



Tree of Circles Brings Vision of Hope

Original article and photo by
 Andy Telli in the *Tennessee Register*

When Diallo Henderson needed help, he found it at the Ladies of Charity Welfare Office in Nashville. To show his gratitude, he offered his talent as an artist. Anna Williams, the welfare office manager, suggested that Diallo use the “blank, boring wall” in her office as a canvas for a mural.

Diallo had recently lost his job and needed assistance paying his utility bills. His mother suggested the Ladies of Charity might be able to help him. “I came in needing help, needing some strength from someone here,” he said. “What I know for myself, there was an exchange made. One needing to have pride and coming to ask for help, and another having a lot of strength and giving. The exchange is free flowing and spiritual.”

That’s the message he hopes people will take from his mural, titled *Tree of Circles*. “I’m hoping it will motivate people on both ends,” Diallo explained.

Continued — see Mural p. 8



Let Us Go to the Poor

Sister Claire Debes, DC

On June 10, 2013, the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, Father Gregory Gay, wrote to the members of the Vincentian Family about this YEAR OF FAITH:

“Today, Vincentians, revitalized by faith, must make a contribution to the world. In some places people believe in no one and nothing and in other places people believe in too much ... but material things do not give life but only result in death. Our creative fidelity ought to be a living witness of faith in the midst of a world that needs to be strengthened and healed in so many different ways. We are invited to live a faith that is capable of transforming the world.”

Here in the United States the Vincentian Family has a strong desire to be a part of this transformation. For several years, members of the Family have been gathering together nationally to build relationships and to reflect together how, by working collaboratively, we can strengthen the service each of us provides for those living in poverty. A strong momentum is underway for many in the Vincentian Family to not only address the immediate needs of the persons we serve, but also to look at intermediate and long term needs. This is becoming even more important in our country where many state and federal programs that have offered assistance to families are changing.

“Our faith, always young, is able to satisfy the needs of every era and heal the wounds of all people.”

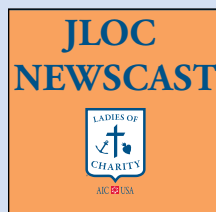
On Oct. 25-27, another Vincentian Family Gathering will take place at the Marten House in Indianapolis. As this is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the theme is a quote from Frederic: LET US GO TO THE POOR. As was the case in his day, the poor remain with us and the number of those who are poor in our country is growing.

The meeting will begin Friday evening with a keynote talk about Frederic. On Saturday, Father Guillermo Campuzano, CM, will speak to the participants on “The Spirituality of Systemic Change” and on Sunday morning, he will challenge the participants to move from spirituality to action through his presentation: “Managing Change: Moving Vincentian Spirituality to ACTION.” Come to this Gathering

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The *SERVICETTE* is a publication of the Association of the Ladies of Charity as a record of their activities in the USA

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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide Vincentian leadership to women acting together against all forms of poverty.

VISION STATEMENT

LCUSA-AIC provides Vincentian leadership of transformation assisting persons who are vulnerable to move from marginalization and despair to participation and hope.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Individual members are supportive of the mission and purpose of LCUSA and participate in the ministry of the Ladies of Charity by prayer and/or service and pay dues prescribed by the board of directors.



SERVICETTE NEWS DEADLINE

The deadline to submit articles and photos for the Fall issue of the *SERVICETTE*:

Monday, October 7, 2013

Articles and photos can be sent by e-mail to: kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com

Articles and photos should be sent separately and not within the text document.

Please contact us for info.



A Right to Be Lived

Bishop David A. Zubik
Episcopal Chairman

I grew up in Ambridge, Pa., along the Ohio River. My parish school was there. I remember that houses were tucked so close together that they hugged the school property. There was no room for a playground. The mayor decided that he would close down Beaver Road for 30 minutes every school day. This allowed the kids at Saint Stanislaus to have a little recess time, playing in the streets without fear of getting run over.

Imagine if that happened today. Somebody would sue the town. Regularly blocking off a city street for the benefit of a Catholic school would be argued as a violation of the establishment clause. It would offend somebody's sensibilities and there would be a good chance that a cash-strapped town would buckle under.

I honestly do fear an aggressive secularism that has turned the meaning of religious freedom on its head, citing the First Amendment to actually silence the believer's right to speak effectively to the issues, reducing freedom of religion to a mere right to privately worship within the four walls of a temple, mosque or church.

Religious freedom is our right to live our faith in the world according to the dictates of our own consciences. Yet there are secular clichés circulating in our culture today which are often used to reflect a dangerous contemporary misunderstanding of religious freedom in some circles. One such secular cliché in regard to religious freedom is: "Yes, there is freedom of religion. But there is also 'freedom from religion.'"

Actually, there are two different interpretations of that phrase. The older version defines "freedom from religion" as meaning that a person cannot be

forced to practice a religion against his or her conscience – the clear meaning of the establishment clause in the First Amendment.

But there is, unfortunately, a more contemporary interpretation of the phrase "freedom from religion" that effectively bans religion and religious practices from public sight and particularly from the public arena where ideas and issues are debated. This definition of "freedom from religion" sees no role for religion in the public arena and sees any attempt by organized religion to play such a role (for example, supporting and testifying for legislation that would restrict abortion) as an "imposition of religion" on others, thus violating their "freedom from religion."

This concept of "freedom from religion" is simply dangerous as it seeks to ban or limit religious expression because it offends others, contradicts secular principles, or denies a faith-based engagement with society.

When we discuss freedom of the press, nobody refers to an equal "freedom from the press." You can choose not to buy a newspaper or watch a television news show. But you have absolutely no right to ban newspapers or ban television news because freedom of the press offends or annoys some folks.

The same holds true for religious expression. We have the right not just to worship, not just to pray privately, not just to sit within the walls of a church, temple or mosque. We have the right to have a religious impact on our society. We have a right to express our beliefs publicly and to try to change hearts and minds.

Religious freedom is not a passive act. Religious freedom is intentionally "action." Religious freedom has to be expressed. Religious freedom is "a right to be lived." ♦

Visit LCUSA online at
<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>



President's Message

Gayle Johnson
LCUSA President

God does not consider the outcome of the good work undertaken but the charity that accompanied it.

(1: 205)

A group of business men and women were rushing through the airport to catch a flight to an important meeting. They were late and still needed to pass through security. In their haste they upset a table with pencils and a few trinkets on it. Beside it stood a young girl aged 10 or 11. None of them stopped to apologize or help pick up the strewn items. They simply continued on their

way. With tears in her eyes, the young girl knelt down to pick up the pencils scattered across the floor. Suddenly one of the men who had been part of the group reappeared. He bent down, apologized and started helping the girl pick up her wares. It soon became obvious the girl was blind. As they worked they chatted and when they finished, the man gave the girl a hug, apologized again and turned to go. "Are you Jesus Christ?" the young girl asked. "No, my name is John. Why did you think I was Jesus Christ?" The girl replied, "Because I prayed to him to help me and you appeared."

