

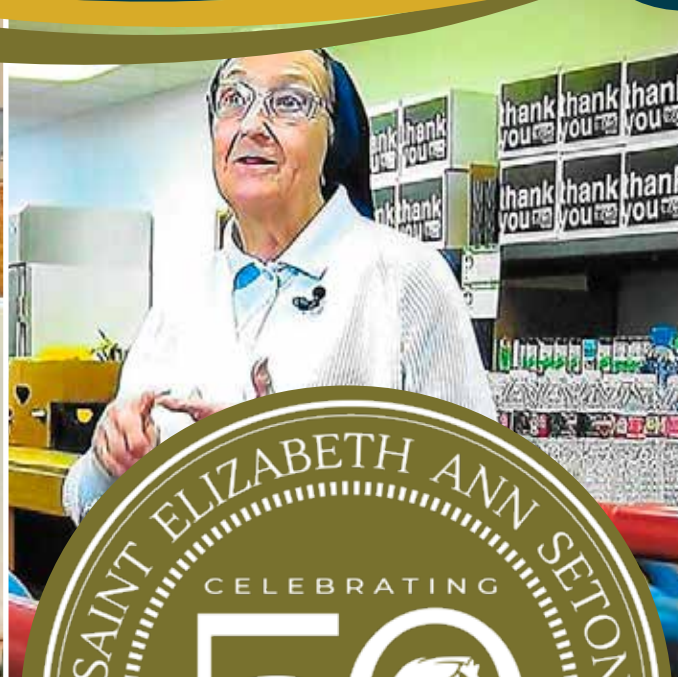
SERVICETTE

TO SERVE RATHER THAN BE SERVED



AIC USA

NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY
INFORMATION
PAGE 6



"When so rich a harvest is before us, why do we not gather it? All is in our hands, if we will but use it." - Elizabeth Ann Seton - "It's in our hands, if we will but use it" - the opportunities and blessings given us. She was the first American canonized a saint. Born Aug. 28, 1774 in New York City, raised Episcopalian; she married at 19 in 1794, William Magee Seton. Together they had five children; he died in 1803, and she converted to Catholicism. Later, founded the first Catholic schools in the United States. She is the patron saint of Catholic schools, widows, and seafarers. Her examples of serving the poor and devotion to God, inspires communities all over the world. She died Jan. 4, 1821. Elizabeth Ann Seton 1774-1821.



LETTER FROM THE LCUSA PRESIDENT

By Irene Siedlarczyk, LCUSA President

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 Irene Siedlarczyk
Editor Chris Young
Layout & Design Shelly Clokey

Direct all correspondence and inquires to:

LADIES OF CHARITY USA
8001 Longview Road
Kansas City, MO 64134

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.



AIC USA

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**:

Due date for submission of articles for the next issue is

October 15, 2025. 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.

Ladies,

Spring has come and gone with its new life and wonderful flowers. Now we are in summer with its warmth and joy.

It has been nearly six months since I took over as president of LCUSA, and I am amazed at how much I've learned in that short time. I hope to reach out to as many local associations as I can. In June, Elmira and Buffalo are on my schedule.

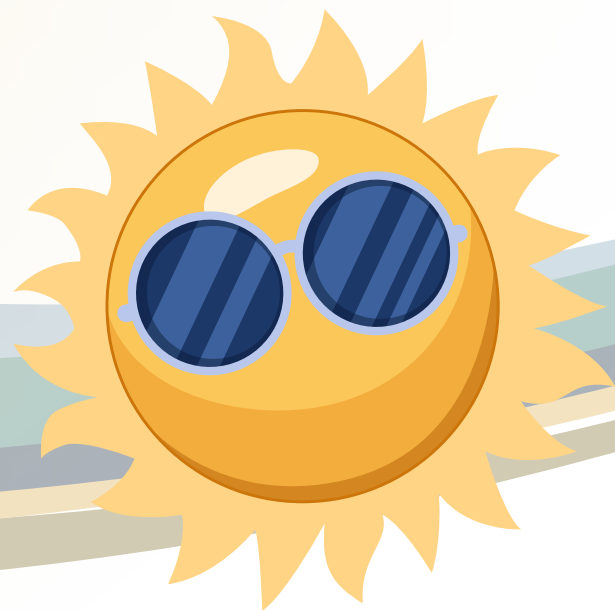
I look forward to seeing many of you in September at the upcoming assembly in Bethesda, Maryland. I have been fortunate to be able to attend many assemblies, and each time it has been an amazing experience. The speakers are exceptional with topics St. Vincent would be proud of. This year celebrates the 50th anniversary of the canonization of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton. There will be a day of reflection held at her shrine in Emmetsburg, Maryland on Thursday, Sept. 11, to start the assembly activities. The assembly runs from Sept. 11-13, and I hope that as many Ladies as possible can join the assembly this year.

I have a special trip planned later in September to meet the Ladies in Pittsburgh, Kansas City, Gallup, and Los Angeles. This trip will be with Tayde de Callataÿ, the AIC president; and Suzanne Johnson, the US representative to the AIC board. This will be a wonderful experience, and I look forward to meeting many Ladies of Charity across the country.

If there's anything that I can do to assist with guidance for your local association activities, or if you would like a visit from me, please send a message to the national office.

I wish you a safe and joyful summer. Take care and God bless you all.

Irene Siedlarczyk
LCUSA President





“CHOOSE HOPE”

By The Most Reverend David A. Zubic

The year was 1887 and a 15-year-old French girl named Thérèse Martin was on a pilgrimage to Rome with her father and her sister. Her heart soared when she visited the Colosseum and kissed the ground where the early martyrs of the Church shed their blood for the faith.

But Thérèse had a secret dream—a hope—for this pilgrimage. Since an early age, she felt God calling her to enter the Carmelite Convent. She had petitioned her local priest and bishop, who advised her to wait until she was 21 years of age. But Thérèse was sure that the Lord was calling her to Carmel more urgently. She set her sights on asking Pope Leo XIII himself.

