

LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SERVICETTE



AIC USA

Vol. 57, No. 1
January 2018

"To serve rather than to be served"

Caregiving

**"Ladies of Charity: 400 Years
to the Call of St. Vincent de Paul"**

*Celebration of the Sacred Liturgy
in joyful thanksgiving for
400 years answering the call of
Saint Vincent de Paul*



LADIES OF CHARITY USA

*September 8, 2017 ~ Kansas City, Missouri
Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

**LCUSA National
Assembly 2017**

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 Suzanne Johnson
Editor Irene Siedlarczyk
Layout & Design Joseph Garza
Executive Director Ashley Larsen

Direct all correspondence and inquires to:

Servicette, LCUSA Service Center
2816 E. 23rd St.
Kansas City, MO 64127
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 next issue of the **SERVICETTE**:

Deadline is March 31, 2018, at the latest. Earlier submissions are appreciated.

Articles and photos can be sent by email to: office@ladiesofcharity.us
Articles and photos should be sent separately and not within the text document.

Please contact us for information.

The Wounded Healer



Bishop David A. Zubik
Episcopal Chairman



It is a natural part of living out our lives in faith. We care—care for the health of all; care for the souls of all. Dear Ladies of Charity, you are healers by your Christian vocation.

Yet, one of life's little mysteries is how we sometimes find it far easier to make others happy than to make ourselves happy. We are willing to reach out, to extend ourselves to care for others. But we find it much more difficult to take care of ourselves. In truth, the reality is that we can't do one without the other.

Let's revisit a critical teaching of Jesus: "Which is the first of all the commandments?" Jesus is asked. He answers: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:28, 30-31).

Notice the interesting twist in this—one that we often forget. Love of God first. But with love of neighbor you must love your neighbor as you love yourself. Think about what this means.

The assumption is that we must show our love of God and our love of neighbor. We must honor God and be a blessing to others. But we cannot do either if we do not love ourselves. In other words, we can forget that fundamental to this principle of love of God and of neighbor is that if we

don't—or can't—love ourselves, we cannot love our neighbor, nor can we love God.

Seems a little funny, doesn't it? In fact, it might seem a little selfish—focusing on ourselves when we should really focus on our neighbor. But that's not what the Scripture means. It's not setting up a choice between self or neighbor. It is saying that if we cannot accept ourselves—even with all our faults and in our shortcomings—how could we possibly love our neighbors, with all their faults and all their wounds?

In the 1970's, Father Henri Nouwen, the influential Catholic author who died in 1996, wrote a simple book called, *The Wounded Healer*.

Father Nouwen wrote that the Wounded Healer was "the one who must look after his own wounds but at the same time be prepared to heal the wounds of others."

The Wounded Healers are the servants of servants who know both their own strengths and their own weaknesses. The Wounded Healers are those who know that compassion must be their vocation.

Father Nouwen put it this way: "We can only love because we are born out of love, and that we can only give because our life is a gift, and that we can only make others free because we are set free by Him whose heart is greater than ours."

That is at the heart of caring. That is how we are called to live our vocation of caring every day.

Advocacy Connections

Kathleen Gallagher of the New York State Catholic Conference will be visiting The Daughters of Charity and assisting them with advocacy. Sister Donna Franklin will be retiring as the Director of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Ogdensburg and moving to the DePaul House. She will be their in-house expert on advocacy.

The Trump Administration is rescinding the Obama-era Executive Order known as the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). There are nearly 800,000 beneficiaries of this program with 42,000 being New Yorkers. Children, referred to as Dreamers, were brought to this country by their parents. The President has signaled that he would like Congress to address this matter legislatively. The Catholic Church of New York stands with the Dreamers.

On October 6, 2017 the Trump Administration issued interim rules expanding the exemption to the Contraceptive Mandate for religious employers, such as the Little Sisters of the Poor, who object on moral grounds to covering contraceptive and abortion-inducing drugs and devices in their employee health insurance. From the onset, churches were exempt from the mandate which was put into place by the Department of Health and Human Services under the Affordable Care Act. However, religious affiliated non-profits, such as Catholic Charities and Catholic health providers, were not covered by the exemption and are now covered by the new expanded exemption, but in New York, the Cuomo Administration has implemented regulations to require contraceptive and abortion coverage. Several organizations, led by the Diocese of Albany, have brought a legal challenge to the New York regulations. This legal challenge is in its initial stages.

For more information and to advocate on these issues, go to the New York State Catholic Conference website. Thank you for your advocacy.



Suzanne Johnson
LCUSA President

My father died a year ago. For over a year prior to his passing, he needed assistance. Someone had to be in the house

with him 24/7 because he could not always manage on his own. At first, it was just to ensure that he got “up and about,” manage his meals and keep the house. My siblings and I would take turns being available for this. But the task became a little more physical, to the point where he needed assistance in the shower, bathroom, and simply navigating from the bedroom to the kitchen to the family room.

At this point, we were blessed to find in-home care givers to provide the round the clock care, augmented by my siblings and me. And I would wonder – “What do families do who do not have a lot of children (there are ten of us!)?” or “How do people manage who have not been able to save for this event?” These questions are becoming increasingly relevant in this time. Thus, LCUSA's current undertaking is very timely.

The purpose of the Caregiving Project is twofold – to provide caregiving training and jobs to those currently in poverty, and to provide in home care to the elderly and disabled. Having worked with the women who took care of my father, I came to understand that caregivers are very special people. It is truly a calling to be able to give and care for those who are unable to

care for themselves. In addition to being able to provide for my father's physical needs, these women were also very spiritual, and would spend time praying with my father. So we were doubly blessed!

In addition to the training and the caregiving, we envision the local association's involvement as being there to provide a faith-filled support for both caregiver and homebound. As St. Vincent de Paul said to the early Ladies of Charity, “You should bring to the sick two kinds of food: corporal food and spiritual food; that is to say, some little word from your meditation, were it only five or six words, to help them to acquit themselves of their duty as Christians or to bear their sufferings patiently. God has called you to this.”

Our Bodies: Sources of Dignity and Connection

Marilyn Martone

Recently I was in the hospital for a knee revision. After surgery I was placed on the ortho floor where rehabilitation and doing as much for oneself, as possible, were stressed. I understood the importance of exercising and the role it played in my recovery and appreciated the encouragement I received from the aides until that encouragement turned into badgering and intimidation when it came to bathroom issues. The staff knew that I could walk because I had done it in the afternoon with the physical therapist. So when I rang in the evening for a bedpan I was told I needed to get up and walk to the bathroom. What the aide did not understand was that it was ten minutes since I had rung for the bedpan, there was no walker in the room, I was connected to two machines that I would have to drag with me and I knew I would never get to the bathroom in time. So I refused to walk. This led to confrontation and no matter how polite I tried to be the aides viewed me as a spoiled, lazy woman. When my roommate, who had nothing attached to her and did not need a walker, walked to the bathroom she was told what a fighter she was, not like some people. I began to cry. I was at my lowest point, I had been through two knee infections in one year, I hurt, I was tired, and I just needed someone to give me a little care and compassion. At that moment I realized that it is not so much in the large, technical things that are done to us in the health care setting that negate our dignity but it is in the small every day occurrences, usually bodily functions that we cannot control, where our dignity is most at risk.

The professional literature stresses the importance of autonomy, allowing us to be part of our health care decision-making. We seldom talk, much less write about, urination, defecation, vomiting, bleeding, expectorating, choking, drooling, having spasms or tics or seizures, being hard of hearing, blind, etc. Most of us experience many of these conditions but it is impolite to speak of them. Yet this is precisely what it means to be human. We are not all mind but have bodily functions and believe in a God who became incarnate. When one is unable to care for oneself, how wonderful it is to have someone bathe and lotion you! How we speak to someone who is hard of hearing can either promote or negate that person's dignity. Sometimes just the way one looks at you speaks volumes.

