



LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly

Serving the elderly poor in Palatine since 1966

Mission Statement

Continuing the work of Saint Jeanne Jugan, our mission is to offer the neediest elderly of every race and religion a home where they will be welcomed as Christ, cared for as family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.

Save the Date:

■ December 9, 2018
**Christmas
Open House**

Holiday Mass Schedule

Dec. 24th - 7:30 PM

Dec. 25th - 11:00 AM

Jan. 1st - 11:00 AM

St. Joseph's Home for the Elderly
80 W. Northwest Highway
Palatine, IL 60067
847-358-5700
www.LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org

Fall/Winter 2018



Enjoying the simple pleasure of being together and holding hands, Residents Ellarita and Jack Wolfe (married for 66 years) celebrate at our annual Resident Christmas Gala.

A Christmas Treasure

The Gift of Simplicity

I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. Phil 4:11.

With shopping displays appearing even before Halloween, our culture seems to be promoting the materialistic aspect of Christmas now more than ever. Year after year, our calendars are saturated and the tone of the season seems to be frantic rather than festive. Over and over, we hear people wish that the holidays would be more focused on 'family' and less on materialism. How many times watching a classic Christmas movie do you find yourself yearning for simpler times? In the hustle and bustle of today's world, we often miss the satisfaction of enjoying the simple things.

Living with the elderly is a beautiful treasure with so many gifts. This is especially evident at Christmas time. Our elderly Residents teach us a lot through the

wisdom of their words and the example of their pace. The natural course of aging causes their elderly bodies to slow down. We are continually amazed and watch with awe as they gracefully adapt, accept and surrender. Their focus becomes uncluttered with the external distractions and they are able to simply be present and enjoy.

The twinkle in their eyes and their smiles are heart-warming as they quietly stroll through our Home observing the decorations and listening to Christmas music. Often found in front of the manger deep in prayer, we watch in admiration as they immerse themselves in the true spirituality of Christmas.

Our prayer this Christmas is that we all try to learn from the example of our elders by simplifying, allowing us time to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

Little Sisters of the Poor



150 Years in America Generosity of Our Friends

The picture above tells a story that is repeated over and over again throughout the history of the Little Sisters of the Poor. Two Sisters are welcomed through the servants' entrance after a grand soiree, perhaps a Christmas party. The head of the household is sympathetic toward our work and the servants share with the Sisters all that is leftover. A few guests curiously look on, wondering who they are and how they do what they do.

The year is 1876 and the Little Sisters have opened their third home in Chicago. In December of that year, we read in their foundation book (an ongoing handwritten historical ledger kept at every Little Sisters'

Home) that The Society of St. Vincent de Paul gave them the large sum of \$300 to build their chapel, enabling them to have Holy Mass three times a week. In speaking of their surroundings, they described it as a poor section of town but filled with good, generous neighbors. A kind family offered them their first meal, and a neighbor woman, whom they described as working very hard taking in laundry to feed her family, purchased a bed for them. She herself carried it to them, making several trips. Someone gave them a horse, which they described as 'gentle and still fairly young'.

Throughout the years, the theme of 'Gratitude' remains the same. On Christmas day in 1895 a Sister wrote: "All during this Christmas day one can see the good elderly and the Little Sisters piously stopping by the crèche of the Divine Infant. No one is forgotten in our prayers: the living and the dead, all of our benefactors who are such an important part of our work."

We continue to hear stories of our generous friends, who make sacrifices to help us. Recently a Motorola retiree sent us a card that he has precious guarded for over 60 years. It was a 1957 thank you from the Little Sisters living on Prairie Avenue in Chicago. A charming note thanking him for the gift of their first television set. He and his boss at Motorola had arranged the donation of a state of the art television. The handwritten note from one of the Sisters tells in detail the joy that this television has brought to the 'old ladies' in her care; she said "they enjoy meeting Msgr. Fulton Sheen every Monday night!"

Our Mother Foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan knew that prayers of gratitude were a direct way to God's heart. In thanksgiving for your kindness to us, along with our daily prayers, we offer a Mass the last Sunday of every month in our chapel at 11:00 a.m., for you. You are always welcome to join us.



From our first arrival to the U.S. through today, it is only through your support that we are able to provide a loving home and quality care to the needy elderly.

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



*It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas...
and we would like to invite you to join us
for the simple joys of the Christmas Season.*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9TH, 2-4 PM

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

SANTA AND GAMES FOR THE KIDS

**BEAUTIFULLY DECORATED
CHRISTMAS TREES THROUGHOUT OUR HOME**

COOKIES AND HOT CHOCOLATE

Around Our Home



Our volunteers and Cindy DeLuca (in light blue gloves), made "lefse", a Norwegian bread for the Scandinavian themed community meal at St. Theresa Parish in Palatine.

