

Couple inspires readers worldwide

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RELIGION WRITER



A Syracuse couple have been getting letters from all over the world after a story about them appeared in the October issue of Guideposts magazine.

Rick and LaVerne Torrence have a ministry, Winds of Agape, based on Syracuse's North Side. Working without state or federal funding, Winds of Agape includes a thrift store, food program and education program.

The family also has a music ministry, the Winds of Agape chorus.

In 1997, The Post-Standard published a story about the Torrences' 1983 move to Peoria, Ill. The couple said at God's direction, they sold or gave away everything they owned and moved with their three young children to Peoria, where they knew no one.

"If you truly want to be my servants, you will give away ev-

erything. I have a place for you in Peoria," the Torrences said God told them.

There they founded a church, the Christian Assembly Church. The church provided the Torrences with a house, and the congregation donated the household items they needed, including a green slow-cook pot, just like the one they had gotten as a wedding gift and gave away.

The Torrences spent two years in Peoria, learning to trust in God without pride, Rick Torrence said. They moved back to Syracuse and began their ministry, serving 400 to 600 families each month.

A local writer for Guideposts saw the newspaper story and told the magazine about the Torrences, Rick Torrence said. The magazine's editor called and asked the couple for permission to print their story.

Guideposts, which has a circulation of 3.3 million, was founded in 1945 by **Dr. Norman Vincent Peale** and his wife, **Ruth Stafford Peale**. The magazine prints "true stories of hope and inspiration."