She and her fellow pilgrims had been instructed not to speak during an audience with the pontiff. But when Thérèse knelt before him, she asked his permission to enter Carmel at age 15. Pope Leo XIII’s attendants assured him that Thérèse’s superiors were considering the matter, and he advised her to listen to them.

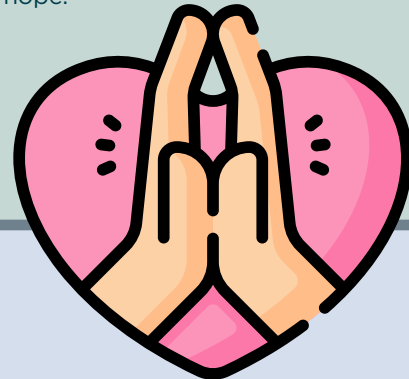
But Thérèse held on to hope. In her autobiography, *Story of a Soul*, she recalls: “I made a final effort, stating in a suppliant voice: ‘Oh! Holy Father, if you say yes, everybody will agree!’ He gazed at me steadily, speaking these words and stressing each syllable: ‘Go... go... You will enter if God wills it!’”

We now know this beautiful woman of faith as Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, whom the world reveres for her “Little Way” of trust and love. The Lord fulfilled Thérèse’s dream: she entered Carmel the following year. During this Jubilee Year of Hope, you and I have much in common with Saint Thérèse. We too are pilgrims with deep hopes written on our hearts.

I ask you to take some time during this year to share with the Lord the secret hopes of your heart. Go to an adoration chapel if you can, and gaze upon His Eucharistic Face. Kneel before Him and petition Him, like little Thérèse did so many years ago. Perhaps you will lay before Him your sorrows for others: loved ones who are seriously ill or gravely depressed; children who no longer practice the faith; family strains. Maybe there are hopes for yourself that you have long cherished: financial stability, healing from past wounds, goals you wish to accomplish, sins you want to overcome, and holiness you desire to attain.

And after you have laid these beautiful hopes before Our Lord, I ask you to place before Him one question, even if it’s difficult to do: “What is your will for me?” What are God’s dreams, His hopes for you? Listen to His hopes as attentively as He listened to yours. Perhaps your hopes are the same. Or perhaps God has a different hope for you, a better one. It may not be an easy road—you may have to cling to the cross with all your might, but the closer we get to the cross, the easier Christ can kiss us from it.

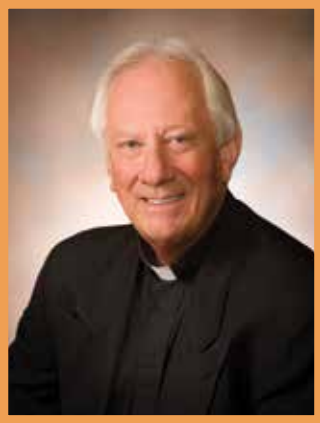
It takes bravery and persistence to be a pilgrim of hope; Saint Thérèse shows us that. Living in hope is a choice that the Lord freely offers us. He does not impose it upon us. You may look around yourself and see a lot of reasons why hope seems useless, or even foolish. In those moments, look to the cross of Christ crucified. Look to the love that constantly pours out for you and you alone from it. And there, behold the reason for your hope.



DON'T FORGET TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR THE LATEST NEWS AT AIC.LADIESOFCHARITY.US

Greetings Ladies FROM THE HEARTLAND.

By Fr. Richard Gielow, C.M.



Rev. Richard Gielow, CM
LCUSA Spiritual Advisor

Spring is a good time to reflect upon what gives us hope. Pope Francis has asked that this Jubilee year be one of hope. We remember that Hope is to look forward to tomorrow because of what we have done today. It is based on the Easter message of hope. Jesus died on Good Friday but the story doesn't end there. He is raised from the dead on Easter, and has opened the gates of heaven for us.

We are indeed grateful.

Hope is one of the theological virtues: Faith, hope and charity. They are connected. Without faith – no hope, and hope always brings us to charity. I know that hope-filled people give hope to others. In a world that sees a lot of pain and suffering, we need those beacons of hope to encourage us, and motivate us to follow Jesus.

That is why the Ladies of Charity are so important. Everywhere in the world some Lady of Charity is engaged in a work of mercy. And because of that dedication to Vincent and Louise, many, many people have hope. So, continue your fine work. Your undying love for the poor is a beacon of hope.

God Bless you all. See you in September as the song goes.



BUFFALO LADIES OF CHARITY – SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH “MASS MOBS”

By Kathy Rosetti, President

The Buffalo Ladies of Charity association was established over 80 years ago, partnering with Catholic Charities. Today, their membership includes more than 300 women working together to provide clothing, baby bags, school supplies, household goods, and more, while also maintaining a thrift store in Buffalo.

Motivated by a renewed understanding of the special charism as a member of the Vincentian family, and a rich history, last year, I initiated a special committee to ensure Vincentian Spirituality was an integral part of our organization.

Kathleen Sieracki, co-president and chair of the Spirituality committee, suggested we begin holding our own “Mass Mobs;” worshipping together at various Masses held in the Diocese of Buffalo. The first was in recognition of the 407th Anniversary of the Ladies of Charity at St. Benedict’s Church. Recently we held a “Mass Mob” at Our Lady of Victory Shrine and Basilica to celebrate the Feast of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the first American Saint, and founder of the Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph.

Those who have participated in these “Mass Mobs” have found it enriching in their own spiritual growth, and in their commitment to the Ladies of Charity Vincentian charism. They plan to continue their “Mass Mobs” at churches throughout the diocese!





MADAGASCAR TWINNING PROJECT

By Holly Walter

The AIC-LCUSA Twinning Project with Madagascar is in need of donations. Since we paired with one of the poorest regions in the world, we have tried to help them overcome devastating storms, cyclones, floods, droughts and other natural disasters.

Madagascar is primarily an agricultural society, which has endured weather calamities often ruining harvests and productivity, destroying crops, houses, and infrastructure because of their location near the Indian Ocean, near the east of Africa. The people of Madagascar seem determined to overcome these setbacks and move forward to expand farms and businesses. The donations we have sent in the past have helped them rebuild, feed and educate the children, who are the future of this island nation.

