

LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA® SERVICETTE

"To serve rather than to be served"



AIC USA®
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MODELS OF VINCENTIAN COLLABORATION

Saturdays with the Sisters — Daughters & Ladies in Albany

Mary Clinton

In September 2014 the Ladies of Charity of Albany, N.Y., began a new ministry with the Daughters of Charity at St. Louise House. On the fourth Saturday each month, Ladies visit the retired nuns. In the first few months, everyone got acquainted, sharing stories from the Daughters' lives and talking about the various ministries of the Ladies of Charity. Early activities included a sing-along and writing Christmas cards to soldiers. During the April visit, the nuns worked alongside the Ladies sorting clothes for Mary's Corner, a program that provides resources like diapers, baby food, clothing and books to parents of



Sr. Mary Albert (center), Mary Clinton (L) and friends at the first annual barbecue.

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COLLABORATION

From the President

Do not believe that things will always be as they are now. St. Louise de Marillac

In May, Very Reverend G. Gregory Gay, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, invited all in the international Vincentian Family to celebrate a "Year of Collaboration" from the Feast of Pentecost, May 24, 2015, to the Feast of Pentecost, May 15, 2016. Our theme is "Together in Christ, we Vincentians make a Difference." We are encouraged to pray, reflect, learn and serve as one family.



*"Together in Christ, we Vincentians
make a difference"*

What is collaboration? Bishop Joseph Sullivan, former Episcopal Liaison for the Ladies of Charity and leader in Catholic Charities USA and the Diocese of Brooklyn, was known to quip, "Collaboration is unnatural acts of consenting adults." Humorous, but at the core there is an element of truth. The dictionary offers the following two definitions: first, to work, one with another; cooperate, as on a literary work; second, to cooperate, usually willingly, with an enemy nation, especially with an enemy occupying one's country. The word, which we hear frequently in this family is an antilogy. Moving forward with the first more positive definition, we may still tend to engage in collaboration with some degree of reticence. On one hand we willingly collaborate, knowing that we need to combine our resources to combat poverty in these complex times, but on the other hand, we may question the "me" in this "we" relationship.

The elements of collaboration are key to understanding what is being asked of us in this special year. First, in order to collaborate, we need to create or build relationships with collaborators. Second, our collaborators must value and share our mission of alleviating poverty, with a special concern for protecting human dignity and our "common home," strengthening the family, and focusing on increased participation of the marginalized in society. Third, we need to dig deep into our Vincentian Spirituality and build up our virtue of humility so that our service is not about "me." It is about doing God's will for the benefit of God's "preferred" people. Our purpose must always be to answer the Vincentian question, "What must be done?" when we

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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

Editor-in-Chief Mary Ann Dantuono
Editor Kathleen Sieracki
Layout & Design Elena Miranda
Executive Director Tama Dutton

Direct all correspondence and inquiries to:
Servicette, LCUSA Service Center
850 Main St.
Kansas City MO 64105
Email: office@ladiesofcharity.us

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 Summer issue of the **SERVICETTE**:

Monday, November 8, 2015

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.



10 Tips to Greater Joy

Bishop David A. Zubik
Episcopal Chairman

A year ago, Pope Francis gave an interview where he presented ten tips to bring greater joy to life. Let's take a look at his suggestions.

The tenth papal tip for living a life of joy is: "Live and let live." This does not mean that we permit evil to flourish by our silence. But it does mean that we travel life's path with our brothers and sisters, always learning from each other, always serving as both teacher and student.

The ninth tip for a life of joy according to Pope Francis is "Be giving of yourselves to others." Our lives should always be pointing outward, always in service, always being generous and open toward others.

The eighth tip is to "Proceed calmly" in life. Joy is found in living our vocation in humility and kindness. As Max Erhmann's poem "Desiderata" reminds us, "Go placidly amid the noise and the haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. ... And whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace in your soul."

The seventh papal tip to a life of joy is to develop a "healthy sense of leisure." We lose not only calmness and stillness in the busyness of our lives, we lose the beauty and peace of time well spent. This is not only the joy of play and exercise but to search out as well the pleasures of art and literature.

As his sixth tip to a joyful life, Pope Francis simply cites the commandment: "Keep holy the Sabbath." Sunday is for celebrating our faith. Sunday is for celebrating our family.

The fifth tip to joyful living? Pope Francis calls on us to "Invest in youth."

It is a key to our joy that we nurture joy—and a true understanding of joy—in the generations to come. Joy comes in serving those who came before us and building up the generations that come after us.

Pope Francis' fourth tip to finding true joy: "Respect and take care of nature." Again, to "go placidly amid the noise and the haste" is to live at peace and in peace with the physical world, God's creation.

The third way to find joyful living? The Holy Father states: "Letting go of negative things quickly is healthy." Live positively amid the fuss and turmoil. Avoid sin; embrace goodness and truth. Joy will be yours.

His second tip for joyful living: "Respect the beliefs of others." We can't convince another by endless finger-wagging, or endless pointing out of flawed reasoning or flawed theology. Saint Francis of Assisi said it best: "It is no use walking anywhere to preach unless our walking is our preaching."

The first, the number one, the final tip for finding joy in life: "Work for peace." Hope for peace, live for peace, work for peace, pray for peace.

To live God's will in our lives, we must always witness to the life and joy—yes, that joy as described by Pope Francis—that we find in living out the Gospel message.



Dates to Remember

- May 24, 2015–May 15, 2016**
(Pentecost to Pentecost)
Year of Vincentian Collaboration
- October 24–26, 2015**
Vincentian Family Collaborators' Meeting
Denver
- January 23–26, 2016**
Catholic Social Ministry Gathering
Washington, D.C.
- September 29–October 1, 2016**
LCUSA National Assembly
Queens, N.Y.



President's Message

Mary Ann Dantuono
LCUSA President

Collabortion

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are confronted with poverty, illness and oppression.

The Vincentian Family in North America has been working on collaboration toward systemic change. The Ladies of Charity USA have been active participants in annual convenings of the leadership of the Vincentian Family and biennial meetings for the membership

around topics of systemic change since 2010. It has enhanced our sense of family and purpose.

Collaboration is necessary for us as Ladies of Charity. Our history is woven with collaborations with the Daughters of Charity and the Congregation of the Mission. In the United States today, we collaborate with the Daughters of Charity, the Congregation of the Mission, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities agencies and many others to create projects or programs for the poor. Our call is to give our best as servants of the poor.

