

LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA®

SERVICETTE

"To serve rather than to be served"



AIC USA®
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CHARITY, HUMILITY, AND SIMPLICITY

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*My God, I humbly beg you
to make me an instrument of
your love;
give me the grace of performing
all my actions to help my
neighbor with charity, humility
and simplicity.*

*It is my hope, Lord,
that fidelity in the practice of these
virtues may obtain the reward
which you have promised
to those who serve you
in the person of the poor.*



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 next issue of the **SERVICETTE**:

Wednesday, February 1, 2017

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.



LCUSA 2016 ASSEMBLY

AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE FOR A SOLD-OUT AUDIENCE!

Two hundred members of the Ladies of Charity USA completed a spirited 2016 National Assembly with a Mass at St. Thomas More Church on the campus of St. John's University in Queens, N.Y. Fr. Richard Gielow, CM, national spiritual advisor, installed officers and the board of directors for 2017-2018. Suzanne Johnson of Los Angeles will be president; Debbie Chadwick of Nashville will serve as president-elect. The secretary will be Peggy Keene of Pittsburgh, joined by treasurer Victoria Shoaf of St. John's University. Regional vice-presidents Karen Radu (Mid-Atlantic); Mary Nell Williams (North Central); Irene Siedlarczyk (Northeastern); Mary Cay Murray (Southern); and Theresa Ward (Western) and the directors from the respective regions were also installed. Following Mass, there was a gala cocktail hour and dinner where we viewed the first part of "Acting with a Vincentian Heart," a documentary about the Ladies of Charity, our history, work and our future. The film is being produced by Joan Ball, Ph.D., St. John's University, and her husband Martin Dominguez Ball who spent the spring traveling around the United States filming and interviewing Ladies of Charity.

The assembly offered several opportunities to consider the theme, Ladies of Charity, Woman of Mercy. Sr. Regina Bechtle, SC, spoke on praying with the spiritual works of mercy, saying that a Vincentian heart knows that prayer and service become one when our eyes are fixed on Jesus. In the second major

address, Meghan Clark, Ph.D., a faculty member at St. John's University, discussed the essential connection of mercy and justice. Several current board members also presented information on programs and best practices, including two exciting new LCUSA projects: Mission Market involving selling fair trade items; and Ladies of Charity Caregiving which would establish and maintain centers around the United States for training and hiring home care workers to work in local communities.

The 400th Anniversary of Ladies of Charity is in 2017 and opportunities for celebration were discussed. We will gather in Kansas City, Mo., September 7-10, hosted by LOC of Metropolitan Kansas City.

LCUSA is greatly indebted to the St. John's University Association and the Northeastern Region for planning and hosting an outstanding assembly, chaired by Natalie Boone and Marge Cashin. We also thank outgoing president Mary Ann Dantuono for her truly outstanding leadership these past two years in which much was accomplished to advance the mission and growth of LCUSA.

This issue contains excerpts from Sr. Regina Bechtle's inspiring presentation; articles about the Mission Market and Caregiving Projects; and reflections from some women who attended. Immediately following the assembly, ten women began training to become Lay Vincentian Spiritual Moderators. A full description of that experience is also included.



Do's and Don'ts

Bishop David A. Zubik
Episcopal Chairman

It's amazing to me how, oftentimes unexpectedly, we get the nudge to travel down memory lane, and as I go deeper into my senior years, those journeys become more frequent.

The good mom that she was, my mother gave me her usual prelude to the new school year—whether it was my first day in first grade or my first day as a senior in college—by offering a list of “do’s and don’ts.” And while I honestly admit that I did not always welcome her “do’s and don’ts,” as I look back on it today, I can see that she was offering far more than good motherly advice.

She was sharing, in a very real way, the wisdom of God.

As citizens of a culture that would have us live as if we were each the center of the world, the “do-don’t” exchange can be a foreign language. As Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI often reflects, this resistance to being told what and what not to do is borne out of relativism—a belief that somehow “I am the center of the universe.”

You may have become familiar with the term “Cafeteria Catholic.” That contemporary “handle” suggests a tendency to pick and choose the parts of our Catholic faith that we want to embrace and ignore the others.

That was not, and is not, the way of Jesus. As you and I read the Gospels, we see that Jesus often spoke the language of “do and don’t.” He never spoke those words in a cold, calculating tone, but rather from a wise and loving heart. If we are going to take Jesus seriously and answer his call to be his disciples, then we need to see the “do-don’t” flavor of

the Gospel as something other than a set of rules. It is a guide for life and an invitation to open our minds and hearts to the movement of God’s Holy Spirit, so that we follow Jesus in everything that we do and in all that we are.

In today’s world, we can approach the Gospels in two significantly different ways.

Continued — see Do's and Don'ts, p. 10



Bishop David Zubik at the opening Mass of the 2016 National Assembly.



Give me people of prayer

Mary Ann Dantuono
LCUSA President

As I look back over my term as your president, I am assured that we are moving forward through the grace of God in very difficult times. Providence has graced us with energy and enthusiasm for our mission and we are celebrating 400 years of women in service to people who are poor. We are blessed by the women who began this work with St. Vincent in 1617 and each and every one who continued and continues this work.

We are growing, changing and adapting as we read the “signs of our times.” Our 2016 National Assembly was creative,

dynamic and hope-filled. I thank again the National Assembly Committee of the board of LCUSA and the local committee of the Ladies of Charity of St. John’s University for all their preparation and execution of this wonderful gathering. We deepened our Vincentian commitment, learned some new ideas, and met fabulous women from across the United States.

Additionally, our 2015 statistical reports show that even though we had a slight decrease in our total membership, we added 425 new members, and increased our volunteer hours from 2014 by 24.5% to 1,261,568. That number animates my imagination as I think of all the loving care that was given to mothers seeking warm winter coats for their children in our many thrift shops, the relief of the hungry people needing food assistance from our many pantries, the smiles on the faces of the children, men and women who were the recipients of

the many generous “baskets” distributed through the holidays, the students who benefited from our literacy and tutoring, and so many more acts of mercy.

As we move forward in these times, I would like to say that we have eliminated (or even reduced) poverty – but our reality is far from that. Women in 2016 are still the largest segment of 47 million people in our country who are poor. A sad fact is that the poverty rate for single-parent families with no husband present in the household is 31%. That is where we find most of the one in five children living in poverty. We also find disproportionate poverty among people with disabilities. The poverty rate for people living with a disability was 29% in 2014. That is more than four million people living with a disability—in poverty, a double challenge.

So our commitment to love endures as poverty and hopelessness dominate for so many in our communities.

Continued — see President's Message, p. 12

Reflections on the 2016 National Assembly



Eleanor Raggett, Kansas City

*T*he spirit of St. Vincent lives on through us. At the national assembly in Queens, N.Y., we delegates had the opportunity to learn from one another in our common mission, serving the poor and the downtrodden. Sr. Tesa Fitzgerald, CSJ, inspired us as she described her ministry, Hour Children. Her reaching out to incarcerated mothers and their children spurs each of us to

go the extra step. Michael Elsas provoked us to think critically in our search to find quality home health care. We not only shared meals but also shared ideas with delegates from all over the United States. Bishops along with our spiritual advisor, Fr. Richard Gielow, CM, bestowed their blessings upon our efforts to walk in St. Vincent's footsteps.