In addition, we have helped the women of Madagascar start new businesses and gain independence in a male-dominated society. With the help of the Daughters of Charity and Vincentian priests, Madagascar has made great strides, and will continue to do so.

In 2024, we sent \$7,539 to Madagascar, much of which we collected at our National Assembly in St. Louis, Mo. Other donations came in throughout the year. I have been requesting donations in the Servicette since 2017, when I became chair of this committee, and the response has always been generous. This year, I hope, will be no exception. Thanks to your generosity, the women and children of Madagascar attend school through college, and the women will be able to start new businesses. Houses are being built to replace the ones destroyed by weather events, and new crops are being exported to other areas of the world.



Did you know that Madagascar produces most of the world's supply of vanilla? Think of all the Christmas cookies, and other treats you bake that use vanilla.

Let us, as AIC-Ladies of Charity of the US, continue to support the women and children of Madagascar. Thank you for your generosity and consideration in making a donation.

*Sincerely,
Holly Walter, Madagascar Chair*

Please send all Madagascar donations to:

**LCUSA Service Center
8001 Longview Road
Kansas City, Missouri 64127**

Please put Madagascar on the memo line of your check.

**Thank You for Your Generosity,
Holly Walter, Madagascar Chair**



LADIES OF CHARITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA®

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

LCUSA National Service Center
8001 Longview Road
Kansas City, MO 64134

Phone: 816 260 3853
Email: office@ladiesofcharity.us
Website: aic.ladiesofcharity.us

National Assembly Underwriting and Program Ad Form "CHOOSE HOPE"

45th LCUSA National Assembly
September 11th-September 13th, 2025
Bethesda, Maryland

Hosted by the Ladies of Charity, Archdiocese of Washington/Mid-Atlantic Region

Refer to the chart for suggested underwriting levels. All donations are tax deductible, and underwriters will be acknowledged in the program book. Underwriters can submit a full-page ad (8"x10" finished artwork).

Make checks payable to LCUSA/Underwriting and send this form and your contribution to LCUSA National Service Center by June 15, 2025.

For assistance, contact Nancy Bianculli at (412) 818-1719. **Send ads digitally in PDF form to: nb7510@outlook.com**

Thank you for your support.

Legacy level.....\$5,000+	Full page\$500
Faith Level.....\$2,500-\$5,000	Half Page.....\$250
Hope Level.....\$1,000-\$2,499	Quarter Page.....\$150
Charity Level.....\$500-\$999	One-eighth Page.....\$100
	One line.....\$50

Underwriting Level _____

Ad Size _____ Amount \$_____

Individual or Company Name _____

Contact Person (if company) _____

Email _____

Phone _____

One Line Ad (please Print) _____

Please check (✓) here to be listed as Anonymous in the program book:

Ad Specifications:

- Program booklet is 8.5"x11" stapled
- Email in .pdf file if possible. Word or Publisher documents also accepted.
- Following are the ad dimensions for finished ads:
- Full Page: 8"w x 10"h-
- 1/2-Page: 5"h x 8"w
- 1/4-Page: 5"h x 4"w
- 1/8-Page: (Business Card Size) 3.5"w x 2"h



Ladies of Charity
National Assembly
September 11-13, 2025

Choose Hope



Hotel Information

The Bethesdan Hotel, Tapestry Collection by Hilton
8120 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, MD 20814
(301) 652-2000



Special LCUSA Rate **\$149 + tax per night (One King or two Queens)**.
Rate is in effect between Sept. 6 and Sept. 17, 2025 (book early to ensure choice).

Reservations

Hotel reservations MUST be made by Tuesday August 19, 2025. Rates and availability are not guaranteed after that date. Please contact Hotel directly, (301) 652-2000 (mention Ladies of Charity for rate) or book via the personalized web registration link:

<https://bit.ly/LCUSA2025>

Hotel Information contact

Call Roselle Candila (301) 652-2000 or (301) 664-7301 for help with any reservation questions.

Transportation

Airports

NO airport shuttles are available. Reagan and Dulles are accessible via the Metro with one transfer. Taxi stands and personal reservations via Uber and Lyft apps are available at all airports.

Drive time and routes will vary with traffic conditions:

Washington National (Reagan) Airport: approx. 10 miles

Washington Dulles International Airport: approx. 20 miles

Baltimore Washington International Airport: approx. 27 miles

Amtrak: Union Station is located on the Metro Red Line that takes you directly to Bethesda.

Hotel Parking

Discounted self-parking rate: \$20.00 overnight parking and \$15.00 day/event parking. The garage entrance is on Wisconsin Ave., to the right of the hotel entrance.

Overnight guests will be charged discounted parking automatically in the system. You must mention to the front desk when you check in that you are parking so your room key can be programmed to grant you in and out privileges at the reduced rate. Daily drivers will be able to obtain a reduced day rate pass from the hotel conference director each day.

Valet parking: Not available. *EV charging:* On-site. *Secured:* Available. *Covered:* Available. *In/Out privileges:* Available



Ladies of Charity
National Assembly
September 11-13, 2025

Choose Hope



Assembly Registration Form

Please register online and submit a secure payment at aic.ladiesofcharity.us/register-assembly-2025 or use the form below, **make checks payable to LCUSA** and **mail with this Registration Form and the Registration Options Form to:** LCUSA National Service Center, 8001 Longview Rd., Kansas City, MO 64134 Ph. (816) 260-3853. **Registration Deadline: Tuesday, August 19, 2025.**

DATE OF REGISTRATION

/ /

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name:

Email: Phone Number:

Address:

City: State:

Zip Code:

Name of Your LOC Association (required for name badge):

May we publish your contact information in the assembly roster? Yes No Name Only

Your LCUSA Region Mid-Atlantic North Central Northeastern Southern Western

Please check any below that apply to you:

Association: President/Officer Association Member Individual Member Ladies of Charity

Certified Vincentian Spiritual Advisor/Moderator Junior Ladies of Charity Moderator

LCUSA: Current Board Member Past Board Member Past National President

Religious: Priest Daughter of Charity Sister of Charity Other:

Other: Guest

Dietary/Special Needs:

In case of emergency, we will contact - Name:

Relationship:

Phone number:

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Registration Options

Please make your selections and fill in the amounts paid in the blanks below.
Registration Deadline: Tuesday, August 19, 2025.

