

DANIELLE

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with his wife Brenda.

With Danielle Inn, the Gebhardts will provide free room and board, transportation to and from medical visits, prenatal, obstetric and post-delivery care, continuing education such as GED and computer training, parenting skills, personal and business life skills, and education on survival, spirituality and finances to women with no place to turn but abortion when an unexpected pregnancy occurs.

Faith will be an important element to reshaping lives, the Gebhardts said. Bible study and group discussions

will be held daily, and the women will be encouraged to practice their faith while residing at the inn.

"We're gonna get them plugged into 'church is the way of life,'" Mark Gebhardt said. "If they'll open themselves to exposing their lives to the knowledge of the word (of God) that I have, then the possibility of changing their lives is extreme. ... Danielle Inn will be the heartbeat of God."

The Gebhardts have been missionaries for most of their married life, working in Africa, Canada and, lastly, in Missouri at a school and drug rehabilitation center with youth and adults. Their experiences helped prepare them for this current ministry.

"It's just our calling," Brenda Gebhardt said. "It's our life – to go where the Lord will have us go."

What brought the Gebhardts, who are licensed ministers through Rhema Bible Training Center in Oklahoma, to Louisiana were Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Mark Gebhardt, a professional logger, worked as a subcontractor for FEMA and the Corps of Engineers removing downed trees and debris first in Texas, then Mississippi and finally in Pearl River and Covington. When work halted, he thought he would return home to Missouri, but the Lord had a different path for him and his wife.

"If you believe your steps are ordered by the Lord, I wouldn't trade where I am," Mark Gebhardt said. "There's nothing special about me, but because of God's favor, he gave us this."

A series of events brought Gebhardt in contact with Mike and Charlene Ecuyer who had run the site as Agape Ministries, a nonprofit foster home for children. The Ecuysers, who are on the board of Agape Ministries, had a desire to convert it into a home for pregnant women, the Gebhardts said. The Ecuysers told the Gebhardts that the Lord had put it on their hearts to turn the property over to them.

Given former Agape home

The Gebhardts agreed to be directors and were given the home to run with only two stipulations – that its name be Danielle after the biological daughter they never had, and a painting, completed by Mike Ecuyer's deceased mom, hang in the home.

Brenda Gebhardt said, "The Lord spoke to my heart: 'Brenda this is not about physical childbirth (she's never had children); it is about saving lives, about birth,

about women who need their lives to turn around and be blessed.'"

The facility will have a house mom and a licensed kitchen where residents are invited to share cooking duties, and make cookies and other sweets to sell. Any profit from the sale of goods will be deposited in an account for participants to use when they depart the inn.

Brenda Gebhardt wants to keep ties with the women "to strengthen them as they find their place outside of Danielle Inn."

Mark Gebhardt also hopes to expand his ministry to the babies' fathers, if they are willing, since they, too, are hurting and need to realize the responsibilities they have.

The Gebhardts have seen miraculous generosity of time, treasure and talent over the past year while rehabilitating the inn. Groups and individuals have participated in the Adopt a Room program and furnished and decorated a room in the house as if their daughter or loved one was to live there so residents could sense the care and love of others.

"God is able to meet them there," Brenda Gebhardt said. "It's not just three meals a day and a clean bed. If she feels God is there to give his best, then maybe she will be moved to give her best."

All religions helping

St. Peter Catholic Church in Covington's youth group painted the residence's fence and helped with a recent fund-raiser that netted \$26,000. St. Luke Catholic Church in Slidell held a fund-raiser, and Mary Queen of Peace Catholic Church also has been generous. More than 50 volunteers are waiting in the wings.

"All religions are helping

with this project," Brenda Gebhardt, director, said. "Everybody is pulling together."

"But the majority of the help we have received has come from our Catholic church family," Mark Gebhardt said. "They are a group closer to the understanding of the right to life."

The Gebhardts think people have been supportive due to Danielle Inn's mission to save the lives of babies and help women turn their lives around.

"Providing support for the pregnant woman and her unborn child is crucial, really crucial," supporter Melody Barousse said. "Danielle Inn is one very wonderful answer to this need. A safe, nurturing place for a girl or woman to carry her unborn baby, deliver the baby, care for any other children, and then get back on her feet after delivering completes the term: 'I am pro-life!'"

Some hurdles remain

Danielle Inn has to surmount a few hurdles before gaining local approval to open – obtain and install a steel staircase from the second floor, install a sprinkler system and fire alarm system.

The Gebhardts say since this is the only place of its kind in Louisiana to care for pregnant women who already have a child, it is imperative to open as soon as possible. Already, there is a waiting list of 19 women. The Gebhardts receive referrals through local crisis centers.

"We're just ready to get into the next phase (to open) to save babies' lives," Mark Gebhardt said. "We want to help those women being preyed upon by ignorance."

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Cardinal John Henry Newman beatification said to be set for May 2, 2010

LONDON (CNS) – Cardinal John Henry Newman will be beatified in Birmingham, England, May 2, a Catholic Church source told Catholic News Service. The date and venue have been proposed by the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes and are

expected to be accepted soon by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the source told CNS July 15.

The source said the beatification will be in the Birmingham Oratory, which he founded following his conversion to Catholicism in 1845.