The Ladies of Charity of St. John's University (SJU) rolled out the red carpet. Thursday evening, we had the opportunity to meet and mingle at the welcome reception. They presented a well-organized program, and had members greet and attend to us. The highlight of their hospitality was attending Mass at St. Thomas More Church, SJU. The banquet following was a perfect closure to a most satisfying assembly. We in Kansas City look forward to continuing LOC hospitality at the 2017 National Assembly. A big thanks to Mary Ann Dantuono and the 2016 St. John's Association Assembly Committee headed by Natalie Boone and Marge Cashin!



Chris Young, Utah

*T*he 2016 LCUSA assembly had a quaint and close-knit feeling with the hotel being smaller than usual; watching Tama Dutton, our executive administrator, and her husband on Wheel of Fortune was

like rooting for a family member. It brought us together. I wasn't supposed to make the trip; my doctor and surgeon told me my gallbladder was in such bad shape I could end up in a New York hospital. I was fine and it was a great assembly; I received a special blessing from Fr. Gielow.

Friday's luncheon was extremely emotional with my hearing Erin Von Uffel, who is dedicated to Sr. Marie De Mondat-Grancey's cause for canonization and Mary's House in Ephesus, because I have been there and left my prayers on that

wall. On the flight home I was seated next to a young man, Hugh, 32, who proceeded to drink a beer and two mini bottles of whiskey and then tell me a lot about his life including the fact that after his mother dies he wants to commit suicide. He then went to use the restroom. I prayed for answers asking why God seated him next to me and what I could say and thought of the prayer card we received. Luckily I had two. When he returned, I placed the card on his heart and as I prayed I could feel his heart beating in my finger tips and up my arm. It was beautiful. Together we offered up to God through the intercession of Sr. Marie and asked for her to heal him. As we heard in the Friday morning Mass and the Most. Rev. Bishop David Zubik's homily, "Two important things: Treat every single person as if they were Jesus and as if you are Jesus - that was at the heart of St. Teresa of Kolkata."



Buffalo and Utica Ladies of Charity

Kathy Roseti, Buffalo

*I*got involved in Ladies of Charity four plus years ago without knowing anything about its history or the many ministries in which it is involved. I found attending the assembly to be very rewarding, especially spiritually. I found both Masses, especially the one at St. John's, and the homilies from both bishops and the many priests and sisters who spoke to us to be very meaningful. I also observed with admiration the many women from throughout the United States. It struck me how many lives have been touched in a positive way just by those in that ballroom. I would have liked to learn more about the many activities among Ladies of Charity associations. Perhaps "brainstorming" sessions in smaller groups where we might talk about best practices for helping those living in poverty and social activities for members, and then compile lists for distribution, could be considered.

Lillian Mazurowski, Utica

Thank you so much for inviting me to go to the national assembly in Queens. I had a great time and felt so welcomed. It was an informative and joyous time. I met members from all over the country. I can't wait to share my experiences with my small association (but we are growing).

**Dee Mansi
President of AIC
United Kingdom (UK)**



Margaret Hanson (L) and Dee Mansi

The iconic yellow cab sped along the Van Wyck Expressway from JFK Airport to the Marriott Courtyard Hotel at La Guardia, and I smiled all the way! I was travelling to the LCUSA assembly, and the sense of anticipation was entirely without concern as I knew I was heading to family. I was happy I had not decided to fly straight home to London from my work in the Vincentian

Collaboration Commission

in Philadelphia, but rather to visit my sisters in New York.

Within minutes, I was straight into the LCUSA culture of wonderfully alliterative language of project titles. Over breakfast, Donna Stengel from Lancaster, N.Y., told me about their Pennies for Pillows Project, and I was delighted to meet my Cincinnati pal Jean Wilkinson whom I'd met in January 2015 at their food collection van. The surprises continued! I met Daughters of Charity from previous events, LCUSA attendees at AIC International Assemblies and my cyber chums: John Freund, CM, and Monica Smith who have both helped AIC UK.

The organization by the St. John's group was superb! Rotating our seating periodically, I went on to hear of more projects from members. As I said to Mary Ann Dantuono, I was impressed at the breadth and depth of the work you plan to endorse and connect with in the Works of Mercy workshops, as much as I was of your taking the time to learn from the Practices and Benchmark exercises. Nothing was superfluous. All went to strengthening LCUSA and making an impact!

In many ways, AIC UK works similarly to you as sadly poverty is as much in evidence here as in the USA. We are fewer in numbers, but pack a punch engaging directly with social justice issues in collaboration with other branches of the Vincentian Family, church or civil society on an island of

65 million where 10% are culturally Catholic and only four million attend Mass regularly.

The late Doris Hoag reminded us (quoted in booklet) "the work of Our Lord is dependent less upon many workers, than upon the fidelity of the few He calls," St. Vincent. This could well be our mantra too! We try to promote our work locally and nationally, and we enjoy the international dimension immensely also. Equally, like you, we too are proud of being the founding branch of our Vincentian Family. We are the Church's secret weapon – two million lay and religious people worldwide all doing God's work utilizing our Vincentian charism of "prayer in action."

While reflecting during the Mass in St Thomas More's Church, St John's University, the beautiful surroundings prompted me to consider the indomitable spirit, ingenuity and creativity of Americans, where you plan ambitiously and deliver strongly. I have every belief that the future of LCUSA is rosy, and on Saturday, I left for home speeding back on the Van Wyck Expressway – smiling broadly. I thank you all for making my detour so special!

Mary Domer, Milwaukee



From the left, Mary Johnson, Claire Wycklendt, Cathy Liska and Mary Domer, Ladies of Charity from Milwaukee

Our assembly began with Sr. Regina Bechtle, SC. How beautiful and wonderful it was to start with her talk. As we learned about Elizabeth Seton, we had the opportunity to learn more about the Vincentian Heart.

Maybe it is the words to the song, "You've got to have heart, miles and miles of heart." We have heart and now we are commissioned to do the work.

All our chapters work for those in need. Some words of St. Louise de Marillac spoke to me. "Do not be upset if things are not as you would want them to be for a long time to come. Do the little you can very peacefully and calmly so as to allow room for the guidance of God in your lives. Do not worry about the rest. You see a great deal of distress that you are unable to relieve, God sees it also. Bear the pains of the poor together with them, doing all you can to give them whatever help you can, and remain in peace."

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AIC Moments



Evangelizing in Developing Countries

Gayle Johnson

A little over ten years ago AIC asked the Ladies of Charity in associations in developed countries to partner, “twin,” with associations in the poorer, undeveloped countries. The idea was to provide funds for projects that provided the basic material necessities, fostered education and empowerment for women especially, by providing ways to support their families.

Our national association, LCUSA, chose Madagascar as our “twinning” project in 2004. Our first project was in a village collaborating with the Daughters of Charity. The sisters were providing a nutritional meal to homeless street children. We provided funds for the meals they served. A unique aspect was that the children were able to maintain their dignity as they provided the fuel, small sticks and branches, to cook their meals. The project grew as a home was built to house some of the children and a garden was planted so they could grow their own food.