An act of compassion done in the name of Christ!! Is that how we go about our work? St. Paul in his letters speaks of serving others, not in our own name, but as Christ working through us. Mother Teresa displayed compassion in Christ's name as she worked among the poor and homeless in the streets of Calcutta. Our

own St. Louise de Marillac counseled her sisters to show compassion with their charity. "As your conduct toward the sick, may you never take the attitude of merely getting the task done. You must show them affection; serving them from the heart; inquiring of them what they might need; speaking to them gently and compassionately." Pope Francis walks among the poor, speaks of them as did Vincent, and shows them great love and tenderness in his every word and gesture. The poor are our masters. To live our faith we are called to emulate these blessed models and act not as ourselves but as Christ.

As we visit the sick, give shelter to the homeless, serve in our food kitchens and thrift shops, and read to and tutor young children, let us remember we serve with love for those living in poverty, with compassion in our hearts, and in the name of Christ. ✧

ADVOCACY CONNECTIONS

Raise Your Hands— Raise Your Voice!

Connie O'Brien

NETWORK is a national Catholic social justice lobby. The "Nuns on the Bus," representing NETWORK, were back on the road this summer – traveling 6,500 miles across the United States in the name of Faith, Family and Citizenship. The sisters (a total of 29) hosted 53 events in 40 cities, spanning 15 states from May 28 through June 18. On this road trip the sisters were focused on comprehensive immigration reform that ensures family unity; protects the rights of immigrant workers; acknowledges that our borders are already secure, with only minor changes needed; speeds up processing of already-approved immigrants; enhances the present diversity visa program; and provides a clear and direct pathway to citizenship for the 11 million people who are undocumented in the United States. (NETWORK: www.networklobby.org)

The Nuns on the Bus stopped in Birmingham, Ala., on June 4 and 5. Ladies of Charity of Central Alabama Co-Presidents Anne Laliberte and Connie O'Brien attended the Civil Rights Forum on Tuesday evening, at the Catholic Social Services Office in Homewood. Also in attendance were Sr. Ellen Reilly DC, Spiritual Moderator of the Ladies of Charity, and Sr. Brenda Monahan, DC, former principal of St. Barnabas Elementary School (a volunteer site for the Ladies), and



From left: Connie O'Brien, Sisters Mary Beth Lacy, DC; Simone Campbell, SSS; and Anne Laliberte

now Director of the Beacons of Hope School Consortium. The crowd was welcomed by Birmingham Bishop Emeritus David Foley. Sister of Social Service (SSS) Simone Campbell and Sr. Mary Ellen Lacy, DC, from NETWORK addressed the gathering. Participants were told of the significant role that the Catholic Church (joined by other churches as well) played in suspending the punitive sections of the oppressive Alabama state law, HB56. Immigrants from a variety of Latin American countries told those gathered of their joy in receiving their Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) papers, a renewable provision to defer deportation. A Knight of Columbus from Tuscaloosa described the relief work that

Continued — see Nuns on the Bus p. 10

Letter to the Editor:

Ladies of Charity of the USA Servicette
Dear Editors:

Am I missing something? When did the Ladies of Charity delve into politics?

Two articles in the recent Servicette (The President's Message and Advocacy Connections) discuss Obama Care (Affordable Care Act). The President's Message talks about how we need to educate the poor who are "woefully ignorant about how Obama Care can improve their lives." The Advocacy Connections article discusses lobbying governors who have rejected federal funds to expand Medicaid in their states.

Whether you agree with government run health care or not, the question is—Is this the role of the Ladies of Charity? Politically, we are not all of the same mind on this issue. My fear is you are dividing us into factions by moving in this direction.

This is not why I joined the LOC, nor is it the goal of most of those in my parish. We seek to quietly, in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, tend to the spiritual and physical needs of the poor and infirm as best we can.

Sincerely,
Ellie Anater

St. Angela Merici Church,
Diocese of Pittsburgh

Dear Ellie,

Thank you so much for taking the time to express your concerns about recent articles in the Servicette. We affirm your

understanding that as Ladies of Charity we seek to offer our assistance with dignity and mercy in the spirit of St Vincent and St. Louise. As Vincent and Louise did in the 17th century, we must respond to the needs of the poor with our very best talent and skills in our times and situations.

In 2005, the Very Rev. Gregory Gay, CM, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and Ladies of Charity, stated that our times call for a response to poverty of charity and justice. This is the methodology of systemic change. We must respond to the immediate needs, stand with persons who are kept in poverty because of a denial of their rights or access to services, and we are called to work collaboratively as the Vincentian family and with others, to change the systems that keep people in poverty.

We understand your concern about the Affordable Care Act. Part of this law is a violation of the right of institutional conscience and the bishops along with many people are working legislatively and through litigation to change parts of the law. However, the bishops, along with the Ladies of Charity, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities, Catholic Health Care and others who work with persons living in poverty are trying to understand how poor people will be affected and what they will need to do to access basic health care.

For example, the Ladies of Charity in Kansas City have been involved with a health clinic for the uninsured run by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The new law impacts their mission and work. The clinic is in the process of redefining the

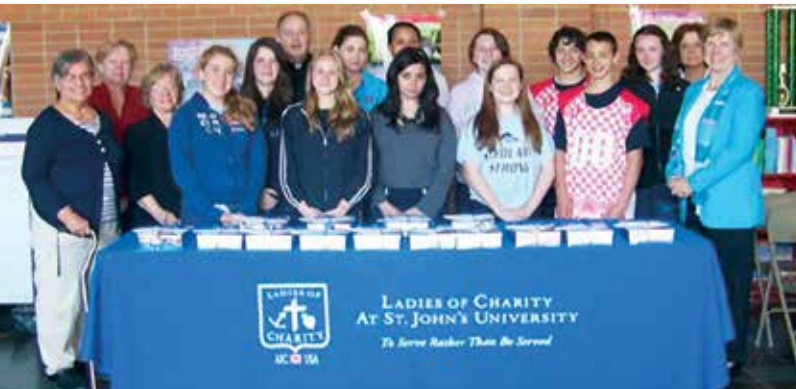
criteria for service. As volunteers in the clinic this impacts our relationship with those visiting the clinic. If your association is involved with health care or providing social services, new regulations will affect your work. If you see clients in a food pantry or thrift shop we encourage you to understand the ramifications of the law and help those we serve navigate the maze.

Recently a hospital in Liberty, a suburb of Kansas City, Mo., closed its doors and furloughed doctors and nurses, no longer able to provide services. Missouri did not pass the Medicaid expansion and therefore does not have the funding to provide care. Our aim is to try to understand how the Affordable Care Act will impact those we serve, to stand with them as they try to access this new system, and to work with our Vincentian family to make sure it meets their needs. Medicaid expansion is an important component to meeting their needs.

