



## LCUSA National Service Center Relocating

In a letter to association presidents and in a website message, LCUSA President Gayle Johnson has announced that LCUSA's national office is being relocated to Kansas City, Mo. The building in St. Louis which held the national office was recently sold and LCUSA was forced to relocate for the second time in five years. Two factors influenced the decision of where to relocate. LCUSA is incorporated in Missouri so remaining in the state was a must. Also, the budget is restrictive and there was no suitable nor affordable space in St. Louis.

The postal and email addresses for the new office in Kansas City are on page 2. The new cell phone number is 816-260-3853. If you leave a message, your call will be answered as soon as possible while the office operates in a temporary space. The relocation may not be complete until early December. In the meantime, all services will be provided.

While LCUSA is in the process of hiring a new office administrator, special thanks go out to Maureen McMillan for her service to the Ladies during her tenure in the national office. She was always cheerful, willing to help and filled with a Vincentian heart. Maureen received a severance package and St. Louise medal commemorating her years of service.

Much prayer and thought was put into the decision to relocate. Please be patient and keep LCUSA in your prayers as the process moves forward. ✧

## 14TH ANNUAL LCUSA ASSEMBLY “Just Care! Vincentian Women in Action”

Christine Young

President Gayle Johnson welcomed Ladies of Charity from throughout the United States to the 14th Annual Ladies of Charity USA National Assembly held at the Hilton Milwaukee City Center Sept. 11–13. Everyone in attendance was



Above: Friday Morning Mass; left: Bishop Don Hying and Gayle Johnson; below: Marilyn Martone delivered the keynote address on Friday morning.

inspired through liturgies, keynote addresses and workshops.

In the opening Mass, the Most Rev. Donald Joseph Hying, Vicar General Auxiliary Bishop for the Milwaukee Archdiocese, said the Ladies of Charity put into action Jesus' corporal works of mercy.

Marilyn Martone spoke in her keynote address on Friday about her personal experience as a caregiver for her daughter Michelle who suffered a traumatic brain injury in an accident. “Our society puts emphasis on being strong without needing care; those who need care often say they don't want to be a burden,” she said. “Until we recognize our own vulnerability, we will not be able to care for others; not because we are stronger, but because we are one with them.” The problem is not with caregiving, but with how society perceives it, she continued. There are four points

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

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### MISSION STATEMENT

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

### VISION STATEMENT

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

## INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

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



## SERVICETTE NEWS DEADLINE

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

**January 10, 2015**

Articles and photos can be sent by e-mail to: [kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com)  
Articles and photos should be sent separately and not within the text document.

**Please contact us for info.**



**Bishop David A. Zubik**  
*Episcopal Chairman*

## The Halo Effect

Did you ever notice what I call the “halo effect”—somebody inspiring us to become holier and in turn our inspiring others to become holy, too? This halo effect was especially powerful for me at the canonization of Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II. I had the honor and blessing of being in Rome for those canonizations, leading a pilgrimage from the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

As a bishop, I was privileged to celebrate Mass along with about 1,000 other bishops from around the world. We were told to arrive at Saint Peter’s Basilica by 8:30 a.m., but because of the crowds I decided to make the short walk from the hotel shortly after 6:00 a.m. and arrived at the basilica around 6:30, two hours early. A very kind Swiss Guard allowed me to wait inside the basilica, where I went to the tomb of Pope John Paul II. The Latin inscription “Beatus” or “Blessed,” formerly on his tomb, had already been replaced by “Sanctus” or “Saint.”

In one way, it was like visiting the grave of an old friend. In 1978, I was a young priest when Karol Wojtyla was elected pope. He motivated me to “be not afraid,” to preach the Gospel, to teach the fullness of our Catholic faith and to stand up for those who have no one else to stand for them. In 1997, he touched my life in a real and crucial way when he named me a bishop and appointed me Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh. And again, in 2003, he made me Bishop of the Diocese of Green Bay.

As I sat before his tomb, I thought of the vast crowd outside, many of whom had slept in the street. I knew

that there were literally a million people who would have given their most prized possession to be where I was at that moment. I continued to pray the rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours for ninety minutes.

The halo effect of that time spent with Saint John Paul II has increased my hunger and thirst after holiness, truly a gift from God. My prayer is that you will experience your own halo effect, whether it comes from spending time with a saint who prays for you from heaven or with a saintly person in your neighborhood or workplace. May their witness and prayers inspire you to hunger and thirst after holiness. More than being spectators of that event, either several feet away from the altar as was I, or thousands of miles away, we receive the halo effect through the lives of these two new saints and the whole company of saints.

We can and should be excited and moved by the canonization of our two newest saints. It is also so important to consider the other side of the halo effect—that you and I can inspire others to holiness by our own words and deeds. In imitation of their lives, may we seek to be the halo effect on each other. ✧

## Leave a Legacy

**The work you do makes a difference.**

Please consider remembering the Ladies of Charity in your estate planning.

Contact the LCUSA Service Center for legacy planning information.



## President's Message

**Gayle Johnson**  
*LCUSA President*

*Extend your mercy towards other, so that there can be no one in need whom you meet without helping.*

St. Vincent de Paul

What wonderful stories you have to tell...the young man in a restorative justice program who visits your thrift shop wanting help in finding suitable attire for his first job interview; the single mother struggling to support her family who asks for help in learning how to budget; women immigrants

who attend your English as a second language classes; women in your safe homes who participate in your craft therapy programs; the elderly in nursing facilities whom you visit, read to and join for social activities. These interactions not only reflect your love and care for the marginalized but begin relationships that help transform lives. It's wonderful what a touch, a smile, a kind word, or a listening ear can do for the spirit. Each is evidence of caring about another. These smallest acts of caring may turn a life around. Just as Vincent asked the early Ladies and Daughters to carry the message that God loved them on their visits to the poor, you must carry the same message of hope and love. The bonds of trust and love you build may provide a basis for renewal.

Continue to do the work you do so well, but add to your mission advocacy on issues that will change the patterns that hold people in poverty. Become a voice for those who have no voice in our society. Speak as an individual or as an association and support Catholic social teaching on these issues. Collaborate with other members of the Vincentian Family, with Catholic Charities, and other organizations as they attempt to make these changes. If you feel comfortable, become an instrument for change in your parish or diocese. Throughout our history the Vincentians, beginning with Vincent and Louise, have approached those in power to try to alleviate the suffering of individuals living in poverty. Can we do less? ♦

## LCUSA GRANTS: PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION



*Albe McGurk sharing lunch with an Urban Ranger in Kansas City.*

As part of its mission to support local associations, LCUSA annually offers three different grant opportunities: Kathleen Hager Grants, Diane Downey Reading Enrichment Grants, and the recently established Junior Ladies of Charity Grants.

Initiated in 2008, grants funded through a bequest from Kathleen Hager are intended to assist associations build relationships with persons they serve and alleviate poverty. Associations may apply for up to \$1000. Full criteria and guidelines are available on the LCUSA website ([aic.ladiesofcharity.us/resources/LCUSA](http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us/resources/LCUSA) forms). In 2014, 10 associations received grants totaling \$7500. In the Mid-Atlantic Region, St. Anthony of Padua Parish in North Beach, Md., was awarded \$500 to help with emergency medical and dental costs. The

Ladies of Madonna/Word of God Church in Pittsburgh received an \$800 grant to expand service to women recovering from substance abuse. In the Northeast Region, Buffalo was awarded \$800 for the purchase of new underwear for people referred to its thrift store for assistance. The Ladies in Utica, N.Y., received \$500 for baby supplies at two outreach centers. There were three successful applicants in the North Central Region. The \$600 awarded to Kansas City enabled that association to expand its sandwich program with the Urban Rangers, a group of at-risk youth. The Milwaukee Ladies used a \$900 grant to provide new underwear and socks for school children. Each child received five new pairs of socks and underwear, and as of September, 215 children had been outfitted. The Ladies of Perryville, Mo., received \$500 to help support their food pantry. The Bastrop, Texas association in the Southern Region utilized its \$1000 grant to purchase a computer to support collaboration with the county emergency services department in providing health workshops and money management classes. There were two grantees in



*Beth Boemer packing underwear and socks in Milwaukee*

*Continued — see p. 18*

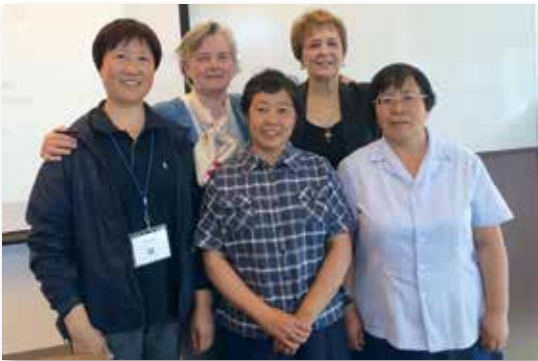
# LCUSA GLOBAL OUTREACH

## BRIDGING TWO CULTURES

Gayle Johnson

A delegation of 25 Sister Superiors from mainland China arrived in the United States in June to participate in a leadership institute and cultural sharing of pastoral work held at DePaul University in Chicago. Fr. Hugh O'Donnell and Sr. Patricia Bombard led the program. The sisters had brief stops in New York City and Washington, D.C., before journeying to Chicago. In New York the St. John's University association had the opportunity to attend Mass with the sisters.