In this year of collaboration as a family, I encourage you to reach out and build relationships with the members of the Vincentian Family in your geographic area. We have many branches all working with the same core mission.

Create opportunities to meet each other, learn about each other, our histories, our service and our hopeful future. Look for opportunities to work together in furtherance of the Vincentian mission. Celebrate our communal mission. In the words of St. Louise, "Let us love one another as we are all His." Let us be a family that is a shining light of God's love and mercy, so that others will seek us out, joining us for our spirituality and mission to love "with the strength of our arms and the sweat of our brows." Through collaboration we can create a sustainable future for our organizations and together in Christ, we Vincentians will continue to make a difference. We may work differently because of this celebration of collaboration, but it will be a continuation of a special mission begun almost 400 years ago.

ADVOCACY CONNECTIONS

Sign up for CapwizAn On-Line Voice for the Poor — a Megaphone for Social Justice

Irene Frechette

What is Capwiz? It is an email service provided by CQ (Congressional Quarterly) Roll Call, a well-respected organization with a long history dating back to 1945. CQ Roll Call characterizes itself as an organization that provides **non-partisan** insights and tools for those who lead, shape or follow public policy.

Capwiz is a legislative advocacy alert e-mail system that sends messages about social justice issues that Vincentians, working in consultation with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, wish to advocate for with Congress and the president. Accompanying each alert is information about the issue and a template letter that can be emailed automatically to your congressional representatives and the president. The letter can also be modified to suit your own outlook on the subject.

The Vincentians stand for Justice and Charity – not either or - but both, because charity alone will not bring about the systemic change needed to enable the poor, marginalized and the vulnerable to work their way back into the mainstream as contributing, productive and self-sufficient citizens.

Justice (Social Justice) in the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching is the medicine to bring about the cure. That is where Capwiz comes in.

When federal legislation is proposed that either hurts or helps those in need, when national politics and programs

seem to stray from the principles and values of Catholic Social Teaching, and when federal budget priorities ignore the needy and disadvantaged - if you are signed up for Capwiz you will receive Action Alerts.

Typically the action alert contains a cover message from the St. Vincent de Paul Society president, plus an electronic link to a proposed letter to be sent to the president and congressional representatives and senators.

The letter itself can be easily modified to reflect your opinion, or you can simply send it as is. With a few clicks of the computer mouse, the letter is in minutes electronically on its way to your specific senator, representative and the president. You will then receive an email delivery confirmation along with the full text of what you wrote. If you want to send the letter by regular mail, you can cut and paste the text into word-processing software, print and send.

In short, Capwiz is a vitally important resource that enhances our collective ability to be effective advocates for the poor.

Our Catholic Social Teaching directly addresses this subject within the theme "Call to Family, Community and Participation" as follows: "The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society in economics and politics, in law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable."

Please go to <http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us/advocacy/sign-up-for-capwiz/> and have your voice heard!

Year of Vincentian Collaboration: Building a Culture of Teamwork



In announcing and discussing the year of collaboration, Fr. Gregory Gay, CM, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity, identified three components for the events highlighting the undertaking.

We have been asked to celebrate on three special days: Pentecost 2015, May 24; the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, Sept. 27; and Pentecost 2016, May 15. Suggestions for each of these days include thanksgiving for coming together and for what we have all accomplished. Suggested appropriate readings include St. Vincent to Jean de Fonteneil (8/29/1635): "I am also overwhelmed by the charity you have extended and keep on extending to my poor brothers. Because you have done all this for the love of God, and because gratitude for so many kindnesses is beyond our power, I beg Our Lord, Monsieur, to be Himself both your thanks and your reward." (CCD: I, 291)

The celebrations should also include reflection, particularly on Sept. 27, and include the Vincentian Family Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you who loved the poor, give us eyes and a heart directed toward the poor; help us recognize you in them, in their thirst, their hunger, their loneliness and their struggle.

Enkindle within our Vincentian family courage, unity, simplicity, humility, grace and the fire of love that burned in St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac, Blessed Rosalie Rendu, Blessed Frederic Ozanam and Father Gerald Ward.

Strengthen us, so that faithful to the practice of these virtues, we may contemplate you and serve you in the person of the poor, and may one day be united with you in your kingdom. Amen.

The third component is serve. Over 70 members of the Vincentian family took part in a Vincentian Family

"Together in Christ, we Vincentians make a difference"

Collaborative Action Program in Paris in 2013. Details of the participants and activities may be viewed at www.vfcap.org. Each person is being asked to post a three minute video about what they learned and how it has helped with their own efforts to promote collaboration in their respective regions or countries. These videos will appear on Facebook. [com/Vincentian Collaboration](https://www.facebook.com/VincentianCollaboration). Other resources for collaboration are posted on famvin.org/formation/collaboration. "The Year of Vincentian Collaboration: Let's Get Started" is currently available on YouTube.

LCUSA urges each member and association to choose at least one of these resources, reflect and further our understanding, and then reach out to fellow members of the Vincentian Family.



A FRESH LOOK

In preparation for the 2017 celebration of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Ladies of Charity, the International Association of Charities (AIC) is drafting a new charter outlining the origins and mission of the organization.

The document has three chapters: AIC's Identity; AIC's Mission; and AIC Today; with a concluding section on the future of AIC. Each chapter has multiple sections. AIC is sending the sections monthly, accompanied by questions for reflection by individual members and in meetings. Each release will be posted on the LCUSA website (<http://aic.ladiesof->

charity.us/reflections-on-the-aic-charter/) for easy access by everyone.

As an example, the second topic discusses the motivations for our actions. Why are we Ladies of Charity? The first reason given is our commitment as citizens to other members of society who are lacking fundamental needs. The second is our commitment as followers of Christ and members of the Church, living out its preferential love for the poor. As followers of St. Vincent, we serve the poor as Christ did through faith, prayer and action. We also serve Christ through the poor. "The pyramid is reversed, the rich and powerful in the world are called to serve." AIC also gives women a place in society, with 20,000 women in positions of responsibility within the organization and a place in the Church. St. Vincent said to the first Ladies of Charity, "For around 800 years women have had no public role in the Church, and...."

Questions for reflection:

- ▶ How does being aware of the existence of so much social injustice around you motivate you in your work as a volunteer?
- ▶ Given the teachings of Christ and St. Vincent de Paul, how do you try to be consistent in your personal life?
- ▶ What practical actions could you carry out, alone or in a group, to fulfill your commitment to accord a place to women in society?

