



# A STAKE IN THE GROUND

A FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE TO PROVIDE  
A FOUNDATION FOR OUR IMMIGRANT NEIGHBORS



Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet  
Ministries Foundation

*St. Paul Province*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A STAKE IN THE GROUND: A VITAL FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE

The Sisters of St. Joseph have a history of identifying neighbors in need and making a commitment to serve them. One focus of their contemporary ministries is adult immigrants. They work with adult immigrants at a highly successful literacy program known as Learning In Style. The Sisters have demonstrated that proficiency in English is the enabler of everything, from finding a job to attaining citizenship; and their approach has been endorsed by outside evaluators.

The Sisters began this facet of their ministry in 1994, housing Learning In Style in an unused convent that it soon outgrew. They then moved to a nearby Baptist church, which, again, proved too small. In 2008, after careful study and research, the Sisters purchased land and a building in South Minneapolis at 2200 Nicollet Avenue. It was a clear signal of their intent to stay in the Whittier neighborhood and continue to meet the emerging needs of its immigrant-rich population.

The Sisters committed money from their own investments, designating the \$1.6 million purchase price as a lead contribution to a fund-raising initiative with adult literacy as its core mission and a goal of \$4 million to: renovate the new building; construct additional space; and provide operating and mission support.

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It's not easy to be an immigrant in any time or place, certainly, but the path is smoothed a little for the ones who find their way to the building at Nicollet & 22nd.

”

“EVERYTHING IS BETTER THAN BEFORE. **YESTERDAY I TOLD THE PHARMACIST THEY GAVE ME THE WRONG MEDICATION. LAST YEAR, I WOULDN'T KNOW.** I UNDERSTAND THE WORDS THE DOCTOR SAYS NOW. I'VE LEARNED THE INTERPRETERS DOESN'T SAY ALL THE WORDS, I NEED ENGLISH AND I NEED THIS SCHOOL.”

The first Sisters of St. Joseph arrive in the United States

1836

1840

IDENTIFYING AN URGENT NEED TO ASSIST NEWLY ARRIVED IMMIGRANTS ON THEIR PATH TO AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP, THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET HAVE SUCCESSFULLY FOCUSED ONE OF THEIR MINISTRIES ON TEACHING ADULTS AMONG THEM HOW TO READ, WRITE, UNDERSTAND AND SPEAK ENGLISH. IT IS A NEW LANGUAGE FOR A NEW LAND, AND **DESTINED TO GIVE THEM A NEW FUTURE.**

## Many Lifetimes of Ministry

The ministry of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet always adapts to the community needs of the time. The history of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the Upper Midwest dates from the riverboat arrival of four pioneer members of the order in St. Paul on November 3, 1851. The Sisters were invited by the bishop to improve the lot of the immigrants, refugees and settlers who had come to call this territory “home.”



**THE STAKE IS IN THE GROUND, AND THOSE WHO PUT IT THERE NEED THE HELP OF BENEFACITOR-PARTNERS.** THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH HAVE LAUNCHED THIS FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE IN ORDER TO ENLIST OTHERS TO BRING THEIR VISION OF A STAKE IN THE GROUND TO REALITY.

The first Sisters of St. Joseph arrive in Minnesota

The Sisters open Minnesota's first hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, in response to a cholera outbreak

33 million immigrants come to the United States from Europe

The Sisters begin to train nurses

1850 1851 1853 1860 1870 1880-1915 1890 1894 1900



By 1930, women religious outnumbered priests in the United States four-to-one and managed the institutional infrastructure of the Catholic Church. They administered, governed, taught and healed, holding positions generally denied laywomen.

In the Upper Midwest, the Sisters of Saint Joseph's work could be summarized in one word:

**progress.** Their work led to nearly 150 institutions in education, health care and social services in Minnesota, Wisconsin, North Dakota and South Dakota. In 1951 alone they taught 20,000 students in elementary and secondary schools, 938 women in the College of St. Catherine, and 175 nursing students.