Jesus constantly reminds us to care for the vulnerable. The Jesus we meet in Scripture is not afraid to touch the menstruating woman, the leper, the blind man. He recognizes their need for companionship and dignity. Like Jesus, as Ladies of Charity, we too are asked to care for the vulnerable not only from a distance by handing them supplies and goods. We are called to be hands on.

As we begin our new national project of providing aides and personal assistants to those in need let us all reflect on how we honor these individuals' dignity – both the providers and recipients of care. Our training program must stress the importance of appropriate touch. We must emphasize listening and recognizing that each individual is unique with his or her own story. We must build trust and relationships. Everyone brings something to a relationship and we must make every effort to recognize each individual's gifts because everything about us is pure gift. All we have has been given to us by God to be used not just for our flourishing but for the good of the community. We must all come to terms with our own vulnerability and form relationships of interdependence. As St. Vincent said, “We should strive to keep hearts open to the sufferings and wretchedness of other people, and pray continually that God may grant us that spirit of compassion which is truly the Spirit of God.”

But in addition to the hands on care that we provide we must also bring about systemic change by helping society to recognize that doing bodily work is dignified and important work. St. Vincent reminds us that doing this bodily work is what Jesus, himself, did while on earth. Vincent states: “He labored unceasingly for his neighbor, visiting and healing the sick and instructing the ignorant unto their salvation.” Interestingly, it is by appreciating the importance of our bodily functions that we are united in our humanity and by disregarding these functions and placing little value on them we negate an important part of ourselves and our connection to others. As Ladies we must do all this in a spirit of humility, simplicity, and love.

Ladies of Charity Caregiver Initiative

With the 400th Anniversary of St. Vincent's calling for the Ladies of Charity to support the spiritual and corporal needs of persons in their homes, the Ladies of Charity, USA will begin a "Home Care" program for the purpose of assisting a growing number of elderly who are homebound. The Ladies of Charity and their family members will play an important role for the Caregiver initiative, providing an organic market for homecare needs and a distinction from other providers by working from a mission driven and spiritually-based value system founded in service to those in need.

With a national presence in parishes and communities across the United States, the Ladies of Charity are well-placed to serve a niche presence for an increasing number of patients and families desiring spiritual, physical, and social care. According to research, 75% of people aged 65 or older need some level of personal care, and by 2050, the total number of individuals needing this care will grow from 12 million to 27 million. This challenge provides the Ladies of Charity, USA with a unique and familiar calling to develop a service model that joins Vincentian charism to those in need of home-based care.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of the Caregiver initiative is to provide quality care for clients in need and quality jobs for caregivers. Both of these goals will require that LCUSA members become engaged as leaders and sponsors of the initiative to ensure that appropriate Caregivers are chosen and to support an environment of trust, friendship, and team approach. As approved in April, 2016 by the Board of LCUSA, below are the goals for the Caregiver initiative:

- Provide home health, personal care services to the sick, frail elderly and disabled people, with a goal to provide care for 50 clients in each location
- Offer training and the opportunity for quality jobs in the local association community
- Provide support for family members of people who need care
- Strengthen ties between the Local Associations and the National Association of the Ladies of Charity USA
- Strengthen Ladies of Charity name recognition locally and nationally
- Help recruit new members to the Ladies of Charity through projects rather than parishes
- Provide funding to the National and Local Associations for application in related projects

PILOT SELECTION

The board of LCUSA has laid out a three-year timetable to implement Caregiver sites in three national locations, with the present steering committee serving as quasi-board for the initiative through the first three years to provide direction for the implementation. Selection of the first pilot site is critical to the success of the Caregiver initiative and will require LCUSA members to assume leadership roles in defining the pilot model. Below are the roles responsibilities that will be requested from the local Ladies of Charity association:

- Assist in identifying a minimum of 50 clients and caregivers for pilot initiative
- Assist in identifying/recruiting a full-time local homecare administrator
- Assist in the establishment of local office and initial staff within 6-9 months
- Serve as pilot location for national launch of LCUSA Caregiver initiative

For local operational support, a full-time administrator and administrative staff (1-2) will be hired to coordinate daily operations (scheduling, payroll, etc.). In addition, support for operationalizing the pilot will be provided through a team of consultants with experience in catholic healthcare and homecare. Consultant activities will be managed by Josiah Mooney, Managing Director for Care Continuum Partners, LLC.

LCUSA QUESTIONNAIRE

A questionnaire was distributed to all local association Presidents to determine interest at the local level. If your association has interest, but did not get the questionnaire, please call the LCUSA office at 816-260-3853.



LCUSA President Suzanne Johnson with Consultant Josiah Mooney

BIOGRAPHY: **Caregiving Consultant** **JOSIAH MOONEY**



Josiah Mooney

Josiah Mooney, MA. MHA, is Managing Director for Care Continuum Partners, LLC, founded in 2016 to assist health plans and providers in developing community-based care management expertise for long-term care populations. With 10 years of experience in healthcare, Josiah has held prior roles in the hospital,

physician practice, and managed care areas within healthcare, most recently serving as AVP for Long Term Care Products for Fidelis Care New York, and VP for ArchCare's Medicare Advantage program.

Prior to a career in healthcare, Josiah and his wife, Katherine, lived 4 years in Central and South America working with Catholic Relief Services in community development and healthcare initiatives. Josiah attended St. John's University for undergraduate and graduate studies in Government & Politics and International Relations and completed a Masters in Healthcare Administration from Trinity University in San Antonio. Josiah continues to support his hometown community of Tyler, Texas, serving as an alumni committee member of Bishop Gorman High School, as well as committee member for the Friends of San Lucas Mission, Guatemala. Josiah and his wife, Katherine, have 4 children and live in New York.

Josiah is looking forward to working with the Ladies of Charity in developing and establishing the Caregiver Initiative.

Dreamers Resolution Passed at the 2017 National Assembly

Welcoming the Stranger

WHEREAS, the Ladies of Charity of the United States of America® are celebrating 400 years of the *Charism of Charity* as members of the Vincentian Family,

WHEREAS, our family has determined that to celebrate this 400th year, we will look at creative and new ways of *welcoming the stranger*,

WHEREAS, at this moment in the USA nearly 1.2 million young men and women who entered the United States as children and know America as their only home are threatened with deportation,

WHEREAS, As Catholics, we have long supported DREAMers as we believe in protecting the dignity of every human being, especially that of our children,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

- Will reach out to and stand with this group of young people known as the DREAMers—contributors to our economy, veterans of our military, academic standouts in our universities, and leaders in our parishes and communities;
- Will study and educate our members about this issue and enlist their support;
- Will participate in the efforts of the USCCB to find a legislative solution such as [Dream Act of 2017, S. 1615/ H.R. 3440](#) which will provide “conditional permanent resident status” and a “path to full lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship”; and
- Will keep the DREAMers and their families in our prayer.



