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**Links:**

- [High resolution photos of Father Joe's Villages](#)

**Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor Gives Hope, One-on-One Support to Young Pregnant Women and their Children**

- *Program at Father Joe's Villages supports expecting young mothers between the ages of 18-24 and their children with dedicated, one-on-one support*
- *Enrollees able to access prenatal care, housing, jobs and college*
- *Support provided by San Diego Foundation and Amon family*

**WHAT**

Young pregnant women and their children accessed care and hope through a [Father Joe's Villages](#) program that's now entering its second year.

Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor provides the families within its care access to services like housing navigation, nutrition education, prenatal care, employment services and a private room at the shelter in Father Joe's Villages' Joan Kroc Center.

At any given time, the program serves mothers, between the ages of 18 to 24, and their children through one-on-one dedicated support. Pregnant women as well as mothers with a child under a year old are eligible for entry into the Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor program. In the past year, three infants were born to mothers in the program. The program is supported through funding from the Amon Family.

How mothers and their families move forward from the program depends on their needs. Some return to their families or partners while others may move into Permanent Housing. Some, including one mother and her partner this year, may transition into Rapid Rehousing, where they are provided rental assistance and ongoing case management.

**WHY**

The recently released [Point-in-Time count from the San Diego Regional Task Force on Homelessness](#) showed that 526 families experienced homelessness in the City of San Diego in 2022, an increase of over 208 families as compared to [January 2020](#).

For young mothers who have experienced homelessness, housing instability or unstable domestic situations, programs like this one offer more than just housing and health care: they also offer hope.

Homelessness can impact not only the health and wellbeing of adults, but that of children as well. Children affected by homelessness may experience developmental delays that can contribute to academic and behavioral struggles. However, early interventions can help young children and their families thrive.

Children enrolled in programs like the Therapeutic Childcare Center, available to Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor clients, [saw improvements in their literacy, resiliency and academic skills.](#)

## STORIES

Here are a few stories from the program. Names have been changed to protect identities:

- Jane, 20, and Terry, 23, were both pregnant and had fled domestic violence when they came to Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor. Both women secured housing vouchers when staying with the program and are prepared to apply for permanent homes.
- Patty, 20, secured a part-time job at a cafe. She and her two children, a 5-month-old and a 1-year-old, are moving into an apartment with the help of rental assistance through the Rapid Rehousing program.
- Sandy, 19, was pregnant and came to Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor with her 1-year-old baby. Her case manager helped her apply for unemployment benefits and she is now enrolling in school.

## QUOTES

“Too often, what families on the street experience is trauma and tragedy. This is a different path. It’s not just housing or support services: it’s hope,” **Deacon Jim Vargas, president and CEO of Father Joe’s Villages.** “Every woman who passes through these doors with her family receives the support she needs to find stability and to imagine, and achieve, a better future.”

“Our faith calls upon us to serve those in need, and we recognize a need to care for young mothers who do not have their own families to rely upon,” **said Adriana and Cristiano Amon.** “We are hopeful that many more women will be positively impacted by Saint Margaret of Cortona Harbor, and many more children welcomed into life.”

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND CONTACT

- **Organization:** [Father Joe’s Villages](#)
- **To coordinate interviews:** Contact Byron Kimball, [Byron@gomixte.com](mailto:Byron@gomixte.com), 619-732-0789 ext. 297
- **Link to use in your story:**
  - [Father Joe’s Villages website](#)

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As San Diego’s largest homeless services provider, Father Joe’s Villages ensures that each person can rediscover hope and leave homelessness behind. To address the

complex needs of people who are homeless, the organization provides housing for more than 2,500 people each night, along with health care, substance use disorder treatment, job training, therapeutic childcare and more. This mission is made possible only through the efforts of compassionate staff, [volunteer work](#), [car donation](#), and generous public and private [charitable contributions](#). For more information, please visit: <https://.my.neighbor.org/>.