When we made the commitment to be a Lady of Charity, we committed that the "poor would be our masters." Our masters are asking us to find new ways to alleviate poverty and build communities of justice. We pray to Vincent and Louise for the wisdom and strength to work together to be responsive to this commitment in the 21st century.

Sincerely,
Gayle Johnson
President LCUSA

Mary Ann Dantuono
President-Elect & Chair of the Advocacy Committee



A Spirit-Filled Confirmation Celebration

Marge Cashin, LOC St. John's University

Another occasion presented itself to the Ladies of Charity of St. John's University (STJ) to offer relief to neighbors who remain in devastating conditions throughout the Long Island

area impacted by Super-Storm Sandy. The eighth grade students of St. Camillus - St. Virgilius Parish were confirmed on May 24 by Auxiliary Bishop Frank Caggiano of the Diocese of Brooklyn. Many of these young people and their families are still not able to return to their much loved homes or are living on the top floor of severely damaged homes which are under repair. They do not have basic needs such as kitchen facilities or washers and dryers. They have lost all of their personal belongings, including clothing, school supplies, sports equipment, furniture and all personal pictures and memorabilia. What they have not lost is love of their community and each other and a firm resolve to get back to normal in the neighborhood which is home to them.

Armed with funds from the Ladies of Charity of Washington, D.C., and the St. John's association, four STJ Ladies: Natalie Boone, president; Mary Ellen Freely, president-elect; Mary Ann Dantuono, LCUSA president-elect; and Marge Cashin,

Continued — see Confirmation, p. 14

LCUSA MEMBERS' TWINNING DONATION AT WORK

Activity Report AIC Madagascar 2012

Rose Ramanankavana



In all of the regions of Madagascar the political crisis brought about a decline of the economic situation and as always the poorest are the first victims. Manakara unfortunately is no exception from this sad fact. The volunteers of AIC, in spite of the obstacles they meet, are doubling their efforts and courage in order to help the children and their mothers at the Tanambao AIC Center.

This year's renovation and enlargement of the Center has been a major event for AIC Manakara. In spite of the troubles caused by the construction work, the adaption to the place lent to AIC by the parish priest, and in spite of various crises which often de-motivated the volunteers, the year passed well and the start for the new term was successful. By now 309 children benefited from schooling, school meals and medical treatment. And now we have the great pleasure to work in a nice, spacious and comfortable place. Our deep-felt gratitude goes to Actions Trois Rois, Aachen, Germany, for financing the enlargement and renovation in service to the marginalized children from Manakara.



The Beneficiaries:

A-The Children

The number of poor children coming to the Center with their mothers is steadily increasing. The situation is still worsening because of indeterminable strikes of the public school teachers. From the beginning of AIC there was concern for the children, orphans or with a single parent. With the aid of AIC, these children are registered officially, their first civil right, before they are registered for the different schools. However, some are still waiting for their birth certificate.

The daily school meal, following correct rules for hygiene, has a positive effect on the children. Collaboration with the United Nations Food Program is on-going. Two years in pre-school seem to work out very well. When the children leave the Center they are ready for public schools, and often even better prepared than the other children.

B-The Mothers

Close collaboration with the children's mothers is crucial to AIC. 137 mothers (single mothers, widows, women abandoned by their partners or grandmothers) are working with the volunteers. The mothers participate in workshops and receive counseling, resulting in better health status. Besides hygiene we offer civil rights and spiritual education.

This year, thanks to partnering with LCUSA- AIC USA, small micro-credit projects were established by groups of 10 women. Follow up was provided by the volunteers and a social assistant. The fourth group started recently and repayment is very encouraging in spite of one or two women who failed. The women gain self-confidence and are happy to have their own small business or other income generating activity.

The overall aims of the AIC volunteers' actions are emergency relief for marginalized groups, especially for street children and their families and in general for single parents without social support; and empowerment for those who because of their misery do not enjoy any of the civil rights within their respective communities.

Activities are realized through participation, collaboration and partnership, including:

- ▶ Different kinds of training offered to the volunteers
- ▶ Fundraising for the projects
- ▶ Visits or the opportunity to take part in training sessions
- ▶ Partnering: Equipes Saint Vincent, AIC France (salary of the teacher, nutrition, micro-credit projects) and LCUSA-AIC USA (visits of the board in order to offer training to the groups, micro-credit project)
- ▶ The Vincentian Family (Australia)

Thanks LCUSA- AIC USA for your partnership in supporting the work that benefits both the women and children of this region of Madagascar. ✧



Book Review

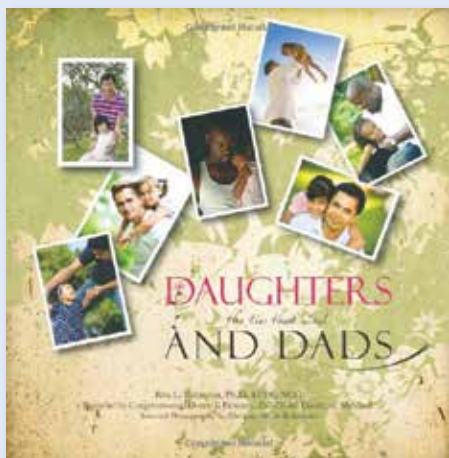
Reviewed by Pamela Harris

Daughters and Dads—the Ties That Bind

by Dr. Rita L. Robinson

There is so much to recommend in Rita L. Robinson's *Daughters and Dads—the Ties That Bind* that it is hard to know where to start. It is a wonderful collection of stories of daughters and their fathers and lessons learned. Each chapter describes father-daughter relationships and reveals the special and sometimes challenging interaction of girls and women with their fathers. The author explores the topic of what it means to be a man, a father. She paints a vivid picture of how the father-daughter relationship is a blueprint for how daughters relate and behave with their future mates.

Dr. Robinson gives voice to the many men who assume the role and responsibility of father and who make a conscious effort to be present in a loving and meaningful way. The book is an attempt to give voice to fathers through their daughters. It is a must read!



Editor's Note: Rita Robinson is the president of the Ladies of Charity of the Archdiocese of Washington, and is vice-president for the Mid-Atlantic Region for LCUSA. Her book is available through amazon.com.

Daughter of Charity Embraces Role of Helping Men to Become Stronger Dads

Original article by Jennifer Brinker in the *St. Louis Review*

Sister Carol Schumer believes in giving people a hand up, not a hand out. But she also knows that one does not have to go it alone when facing the struggles of life.

For 15 years, Sr. Carol has served as a parenting skills specialist with the Fathers' Support Center in north St. Louis. The center's core program is The Family Formation, a six-week "boot camp" that gives fathers a chance to develop their personal and parenting skills. The program also helps them to develop spiritually and emotionally to become stronger fathers.