Three-Day Assembly Registration

Thursday, Friday and Saturday

Includes: Three Buffet Breakfasts, Three Lunches, Saturday Banquet, All Plenary Sessions and Workshops, Seton Shrine activities, and bus to Seton Shrine and Closing Mass.

\$350.00

\$ _____

I will attend the Day of Reflection on Thursday: Yes No

Box Lunch (choose one): Homemade Chicken Salad Oven Roasted Turkey Vegetable & Hummus

One-Day-Only Options

Day of Reflection Only - Thursday, September 11 - Includes: Seton Shrine - Fr. Richard Gielow, CM, Vincentian Spiritual Advisor, LCUSA. Reflection, free time, Mass, lunch, and bus from hotel.

Myself

\$40.00

\$ _____

On the Day of Reflection, I will take the bus from the hotel: Yes No

Box Lunch (choose one): Homemade Chicken Salad Oven Roasted Turkey Vegetable & Hummus

Guest Name _____

\$40.00

\$ _____

On the Day of Reflection, guest will take the bus from the hotel: Yes No

Box Lunch (choose one): Homemade Chicken Salad Oven Roasted Turkey Vegetable & Hummus

Friday Only

Includes: Breakfast, Lunch, and Friday Plenary Sessions and Workshops

\$200.00

\$ _____

Saturday Only

Includes: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner Banquet, Plenary Sessions, Bus to Mass

\$275.00

\$ _____

Saturday Banquet, Guest Name _____ Bus to Mass? Yes No

\$100.00

\$ _____

A \$30 handling fee will be applied to cancellations. **NOTE:** no cancellations can be refunded after August 19, 2025. **For more information or questions please contact the Office Administrative Assistant: office@ladiesofcharity.us**

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:

\$ _____

THANK YOU FOR REGISTERING



**LCUSA National Assembly
"Choose Hope"
September 11-13, 2025
The Bethesdan Hotel, Bethesda, Maryland**

SILENT AUCTION AND RAFFLE DONATIONS REQUEST

Dear Ladies of Charity,

The Auction/Raffle Committee invites you to attend our 2025 National Assembly!

We greatly appreciate your help to defray the assembly cost through your donations to our Auction! Because many will be traveling, we would appreciate your gift cards to your favorite national stores and/or small items for baskets or, if more convenient, a monetary donation, in the form of a check **made payable to Ladies of Charity**. Please send your donation, with description, to the address below by **August 5, 2025!** We would appreciate having the donations prior to the Assembly!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ CELL: _____

EMAIL: _____ LOC Association: _____

Description of item:

Type of Donation _____ Amount _____

Type of Donation _____ Amount _____

Type of Donation _____ Amount _____

If you have any questions, please feel free to call, text or email:

Silentauction@ladiesofcharitycalvertcounty.org

Laura Schuessler – (cell) 401-610-6201

Kathy Temple – (cell) 301-466-2576

Kristen Haywood – (cell) 301-717-8530

Please send gift cards and donations by **8/5/2025** to:

**LOC Silent Auction/Raffle Committee
c/o Kristen Haywood
169 Tucker Ct
Friendship, MD 20758**

Thank you! We are truly grateful for your support and look forward to seeing you in September!

MOTHER-DAUGHTER TEAM CREATE A ZERO-WASTE THRIFT STORE AS NEW MEMBERS OF THE LADIES OF CHARITY OF NORTHERN UTAH

By Chris Young, Servicette Editor

The last two years have been prosperous for the Ladies of Charity of Northern Utah associated with St. Olaf Parish in Bountiful. Four women joined the Bountiful association in 2024, and six women joined in 2025. Those invested in 2024 were, Allison Nielson and her daughter Caprice Nielson, Judy Rohrbaugh and Esther Shutt. The new members in 2025 were Vanna Nguyen, Carrie Auer, Dominique Byrd, Molly Hawkins, One Diphibane, and Mary Jane Cassidy.

Allison and her daughter, Caprice, heard about the Ladies of Charity in 2024, while attending the St. Olaf Council of Catholic Women Tea. Allison's husband is a St. Olaf Knight of Columbus, and Caprice, now 23, attended St. Olaf School through 6th grade. The family had been attending another parish where a family friend was the priest, who has since been transferred.

Allison and Caprice became involved with the St. Olaf Council of Women by assisting at the Tea Party, and also joined the funeral committee. They attended the next Ladies of Charity monthly meeting, and had already volunteered at the Ladies of Charity Center of Hope Food Pantry and Thrift Store to familiarize themselves.

The mother-daughter team joined and immediately became the assistant managers of the Thrift Store. "I love thrifting," said Caprice. "It's something that I have been passionate about forever!" Caprice has a special interest in some day opening a store that is part thrift, part upcycled goods, and handmade clothing, she said. Being conscious about the environment, and not wanting the excess clothing in the Thrift Store to end up in the landfill, she decided to start selling the clothing online, with Allison, who already has four jobs.

"Caprice was the young mind behind the online sales," said Allison. "We go through the clothing to look for unique, vintage, or funky clothing," said Caprice, who has a storage unit where seasonal clothing is stored. The two of them, and other Ladies of Charity, are willing to give

clothing away for free if someone in need comes into the Center.

"One day a woman came in wearing a bathrobe for a coat, so we gave her a coat," said Allison. "Another time we gave dishes, bedding, and a lamp to some refugees. We also work with the agency Just Serve, who provides volunteers for us, and has leads on household items for people." The team tries to repurpose everything that comes into the Thrift Store by giving the excess to a company who will take off the buttons, zippers, and pockets, and cut them down to be made into quilts.

"I'm super proud of that," said Caprice. "There just aren't enough people to purchase all of these clothes. The clothes are put into massive ton bundles and shipped to third-world countries, mostly Africa, where they are sold in flea markets in the streets. What doesn't sell goes into the ocean, can be seen for miles and looks like a textile mountain.