In The Spirit of Giving

Under the direction of our Volunteer Coordinator, Cindy DeLuca, many Resident volunteers gather every Wednesday afternoon to make sandwiches and other food for those in need. Their gift of love is delivered to homeless shelters, emergency shelter locations and parishes that offer community meals to those in need. One enthusiastic Resident prepared an entire spaghetti and meatballs dinner for 20 people! Several other Residents helped make all the trimmings for a turkey dinner, including 15 lbs. of mashed potatoes!

You can see from the big smiles on the faces of our dear volunteers that "... it is in giving that we receive".

#GIVINGTUESDAY

#GivingTuesday is a world-wide day of giving that harnesses the collective power of individuals, communities and organizations to encourage philanthropy and to celebrate generosity worldwide.

After Thanksgiving and shopping days Black Friday and Cyber Monday, this year's #GivingTuesday will take place on November 27th and will kick off the giving season by inspiring people to come together and give back.

We are happy to welcome the needy elderly into our Home. But we can't do it without your help! Your #GivingTuesday donation will help us to provide a comfortable

Home for our Residents.

We appreciate your generosity, no matter what size. Together all the gifts add up. You can help us make a difference in the lives of the elderly by donating online at LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org or mailing your donation in the enclosed envelope.



Will you help us to continue to provide a loving home filled with simple pleasures for the elderly by making a #GivingTuesday gift on November 27th?



We believe that the elderly are our greatest treasures. They possess a great wisdom from their vast life experiences, which is a gift for all of us

Looking Back on a Well-Lived Life

Psychologists have long studied the link between emotional events, including holiday celebrations, and the clarity of memories. We see it firsthand during the aging process, as the process of reminiscing is very strong. "As people approach the end of their lives, it's natural to want to put life in perspective, resolve past conflicts, grieve losses and changes, forgive oneself and others, celebrate successes and feel a sense of completion." (John Kunz, Giving Voice to Lives: Reminiscence and Life Review).

Holidays frequently arouse memories. During this time, we recognize the importance of reminiscing and we are blessed to be able to accompany our Residents through this process. By listening to their stories of the past, we not only can help them find closure, but we can also help them recognize the good that they have accomplished in their lives.

St. John Paul II said "As Christians we should offer our memories to the Lord. Thinking about the past will not alter the reality of your sufferings or disappointments, but it can change the way you look at them. Younger people cannot fully understand the way in which elderly sometimes return to the distant past but such reflection has its place. And when it is done in prayer it can be a source of healing."

This Christmas Season we all can help our elders find a sense of meaning and completion in their lives by being present with them and listening. Chances are by being there for them, we will also learn a few things from their wisdom and life experiences.

A Moment with Mother Margaret



Mother Margaret Charles escorts one of our Residents, John, to our annual Resident's Christmas Gala.

Dear Friends,

"The kingdom of the heavens has approached: rather than arriving in clouds of wrath to the accompaniment of thunder, God has come to His people with soft steps, one at a time, the steps of the donkey carrying Jesus and Mary in the Sinai Desert, the steps of the young Jesus on the streets of Nazareth and later out in the Jordan Desert." (*Fire of Mercy*, Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis).

I recently read this lovely passage and thought about the soft steps God uses as He comes into our lives: the soft steps of the biblical donkey, of the Baby, yes, but also, the soft steps of the elderly woman, slowly making her way toward the chapel, or the elderly gentleman with padded slippers, a quiet shuffled gait and a beautiful smile, or the gentle steps of a Little Sister peeking in on a sleeping elderly Resident. Sacred, caring encounters.

Christmas is joyfully celebrated at our Home. I am always amazed when an elder says to me "this is the best Christmas I have ever had" but for some, it's true. The gifts aren't elaborate, but they are given with love. The celebrations are centered on the Reason for the Season. On the first Christmas, Heaven came close to humankind. We celebrate that event. Heaven is close to us all; it is especially close to the elderly.

Our holiday to-do list is rather simple: find ways to make Christmas special for our elderly Residents, and ways to express our sincere gratitude to all of our benefactors. To our Residents, who daily remind us of the slow, quiet steps that God uses to enter our lives, we offer the gifts of love, peace and security. To you we offer our sincere promise of daily prayer.

Christmas is a time to remember that everyone is someone for whom the Son of God entered the world. Thank you for helping us to keep that message alive; thank you for supporting our work and enabling us to gently care for the elderly.

We owe you a great debt of gratitude. And we offer you the finest gift we can give, our prayers.

May the Lord Jesus, whose gentle coming among us brought light and grace to people of all ages, fill you and your loved ones with these gifts this Christmas. May you have a few quiet moments to hear the soft steps of God in your heart.

The Little Sisters and the Residents of St. Joseph's Home join me in wishing you a Joyous Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Gratefully,

M Margaret Charles

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