Today there are 14 village projects sponsored by AIC in Madagascar that

provide education in schools, nutritional meals at least once a day and a food coop to share rice, their staple. The AIC projects teach literacy classes to over 700 women. These projects are visited annually by animators (special representatives of AIC responsible for supervising sponsored projects).

“Let us not close our hearts within our own peculiar concerns, but let us open them to all humanity.”

- Pope Francis,

Message for World Mission Sunday 2016

Thanks to your generosity over the years, LCUSA funds have supported seven of these group projects, covering 837 children and 80 mothers in 2015 alone. In addition to programs for the children the mothers are taught basic hygiene and health care and instructed in poultry breeding so that they can provide for their families. In our letter in 2014 we told you about Merline, a

mother of five children, who was taught to raise chickens to support her family. The children would help her in the project after attending school. With earned money she was able to purchase blankets for her family for the winter.

Group Fianarantsoa is one of the village projects our funds support. The children range from ages five (kindergarten) to 18 (university) and attend their center five days a week. The children are in school in the morning and receive their noon meal there from October thru July. Annually, LCUSA provides approximately 5000 Euros toward these projects. Madagascar has become a model for associations in the rest of Africa in the development of their projects. This seems appropriate as Madagascar was the first country in Africa to which St. Vincent sent the Congregation of the Mission to evangelize.

Additionally, LCUSA takes part in the Haitian initiative of the Vincentian Family organized a little over seven years ago. Individual Family members (AIC, Daughters of Charity, the Congregation



of the Mission, Sisters of Charity, SVDP Society) had small projects underway in Haiti. All the branches decided to collaborate on a larger project that would be sustainable, a fish farm. The goal was to train the people to raise a major food source and create a sustainable project they could eventually run and maintain themselves. Marie Fouche, a St. John's association member, is the AIC represen-

tative to the commission governing the project. There has always been an educational component to the project but the program in developing reading skills was expanded this year to include the idea of reading for "enjoyment and fun" as well as being a learning tool.

The governing commission meets annually to assess and evaluate the course of the collaborative project and annual trips to visit the project in Haiti are conducted. This year the commission met in Los Altos Hills, Calif. They developed an ideal of what they wanted to accomplish five years from now with the collaborating groups.

In 2015, \$4,275 was collectively raised for AIC Madagascar throughout LCUSA. Each year the offertory collection at the closing Mass of the national

assembly benefits the twinning initiative. Donations are gratefully accepted throughout the year by the LCUSA National Service Center, 850 Main St., Kansas City, MO 64105.

Truly your generosity has made a difference in the lives of the people of Madagascar and Haiti.



Advocacy Connections

The Effects of Predatory Lending on Those We Serve!

Irene Frechette (Lady of Charity)

SVDP Representative to the Ladies of Charity Board of Directors

What is predatory lending? It is the act of imposing unfair and abusive loan/rental/usage terms on the borrower.

It is unfair, deceptive or fraudulent business practices. It is unscrupulous businesses that prey on the poor and vulnerable, the elderly, immigrants, the uneducated, people who need cash in a hurry and do not, cannot or do not know how to "read the small print."

We see the ads on television, in newspapers, on flyers put on automobiles – No Credit NO Problem – We've got you covered. It takes many, many forms including pay day loans, rent-a-centers, reverse mortgages, tax refunds, etc.

Pope Francis stated in January of 2014 that "Usury is a 'dramatic social ill.' When a family has nothing to eat, because it has to make payments to usurers, this is not Christian, it is not human! This dramatic scourge in our

society harms the inviolable dignity of the human person."

The St. Vincent dePaul Society's Position Paper on Predatory Lending states that "While commercial check-cashing outlets have been in the United States since the 1930s, payday operations began in the early 1990s. Prior to that time, short-term loans had been available through pawn shops, auto title lenders, retail installment credit, and loan sharks. By 2000, the payday lending business was prospering with more than 10,000 payday lenders doing business in the United States, accounting for about two billion dollars in revenue. Some pawn chains have also entered the pay day lending business. Pay day loans, also called cash advance loans, post-dated-check loans, deferred deposit check loans, deferred presentment loans or check advance loans, offer quick money, easy financing, and nothing down. These

lenders operate from storefront shops in low-income neighborhoods across the country. Borrowers without an established credit history, with damaged credit, with no other resource when cash is urgently needed, become trapped when they are unable to repay the loan on time."

It is our duty as Catholics to help the people we serve to understand the deceptive practices they are being exposed to when they need money.

Catholic Social Teaching is very clear as to our duty to advocate for the people we serve, The Option for the Poor and Vulnerable states that "A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

Continued — see Advocacy Connections, p. 14

FIRST THE HEART:

PRAYING WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Regina Bechtle, SC

**Editor's note: Sr. Regina Bechtle gave permission for excerpts of her address to the national assembly to be used in the Servicette.*

Let us reflect together on what it's like to pray with the spiritual works of mercy, and to do that with a Vincentian heart.

Why this focus on the heart? I take my cue from Vincent's reminder, whenever we get perplexed about what to do and how to do it – amid the multiplicity of needs that come up to meet us, all the demands of love – Vincent reminds us: “First of all, God demands the heart, and then the work.”

You don't need me to tell you how to do the spiritual works of mercy! Rather, I'd like to reflect with you on the question: How does a Vincentian heart pray with the spiritual works of mercy, those acts of compassion that relate to the emotional and spiritual needs of our neighbor?

All love is one: Prayer, service and Vincentian single-heartedness.

As a Sister of Charity, I have a special bond with Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton. As an Episcopalian in the early 1800's, she helped to start a group that reached out to poor immigrant women and their children.

Elizabeth and our other wisdom figures give us great advice about how to serve. “Do what is before you to do.” – Vincent. “Take good care of the service of the poor.” – Louise. “Keep well to what you believe to be the grace of the moment.” – Elizabeth Seton

But what I want to focus on today is their deep insight about the place where that service comes from, the ground of it all. It's all about the HEART. First of all, God demands the heart, and then the work. Start with the heart. That's the key that holds it all together.

Praying is living mindfully, aware that we are surrounded by Holy Mystery, by Divine Presence, no matter where we are. Elizabeth learned how to pray always, even when she was busy about many things, even when she felt rejection and misunderstanding from those she thought she could trust. She learned to contemplate – to notice God's Presence – in the midst of her activity.

And she instructed her followers: “We must pray literally without ceasing...in



every occurrence of our lives--you know I mean that prayer of the heart which is independent of place or situation. It is a habit of lifting up the heart to God, as in a constant communication with him.”

Our God comes to meet us – encounters us – especially when we are breaking the bread of our lives for others in service. In other words, praying and serving are one seamless movement for those with a Vincentian heart. Our service is an act of worship, an act of prayer, because in it we meet Christ, we sharpen our vision to see the face of Christ in those poor ones.

Opening Our Hearts to Mercy: Befriending Vulnerability.