September 9, 2017

Ladies of Charity of the United States of America®

2017 National Assembly

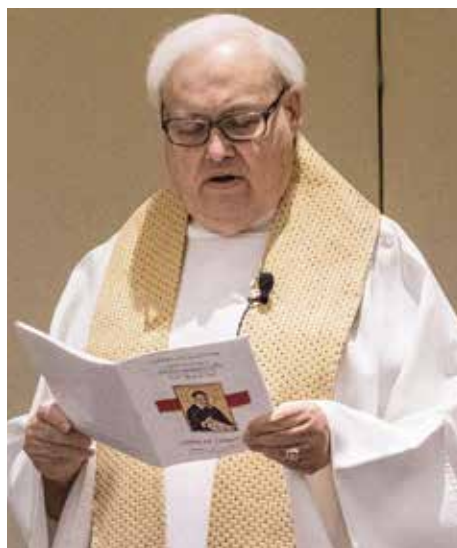
Kansas City, Missouri

Aic.ladiesofcharity.us

office@ladiesofcharity.us

LCUSA 2017 National Assembly

Chris Young



The 400th Anniversary celebration of the founding of the Confraternities of Charity (now known as AIC) began in Châtillon, France in March 2017; it continued with the LCUSA National Assembly, “400 Years of ‘Yes’ to the call of Saint Vincent de Paul,” in Kansas City, Mo., Sept. 7-9. We were greeted with warm hospitality and the epitome of organization and coordination from the Kansas City Metropolitan area Ladies of Charity. Many members arrived early to partake of excellent tours and famous Kansas City BBQ. We gathered in great joy with friends we have met along the enriching Ladies of Charity journey.

“Namaste,” said Sister Joyce Rupp, beginning her keynote address “Women of Boundless Compassion.” “I greet the wholeness of who you are; I open wide my heart to you, and I bow to God who dwells within you.”

A Servant of Mary Sister, author, retreat and conference speaker, Sr. Joyce was touched with how the Ladies and the Sisters work in collaboration in the transformation of people within the world. She also wanted the women to reflect on the first time they felt the divine stir within them to become a Lady of Charity, much like that of Archangel Gabriel’s call to Mary and her “yes.”

“The hardest part is trusting in what God has said through the angels and then left,” Sr. Joyce said. “We’re not sure we have time to do what we have taken on. Compassion is a way of life – an inside-out movement; charity imbues your whole life with compassion surrounding it.

“Practicing compassion has helped me become more tolerable of people and less judgmental,” Sr. Joyce said.

In his homily on Friday, September 8, Father Richard Gielow, LCUSA Spiritual Director elaborated. “Sr. Joyce told us Jesus’ greatest gift was compassion, which he learned from his mother. The world has never been the same since Mary said, ‘Yes,’ and she and Joseph brought Jesus into the world. The Beatitudes, he learned from his parents. ... God is with us, that is how we are able to be compassionate and see Christ in others, and are able to be the compassion the world needs today.”

Take the number 8, from our formal founding date of December 8, place it on its side, and it becomes infinity, Fr. Gielow said. “I think God wants the Vincentian spirit to go on forever in the Ladies of Charity.”

Welcoming all the Ladies to Kansas City, Karen Limer, President of the Kansas City Metropolitan Association,



quoted St. Vincent, saying, "This gathering is to treat our spiritual advancement and the manners of concern to the good of the poor and the maintenance of said confraternity.' What would St. Vincent think of all this? We are still doing the work he envisioned."

"I want to thank [the Ladies of Charity] for keeping alive the Vincentian charism," said Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, D.D., Bishop emeritus of Albany and former Episcopal Moderator of the Ladies of Charity from 1999-2008, whose talk was titled "Welcome the Stranger," a Reflection on the Theology of the Laity.

"Your organization has extended to all corners of the globe. You have accomplished so much through your service and advocacy on behalf of the homeless, the poor, the ill, developmentally disabled, refugees, immigrants, victims

of war and of floods, of catastrophic diseases such as influenza, and HIV/AIDS," Bishop Hubbard said. "And, you have responded to them with the utilization of physical, social and fiscal resources; you have been doing this since 1617."

In the second decade of the 21st century, the nation has become polarized, he said. The rhetoric in the political campaigns and on cable television have become uncivilized and hurtful, bordering divisions of the faces of race, gender, ethnicity, nation of origin, religion and socio-economic status.

During the first years of the 21st century, America has faced harsh realities: The attack of 9/11 in New York City, in the fields of Pennsylvania and the Pentagon in Washington D.C; with the collapse of Wall Street and the recession – 47 million Americans currently live below the Federal poverty line, Bishop Hubbard

said. Violent gangs, the growth of urban centers, small towns and rural villages dying due to the decline of the family farm and the loss of jobs – "I would suggest that there is no organization within the Church today whose members are better prepared to address these issues than the Ladies of Charity."

"I think St. Vincent de Paul is the greatest guy who has walked this earth since Jesus," said Daughter of Charity Sister Paule Freeburg, adding that this is her bias. "Pope Francis is right behind him; we have a great pope, who said 'We are accustomed to a culture of indifference.'"

St. Vincent said to truly discern the poor, "we must see them in their own homes and see them with our own eyes," she said. "We are called to see Christ in the poor we serve. This belief in the real presence of Christ in the poor was the





driving force of St. Vincent's life and it is fundamental to our spirituality."

The first rule of Châtillon is the "ultimate rule that both St. Vincent and Pope Francis describe," Sr. Paule said. "We must have a culture of encounter – set the table for the poor; put a napkin on the tray for the sick. Vincent spoke about the way we should treat the poor and the sick; meet their needs without judging them. It is not what we do, but how we do it."

AIC President, Alicia Duhne of France, said the international and national organizations share a history. In August 1617, Vincent de Paul was installed as a parish priest of Châtillon-les-Dombes, in the Lyons region of France, where Francoise Bachet reported to Fr. Vincent de Paul, as he dressed for Mass, that a family was so ill they could not tend to each other. His heartfelt sermon led to

an afternoon meeting in Bachet's home, followed by a spontaneous outpouring of charity that overwhelmed the family with food and visitors. Vincent realized



that it was not enough for charity to be generous and personal; it must also be organized.

The tiny mustard seed of the Ladies of Charity was planted on Aug. 23, 1617,

Duhne said. Saint Vincent de Paul outlined rules pertaining to the spiritual and corporal needs of the poor. His efforts received the affirmation of the Archbishop of Lyon forming the first association of the Ladies of Charity. It was canonically approved, Dec. 8, 1617, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Fr. Vincent left Châtillon to organize other associations and asked Louise de Marillac, his accomplice, to visit them. Not satisfied with the confraternity merely visiting the laity, she received an overview of the many different groups' affairs from the reports of the officers. She began organizing, renewing and offering suggestions for improvement, Duhne said. Louise encouraged them to live a holier life and engage in harder work through dedication; she taught by her example.





On March 11, 1934, Pope Pius XI canonized St. Louise de Marillac as the model for the Ladies of Charity.

Another woman of faith important to the history of the Ladies of Charity is Elizabeth Ann Seton, born in 1704. According to Sister Mary Victor Power, S.C., Elizabeth Ann Seton always answered the call as a wife, mother, widow and founder; she founded the Sisters of Charity.

On May 23, 1802, bankrupt and with a very sick husband, Elizabeth Ann traveled with her five children to Italy, where the family was quarantined. There she was introduced to Catholicism and the Eucharist. After her husband died in 1805, she was baptized Catholic against her family's will. She returned to New York and started a school for young girls.

In 1808, the Sulpician Fathers, a society of French priests, invited Elizabeth

Ann to Maryland, where she founded Saint Joseph's Academy, the first free Catholic school in the United States, and the Sisters of Charity of Saint Joseph, the first American congregation of religious sisters. This was the beginning of the U.S. Catholic parochial school system. She adopted the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. She became known as Mother Seton. Her order soon expanded, establishing more schools and orphanages along the East Coast of the United States. Mother Seton died in 1821, when she was 46. On Sept. 14, 1975, she was canonized by Pope Paul VI, the first American to be declared a saint.

Another first happened in the United States when Catherine Harkins-Drake founded the Ladies of Charity in the United States in St. Louis in 1857, said Mary Nell Williams, North Central Region vice president. As a young girl, Harkins was taught by the Sisters of Charity and



learned of St. Vincent and his ministries of charity.

"At 23, after vivid dreams, her priest urged her to gather a small group to follow God's prayer; if it was God's will, it would succeed. She initiated the first association, and adopted the rules of the AIC. As we remember those women who have gone before us, let us remember Catherine Harkins, and how we have answered 'yes.'"