We encourage you to follow the postings on the website, think about and discuss them, and feel welcome to submit your written reflection for a *Servicette* article (400-500 words). LCUSA and AIC both welcome your feedback.

As Ladies of Charity we join 150,000 members in 53 national associations across the world dedicated to the mission of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. We are called to continue the mission they began in 1617 by continuing the fight against all forms of poverty and marginalization not only in the United States but throughout our global family. Globalization, systemic change and twinning are terms we are familiar with, directly related to our mission with AIC Madagascar that is specially targeted toward women and their children.

AIC Madagascar continues to express its most sincere appreciation for your prayers and financial support to benefit those in need. There are mothers

striving to provide a better life for their children by ensuring they attend school, a school that AIC builds for the small communities where poverty is rampant. They understand, and we as mothers understand, that a strong education is the foundation needed to lift children out of poverty and into secondary education to ensure a productive adult life. The women are provided an opportunity to expand their own education through literacy classes creating the confidence to serve as role models for their children and other women.

Systemic change will only truly continue through your prayers and support. There are many mothers with young children in Madagascar whose stories have yet to be told; children who will

grow into young women and men whose lives will be forever changed because of your support. Please continue your support of the life changing projects dedicated to the well-being of the people of Madagascar in the hopes of a truly better tomorrow.

Thank you for helping serve as change agents in Madagascar where children and women can realize their dreams. Please consider this important mission a part of your giving both personally and through your local associations. Gifts are welcome and gratefully accepted at any time. Please help today by mailing your gift to Madagascar Twinning Project, LCUSA National Service Center, 850 Main Street, Kansas City, Missouri 64105.

Introducing: **Mary Smith** Triple Threat Lady of Charity

Mary Smith joined the Ladies of Charity (LOC) in 1954 in her hometown of Elmira, N.Y. and has never allowed her membership to lapse. In 2010 she moved to Rochester, a city in the same diocese but without an LOC association. Mary could have chosen to drop out or to become an individual member. Instead she maintained her membership with Elmira and also joined both Binghamton and Buffalo. Mary says she wants to remain a part of the whole and also enjoys receiving the various newsletters. She responded to a recent web posting about new members in Utica, N.Y., also in the northeastern region, and said she would like to hear about special events such as the induction and attend in support when possible.

Mary Fitzgerald was the head of Catholic Charities in Elmira in 1940 and initiated the Ladies of Charity, hoping for volunteers; it was her dedication to serving persons in need that inspired Mary Smith to join. Elmira is within the Diocese of Rochester and Mary Fitzgerald was held in high esteem. Mary Smith recalls a newspaper photo of then Rochester Bishop Fulton J. Sheen kneeling in respect at the feet of Mary Fitzgerald. In 1964 the two Marys traveled to an LOC meeting in St. Louis. Mary Smith describes herself as a small town girl. St. Louis was the biggest city she had ever visited and during that visit she rode an escalator for the first time.

Mary Smith continued to attend LOC assemblies and was elected board secretary in 1990 in Hartford, Conn. In 1994 she was elected AIC representative at a delegate assembly in

Guatemala. She served in this capacity until 1998 and especially enjoyed visiting the AIC headquarters in Brussels and the cathedral in Cologne. Riding to and from a German airport in a Mercedes Benz taxi also impressed the small town girl. During her four year term she paid all her own travel expenses. She still keeps in email contact with Martha Horn of Germany and Rose de Lima of Madagascar.

Before leaving Elmira Mary served the LOC association as secretary and newsletter editor for 10 years. Her daughter Monica Ellsworth has succeeded her in the same position. Saying she wants to wear out rather than rust out, Mary continues to volunteer in many ways. She is a member of the inter-faith Coalition for Anti-Human Trafficking; the diocesan public policy committee; Catholic Daughters of America; and she is a professed secular Franciscan. Mary also is an usher at six live theaters, is an election inspector and volunteers at the library and in adult religious education at her parish. She believes that while helping others, she in turn is benefited.

While the humorous title of this profile refers to Mary as a triple threat because she belongs to three associations, she is a powerful and dedicated woman who has served in the past and present in multiple ways and she intends to continue the same commitment in the future.





Daughters of Charity help sort children's clothing for Mary's Corner.

young children. The participants inspected the clothes and put together over 300 outfits. The Daughters enjoyed this Saturday the most, doing ministry work again. A barbecue in June was another successful event as many Ladies brought their family and friends and people of all ages participated.

Mary Clinton has worked part-time at St. Louise House for seven years. Her day job is in public housing, so she is grateful for the calm and caring atmosphere in the evenings. She was taught by the Daughters of Charity in her home town of South Troy and was grateful to be present during the last three years of her elementary school principal's life. Mary is looking forward to including Junior Ladies on some of the visits. She wants them to hear the stories of these powerful women who ran schools and hospitals before such careers were open to lay women. The Ladies are aware that many associations have lost their proximity to Daughters, so they feel very blessed to develop these relationships and consider the visits one of the highlights of the month.

Give Me a Chance (GMAC) Center Daughters and Ladies in Utah



Bobby Earl helping assemble a fountain mosaic at the GMAC Center.

The GMAC Center is a ministry of the Daughters of Charity that empowers low-income women by teaching them marketable skills that will enable them to become self-sufficient. Georgina Severin wrote the following article for the GMAC website.

CHARITY. What comes to mind?

In his Encyclical Letter *Charity in Truth*, Pope Benedict XVI states,

"Love — *caritas* — is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace....

...charity is everything because, everything has its origin in God's love, everything is shaped by it, everything is directed towards it. Love is God's greatest gift to humanity, it is his promise and our hope....

...justice is inseparable from charity, and intrinsic to it."

Considering these words of Pope Benedict leads me to think of one particular group that lives charity in the way described above, in the way of love. The Ladies of Charity is an organization that began with the help and inspiration of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Louise de Marillac, and a group of very generous women in 17th century France. Since then, Ladies of Charity have been serving those in need with love, offering their "personal gift of self, of time, devotion, sacrifices, and perseverance in the effort to bring dignity to each person and to respond with compassion to every human misery." (LCUSA website)

So what does this have to do with Give Me a Chance? We at GMAC are so blessed and proud to have the President of the Ladies of Charity of Bountiful, Utah serving on our Advisory Committee and as a volunteer in many capacities. Bobby Earl has been a Lady of Charity for four years now, practicing *caritas* and justice through Christmas projects for families in need, running the food pantry in Bountiful, helping at the Center of Hope, participating in fundraisers for good works, and generally practicing generosity whenever she can. In addition to her work on our Advisory Committee for GMAC, she actively participates on our Garden Committee and currently comes into GMAC weekly to help Sister Maria with the fountain mosaic project. With Bobby, the task at hand seems to be not as important as how the task is completed. Charity must be rooted in love.