“The Mercy of God is the beating heart of the Gospel,” says Pope Francis. We are among those who have heard the call to follow the teaching and spirit of Vincent, Louise, Elizabeth Seton and

other giants of Charity/Mercy. We keep trying to respond to that call, to serve God's poor ones better and better, to work harder and smarter, to do our part and not be found wanting as we work for the coming of God's reign.

Vincent is telling us that, in order to be the effective ministers we long to be, in order to be ministers of the boundless mercy of our Merciful God, we need to start with our own heart. We need to open ourselves, to make room in our hearts, to receive the touch of God's mercy in all the places where we are hurting.

It is said that pain is the rent we pay for being human. We can choose either to run from pain – our own, that of others – we can resist, flee, avoid, repress it – or we can run toward it (like the first responders on 9/11). We can embrace it. Engage it. Accept it. Let it in. Allow it to teach us what it has to teach us. Pope Francis calls us to be a Church that runs toward pain, that “goes forth toward those who are wounded, who need an attentive ear, understanding, forgiveness and love.”

I'm suggesting that our Vincentian vocation demands that we make room in our Vincentian hearts for our own sore and tender places. Open our pain to the gaze of Jesus; dare to look at our wounds together with him.

Don't we learn this lesson from Louise de Marillac! Talk about sore and tender places! Here was a woman who lived the early part of her life under the stigma of being born illegitimate. She knew abandonment and neglect after her father's death. She was afflicted by depression; she was scrupulous, even to the point of doubting her own salvation. Behind her driven, white-knuckled approach to God – multiplying devotions, piling on practices – was an insecure,

Continued — see First the Heart, p. 14

LCUSA Caregiving Project: More Than Just Care

Marilyn Martone

*A*s Ladies of Charity of the United States of America, we trace our origins back to 17th century France. St. Vincent de Paul established the first group in Châtillon-les-Dombes in 1617 when he called upon a group of women to organize and care for the sick poor. Organizing to serve that need resulted in a sustainable organization that still exists today.

As we looked back to our beginnings and our mission, the LCUSA board voted unanimously that by 2017, the 400th Anniversary of our founding, we will begin a “Home Care” Program that will provide for the spiritual and corporal needs of persons who are sick, elderly and disabled in their homes, while helping women to exit the chains of poverty. LCUSA will establish an extensive certificate-training program for personal care aides and home health care aides who will provide direct care in the home, supported by volunteers from the Ladies of Charity local organizations.

Examining the “signs of the times,” we are aware that 75% of people aged 65 or older need some sort of support and that by 2050 the total number of individuals needing long-term care and personal assistance is projected to grow

from 12 million to 27 million. AARP has found that 90% of today’s older Americans want to age at home but aging at home requires home care workers. We will need 1.8 million additional direct care workers in the next decade. This is the single largest growth opportunity for small businesses.

We recognize that the health care field is competitive and in a constant state of change. What would make our services different is that we are more than just care, more than a business. We are mission driven, rooted in a faith tradition and an organizational history that mandates a commitment to our neighbors in need and carries that out.

There are three principals involved in this venture:

- ▶ Ladies of Charity USA (represented by the Steering Committee and a yet-to-be hired director)
- ▶ Ladies of Charity Care Branches (beginning with one pilot branch in 2017).
- ▶ Ladies of Charity Association volunteers (volunteers who will work with an established Care Branch).

The business components of this venture will be handled by the national organization and hired professionals, who will run the day-to-day operations. Programs will be established only in areas where there is an active, local group of Ladies who have invited national to set up a pilot program in their area. The local LOC groups will act as an auxiliary to this program. They will ensure that the Vincentian charism is part of the training program and will supplement the professional services in whatever way they would like. Some suggestions might be: visit clients, families and caregivers; serve as community ambassadors



Michael Elsas presented a workshop on “Care for the Sick: The nexus of just wages and quality care.”

and recruiters; provide information fairs; serve as peer mentors; support caregivers with transportation needs.

Currently we are in the process of hiring an executive director, who is crucial to the success of this program. (The job description for this person can be found on our web page under “Who We Are” and the “Caregiving Project”). We will also need start-up funds of \$715,000. We have already raised \$300,000 and anticipate additional grant funding from foundations to which we have submitted applications. The Daughters of Charity Province of St. Louise and the Seton Provincialate are supporting this project with “experts” who are on our National Steering Committee, and financial resources.

We recognize the enormity and complexity of this project but more than anything we recognize the vast needs of the sick and disabled in our communities. Let us be guided by prayer and trust in our God and our Vincentian exemplars as we joyfully set forward on this new adventure.



Marilyn Martone introducing the caregiving project

Mission Market Initiative

Winona Nelson

Throughout the world there are many organizations whose mission is to assist those in developing countries. The Ladies of Charity exemplify this role as they have served people in need since St. Vincent de Paul established the first group in 1617. Since St. Vincent's humble beginnings, the organization in the United States has come to serve over 200 communities through 61 associations. The Ladies of Charity of the United States of America is an association of women who are committed to "working together against all forms of poverty."

Our desire is to add another dimension to our programs and work to empower enterprising people from around the world to become self-sufficient in business. We plan to create a viable online market for the unique goods handmade by women in developing countries where the Daughters of Charity (DOC) have skill centers. The more than 60 developing countries served by the Daughters offer many choice locations. Many products made by artisans in the skill centers can be sold through this

platform. Retail gift shops, boutiques, thrift shops, special event planners and other businesses will log on to our online platform and purchase handcrafted artisanal products at affordable prices for re-sale. After evaluating the current market for handmade gift products and speaking with expert representatives from Ladies of Charity, Daughters of Charity and Handcrafting Justice, we believe that we will be able to successfully create a market for these products and promote an enterprising atmosphere for the artisans abroad.

To facilitate these endeavors, we will build a website to be the store for our online commerce, as well as build up social media platforms like Facebook, Pinterest and Instagram to increase marketing awareness. To aid with logistics, we will rent office and storage space in the Kansas City area. Our warehouse space can be affordable because we will be off the beaten path and not in a downtown area or a place where retail customers shop. We plan to partner with InXpress, the international shipping partner of DHL, the global market leader in logistics, as it can negotiate discounted shipping rates for nonprofit organizations. To handle these recommendations, we plan to hire an office/customer relations manager to supervise organizing the operation, staffing and customer service; a warehouse associate to manage inventory and distribution; and we will outsource web site design, development and management, to handle all online



Winona Nelson is chair of the mission market committee.

and social media promotion along with outsourcing bookkeeping and marketing services.

This planning began with the help of the Executives-In-Residence program of the St. John's University Peter J. Tobin School of Business. As part of their coursework, three teams of students under the direction of their professor, Linda Sama, Ph.D., LOC, developed business plans. The LCUSA Mission Market Committee combined the three plans to meet the needs of LCUSA and the DOC.

Political and environmental instability in some of the underdeveloped countries will impact the implementation of the mission market. The committee's next step will be to seek grant funding for start-up costs.

Please pray for the success of this endeavor.

Do's and Don'ts Continued from Page 3

On the one hand, we can be tempted by our secular culture to see Jesus, his church and his word as an intrusion on our freedom.