I get emotional talking about it, because it's not okay," said Caprice. "I'm proud that we are a zero-waste thrift store, and that we do not contribute to this waste. We give away children and baby clothes because "I believe that every child should have clothing," she said.

In her four jobs, Allison works from home doing marketing for a real estate company in Florida, where her mother lives. She also has been a hair stylist for 25 years, and loves working with the senior population, she said. Allison works at two assisted living centers and managed salons for 15 years before working at home and raising her children. She also volunteered to be the Ladies of Charity secretary when the position came open due to an illness.

"Both Allison and Caprice immediately began serving in the Thrift store, began to help out in the Pantry when needed, and have been very helpful with many good ideas and many, many hours of service when the Center of Hope is open, as well as behind the scenes," said



Allison and Caprice Nielson

Continued on page 12 ►

Continued from page 11 ▶

Daughter of Charity Sr. Germaine Sarrazin, Ladies of Charity Spiritual Moderator and Center of Hope Executive Director. “What a blessing to have younger members so filled with energy and the spirit of Saint Vincent.”

Bobby Earl, Thrift Store manager, said Allison and Caprice have brought so many new and fresh ideas to the shop. They “know what will sell online and what sells in the shop,” she said. “They are so willing to do what needs to be done. They have more than doubled our sales by being aware of current styles, and what is happening in the thrift store business. The website that Allison designed has drawn more people to the Thrift Store and Pantry.”

Judy Rohrbaugh has increased the sales of the Ladies of Charity Hope soap. She assumed the duties from Bev Streba, who started the flourishing soap project. Judy stocks and sells, has added a few new fragrances to, and found new locations to sell the soap. One profitable place has been the Knights of Columbus monthly Bingo games.

Allison and Judy have teamed up to hold Bingo Bake sales that also include root beer floats and sundaes. On May 9, they recently cleared \$350. As a result, Judy shopped at a dollar store and “bought 27 laundry detergents, 12 packets of 10 razors, 13 men’s deodorant, 42 toothpaste, 40 toothbrushes, and 36 dish soap,” she said. “We also collected about 150 pounds of food.”

Those who attend Bingo get a \$3 discount off their card for bringing a can of food, and a raffle ticket for the raffle basket we offer,” added Allison.

“I love the Ladies of Charity - it feels like a family,” said Allison, whose external family resides in Sarasota, Fla. Allison also picks up donations from Costco, a program called Feeding America Through Costco, every other week. Costco contributes donations to the Pantry every Saturday and Sundays as well. Every Sunday Allison picks up milk and eggs from the grocery store for the pantry. She works in the Thrift Store one Monday a month, and on the online Thrift sales every day, she said.

Judy moved to Utah from Albuquerque, NM, in 2007.



John and Judy Rohrbaugh

**TEAM
WORK
MAKES
DREAM
WORK**



Allison Nielson and Judy Rohrbaugh

She and her husband are originally from Youngstown, Ohio, and have been members of St. Olaf for four years. Judy’s husband, John, is talented in woodworking, and makes cutting boards, cheese slicers, coasters, trivets, and Lazy Susans, that are sold at the bake sales, Bingo and Farmer’s Markets. He donates all of his profits to the Ladies of Chairty.

“It feels like since we’ve joined, we’ve helped the groups come together,” said Caprice, who noted that now the Council of Women holds food drives for the Ladies of Charity, and the Knights of Columbus have people bring canned food to Bingo for the Pantry. Last year the Council of Women held its annual Christmas Stocking Stuffer for the Ladies of Charity and put together toiletry gift baskets that were given out to families at the Pantry throughout the Christmas season.

It takes about four Ladies of Charity and four volunteers each week to run the Pantry and Thrift Store. New member Vanna Nguyen volunteers in the Pantry by helping clients in the toiletry room and keeping it clean and organized. Carrie Auer, One Diphibane, Molly Hawkins and Dominique Byrd also volunteer in the Pantry.

Dominique, a young member who attended St. Olaf School, volunteers in a position that correlates with her employment.

She is fluent in Spanish and works for Comunidades Unidas, which offers programs to empower the Latinx community to recognize and achieve their potential to become a positive force in their community, she said, adding they are also given access to resources in the community. A large population of Hispanics receive food from the Pantry.

Esther Shutt is the Sunshine lady, who sends out birthday, get well, and sympathy cards. Mary Jane Cassidy, a former Daughter of Charity of 30 years, is active in ministry by preparing funeral lunches, working with adults with disabilities at a facility in Placerville, Calif., and doing meals on wheels. Mary Jane lives in Sacramento, Calif., but is a member of the Bountiful association because she grew up in St. Olaf Parish, and still has family in Bountiful.

The Bountiful association appreciates all its members, especially the younger members with their vision for the future, knowledge of social media, and the ways in which they have enhanced how the Center of Hope can raise funds. ■

CENTER OF HOPE FOOD PANTRY RECEIVES ZERO HUNGER HERO AWARD AND \$500

By Chris Young
 Servicette Editor

The Ladies of Charity of Northern Utah Center of Hope Food Pantry received the Smith's Food Zero Hunger Hero of the Month Award for May. Center of Hope Daughter of Charity Sr. Germaine Sarrazin, Executive Director and Ladies of Charity Spiritual Moderator, received a \$500 gift card from Smith's to help the Center continue to relieve hunger.

The Center of Hope Pantry feeds about 2,400 people, or 550 families each month from various zip codes, not always within its area. "The small food pantry, which began about 20 years ago, provides a huge service to those families that need it the most," said John Franchi, Fox 13 news anchor when the award was broadcast on Fox 13 "Good Morning Utah" May 22. The space is modest, but inside this small room, a lifeline is provided to thousands of families every year. All the shelves are mostly filled by donations," he said.

"Each time we're open, we get new families, and we treat each family with dignity and respect," said Sr. Germaine. "We have people come to the pantry who have jobs, a car, but

they can't afford to buy food, medicine, and pay the rent, so they come to us. Our purpose isn't to feed them for a month, our purpose is to supplement their food supply, so that when they run out of money and food stamps, or when they have an emergency of some kind, they can come here for food," she said.