Laurence de la Brosse, president of the International Association of Charities (AIC), and I arrived in Chicago on June 30 to begin a three day sojourn with the Chinese sisters. We attended Mass in



Laurence de la Brosse (left rear) and Gayle Johnson with students

Chinese each morning in the DePaul chapel. The sisters sang the prayers in a two part format that sounded very much

like Gregorian chant. It was very beautiful and inspiring. With the help of two interpreters, Fr. Joseph Lin and Deacon Thomas Gao, we participated in the interactive sessions as we discussed the qualities and characteristics of servant leadership. The first day Sr. Patricia spoke on spiritual development and introduced the role of the human brain in our thinking and development of empathy. There was much sharing at the individual tables and on the third morning after a presentation by Grace Chen-McClone, several sisters role played various situations met in pastoral work. At each table we then discussed the part empathy plays in our relationships and brought up other examples found in our ministries and in the Gospels. The first two evenings we met with 10-12 of the Chinese sisters and discussed our individual works.

The sisters are planning to form lay volunteer associations to help in their pastoral work. They have waiting lists of parishioners who want to work with the sick and aged and those living in poverty. Several of the religious orders are interested in forming associations of AIC in China and wanted to know how to get started. Laurence had spent several weeks with a small group of Ladies from



Chinese visitors in the leadership workshop

the international board in mainland China in the fall of 2012, visiting the provinces and ministries. Laurence and I gave a presentation on AIC the afternoon of the first day and left materials with each sister. During our evening sessions we answered questions.

The Chinese sisters are young and inspired to do Christ's work with the sick, aged, and poor. The majority of these sisters have birth dates in the 1970s and are the heads of their orders. They are living the spirit of evangelization of the Church in China. Visiting with them was another of the transforming experiences I have had since being a part of the Ladies of Charity. ✧

*Happy are those who consume their lives for the service of our Lord, as he himself consumed his for the salvation of mankind.*

St. Vincent de Paul

## AIC REPORT

MARGARET HANSON

The 2015 AIC Statutory Assembly will be held March 22-27 in Antigua, Guatemala. Those elected to the executive board (EB) for the following two years will also meet March 27-30. The meeting is considered an intermediate assembly for the primary purpose of electing 12 members to the EB. While the statutes (bylaws) provide for a board of up to 16 members, the current EB unanimously agreed to limit the number

to 12 for reasons of cost and efficiency.

Topics on the assembly agenda include involving members in the preparation for the 400th anniversary of the founding of AIC, the Church's oldest social service organization; review of progress in forming relationships with those who are poor; and evaluation by questionnaire of the spiritual emphasis in the organization. Some preparation for the anniversary is already in effect through the engagement of two theology and media consultants who are to

separately review the spiritual and practical activities of members. They may also design a chart and create a slogan to reflect the work of AIC.

It is worth remembering the advice of Sr. Francois Petit, a counselor for the Daughters of Charity: Let the 400th anniversary bring us to re-live the trace of God in the first Ladies of Charity and revive their missionary zeal, to find ways to bring us together and to use scripture as a source of joy. Thus we communicate the values that drive us. ✧

## ANNUAL TWINNING WITH AIC MADAGASCAR

Debbie Chadwick



Student in vocational training

As Ladies of Charity in the United States (LCUSA), we join the 150,000 members of the International Association of Charities (AIC) in 53 national associations around the world dedicated to the mission of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. We are called to carry on the mission they began in 1617 by continuing the struggle against all forms of poverty and marginalization not only at home but also throughout the world.

Madagascar is an island in the Indian Ocean, 250 miles off the east coast of Africa. Over the course of several years, AIC USA has formed a special bond with the AIC volunteers (members) in Madagascar, offering both prayer and financial support for their efforts, especially for initiatives targeted toward women and their children. This bond is called twinning. AIC Madagascar expresses sincere appreciation for the help LCUSA provides.

Merline is one example of the women served by the volunteers and their programs. Her children are able to attend a school which AIC built to help students move out of poverty through a strong educational foundation. Merline raises chickens to support her family. The children help when they have completed their studies, making the business a true family effort. Merline told AIC workers that she plans to purchase blankets for her children to keep them warm this winter, using profits from the independent business AIC helped her start.

Merline is just one example of the many women in Madagascar touched by the generosity of LCUSA members and associations. Vocational training courses such as sewing teach skills while creating social links that serve as an important support for the women engaged in the training. In Madagascar 245 children receive literacy and supplemental food while AIC also works with 700 women like Merline, providing literacy classes which create the confidence to break free of poverty. While the twinning project is working, AIC Madagascar still needs LCUSA support to continue life giving projects dedicated to the well-being of their community and to the hope for a better tomorrow.

Systemic change is truly taking place and will continue through prayers, support, and efforts to help children grow into adults who are successful members of their society, who in turn will continue the growth of systemic change. There are many young children in Madagascar whose stories have yet to be told, children who will grow into the young women and men whose lives will be changed forever because of this support. There are many adults who are learning along with their children and see education and small business endeavors as paths to independence and self-reliance.

Thank you for helping create an environment for systemic change in



Madagascar where children and women can realize their dreams. Please consider this important mission as 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 the LCUSA National Service Center. A collection also was taken up at the 2014 national assembly in Milwaukee. In 2013, the total amount raised in support of AIC Madagascar was \$5000. ✦

For additional information: AIC MADAGASCAR-Web:[aic-madagascar.org](http://aic-madagascar.org)



On the occasion of the opening of the 69th session of the United Nations General Assembly in September, the Archdiocese of New York hosted its annual prayer service and reception in honor of the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations. LCUSA President-elect **Mary Ann Dantuono** had the opportunity to speak to the secretary-general, **Ban Ki-moon**, and express the prayerful support of the Ladies of Charity AIC-USA for the efforts to build peace.

that frame caregiving: there is a theological foundation; caregiving is personal; caregiving is contextual; and caregiving is work. Caregiving needs to be everyone's responsibility, not just women's, she said, adding that "18 percent of older women are cared for by a spouse, while 53 percent of men are cared for by a spouse."

Daughter of Charity Sr. Germaine Price talked about caring in the Vincentian way. "Care is both affective and effective, but first we must trust in God," she said. "The truth is that we all need care. Selfless giving day in and day out is not always easy. ... Listen to the poor and be their friend – God speaks to us in the people we serve; that spirit is already in our hearts." Those with a Vincentian heart will keep on caring no matter what the cost.

In the Saturday keynote, Kim Bobo of Interfaith Worker Justice spoke about some of the difficulties faced by workers in the United States today. She urged her listeners to support both a gradual increase in the federal minimum wage and the establishment of a standard for paid sick leave. For further information and updates, contact [kbobo@iwj.org](mailto:kbobo@iwj.org).

The love and care Dorothy Day gave the hungry and poor through the Catholic Worker Movement was shown in clips from the movie "Entertaining Angels." Confirm, challenge and change were the key words discussed afterward.