Or we can see Jesus, his church and his word according to the wisdom that my mother reflected whenever she would give me the list of "do's and don'ts" at the beginning of each school year and beyond. As we think about what that



all means, it is imperative for us to see wisdom as it truly is in the Bible: the mind and the heart of God.

It is important that we embrace his "do's and don'ts" in our lives as an invitation to both recognize the mind and heart of God and to embrace what it means to live it.

Praise God as he gives that wisdom. Pray God that we embrace that wisdom.

Vincentian Spiritual Moderator Training

“A wonderful experience”



Peggy Keene with the students in the Vincentian spiritual Moderator training.

Marlyss Giles

Following the 2016 National Assembly, in Queens, N.Y., the Spirituality Committee of the Board of Ladies of Charity USA held a Vincentian Spiritual Moderator's training program, October 2-3, with ten lay candidates from Ladies of Charity organizations invited to attend. This pilot program was designed for the development of spiritual moderators at a local level. Historically, this role was filled by a Daughter of Charity or a Sister of Charity who was “formed” in the Vincentian charism. We hope that this role can also be filled in the future with Ladies of Charity, “called” and trained for this important role. The agenda consisted of eight hours of intense training focused on the Vincentian charism. The candidates were each assigned a mentor who will communicate with them monthly over the coming year to guide and assist them in the formation process. Upon completion of this year, the candidates will be certified as Vincentian Spiritual Moderators at the 2017 National Assembly in Kansas City.

Mary Ann Dantuono, LCUSA president, welcomed the candidates and opened the session with an introduction to the Association of International Charities (AIC) and Ladies of Charity of

the United States of America (LCUSA). She discussed the laity's call to holiness in today's Church, especially as a Lady of Charity. She stated that as a people of God, we are called to Christian charity by serving the poor as Christ did. To do this, we must search for spirituality in our lives by discovering the fire within and channeling it to others. Further, it is important to recognize that how we relate to others is how we relate to God. Mary Ann challenged the candidates to consider how they search for spirituality in their lives through marriage, child-rearing, and relationships, and to determine how they can become the person they were meant to be.

Presentations on the lives of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton personified these saints, each with human emotions of doubt, pride, weakness, and fear, but with perseverance and the love of God; they were called to holiness by serving the poor as Christ did, thus serving Christ in the poor. Relating one's life with the “normal” lives of these holy people is truly humbling and gives much pause for reflection.

The presenters also focused on Catherine Harkins, foundress of the first Ladies of Charity in the United

Continued — see Vincentian Spiritual Moderator Training, p. 15



Mary Ann Dantuono and Suzanne Johnson joined the LCUSA Spirituality Committee for the training.

We continue to seek out the least, the lost and the lonely among us. Throughout 2017 the Vincentian family is asking us to reflect on the theme of "Welcome the Stranger." How well do we know the people who are living on the margins in our communities? How can we find the people who have given up? People who are doing it all—working low wage jobs, caring for a family, maybe even an elderly parent or a disabled child and who never get ahead? Do we know their names? Have we touched their pain, their despair, their goodness and their possibilities?

As we contemplate the birth of Jesus, let us remember what is conceived in Mary. For Mary her "yes" was a "yes" of hope. She said "yes" in openness to the mysteries of life, to a faith that sustains, and she conceived Jesus, our Hope. When Jesus was born into this world, the world slept. But slowly, to the lowly (shepherds) and the seekers (Magi) this hope was revealed to them and they revealed it to others. We

too are asked to live in the hope that opens the door to loving more deeply. May the hope that is Christmas bring you, and everyone you love, deep joy and peace.

Finally, I offer you four challenges for the New Year:

- ▶ Continue to pray constantly and persistently in hope.
- ▶ Befriend someone in your community who is suffering.
- ▶ Find a new worker for our mission of prayer and loving service, a woman who shares our commitment to alleviate suffering of people who are poor, who wants to protect our earth as a common home for all, and who loves God with all her heart.
- ▶ Celebrate our rich history and our infinite future. Join the celebration in Kansas City, Mo., September 7-10, 400 Years of "Yes" to the call of St. Vincent de Paul and bring a new Lady of Charity with you!

My prayer as I conclude my presidency is that the Ladies of Charity will continue to be beacons of God's mercy and as Bishop David O'Connell, CM, urged us in his homily at the conclusion of the 2016 Assembly, will "leave on the hearts of the suffering the fingerprint of God's mercy." Mary's "yes" brought hope to the lowly and the seekers. St. Louise's last word in her life on earth was "yes," affirming that hope. Ladies of Charity are women of prayer, mercy and hope, "yes!"

"Your Confraternity is a work of God . . . who, by divine grace, has called and united you together . . . [and] wants you to listen to the voice of the Almighty so that you may go with joy and tenderness wherever God calls you . . . Loving the poor means to love in the best way."

- St. Vincent de Paul

Reflections on the 2016 National Assembly

Continued from Page 5

Both Elizabeth and Louise had such patience as they worked to change the lives of the poor. Leaving the assembly, I keep pondering the words of patience, yet I want the world to have beliefs to not let the poor suffer so much. I guess that our work is to keep the world aware that the poor need us forever. So love that Vincentian Heart!

Regina L. Barrett
Mount Calvary,
Archdiocese of Washington

I want to thank our current president, Viola Johnson-Robinson, for asking me to substitute as a delegate. We get very comfortable in the places where we are, but God will place you where he wants you to be. It has been some time since I attended a national assembly, and my heart was

very spiritually filled through being with like-minded women. You see only the small picture when you don't step outside of your comfort zone; it is awesome to witness the big picture of being a member of the LCUSA organization. There is a Vincentian Spirit that becomes a part of your DNA, of who you are as Ladies of Charity. Just as many of you research your genealogy to get a better understanding of where your family comes from, you should have that same spirit about your calling to be a Lady of Charity. You would beam with pride to see our Archdiocese Ladies in action on the national level, proudly serving and representing us. If you haven't attended, give it some consideration, especially next year when we will be celebrating our 400th Anniversary in Kansas City, Mo.

Attending the assembly was an eye-opening experience. However, the session that I personally got the most out of was First the Heart: Praying with

Spiritual Works of Mercy, presented by Sr. Regina Bechtle. We were assembled in small groups during her presentation and had discussions about our prayer life, reminding us that a Vincentian heart knows that both prayer and service come from the same source, the same energy of LOVE. A Vincentian heart honors the vulnerable places of life – our own and others – because it is there where we are sure to meet the God of infinite mercy. Allow pain to teach us what it has to teach us. For it is in those times that we allow our hearts to receive the touch of God's mercy. We are most vulnerable sometimes when we are doubtful, afflicted or dealing with an offense or injustice.

"We must pray literally without ceasing . . . in every occurrence of our lives – you know I mean that prayer of the heart which is independent of place or situation. It is a habit of lifting up the heart to God, as in a constant communication with him." - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

SAINT MATTHIAS APOSTLE PARISH LANHAM, MARYLAND, 1966 -2006

Jacqueline Bates

The Ladies of Charity of St. Matthias Apostle Parish in Lanham, Md., gathered in June to celebrate the golden anniversary of their association. Co-Presidents Debbie Self and Terry Poyner presided at the event, recalling the past and looking forward to the next 50 years.