THEY MINISTERED WITHOUT REGARD TO THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE PEOPLE WHOSE DAILY LIVES THEY TOUCHED. FROM PRIMITIVE BEGINNINGS EMERGED SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND ORPHANAGES AS **THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH BECAME MAJOR SHAPERS IN THE 19TH CENTURY.**

Sisters of St. Joseph establish the College of St. Catherine, which is now the largest women's university in the U.S.

Sisters outnumbered priests in the U.S. 4 to 1 and managed the institutional infrastructure of the Catholic Church

1900      **1905**      1910      1920      **1930**      1940

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH IDENTIFIED UNMET NEEDS, PARTICULARLY IN THE INNER-CITY, AND SET ABOUT SEEING HOW THEY COULD HELP MARGINALIZED NEIGHBORS - MIGRANT WORKERS, ABUSED WOMEN, IMMIGRANTS, AND THE ELDERLY. THIS IS STREET-LEVEL MINISTRY. **IT IS DONE ONE-ON-ONE OR IN SMALL GROUPS.** IT HAPPENS IN MODEST PLACES IN MODEST NEIGHBORHOODS. **IT DEMANDS HARD WORK AND SUCCEEDS ON TRUST.**

The Sisters of St. Joseph, the single largest community of vowed women religious in Minnesota, continue as leaders in committing their talent and resources to contemporary forms of ministry. They do so with the support of Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Ministries Foundation, which leverages the contributions of Sisters—in-kind human services as well as direct cash and donated space and equipment—to attract private and public support. The social services network nurtured by the Foundation ranges from free health clinics to housing and support for immigrant women escaping torture in their native lands.

The network serves more than 15,000 people at an annual cost of \$4.5 million, including \$1.4 million from the Sisters of St. Joseph. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* noted “The Sisters of St. Joseph are one of the fifteen most influential organizations for social betterment and social change in Minnesota since Minnesota was established as a territory.” A half-century earlier, a columnist described the Sisters by saying “Under the roof at 1870 Randolph Avenue lies a collection of more intellectual talent than any other building in the Northwest can boast.”

“  
Life was bad, now  
life is good.  
”

In 1951 alone the Sisters of St. Joseph teach more than 21,000 students

As the Sisters respond to the needs in the community, organizations emerge including: The Bridge for Runaway Youth, Peace House, St. Joseph's House, The Free Store, INSTEP day care, The Consociate Program, Dwelling in the Woods, Sarah's...An Oasis for Women, Sisters Care, St. Mary's Health Clinics, and the St. Joseph Worker Program

More than one million immigrant representing 182 nations pass through Minnesota

The Sisters start a new program to educate adult immigrants called Learning In Style



THE UNITED STATES ACCEPTS BY FAR THE MOST LEGAL IMMIGRANTS OF ANY NATION IN THE WORLD AND IN DOING SO RECOGNIZES ITS OWN HERITAGE AS A **COUNTRY OF IMMIGRANTS**. ACCORDING TO THE 2010 CENSUS, 40 PERCENT OF U.S. GROWTH WAS DUE TO IMMIGRANTS.

## Strangers Among Us

All of the great religions teach that compassionate treatment of the stranger is obligatory. A common theme in many religions, it goes beyond love of neighbor; it is compassion for our unknown neighbors, the strangers among us. The work of Learning In Style has its roots from the Bible, "I was a stranger and you took me in" (Matthew 25:35).

The globe is restless. An estimated 200 million people today live outside their country of birth, about a fourth of them in North America. Today's immigration stems from global economic and political changes over the past half-century, as well as legal changes in the United States that have eliminated the bias for immigrants from Europe over those from Asia, Africa and the Middle East.



Sisters of St. Joseph named "one of the fifteen most influential organizations for social betterment and social change in Minnesota" by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*

The Sisters put a stake in the ground to meet the needs of our immigrant neighbors

Our work, together, will determine what the future looks like. Can we count on your help to continue meeting the needs of the time?