International Association of Charities (AIC) Representative Margaret Hanson provided an update on international activities and preparations for the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the organization. Natalie Boone, a Lady of Charity from St. John's University who, along with Margaret Cashin, serves as an observer for AIC at the United Nations, described how issues involving women and poverty are monitored. Natalie also introduced the song "One Woman: A Song for UN Women," available on YouTube. Several workshops highlighting local service providers also supported the assembly theme.

LCUSA thanks co-chairs Mary Domer and Mary Johnson and all the Ladies of Charity of Milwaukee for their careful planning and hospitality and urges everyone to save the date for the 2015 national assembly, Sept. 17-19, at the Marriott Hotel on Canal St. in New Orleans. ♦



a. Evelyn Beyer (left) and friends boarding a tour bus  
b. Ann Peffen (left) and Debbie Chadwick  
c. Heart to heart, Marge Cashin (left) and Betty Wasielewski  
d. Person to person connection  
e. Natalie Boone, AIC Representative to the UN



f. Maria Freiburg (L) and Winona Nelson  
g. Maureen McMillan taking the roll call  
h. Kim Bobo, Saturday keynote speaker  
i. Installation of officers



# *In Memoriam*

## **Doris Hoag**

1931-2014

**Ladies of Charity USA (LCUSA) President 1994-1998**

**AIC Representative 1998-2006**

Margaret Hanson and Albe McGurk

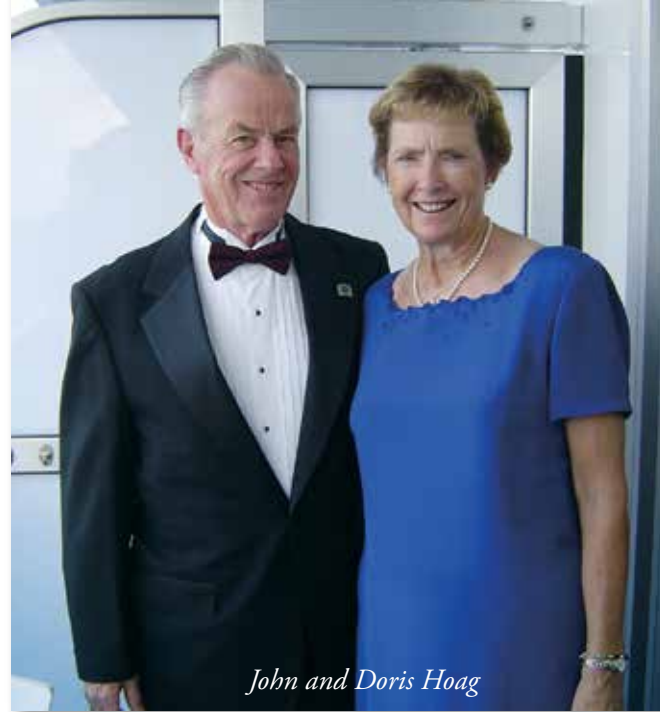
**W**e were at the national assembly in Milwaukee when we received the news that Doris had suffered a stroke. Her daughter Suzanne Johnson, soon to be installed as the next LCUSA President-Elect, immediately left to be with her father and family. All sorts of emotions and memories come when you receive news of this kind.

Doris was first and foremost a wife and mother. She and her husband John had 10 children, 37 grandchildren and 18 great grandchildren. For the ordinary woman this would have been enough, but Doris was not an ordinary woman. In addition to attending nursing school and working as an RN, Doris volunteered at school, church and various organizations. She enjoyed reading, quilting, golf, dominos, bridge, dancing and traveling. She had a fun loving spirit and liked a good party.

Doris lived a truly Vincentian life, exemplifying "To serve rather than be served in Humility Simplicity and Charity." After becoming a Lady of Charity in 1977, Doris worked tirelessly in various activities of the local association and served as the President of the Kansas City Metropolitan Association in 1988-89.

During her tenure as the LCUSA President much was accomplished by her enthusiasm, hard work and cheerful demeanor. She encouraged local associations to add to their membership and promoted the initiation and formulation of a long range plan. Doris not only found a new meeting place for the spring board meeting at the Franciscan Prayer Center in Independence, Mo., when the Daughters of Charity closed a previous site, but also with the help of the Vincentian fathers was able to relocate the National Service Center to their provincial office building. Doris oversaw the production and sale of a pocket calendar and a national cookbook in time for the 1996 Biennial Meeting in Cleveland.

It was Doris' insight that in order to grow and expand the organization of the Ladies of Charity as the new century approached, change must occur. Under her guidance LCUSA considered ways in which it could be better prepared to serve those in need. During the biennial meeting in Cleveland workshops on leadership motivated the members to realize their potential and provided inspiration to participate in the organization more



*John and Doris Hoag*

fully. Doris introduced the tradition of a shared breakfast for association presidents and regional vice-presidents at the annual meeting as a way to share ideas and provide an opportunity for presidents to know better their regional vice president. In 1998 in Orlando, Doris presided over the first national assembly LCUSA held independently of Catholic Charities USA, a practice continued successfully to this day.

When her term of office as President of LCUSA ended, Doris went on to serve as the representative of LCUSA on the executive board of the International Association of Charities (AIC).

Laurence de la Brosse, AIC president, said "she was so very dynamic, ready to help, full of joy, a genuine member of the AIC family."

I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. (2Timothy 4:7) ✦

## **STRENGTH IN NUMBERS**

**Francine Hovanec, Membership Committee**

*We should assist the Poor in every way and do it both by ourselves and by enlisting the help of others... to do this is to preach the gospel by word and by work.*

*St. Vincent de Paul*

The LCUSA Membership Committee is encouraging you to take advantage of the Membership Drive Award being offered to associations who increase their membership by the greatest percentage. The awards will be based only on

new members who join between April 1, 2014 and April 1, 2015. Non-active members who return may not be counted as new.

Knowing that Ladies of Charity often take their "humility" to the extreme by not presenting and showcasing their good works, there is a need to tell others and invite them to join in our mission. Share with them the satisfaction of serving the poor so that they may also reap the benefits of God's grace. Challenge each other to introduce the Vincentian Spirit to others and increase our numbers throughout the United States. ✦

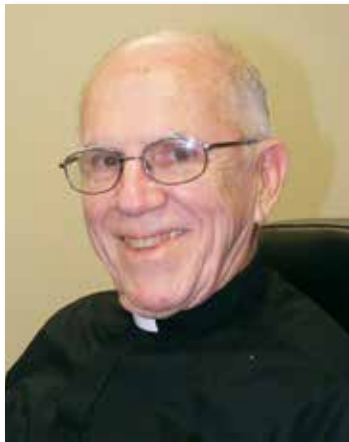
# A TRIBUTE TO FATHER JACK MELITO, CM

Mary Ann Morovitz

The Reverend Jack Melito, editor of the *Servicette* 2001-2008, died suddenly Friday, July 18. A treasured family member, friend, companion, mentor and teacher, he will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. Fr. Jack had just returned to St. Louis after his annual visit with family and friends in his hometown of New Orleans.

Fr. Jack's official name is Ignatius M. Melito. He was born July 8, 1926, in New Orleans, the oldest of three children. Fr. Jack's Vincentian spirit blossomed early as he attended elementary school at St. Joseph's Parish, staffed by the Daughters of Charity. He continued his Vincentian studies at St. Vincent's College, Cape Girardeau, Mo. Fr. Jack was ordained May 20, 1951, after completing his studies of philosophy and theology at St. Mary's of the Barrens in Perryville, Mo.

God directed the roots of Fr. Jack's life to reach out, touch and intertwine with the lives of many. He spent the greater part of his life teaching in seminaries in Los Angeles, Denver and St. Louis. He also served as the Spiritual Director of the Daughters of Charity West Central Province from 1976 until 1985 and was one of the archivists for the Midwest Province of the Congregation of the Mission (CM). Fr. Jack acquired a PhD in English. He loved literature and writing and wrote or edited a number of books, articles and texts about the life of St. Vincent de Paul. From 1989 until 1996 he was the editor of the CM's Midwest Province newsletter, and contributed to the publication until



his death. From 2003 until 2010 he was one of the proofreaders for a project of the translation of the letters and writings of St. Vincent de Paul.