The Center is run by the Ladies of Charity, who volunteer their time, and other volunteers mostly from JustServe, a volunteer organization provided as a service by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that connects volunteers with nonprofit organizations. JustServe.org is a website where the

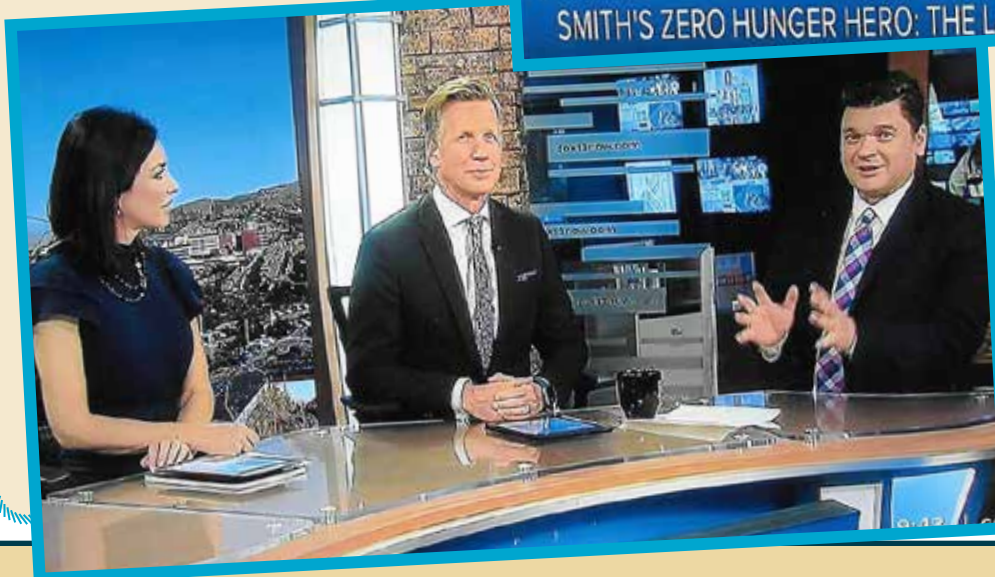
Sr. Germaine received \$500 from Smith's Food.



John Franchi, Fox 13 News Anchor, talks about the Center of Hope Food Pantry and the Ladies of Charity to News Anchors Kelly Chapman (left) and Dan Evans.



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volunteer needs of organizations may be posted free of charge, and volunteers may search for places to serve in the community, providing opportunities to help those in need.

JustServe and the Center of Hope came together one day when Heath Bradley with JustServe International, who lives in North Salt Lake near the Center of Hope, drove by the Center and saw people lined up outside waiting to shop. Realizing volunteers might be needed, he reached out to Ranee Hollinger, Center of Hope Pantry manager and Lady of Charity, to find out the needs of the Center. He also put together hygiene kits for the Center. Ranee in turn reached out to Shannon Wright with JustServe, and it was a “perfect fit,” said Shannon Wright with Shannon Clothing, who also assists a great deal in the Center of Hope Thrift Shop. She takes away excess clothing and distributes it in other locations to comply with the Thrift Shop’s zero-waste motto.

The JustServe volunteer jobs are open to anyone regardless of race, religion, or sexual orientation, and the Center of Hope posts three times a week because it is open on Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. The Center posts that it is in need of four volunteers each time, and its needs also include: 1) Spanish speakers, the clientele is about half Hispanic; 2) Cleaning supplies and toilet paper; and 3) Diapers, sizes 4, 5, and 6. Volunteering at the Center has given volunteers an opportunity to earn community service hours for a variety of reasons including for various schools and levels of education, court-ordered hours, and just because people want to volunteer their time in the community.

One JustServe volunteer was looking for a charity in which to serve when she found the Center of Hope Food Pantry, and a need for a Spanish speaking individual. “I speak Spanish, so my husband and I volunteered, said Ada Nelson. “I then learned that the Ladies of Charity are associated with St. Vincent de Paul. I am from Panama, and I attended a St. Vincent de Paul



Sr. Germaine explains the Pantry

bilingual school for 13 years, that was set up as a charity in the inner city of Panama. It was an amazing school for me. I attended with my five siblings. I grew up Catholic, but converted to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints about 50 years ago.” Ada also does genealogy, and found out that a few generations ago, one of her relatives was a Sister of Charity in New York, so the Center of Hope is a special place for her, she said.



Sylvia D'Ausilio

“We have many members who give their all to the ministry at the Center of Hope,” said Sr. Germaine. “One in particular is Sylvia D’Ausilio, who will turn 90 this year. She is one of our original members. Her son Dan works for us, and the two of them work many hours weekly. Sylvia can be seen stocking shelves every evening before the next day’s pantry, as well as straightening shelves and rearranging items to give them the best look for the next day. They might even be caught on weekends at the Center. When we have a delivery of food from the Utah Food Bank, they are both there to assist Ranee by sorting and shelving foods,” she said.

AIC-LCUSA MEMBERSHIP LADIES OF CHARITY IN THE PITTSBURGH DIOCESE INVEST MORE THAN 130 WOMEN

By Chris Young, *Servicette* Editor
 Peggy Keene, Ladies of St. Joseph the Worker,
 Diocese of Pittsburgh

Bishop David A. Zubik invested more than 130 women in the Ladies of Charity, Diocese of Pittsburgh May 18, 2025. There are 38 individual Ladies of Charity associations in the Pittsburgh Diocese under the leadership of the Pittsburgh Diocesan Board. The officers of the Diocesan Board include president, 1st vice president, 2nd vice president, recording secretary, financial secretary, treasurer, corresponding secretary and parliamentarian. There also are a number of committees on this board. Communications, Extension, Jr. Ladies of Charity, Membership, Newsletter Editor, Nursing Home Network, Social Media, Spirituality, Society for the Unclaimed Dead and Mid-Atlantic National Board Representative (when a Pittsburgh Lady of Charity sits on the LCUSA National Board).