2000 **2001**

**2008** 2010

2020

2030

2040

BETWEEN 1982 AND 2008, MORE THAN ONE MILLION IMMIGRANTS REPRESENTING 182 NATIONS PASSED THROUGH MINNESOTA, SEEKING EITHER TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT HOUSING. **THE VAST MAJORITY OF IMMIGRANTS ARE IN OUR COUNTRY LEGALLY.**

While drawing heavily on social services to gain a footing, they are also a growing economic force—adults who own entrepreneurial businesses and workers who pay state and local taxes. Most of the state’s foreign-born residents are working-age adults between 18 and 65, almost three-fourths gainfully employed. Almost one in four are refugees seeking asylum, far larger than the percentage for the nation as a whole. They are a more diverse mix than those settling elsewhere in the country, including the nation’s second-largest settlement of Hmong and enough Somalis to make the Twin Cities’ population second only to Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia.



“  
Now, I can help my kids with homework.  
”



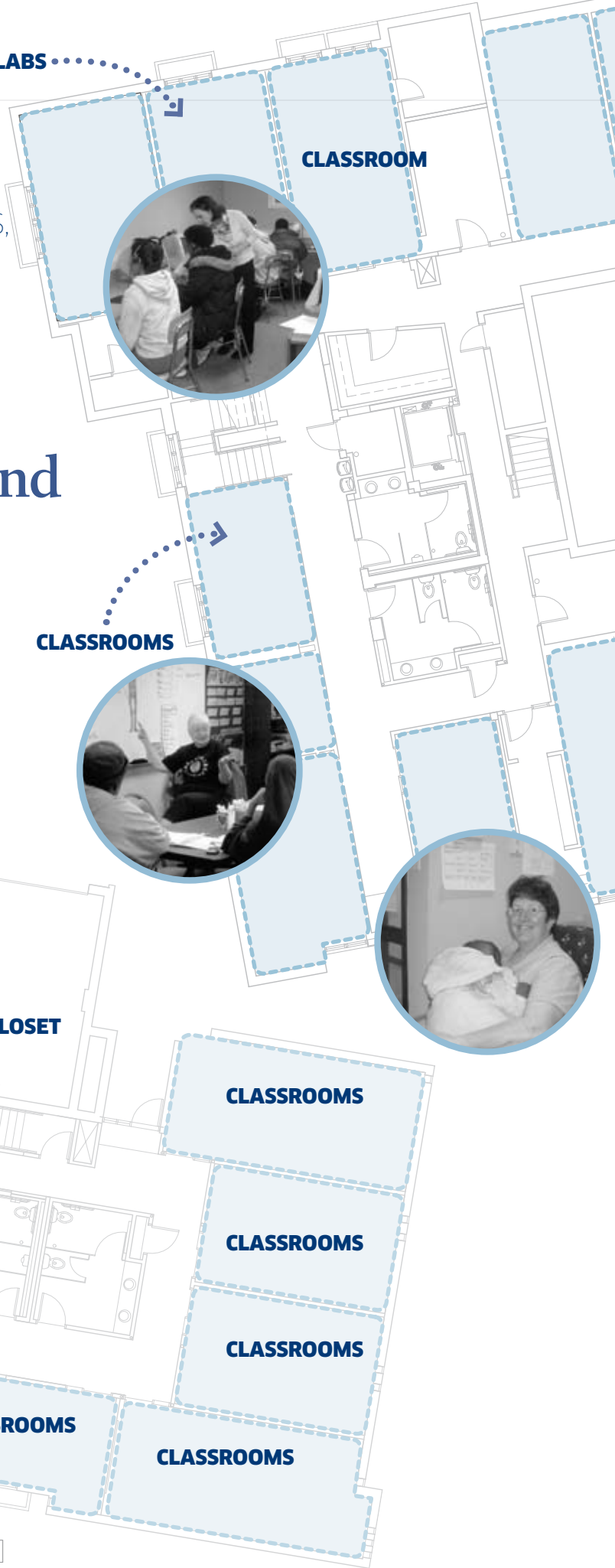
COMPUTER LABS

**LIMITED LANGUAGE ABILITY REMAINS A SIGNIFICANT BARRIER** TO INTEGRATION, AS WELL AS A FREQUENT CAUSE OF STRESS, SEGREGATION AND CONFLICT BETWEEN IMMIGRANTS AND NATIVE-BORN GROUPS.