From 1998 until his death Fr. Jack served the members of St. Catherine Laboure Parish in St. Louis. In addition to his priestly duties he wrote inspirational articles published in the weekly bulletin. At the time of his death Fr. Jack was the spiritual advisor for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. There were more than 40 priests at his funeral Mass. Family members were joined by many Daughters of Charity and numerous parishioners and friends.

The Ladies of Charity and fellow parishioners of St. Catherine's will miss being greeted by the warm and friendly smile of one of their mentors. His words and actions have encouraged them to imitate Christ through the spirit of St. Vincent. Lady of Charity Pati Feltz said, "I will miss his dry sense of humor. He was so humble, and yet so intelligent and so witty – but always in his quiet, 'southern gentlemanly' manner."

Betty Tutor, "the go to gal" who worked on the *Servicette* with Fr. Jack, said they probably produced a thousand newsletters, publications and articles over the past 25 years. In addition to having Fr. Jack as her boss, Betty considered him a true friend. He was with her in the surgical waiting room while her husband was undergoing heart surgery; prayed and visited with her before her surgeries; and concelebrated her father's funeral Mass. She said, "He was a great friend to my family." Betty described Fr. Jack as a humble and kind Vincentian, thrifty, generous and blessed with a great sense of humor.

We love you and miss you, Fr. Jack. We will keep you in our hearts. ✦

## Thank You from Milwaukee LOC

Mary Domer and Mary Johnson



The Association of Ladies of Charity of Milwaukee wishes to thank everyone who attended the national assembly in September. It was truly a magical

weekend filled with Just Care speakers, friends, inspirations and memories that will last us until we are together once again in New Orleans.

None of us will forget the concluding Mass during which we joined in song with three local choirs and installed our new officers.

So as we leave you, we invite you to ponder the words of Dorothy Day, "What we would like to do is change the world-make it a little simpler for people to feed, clothe, and shelter themselves as God intended for them to do. And, by fighting for better conditions, by cry-

ing out unceasingly for the rights of the workers, of the poor, of the destitute... we can, to a certain extent, change the world; we can work for the oasis, the little cell of joy and peace in a harried world. We can throw our pebble in the pond and be confident that its ever widening circle will reach around the world. We repeat, there is nothing that we can do but love, and dear God, please enlarge our hearts to love each other, to love our neighbor, to love our enemy as well as our friend."

Thank you for coming to Milwaukee and praying with us. ✦



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# ADVOCACY CONNECTIONS

Mary Ann Dantuono

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The Advocacy Committee of the LCUSA national board was established in 2009, charged with educating the board and local associations about systemic change and advocacy. Committee members have also established relationships with like-minded groups, including the Vincentian Family Collaborators, the Coalition of Catholic Agencies Against Human Trafficking, the Cap Wiz Voice of the Poor program of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and Catholic Charities USA.

During its spring 2014 meeting, in an effort to expand advocacy efforts, the national board acted to establish the position of Advocacy Liaison for each of the five geographic regions of LCUSA as well as liaisons to cover specific meetings or issues. The women in these positions need not be board members, but will be part of the Advocacy Committee. The liaisons will assist in planning and executing initiatives at the local level and continue their own education on systemic change and advocacy. When funding is available, they will attend the national Catholic Social Ministry Gathering (CSMG) co-sponsored by LCUSA with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and other Catholic organizations and held annually in

Washington, D.C. Regional Advocacy Liaisons are available to local associations who wish to develop their advocacy activities.

Following the board meeting, regional vice-presidents looked for women who would respond positively to questions such as:

- ▶ Are you curious about learning from persons living in poverty?
- ▶ Do you enjoy collaborating with other agencies and organizations?
- ▶ Do you ask questions to learn why people are living in poverty?
- ▶ Are you open to learning more about how policy issues impact families in your area?
- ▶ Are you interested in learning more about advocacy on behalf of persons living in poverty?

To date, four women have agreed to be pioneers in this position: Mary Ann Tretler in the Mid-Atlantic Region; Barb Killian in North Central; Marie Copeland for the Northeast; and Maura Bonnarens in the West. The liaisons had their initial meeting and orientation at the national assembly in Milwaukee. Look for more information on these trailblazers in the following article. ✧

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## INTRODUCING THE REGIONAL ADVOCACY LIAISONS

The Advocacy Connections column in this issue describes the new position of Regional Advocacy Liaison. Four Ladies of Charity have agreed to participate. Each brings a unique background and set of qualifications to the role.

Mary Ann Tretler of the Archdiocese of Washington will serve the Middle Atlantic Region. After college she was an inter-faith community organizer in Maryland, working with neighborhood residents to find specific solutions to grassroots issues. In her role of organizer, she was in the background as leadership was developed within the community. Mary Ann is a nurse and the secretary of the archdiocesan Ladies of Charity association.

Barb Killian, co-president of the Indianapolis association in the North Central Region, is a health-care lawyer who has been active in raising awareness in the community about human trafficking and child abuse. She also has a background in communication. Barb served as both a producer and assistant director in telecasting collegiate and professional sports and was a member of the local host committee for the 2012 Super Bowl in Indianapolis.

The Northeastern Region will be represented by Marie Copeland of Albany, who is the public policy chair for both her parish and the diocesan Ladies of Charity. She relies on the bishops' agenda as promulgated by the New York State Catholic Conference to guide her advocacy activities. Marie



Advocacy Committee, from left: Theresa Ward, Marie Copeland, Barb Killian, Marilyn Martone, Mary Ann Tretler, Mary Ann Dantuono, Rita Robinson

worked as a bank trust officer prior to becoming a stay-at-home mom to the daughter she and her husband adopted 22 years ago.



Maura Bonnarens

The fourth liaison is Maura Bonnarens of California, representing LCUSA's Western Region. A civil engineer, Maura is one of the founding members of the St. Vincent de Paul conference in Alameda County (across the San Francisco Bay) in 2011. She is currently first vice president of the district council. Maura learned about the Ladies of Charity when she attended a Vincentian Family Gathering in the autumn of 2013, and joined the San Francisco association shortly thereafter.

Thanks to Mary Ann, Barb, Marie and Maura for agreeing to help expand the scope of LCUSA's Advocacy Committee. ✧

## LCUSA NATIONAL BOARD AT YOUR SERVICE: COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

**LCUSA** is working to improve all facets of the organization under the framework of the five goals defined in its strategic plan. Members of the board and other interested Ladies of Charity are collaborating in five committees responsible to develop and implement action plans designed to achieve these goals. In order to keep all members aware of how the national board works on their behalf, the next five issues of the *Servicette* will highlight one of the committees.

Featured in this issue is the Communications Committee which aims to increase communication and visibility of the Ladies of Charity locally, nationally and internationally. The *Servicette*, free to all members, is the communications tool reaching the largest number. Information from local associations is always welcome to supplement the regular columns and articles from a national perspective. Sharing stories is an important way for members to learn from one another. Articles and photos may be sent to [kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com](mailto:kathleen.sieracki@gmail.com).

The LCUSA website, [aic.ladiesofcharity.us](http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us), was redesigned and updated in 2014. It offers fresh news, spiritual enrichment and updated forms. New information is added regularly and website subscribers receive a weekly email alerting them to new

postings. All members are urged to participate by selecting *Subscribe* on the home page, completing required information and confirming the subscription by responding to an email which is automatically generated.

Part of the communication action plan is to use the newest media formats. LCUSA now has a Facebook page. If you are active in this network, please like Ladies of Charity USA. Several videos are also available either through the LCUSA website or on YouTube. Fr. John Freund, CM, narrates a two-part history of our organization, "AIC: Journey from 1617 to Today." Professor Joan Ball of St. John's University and her husband Martin created "Ladies of Charity: Acting Against Poverty With a Vincentian Heart." The LCUSA website also features videos from LOC associations in Albany, Buffalo and Staten Island, all in New York, and Naples, Fla. Submit your own video to [kkav@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kkav@nycap.rr.com).

Future plans to improve communications include working with the board's Finance Committee to create an annual report; arranging for an article in a national publication; and publicizing plans for the 2017 celebration of the 400th anniversary of the founding of Ladies of Charity.