Each individual association has its own bylaws, officers and committees. The individual associations pay their LCUSA dues to the Diocesan Financial Secretary who in turn has the Diocesan Treasurer submit the total amount of dues for the active Pittsburgh membership to the LCUSA office. Total number of active Pittsburgh members fluctuates every year, but is usually about 1200+ yearly.

Membership is something that is always a concern for Ladies of Charity associations across the nation, and each situation is different. There is not a one-size fits all method to attract new members, said AIC-Ladies of Charity of the USA past president Holly Walter in her 2024 Winter *Servicette* president's letter. "We must try and increase membership by making our associations visible in our diocese and communities" she said. Publicize activities in church bulletins, diocesan newsletters, or on social media to reach younger audiences. It might be necessary to change meeting times, or days the associations meet. Let others know what you are doing and who you are, she said.

AIC-LCUSA Membership Committee Chair Mary Pat Sullivan, who is also the vice president of the North Central Region, said the average age of the associations is about 60 to 90 years. Ladies are joining associations after they retire. "They are nannying their grandchildren or traveling, and we have found that our groups are older and are not able to lift what we need to in our pantries. We have one lady who is 92, and is still very active by crocheting every day," Mary Pat said. We have others who pray for us.

In some areas of the country, joining the Ladies of Charity has become a social activity. The Ladies of Charity is a ministry where the members learn humility, simplicity, charity, and to not judge others, she said.

THE SERVICETTE MAGAZINE NOW RECOGNIZED BY THE CATHOLIC MEDIA ASSOCIATION

By Chris Young, *Servicette* Editor

I was a member of the Catholic Media Association as a staff writer and then Associate Editor for the Intermountain Catholic Newspaper in Salt Lake City, Utah for 20 years. Then when I retired and continued writing for Catholic publications and the *Servicette* as editor, I continued as a member, and decided the *Servicette* should be recognized by the Catholic Media Association. As a result, this year I petitioned the Association and they welcomed me and the *Servicette*! It is right up there with all the national Catholic newspapers, books, *Our Sunday Visitor* and other Catholic publications! This is a proud moment for me and the Ladies of Charity National Board members.

This year the Catholic Media Association Convention was held June 23-27 in Phoenix, Arizona, and I and Monica Trujillo, the LCUSA board director from Gallup, NM, represented the *Servicette* Magazine in Phoenix, and had a wonderful time. The magazine didn't win any awards, but we recruited a few new women who are interested in becoming Ladies of Charity. We even met the new pope, Pope Leo XIV!



✓ ✓ ✓ Chris and Monica



Chris Young



JUST A DOOR

By Alcira Villarreal
Ladies of Charity, Miami, Fla.

They say that pilgrimage means praying with your feet and an open heart.

I want to share with you what it means to pilgrimage and experience the places where St. Vincent de Paul opened his heart to the poor. By visiting these sites, we feel closer to his purpose and to God's face when we help those most in need.

The world travels to Paris for its glamour, elitism, fashion, and history, but let us remember that history is the teacher of life. How wonderful it is to experience the history of a great saint in his homeland, in places that have transformed the lives of many of us, especially the more than two million people who make up the Vincentian family worldwide. Not everyone has had the privilege of living this pilgrimage experience. Still, many live the love, dedication, and commitment that St. Vincent taught us by example to help the most vulnerable.

I traveled to Paris with a clear purpose: To immerse myself further in the Vincentian charism and better understand what St. Vincent wants from us, his family, in this turbulent century full of challenges.

My Experience in Paris

In May 2024, I arrived at the Maison-Mère, the Motherhouse of the Vincentian Family, to participate in the international CIF formation program. St. Vincent initiated the idea of continuous formation at his first assembly in October 1642. Although this effort was not consistent in its early years, it was resumed in 1994 with enthusiasm, and for the past 30 years, it has been an ongoing program.

This formation seeks to reinforce knowledge about St. Vincent's biography, and the history of the Vincentian family. It also delved into aspects of morality, theology, and spirituality within the Vincentian charism. Additionally, it explored solutions to the problems affecting the most vulnerable. As an additional gift, we visited places that reminded us of our founder's beginnings and first steps.

Personally, walking through places once trodden by St. Vincent filled me with a more significant commitment to becoming a better Vincentian. The joy of meeting Vincentians—priests, sisters, and laypeople—from all over the world, listening to their experiences, and learning from their stories was an invaluable reward. The simplicity, humility, and palpable joy in every moment stand out among Vincentians, regardless of their origin.

Unforgettable Moments

For three weeks, we learned, reflected, and deepened our understanding of the lives of St. Vincent and St. Louise de Marillac. Attending Mass and praying the Rosary at the Shrine of the Miraculous Medal on Rue du Bac every afternoon was an immense blessing. Living those weeks at the Maison-Mère felt like being at home, with a profound sense of belonging.

One detail that marked my experience was the physical and spiritual closeness to St. Vincent. His incorrupt body was so close to me, separated only by a hallway and a door. Each day, opening that door brought me indescribable joy. On my last day of formation, after Mass and before our farewell celebration, I approached his resting place alone and said, "I will miss being able to visit you every day." His response in my heart was clear: 'You are needed more outside than staying here with me.' I then remembered the words of Blessed Rosalie Rendu: "One never prays better than in the streets."

A Special Invitation

Although I miss opening that door, God willing, I will return to participate in the Vincentian pilgrimage. This initiative of the new Office of Pilgrimages in Paris on Rue de Sèvres was created by our Superior General, Father Thomas Mavric, C.M., and directed by Father Andrés Motto, C.M., also director of the CIF.

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ST. JOHN'S BREAD & LIFE LEAVES INDELIBLE IMPRESSION ON JUNIOR LADIES OF CHARITY

By Elena Miranda and Pat Mulé

Easter break in April provided a unique opportunity for the St. John's University Junior Ladies of Charity. Pat Mulé and Anna Rocchio, Lady of Charity junior moderators, and Ladies of Charity Jen Borg, accompanied them as they visited St. John's Bread & Life in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, NY. The experience left an indelible impression on the group.