Bobby was born and raised in Salt Lake City, has two children, four grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. She is, without a doubt, a great model for her family, friends, and those with whom she works. Bobby writes that as she has seen people go through the GMAC program, "it has been so fun to watch the transition to happy confident women."

A Perfect Storm of Events— The Little Cross That Could

Every two years the Ladies of Charity in Little Rock, Ark., organize a "Pay It Forward" fundraising project. Each participant receives five dollars and is encouraged to make it grow. The proceeds are used to support ongoing programs such as helping to purchase medicine, help with emergency housing and supplies for a pregnancy resource center.

Susan Johnson, a member since 2014, used her five dollars to buy a bottle of Mod Podge, used as glue, sealer and finish for decoupage creations. She is a sign language interpreter



Sr. Elizabeth Greim displays the check donated by Susan Johnson.

end, was sold for \$300.

On the evening that the funds were to be brought in, the Ladies had a guest speaker, Sr. Elizabeth Greim, DC, who had just been named the new director of Jericho Way, DePaul USA, a day resource center for the homeless. Sr. Elizabeth gave a clear and moving talk about the plight of the homeless, their struggles and needs and the many opportunities that abound for charitable acts of kindness. People who are homeless need more than donations of food and blankets. They often need identification in order to cash checks, enter night shelters, obtain bus passes, etc. The cost for copies of birth certificates needed to get the identification is the first hurdle.

Susan donated her Pay it Forward funds toward Jericho Way and designated that all of the proceeds from the cross be used for the payment of document fees. Myra commented on the LCUSA website: "Susan is a very talented young woman. As we say in our profession, 'She has a deaf heart'. This means she is very empathetic with our deaf population. As I have come to know her more, I know she has a soft heart for all living creatures. This was an awesome project way to go. Thank u God."

A combination of talents and generosity provide an excellent example of Vincentian collaboration.

for the deaf in a local school district. "It was during a snow-storm, with school closed, that the coiled cross was born out of cabin fever," she says, from magazines she had on hand, along with scissors, a needle and a cork.

Pleased with the results, she "posted (boasted)" it on Facebook. Several people wanted to buy it, but she had only the one. The idea of an auction developed. She informed bidders that the proceeds would benefit the Ladies of Charity, a Vincentian organization that helps the less fortunate. "A friendly and energetic bidding war ensued." The popular little cross gained much attention and at the auction's



The little cross that could.

LOC and SVDP in Buffalo



Ladies of Charity of St. Greg's loaded an SVDP truck with donations for the diocesan LOC Center.

Ladies of Charity (LOC) who volunteer in the Lots of Clothes Thrift Store sort clothing donations carefully. Garments which are inappropriate for the store (soiled, out of season or badly out of date) are bagged and saved for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP). For the year 2015, through mid-August, 720 bags of clothing and 23 boxes of other miscellaneous merchandise have been donated.

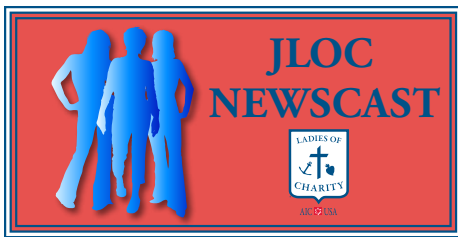
Diocesan President James Byron reports that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in Buffalo is happy to receive clothing donations from the Ladies of Charity.

When clothing bags are picked up by their trucks at the Ladies of Charity store, the clothing is taken to the SVDP warehouse, where it is unloaded and sorted. The clothing that can be used in the discount store in the same building is taken there. This clothing is either sold in the store, or available at no charge to the needy when they present a voucher issued by a St. Vincent de Paul Society parish conference. The remaining clothing which cannot be used in the store is then "baled" by a machine which basically compresses the clothing into 1,000 pound bales for shipping to a clothing broker. The broker performs a further sort, separating unusable clothing for salvage (rags) and usable clothing for shipment to be sold in consignment shops, as well as exported to second and third world countries.

In this way, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul realizes revenue from the sale of clothing donated by the Ladies of Charity. Most importantly, this revenue is used to offset discount store expenses of employing individuals, as well as supporting the Society's dining room, where up to 300 meals per day, five days per week, are served to the needy at no cost to the guests.

The Ladies of Charity of St. Gregory the Great Parish in the Diocese of Buffalo have been blessed with the cooperation and assistance of men from the parish SVDP for many years. The Ladies hold an annual household goods collection

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New Group Organized in Albany, New York

Beth De Angelis

Twelve young women were installed in June as Junior Ladies of Charity in the Diocese of Albany. The group is based at St. Matthew's Church in Voorheesville and is innovative as all the members are students in Voorheesville Central Schools. This group complements another JLOC association in Albany formed of students from the Academy of the Holy Names. Faith Cunningham had also been active dur-

ing the formation of the Juniors group during the last year. She graduated from high school earlier in June, so she was installed as a Lady of Charity during the same ceremony.

The new group of Juniors is very committed to serving others. They have sent shoe boxes filled with Christmas gifts to children in Zimbabwe; organized activities and brought Easter baskets to the children at Copson House (St. Catherine's Center for Children); visited the Daughters of Charity; sorted clothes for Mary's Corner; and held a bake sale to raise funds for their projects.

Sr. Mary Grace Higgins, DC, helped



New Juniors in Albany are beaming after their installation.

prepare the girls by sharing the history of the founding of the Ladies of Charity, Daughters and Sisters of Charity and Juniors as part of the Vincentian Family. The group is inviting Ladies of Charity to visit and share some of the wisdom gained through their ministries.

LCUSA welcomes the newest association of Junior Ladies of Charity.

Helping Close to Home

Mary Diederich

The Junior Ladies of Charity at St. Louise de Marillac received \$75 as a share in the 2015 LCUSA grant to all the Junior groups in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the group chose to use the funds to help a fellow parishioner in need. The day began with raking leaves, weeding, removing dead shrubs and planting flowers. All the outdoor tasks were completed despite the threat of rain. Once inside the girls divided the work.