The Daughters of Charity were formed in 1633 to perform the ordinary domestic tasks which the ladies of the confraternity were unable to assume, said Sister Kathleen Appller, a Daughter of Charity, who was elected as Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity in 2015. "The Ladies and the Daughters of Charity came into being as a shared response to the needs of the poor."

The two groups complement one





another in their vocations and in their service, Sr. Kathleen continued. “We prolong and perhaps enhance the insights of our common founder; what a privilege and a responsibility,” she said. The qualities and virtues the two groups strive to practice daily to represent Jesus Christ are humility, simplicity and charity.

Today the corporal care in serving the poor requires more than merely meeting the material needs of the poor. “We strive to give each person that which is needed so that tomorrow they can provide for themselves – systemic change,” Sr. Kathleen said. “We also tend to their spiritual needs. Charity is the love of God that stretches through life of the Lady of Charity. All that we do is built upon relationships with people. ... In short, we enjoy being in one another’s company.”

Through a panel discussion, the Ladies and Daughters of Charity heard the importance of advocacy for the underprivileged, bylaws for their organization and the growth of the Junior Ladies of Charity throughout the nation.

“We are listening, giving the poor an opportunity to tell their story,” said Mary-Ann Dantuono, LCUSA immediate past president and advocacy chairwoman. “If you haven’t noticed, the poor are visible in our American communities. You rarely see them being talked about or to, particularly in political arenas; we need to give them the visibility that they deserve as human beings with dignity.”

This year the LCUSA Advocacy committee has collaborated with others who share their values and principles on the issues of ending violence against women and raising awareness against trafficking, health care reform, migration and refugees, and support for family care givers, Dantuono said.



Committee members collaborate, for example, by attending the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in Washington, D.C., work with Catholic Charities USA, align with the Vincentian family social justice coordinator and have advocacy regional liaisons who participate in monthly conference calls. Mary Ann concluded with presenting a resolution in favor of the DREAMers, which was passed overwhelmingly.



Bylaws are important for an LCUSA chapter because, as St. Vincent said, “the poor have suffered more for the lack of good organization,” said Margaret Hanson, LCUSA parliamentarian.

The Junior Ladies of Charity are growing in associations and meet annually. “They only need three girls to attend, who will bring three more girls to a meeting” said Nancy Bianculli, an LCUSA National Board director. She shared the four tenants of the JLOC: Spirituality, Service, Social and Sharing.

LCUSA commissioned eight women as Lay Vincentian Moderators for the first time during the 2017 national assembly in Kansas City, Mo. As the number of Daughters and Sisters of Charity continues to decrease, “we saw a need for

putting a ground work project together and formed a new training program, said Peggy Keene, LCUSA Board secretary. Those initiated into the program were Judi Damon, Marie Fouche, Marlyss Giles, Peggy Keene, Catherine Liska, Deniointinette Mazingo, Mary Cay Murray, Lucy Saunders and Holly Walter.

The Very Rev. G. Gregory Gay, immediate past Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, and presiding priest and homilist for the concluding Liturgy of the national assembly, said the readings reminded him of the Vincentian charism and the sermon St. Vincent de Paul gave that planted the seed for the Ladies of Charity. The message was, “the only thing you should give to anyone is love,” Fr. Gay said.

The Ladies of Charity, as Christian followers of Jesus, “the keepers of your brothers and sisters whom the Lord has entrusted to you – you need to know the men and women you serve,” said Fr. Gay. “Your call in the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul is to draw nearer to those who live on the brink of society.”

The national assembly’s theme in honor of the 400th anniversary of the birth of the Ladies of Charity, is telling of a courageous “yes,” and an imitation of Mary’s “yes;” a call of compassion and tenderness that St. Vincent de Paul made to the laity that formed the first confraternity of charity in Châtillon. Today that call of compassion and tenderness is answered by 150,000 volunteers in 53 countries around the world.”

There are now almost 6,000 women in 21 states and the District of Columbia serving as Ladies of Charity in 68 associations. We emerged from our 2017 Assembly filled with enthusiasm, joy and humility as we greet those whom we are called to serve.

The 2017 LCUSA Assembly Was Nourishing, Challenging and Joyful!

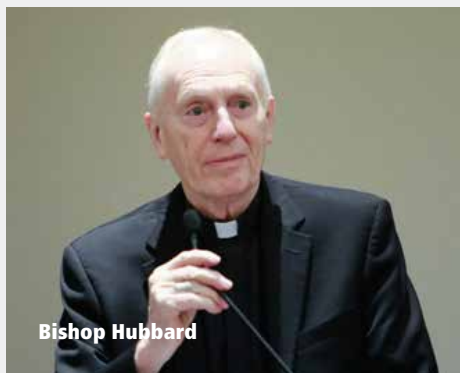
Suzanne Johnson, LCUSA President

Perhaps I am a bit prejudiced because I was part of the planning committee, and I stood before the assembly speaking more times than I can count, but I came away from the recent National Assembly on such a “high” that it may be days before my feet touch the ground! Let me reminisce.



Sr. Joyce Rupp

Our celebration began with two hours of reflection time with Sr. Joyce Rupp, speaking to us about compassion – compassion for others and ourselves. This was followed by a celebratory dinner where we were invited to watch “Ladies of Charity” videos – “Serving with a Vincentian Heart,” “Stories of Hope,” “Serving with Vincentian Creativity” and “Next Generation.” These videos, produced by Joan and Martin Ball, are available for viewing the LCUSA website – AIC.ladiesofcharity.us.



Bishop Hubbard

Friday morning began, as all our assemblies do, with celebration of Mass, followed by opening remarks by Bishop Howard Hubbard, Bishop Emeritus of Diocese of Albany. The Bishop gave us a history of the role of the laity and women in the Church, and remarked on the “forward thinking” of St. Vincent de Paul, who in 1617 was encouraging LAY WOMEN to assume their roles in the Church. A copy of his remarks is posted on the website also. On Friday, five women presented the history of Ladies of Charity and the lives of those persons who played important roles in our formation.

After lunch, the Ladies could learn (very briefly!) about five projects in which Ladies of Charity are or have been involved, followed by Regional Meetings.



Sr. Kathleen Appler, D.C.

Saturday morning saw us praying together with Tom Jacobs, a retreatant from the Kansas City area, whose prayers emphasized service and companionship on our journey of service. We were honored to have Sr. Kathleen Appler, D.C., the Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity. Sister is the first American woman to serve in that position, and flew in from France to be with us. Sister’s talk focused on the history of the Ladies of Charity and the journey shared by the Ladies and the Daughters for the past 400 years.

Our Best Practices Panel focused on By-Laws, Junior Ladies of Charity, Advocacy and the Vincentian Lay Spiritual Moderator Program. (A copy of that power point is posted on the LCUSA website.) Nine women were commissioned as Lay Vincentian Spiritual Moderators! Our business meeting included a resolution for LCUSA to support the DACA (DREAMers) bill currently in the Senate and the House of Representatives. The resolution was adopted with overwhelming approval from those assembled.



Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C.



Fr. Gregory Gay, C.M.

After our business meeting, Sr. Paule Freeburg, D.C. spoke about serving the poor with dignity – “putting the napkin on the tray.” Each lady in attendance was then given a napkin along with encouragement to “Put the Napkin on the Tray.” After a final blessing by the Spiritual Moderators, we went to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, where Fr. Gregory Gay, former Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, celebrated Mass.