Juniors President Ariana Yopez reflected on the day's events:

"I had the opportunity of working in the kitchen, where we helped prepare and pack lunches for people in need. The meals we put together included: Cereal, milk, cookies, and fruit; seemingly ordinary, yet substantial items that could bring comfort and nourishment, and could make a difference in someone's day.

I was responsible for carefully placing the food into containers, ensuring each was filled properly and neatly, knowing that these packages would soon be handed out to individuals and families who rely on this support.

Though the service hours we earn through school are part of a requirement, that's never why we do it. What matters most is the feeling of purpose and connection that comes from helping others, even in a small way.

It's humbling to take part in something that directly touches lives. Being behind the scene in the kitchen gave me a deeper appreciation for the volunteers who show up consistently, not for credit, but simply to give."

The Juniors plan a return visit to St. John's Bread & Life in June.

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Everyone is invited to join this beautiful and blessed experience. It will visit key places in our Vincentian journey. Remember: Just a door and an open heart can change how you see life. That door that once opened, will stay in my heart and soul forever.

*Did you know that the series *The Flying Nun* was inspired by a Daughter of Charity?*

GOD BLESS YOU!



AIC-LCUSA NATIONAL OFFICE MOVED APRIL 3, 2025



**WE'VE
MOVED**

Donna Montague, (left) AIC-LCUSA Treasurer; Mary Nell Williams, AIC-LCUSA President-Elect, holding the picture; and Mary Pat Sullivan, vice president of the North Central Region, are standing in the new national office space. The picture Mary Nell is holding is of St. Vincent de Paul meeting with some of the early Ladies of Charity in the 1600s. The Ladies of Charity were founded in 1617. There also are some early Daughters of Charity depicted. The picture previously hung in the Seton Center office, where we were located, and we moved it with us to the new office in Catholic Charities.

**By Mary Nell Williams,
AIC-LCUSA President-Elect**

After more than 10 years, our AIC-LCUSA national office moved from the Seton Center in Kansas, Mo., to the new Catholic Charities building on April 3, 2025. The address of our new office is:



**LADIES OF CHARITY USA
8001 LONGVIEW ROAD
KANSAS CITY, MO 64134**



**Our office phone number remains the same:
(816) 260-3853.**



Growing fruits and vegetables in the garden is her favorite pastime, along with an assortment of household plants. At the end of the day frolicking around the house with two dogs and two cats removes all the cares of this world.

“Of course I do lean heavily on my favorite scripture: ‘18 be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants from you in your life in union with Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 (GNT)

On a more serious note, I obtained my undergraduate degree from Northwestern College with a concentration in Business Administration. Master of Divinity from the Interdenominational Theological Center, with a concentration in Pastoral Care and Counseling. I am an ordained elder in the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church.



Gwendolyn Tolbert

Our new office Administrative Assistant, Gwendolyn Tolbert, began her work with us on May 5, 2025. She is quickly settling in, and has organized the new space. Please contact her with any questions or concerns. If necessary, she will direct your concerns to the appropriate person.

Gwendolyn is the youngest of nine siblings. She is also the proud mother of two boys and one girl, and five grandsons.

JUBILEE OF HOPE

by Carol Schumer, D.C



This year, 2025, the Jubilee Year of Hope, is a significant moment in the life of the Church, during which we celebrate a year of messianic favor, inaugurated by Jesus through his Incarnation and Paschal Mystery Proclaimed every twenty-five years since the thirteenth century. The celebration of Jubilee typically includes pilgrimages, processions, celebrations of Mass, and an invitation to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. These celebrations are opportunities to receive God's mercy, especially through the Jubilee indulgence and the performance of works of mercy. The theme for this current Jubilee is *Pilgrims of Hope*. The Papal Bull, which initiated the Jubilee, suggests several ways to bring Christ and his message of hope to the world, for example, by working for peace, by promoting human life, by showing pardon to those imprisoned, by supporting people who are ill and by accompanying elderly persons.

Pope Francis writes, *"We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The... Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire..."* He continues, *"In the course of the year, every effort should be made to enable the People of God to participate fully in its proclamation of hope in God's grace and in the signs that attest to their efficacy."*

St. Vincent in a conference to the Daughters of Charity in 16532 explains the Jubilee, noting the word "Jubilee" means jubilation. He reminds us that those who make a Jubilee receive spiritual graces so that we are free and can possess its many benefits. Among them, the virtues of faith, hope, charity, justice and fortitude which are *"the treasures of Christians and are like suns that shine on our souls and make us pleasing in God's eyes."*²

Pope Francis calls on us pilgrims, during this Jubilee Year, *"to discover hope in the signs of the times" and "to recognize the immense goodness present in our world, lest we be tempted to think ourselves overwhelmed by evil and violence."* He challenges believers *"to be signs of hope"* by their "openness to life and responsible parenthood" and by working "for a future filled with the laughter of babies and children." In addition, he urged us to be "signs of hope" for those who are young, elderly and sick. Finally, the Pope appeals for *"hope [to] be granted to the billions of poor [persons], who often lack the essentials of life."*³ This last invitation is

clearly affirmed and lived by Ladies of Charity.

Pope Francis' agenda for this Jubilee Year includes encounters with no less than 35 diverse groups of people who are coming to Rome to celebrate their particular Jubilee, starting with "the world of communications" and concluding with *"the Jubilee of prisoners."* The Pope also canonized two young people, Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati during the Church's Jubilee of Teenagers, that took place April 25-27, 2025. Frassati spent his days working with the

St. Vincent de Paul Society in his parish. He visited the poor and was generous with his time and friendship. When he died after contracting polio, his funeral was attended by thousands since he befriended every single person he met.

*"May the God of hope fill [us] with all joy and peace as [we] trust in him, so that [we] may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*⁴



Pier Giorgio Frassati

1 <https://www.archstl.org/2025Jubileeyear/>

2 Coste, Conferences of Vincent de Paul, volume 9, #53 "The Jubilee", April 17, 1653, pages 480-81

3 America, Gerard O'Connell, "What is a Jubilee Year? History and Meaning Behind a Centuries-Old Tradition," 2/13/25

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2025/02/13/christian-jubilee-meaning-249903?pnspid=>

4 Romans 15:13 New International Version



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