Windows were cleaned, furniture dusted, carpeting vacuumed, refrigerator sanitized and floors swept. They also swept and tidied up the rear porch area. To complete their project, a man from the parish will donate his time to replace a railing. The recipient was very grateful and the Juniors enjoyed spending their time, strength and energy helping someone in need. The beauty of the clean environment left behind, filled with the goodness of the Juniors, is a simple but tangible example of reaching out to someone living on the margins of society.



Photo above and left: Juniors from St. Louise De Marillac helping a fellow parishioner.

JLOC Kansas City



Above: Juniors in Kansas City crowned the Blessed Mother statue in a Rosary Garden they maintained during the summer.

Right: Junior Ladies in Kansas City making rosaries for residents of a assisted living facility.





JLOC St. Anthony's Parish

LOC of St. Anthony's Parish in Calvert County, Md., awarded scholarships to three Juniors toward their continuing education. Pictured are Susan Wilson, LOC president on the left; Gabrielle Kaphart, JLOC member for three years, fourth from the left; Bunny Tate, JLOC moderator, fourth from the right; and Jacquilyn Johnson, JLOC member for three years, third from the right. Fatima Quintana, a member for two years, also won a scholarship but was not present for the picture.

JLOC Buffalo

Top right: Nine new JLOC received a blessed charm during an induction ceremony at St. Mary of the Assumption Church, Lancaster, Diocese of Buffalo.

Right: Janice Ferguson (standing right) is the chair of the school backpack program in Buffalo. LOC is a site for work experience for student interns from the Olmsted Center for the Visually Impaired. The intern filled over 600 packs with age-appropriate school supplies. Juniors worked to help assemble the backpacks for family groups.



First American Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity

Sister Kathleen Appler, DC, was elected Superioress General of the worldwide community at the General Assembly of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris in May. She is the first American to hold this position and only the second who is not French. Her appointment is for six years and she may continue for another six years if re-elected at the next General Assembly. There are 16,179 Daughters of Charity living and serving in 94 countries. The community is divided into 60 provinces and one region. Sr. Kathleen has been serving as a member of the Daughters' General Council in Paris since 2009. Prior to that, she was Provincial of the Daughters' former Northeast United States Province based in Albany, N.Y.

A native of Utica, N.Y., Sr. Kathleen entered the Community of the Daughters of Charity in 1973 and marked 42 years of vocation in 2015. She has served in education, administra-



DAUGHTERS
of CHARITY
PROVINCE of ST. LOUISE

tion, vocation and formation ministries. She taught in Syracuse, N.Y., Bridgeport, Conn., Utica, N.Y. and Wilmington, Del. Sr. Kathleen served at St. John's Parish Center in Brooklyn from 1995-2000 and was the local superior for part of that period. In 1999 she moved into governance for the province and resided in Albany until her appointment in Paris in 2009.

Lillian Mazurowski, a Lady of Charity in Utica, was a volunteer at Our Lady of Lourdes School while Sr. Kathleen was principal from 1985-1995. Lillian's husband died suddenly. She recalls Sr. Kathleen as very supportive, encouraging Lillian to pray to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, who had also been widowed as a young woman.

A 1970 graduate of Utica Catholic Academy, Sr. Kathleen studied at Maria Regina College in Syracuse; Sacred Heart University in Bridgeport; the State University of New York at Cortland; and the Center for Spirituality at Work in Denver.

Networking: Another Name for Collaboration and Advocacy

Lucy Ann Saunders, LCUSA Past President & CCJAC Member

The Charles County Maryland Justice & Advocacy Council (CCJAC), under the auspice of the Archdiocese of Washington, has set into action the networking of county agencies and non-profit organizations known as the Charles County Service and Advocacy Network (CCSAN).

The steering committee includes representatives from various church denominations, Catholic Charities and other non-profit agencies in the county. The first meeting in March at Forest Park Baptist Church in Waldorf, Md., focused on the direction of health care in Charles County and was the first of three scheduled for this year. The presenter was Howard Haft, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Health Partners, Inc., a non-profit organization with a paid staff of two registered nurses assisted by volunteer doctors and dentists who treat individuals without health insurance. Small breakout groups allowed everyone to have input in the discussion. With stimulating conversation, sharing of new ideas and the information presented, networking of organizations began as individuals discovered connections which would complement current health care services.

The second meeting in July focused on a panel presentation. Topics discussed were transportation, adult education programs

and job sources. The half-day session began with discussion on the day-to-day impact of the lack of transportation throughout the county and the lack of technical skills needed for the job market. Panel members described opportunities already available for people who need training as well as the availability of on-site job training. The employment center announced that a mobile unit with 10 computers was available to come to any location in the county. That was news to many present. Again the opportunity to network and discover various avenues of assistance was met with enthusiasm. Brochures and business cards were exchanged as dialogue continued. Networking at these two meetings led to the opportunity to collaborate. The CCSAN believes that this type of networking enriches its goal of advocacy.

A third meeting is scheduled for October when agencies will be afforded another chance to network. Times are changing and new avenues of bringing resources together in one place have sparked interest in service and fellowship providers as they market their knowledge and skills to each other for the betterment of their community. The concept of networking at the county level has resulted in mutual collaboration and advocacy in southern Maryland.

Ladies of Charity: An Inspiration for Seminarians

Two young men studying for the priesthood at Christ the King Seminary in the Diocese of Buffalo participated in the activities at the Ladies of Charity Center as part of their education. They offer these reflections on their experience.

According to Dan Ulmer, "What I find most amazing about volunteering at the Ladies of Charity is the number of people who are dedicated to serving the less fortunate. Their approach to focusing on the dignity of each person who walks in the door is inspiring and is a good reminder of how everyone should be treated regardless of their circumstances. It is a comfort to know that I can help future parishioners get in touch with the Ladies of Charity who will help them in



Seminarian Dan Ulmer



Seminarian Michael Daum

numerous ways to get back on their feet."

Michael Daum describes his experience: "The Ladies of Charity have had a great effect on my journey towards the priesthood. Some days you meet people who are homeless and are in need of clothing. Other days you meet generous people who are willing to donate needed items. Still other times you are working with the Ladies themselves to bring dignity to those who often do not

experience it. In all these scenarios, one experiences an outpouring of the holy virtue of charity, which St. Vincent de Paul describes as 'the cement which binds communities to God and persons to one another.' In this outpouring of charity I have been able to clearly see the path that has been laid out for me."

Travels in the Northeastern Region

Kathleen Sieracki, Regional V.P.

