



Journey to Christmas

Trusting in God's Promise

We are all familiar with the story of Christmas, but how often do we contemplate the journey of Mary and Joseph? Their faith and sacrifices are significant parts of the story. It was a long and arduous journey. Joseph led Mary, who was 'great with child' traveling for days, on a donkey. It was a true journey of trust. They didn't know what lay in store for them in Bethlehem, but they had complete trust that God had a plan and purpose in this difficult journey.

2020 has been a year with great sacrifices and opportunities to test our faith. Looking back, we could never have imagined what was in store for us. As we journeyed through the challenges, we strived to place our complete trust in God's plan and purpose.

This year has also given us many blessings. We are so very blessed that as we go to print, **none** of our Residents or Little Sisters have been infected with COVID. We have been overwhelmed with all of



your prayers, food donations and financial support. You have shared with us what you were able to give and we are eternally grateful.

All throughout this year, the Lord has given us opportunities to slow down and contemplate His movement in our lives. Many times, just at the right moment, God surprised us with His grace and compassion. He showered us with His love, restored our hope and reminded us of His promise for the future.



Our normal Christmas Season is filled with carolers in our hallways, an Open House showcasing our many decorated Christmas trees, a visit from Santa, and an elegant Christmas Gala prepared by volunteer chefs. This year will be different. At this writing, we aren't exactly sure what it will look like, but most probably it will be simpler and more spiritual.

Join us this Christmas as we travel with Joseph and Mary on a journey of trust and anticipation of the coming of our Savior.

BOB AND BARB



Bob and Barb met on a blind date shortly after Bob completed his service in the army. They were married for 37 years and looking forward to enjoying their retirement years together, when Bob received a devastating diagnosis of a severe form of Parkinson's disease that does not respond to medication. Bob is a fighter and together, he and Barb, met the disease head on. Barb cared for Bob for nine years, until she was unable to provide the care that he needed.

It was a hard decision, as it is with many of our Residents and families, to seek admission to our Home. They struggled with many emotions and the prospect of living separately. Their saving grace was knowing the quality of love and care that we provided in our Home, as Barb's mom was already a Resident.

Bob is a calming presence in our family. He lives one day at a time and always has a smile to share. Before the lockdown, he and Barb would often walk around our grounds, stopping to greet everyone that they met.

Bob and Barb are such an inspiration and witness to us, and everyone who knows them. Despite the toll that the disease has had on Bob, his humble acceptance inspires us. Their devotion to living out their marriage within the framework of their circumstance is a powerful witness to their marriage vows.

The separation caused by COVID, has been difficult for them. Frequent Skype visits keep them connected. Now, with safe family visit protocols, it is a joy for them to once again be with each other in person. "He is the love of my life", Barb repeats again and again whenever she has a chance. Bob's loving smile says more than any words ever could.

Your Gift of Love

There are many stories of the kindness and generosity of St. Nicholas that led to the tradition of Santa Claus delivering gifts. We have been blessed with many 'Santas' over the years. Some were 'secret' sending their gifts with anonymity. Some showed up dressed like elves or came singing Christmas Carols. Many sent much-needed financial support and many offered up their prayers for us. We treasure and appreciate every one of your gifts.

Please continue to pray for us and if you are in a position to financially support us, we will be very grateful. In considering a gift, you may want to know that the Cares Act expands tax deductions for charitable giving with a new \$300 deduction when not itemizing or 100% deduction when itemizing. Plus, a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your Individual Retirement Account payable to us can be counted toward satisfying your required minimum distributions for the year. Please check with your tax advisor for specific advice.

We realize that this Christmas is going to be tough for many families. Economic difficulties have touched so many. The coronavirus has affected many families, some who are still facing the

difficulties of recovery. Social distancing and other precautions have caused traditional gatherings to be cancelled. We understand your struggles and want you to know that you and your loved ones are in our prayers every day! We pray in thanksgiving for your generosity,

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we pray for your special intentions, we pray for God to ease your struggles and for your protection and the protection of your loved ones.

With God's grace, we will make it through these difficult times. May the newborn Savior with His promise of everlasting life fills all of us with the love, hope and strength that we so desperately need now.



