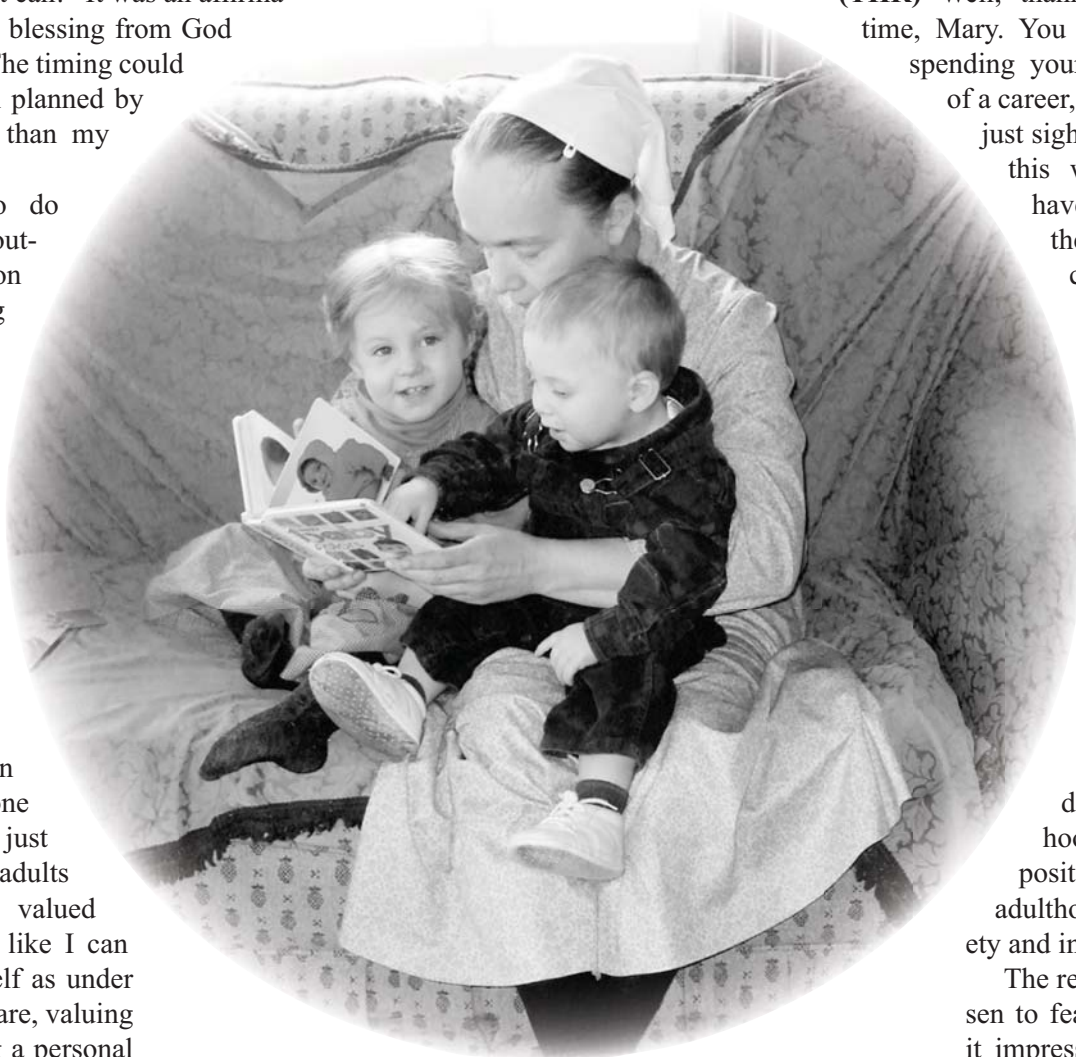
(MH) Not in a major way, but of course there are things I cannot do because of the rules. Many times I wish we could just promptly resolve an issue and then move on.

(THR) Well, thank you for your time, Mary. You could easily be spending your life in pursuit of a career, a gold medal, or just sight-seeing through this world. But you have chosen to serve these two precious children. From my short time in your home, I would say Brendan and Jeanna appear happy and loved. You may never see the fruits of your labors, but I think we can all agree that a happy, secure, disciplined childhood bears many positive results in adulthood, both in society and in the church.

The reason I have chosen to feature you is that it impresses me to see a single lady take on foster care. I am sure fostering in a home with both a father and a mother involved would be a lot easier (and

it is more ideal). I am not referring to singlehood as "less than ideal," but we know that the ideal is for children to be raised in a home with both a father and a mother. So to see you and other single sisters move ahead and do what they can is a blessing. Doing less than the perfect ideal is better than wasting one's life on frivolities. May the Lord bless your labors, as you serve Brendan and Jeanna.~

The Heartbeat of the Remnant wishes to bless everyone, single or married, who is sharing God's love to the children of this world who are passing through turbulent waters in their days of innocence.



Happy moments with Jeanna and Brendan