During the last few months I had the opportunity to meet Ladies of Charity from several associations in the Northeastern Region. In May I attended a meeting in Elmira, N.Y. There are about 60 members in the group. Once a month members prepare a meal for up to 150 people at a community kitchen. Some women hold a monthly birthday party at a nursing home and others lead collections of food and paper products for pantries in rural areas. Recognizing that many groups sponsor Christmas gifts for people in need, the Elmira LOC choose to emphasize Easter instead and make about 200 gift baskets each year for children and adults with special needs. The group's primary fundraiser is a rummage and bake sale. President Deborah Sullivan led a discussion on how to celebrate their 75th anniversary this year. Members decided to donate \$750 to the community kitchen in recognition of the anniversary. The association has women who lead particular committees. However, membership, fundraising and publicity are considered everyone's responsibility.

In June I traveled to the Albany, N.Y. area, accompanied by two leaders of the Buffalo association, President Marilyn Leslie and Junior Ladies of Charity (JLOC) Moderator Marian Snyder. Our primary purpose was to visit Sr. Mary Grace Higgins, DC, former Vincentian Spiritual Moderator in Buffalo. However, by the grace of God, many opportunities to meet other members of the Vincentian Family abounded. We were pleased to attend the 45th



Ladies and Daughters of Charity dine and network at Kathy Kavanaugh's home.

Anniversary Mass of the Albany LOC which featured the reception of 15 new members. When asked, one of the new members said she had joined because a friend invited her. Another highlight of the Mass was the reception of 12 founding members of a new JLOC group. The Albany Ladies operate two locations of Mary's Corner, serving families with young children in a variety of ways and are considering a third location. They also collaborate with other community groups in the city of Cohoes in a Bridges Out of Poverty program. "Saturdays with the Sisters," a monthly visit to the Daughters of Charity retirement home is a successful new project, described more fully in another article in this issue.

In the same week we traveled to Utica, N.Y., and met with the Ladies of Charity there. They are a small group who welcomed three new members that day. Outgoing president Janet Saville is the daughter of one of the original presidents. The Utica area is the home of Sr. Kathleen Appler, the recently elected Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity worldwide. In response to their reception

into the Ladies of Charity, one of the new members said "Thank you for asking us and showing the way." The association recently had a Day of Reflection based on St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Describing their regular study of Vincentian history, a woman stated that it "puts things in perspective in today's life."

Sr. Paula Mayer, DC, is their Vincentian Spiritual Moderator, and also manages a food pantry and clothes closet. The new members are drawn from volunteers at the pantry. Sr. Paula composed a "Special Prayer for a New Lady of Charity:"

"Sing to the Lord a new song. What is this song? It does not consist of words; it is not a melody; it is the song of your life to be identified with that of Jesus. It is sharing his sentiments, his thoughts, his actions. And the life of Jesus is a life for others. It is a life of service. These words came from Pope Francis yet they remind us of your lives. Your lives are shared with others and for the good of the less fortunate. Thank you for sharing your lives with us in the Ladies of Charity. We feel blessed in having you as members and look forward to working with you for many years to come."

Following the meeting, everyone formed an assembly line to make sandwiches for the parish outreach program.

There are five LOC associations in the Albany Diocese. LCUSA Board Member Kathy Kavanaugh invited representatives from each of the groups to



Ladies and Juniors were installed at Mass in Albany.

Continued — see page 13

Ladies of Charity Nourish Communities

Rachael Sutherland

Published in the Intermountain Catholic

For the past decade, the Ladies of Charity have served Utah's poor with "simplicity, humility, and charity" by administering services to ease the burden of circumstances brought on by poverty.

Part of the international Vincentian community of ministries, the Ladies of Charity was founded in 1617 by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac in France. A Utah chapter of the Ladies of Charity was established in 2003 by Sr. Charlotte Marie Clark at St. Olaf Parish in Bountiful, and focused on providing food to community members through a food bank and food delivery service.

After working within the diocesan school system and visiting low-income families, Sr. Charlotte Marie "discovered that they needed more than tuition assistance," and established the Ladies to deliver food to the families, regardless of religious denomination, according to Sr. Germaine Sarrazin, the current moderator of the Bountiful chapter, who has been a professed member of the Daughters of Charity for 56 years.

Within two years, a second Ladies of Charity chapter associated with Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was formed to better serve the community in the Salt Lake City area. While the St. Olaf Parish's 30 Ladies of Charity seek to supply the local food bank and organize places for families to pick up food, the Salt Lake City's 25 chapter members' "biggest thing is delivering a box of food to people," noted former chapter president Jenny McDonald.

"We have about 30 families that we are presently taking care of," most of whom are working poor, said McDonald. "There are people in the households working, but they have low-paying jobs, and they're one vehicle repair away from financial



Photo by Chris Young

Ladies of Charity distribute backpacks in Salt Lake City.

disaster, so this is just one way of easing the grocery bill."

On the first Tuesday of every month, the Ladies drive to selected homes to deliver boxes of groceries; the second Tuesday of every month they host an open pantry for families.

"Home delivery is very vital" to the operations of the Ladies of Charity, but McDonald adds that both chapters hold clothing drives, bake sales and other fundraisers supported by their parishes to provide further help to poor families, including seasonal programs to adopt families during the holidays and a more recent project of micro-lending in Haiti. The Ladies even have a "tiny medical fund" to assist families that are "unable to pay a copay," McDonald said, and a grant from the national association of the Ladies of Charity recently provided Payless gift cards to children in need of school shoes.

For the Utah chapters, reducing food costs for families "is the one thing that we're really trying to address to help alleviate the issues of living in poor circumstances," McDonald said.

On the national level, the Ladies of Charity is "working on systemic change to try to end poverty" through advocacy, said Christine Young, who serves on the group's national advocacy board and is a Western Region director of the Ladies of Charity, acts as a liaison between the local chapters and the national organization.

"On the advocacy committee, we advocate for the poor on a national level and try to make people aware" of the challenges faced by the impoverished, she said.

Each local chapter is a member of the national organization of the Ladies of Charity, and strives to work with other chapters as well. "We try to interact as much as possible, in order to work together as part of the Vincentian family," said Sr. Germaine, who provides spiritual leadership in her role as moderator for the St. Olaf chapter. Both she and Holy Cross Sister Catherine Kamphaus, the moderator for the Our Lady of Lourdes chapter, begin each meeting with a prayer, meditation, or review of their ministries to "help keep the ladies focused on the Vincentian Spirit of their mission," Sr. Germaine said.

