

My Word This Year is Joy — Sister Maria Teresa Griffin SSJ

A Day in the Life

Five years ago, **Sister Maria Teresa Griffin SSJ** was facing a significant decision in her life. Sister Maria explains, “My convent was closing. Aging and cancer had impacted my life and this played an important part in my decision. Where could I go while continuing to contribute to life in community? What were my options? As Sisters of Saint Joseph, we are so fortunate to have Saint Joseph Villa, such a beautiful home. As I realized this, I knew

my prayers were answered and I chose the Villa.

There are many things she loves about living at the Villa: Daily Mass, community, lovely bedroom and bathroom, health care and reading the newspaper as she has her coffee each morning in the dining room. Sister Maria enjoys the birthday celebrations, activities and quiet time to solve crossword puzzles, which she buys at the

Dollar Store, and the Jumble from the daily paper.

“If you have company, and it is around dinnertime,” she explains, “you can bring them into dinner as your guest. It is just wonderful to be able to do that and feel at home.

I like to be of help and be part of what is going on and here I can do that. Some people like to be more involved than others



— there is no pressure. Physically I cannot do what I used to do. That is a difficult thing for me — diminishment. I cope with that every day as I still continue to give back.

My main activity is collecting clothes for the poor. I helped **Sister Margaret Mary McLaughlin SSJ** on the fifth floor where I helped sisters clean out, organize their rooms and move in. We would send extra clothes to Impact, The Welcome Center and a Soup Kitchen in West Philly. One day **Sister Jean Faustman SSJ** gave a talk and told us about Dawn's Place and I started to send clothes there. Some of the women write letters to me. They are so sweet. One woman wrote, I just got to Dawn's Place and I had nothing . That is such a joy for me.

I noticed the libraries on each floor needed some organization, so I did that." Sister Maria is looking forward to using her organizational skills to arrange the books in the new Community Room on the Lobby Floor. She says with excitement, "There are bookcases on either side of the fireplace and I already have been putting books away for those shelves."

Sister Maria considers writing another apostolate. She explains, "I think it is important to keep in touch. I do a lot of writing. I send a card each month to any of my cousins who are in college, birthday cards to my family and cards to some cousins who are elderly. I still keep in touch monthly with some students I taught. I remember my angel house and send a card every month."

To any sister considering a move to the villa, Sister Maria says, "My key word for this year is **Joy**. I am 89 years old, feel so fortunate and just so happy to be here. So, what are your options? At Saint Joseph Villa we say — Welcome Home!"