Kathy Kavanaugh is chairman of the committee. Other members are Margaret Hanson, Mary Beth Legg, Elena Miranda and Kathleen Sieracki. ♦

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## Leaving a Legacy of Love for the Poor

Winona Nelson

**A** legacy gift to the Ladies of Charity will preserve your assets, provide tax benefits while you are alive and allow the work you are doing and care about to continue. The projects supported by LCUSA provide food, clothing, financial assistance, literacy funds and spiritual support to the communities in which they serve. A deferred gift can continue this vital work and leave a lasting legacy. When you plan a legacy gift, you are not parting with current income or assets. By sharing these assets after your lifetime you may be able to leave a larger gift than you can today, helping even more people. You also have the flexibility to adjust your plan should your circumstances change.

A well-planned legacy gift can maximize the benefits for your family, LCUSA and the community. There are many ways to provide for the security of those you love and still create a lasting legacy

for the work you are doing on behalf of the poor and marginalized. A charitable bequest is the most common type of deferred gift and is made through a will or trust; naming LCUSA as the beneficiary of retirement plan assets such as an IRA, 401 (k), 403 (b), Keogh and other qualified plans can provide greater tax benefits to your heirs while maximizing the impact for LCUSA.

LCUSA may be named as a beneficiary of your life insurance. Most bank accounts or certificates of deposit will allow you to name LCUSA as "Payable on Death" beneficiary using a designation form. Publicly traded stock may be transferred to LCUSA.

Without documentation in a will, trust or beneficiary designation, state law determines how your assets are divided, with no provisions for your friends, favorite charities, church or the community. To start the planning

process, first determine the people and charities you wish to support and the property you expect to have available, and consult with an attorney who regularly prepares wills and trusts. You may contact LCUSA to discuss your gift options and wishes. Once your plans are in place, notify LCUSA so we can acknowledge and thank you for your intended gift.

One sentence in your will or trust has the power to support LCUSA for many years to come. Your attorney can use the following language to create a bequest for LCUSA:

"I give \$\_\_\_\_\_' or '\_\_\_\_\_% of my estate' or 'the following described property' to Ladies of Charity of the United States of America, 850 Main St., Kansas City, MO 64105 for its general purposes."

Please contact us for more information. Thank you for considering LCUSA in your estate planning. ♦



You shop. Amazon gives.

Shoppers on Amazon.com can now arrange for .5% of the cost of their eligible purchases to be donated to LCUSA. Customers receive the same products, the same prices and the same service. To get started, go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). On the first visit, before beginning to shop, select Ladies of Charity USA as your charitable organization. AmazonSmile will remember your selection and every eligible purchase will result in a donation to LCUSA. You can use your existing Amazon.com account. As you shop, you will see "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on product detail pages. You may also want to bookmark AmazonSmile to make shopping even easier or use the link on the LCUSA website, <http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>

## New Ways to Support LCUSA at No Cost to You

Winona Nelson

**LCUSA** is now partnering with the IAA Donation Division to give donors the opportunity to donate unwanted vehicles and have the value of the vehicle benefit us. The process is easy. Contact IAA at 866-332-1778 or through the LCUSA website ([aic.ladiesofcharity.us](http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us)). Towing of the vehicle (car, truck, boat, motorcycle, snowmobile, personal watercraft or heavy equipment) will be free and conveniently scheduled. IAA will auction the vehicle and the donor will receive a sales receipt to file for a possible tax deduction. LCUSA receives the proceeds of the auction. ♦



**Drive change. Donate a vehicle today.**

Tax deductible • Free towing • Any vehicle, any condition

Program Powered by the IAA Donation Division.

866-332-1778  
[aic.ladiesofcharity.us](http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us)

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## My Visit to St. Vincent Ain Karem Home for Children with Special Needs, Jerusalem

Mary Beth Legg



Some residents of the St. Vincent Home

I traveled to Israel and Jordan in June, leading a pilgrimage with 41 people including three priests and two nuns. While visiting the Jerusalem neighborhood Ain Karem, we celebrated Mass at the Church of John the Baptist, built above a cave believed to be where John the Baptist was born and close to the site of the visitation of Blessed Virgin Mary with Elizabeth and Zechariah. Very nearby on a hill sits St. Vincent Ain Karem Home for Children with Special Needs. ♦

One of the highlights of my trip was visiting and touring St. Vincent. I met Sr. Susan Sheehan, DC, who immediately welcomed me. She was very happy to hear I was a Lady of Charity. Sr. Susan has been serving at St. Vincent for 25 years and loves being there. The school cares for approximately 60 severely handicapped children, both Jewish and Arabic. Most of the children have extreme brain damage. Jewish, Arabic, Muslim and Christian lay people work and live together. They include physicians, nurses, physiotherapists and social workers. Volunteers from around the world support the staff in their work and there is a waiting list for those eager to



Sr. Susan Sheehan, DC, (right) and a volunteer

Continued — see Home, p. 18



Above: Demonstration highlights TASSC issues. Below: Rita Robinson expressing LOC support for TASSC.



## ADVOCACY IN ACTION

RITA L. ROBINSON AND TONI GAINES

The Archdiocese of Washington (ADW) Ladies of Charity joined other interfaith supporters as active participants in Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition (TASSC) International 17th Annual June Survivor Week. The mission of TASSC is to end the practice of torture wherever it occurs, and to help and empower survivors, their families and their communities.

The opening session, attended by 115 participants, took place on June 25 in the Pryzbla Center at Catholic University. The conference was opened by remarks from Gizachew Emiru, Esq., executive director of TASSC. The program was powerful and included a presentation by Juan Mendez, United Nations Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Mr. Mendez is a visiting professor of law at American University, Washington College of Law, and the author (with Marjory Wentworth) of “Taking a Stand: The Evolution of Human Rights.” Representatives Adotei Akwei, Amnesty International; EJ Hogendoorn, International Crisis Group; Feyera Sobokssa, a torture survivor; and Joseph Anderson, Americans for Immigrant Justice, discussed various aspects of the inhuman practice of torture, the lack of procedural safeguards for victims and society’s increasing tolerance for this behavior.

In the afternoon Andrea Barron of TASSC conducted an intensive training session in preparation for the Capitol Hill visits scheduled for the following day. Training included an introduction to Congress and specific talking points to be shared with representatives and senators. Thursday was advocacy day. The group held 26 meetings with staff members and two members of Congress: Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Congressman Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.-8th District, Montgomery County). Three survivors from Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, and Ethiopia presented testimony at the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, chaired by Rep. James McGovern (D-Mass.), to a standing room-only audience of congressional staffers. The commission’s goals are to “raise greater awareness of human rights issues among members of Congress and their staff, as well as the public,” and “encourage members of Congress to actively engage in human rights matters.”

On June 28, the United Nations Day to Commemorate Victims of Torture, TASSC held a day long vigil in Lafayette Park, in front of the White House. The vigil included greetings from survivors from Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East/Asia. The interfaith supporters were thanked and invited to the stage to express their commitment to work for the abolition of torture and to support the efforts of likeminded individuals and organizations. Representatives from a number of the groups were invited to speak. Rita L. Robinson spoke on behalf of the Ladies of Charity Archdiocese of Washington. Among the other groups present were the Metro Washington Jewish Community; Capuchin Friars; Carmelite Sisters of Vedruna; School Sisters of Notre Dame; Theological College, Catholic University of America; and the Holy Name Society of Holy Redeemer Parish, Kensington, Md. Throughout the day, there was music, drumming, poetry, and speakers. TASSC has inaugurated a healing garden on its office grounds. The garden will commemorate victims of torture and provide a space for reflections and meditation.



Rita Robinson (L) and a fellow TASSC supporter

In addition to their participation in the Survivor Week, in the same month the ADW Ladies responded to a call for help from TASSC to prepare homes for six torture survivors. The Ladies donated dressers and some bedding. Katherine Crosson, a TASSC volunteer, expressed her gratitude by saying, “A simple ask and we have been blessed.”

The support of TASSC provided by the Archdiocese of Washington Ladies of Charity exemplifies both justice and charity. ✦



## Father Greg Gay Visits Ladies of Charity in Baltimore

Joan Scott

The Ladies of Charity of St. Cecilia's Parish in Baltimore, Archdiocese of Washington, were honored in August by a visit from Fr. Gregory Gay, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission and a native of Baltimore. During Fr. Gay's official visit to the parish in the spring, the parishioners invited him to return and he did so during his vacation with family in the area. During this visit, he presided at Mass and exchanged blessings with the Ladies.

