



*St. Clare's Home*  
RESTORING HOPE ~ SAVING LIVES

APRIL 2025

**GALA  
NIGHT**



## *A heartfelt update*

**Exciting news from Charleston!** I am pleased to announce that the house has been approved for a group home! This was a significant hurdle, and we are now in the process of closing. Hopefully by mid-May we can welcome a small group of our first moms and help the Hospitalier Sisters of Mercy acclimate to the new schedule.

The annual Pink & Blue Gala in February was a resounding success! It was a joy to gather with friends for a fun-filled evening to support our mission. We are incredibly grateful for the generosity of our sponsors and donors, especially **The Grady Group**, the 2025 Presenting Sponsor. For a full list of sponsors and our gallery, visit [St. Clare's Pink & Blue Gala](https://www.stclareshomesc.org). All funds raised will greatly assist our impact and operating budget.

In addition to the gala, we are thankful for several generous car donations. These are truly game changers for our moms, allowing them to drive to work instead of relying on costly Ubers.

I am thrilled to report that St. Clare's moms are thriving! We have supported 55 women, 32 babies and 22 other children at our Greenville location. Many moms who have been with us for a while are becoming self-supporting and preparing to leave soon. Newer moms are actively engaged with social services and exploring job and educational opportunities, with one mom poised to start CNA training soon!

Thank you, Lord God, for your continued support of this mission. We are truly blessed to have such a caring community behind us.

*Valerie*

**Valerie Baronkin**, Executive Director

# Easter at St. Clare's

## *Rejoice, for he has risen!*



There's something that really brings joy to my heart and that is watching kids run around the yard holding their baskets with their eyes wide open as they hunt for Easter eggs. I remember doing this as a child and shamefully I always loved stealing everyone else's eggs.

My favorite part of hunting eggs was always the money eggs. I could never turn down the opportunity to make a little extra cash! Sometimes my family would dye real boiled eggs and these were always a yummy treat. We would also usually have some sort of family gathering where there was food and fun for everyone.

The older that I've gotten I've realized that the Easter season and the egg hunt is about more than just a fun time with fun games – it's a way to create lasting memories, share traditions across generations and celebrate the new life and joy that Easter represents.

Easter is the heart of the Christian faith and a celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead. It's a reminder of God's incredible love and the victory of life over death. For Catholics, Easter isn't just a day on the calendar; it's a powerful declaration of hope, renewal and salvation. The empty tomb is proof that sin and death don't have the final say. As we reflect on the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, we're also called to live as Christians – walking in faith, love and the joy of new life in Christ.

For me personally, this Easter has been extra special.

*Continued ...*





# Easter at St. Clare's

## Rejoice, for he has risen!



*Continued ...*

Joining the Catholic Church was one of the most meaningful decisions I've ever made. It wasn't something I rushed into – I spent a lot of time praying, asking questions and learning about the faith before I finally felt God gently leading me home.

The beauty of the sacraments, the depth of the Church's teachings, and the sense of peace I felt during Mass all drew me in.

Going through OCIA and receiving the sacraments for the first time – especially the Eucharist – was incredibly moving. I felt like I had finally found where I belonged, not just in a church community, but in a spiritual family that stretches across time and the world. It's a journey that continues every day, and I'm grateful for the grace and guidance I've found along the way.

BY JOHNE PAYNE



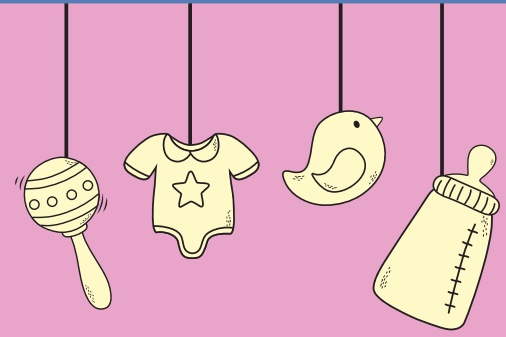
## Welcome home, Johnne!

One of our newest staff members, Johnne Payne, joined the fullness of the Catholic faith during Easter Vigil Mass this year! We are so thrilled she has dedicated her life to Christ and we will continue praying and supporting her throughout her faith journey!



# OH BABY!

## Three baby shower celebrations for moms



On Valentine's Day, staff and residents threw a baby shower for three St. Clare's moms: **Khristina**, **Mandy** and **Alexis**. The party was organized in collaboration with the staff and students of Sacred Heart Hybrid Academy of Greenville, who sponsored it, led by Jessica Sadowsky and Kristina Hernandez. Hernandez anchored the day's program, and Sister Stella Maris led with prayer and a welcome address, immediately followed by lunch and cutting the cake!