Founding pastor Fr. Edward Hughes organized the Ladies of Charity in 1966. He envisioned a small group of women who would collect clothing and food for the needy in the community. The first president was Luzelle Schwartz, joined by a few select ladies as the first members. The Ladies' duties were to prepare the mailings to the parishioners, and to sponsor the anointing of the sick service twice a year. The Ladies also participated in some projects undertaken by the Prince Georges (P.G.) County Ladies of Charity, which in turn is under the umbrella of the Archdiocese of Washington. Sister Letitia, DC, the spiritual moderator for the P.G. County units, arranged a day of recollection each May. One month a year, the Ladies helped at Martha's Closet, a charity where children's clothing was collected and distributed to families in need.

Mrs. Schwartz continued as president until 1997. During those thirty years, the membership was kept to six or eight select Ladies. During the next several years, under succeeding officers, a church pantry was formally developed, and the Ladies continued with the collection of non-perishable food. Members of the parish supported the pantry by bringing food to the church and the school children participated during the holidays. This enabled the preparation and delivery of bags of food at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. The Ladies faithfully continued to help at Martha's Closet one month a year and provided many bags of food there also.

During Lent, the Ladies held a Bible study and took part in other special spiritual devotions. In June 1999, the St. Matthias Ladies of Charity hosted the Prince George's County quarterly meeting. They also sewed quilt blocks to help the St. Ignatius Parish Ladies provide floor covering for the babies to play on at Saint Ann's Infant and Maternity Home. The residents at Magnolia Gardens Nursing Home were remembered with greeting cards for birthdays, Christmas, and Easter. The



Members and friends celebrate the 50th anniversary of LOC at St. Matthias Apostle Parish, Lanham, Md.

membership began to grow. The LCUSA national assembly was held in Arlington, Va., that year, allowing several members to attend and participate.

The Ladies continued serving the needs of the community. Food drives were held for Damien Ministries, a charity helping HIV/AIDS patients, and the Ladies made and distributed hats for premature babies at Prince Georges Hospital. A quarterly newsletter was developed and distributed to the parish. Over 100 lap quilts were crocheted for patients at the Magnolia Nursing Home. A cake walk at the parish flea market earned monies for the Pregnancy Aid Center which also benefitted from a fund drive in which parishioners used baby bottles to collect their loose change. In 2003, the Ladies hosted the Prince Georges County Communion brunch. The proceeds from the last cake walk were used to buy phone cards for patients at Walter Reed Hospital. In 2005 and 2006, a Mother-Daughter Mass and Communion breakfast was hosted by the Ladies of Charity. The pantry continues to thrive and is a big asset to the community.

During 2001 to 2004, several Ladies joined the unit and helped it grow into the valuable working group that it is today. As always, St. Matthias parishioners were supportive and helped keep the pantry supplied with non-perishable food, provided Christmas gifts for the giving tree, and responded generously to the many other endeavors undertaken. The Ladies were fortunate to have had the spiritual guidance of several moderators over the last few years.

The association is proud of the growth of its membership and hopes to remain being a vital part of the St. Matthias community. As they continue their works, they prayerfully seek the guidance of Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Louise de Marillac, and Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton to make future endeavors successful.

Congratulations Ladies of St. Matthias Apostle Parish!



Members and friends celebrate the 50th anniversary of LOC at St. Matthias Apostle Parish, Lanham, Md.

First the Heart Continued from Page 8

anxious woman afraid of being rejected, afraid of not being good enough, unaware of her own giftedness. She saw her pain all too clearly, but she tried to squelch it, cover it over, make it go away by keeping busy until she let God touch her heart.

When our eyes are fixed on Jesus Christ, when he fills our horizon, we see differently, don't we? We see beyond appearances. We look at those in need and see not just the sinner, the ignorant, the doubtful, the sorrowful, the ones whom life's burdens have made hard and rough. We see Jesus Christ. (Isn't that what Vincent led Louise to see?) We look at ourselves and see not our weakness, limits, not-enough-ness, all the ways we judge ourselves and find ourselves wanting. Instead, when we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ – when we behold him beholding us, and smiling – we begin to smile, too.

It takes courage to care, and yet to remain at peace in the face of human need – our own and others, knowing that we can't fix it.

Advocacy Connections

Continued from Page 7

What can you and I do to help?

- ▶ Work to pass state and federal legislation to restructure or ban predatory loans. In an article for the St. Vincent DePaul E-Gazette, Tom Dwyer (national Voice of the Poor committee chair) wrote "Investigate the situation in your home state. At the website for the Center for Responsible Lending, find an interactive map showing the situation in your state, including the interest rates being charged. Sadly, 36 states have to-date carved out exceptions to their usury laws to allow predatory lending at exorbitantly high interest rates. Based on current law, this situation can't be remedied at the federal level."
- ▶ "Faith-based groups are uniformly united in their opposition to these immoral and predatory lending practices and rates, so unite with them in your state to reverse existing legislation and stop any expansion."
- ▶ Encourage your parish or social service providers group to invite a speaker to talk about the dangers of predatory lending.
- ▶ Develop a simple questionnaire for use as appropriate when meeting with families in dire straits due to these loans. Be aware that it is not usually the first reason for need that is mentioned. They are embarrassed and fearful about having these loans.
- ▶ Provide simple budgeting assistance that can be offered to low income families.
- ▶ Consider setting up a micro-loan program in partnership with a local credit union.

I hope that – whether you are praying or serving - Vincent's words will resonate deep in every chamber of your heart and your spirit, and call you back to the reason why you do what you do:

"First of all, God demands the heart, and then the work."



MEMORIALS AND 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. Use the enclosed envelope to submit your own intentions.

† MEMORIALS †	
<i>In Memory of</i>	<i>Bequeathed by</i>
Margaret Callaghan	St. Matthias the Apostle Ladies of Charity
Carolyn Cocina	Kathleen Sieracki
Robert P. Edmunds	Margaret Hanson
George Albert Gates	Patricia Payne Rogers
Lawrence Hornyak & Dr. George Moy	Edith Hornyak
Mary Johanna Metz	The Andrew Kurt Family
Flordelino "Floyd" Miguel	Suzanne Johnson
† IN HONOR OF †	
Deacon Al Poroda	Alice Marie Jozefczyk

WANT YOUR ASSOCIATION IN LIGHTS?

Kathy Kavanaugh, LCUSA Communications Chair

We have a new, and hopefully fun initiative, called “Association Spotlights” and we hope you will enjoy participating!

On our web site under “Resources” is a map of the United States with a “dot” representing each association. We are asking each association to submit a photo and an article or caption. The more in-depth articles will be suitable for the Servicette and the captions or brief ones will go on the web site. Either way, when you submit, your “dot” will light up! In addition, when you press each lit dot, the appropriate association photo will appear. We are hoping to have each association “lit” by the end of each year with hopefully lots of 400th Anniversary pictures!