Sr. Carol's past life as a school teacher and administrator is evident in how she approaches her class. She wants the tables in a u-shape, so everybody can see one another. Small bowls of candy are scattered around. And nobody is an observer in her class, not even the center's staff who stop by for a visit. "Everybody who comes has to sit at the table," she said.

The men are there because they want to become more involved in their children's lives. Some have custody of their children. Some don't. Others are struggling with drug or alcohol use. Sr. Carol said that while she still gets nervous on the first day of class, she knows that she's right where she needs to be. She noted that her service fits in well with the charism of the Vincentian community, the Daughters of Charity, which she entered in 1966 from her hometown of Perryville, Mo.

"Our charism is service to persons who are poor," she said. "If Jesus was here now, he'd be right alongside these men. It is a blessing to be able to walk with them." Sr. Carol has reached more than 1,200 men in the 85 classes she has

facilitated. She tells each participant that there are three key elements needed to become healthy: high self-esteem, self-discipline and social competence.

Her influence as a Catholic woman religious also is apparent. "We start each class with prayer. We discuss how we're



Photo by Lisa Johnston, St. Louis Review

each unique and special and I feel that is God's image in us," she said. "I regularly bring up faith. The center's administration is OK with this. I tell the men that God is there to support us, and if we don't have a higher power, we need to get one." Over the course of the program, these dads learn how to effectively discipline children and manage their anger and emotions. They also discover their personal temperament and the thinking stages of children.

One of the fathers, Franklin Thomas, said he knows "you're going to tell me some things I want to hear, and some things I don't want to hear." He acknowledged that society sometimes sees black men as good for "nothing except to pay child support."

"You have the power within you to change that," Sr. Carol said. "Gentlemen, you have to change that. Don't let anybody tell you that you aren't important in the life of your child."

Editor's note: Sr. Carol Schumer is a regular contributor to the *Servicette*. See her article about Rosalie Rendu on page 16. ♦



Junior Ladies of Charity (JLOC) Serve in Many Ways

Lucy Ann Saunders
LCUSA Membership Committee

Today's junior ladies are actively participating in their communities, while also supporting overseas missions. A glimpse of these services is as follows:

Harker Heights, Texas JLOC visited local nursing homes bringing home-baked treats and provided a Children's Christmas Market the first weekend of December in which items (all under \$5) are available for children of the parish to purchase secretly for their families. They planned a field trip to St. Mary's Cathedral in Austin to attend

a Latin Mass; created Halloween bags for patients at a children's hospital; sent boxes to soldiers in Afghanistan, where a chaplain who was at Ft. Hood is now deployed, organized in three different shipments: Box One with snacks/goodies; Box Two, toiletry items; and Box Three, an entertainment box.

Kansas City JLOC helped elderly in neighborhoods by raking leaves and cleaning yards; volunteered at a hospital to make patient tray favors; served at local agencies for activities such as: Reach Out and Read, Project Uplift, Hospice House, and Operation Breakthrough.

Diocese of Pittsburgh JLOC made a video to recruit other young girls in the diocese and held a retreat for ninth and tenth grade young ladies at St. Paul Seminary.

Albany, N.Y. JLOC raised approximately \$1,000 for a well in Haiti; collected items for Hurricane Sandy victims; donated \$123 to the Homeless Action Committee Albany; conducted two blood drives; participated with the Albany LOC in sorting children's clothing for Mary's Corner; and conducted a

coat drive for Mary's Corner.

Troy, N.Y. JLOC meet once a month on a Sunday afternoon, beginning and ending with a prayer. Each girl has a prayer partner for one month until the next meeting. Activities: Pennies for Heaven; Crowning of the Blessed Mother in May; canned goods for the poor; retreat once a year; car washes to provide Mothers' Day Baskets; soap for Little Sisters of the Poor. The girls pay for installation and Mass cards for family members and send money to Africa. Moderator Mary Ann Kehn finds it helps to have the girls become more social with each other at a Valentine's get together at the February meeting and at other holidays.

Thanks to all JLOC groups for giving of themselves to others and to the moderators/sponsors for leading these young girls in the service of others, sharing their talents and skills in today's world by volunteering in a society that needs their vision of hope for the future. Feature your association in the JLOC NEWSCAST by emailing: kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com. ♦

The Junior Ladies of Charity of St. Margaret of Scotland Seat Pleasant Archdiocese of Washington

Jasmine Stokes, President

The Junior Ladies of Charity of the Archdiocese of Washington is a group of young women who have dedicated a small part of their lives to helping those in need. As members of St. Margaret of Scotland parish in Seat Pleasant, Md., they have accomplished many things since the group's inception eight years ago. Over the course of the past year, they gave Valentine's Day presents to mothers and children at Shepherd's Cove Shelter and sponsored a family for Thanksgiving by providing a turkey, ham, and many other nonperishable items and desserts. The group also gave a huge box of individually wrapped toys to children at Shepherd's Cove for Christmas.

Being a Junior Lady of Charity takes motivation and determination to work hard on individual projects, making them the best they can be. It takes a creative spirit to come up with new ideas at meetings, and it requires leadership to be able to take charge of assignments when others aren't around or



Gloria Rose, left, and Jasmine Stokes

aren't able to fulfill the objective to the best of their ability. Not only does it take these three traits, but it also takes a kind-hearted young lady who is willing to set time aside to help others. This year they considered themselves blessed to induct five new members willing to accept the responsibility of being a Junior Lady of Charity, and they hope to welcome more each year. ♦

Introducing LaNora Hughes

Donna Montague, VP, LCUSA North Central Region



LaNora Hughes has been a member of the Ladies of Charity Metro Kansas City (Kansas and Missouri) for over 27 years. The Ladies of Charity must have seemed like a perfect fit to LaNora, since she had already committed her life to the ideals given by St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. LaNora has made a difference in the lives of people living in poverty in the Kansas City area as well as in the Central-American city of San Salvador.

She has held several positions in the association including membership chair, fundraising chair, president and past president. For the last twenty six years, LaNora has volunteered as a “Bag Lady,” sorting clothes at the Seton Center Thrift Shop. During her time at the Seton Center, she has rotated a board position with her friend and fellow worker Mary Fern. In addition, LaNora holds a position on the board at Duchesne Clinic,

part of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth Health System, where she provides administrative medical assistance.

LaNora and her husband Larry are members of Visitation Parish in Kansas City, Mo. At Visitation, LaNora serves as the captain for funeral meals, a communion minister and as a parish representative for the Sister Parish Committee. With the Sister Parish Committee, she has taken seven trips to San Salvador as a medical missionary.