## A Stake in the Ground

One hundred sixty years after answering the call to serve the first wave of immigrants to Minnesota, the Sisters of St. Joseph again focus on the strangers in our midst. In a sense, this community of women religious is revisiting an earlier chapter in their history, editing and rewriting the work they do to meet the growing needs of the new adult immigrant.

From the outset, the emphasis has been on improving the adult immigrant's ability to communicate in English, how to speak, listen and write in a new tongue. As proof of the need, the number of students immediately outstripped the space and the center moved. Within a few years, it was clear that their second space was inadequate to meet the needs of adult immigrants, as well.





**CLASSROOMS**

THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH USED THEIR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY'S INVESTMENTS TO PURCHASE A NEW HOME. THEY BEGAN TO CREATE A PLACE FOR THE DISPLACED, A COMMUNITY OF COMPASSION REACHING OUT INTO A NEIGHBORHOOD OF NEED.



**CHILD CARE**

In the depths of the Great Recession, in October 2008, the Sisters made the kind of decision that makes little sense unless you are guided by faith. The Sisters put a permanent stake in the ground of the Whittier neighborhood, this time along Nicollet Avenue, Minneapolis' main street for the newly arrived. At the core of this new Ministry Center remained Learning In Style, their highly successful adult literacy program for immigrants.

Along with making an act of faith in the future of their mission, the Sisters did some prudent due diligence. With the assistance of MAP for Nonprofits, a group that helps organizations think through strategic decisions, the Sisters asked outside experts three questions:

- Will the services of Learning In Style be as needed in the future as they are now?**
- Is the Whittier neighborhood the place in Minneapolis best suited to the Learning In Style mission?**
- Does Learning In Style offer a learning approach that is unique and effective?**



The answers came back “Yes” to each question, providing invaluable third-party endorsement. MAP research, concluded that the number of immigrants had doubled since Learning In Style began, and the need for their education was greater than ever. The Whittier neighborhood, 90 percent rental and a port of entry for immigrants, was an ideal setting. The Sister of St. Joseph's approach to adult language education, individualized and small-group instruction, focusing on women and working with a range of literacy levels, is “best practices,” as shown by its students' stellar performance on standardized national tests, where they scored 20 percent above the average.

**YES**



THE SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH, WORKING WITH SISTERS FROM OTHER RELIGIOUS ORDERS AS WELLS AS VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF, **HAVE TAUGHT MORE THAN 3,500 ADULT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS**, ABOUT 70 PERCENT FEMALE, FROM 76 COUNTRIES LOCATED PRIMARILY IN AFRICA BUT ALSO IN SOUTH AMERICA, ASIA AND OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD.

## A United Nations of Hope

“Each year,” writes one Sister of St. Joseph, “we spend our time, our energies and our talent in an endeavor we know makes a difference in the lives of many people. We welcome the stranger whom we accept with dignity and respect. We create a place and an atmosphere that fits us and is a part of who we are and what we hope to do. At times we speak for and speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves. We teach, we listen, we respond to needs.”

The needs often go beyond language. The Ministry Center also houses the Clothes Closet for garments, household items and toiletries and the Children’s Room, which provides a safe, nurturing place for student’s children while they are in class. Staff invests their time on more than teaching - three years on paperwork to get the fiancé of a Togo student into the United States or a few hours getting a landlord to repair someone’s plumbing, for example.

In just the past year, students ranged in age from 18 to 96 and came from 28 countries. Africa is the source of most students, some of them fleeing war, oppression and torture. More than half the 48 countries of continental Africa have been represented in classes, and Somalis represent the largest contingent of them. The Ministry Center is truly a United Nations of hope.