The day included a series of fun activities such as not being able to mention the word "BABY;" guessing the prices of baby items; filling in missing words to make a statement; and decorating cookies. Lastly, moms opened their gifts.

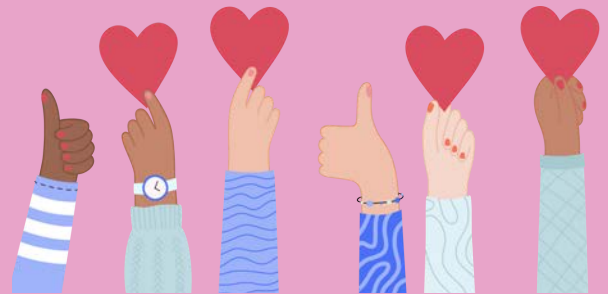


The day ended with closing remarks and showing the staff and students of Sacred Heart appreciation for their assistance and support.





# Community support updates



We are excited to share some community support updates from:

- Mark Advent of **Advent Home Services** fixed our shower doors and smoke detectors.
- Steve Killian of **Killian Auto Pros** donated his time and materials to repair a resident's car.
- **Meredith Brinkley** built a ramp to our porch for strollers, then stained the playset.
- **Joshua Halka** created a beautiful prayer garden as part of his Eagle Scout project.
- **Kelli & Mark Reinstein** donated funds to repair a resident's car.

**CAR DONATIONS:** We are grateful for the recent donations from Father Patrick Cooper, Douglas James, and Zachariah and Maria John. These vehicles are helping moms who are working full-time by providing reliable transportation and reducing Uber expenses.

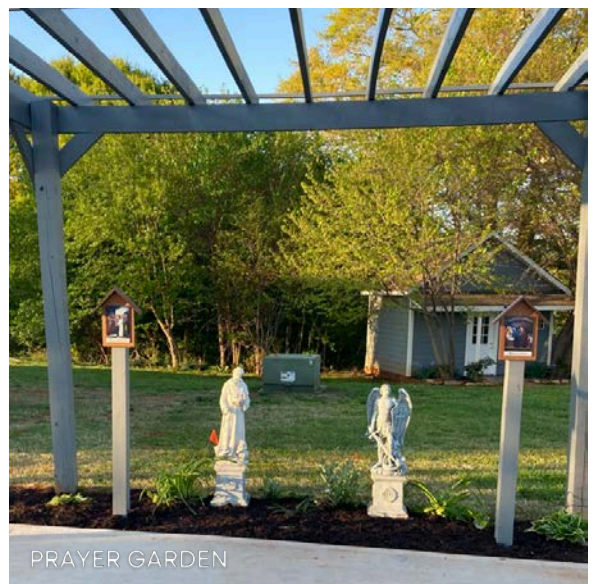


**THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!**

**POWER OF PRAYER:** Kay Leaumont and Maura Chamberlin led our first virtual rosary for St. Clare's and the miracle of life. It was a great success, and we will now host a regular rosary via Zoom. Our next session is Wednesday, May 21, at 7:00 pm.

If you would like to receive updates, please join our Flocknote page for the Rosary Group, or email Kay Leaumont: [kcleaumont@gmail.com](mailto:kcleaumont@gmail.com).

Thank you for your continued support and prayers for St. Clare's Home!





And for a final, joyous moment from the Pink & Blue Gala in February: Bishop Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS, led participants in his now classic exclamation: "Woooooow!"



# SC WORKS

St. Clare's Home is extremely grateful to SC Works and their professional staff who have once again shared their time and talent with us. Several of our resident moms were able to attend and graduate from their "Back to Work" program last month. Topics covered included jobs versus careers, resume building, interview skills, plus individual mock interviews and valuable feedback.

Our moms were introduced to resources and services in the community to assist them in their journey to self-sufficiency. We look forward to our continued partnership with SC Works and their return this fall!



## THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT

*We could not accomplish our mission without you!*



Please visit our [Wish List Here](#) or our Amazon [Wish List Here](#)



To sign up for our **newsletter**, click here:  
<https://stclareshomesc.flocknote.com>



To arrange donations, call **843-259-1108**.



To volunteer, contact Colleen Chmiel:  
[stclaresvolunteer@charlestondiocese.org](mailto:stclaresvolunteer@charlestondiocese.org)

Are you able to donate a car for the moms?  
Call Valerie at **864-275-5505**



### Our PO Box:

St. Clare's Home  
1754 Woodruff Road, #170  
Greenville, SC 29607

Please send any checks to our PO box listed above, or click [here](#) to donate.