The Hughes have three daughters and five grandchildren. LaNora especially values her family because she lost her own parents at the very young age of 13. Her 21 year old brother became her guardian and he encouraged her desire to be a nurse. Her nursing skills served her well during her working years, and have been equally valuable in her volunteer work in El Salvador and in serving at the Duchesne Clinic.

When asked what she likes about Ladies of Charity, LaNora says it is the ladies themselves that make her membership so rewarding. “Our ladies are all kind, caring people; it is easy to like these folks.”

LaNora also shared that her association with Ladies of Charity and her mission trips remind her that she has been blessed in her own life to have lived at the right time, the right place and with the right family. She loves working with the folks in need because she can see Christ in these people. She said, “The people that I help are always so grateful for everything that is done for them. I feel grateful to be the recipient of special blessings and prayers bestowed on me from these wonderful people. You always receive more than you give.”

One of LaNora’s good friends and a fellow Lady of Charity said that whenever she talks to LaNora, it seems as if LaNora is involved in some act of charity. She went on to say that LaNora truly embodies the saintly characteristics set out by Vincent and Louise. LaNora has also instilled this love of service in both her children and grandchildren.

The North Central Region LOC is pleased to have this opportunity to recognize LaNora for her many contributions to people in need. It is obvious that LaNora personifies the Ladies of Charity’s mission: “To serve rather than be served.” ♦

Mural

Continued from p. 1

The mural depicts a tree with large circles of different colors hanging on it like fruit. Above the tree are painted the words hope, strength, pride and love in giving. According to the artist, “Trees go through an arduous process” starting from a seed...roots burrowing deep into the ground. “At the tips you see the fruit” of that process. “People come here in arduous circumstances, but their visit bears fruit.” Diallo decided to leave the interpretation of what each circle represents to the viewer.

Anna states, “I love it. I think it brings so much hope in here. People who are in trouble...it’s hard for them to come here. They come in with their heads bowed to ask for help....We’re here to help. You don’t have to walk away feeling embarrassed because we all need help.” Office manager since December 2012, Anna wants the help Ladies of Charity provides to have a long-lasting impact. “You never know how you’re going to change somebody’s life. That’s why I try to listen to all the people who come in for help and get to know them and what they

need.” It was through just such a connection that Anna discovered Diallo is a self-taught artist.

The Nashville association of the Ladies of Charity was established in 1910 and has been serving persons living in poverty ever since, with clothing, assistance with utility bills, lunches for the hungry and food boxes for families. About 5,000 people are helped each year. Funding comes from individual donations, proceeds from two consignment sales of clothing each year and a grant from the United Way. ♦

Membership Growing in the Archdiocese of Washington, (ADW)

Evelyn Nichols, President, LOC St. Margaret of Scotland

Toni K. Gaines, President, LOC District of Columbia Parish Units



Ladies of Charity associations are seeking ways to attract new members. Ladies in the ADW have found some success by extending personal invitations. On Sunday, April 28, in celebration of “Ladies of Charity Day,” St. Margaret of Scotland, Seat Pleasant, Md., Ladies of Charity had their 2nd Annual Recruitment Tea. Information about the LOC ministry was shared, followed by tea, light refreshments and door prizes. Literature about the organization was also available. Each member was to invite at least one person to the tea. Last year, four new members were recruited.

On June 9, the District of Columbia Ladies of Charity Parish Units held their quarterly meeting at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church (OLPH). Toni K. Gaines, president of the district parish units, presided. Five potential new members attended the meeting as guests. Following the business meeting, the OLPH group hosted a “meet and greet” for the guests, officiated by Katalina Masembwa, membership committee chairperson. The rejuvenated group from St. Francis de Sales Parish was also present, with Patricia Camp as president. ♦

Former Presidents of Ladies of Charity USA Honored

Gayle Johnson, LCUSA President

Many of our ladies have given a lifetime commitment to working with the underserved and those living in poverty. Recently two former presidents of LCUSA were honored in their communities for their work.

On March 5, Albe McGurk received the Mother Evelyn O’Neill Award. This award “recognizes a woman who has served either the greater Kansas City community or the world at-large by exemplifying the attributes of Mother Evelyn O’Neill, including exceptional leadership, community service and/or educational reform.”

Albe has been a Lady of Charity for thirty-one years, serving as president and secretary of her local association and committee chairperson for fundraising activities. She served on the national board of LCUSA for eight years, two as president. Albe attended international assemblies for AIC in Rome and Mexico and presented a paper on membership at the 2007 meeting. She was also co-chair of the 2011 LCUSA National Assembly in Kansas City.



Albe McGurk with her son John at the 2011 LCUSA Assembly in Kansas City.



Mary Beth O’Brien, right, with Sr. Sheila O’Friel at the 2012 Assembly in Bethesda, Md.

Mary Beth Casey O’Brien was honored on April 23, when she received the First Annual Governor Hugh L. Carey Award at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, N.Y. The award recognized a son or daughter of Erin who exemplified the same commitment to a lifetime of work and community service as Governor Carey.

Mary Beth has been a Lady of Charity for many years, serving as president in 1989–1991 and co-president 1995–1997 of her local association in Albany. She served on the national board of LCUSA for eight years, two years as president. Mary Beth also attended international assemblies for AIC in Mexico and twice in Rome, and was a non-governmental organization (NGO) representative for the International Association of Charities (AIC) to the United Nations 2000–2010. Mary Beth has also been honored by Notre Dame University for her lifelong work serving others. ♦

SIGN-UP FOR CAPWIZ

Join the Legislative Network of the Vincentian Family.
Sign up as a Lady of Charity
<http://www.capwiz.com/svdpusa/mlm/signup/>

Nuns on the Bus

The Nuns on the Bus made 19 stops throughout the U.S. On May 29th they gathered in the shadows of both the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island for the kick-off event. Photo right: Sr. Julie Cutter, Sister Moderator of the Ladies of Charity USA, and Exec. Dir. of the Sisters of Charity Federation, (left) at that event with Sr. Simone Campbell. Below: Sr. Mary Beth Lacy speaking at the kick-off event.



was done to help immigrants (who had lost everything and were in fear of seeking help and facing possible deportation) after the damaging tornadoes of 2011 devastated the area. The crowd was urged to RAISE THEIR VOICE NOW and to call their senators.

There was also mention of the economic argument tied to immigration.

Immigrants create businesses and jobs; they buy homes and participate in the economy; they pay taxes and support Social Security. In Alabama, immigrant communities contribute to the state's economy with over \$5.8 billion in purchasing power; employ over 7000 people in Asian and Latino-owned businesses; and pay over \$130 million in state and local taxes (Immigration Policy Center). The undocumented (many of whom have been living here for 10 years or more) continue to struggle.