Each of you has a great story of serving others (better to have action shots of serving rather than fund-raisers, if possible) and I am SURE someone took pictures! Send them and a story to describe the occasion to the national office, office@ladiesofcharity.us. There are a few details we need. Send in pictures as large as you can on your cameras or phones so we can use them in the Servicette (Use the large setting and always use flash indoors.) Smaller sized pictures usually can be used on the website. You need a release

to use pictures of non-LOC individuals; it is on the website under “Resources.” We also need a point person from each association who can keep in touch with me. It might be your photographer or historian. I am emailing each Regional Vice President to have her get the name of this person from you. She will have my email.

We will have this up and running by January so get in your articles any time and we will light you up as soon as we can! Everyone wants to see you “on the map!”



Vincentian Spiritual Moderator Training - Continued from Page 11

States. The Spirituality Committee created multi-media presentations on these topics; they also led discernment, apostolic reflection and prayer in groups. The team was composed of Daughters of Charity Sr. Claire Debes, Sr. Elyse Staub, Sr. Paule Freeburg; Sister of Charity Sr. Mary Victor Powers; and lay women Peggy Keene, Mary Nell Williams and Karen Radu.

Catherine Liska (Milwaukee) stated that “All (the presentations) were wonderfully informative.” Holly Walter (Buffalo) added that the “presentations certainly would help someone who is thinking about taking on this role.” The candidates will receive the presentations on a flash drive for future use in their associations. The shared dialogue and informal discussion were also valuable to the candidates. Lucy Saunders (Maryland) really “appreciated the

dialogue among the Ladies.” The time we spent together “gives enthusiasm, creates a comradery amongst the group” added Deni Antoinette Mazingo (San Bernardino, Calif.).

Each of the participants brings a background and her own personal experience to keeping the Vincentian spirit alive in the associations. “I am glad I stepped up and said yes to God’s calling,” Tawanda Harrison (Washington, D.C.). “It was wonderful,” stated Mary Cay Murray (Lake Travis, Texas), and “I am glad we have a mentor.”

Today, 400 years after the formation of the first Confraternities of Charity, the Ladies of Charity are privileged to be among the 225 branches of the Vincentian Family. As a Vincentian Spiritual Moderator for our local organizations, we will be charged with ensuring that the Vincentian mission, spirit, and

charism continues to grow. This is truly a humbling experience and responsibility, and not to be taken lightly. At the end of his life, Vincent stated that he “could have done more.” We ask ourselves, how can we do more to promote the Ladies of Charity locally and fulfill the legacy of the Vincentian Founders? The coming year will be a time for spiritual formation and dedication to fulfilling this legacy through prayer and reflection. We ask for your prayers and support as we begin this journey with our founders.



Discussion group during the Vincentian Spiritual Moderator training.



St. Angela Merici, Diocese of Pittsburgh

The St. Angela Merici JLOC, White Oak, Pa., Diocese of Pittsburgh, was given a very generous grant of \$140 from LCUSA. The girls wanted to pick a specific service project in their local community to use those funds. They decided on a backpack project for back-to-school students. After contacting the principal of their Catholic school, Mary of Nazareth, they were able to get a list of students from kindergarten through eighth grade who needed those items.

Backpacks and school supplies were purchased in part with the grant, as well as with a donation from their local group. Supplies were purchased by the girls themselves, packing appropriate supplies according to age and gender. Twenty-five backpacks were filled and distributed by the school, making many children excited and happy on their first day back to class. Ms. McFarland, the principal, deemed the project a great success.



Juniors of St. Angela Merici filling school backpacks..

Three girls were invested into St. Angela Merici's Junior group this past August. The Merici juniors are proud of them.

A social and craft party at a local nursing home was held in November. The girls will send Christmas cards to members of their parish who are in nursing homes; make personal care bags for a local food pantry; help distribute food at another local food pantry and visit the Pittsburgh Community Food Bank to volunteer for a day.

Moderators Maura South and Gerry Jackson have a great group of girls and are excited to be able to have them participate in service to others, and to try and see Christ in all those they meet and serve. They thank everyone for their support of these special young girls!



Juniors from St. John's served at the opening Mass at the national assembly.

St. John's Preparatory, Queens, N.Y.

Several Junior Ladies of Charity from St. John's Prep. attended and helped at the 2016 National Assembly hosted by the Ladies of Charity of St. John's University. JLOC moderator Kitty Prager reports the girls were impressed with the welcome and kindness they received. They were amazed at the scope of women from all over the country in attendance, and they thoroughly enjoyed serving at Mass and assisting members at meal time. Their regular activities including discussion groups on human trafficking, homeless shelters, etc. They have held food drives and fund raisers for Haiti. An online community has been suggested to maintain a connection as girls leave high school and move to colleges across the country. Moderator Marian Snyder of the JLOC in the Diocese of Buffalo endorsed the idea.



Juniors from ST. John's at the LCUSA national assembly..

St. Mary of the Assumption, Diocese of Buffalo

Junior Ladies of Charity from St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Lancaster, N.Y., Diocese of Buffalo, helped assemble school backpacks for families who had been referred to the Ladies of Charity by social workers at Catholic Charities. Over 600 children received backpacks filled with school supplies. By judicious shopping, Ladies of Charity have already purchased all the backpacks for the next school year at bargain basement prices. In October, the Juniors offered Halloween fingernail polish and face painting at a nursing home. They had a parish-



Juniors from the Diocese of Buffalo helped fill requests for school backpacks.

wide collection of holiday costumes and accessories which were distributed to shelters and thrift stores. The group will "adopt" two immigrant families for Christmas, form teams and assign shopping duties. In November, they helped assemble bags of Thanksgiving food at a mission center.

Academy of the Holy Names (AHN), Albany, N.Y.

Nancy Vanderhoeft

The Junior Ladies of Charity have been extremely busy since the first day of school! They successfully completed a coat drive in support of the Albany Ladies of Charity, receiving donations of more than 40 garments. The Juniors also held a Yankee Candle Sale with proceeds of nearly \$2,500 to benefit "Save the Children," and a bake sale for Hurricane Matthew relief in Haiti. At Christmas, the girls will participate in the Salvation Army "Soldiers for Toys" collection, Toys for Tots, do gift wrapping at a local mission and work at the food bank. The JLOC thank the AHN community for their support of all their efforts.

St. Louise de Marillac, Diocese of Pittsburgh

The Junior Ladies of St. Louise de Marillac Parish in Pittsburgh have been very busy. They created custom draw-string bags for the backs of the wheelchairs of children and young adults who reside at the Children's Institute. The bags were double lined with long strings and the girls used fabric markers to create unique designs. The children who received the bags were delighted and grateful.



In September, the JLOC wrote letters to women with breast cancer, offering comfort and understanding. Using a \$135



grant, members purchased foil containers of tuna for distribution to homeless people (Sensitive to a lack of can openers, they chose foil over cans.) They cancelled their original idea of distributing apples after learning many homeless people have poor teeth.

Moderator Mary Diederich writes, "As adult Ladies of Charity, we have the joy of serving side by side with the Juniors. May all Junior Ladies of Charity, through involvement with this organization, have experiences that change the course of their lives. May they someday share some of the wisdom and lessons of love learned from being part of this group."



