



# Joseph's Coat

SPRING 2023

BY  
APPOINTMENT  
ONLY

## Shopping Hours:

Monday and  
Wednesday  
9:00 - 3:00

## Donation Hours:

Tuesday and  
Thursday  
9:00 - 2:30

FINANCIAL  
SUPPORT IS FULLY  
TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

WE DO NOT  
PUBLISH, SELL,  
TRADE OR RENT  
DONOR  
INFORMATION.

## The White Shirt

Article submitted by a retired  
Joseph's Coat volunteer.

***This actually happened and it occurred in the summer of 2017 at Joseph's Coat. I've only told my wife until now and it has been a difficult matter to even attempt to understand the meaning of such an obvious, miraculous event. The meaning is, perhaps, as infinite as the Source of the miracle:***

I was in the Men's area at the Coat volunteering one morning when there were still a large number of shoppers allowed in the store (pre-Covid). It was a particularly busy day with many requests to find special items of clothing for individual shoppers. A tall, strong African American gentleman approached me and said, almost pleading, "I have to find a white dress shirt for church this Sunday, can you help

me?" I asked him what size he needed and he said "size 4X and it has to be white!" I had earlier looked through our stock of men's large sizes that morning and I

knew we didn't have anything nearly that big, especially in white, but I told him I would go in back and look. As I usually do when someone is in a great need of something like winter boots or a unique size, I asked God to provide it somehow and to quickly guide me to it. In this case, I knew there were no 4X white shirts in the entire store, but it was worth a try.

First, I went to the "Skinny Room" where the extra-large sizes were kept at that time... no luck. I



checked through the shirt racks in the main storage room and there was nothing even close. Then I remembered that occasionally some men's items were kept in the "warehouse" room in the back of the store, prior to the remodel. There was a very small room with a single 8' long folding table where, typically, only a few items were sorted (like men's shoes). The room was dark when I entered so I found the light switch and turned it on. There was the table with some shoes and clothing

*Cont'd on back*

## A Few Notes...

- ◆ We cannot accept: TV sets, hangers (plastic or wire), sharp knives, adult diapers (such as Depends), medical equipment, inoperable small appliances, telephones or electronics and used cosmetics
- ◆ We need women's feminine products (tampons and sanitary pads), toothbrushes, travel size shampoo, conditioner, body wash and toothpaste, full size shampoo, lotion, conditioner and body wash.
- ◆ Please be sure to check our website for important information about unexpected closed dates/times due to weather or overwhelming amount of donations.
- ◆ We are now accepting Spring and Summer clothing.
- ◆ PLEASE DO NOT PUT DONATIONS IN CARDBOARD. OUR RECYCLING PROCESS HAS CHANGED AND IS NOW LIMITED.

## The White Shirt (cont'd.)

lined up along the back edge but for the most part the table was bare. I checked the small piles of clothes and again, nothing.

So, disappointed, I turned and began to walk back to the light switch thinking I'll have to tell this fellow we didn't have his shirt. But only a few steps from the table something made me pause and turn around.

What I saw next caused several reactions: disbelief, wonder, shock. Laying on the table just a few feet away was a white dress shirt. It was NOT there seconds before, and there was no one in the room except me. I had to laugh since I realized what

had just happened, my request had been answered in a surprising and bold way. What was so incredibly striking was the way the shirt was laid on the table, face down with arms outspread like One who is welcoming or One crucified (or both?). Then I thought, can it possibly be, a size 4X? I walked over, carefully turned the shirt over, and there on the collar it said "4X"...

As you can imagine this causes all sorts of thoughts and emotions in a human being. This isn't supposed to happen especially in such a simple place like a free store, or should it? I gathered up the shirt, brought it out to

the patiently waiting man who was overjoyed that we had his shirt. He could now attend on Sunday and be well dressed and presentable.

I had to ponder this event for some time before coming to a few conclusions: Was the shirt there just so the man could attend church properly? Was it simply one of many miracles that happen at the Coat that many of us have experienced but may not recognize? Was I to keep it to myself or should I share it, even in a limited way? I've also wondered if some of those we've served may be angels (literally) sent to test us and bring out the best in our work. (There are times when you look in their eyes and find something very saintly there, if we only look deeply enough). My conclusion? This miracle was God's message that "I am with you, here, now, always". A most consoling and humbling thought...



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