The ministry of the Ladies of Charity reaches beyond com-



Photo by Chris Young

Food distribution in Salt Lake City.

Continued — see page 14, bottom right

Leading From the Center, Not the Top

Fr. William J. Byron, SJ

Abbreviated from an article originally published in *The Catholic Sun* Diocese of Syracuse, N.Y., May 7, 2015

I've been thinking a lot these days about the geometry of leadership. Those thoughts are prompted by invitations I've had to speak to college students about leadership and also by the recent death of a great educational leader, Holy Cross Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, and by the emergence of presidential hopefuls as the primary season begins to heat up.

By mentioning the "geometry of leadership," I'm calling attention to a top-of-the-pyramid perspective on leadership. Many impute a "king of the hill" attitude to the mind of the leader.

Draw a triangle and picture yourself at the top; the horizontal line running from left to right below can support a wide base of potential followers. They may or may not be responsive to orders from above. If they are, you are exercising leadership. If not, you are whistling in the wind. And note, by the way, the possibility of impalement that is associated with a position at the top of the triangle!

It can be lonely at the top. The top can also be an out-of-touch, can-hardly-see-you, certainly-can't hear-you perch that is usually accompanied by title and perks, but is largely ineffective as a power source or center of influence. I recommend a "center-of-the-circle" image of leadership. There you are, at the center, on a level plane, able to be seen and heard as you yourself see and hear, able to lift (encourage) and touch (pat on the back) because you are also one of the on-the-ground followers even though you carry the title of leader.

I urge students to keep in mind the geometry of leadership as they approach graduation and the world of work, indeed as they work their way toward the top of any career, understanding as they go that the top is really in the center and on common ground with their partners in the enterprise. Few business schools teach that leadership is a blend of humility and ambition. I recommend that blend, however; it is an amalgam of humility and ambition known as "hum-bition," a word worth adding to the would-be leader's vocabulary. The qualities that are needed to be a good leader in any organization are integrity, honesty,

intelligence, creativity, character, service and commitment. To gain an even fuller understanding of the nature of leadership, you have to add some additional qualities: decisiveness, compassion, respect for human dignity, persistence, perseverance, steadiness and vigor. A will to succeed has to be there too; without it, not much is likely to happen.

So there you have it, the geometry of leadership. It applies to business, politics and any form of leadership. Let those who want to lead ponder the meaning of all the qualities I've listed. Let those who elect or appoint others use these qualities as selection criteria.

Note: The LCUSA Nominating Committee is in the process of identifying candidates for the election of officers and regional directors at the 2016 national assembly. Those who are elected will serve for the 2017-2018 term. More information will be distributed to association presidents. If you are interested in joining the LCUSA Board of Directors in leading from the center, please contact Kathleen Sieracki, Chair of the Nominations Committee (kandsieracki@aol.com).

Travels in the Northeast Region

Continued from page 11

dinner at her home during our visit. Women from Albany, Saratoga Springs and Schenectady were able to attend. The opportunity to meet and exchange ideas was highly effective. The Albany area groups promised to meet again and perhaps plan a joint celebration for the 400th anniversary of Ladies of Charity in 2017. Thanks to Kathy Kavanaugh for her leadership and hospitality.

On the final morning of our visit (which had been spent enjoying the hospitality of the Daughters of Charity at De Paul House and St. Louise Residence), Sr. Denise Williams, DC, sponsored a "Makin' Bacon" breakfast fundraiser in honor of her 50 year jubilee as a Daughter. Sr. Paula is the Vincentian Spiritual Moderator for the Albany Association, and in a true spirit of collaboration donated the proceeds from the event to Mary's Corner.

During our visit, we were also privileged to be present for the reception of the body and wake service for Sr. Mary



Sr. Denise Williams (second from the left) sponsored a fundraising breakfast to benefit Mary's Corner.

Anne Brawley, DC, longtime and much beloved Vincentian Spiritual Moderator for the Ladies of Charity in Binghamton, N.Y. Sr. Mary Anne, whom we came to know during her recent few years in Buffalo, had died in Binghamton and was to be buried in Albany.

LOC and SVDP in Buffalo

Continued from page 7

to benefit the Fresh Start program of the diocesan Ladies of Charity; Fresh Start provides basic household supplies to people beginning again after crises. The Society makes its truck available for the collection and the men help with packing boxes and bags of donated items; one of the members drives the truck to the LOC Center and helps unpack. The SVDP conference also shares the money received at the collection at Mass on Thanksgiving by making a generous donation to the parish LOC to support its various outreach programs. Judy Huber is president of the LOC group and an active member of SVDP.

St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Lancaster, N.Y. is very blessed to have active longstanding groups of the SVDP, LOC and Junior Ladies of Charity (JLOC). These Vincentian groups often work together in their mission to reach out to the needy.

Each fall, SVDP at St. Mary's holds a weekend long clothing drive in the

parish parking lot and has always been very successful. A number of years ago the JLOC collaborated with the St. Vincent de Paul group and now hold a joint drive on that same weekend, with the girls collecting home furnishings for the LOC Fresh Start Program. The donation trucks are parked side by side and as parishioners pull up in their vehicles, both the men and the girls help unload the donations and place them in the appropriate truck. Parishioners have found this to be a most convenient way to clean out their closets and bring all their donations to one location at the same time. By the end of the weekend both trucks are full and over-flowing.

The Ladies of Charity also work closely with the SVDP group. Most recently, a parishioner who was transitioning to an assisted living facility called for help to empty out his household in preparation for the move. The St. Vincent de Paul group and Ladies of Charity gathered together, with the SVDP group loading up furniture, large items and some of the clothing,

and the LOC packing other clothing and the household items appropriate for the Fresh Start program. It was a win-win situation for all involved. The SVDP president will often contact the LOC Center in Buffalo when he is helping out a local family in need, looking for donations of household items or bedding to help the family. The SVDP group is also very supportive of bake sales run by the LOC and JLOC.

The LOC and JLOC groups also work together. At Christmas time the JLOC adopt two or three immigrant families. The girls purchase individual gifts for the family members and grocery gift cards, while the LOC provide the funds to purchase microwave ovens for each of the families. This past year the LOC helped deliver all the gifts to the Catholic Charities Refugee and Immigrant Center. The two groups also support each other's bake sales by baking, sharing supplies and making purchases.

Throughout the Buffalo diocese, Vincentian Family members work together toward a common goal.