Over the past year, a total of 406 students attended classes totaling 24,986 hours. Retention month-to-month averaged 90 percent. A dozen students in the last year achieved citizenship. Photos of the new citizens, in their native costume holding the American flag, adorn a bulletin board in a newly renovated hallway as inspiration to others.

- ALGERIA
- ARGENTINA
- BENIN
- BOSNIA
- BRAZIL
- BURUNDI
- BHUTAN
- CAMBODIA
- CAMEROON
- CHILE
- CHINA
- COLOMBIA
- CONGO
- COSTA RICA
- CUBA
- CZECH REPUBLIC
- DJIBOUTI
- DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- ECUADOR
- EGYPT
- EL SALVADOR
- ERITREA
- ETHIOPIA
- FRANCE
- GAMBIA
- GEORGIA
- GERMANY
- GHANA
- GUATEMALA
- GUINEA
- HAITI
- HONDURAS
- INDIA
- INDONESIA
- IRAN
- IRAQ
- ITALY
- IVORY COAST
- JAPAN
- KENYA
- KOREA
- LAOS
- LATVIA
- LEBANON
- LIBERIA
- MALI
- MAURITANIA
- MEXICO
- MOROCCO
- NEPAL
- NICARAGUA
- NIGERIA
- PAKISTAN
- PANAMA
- PERU
- POLAND
- PORTUGAL
- PUERTO RICO
- RUSSIA
- SAUDI ARABIA
- SENEGAL
- SLOVAKIA
- SIERRA LEONE
- SOMALIA
- SUDAN
- SYRIA
- TAIWAN
- TIBET
- TOGO
- TURKEY
- UKRAINE
- USA
- UZBEKISTAN
- VENEZUELA
- VIETNAM
- ZAIRE



The improvement of adult language skills has a domino effect. It ends the isolation of the immigrant who is illiterate in English, enables him or her to talk to teachers and doctors, read newspapers and bus schedules, become a citizen, file a complaint with the city council, get a better job, pass a high school education equivalency test, and advocate for themselves and their children. All of this makes for a better family, a better community, a better nation, a better world.

Learning In Style is highly successful for two principal reasons. The first is the quality of the faculty, most of whom have graduate degrees

and lengths of teaching experience almost never found in similar adult literacy programs. The second is the commitment and perseverance of the immigrant students themselves, all of whom make great sacrifices attend class. Many students, especially the women, have never been to a school of any kind.

There is a deeply serious quality to the community that gathers at 2200 Nicollet Avenue. They know they are embarking on a journey of hard work, and they are determined to succeed because the consequences for their lives are so great.

**THE KEY TO OPPORTUNITY IS EDUCATION,  
AND THE KEY TO EDUCATION IS LANGUAGE.**

A STUDENT WHO CAN BARELY WRITE AN ENGLISH SENTENCE WHEN SCREENED AT REGISTRATION CAN RETURN, AS ONE DID, EIGHT YEARS LATER TO GIVE HER FORMER TEACHER A BUSINESS CARD. SHE WAS TRAVELING INTERNATIONALLY REPRESENTING A GARMENT MANUFACTURER.

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A FEMALE CHINESE STUDENT WHO BROUGHT HER LUNCH SO SHE COULD STAY AND LEARN ALL DAY SPEAKS FOR MANY OTHERS IN SAYING, **“LEARNING ENGLISH FELT LIKE I GOT TO OPEN THE DOOR I WAS TRAPPED BEHIND AND GO OUT INTO THE WORLD. I STILL FEEL MY LIFE EXPANDING.”**

Trust is essential, and students trust the Sisters. “We are like family here,” comments a Somali student. A staff member says, “Each day we sit down with men and women so eager to learn, yet they, whose life experiences have been beyond our comprehension, can teach us so much. We rejoice in their small and not-so-small successes and are filled with regret at any failure.”