On Wednesday morning, the nuns visited La Casita, the Hispanic outreach of the diocese housed in the Catholic Social Services Building. Led by the Sisters of Guadalupe, La Casita offers many services such as English as a second language, tutoring for the citizenship exam, parenting, and tax preparation. ♦

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Go to the Poor

Continued from p. 1

to explore our Vincentian charism and discover ways to assist families to become more self-sufficient. Come learn more about what we Vincentian Family members can do together that our organizations cannot do alone. A goal of this meeting is also to get a larger number of our young people to attend.

Frederic Ozanam once stated: "Our faith, always young, is able to satisfy the needs of every era and heal the wounds of all people." Today, we need to be creative in satisfying the needs of those we serve. One day Frederic likened the work of Providence in our lives to a craftsman working on the design of a tapestry. He said: "Let us work on this earth, docile and submissive to the will of God without knowing what He is accomplishing through us. But He, the divine Artist, sees and knows. When He will show us the finished work of our life, of our toil and of our troubles, we shall then be thrown into ecstasy and we shall bless Him for deigning to accept and place our poor works in his eternal mansion." (Baunard, Correspondence pp. 235/236)

The Ladies of Charity USA website (<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>) will give you a link to the Gathering website. ♦

VINCENTIAN CHRISM IGNITES MOTIVATION

Patricia Smith, Public Relations Manager
Daughters of Charity Health System
and Daughters of Charity,
Province of the West

In the spirit of their predecessors, members of the San Francisco association of the Ladies of Charity travel the distance providing service to those living in poverty and carrying the charism of their founders St. Vincent and St. Louise. Sr. Estela Morales, DC, spiritual moderator for the group since 1997, says the Vincentian charism has motivated the



association since its inception more than 20 years ago. A deep respect for the legacy of providing compassionate care and understanding to the less fortunate provided the impetus for Charlotte Kiesel

From left, Hilda Barradas, V.P.; Diane Croce, Treasurer; Betts Slaven, Sr. Elena Morales, DC, Moderator; Linda Ramelot, President; Diane Lawrence; Linda Catalano; Mary Cravalho; Norma Keleher; Rebecca Tompkins

Continued — see Charism p. 14

"To serve rather than be served"

Family Dinners Bring Healthy Benefits

Candice Stellato, President, LOC Albany, N.Y.

On April 26, the Albany Diocese Ladies of Charity sponsored NOURISH, an event to highlight the rapidly decreasing number of families regularly sharing meals together.

One hundred sixty-five people attended. The schedule included two guest speakers: Miriam Weinstein, author of *The Surprising Power of Family Meals*, and Dr. Robin Goland, a Merrill Eastman Professor of Clinical Diabetes, Professor of Medicine and Pediatrics at Columbia University, and Co-Director of the Naomi Berrie Diabetes Center, which she was instrumental in establishing in 1998.

Ms. Weinstein had many paintings and photos of family mealtimes across the centuries and across the continents, all to show the commonality of these gatherings and our propensity to record them. She cited research showing that children who start school with large vocabularies tend to do better throughout their school years and that this vocabulary is gained from family interaction, largely at the dinner table. The family circle, she added, is where children find out where they are from and who they are. Traditional foods and enjoying them together is important to their gaining this understanding.

Next, Dr. Goland related startling numbers about Type 2 diabetes. Whereas the prevalence was one person in twenty-five in the latter part of the 20th century, it now is one person in ten. A five to ten percent reduction in weight can reduce blood sugar. For children the best news is that they still are growing. If their weight gain can be stemmed early enough, they will approach more healthy proportions over time.

The two main speakers joined Mark Quandt, Executive Director of the Northeastern Regional Food Bank, and Ellie Wilson, lead nutritionist for a supermarket chain, for a panel discussion. Mr. Quandt told us that the Bank distributed 27 million pounds of food

Right: Candice Stellato (fourth from left standing) and the NOURISH planning committee.



Below: Many questions followed the thought-provoking presentation.



last year, amounting to around 23 million meals. He stressed the importance of caring for others, remarking that it's difficult to pull oneself up by one's bootstraps when one doesn't even have boots. Ms. Wilson stressed the importance of education, citing the efforts of supermarkets to identify healthful foods. She advocates using an 8-inch dinner plate to help us eat a bit less.

Some reflections on the day:

"Our committee did a lot of careful thinking, planning and organizing for NOURISH. It was gratifying to see how it all came together. Our goal was to nourish mind, body and spirit and we did that. It was exciting to hear the positive comments and to know that the information presented was well received. Another goal we had was to raise money for our food based ministries, and we did that as well. We raised \$10,000. The fact that we were able to do all that we did was a blessing."



"My prayer is that many more members will become involved with these services to people who live in difficult conditions. The NOURISH event was worth every moment spent preparing for it."

"It was a learning day for all of us. AMEN-LET'S DO IT!" ♦

HEAR YE – HEAR YE!

Were you aware that through the LCUSA website (<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>) and email, you can access the latest news items? Our website provides **two options** for you to enter your email address. The first option is at the **top** of our webpage and signs you up to receive **updates and communication** from the LCUSA board, members of the board committees, and the St. Louis office.

The second option is at the **bottom** of the webpage and sends a news alert that lets you know of **current news** as it is posted. Please consider signing up under both locations. ♦

Birthday Celebrations at St. Joseph's Rebuild Center, New Orleans

Lucy Ann Saunders



Photo left: Mary Leggio, Board Member (left) and Adrian Kappesser, President (center) with birthday celebrants.

The New Orleans Ladies are giving some of this hope to those living in that area by recognizing individuals monthly with cake and punch. From the photo you can see the happiness and joy that radiates from the honorees, who share their birthdays with others finding solace at the center. Now that summer has arrived, ice cream is also a big treat on these special occasions.

The center provides lunch, financial help, showers, laundry facilities, toiletries, restrooms, legal and medical services, as well as a food pantry. These services fulfill the needs of many who are caught up in the everyday life of economic poverty. Giving dignity and showing that someone cares and recognizes these individuals as persons has been a positive outward sign in these monthly celebrations. The New Orleans Ladies were awarded \$800 from the LCUSA Hager Grant to host these celebrations which resound throughout the center with the singing of "Happy Birthday." ♦

Who doesn't like to be recognized on their birthday? This question prompted the New Orleans LOC to host monthly birthday celebrations at St. Joseph's Rebuild Center. St. Joseph's Center is managed by a coalition of Catholic and other faith-based organizations serving the Canal Street corridor. Their mission statement reads, "The purpose

of the Rebuild Center is to provide a setting, resources and opportunities for collaboration among Catholic and other faith-based organizations in the City of New Orleans. The center will work with the needy and displaced residents to rebuild their lives and repopulate this neighborhood. We will be a CENTER OF HOPE for this community."

