



# LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA®

AIC USA

*Providing Vincentian Leadership to Women Acting Together Against All Forms of Poverty*

MOST REV. DAVID A. ZUBIK, D.D.  
Episcopal Chairman

REV. RICHARD GIELOW, C.M.  
Vincentian Spiritual Advisor

SR. ANN CLAIRE RHOADS, D.C.  
Vincentian Spiritual Moderator

SR. GRACE HARTZOG, S.C.  
Vincentian Spiritual Moderator

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

HOLLY WALTER, PRESIDENT  
Lancaster, NY

IRENE SIEDLARCZYK, PRES. ELECT  
Endicott, NY

PEGGY KEENE, PAST PRES.  
Pittsburgh, PA

SUZANNE JOHNSON  
AIC Executive Board, Arcadia, CA

CLAUDIA VAN, TREASURER  
Corapolis, PA

KAREN RADU, SECRETARY  
Mid Atlantic Region, Pittsburgh, PA

MARY NELL WILLIAMS, HISTORIAN  
Indianapolis, IN

NANCY BIANCULLI, V.P.  
Mid Atlantic Region, Pittsburgh, PA

DEBORAH SELF  
Mid Atlantic Region, Lanham, MD

VIOLA JOHNSON-ROBINSON  
Mid Atlantic Region, Ft. Washington, MD

MARY PAT SULLIVAN, V.P.  
North Central Region, Overland Park, KS

ROSEMARIE VOHSEN  
North Central Region, St. Louis, MO

SHARON TERWELP  
North Central Region, Liberty, IL

NATALIE BOONE, V.P.  
Northeastern Region, Westbury, NY

KATHLEEN ROSETI  
Northeastern Region, Williamsville, NY

FRANCES SIMKULET  
Northeastern Region, Port Crane, NY

MARLYSS GILES, V.P.  
Southern Region, Birmingham, AL

ANNELIES GEELEN  
Southern Region, Southern Pines, NC

ELLEN POSCH  
Southern Region, Nashville, TN

HILDA RUIZ, V.P.  
Western Region, Los Angeles, CA

IDA BICKERTON  
Western Region, Gallup, NM

EILEEN D'ORAZIO  
Western Region, Gallup, NM

CHRIS YOUNG, SERVICETTE ED.  
Western Region, Bountiful, UT

MARGARET HANSON  
Parliamentarian, Binghamton, NY

April 2024

Dear Ladies and Friends of Ladies of Charity:

After a very successful Assembly in Buffalo New York last year, we are looking forward to our annual Assembly being held in St. Louis Missouri in 2024. The St. Louis area is a very special for Ladies of Charity since it is our birthplace here in the United States. We will be taking a trip to Perryville and the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal as part of our Day of Reflection. Catherine Harkins had a dream about seeing St. Vincent de Paul traveling around the streets of Paris France gathering up children living in poverty and neglect. After several recurring dreams, she consulted a local priest, Father Urban Gagnepain, CM, and he advised her to gather a group of women and form a society whose goal was to serve those living in poverty and marginalization. As soon as the group secured the rules of the original Ladies of Charity in France, they became affiliated with the mother branch in Paris and became an Association in 1857. Catherine Harkins became the first American President of the Ladies of Charity of the United States of America.

This year's Assembly chose the theme "Ladies of Charity: Committed to the Eucharist, Committed to Serving Those in Need" As Ladies of Charity today we are certainly dedicated to serving those in need. But we also need to be dedicated to the Eucharist which is the ultimate way we receive the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and are strengthened to carry on our mission to aid the less fortunate. The Eucharist gives us a very personal connection to Christ that cannot be duplicated by any other means.

As Ladies of Charity, we all work together to combat poverty around the country and in our own individual communities. At the assembly each year we provide the opportunity to develop leadership skills, help in the formation of new associations, and provide encouragement for each other's efforts. We also get to receive special enlightenment from speakers who focus on topics that educate us about different projects and endeavors that are occurring all over the nation but particularly in the locality where the Assembly is being held.

I would also encourage donations to the Madagascar Fund which helps finance opportunities for women and children in one of the most poverty-stricken areas of the world. I personally have served as chair of the Madagascar Committee since 2017 and can verify that all our donations have helped immensely to construct new homes and schools to replace the ones destroyed by storms and get women owned businesses off the ground. Donations will be accepted and collected at the assembly.

In closing, I would like to remind everyone that we are certainly a people of prayer as well as action. We will again be having a Day of Reflection on Thursday of the assembly just like last year in Buffalo. But we are also people who receive the Eucharist with open hands and hearts and carry on the mission of Jesus Christ, our Savior, and example for all that we do. We are invigorated by the real presence of Christ in our lives. We welcome you to St. Louis and all that it will provide in the way of spiritual growth for all of us.

Yours in Humility, Simplicity, and Charity,

Holly Walter, LCUSA President