The cultures from which students come are characterized by an abiding respect for teachers. That is why its students call their instructors “teacher,” not “Sister.” The smallest kindness may bring forth a heavily accented, “Thank you, thank you.” There are cultural differences in the way in which gratitude and respect are shown. The hand placed over the heart is a universal symbol. Some students bow; others may give their teacher a hug or kiss you on the cheek. Sometimes the eyes convey more than any words could. This profound sense of gratitude is the marketing secret of Learning In Style. Faster than Facebook, the news about the school travels along the immigrant grapevine. More effective than a paid advertising message, it brings credibility to the program and new students to the door.

**“EVERYONE WAS SO FRIENDLY AND NICE** WHEN I ARRIVED, I FELT WELCOMED INTO A FAMILY” AN ALUM OF THE SCHOOL EXPLAINED.

AFTER STUDYING AT LEARNING IN STYLE, SHE WENT ON TO A HOTEL JOB THAT REQUIRES HER TO SPEAK ENGLISH EXTENSIVELY AND NOW TAKES FRIDAY MORNING OFF TO **SUPPORT OTHER IMMIGRANTS LEARNING ENGLISH.**

ONE SISTER RECALLED SIPPING COFFEE WITH AN ELDERLY, VERY DIGNIFIED GENTLEMAN WHO SAID SIMPLY, "I HAVE A QUESTION. HOW DO YOU DO THIS? WE COME HERE, AND WE HAVE ALL THIS GIVEN TO US. WHY? GOD?" HE SAID HE HAD BEEN IN MANY PLACES, **NONE OF THEM ARE LIKE THE WORK OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH.**



THE WILLINGNESS OF PEOPLE TO HELP IN ANY WAY LEFT HIM PUZZLED. "SOMETIMES," HE ADMITS, **"I CRY AT NIGHT—IN GRATITUDE."**

THE STAKE IS IN THE GROUND.  
YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO BRING THE VISION TO REALITY.