A SHOWER FOR GOD'S CHILDREN

Winona Nelson, President, LOC St. Jude Parish

On June 15, the St. Jude Ladies of Charity in Montgomery, Ala., Archdiocese of Mobile, hosted a "Shower for God's Children" to benefit the Father Purcell Memorial Exceptional Center. The Center, located on City of St. Jude campus, is a skilled pediatric nursing facility which provides a loving home to 58 developmentally disabled children. The Ladies invited parishioners and other civic and community leaders to this first annual event. In lieu of gifts, guests were requested to make tax deductible donations to the Center. More than \$7000 went to the Father Purcell



Center to provide assistance to these children with special health care needs.

Founded in 1938, the St. Jude LOC is celebrating its 75th anniversary. The 26 members provided school supplies for approximately 100 children entering first grade in an elementary school in one of Montgomery's poorest neighborhoods. In December, they will prepare 150 fruit baskets for the elderly, disabled and homebound members of their parish. Together, the St. Jude LOC is taking care of the needs in their community. ♦

Photo left: Winona Nelson greets a resident of the Father Purcell Center.



St. Greg's members prepare for their annual household goods collection, with surprise helper Leona Prinzbach (fourth from the left).

Marking Twenty Years of Service—LOC, St. Gregory the Great Parish, Diocese of Buffalo

Marilyn Leslie

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of the founding of a Ladies of Charity organization in St. Gregory the Great Parish, Williamsville, N.Y. On June 21, 1993, when a small group of women met in the school cafeteria to plan their first enrollment, perhaps they envisioned a wide range of outreach activities that could span many years. The LCUSA-AIC motto, "To Serve Rather Than be Served," has been their driving force ever since.

Anniversary proceedings were opened by Buffalo's Spiritual Moderator, Sister Mary Grace Higgins, DC, with inspi-

rations from St. Louise to encourage continued dedication of the St. Gregory Ladies as they serve the parish and community. Current officers Judy Huber, president; Margret Wrobel, vice president; Katie Ola, secretary; and Susan Ward, treasurer, were installed by Kathleen Dolan, president of the Buffalo association, at a gathering to celebrate this special occasion. Kathleen Sieracki, northeastern regional VP, addressed the group with a short history of the original parish meetings.

For the past twenty years St. Gregory Ladies have contributed their time, tal-

ent and treasure to many parishes, food pantries and individuals. Monthly service at the LOC diocesan thrift store has been a core activity for many women. Hundreds of handmade rosaries for First Holy Communicants, wheelchair/walker bags for nursing homes and Baptismal stoles have been created by caring hands. The care of altar linens and the interior appearance of the parish church have also been weekly endeavors for years.

Perhaps the most challenging outreach activity for the St. Gregory Ladies of Charity is the annual household goods collection. Each spring generous members of "St. Greg's," the largest parish in the Diocese of Buffalo, donate small household appliances, linens, dinnerware, kitchen items, etc., to supply the diocesan LOC "Fresh Start" program. Two trucks were needed this year for the huge response! The Ladies collect, categorize, assemble and pack hundreds of items which are then delivered to the LOC Center for distribution to needy families and individuals.

The Buffalo association was founded 72 years ago, and many of the St. Gregory Ladies are actively involved in a variety of diocesan programs and projects. For an overview of these programs, including "Fresh Start," visit www.locbuffalo.org.

Congratulations and thanks to the St. Greg's Ladies. ♦

Celebrating 54 Years of Priesthood

Toni K. Gaines, President, District of Columbia Parish Group

On June 30, the Rev. Carl Francis Dianda retired after 54 years dedicated to the priesthood. His retirement celebration took place at St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Washington, D.C., where he has been pastor for 25 years.

In recognition of his almost 40 years of commitment as Spiritual Advisor, the association of Ladies of Charity of the Archdiocese of Washington was honored to participate in this celebration. Everyone agreed that Fr. Dianda is a blessing to all and a true ambassador for the Ladies.



His leadership and guidance provided over the years made the members more compassionate as they served the

needs of the less fortunate within their community. Ladies treasure his example of looking for the best in each person encountered, by not thinking of giving a hand-out, but a hand-up. He has taught members to be vessels for the Lord and to truly see the face of Jesus in every person served.

Although Fr. Dianda is entering retirement, the Ladies of Charity are elated that he has offered to continue as Spiritual Advisor during the next chapter of his life. Thanks be to God for Fr. Dianda's commitment to the association and its members. Everyone looks forward to the future with his continued service to the Ladies and his love for those less fortunate. ♦

Charism

Continued from p. 10

to form the first San Francisco Ladies of Charity in 1990. “The more I learned about the vision of St. Vincent and St. Louise and the way the first Daughters of Charity traveled the streets of Paris, the more I admired their ministry of service. Everything evolved from there,” she said.

Charlotte found herself heading the group as the first president, with support from Ellie Journey, vice president; Jean Lawson, secretary; and Joan Freitas, treasurer. The core group of 12 members was installed as the first Ladies of Charity in the Archdiocese of San Francisco with Archbishop John R. Quinn presiding at the Eucharistic celebration on March 15, 1990, the feast day of St. Louise. The service, held at Seton Medical Center in Daly City, was followed by a celebratory dinner. Sr. Arthur Gordon, DC, served as first spiritual moderator.

With a vision focused on service to the poor and deepening their own spiritual lives, the women decided fundraising was not at the top of their list of priorities. However, when the opportunity to sell wine under their own label surfaced, they made the leap. “Our chardonnay was produced and bottled by Fritz Cellars in Cloverdale under the Ladies of Charity label for several years in the early 1990s,” says Linda Ramelot, current president and an active member for more than 13 years.

Members span four counties and meet for planning and spiritual gatherings, including an annual retreat. Today, several examples of their circle of care include the Daughters of Charity Epiphany Center, a residential program for women and their families; the St. Vincent de Paul Free Dining Room; the Gift of Love Hospice, which offers lodging and assistance to men with severe AIDS, sponsored by the Missionaries of Charity; and monetary support for the works of the Daughters of Charity in Haiti. These ministries reflect the motivation and charism still evident today to all those they serve in the San Francisco bay area. ✦

Confirmation

Continued from p. 10

treasurer, brought a Confirmation celebration to these students and their religious education teachers in a gathering space at St. Camillus School. The event featured pizza (purchased from *Ciro's*, a local establishment recently reopened) juices and a lovely decorated cake. The four Ladies sat with the young people and listened to their stories of school, coming together as a community and their plans for high school. They learned a great deal about the students' resilience and determination. Many of these children have been together in religious education classes from a very early age and the long time friendships were very evident.