This event was the culmination of a busy year. The association's biggest fundraiser is a pre-Christmas card party and luncheon. Proceeds were used in a variety of ways: purchase

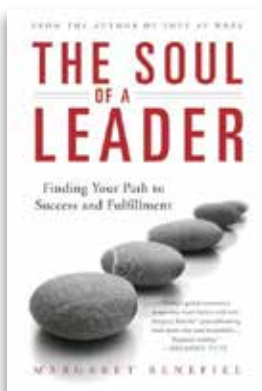
Above left: Lady of Charity Dietrich Davis blessing Fr. Gay.  
Above: Fr. Gay blessing (from left) Dietrich Davis; Muriel Johnson; Gaystella Armstead; Nadine Sheppard; and Cecilia Simms.

of sleeping bags for the homeless; a donation to a scholarship fund for students attending Catholic schools; and purchase of pew cards for the church. The Ladies' collection of supplies for the parish food pantry was recognized as the largest donation ever received. The group also collaborates with Newborns in Need, a national non-profit, to operate a chapter in Baltimore providing essentials for babies.

In addition to other spiritual activities, the members organized a special service at church to pray for the kidnapped school girls in Nigeria. Each person drew a name of one of the children, lit a candle and agreed to pray daily for her.

The association commissioned three new members in October and are looking forward to establishing a Junior Ladies of Charity group in 2015. ♦

**The Soul of a Leader: Finding Your Path to Success and Fulfillment** by Margaret Benefiel



Reviewed by Margaret Hanson

One doesn't connect spirituality with leadership often, but Margaret Benefiel, a professor of spirituality and organizational leadership, does. In her book "The Soul of a Leader" she narrates the success secrets of the outstanding

leaders she interviewed as they pursue a path of soulful leadership. The work of the Ladies of Charity, enriching the lives of people who are poor in any way, requires leadership on every level, from those who provide individual service at the local association level to organizational leaders who provide the network of vehicles through which LCUSA members function.

Keeping MISSION at the fore is a fundamental element of soul-based leadership. The author elaborates on three principal means to do so: focusing on something more; sharing the vision; and returning to mission. It is the mission that drives us and is borne out in behavior. Because of the human condition, focusing on the mission is the driving

force of what we do. The mission drives one to action, and the recent brutal death of Jim Foley, a freelance reporter working in Syria, reminds us of how far following the mission can take us.

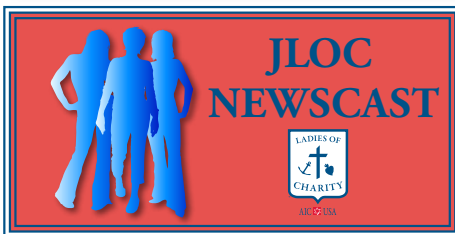
Mission is articulated in the STRATEGIC PLAN which identifies how we will accomplish the mission. It helps us to know where we are going and how to get there. We "focus, develop, share and return." (p.87). In our associations, getting back to the mission (which is in every bylaw: who says by-laws aren't important?) is our task. We act, share the vision, focus on something more and return to the mission.

Team learning and a shared mental model or vision drives people who all

*Continued — see Book Review, p. 18*



*Rev. Michael Mulhearn, CM, presided at the ceremony welcoming new the Juniors group formed in Kansas City*



## New Junior Ladies of Charity Group in Kansas City

Barbara Weatherford

Fifteen young ladies from the Church of the Ascension in Overland Park, Kan., were received into the Junior Ladies of Charity (JLOC) in September. The Rev. Michael Mulhearn, CM, Spiritual Advisor for the Ladies of Charity of Metropolitan Kansas City, received the new members during a Mass. After the homily Fr. Mulhearn blessed and indi-



vidually presented a beautiful silver charm to each new Junior Lady. The charm holds an anchor, cross and heart. The anchor symbolizes how we are anchored to our faith and duty to serve

the poor, the cross represents Christ and his death for us, and the heart reminds us that charity is the action of your heart. The girls then prayed the Act of Consecration. A reception followed the Mass and ceremony. The Junior Ladies and their families celebrated the occasion and planned service opportunities.

A major service project will be a partnership with both Giving the Basics and the Blue Valley School District Special Education ACCESS program. Giving the Basics is a national organization promoting distribution of personal care items where needed. The JLOC will work with ACCESS students in organizing drives at several district schools to collect personal hygiene items. The two groups will work together to sort and package the products. Each package will include a note created by the students, for example, "These tooth brushes have been packaged for you with love by the JLOC and ACCESS students." The packaged items will be distributed to shelters and pantries. Many school districts have also requested help for students in need of personal care items.

Welcome to the newest Junior Ladies of Charity association, and best wishes on your important service project, which combines accompanying a marginalized group of young people as they work to join the mainstream of society and at the same time together serving people living in poverty. ♦

## JLOC Northeastern Region

The Junior Ladies groups from St. John's Preparatory School in New York City and St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in the Diocese of Buffalo traveled on Oct. 24 to the Carondelet Hospitality Center in Latham, N.Y. for an overnight stay and inaugural Junior LOC Assembly. During the meeting, Sr. Mary Grace Higgins, DC, spoke about Vincentian history and the young ladies shared their projects and hopes for the future. In August, the Buffalo Juniors held a car wash to raise funds for the trip. More information about the meeting will be in the next issue. ♦



*Advertising for car wash customers in Lancaster, N.Y.*

# Active Ladies of Charity in the Archdiocese of Washington

Toni K. Gaines



From left, Toni K. Gaines, treasurer; Mary Louise Hand, president; Gloria Lessington, second vice president; and Mary Ann Tretler, secretary are the new officers for the LOC in the Archdiocese of Washington. Sr. Sandra Goldsborough and Fr. Carl Dianda are in the rear.

A new Board of Directors for the Archdiocese of Washington Ladies of Charity was installed in June by Spiritual Advisor Fr. Carl F. Dianda. Mary Louise Hand is the new president and together with her fellow officers will lead a very active archdiocesan association for the next two years.

In May, 100 members from throughout the archdiocese gathered at St. Ann's Center for Children, Youth and Families for a May Day Mass and luncheon. In keeping with tradition, Roberta Dade-Young of our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish (OLPH) crowned the Blessed Mother. Members donated toys, clothes, diapers and other supplies for use at St. Ann's.

Ladies of Holy Ghost Parish in Issue, Md., visit Charlotte Hall Veterans Home monthly. In addition, Nancy Roach, Sally Mack, Louise Frere and recently deceased Doris Smith mail birthday cards every month to residents. Veterans have written personal thank you notes for the cards. On May 30, several Ladies traveled to Charlotte Hall and served lunch in recognition of Memorial Day. The entire group was honored for their service at a Volunteer Appreciation Banquet in April.

The Ladies of OLPH and their male associate members operate a busy food pantry which provides non-perishable goods and meat, fresh produce and bread/baked goods when available to 85-90 families weekly. A large group, including students fulfilling their community service requirements, gathered in August to replenish the shelves. OLPH inducted five new members in June. Fr. Thomas Frank, SSJ,



Student volunteer Taylor Gaines packing bags at the OLPH pantry.



From left, Joanne Lierman, Linda Turner, Gladys Thomas and Lucy Saunders on a recent visit to Charlotte Hall.

officiated at the solemn ceremony.

In June, three Ladies from St. Benedict the Moor Parish volunteered for the first time at the Cup of Joe project, a breakfast pack program serving residents of Catholic Charities' homeless shelters throughout the archdiocese.



James Jackson moving supplies to the shelves in the OLPH pantry.

They packed and delivered 432 bags to the Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter. In August they were joined by women from four other parishes: Holy Comforter/St. Cyprian; OLPH; St. Gabriel; and St. Martin of Tours in a "Ladies of Charity Day-Cup of Joe." In an hour, a well-organized group of 35 women packed 1000 breakfast bags. At the same time, other women under the leadership of Lauretta Sullivan (age 97) decorated the bags with uplifting phrases, drawings and spiritual verses. Catholic Charities staff members Kevin O'Brien, project coordinator, and Ebony Bowers welcomed the participants.

