

## RIP Medical Debt Information

Recently I have become aware of a pressing need in the US for people with extreme medical debt to get some relief. 50% of the people in the US have skipped or delayed care due to their inability to pay the high medical bills they would incur due to their lack of medical insurance. The kind of people represented include those in jobs without medical insurance who have a loved one who has a catastrophic illness, such as cancer. This often leads to anxiety, stress and/or depression. A national nonprofit organization, called RIP Medical Debt, has been formed to reduce medical debt burdens of low income individuals with limited capacity to pay their medical bills. They obtain donations from individuals and organizations throughout the US. The nonprofit buys medical debt in bundles, millions of dollars at a time, from hospitals and medical institutions at a fraction of the original cost. With their power, they found that \$1 relieves \$100 in medical debt. They use data analytics to pinpoint those most in need, households who earn less than 4 times the federal poverty level or whose debts are 5% or more of their annual income. When their debt is paid, they receive a letter that their debt has been erased with no penalties. RIP has abolished \$7,387,275,754 in debt for over 4,255,986 people. The nonprofit has a rating of 4 stars with 100% accountability and impact.

This Lenten season we have an opportunity to participate in this project. A donation of \$40 for the 40 days of Lent is encouraged, but any donation, higher or lower, will be gladly received. Checks can be made to St. Matthews or cash can be put in an envelope, with the RIP Medical Debt designation on the donation. Let's make a difference in our country for people who find themselves overwhelmed with medical debt. Thank you for your support. Mary Kimsey