Following the refreshments, the children were presented with Bibles that had been inscribed in calligraphy by Kathryn G. Shaughnessy, Spirituality Coordinator for LOC/STJ. The Bibles contained not only a greeting, but also had a leaflet identifying the Ladies of Charity and our mission. Each beautifully wrapped gift was accompanied by a Confirmation greeting card containing a rosary and a \$50 gift card to Target for the students to make a personal purchase. The needs are many. The pastor of the parish, the Rev. Richard J. Ahlemeyer, blessed the gifts. He also took the opportunity to talk to the students on the importance of giving back to the community. He thanked all

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Both the persons named below and the donors will be remembered at a special Mass said by LCUSA's national spiritual advisor, Fr. Richard Gielow, CM. Please use the enclosed envelope to send your donation with the identifying information to the National Service Center.

† MEMORIALS †

<i>In Memory of</i>	<i>Bequeathed by</i>
Katherine Marie Kukula	Brenda Kukula
Joseph Mengo	Virginia Mengo
Mary Ann Patterson & Frank Simpson	LOC Lake Travis
Frank Real (Father of Pat Botar)	LOC Morgan Hill
Stanley Charles Surowka	Mary Beth Farr
Anna Villano	LOC Morgan Hill

† IN HONOR OF †

Marie Buckley	Kathleen Sieracki
The children and grandchildren of Sadie Herrud	Sadie Herrud

those who made this special celebration possible and reminded everyone that neighbors and friends can come from near and far, as in the gifts brought to them by members of their own community as well as outreach from the LOC of Washington, D.C.

The ride down to the oceanfront area of Rockaway and Broad Channel was filled with awe and sadness at the amount of work still needed to return the once beautiful community to a vibrant neighborhood. However, the ride back was filled with happy stories recounting the smiles and joy evidenced by the marvelous 2013 Confirmation Class in St. Camillus–St. Virgilius Parish. ✦



While seeing family in the Midwest, my husband and I visited the Quincy, Ill., Ladies of Charity. We were welcomed by Jane Hass, president, and Jane Ankrom, vice-president. The group (130 members) has two facilities, the Ladies of Charity Center and a thrift store. The Center shared a building with Catholic Charities from 1960–1980 before moving to its current location. The thrift store opened in its present location in 1985. The Center and the store are located in two different areas of Quincy. While the Quincy Ladies were officially established in 1932, a group of Catholic women had begun doing charitable work in the early 1920s.

Other means of supporting the charitable work at the Center, in addition to the funds generated at the thrift store, include Western Catholic Union matching funds from “Bike for Food;” Knights of Columbus Auxiliary Decorative Table Settings Fundraiser; and donations from parishes and other groups.

They give food only to people living in Adams County. However they do provide free clothing and household items to anyone who visits the Center, serving people from nearby Missouri and Iowa, as well as from all of Adams County and surrounding Illinois counties.

The Ladies give \$20 food vouchers rather than Christmas baskets. In 2012, they distributed 695 vouchers. During the fiscal year ending in Sept. 2012, the Ladies filled over 5,000 food orders valued at more than \$75,000. Over 86,000 items of clothing were distributed. They served approximately 830 households (2493 people) each month. Forty-seven volunteers staffed the Center this year and donated 9,186 volunteer hours. The 30 volunteers who operated the thrift store recorded 4,266 volunteer hours.

This was a very impressive visit. The Ladies of Charity of Quincy truly follow the motto “*To Serve Rather Than Be Served.*” ♦

Dates to Remember

- **September 26–29, 2013**
Vincentian Spirituality Retreat
Evansville, Ind.
- **September 27**
Feast of St. Vincent de Paul
- **October 25–27, 2013**
Vincentian Family Meeting
Indianapolis, Ind.
- **February 2–5, 2014**
Catholic Social Ministry Gathering
Washington, D.C.
- **March 15**
Feast of St. Louise de Marillac
- **April 10–12, 2014**
LCUSA Spring Board Meeting
Evansville, Ind.
- **June 29–July 8, 2014**
Christianity and Islam Symposium
De Paul University, Chicago





AIC USA

<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>

“To serve rather than to be served”

Rosalie Rendu, D.C., Pattern of Charity and Service

Carol Schumer, D.C.

After the example of her mentor, Vincent de Paul, and her own mother, Sr. Rosalie Rendu knew how to unite both those who were poor and rich in the perfect bond of charity and care.

First of four daughters, Jeanne-Marie Rendu, was born to Jean-Antoine and Marie-Anne (Laracine) in Confort, France on Sept. 8, 1788. In her childhood, she experienced the French Reign of Terror (1792-94), with her mother sheltering many clergy, and the death of her father (1796.)



Indeed, the example of Madame Rendu left an indelible mark on her eldest child. At 15, Jeanne traveled to Paris to enter the Seminary of the Daughters of Charity, giving herself to God in very destitute persons, in whom she saw God's image.

Never possessing strong health, she became ill after only months at the motherhouse. In an effort to restore her physically, she was missioned to the Mouffetard District, where she received the name Rosalie and was destined to spend 53 years in love and service. This region of Saint Marceau, a most disreputable quarter of Paris, filled with dingy shacks, wobbly staircases, filthy rags and vermin, grew to be Sr. Rosalie's "diocese" and the people her "children." (DC, *White Wings* ..., p. 152)

Many incidents from her years of ministry stand out.

- ▶ A regular visitor who was alcoholic came yet another time for a blanket.
- ▶ Sr. Rosalie refused, then struggled all night with her lack of care. The next morning, she sent a Sister with her warmest coverlet for him. (DC pp.50-55)
- ▶ When the Chief of Police came to arrest Sr. Rosalie for hiding rebels, she befriended him, offering to assist

him if he was ever in need. (DC pp.100-02)

- ▶ An officer sought by the revolutionaries was hiding with Sr. Rosalie. In a desperate effort to avoid more killing, Sr. Rosalie threw herself to her knees pleading for his life. The insurgents relented and dispersed. (DC pp. 120-23)
- ▶ In the Revolution of 1748, in the midst of gunfire, Sr. Rosalie mounted the barricades commanding: "Stop this shooting! Haven't I enough widows and orphans to care for now?" The firing ceased. (DC pp.131-33)
- ▶ Using her influence, Sr. Rosalie sought the intervention of Archbishop Affre of Paris to prevent a scandal involving the superiors in the Congregation of the Mission. She ultimately prevailed at great personal cost. (Sullivan pp. 309-14)



In conclusion, relationship permeated all for Sr. Rosalie. When called a benefactress, she responded, "No, ... your servant, your sister, your friend." (DC p. 158) She taught Frédéric Ozanam and those who came to her for mentoring: charity does not consist in merely bestowing money. Personal time does far more good. (DC, p.68) Respect was pivotal. Sr. Rosalie knew everyone's name and where they lived. She listened to their tales, responded to their needs and loved them.



The inscription on her tombstone captures this concept well: "To our good mother Rosalie from her grateful friends—the poor and the rich." As always,

persons living in poverty came first!

Reflection: What can we learn of service, charity from Sr. Rosalie Rendu for today? ✦