LCUSA board member Rita Robinson volunteered to assist patients at the Mid Maryland Mission of Mercy Dental Clinic and Health Equity Festival held in September at the University of Maryland basketball arena. Free dental care for underserved Maryland residents was offered over two days.

Even though the ADW Ladies serve individual parishes, they join together three times a year to celebrate and share their Vincentian heritage under the spiritual leadership of Fr. Dianda and Spiritual Moderator Sr. Sandra Goldsborough. ✧

# Reflections.....

At the recent national assembly, officers and members of the ALCUSA board of directors were elected for the term of 2015-2016. The board meets each spring at Mater Dei Retreat and Conference Center in Evansville, Ind. Middle Atlantic Regional Vice President Rita Robinson describes the experience.

Spring Board Meeting  
April, 2014

Early morning rising at the break of day  
watching the sun peek over the horizon  
while speeding on busy highways.  
Arriving at the airport, kissing good-bye;  
Families – men, women, young and old,  
rushing to wait in line.  
Marching onward to places unknown (by me).

Arriving at my destination  
being met and transported by an angel  
to Mater Dei.

A retreat and Spiritual Center:  
quiet, restful, tranquil!  
Coming to be with dedicated, focused women,  
Coming to do the work of Ladies of Charity,  
Meeting, planning, plotting, executing, defining;  
goals, aspirations, and strategic planning.  
Looking toward the future,  
Preserving the past.

Rising early for spiritual reinforcement,  
working, eating, working, eating,  
Fellowship!  
Exhausted by ten and falling into deep sleep  
only to repeat the following day.  
Work completed, friendships solidified,  
Knowing that next year  
The saga will be repeated, again,  
And again!



Board members praying at the outdoor Stations of the Cross.

## Memorials and Honorariums

Both the persons named below 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>
Marianne Berkof (Sister of Annelies Gielen)	Morgan Hill LOC
Joan Betzenhauser	Kathleen Sieracki
Sr. Helen Bristow, SCL	Gayle Johnson
Dorothy Clark	Lake Travis LOC
Nachito Gonzalez (Father of Delmi Murillo)	Morgan Hill LOC
Mark and Mary Guho	Helen Guho
Doris Hoag (past LCUSA President)	Gayle Johnson Mary Beth O'Brien Ann Peffen Kathleen Sieracki Lucky Van De Gejuchte Theresa Ward Elena Miranda Connie O'Brien Mary Smith
Marie Jarvis	Brenda Kukuia
Mary Johnson	Lake Travis LOC
Zenia Kitowski	Lake Travis LOC
Zenida Lopez	Lake Travis LOC
Joseph McDonough	Lake Travis LOC
Fr. Jack Melito, CM	Mary Beth O'Brien
Thomas Smith	Deborah Smith
John (Jack) Ward	Gayle Johnson Elena Miranda Kathleen Sieracki Lucky Van De Gejuchte
Marie Buckley (past LCUSA President)	Kathleen Sieracki
Anitra Lahey	Kathleen Sieracki

### † IN HONOR OF †

Mary Beth O'Brien	Gayle Johnson
Dave Van De Gejuchte	Gayle Johnson



# Vincentian Family: Daughters and Ladies Working Together



Lay Vincentian Moderators join Daughters of Charity in the 2014 blessing ceremony.

A photo in last autumn's *Servicette* showed a line of women religious with their arms extended in a blessing over the Ladies at the conclusion of the LCUSA national assembly in San Jose. The last 12 months have been a period of transition as Daughters of Charity withdrew from several dioceses, including Birmingham, Ala.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Indianapolis; Nashville; and Austin, Texas. Bishops presided at farewell Masses and paid tribute to the Daughters who had served dioceses in many cases for over 100 years. Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin of Indianapolis spoke of "connecting the dots in gratitude...for the one hundred, thirty-three years during which the Daughters of Charity enriched the residents of the state."

Ladies of Charity were present at all the ceremonies, expressing their gratitude, love, and sense of loss. Mary Nell Williams, a Lady of Charity and also a Daughters of Charity Affiliate in Indianapolis reflected, "And so I will come to a 'retrospective appreciation' about all of the Daughters of Charity who have served here during my lifetime and now will no longer be here. And knowing that no more will come in the future, I will not forget that they had been here; that they have been and will continue to be a significant and very important part of my life."

The work of the Daughters has been recognized in many ways. In Austin, Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of former United States President Lyndon Johnson, donated \$1 million to the chapel at Seton Medical Center at the University of Texas to name the chapel in honor of the Daughters of Charity and honor their legacy. A farewell gala in Indianapolis was sponsored by the Peyton Manning Children's Hospital at St. Vincent. Mr. Manning, a National Football League quarterback who formerly played in Indianapolis, attended the celebration.

While Ladies and other friends attended the farewell gatherings, fellow Daughters of Charity were also present in support. Sr. JT Dwyer, DC, reports that it is customary that some sisters from the Provincial Leadership Team in St. Louis participate. In addition, sisters who previously served in the ministry or area and others who are nearby also come if possible.

The same blessing ceremony described in the first paragraph took place at this year's assembly in Milwaukee, but the group extending the blessing included three lay women who are in various stages of formation as Vincentian Spiritual Moderators. The LCUSA Spirituality Committee is collaborating with the Daughters of Charity in preparing Ladies to assume the role formerly held by Daughters. Jude Magers of Indianapolis has already completed her formation under the guidance of Sr. Mary Satala, DC, and was commissioned as a Vincentian Lay Spiritual Moderator during a solemn ceremony in April. Two regional training sessions for other candidates are scheduled: November 2014 in Washington, D.C., and March 2015 in Texas.

Responsibilities of the Vincentian Spiritual Moderator for a local association include sharing the history and spirituality of the founders; leading reflective prayer at meetings; and helping members see the face of Christ in the poor. The Indianapolis commissioning ceremony ended with the words of St. Vincent

*Continued — see Daughters & Ladies p. 18*



Peyton Manning joins in honoring the Daughters of Charity in Indiana



Sr. Louise Gallahue, DC (from left); Marlyss Giles, LOC; Sr. Janet Keim, DC, in Birmingham, Ala.

## Grants

*Continued from p. 3*

the West. Salt Lake City received \$900 to purchase protective winter shoes for children. The Ladies in San Francisco were given \$1000 to expand their craft workshops with women in a residential drug treatment facility.

The Diane Downey Reading Enrichment Grants are awarded to local associations who are engaged in promoting literacy for adults and children, and are intended to assist LCUSA volunteers provide reading programs, materials and resources to motivate students to learn and achieve. The maximum award is \$300. Full criteria are on the LCUSA website (see above). Both in the Northeast, Albany and Buffalo received \$250 and \$200 respectively for reading

programs with children. Within the Pittsburgh association, St. Bartholomew Parish was awarded \$200 to provide materials to help children prepare for sacraments, and the Ladies at St. John of God Church received \$100 to purchase Bibles for RCIA participants. The association at St. John's University in New York City was awarded \$300 for literacy materials for women learning English as a second language.

Details about the Pittsburgh Junior Ladies of Charity and the St. John's Junior Ladies of Charity, winners of the inaugural Junior LOC grants, were in the last *Servicette* issue. Congratulations to this year's successful applicants! Watch for the grant guidelines in early 2015. LCUSA welcomes your participation. ✦



*Middle Atlantic V.P. Rita Robinson (L) presented a grant to Peggy Keene of Madonna/Word of God Parish in Pittsburgh*

## Book Review

*Continued from p. 13*

want to get to a certain place. A critical mass gets the job done. All of us work toward a common goal and have a similar vision and shared values. For those of us who might tend to think that our individual contribution doesn't matter much, Benefiel reminds us of a quote from Anita Roddick, founder of The Body Shop: "If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito!" Benefiel points out and illustrates how practicing gratitude and operating in a culture of the same can help keep an organization on

track by remembering to thank those whose work enables our own efforts. Have we thought of how the skills of an auto repair person help make our projects possible? Gratitude is the acknowledgment of the gifts and skills of others. A culture of gratitude recognizes the good in everyone; practicing affirmation, sharing and listening keeps us true to our values. In an age when recruiting new members is utmost in importance for the continuation of the mission, a positive atmosphere attracts rather than deters others.