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

Both the persons named and the donors will be remembered at a special Mass said by our National Spiritual Advisor, the Rev. Richard Gielow, C.M. Please use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter to submit your own intention.

| † MEMORIALS † | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <i>In Memory of</i> | <i>Bequeathed by</i> |
| Sr. Mary Ann Brawley, DC | Kathleen Sieracki |
| Dorothy "Do" Burns | Eric S. Roccario, MD |
| Regina Cutter | Kathleen Sieracki Elena Miranda |
| Michael Durlak | Roger & Kathleen Sieracki |
| Captain John F. Gietl | Dorothy M. Gietl |
| Evelyn Hummel | Kathleen Sieracki |
| Catherine M. Kane | LOC Lake Travis |
| Persons killed in South Carolina church | Susan Wilson |
| Deacon Don Schnurr | LOC Lake Travis |
| Stanley Zubik (father of Bishop Zubik) | LCUSA Board of Directors |

LOC Nourish Communities

Continued from page 12

bating poverty. Sr. Germaine noted that the group improves the spiritual development of the members and the parish, and allows the Ladies to become "very open to seeing the needs of people and helping in any way they can."

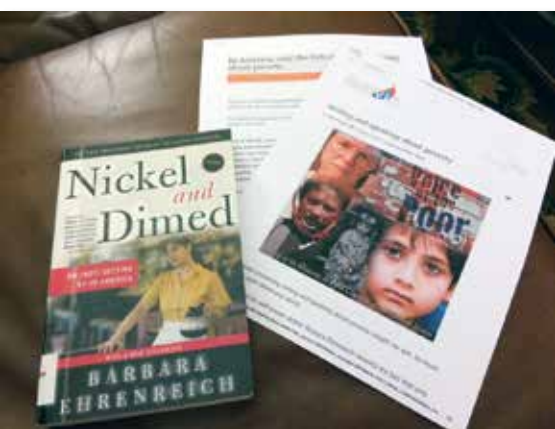
Sr. Catherine said the Ladies are "really addressing the needs of the poor" through their actions, but also emphasized the importance of the Ladies participating in the prayer ministry and its ability to unite the community.

Similarly, long-time member Rita Galster remarked how the "food touches a lot of families," but the Ladies also provide "great camaraderie and a feeling of participation within the parish."

McDonald praised the work of the Ladies of the Charity, saying "it is really a lovely, amazing humbling thing we get to do."



Above and below: The Ladies of Central Alabama held a discussion of *Nickled and Dimed* by Barbara Ehrenreich, a book which had been recommended on Famvin.



Above: St. Louis area presidents met to plan for the upcoming year: Sitting L to R: Barb Thomas, Joan Stanard, Rosemarie Vohsen, Phyllis Makowski; standing L to R, Bonnie Mulligan and Sr. Carol Schumer, DC. Claire Schemel participated via speaker phone.

Right: Mary Clinton (third from left) and Dore Schmidt (R) present a photo of the De Paul House Chapel to Daughters of Charity.



Above: Ladies of Charity Elizabeth Snyder(L) and Sharon Collichio of Albion, Diocese of Buffalo, compiled a cookbook to raise funds.



Above: Members recently inducted into the Metropolitan Kansas City Association: L to R: Bobbie Messick, Mary Adams, Linda Leggio, Joyce DeHaven, Peggy Oades, Tama Dutton, Peggy Lorenz, Anita Messer.

Below: Ladies of Charity in Los Angeles at their annual Hundred Committee Tea in May.



Marian Snyder (above) and Marilyn Leslie, both of Buffalo, teaching retired Daughters of Charity to play Mexican Train Dominoes.





“To serve rather than to be served”

Marie Madeleine de Vignerot, Duchess of Aiguillon, Collaborator of Vincent de Paul in Charity and Mission

Carol Schumer, D.C.



Duchess of Aiguillon

Twenty-three year president of the Ladies of Charity of Hôtel-Dieu, Paris, wealthy, influential and extremely giving, Marie Madeleine de Vignerot, better known as the Duchess of Aiguillon, was one of the closest friends and collaborators of Vincent de Paul in his work for persons living in poverty.

Born in 1604, Marie's main influence as a child was her mother, Françoise de Plessis, the older sister of Cardinal Richelieu, who inculcated prayer, charity and loyalty to kin. This early stimulus for generosity and family impacted Marie her entire life.

At 16, Marie married Antoine Beauvoir du Roure who was killed two years later. With no children, Marie opted to enter the Carmelites. Following her novitiate, as she prepared for vows, her uncle the cardinal, insisted that she become Lady-in-Waiting to Queen Marie de Medici. Marie was very resistant and even asked the queen if she could return to the convent. Her entreaty was refused though Marie's conservative attire alerted everyone to her discontent. Clearly, Marie's God-given disposition, her beauty and her sophistication manifested themselves, too, since she held this position for nine years.

In 1638, the region of Aiguillon was formed and Marie became its duchess. The benefit of her new status was protection of church and state. In agreeing to this title, Marie

accepted her life as a lay woman as well as the power, prestige, independence and wealth of the role. Being duchess freed her to pursue her works of charity. So, four years later, when Cardinal Richelieu died and she inherited his riches, she was able to become a major financial sponsor of many worthwhile, needy efforts.

With her money and through political advising, the duchess supported Vincent de Paul and his many endeavors regularly. He relied on her assistance. However, she was also very concerned about his health and safety. The most obvious demonstration of this care was her giving him a horse-drawn carriage for his trips around Paris and the environs. Refusing this gift, Vincent sent it back. However, when he got sick on an excursion, Marie gave it again; once more Vincent rejected it. In the end, in spite of Vincent's humility and determination, due to persistence and the intervention of Queen Anne of Austria and Archbishop Jean François de Gondi, the duchess prevailed. And, thereafter, Vincent used the coach while calling it his Ignominy, his Shame.

Vincent's death in 1660 bought deep heartache to the duchess. To show her undying affection and gratitude, she purchased a silver-plated reliquary for his heart which is still displayed in the chapel of the Daughters of Charity in Paris.

Fifteen years later, in 1675, the Duchess of Aiguillon died. Having used her wealth, position and influence for good, she impacted the lives of impoverished people throughout the region. Her memory brought tears to the eyes of the vast crowd who attended her funeral. Without a doubt, Marie's legacy lives on even today as the Ladies of Charity of the twenty-first century continue to follow in her footsteps.



Vincent's heart in reliquary,
Daughters' chapel, Paris



Marie Madeleine de
Vignerot