Your gift, whatever it may be, helps us to bring the love and joy of Christmas to our Residents.

St. Jeanne Jugan's Advice in Difficult Times



St. Jeanne Jugan lived through many difficult times. Her faith was strong and she would always place her trust in God. Her words of advice, that she shared with those first Little Sisters more than 180 years ago, are just as wise and relevant to us today.

When Jeanne encountered an overwhelmed and weary novice, Jeanne told her, "When your patience and strength run out and you feel alone and helpless, 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."

Jeanne once visited a prominent civil servant to tell him about her idea for a Home for the elderly poor. Although she was willing to help, the civil servant's wife thought that Jeanne's ideas were unrealistic wild dreams. Jeanne quietly agreed but added, "If God is with us, it will be accomplished. God will help us; the work is His."

In good times and in difficult times,

Jeanne was always praising God. "In our troubles we must always say: blessed be God, thank you my God, or glory to God!"

Jeanne surrendered to the wisdom of God. She looked at her unsuccessful efforts and disappointments as gifts from God. Trusting His plan was better than hers, she went on her way in peace.

As we continue to travel this road of difficulties and unknowns, won't you join us in asking St. Jeanne Jugan for help in surrendering and placing our trusting in God's plan?

"I Wouldn't Want To Live Any Place Else!"

It has been a long time since we have been able to open our doors and let our friends come into our Home. We miss you! While we are happy that our precautions are working, the lockdown has prevented any new friends from coming in and seeing what a wonderful Home that we have.

Recognizing this, a very generous benefactor offered to fund the filming of a short video to give our new and old friends a peak inside. We are still here and because of your support, we are keeping everyone safe, happy and as healthy as we can.

We invite you to visit our website at LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org to watch the video. You will see and hear from our Residents, Little Sisters, and volunteers, just how much your support is making a difference in all of our lives.



MOTHER'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

The night was quiet. There weren't a lot of familiar faces. In the stable Mary and Joseph stayed close. Love, support, and grace were getting them through this strange ordeal. And then, beauty and radiance arrived in the presence of Jesus. B.C. changed to A.D. and the world was made new.

We now have a different BC: *Before Covid19*; before we were all slowed down and isolated by a virus. We look back wistfully and gaze forward hopefully, but we focus realistically on the now.

In the stable at Bethlehem, people came; they left gifts and manifested their love and hope. Today we see the 21st century shepherds and kings making their journey to our Home each day. They include those who offer their gifts in spite of hardship: our staff members who stay steady and devoted to the weakest members of our flock and who diligently join us in our efforts to keep the virus away from our home. And the generous Magi, our benefactors who bring their gifts quietly to our front door, and who touch us daily by their generosity; enabling us to care well for our elders.

This time of social unrest and political uncertainty in our Country is not unlike that of the time of Christ. But Jesus came to unite us all. As we approach the final days 2020, I pray that our spiritual vision may become 20/20.

The picture on the front of our newsletter reflects the sort of Christmas I hope we can all have this year: perhaps a quieter than usual one, but one in which we are united with those we love and focused on Jesus. We will be with our elderly Residents, doing our best to make them happy; together we will offer our prayers for all of you, our modern-day Shepherds and Kings who discover Christ in the midst of the aged. Thank you for helping us to keep the message of Christmas alive, even in these challenging times. May you and your loved ones stay safe and healthy and feel the support of our very grateful prayers.



Thank you for your prayers, we feel them and it keeps us going. Thank you for your financial support, food and all of the items that bring to our door. You help us bring the joy of Christmas to our Residents!

Find our Urgent Needs List & Amazon Wish List
at www.LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org

We're blessed that no Residents or Little Sisters have had COVID. But, the IL Dept. of Public Health requires that we keep a wing of empty rooms in case of an outbreak. We have lost over \$300,000 in Medicaid revenue since this began.

SAVE THE DATE

#GivingTuesday

December 1, 2020

Giving is Easy:

1. Text STJH to 555888, you will receive a return text with a link to our #GivingTuesday donation page.
2. Donate Online at LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org
3. Mail a donation in the enclosed envelope.

MISSION

Continuing the work of St. 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 a family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.