Dates to Remember

- **March 11-16, 2017**
AIC International Assembly and 400th Anniversary Celebration, Châtillon, France
- **April 19-22, 2017**
LCUSA Board Meeting, Marillac Center, Leavenworth, Kansas
- **June 9-11, 2017**
Vincentian Family Gathering, "Welcome the Stranger," San Antonio, TX
- **Sept. 7-10, 2017**
LCUSA 400th Anniversary Celebration and National Assembly, Kansas City, Mo., Marriott Downtown

LADIES OF CHARITY USA MEDIA SURVEY

	Always	Usually	Seldom	Never
I read the Servicette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the bishop's column	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the Letter from the President	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the Advocacy Connections column	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the information about AIC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the articles about Junior Ladies of Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the articles about Vincentian history	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I read the entire Servicette cover to cover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	YES	NO		
I skim the Servicette and read some articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I skim the Servicette but do not read many articles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I read the articles and look at the pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I look at only the pictures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I read only articles from my own association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I rely on the Servicette for information about the national assembly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Information in the Servicette influences the work/activity of my local association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I enjoy seeing Ladies of Charity on Facebook.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I would like to see book reviews in the Servicette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I like to be aware of the activities of the national board of directors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I know how to contribute material to the Servicette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you check the LCUSA website at least once a month?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you "subscribe" to the website to receive email notices from the national office?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you need help subscribing? * (If yes, see below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Do you find the website helpful in keeping connected to LCUSA and other associations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Rate your overall satisfaction with the Servicette:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat satisfied				
<input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied				

Your Feedback is Needed

Please take a few moments to complete this survey and help us meet your needs. You may answer on the LCUSA website (aic.ladiesofcharity.us) or by sending your replies to the

LCUSA National Service Center,
850 Main St., Kansas City, MO 64105

(copy the page or use a separate sheet, numbering your answers to correspond to the questions). Thank you.



*To subscribe, click on the green subscribe button in the upper right corner of the website (aic.ladiesofcharity.us). Complete the information. You must respond to an email generated to you confirming your intention to receive the emails. If you need further help, provide your email address or phone number:

OPTIONAL

Name _____

Association _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Additional comments and suggestions on how to improve and increase the use of media are welcomed:



Left: Regional Vice President Mary Nell Williams (L) presents a certificate to Ann Clark, president of the Ladies of Charity of Frankfort, Ind., recognizing the group's 50th anniversary. The Ladies of Charity of St. Mary's Parish in Frankfort, Ind., celebrated their 50th anniversary with a Mass and reception in October North Central Regional Vice President Mary Nell Williams presented a letter from LCUSA President Mary Ann Dantuono and a commemorative certificate. Each member received a gold rosary. Ann Clark is the third president of the association which was established on Oct. 6, 1966. The members visit four nursing homes monthly; prepare post-funeral meals for the parish; pray for the ill and deceased and for priests at their meetings; and hold an annual "Senior Saints" event for parishioners age 80 and older. **Below: The Ladies of Charity of Frankfort, Ind.**



Left: Ladies of Charity in the kitchen at the Salvation Army in Little Rock.

On a chilly Saturday in October nine Ladies of Charity and two volunteers prepared a warm breakfast for 60 people, including several children, at the Salvation Army in Little Rock, Ark. The meal consisted of scrambled eggs, sausage patties and gravy, biscuits, clementines, and milk, orange juice and coffee. Cereal was available for the children. Moon pies and cookies were also distributed to take home per Nancy Bennett, president, "This was so rewarding. Definitely will do it again."



Arkansas Ladies of Charity and friends gathered to prepare breakfast at the Salvation Army.



Ladies of Charity from Immaculate Conception Church in Baltimore preparing bags of food. The Ladies of Charity from Immaculate Conception Church in Baltimore work closely with the St. Vincent de Paul Society to assist homeless people. They collaborate to provide sleeping in early winter and also distribute bags of food. Members also prepare and share a meal once a month at Sarah's Hope, a shelter for homeless women and children.

<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>



Ladies of Charity members gathered at the 2016 National Assembly in New York City.



New members were invested in Los Angeles. Fr. Perry Henry, CM, invested seven new members for the Ladies of Charity in Los Angeles during a Mass at St. Vincent's Church on Sept. 24. A brunch and meeting followed at the Doheny Mansion. On Sept. 12, a Mass and luncheon in Santa Barbara featured the investiture of three women there.



"To serve rather than to be served"

Vincent de Paul and Teresa of Calcutta, Saints of Charity

Carol Schumer, D.C.

Vincent de Paul made persons living in poverty visible in 17th century France; Teresa of Calcutta did this again in the 20th century. Both urged service out of love to those in need. Vincent speaking with his priests, reflected "... our hearts should be on fire with love for assisting poor people ... because God expects this of us."¹ Teresa is quoted as saying, "It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into it."² Today both are Saints which is our destiny in life, as well, to be saints of charity.



Born Agnes Bojaxhiu in 1910, Mother Teresa, as she is now known, was the youngest in her family. After her father died, Agnes was reared by her mother, a devout Catholic. At 18, she entered the Sisters of Loretto, received the name Teresa and was missioned to India. For 20 years, she ministered, teaching and serving as principal. Vincent, too, came from a faith-filled family and was ordained a priest as a teenager, then began his ministry as an ambitious cleric.

In 1948, at the age of 38, Teresa received a divine call to form a religious community to serve the destitute people

of India; the Missionaries of Charity came into being. In 1617, at the age of 36, Vincent learned of the needs of a poor, sick family and established the first Confraternity of Charity. Both involved women who had not before been tapped for service. Ultimately, each of their initiatives has blossomed into worldwide communities. Both left legacies that have endured multiple challenges.

Vincent who was initially quite irascible strove for and developed humility, while Teresa, at first very difficult, matured into a model of simplicity and straight-forward candor. In the end, Monsieur Vincent was always Monsieur Vincent and Mother Teresa, always Mother Teresa. Thus, both were able to relate comfortably with rich and poor people in order to further God's reign for their least fortunate brothers and sisters.

Service of bodily needs was Teresa's and Vincent's number one concern. However, the spiritual welfare of others and insuring that these companions were ready for eternal life followed very closely. For example, in his instructions to the women in Châtillon, after listing the

details of preparing the patient's dinner, Vincent adds, "say some little word to him about Our Lord ..." ³ and "see that the patient goes to confession ..." ⁴



Mother Teresa directed that her Sisters to give the patients medical attention and to offer them "... the opportunity to die with dignity, according to the rituals of their faith."⁵

Finally, when Teresa or Vincent entered a room, people were drawn to them. They each had an aura of holiness that attracted others. This illumination was God's presence, God's love shining from within them.

Today we, too, are invited to bring this same light of God's goodness to those we accompany.

Reflection Questions: Is my daily life helping me become a saint of charity? How?

How is God calling me to grow into a witness of love in my service of others?



Bibliography:

¹ Coste, Vincent de Paul, Vol. 12, #195, pg. 73

² <http://quotesgram.com/mother-teresa-quotes-on-giving/>

³ Coste, Vincent de Paul, Vol. 13b, #126, pg. 13

⁴ Ibid., pg. 12

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalighat_Home_for_the_Dying