# Fund-raising Objectives

**GOAL: \$4 MILLION**



**TOTAL: \$4 MILLION**

**OPERATING AND MISSION SUPPORT: \$398,000**

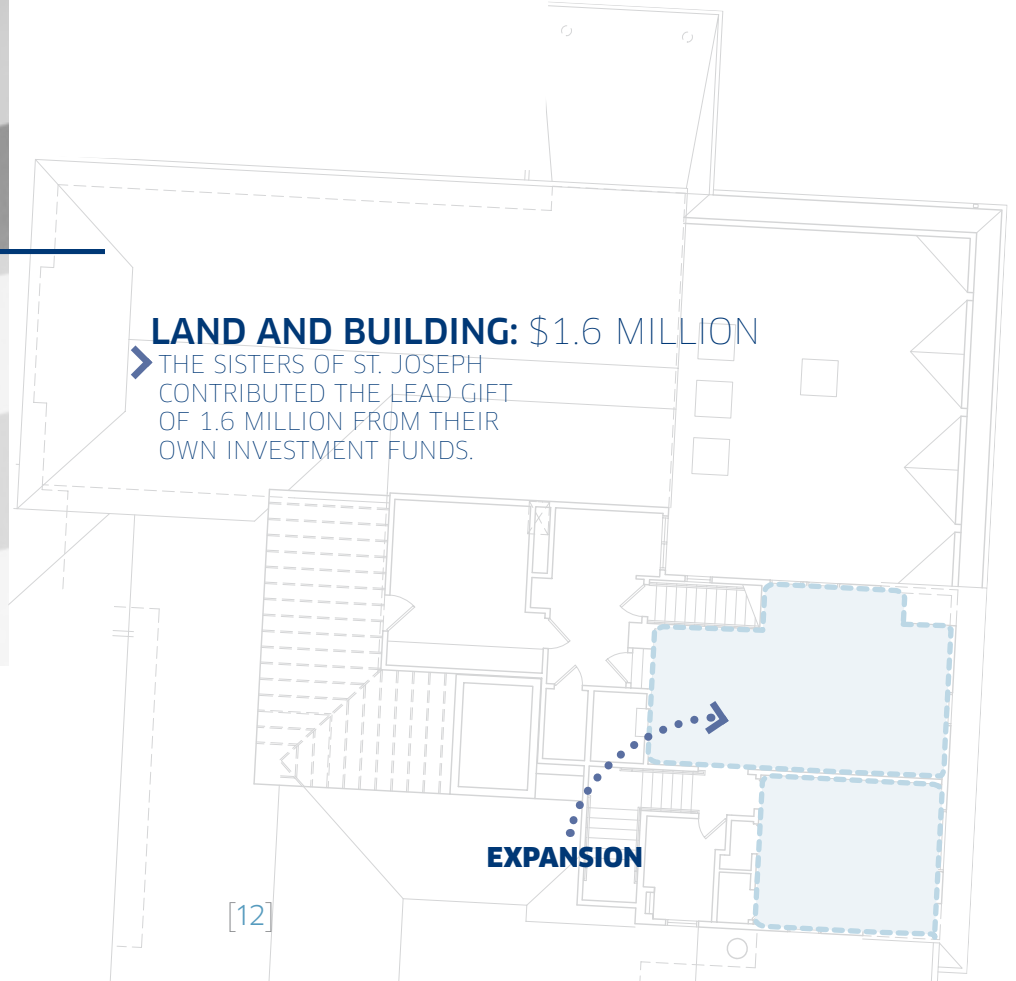
**ADDITIONAL INTERIOR RENOVATION: \$102,000**

- THIRD FLOOR  
CLOTHES CLOSET  
OUTDOOR PLAY AREA FOR THE CHILDREN

**RENOVATION OF BUILDING: \$1.9 MILLION**

**LAND AND BUILDING: \$1.6 MILLION**

- THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH  
CONTRIBUTED THE LEAD-GIFT  
OF 1.6 MILLION FROM THEIR  
OWN INVESTMENT FUNDS.



# SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET MINISTRIES FOUNDATION

## Gift Opportunities

- **ADOPT SPACE**, AN INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM OR OFFICE, AS WELL AS DEDICATED SOCIAL SPACE, IN THE EXTENSIVELY RENOVATED BUILDING, THUS ENSURING AN ATMOSPHERE OF COMPASSION AND DIGNITY.
- **UNDERWRITE RENOVATION** OF THE NOW-VACANT THIRD FLOOR OF THE MINISTRIES CENTER, WHICH IS ENVISIONED AS A HOME FOR EMERGENT COMMUNITY NEEDS. COUNSELING, FOR EXAMPLE, IS ONE ACTIVITY THAT MIGHT WELL BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS SPACE.
- **CREATE AN OUTSIDE PLAY AREA** FOR THE BUILDING, PROVIDING AN IMPORTANT SUPPORT FOR ADULT STUDENTS WITH CHILDREN. FREE CHILDCARE IS A VERY RARE OFFERING AND ONE SORELY NEEDED BY MANY IMMIGRANT STUDENTS.
- **PROVIDE ASSISTANCE** FOR THE OPERATING BUDGET IN THE EMERGING YEARS OF THE MINISTRY CENTER, PROVIDING TIME FOR A FOUNDATION TO GROW AROUND WHAT IS NOW "A STAKE IN THE GROUND."
- **CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPENDING RENOVATION** OF WHAT IS NOW CALLED THE CLOTHES CLOSET. THIS AREA FOR DISTRIBUTION OF CLOTHING AS WELL AS BASIC HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES NEEDS UPGRADING TO MEET NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS.

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A faint, light blue floor plan of a building is visible in the background, showing various rooms, corridors, and furniture like tables and chairs. The floor plan is tilted slightly to the right.

“

Matthew  
25:35

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I was a  
stranger  
and you  
took me in.

”



Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet  
*St. Paul Province*

Ministries Foundation

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