Ruth Noel and Donna Montague

I am thankful to many people – Donna Montague and Ruth Noel, fellow chairpersons of the assembly and ALL the Kansas City Association members, many of whom worked diligently behind the scenes. I am thankful to the members of the National Planning Committee, whose diligence resulted in the speakers and program. I am thankful to the staff of the hotel – the food was fabulous and the service was incredible. I am thankful to the photographer, John Caulfield, whose photos can also be viewed on this website. Finally, I am grateful to all those women who attended this assembly and celebration of our 400th anniversary. Over the course of three days, over 200 women were in attendance. Thank you for joining us.

Remember – our next assembly will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from September 21 – 22, 2018. Please plan to attend. We are nothing without you.

Photos by John Caulfield

Troy, NY Ladies of Charity Annual Fashion Show

Peg Rosamilia, President LOC Troy Chapter



Troy Chapter Officers

The Troy Chapter of Ladies of Charity recently held their Annual Fashion Show at the Franklin Terrace Ballroom in Troy, New York. Under the direction of Chairperson Donna Williams, 7 Chapter Ladies, 3 Junior Ladies, and 2 young gentlemen modeled clothing and accessories from Troy merchants; Truly Rhe,

Aurora Boutique, Topsy Curvy, and The Counties of Ireland.

The successful efforts of all our members resulted in a wonderful crowd of over 200 ladies in attendance. We were pleased to be joined by a representation from the Albany and Saratoga Chapters of the Ladies of Charity.

The evening was fun filled not only with a Spectacular Run Way, but we were entertained by Sound Spectrum's music, over 100 super raffle items and many delicious desserts provided by two of our members, Nancy Donohue and Carol Cody.

The money raised at this event will help us continue to provide comfort to those of the Roarke Center, our community, and beyond.

We are not done yet!! So, stay tuned to see what the Troy Chapter is up to!!



JLOC Model



Lady of Charity Model

Diocese of Pittsburgh Junior Ladies of Charity Investiture

Nancy Bianculli



Pittsburgh Junior Ladies of Charity Investiture Ceremony



JLOC Member Receives Her Cross and Red Rose

Diocese of Pittsburgh Ladies of Charity are so proud and blessed to congratulate our newly invested Junior Ladies of Charity. Earlier in 2017 St Bernadette's Parish started a new JLOC group. Three moderators got together, Katherine Schuetz, Christine Gurski, and Margaret Bent, and planned a pizza party. Ten girls attended that first pizza party meeting.

On Sunday October 1, 2017 eight girls were invested as new JLOC.

[ST BERNADETTE'S PARISH MONROEVILLE PA](#)

[ST. ANGELA MERICI PARISH WHITE OAK PA](#)

The girls participated in the Mass as readers and carried up the gifts. The Mass was presided over by Father Anthony Gargotta, who was very welcoming and made it so special for the girls. What a wonderful witness for an entire church to see these young ladies dedicate themselves to serve the needy. Each girl received her cross and a red rose. The Ladies of Charity from St Bernadette's parish provided a wonderful reception afterwards.

On October 29, 2017 St Catherine of Sweden Parish invested 7 more new JLOC.

Three other Parishes in the Diocese of Pittsburgh are also planning to start new Junior Ladies of Charity groups this coming year.



MY JOURNEY TO SPIRITUAL MODERATOR

Holly Walter

My journey certainly did not begin in a conventional way. My childhood church was a Christian Church, an offshoot of the Methodist denomination. I became Catholic in 1974 as I was preparing for marriage to Mike and made my Profession of Faith on April 21st, a week after Easter because I was too shy to participate in the Holy Saturday services for initiation of new Catholics that we now celebrate as a matter of course every Easter Season.

Like most converts, I immediately decided that if I was going to be a "Good Catholic" I needed to join as many organizations as I could so I joined the choir, became a CYO advisor, became a member of the Liturgy Committee, became a Lector, and joined the parish planning committee that organizes special celebrations and events. Music has always been an important part of my life so choir was a wonderful learning experience. I had the best of teachers so everything he taught me took hold. I learned to sing in Latin as well as learning all of the new post Vatican II folk songs. I started teaching Catholic School at my new parish, St. Josephs in North Tonawanda in 1978. All of these organizations taught me a great deal about how the Church operated and functioned. But I determined that I needed to learn more so I joined other organizations. When our family, of now four, moved from North Tonawanda to Lancaster New York in 1990 I became involved in new ministries. I taught religious education at my new parish, St. Mary's in Lancaster, and taught full time at various Catholic elementary schools in the Buffalo suburbs. I also became a Eucharistic Minister.

In 2005 I began my studies at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora New York after I retired from full time teaching in Catholic schools. I needed a change in direction emotionally, spiritually, and educationally so Father Greg Faulhaber, our weekend assistant at St. Mary's, recommended that I enroll at the Seminary. I loved the Seminary experience and graduated in 2008 with a Master's Degree in Pastoral Ministry.

At a Ministry Fair at St. Mary's that summer I went from table to table looking for an organization to join that would complement the commitment to the poor that I had learned at the Seminary. My good friend and someone I had served mass with for many years, Mary Faulhaber (Father Greg's mother), recommended that I join the Ladies of Charity. That Fall I went to my first meeting and was almost immediately made treasurer because the current holder of that office became ill. After the presiding president retired a few years later I became president of our local group and have been ever since.

I was invited to join the Diocesan Advisory Board in the Diocese of Buffalo shortly thereafter as a member at large and soon became the advocacy chair. Our Daughter of Charity spiritual moderator, Sister Mary Grace Higgins, was told by her superiors that she needed to leave Sisters of Charity Hospital in Buffalo and move to a mother house in Albany New York. Now we had no spiritual moderator for our diocese so everyone around the table at our LOC Advisory board meeting looked at me and I was asked to become the acting spiritual moderator. Sister Mary Grace left me all the materials and wished me good luck before she left.

It has been a fast paced learning experience ever since. I was fortunate to be able to attend the first Spiritual Moderator training program in Queens last year and have been studying for my new ministry for even longer than that. I am deeply thankful to Sister Fran Ryan and Sister Paule Freeburg for their advice and counsel over that time. A lot of my training over the past two and half years has truly been on the job as well. Since I am musical, I have been leading the singing for our diocesan functions and Masses as well as the prayers. I serve two parishes in Western New York as well as a part of my overall ministry. At St. Mary's in Lancaster I am a lector, Eucharistic minister and direct the Parish Outreach and Social Justice committees. Of course, the presidency of our Ladies of Charity parish group is a big part of my ministry there. At St. Leo the Great in Amherst I am a lector, choir member, and cantor. Our choir is a constant source of joy and fulfillment spiritually as we praise God in song every Sunday. In addition, I graduated from Catholic Biblical School last year after four years of study and now attend graduate level classes.

Currently I am a member of the National Board of LCUSA but Vincentian Spirituality is all important to me on every level of ministry. I am deeply appreciative to all who have aided in my growth. As you can see, it has been an ever enlarging circle of involvement and commitment. I am no longer the shy Catholic who was hesitant to participate in Holy Saturday initiation rites. I have two wonderful grandchildren to teach and adore and I couldn't feel more complete personally. Spiritual growth is an ongoing process that never really ends. My dedication to the poor includes working at our thrift store in Buffalo in the "Fresh Start" program and helping all those in need. Some "doing" is indeed a part of spirituality and is a necessary element in personal growth. I now have been commissioned as a Spiritual Moderator at our Assembly in Kansas City this year and will serve the Diocese of Buffalo to the best of my ability. God asks us to help those who need our help by prayer and action. By our service to those less fortunate than we are, we are following the teachings and example of Jesus Christ and are doing His will as He wants us to. Saint Vincent and Saint Louise knew this all too well and dedicated their lives to service to the poor and marginalized. We must do the same and follow in their footsteps.