While one becomes aware that spiritual leadership is essential for organi-

zational effectiveness, a reading of the book also make one aware of our own growth through the process of leading. Profit, people and the planet are partners in our working together for God and an appreciation of who God is enfolds us. In speaking of spiritual transformation and the soul of the leader, the author provides an extensive bibliography for Chapter 8, which can lead to ample reading and inspiration for the edification of Ladies of Charity and the development of one's spiritual life.

Benefiel, Margaret, *The Soul of a Leader*, Crossroads, N.Y., 2008, reprinted 2013. ✦

## Daughters & Ladies *Cont'd from p. 17*

de Paul to St. Louise de Marillac: "Go forth then, go forth in the name of the Lord. We pray the Divine Goodness to accompany you, to be your consolation on the way ...and that, in the end, it may bring you back in perfect health, laden with good deeds and precious remembrances." ✦



## Home

*Continued from p. 11*

serve. Each volunteer must commit to be present a minimum of six months. Sr. Susan explained to me how each caregiver feels they receive more than they give. Financial support and donations come from around the world. I noticed a few "Hello Kitty" book bags given by the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre of Los Angeles!

The Daughters of Charity have been in the Holy Land since 1886, and founded St. Vincent Aïn Karem in 1964. The location, building and grounds are simply beautiful. I regret not being able to spend more time with Sr. Susan. We were blessed to arrive home in Los Angeles two days before the bombing started between Hamas and Israel. Knowing the plight of those in this region, your prayers are needed for the continued safety of this special home and ministry. ✦

## Nights of Thunder in Perryville

Claire Schemel

The Ladies of Charity in Perryville, Mo., receive remarkable community support. They have never needed to organize a fund-raising event for their programs. Scouting troops, church groups and local schools and businesses name the Ladies the beneficiary of their fund-raising. Panera Bread donates bread each year valued at approximately \$30,000.

The most recent occasion was the third annual Nights of Thunder, hosted in August by a local tavern. Participants pay \$10 each for the opportunity to arrive in their own hot rods, muscle cars, race cars and vintage vehicles. Drivers on their way to a race in nearby Sikeston also made an appearance. Dave Mullin, owner of a 1937 Chevy, described the event: "We get to show off our cars, promote our race...and you should see the look on the crowd's faces when we fire up our engines and make it 'thunder.' That's the best part." (The Republic Monitor)

The payment is optional for other members of the public, but everyone is asked to bring as many canned goods as they can carry. All proceeds and food go the Ladies of Charity food



From left, Lo Simms, restaurant coordinator; Donna Semsroot, LOC member; Claire Schemel, president; and Margie Winschel, member, admiring one of the cars on display.

pantry which is operated two days a week in a building purchased and maintained for the Ladies by St. Vincent's Church. The Nights of Thunder raised \$3650 in cash and a truck load of canned goods. The proceeds will help meet the needs of the nearly 1,000 people assisted monthly. ♦

## Mary Beth O'Brien Honored by Catholic Charities



Mary Beth O'Brien, center, Fr. Richard Gielow, CM, left, and Vincent W. Colonno, CEO of Albany Catholic Charities

Mary Beth O'Brien, LCUSA past president, received the 2014 Bishop Howard Hubbard Humanitarian Award given annually by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany to a person who demonstrates a profound understanding of the plight of the poor and vulnerable and is dedicated to eradicating the underlying causes of poverty in society. It is the highest honor the diocesan Catholic Charities can bestow.

LCUSA Spiritual Advisor Fr. Richard Gielow, CM, was among more than 450 people present at the second annual Night at the Museum fundraiser in June.

A native of Troy, N.Y., Mary Beth has spent a lifetime advocating for and working with Catholic causes to help the less fortunate. Her involvement began as a teenager volunteering and working in Troy, where she first discovered her passion for giving a voice to those without one.

Mary Beth and her late husband Frank have been generous supporters of Catholic Charities for many years. Through her leadership and work on the Catholic Charities board of trustees, Mary Beth has helped improve the lives of countless people in the Albany area.

LCUSA congratulates Mary Beth for this recognition of her compassion and generosity. ♦



### Dates to Remember

- February 7-10, 2015**  
**Catholic Social Ministry Gathering**  
Washington, D.C.  
[www.usccb](http://www.usccb)
- March 15**  
**Feast of St. Louise de Marillac**
- March 16**  
**Lay Spiritual Moderators Training**  
Texas
- March 22-27**  
**AIC Statutory Assembly**  
Antigua, Guatemala
- April 8-11**  
**LCUSA Spring Board Meeting**  
Evansville, Ind.
- September 17-20**  
**LCUSA National Assembly**  
New Orleans  
*Details to follow in upcoming issues of the Servicette*
- October 23-25**  
**Vincentian Family Gathering**  
Denver



AIC USA

<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>

*“To serve rather than to be served”*

## Foundation of the Ladies of Charity: Châtillon, France 1617

Carol Schumer, D.C.



Church at Châtillon

The Ladies of Charity originated in 1617 as the first organization established by Vincent de Paul. In preparation for our 400th anniversary, let's reflect briefly on our roots.

In August, 1617, Vincent was named pastor of St. Andrew Church in Châtillon-les-Dombes, France, with a population of about 2000.<sup>1</sup> At that time a market place for wheat, fish and wine, this town was an entrance of Roman influence in France. The parishioners included the lower nobility, bourgeoisie.<sup>2</sup>

Vincent tells us: "... while I was living in a small town near Lyons ... I was vesting to celebrate Holy Mass one Sunday when I was told that in an isolated house a league away everyone was ill. None of them was able to help the others and they were all in indescribable need. That touched me to the heart. During the sermon, I made sure to commend

them zealously to the congregation."<sup>3</sup> This plea for assistance was all that was needed for many to act. Vincent adds: "More than fifty of them set out ... I met the ladies returning in droves and God gave me this thought: 'Couldn't these good ladies be brought together ... to serve the sick poor.'"<sup>4</sup> To this end, on August 23, 1617, Vincent assembled a group of eight women who commenced their ministry to persons living in poverty the next day.

Confraternities of lay people were not a novel idea to the seventeenth century. Common in the Middle Ages, Vincent saw these functioning in Rome and in Paris. What constituted this as unconventional was having "People not in need [come] to the assistance of people who were poor."<sup>5</sup>

The new association was to be "... composed of women: widows, wives and unmarried, whose piety and virtue are known and whose perseverance can be counted on. ... to avoid confusion that comes from too large a number, it [was] limited to twenty..." members.<sup>6</sup> Vincent penned their regulations with input from the women. Then, on December 8, 1617, the first persons were enrolled in the officially erected Confraternity. They are recorded as: Françoise Baschet, Charlotte de Brie, Gasparde Puget, Florence Gomard, Denise Beynier, Philiberte Mulger, Catherine Patissier, Eléonore Burdilliat, Jeanne Perra, Benoîte Prost, Toinette



Jean-Baptiste Greuze,  
La dame de charite

Guay and Guichenon, a nurse. The choice of officers also took place with Mlle. Baschet, Prioress [president]; Mlle. de Brie, Treasurer; Mme. Puget, Second Assistant and honorable Jean Beynier, Procurator. Only a scant few other facts are given, i.e., the names, titles of some of their husbands, parents.<sup>7</sup> Not until June 7, 1626 were three new members received.<sup>8</sup> Thus was the modest beginning of the lay service of poor persons and consequently the foundation of all the other Confraternities of Charity and almost four centuries of Ladies of Charity. Today we stand on their shoulders.

**Reflection:** Do you see any similarities in that first group and today's members?

<sup>1</sup> [http://famvin.org/wiki/Chatillon-les\\_Dombes](http://famvin.org/wiki/Chatillon-les_Dombes)

<sup>2</sup> Brejon de Lavergnée, Matthieu lecture, 4-5-14, DePaul University, Chicago, IL, "Writing a Global History of the Daughters of Charity" <http://youtu.be/-NN3HBrU0V4>

<sup>3</sup> Coste, Pierre, Vincent de Paul Conferences, volume 9, #24, 1646, page 192

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, #20, 1645, page 166

<sup>5</sup> Brejon de Lavergnée, Matthieu

<sup>6</sup> Coste volume 13b #126, 1617, page 9

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, page 21

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, page 22