



“What happiness, to be a Little Sister of the Poor!” — St. Jeanne Jugan

In this newsletter, we share a glimpse of the many simple joys in our life. Faith, kindness, diversity, celebration, and the many good people with whom we share the journey. We begin this new year with gratitude and optimism, convinced that we are all called to thrive in God's abundance.



Resident Faye Lim expresses her best wishes to Sr. Ann Marguerite as she celebrates her 25th anniversary of vows.



Sr. Marie Catherine, who hails from Scotland, had a surprise piper at her 60th anniversary of vows.



David Ungerleider shares his Chanukah tradition; each day a group of residents of varied faiths gathered as he lit the menorah and said the prayers.



At Christmas, Alex Losowky sang a traditional carol from her native Ukraine and thanked all for their prayers and support for her country.



Jackie Bruno's grandson made her day when, after her performance in our Christmas play, he spontaneously jumped onto the stage to present her with flowers.

Making a Difference Every Day

In his letter for the World Day of the Sick, 2023, Pope Francis says: “These past years of the pandemic have increased our sense of gratitude for those who work each day in the fields of healthcare.

“The pandemic has reminded us that

we are all fragile and vulnerable, and need that compassion which knows how to pause, approach, heal and raise up.”

Here at St. Mary’s we have many who have shown themselves heroes over the years. We continue to celebrate the numerous Good Samaritans who

come into our home each day: people who walk together and make the journey easier for those experiencing the challenges of old age.

In this newsletter we celebrate just a few of the countless good people who make a difference every day.

Abosede Bunmi Adekunle, RN BSN, serves as Director of Nursing Services at St. Mary’s Home, but she started her career here many years ago as a nurses’ aide.

We’ve watched her children grow and have celebrated milestones with her. In a few months, she will be graduating from the “Leading Age Leadership Academy,” a year-long, graduate-level curriculum that is enabling her to grow in her leadership abilities and help transform care for our Residents.

We’re proud of her and grateful for all that she does for our Home. Staff members have highlighted Bunmi’s gifts: “She really knows the Residents.” “She is open and adapts to various cultures, showing respect to all.” She has truly grasped the spirit of St. Jeanne Jugan.



Sandra Juarez, C.N.A. is another employee who has taken the opportunity to further her education for the good of our Residents. During this time of shortage in the health care providers field, we’ve offered tuition reimbursement for any staff member to become a Certified Nursing Assistant, in return for their promise to stay at St. Mary’s for a year.

Sandra, a dietary assistant at the time, eagerly accepted the challenge. She completed the course with flying colors and is now offering compassionate care to our Residents.

Sandra is the kind of person who goes out of her way to make the journey easier for others. Her next goal is Nursing School.

Recently, another employee told us, Sandra fixed small gifts for the laundry staff, saying, “They are very hidden down in that laundry and do such wonderful work, I just wanted to let them know we all appreciate them.”

Living According to the Core Values of our Mission

Our Employees, Associates and Little Sisters strive to live the core values of our mission.

- **REVERENCE** for the sacredness of human life and for the uniqueness of each person, especially those who are poorest and/or weakest. This is reflected in relationships that are holistic and person-centered.
- **FAMILY SPIRIT**: a spirit of joyful hospitality embracing all with open arms, hearts and minds; fostering participation in the life of the home and rejecting all forms of discrimination.
- **COMPASSION**: empathy for sharing the weaknesses and sufferings of others; eagerness to relieve pain in all its forms and to make the elderly happy.
- **HUMBLE SERVICE**: the desire to raise others up and to put their needs before our own; an appreciation of simple, everyday tasks and experiences, realizing what is important to others and helping them to attain it.
- **STEWARDSHIP**: The recognition that life and all other goods are gifts from God and should therefore be used responsibly for the good of all; trust in God's Providence and the generosity of others to provide for our needs; just compensation for our collaborators; a spirit of gratitude and sharing.

Congratulations to our staff members who were nominated to receive the St. Jeanne Jugan Award because of the way they embody these values!



Brenda Anderson (on the bike she just won at the staff party!)



Melissa Wierzgac, our Administrator, pictured with Robert Matviuw



Teresa Sotka



Roberta Washington



Luis Lagunas



Rona Dobyne pictured with Peg O'Connell

MOTHER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

We started this newsletter with a quote from our Mother foundress, who often said: "What happiness to be a Little Sister of the Poor!" and as I reflected upon its content I affirm these words wholeheartedly.

The beauty of our vocation manifests itself in the simple joy of sharing our home with our Residents, our Staff, you our benefactors, and all who become involved here at St. Mary's.

Working with our staff members who embrace our mission and core values, helping the frailest of residents enjoy a good meal or a good laugh, praying with an elderly person who is nearing their final moments, opening the mail and finding donations that enable us to meet our daily financial demands – these are sacred moments which bring us to pray with deep gratitude and echo our Mother Foundress' words.

Lent is quickly approaching. May it be for each of us a time to recognize God's beauty in our everyday encounters. Lent is essentially an act of prayer spread over 40 days. It sustains and nurtures our relationship with God as He calls to us each day. Listen for that call and then respond. Our Mother Foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan also said, "Jesus is waiting for you in the chapel. Say to him, 'Jesus, you know exactly what is going on. You are all I have, and you know all things. Come to my help.' And then go, and don't worry about how you are going to manage. That you have told God about it is enough. He has a good memory."

The Little Sisters prayerfully remember you many times during the day. And God, even with his good memory, is reminded of your generosity. Thank you for helping us to provide for our Residents and keep our home safe and welcoming for all.

May God bless you abundantly.

Gratefully,

Mother Margaret Charles



Monthly Giving

Regular giving is simple, efficient, and cost-effective!

To start, visit

bit.ly/stmarys-donate

or scan the QR code below with your phone camera!

Please feel free to contact us at 773-935-9600 for assistance.



littlesistersofthepoorchicago.org/donate

Save the Date!

Sweet Sweepstakes: May 26—July 28

Ten weekly drawings to win \$500 or the Grand Prize of \$5,000!



Habits on the Green: Monday, June 12

Our much-anticipated annual golf classic returns to Midlothian Country Club.



Travinia: Saturday, July 29

Bring your picnic to St. Mary's Home and test your trivia knowledge.



Chez Ste. Marie—A Taste of France: Thursday, September 14

Our ever-popular wine tasting soirée beckons you to St. Mary's Home.