Commissioning of Spiritual Moderators at the 2017 National Assembly in Kansas City

Reflections of Time in France and Rome

Being with the Reliquary of St. Vincent's Heart

Mary Nell Williams

I was in Paris, France in March and celebrated with Ladies of Charity (also known as AIC, International Association of Charity, worldwide). The Ladies of Charity was the first organization founded by St. Vincent de Paul in 1617 and thus began the founding of the Vincentian Charism which all Vincentians celebrate during this year. During the entrance procession for the Mass celebrated on March 8 in Notre Dame Cathedral, the reliquary of St. Vincent's heart was carried down the center aisle. I had not realized that the reliquary would be present then and was touched, awed and humbled to see it. It was later during our celebrations in Chatillon, France that five of us, out of the approximately 400 Ladies of Charity from around the world, were invited to sit in the chapel in the house where St. Vincent had lived when he was the pastor of the local parish church where he founded the Ladies of Charity. There was no distance between ourselves and the reliquary which had been placed at the foot of the altar. We were able to touch, venerate it and take pictures. It has been difficult to explain my feelings.

We had been told that the reliquary would be present in Rome. We had not been told when or where it would be. We first saw it when it preceded Pope Francis' arrival and was carried down the center aisle of St. Peter's Square and placed on a table close to where Pope Francis spoke. I had the same unexplained feelings I had in Paris and Chatillon. Again we had an opportunity to see it during the Saturday evening October 14 prayer service at St. Paul's Outside the Wall in Rome. I believe in all of these events I came to realize this was as close as I would ever be to St. Vincent.

Both in France and in Rome I appreciated these opportunities which, in comparison to our 2 million Vincentians worldwide, few have or will experience. Both celebrations reminded me that I have been privileged to be present during moments in our Vincentian history never to be repeated. Our 400th anniversary only comes once. I have been very grateful and blessed.

Editor's note: Mary Nell Williams, Connie O'Brien, Winona Nelson, Marlyss Giles, Natalie Boone and Margaret Hanson are Ladies of Charity who attended the Vincentian Symposium.



Symposium 2017

400 years of the Vincentian Charism

ROME: 13 14 15 October 2017

Margaret Hanson, Parliamentarian - LCUSA, AICUSA



MY DAYS IN ROME

Please come in, the door is open.
Please come in, and be at home.
All God's children are brothers
and sisters
You are family, please come in.

I was there for a purpose, to join in the recognition and celebration of the four hundred years of service to those in need springing from the heart of Vincent de Paul when he es-

tablished the first Confraternity of Charity. The relic of the heart of St. Vincent was present with us, having been carried from its home in Vincent's chapel in his home in Chatillon, France. During the address of His Holiness, Pope Francis, he encouraged us to continue the journey.

To conceive of a gathering of souls filled with the Vincentian spirit and imbued with the theme: "I was a stranger, and you welcomed me" (Matt 25: 35), stretches the imagination. To participate in the gathering of thousands who made such a gathering a reality was truly phenomenal: an experience like no other and not to be repeated in our lifetime.

The three primary days of the program each occurred in a different venue. Traveling to each was a pilgrimage. The Friday sessions were held in separate auditoriums, identified by language, at the Pala Cavicchi, a center adjacent to the Ciampino airport and accessible from Rome by train or metro. The morning conference and dialogue concerned Vincentian spirituality, formation and communication, presented by Peggy O'Neil, SC, and the afternoon session, prior to the Eucharist, was a presentation entitled, "From Here to Where?" by Dennis Holtschneider, C.M. The message here is to be brought to all branches and each association, suggesting that going forward, having begun to collaborate and cooperate with the various Vincentian groups, we must go further, beyond our current boundaries and invite and work with secular groups with a like-minded mission to increase our impact on mankind. While discussing the implications of Father's presentation I met Pramod Singh, a Vincentian seminarian from Jharkhand, India, his fellow seminarians hoping to be ordained to the priesthood next year, and several men from the St. Vincent de Paul Society in England.

The second day of the program required traveling to St. Peter's Square, with our admission credentials, to enjoy not only entertainment but also to listen to the message delivered in person by His Holiness, Pope Francis, and, most touchingly to hear a young woman from the Syrian delegation from Damascus explain how the Vincentian Marian Youth, despite their wartime circumstances and the danger surrounding them did not abandon their activities and decided to live. "We continue to live for our dear country and this decision made us stronger than ever".

The closing Eucharist on day three was held at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls. The beautiful liturgy in multiple languages, with symphonic and choral music was touching and inspiring.

Fr. Thomaz Mavric, C.M., Superior General spoke in the homily of the Vincentian charism a way of life within the church whereby we allow the Spirit of Jesus to move freely as we live a deeply spiritual life, centering particularly on the Eucharist. We discover and see Jesus in the Poor and the Poor in Jesus. We promote good formation, close collaboration with those who share our same goals and vision on the local, national and international levels.

The symposium supported and promulgated the common project to end homelessness and created the Vincentian Homeless Alliance. This and the movement to welcome the stranger can be seen on U Tube @FamVin.org/formation/collaboration. Multiple resources for continuing the work can also be found at info@famvin.org. This connects to the Vincentian Family Office in Philadelphia which is staffed by Rev. Joseph Agostino, C.M.; S. Francely Perez, DC; S. Marge Clifford, DC; and Rev. Flavio, Perecia Tercero, C.M. The staff organized the Symposium around the theme: I was a stranger and you welcomed me, and communicated with people far and wide.

Multiple resources for continuing the work can also be found at famvin.org.

The 400th Prayer

Lord, Merciful Father
who instilled in Saint Vincent de Paul
a great concern for the
evangelization of those who are poor,
now fill the heart of His followers
with that same spirit.

Today, as we hear the cry
of your abandoned children,
we may run to their assistance
"like someone who runs to put out a fire".

Revive within us the flame of the Charism,
that flame which has animated
our missionary life for 400 years.

We pray in the name of your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord,
"the Evangelizer of those who are poor".

Ladies of Charity at SJU: Service Day 2017

(St. Vincent de Paul's Feast Day)

The Ladies of Charity St. John's University Chapter joined with over 2,000 members of the University family for Service Day 2017. This is a service opportunity that has taken place in September for 16th years in honor of the Feast of St. Vincent de Paul.

Seven members of our chapter were joined by five of our Junior Ladies from St. John's Prep High School to serve at the Hour Children Thrift Shop located in Astoria, NY. There was plenty of work to be done that ranged from sorting clothes and transporting items to a second thrift shop a few blocks away, to organizing books and cleaning the show room. Some of the ladies created a display of items for a "sidewalk" sale that brought attention to foot traffic neighbors.

Most importantly, this gave our Ladies a chance to meet with Sr. Annelle Fitzpatrick, CSJ and Sr. Mary Echo Perry. They have been working with this organization for many years and they were pleased to give the history of the "Hour Children" organization providing practical, comprehensive services to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their families. The women are welcomed at various neighborhood homes where they can live with their child or children while they readjust to society. Community-based programs include: transitional and permanent supportive housing; a comprehensive employment training and placement program; case management and

therapeutic services; pre- and post-release adult mentoring; mentoring for children with incarcerated parents; child care that includes a fully-licensed daycare center and an after-school program that free women so that they can go to work or school, two thrift shops; and a community food pantry, transportation and visitation services; parenting education; mental health support for women, children and families; a Teen Program; advocacy; and a residential Nursery unit.

As we often find, this day was so rewarding to our ladies and we know that our assistance was appreciated because the welcome mat will always there for us.

St. John's University Chapter Ladies and Local JLOC Members at Service Day 2017



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Ladies of Charity Celebrate 400th Anniversary

Toni K. Gaines

On October 22, 2017, the Ladies of Charity (LOC) of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church (OLPH) celebrated the 400th Anniversary of its ministry of serving the less fortunate in the community. OLPH established its LOC association in 1958 under the then Archdiocese of Baltimore. Currently, there are 45 active members with 21 associate members of the OLPH unit serving the community through direct Christian service, prayer, witness and/or financial support. Its oldest founding member, Ms. Lauretta B. Sullivan, is 101 years young. She served as the first OLPH LOC President as well as on the District of Columbia, Archdiocese of Washington and National LCUSA Boards. Currently, the youngest member of the OLPH association, Ms. Jamila Stone at 24 years old serves as the sitting OLPH President. The members gathered to pray in thanksgiving for the many blessings it has received to enable them to continue to perform the good works of the Ladies of Charity as established 400 years ago by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac.

Ladies of Charity at 400th Anniversary Celebration



All Saints Church LOC in Pittsburgh Diocese Celebrated their 40th

Judy Weismann

The Ladies of Charity from All Saints Church in Etna celebrated their 40th Anniversary at a Mass, presided by Administrator Rev. Doctor James R. Gretz on Saturday, October 28, 2017. The current officers Co-Presidents Debi Katich and Ramona Piotrowski; Vice President Dolly Chavez, Secretary April Giel and Treasurer Karen Tomaszewski renewed their commitment as Officers of the Parish Association and all the members present at the Mass renewed their commitment as Ladies of Charity. Sister Mary Victor, SC the Diocesan LOC Spiritual Moderator gave a very informative and heartwarming talk on the life of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. A special presentation was made to Anna Mae Kenst as the longest living member (invested in 1978) of the All Saints Parish Association. A delicious breakfast provided and served by the members was held after the Mass.



Memorials



In Memory of:

Lucky Van De Gejuchte

Charleen Brain

Walter Conley

Mary Manaher

Sr. Rose Rotella, DC

George Martin

Gerry Ryan

Gertrude Bizyak

Bob Bizyak

John Bizyak

Bequeathed by:

Joan Straub

Nashville Ladies of Charity

Jean Mehsling

Karen Tate

M. Susan Hite

Norma Otto

Albe McGurk

Mary Conley

Kathleen Sieracki

Theresa Ward

Suzanne Johnson

Kathy Kavanaugh

Vilma Bellissimo

Vilma Bellissimo

Vilma Bellissimo

Olga Touchet

Suzanne Johnson

Olga Touchet was born and raised in New Iberia, Louisiana, where she met and married her husband of 62 years, Jean Touchet, Sr. She and Jean, a career soldier in the Army, traveled the world and had four sons together. In 1967, they moved to Harker Heights, Texas where Olga lived and raised the boys while Jean served in Viet Nam. Olga loved to play football and baseball with her sons, and enjoyed hunting with her husband.

Olga joined the Ladies of Charity of Harker Heights in January 1997. She loved children, having worked for the Killeen Independent School District. This led her to be active in ministries involving children. She led courses on Saturdays as Director of Religious Education to improve

the spiritual education for the youth of St. Paul Chong Hasang Parish in Harker Heights, Texas. Youth from Fort Hood, Texas, the local army base, also attended that youth program. Having been Director of Religious Education for many years, she was very involved in First Communion and Confirmation classes, activities, and receptions. Over the years, Olga also helped in the many fund raisers – bake sales, raffles, and bazaars - the ladies held. Olga Touchet went home to God on November, 2015.

She is missed by the Ladies of Charity of Harker Heights.

Thank you, Mr. Jean Touchet, Sr. for your generous gift in memory of your wife, Olga.

In Memoriam



Olga and Jean Through the Years



The Future of the Junior Ladies of Charity: The Junior Ladies of Charity are our Future.

Attention Junior Ladies of Charity Moderators. Please share with your JLOC.

JLOC Assembly Report

Nancy Bianculli

HANDBOOK

At the National Assembly in Kansas City, September 7, 8, and 9, 2017, it was reported that a Junior Ladies of Charity Handbook is going to print in 2018. The Ladies of Charity hope that the Junior Ladies of Charity and their moderators will look to this Handbook for an increase in spirituality and direction. The Handbook will give instruction on Vincentian Spirituality, as well as insight into Saints Vincent DePaul, Louise De Marillac, and Elizabeth Ann Seton.

A section of the Handbook will be devoted to having more structure to the meetings.

On the last day of July 1634, in a third and final conference, M. Vincent gave the Rules to the little Congregation of the Daughters of Charity, and an instruction on how to practice them. The following are notes that were taken:

He knelt down, as did all the Sisters present, and after reciting the *Veni, Sancte*, began in this way, "Dear Sisters, when I was speaking to you the other day, I was saying that you've been residing together for some time now with the same purpose in view, but so far you haven't had any Regulations for your way of life. In this, Divine Providence has guided you, as God guided His people, who were without a code of laws for more than a thousand years after creation. Our Lord acted in the same way with the early Church; for, as long as He was on earth, there was no new written law; His Apostles were the ones who assembled His teachings and Commandments after He had gone. Providence seems to have brought the twelve of you together here with the intention of honoring His human life on earth. **What a blessing to be a member of a Community because each individual shares in the good that is done by all! By this means you'll have more abundant grace. Our Lord promised us this, saying, 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst.'**"

All meetings should have the 4 S's:

SPIRITUAL: Prayer and reflection

SERVICE: Discover God in everything and everyone

SOCIAL: Developing friendship and forming a connection of love and care.

SHARING: Sharing experiences. How did I find God in this experience?

The purpose of this Handbook is to keep Junior Ladies of Charity connected and engaged with the church.

SPOTLIGHT

Watch for the JLOC "Spotlight" coming soon to the USA Ladies of Charity web site. Juniors will soon be able to light up their areas on the map. They will be able to see what other Juniors are doing and get ideas from different areas of the country. Junior Ladies will have the opportunity to make friends from all over the country.

JUNIOR LADIES OF CHARITY REFLECTION BOOKLET

Calling all JLOC writers. Are you interested in getting published? Ladies of Charity is interested in writing a Reflection Booklet with short formation pages for Juniors. You would get a topic to research and add pictures, drawings, and or prayers to match your research. The pages submitted would be reviewed and approved by a LOC committee. Everyone's approved topics would be assembled into a Reflection Booklet for future JLOC to use at their meetings as a simple reflection tool. If interested contact Nancy Bianculli at 412 818-1719 or nb7510@outlook.com.

ASSEMBLY 2018

Diocese of Pittsburgh Ladies of Charity are hosting The National Assembly in Pittsburgh September 21 and 22, 2018. Junior Ladies of Charity are invited to attend. Host families will be provided for their visit. Spaces are limited, so let us know if you are interested in coming to Assembly 2018. Special sessions and tours will be provided for the JLOC interested. Call or email Nancy Bianculli for more info 412 818-1719 or nb7510@outlook.com.

Sharing Spiritual Renewal As Ladies of Charity

Author: Lucy Saunders

On Saturday, October 7, the Middle Atlantic Ladies of Charity gathered in Emmitsburg, Maryland, to celebrate their 400th Anniversary. Approximately 250 Ladies made the pilgrimage to enjoy spiritual reflection and fellowship at the home of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, who affectionately named the area Saint Joseph's Valley. The day was filled with tours and a visit to Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto. Mass in the Basilica celebrated by Father Philip Simo, Spiritual Advisor Archdiocese of Washington, closed out the day's activities.

This afternoon liturgy was planned by two Sister Moderators, Sister Sandra Goldsborough, retired from the Washington Archdiocese Ladies of Charity, Sister Ann Adele Kelly, and Emmitsburg Ladies of Charity, who also provided the music for the liturgy. The printed liturgy program contained a special remembrance for the Ladies prepared by Toni Gaines, Archdiocese of Washington Website Manager. The special touches rendered by all involved in the day's pilgrimage evoked the true Vincentian charism among the Ladies present.

Feeling that charism among the Ladies in Emmitsburg took another turn when a special email was received from the Lynchburg (Virginia) Ladies of Charity. It read, "I hope your day at Emmitsburg Saturday October 7th went well. Our circles at Holy Cross Catholic Church were praying for all of you. We had our first Saturday Mass and Rosary prayer that morning followed by going out for brunch. We mentioned all of you in our thoughts and prayers. Last spring we took a bus trip to the John Paul II Shrine in Washington. Both the Saturday event and the trip shared by a group of believers were special experiences. I'm sure those who traveled to Emmitsburg feel the same love of God that we experienced."

Another highlight of the day was the quilt made of blocks sent in by member associations in honor of the 400th Anniversary. Ladies were excited to identify their particular block as part of the anniversary quilt made by Karen Radu of Pittsburgh. It was like finding a hidden treasure!

Other reflections on the day's journey are described below:

- It was a terrific experience for everybody, especially the first-timers. I think some will come back with family & friends. Those who did come can spread the word about how special a visit is to the Shrine. The weather was lovely & the lunch was terrific.
- Gathering in prayer with a large group of Ladies of Charity during our 400th year celebration was a once in a lifetime experience. This wonderful group of Ladies all carries one feeling in their hearts: the gifts of charity, humility & simplicity. May God continue to spread the love in our hearts.
- It was a great meeting of the Ladies of Charity from the different Mid-Atlantic region. The day was filled with a feeling of mutual caring and sharing with one another. The Shrine itself seems to bestow peace, tranquility and true connection with God. I think we all felt this as we toured the Shrine and the surrounding grounds.
- Emmitsburg was an amazing experience. An opportunity to learn more about St. Elizabeth's life and all the contributions she made. A place to go and visit again.
- It probably one of the most beautiful places I have ever been. Seeing where St. Elizabeth lived was an unbelievable experience for me, one I will never forget. Thank you Ladies of Charity for the opportunity.
- The bus trip was long to Emmitsburg but everyone was so excited as they anticipated a wonderful day. We were not disappoint-

ed. The Basilica was magnificent with the several side altars and mosaics and marble. Mass at the end of the day was very special. I visited the Grotto and especially felt the presence of Our Lady when I looked at the beautiful statue looking down at me. It was so nice to rest in the Corpus Christe Chapel and visit with Our Lord for a few moments. Everything was so beautiful and really made me realize how blessed I am to be blessed with the Catholic faith. I had a wonderful surprise while walking up the mountain path. I came upon a priest from EWTN – Father Anthony Mary. He was giving a retreat to the seminarians at Mt. St. Mary's. I had met him several years ago when my mother and I visited EWTN in Alabama. It was an exciting happening. I only wish I had asked for his blessing!

- It was a beautiful visit, and I probably would not have gone if the Ladies of Charity Archdiocese of Washington had not organized it. Thank you!
- All I can say is 400 years of giving, loving and peace still exists. The day was beautiful seeing so many Ladies come together on one accord.
- Upon entering the Basilica for our welcome, I could immediately feel calmness and know that I was on very sacred ground. There were no strangers because we all felt as one and immediately greeted ladies that you didn't know. I left feeling very proud to have answered "YES" to serving as a Lady of Charity and will continue to serve. As I looked back over the 400 year history, I realized that the original mission has never changed. How proud we must make St. Vincent, St. Louise and St. Elizabeth in our obedience to fight poverty in all of its forms.
- Saturday, October 7 defied the weather forecast and turned out to be a beautiful, warm, sunny day – perfect for a pilgrimage. Getting together with a group of nearly 250 other Ladies of Charity from the Mid-Atlantic Region, one could not help but be reinvigorated to go out into the world and share the Vincentian charism with those in need. When I meet Ladies from other parishes and regions, I am always impressed by their warmth and sense of sisterhood and mission. There is an inspiring spirit among the Ladies. One of the most impressive places for me was the cemetery where there was row after row of her sisters buried. To think of all the years of work and dedication that those tombstones represented was humbling. Walking around the gardens and sitting on a bench the peace and tranquility of the place just encompassed me. You could sense the holiness of the grounds and the nearness of God. The closing Mass was a lovely way to end the day and head home filled with thoughts of God and His wonderful love for us. Previously, I had wondered how Saints Vincent and Louise were connected to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton who lived nearly 200 years later and in America. But I learned that St. Elizabeth used the rule of St. Vincent when she founded the Sisters of Charity at Emmitsburg.

This closing thought summarizes all that can be said of Emmitsburg and its impact on anyone that has the opportunity to journey there, "This day certainly fulfilled the definition of a pilgrimage: A journey undertaken by a believer or by a group of believers to a place of devotion. A place that is viewed as sacred and holy."



Emmitsburg Pilgrimage

Ladies of Charity

Servicette, LCUSA Service Center
2816 E. 23rd St.
Kansas City, MO 64127
Address Service Requested



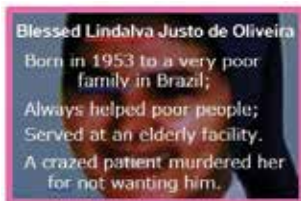
<http://aic.ladiesofcharity.us>

"To serve rather than to be served"

Lindalva Justo de Oliveira

Young, Attractive, Brave

Carol Schumer, D.C.



to stay in her ministry even though she knew the dangers. She was declared a martyr in 2006.

Born on October 20, 1953 in a very poor area of Brazil Lindalva was the sixth of thirteen children. Her father João Justo da Fé, a farmer and widower, married Maria Lúcia de Oliveira, Lindalva's mother. The family, not materially well-off, lived a deep Christian faith. With her mother's good example and her own natural inclination, Lindalva eagerly shared her time and attention with poorer people. Aware of the sufferings of others, she often visited those who were lonely, at times even giving them her own clothes. Early on, she realized she was called to follow Jesus by reaching out to poor persons, offering God's love to them.



After completing her studies, she chose to care for her ill father. On his death, she applied to the Daughters of Charity. She wrote, "I'm 33 years old; I come from a simple, honest family. I have felt God's call for a long time, but have not been available to serve Christ until now. I am in good health and feel I have endless energy to do good works." She was welcomed into the

First Brazilian women beatified, Lindalva Justo de Oliveira, lived only four years as a Daughter of Charity, when she was stabbed 44 times by one of her patient-admirers. When her superiors offered to

mission her, Sister Lindalva asked

Company in July, 1989. Seventeen months later, on January 26, 1991, Lindalva was sent to Dom Pedro II Home in El Salvador, Brazil. There she was responsible for the care of 40 elderly, ill men. With genuine love, she showed no favoritism, looking after them as her lords and masters. She got her driver's license so she could take the residents for rides. Her faith was expressed by a simple acceptance of daily events. She knew how to share this faith and to support her companions when trials overwhelmed them. She assured them, "We will come to know God's love by carrying the Cross," possibly a prediction of what was in store for her.



On Good Friday, April 9, 1993, after praying the Stations of the Cross, as Lindalva served coffee, Augustus da Silva Peixoto approached her, tapped her on the shoulder and thrust a knife into her above the collar bone. She sank to the ground and cried out, "God protect me." Her attacker shouted, "I should have done this sooner!" Another man, attempting to intervene, was warned he would be killed, too. Augustus wiped the knife on his clothes and threw it to the floor before yelling to the shocked witnesses, "She did not want me!" Augustus declared his reason for killing her was Lindalva's refusal to give up religious life to be his lover. He was admitted to a mental hospital on his conviction.

Reflection Questions:

- How strong is my faith amid life's challenges?
- How do I witness, help persons living in poverty in a respectful, loving manner?

References:

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20071202_suor-lindalva_en.htm

<http://filles-de-la-charite.org/history/saints-and-blessed-daughters-of-charity/blessed-lindalva-justo-de-oliveira/>