



Making the Elderly Happy

Especially in the Christmas Season

The last few years, dealing with the COVID Pandemic was trying for all of us, especially around the holidays. It took a lot of creative ideas to make the Christmas Season special for our Residents. However, we persevered, always remembering the words of Jeanne Jugan, *"Making the elderly happy – that is what counts!"* These words inspire us to do whatever we can to bring love and joy to those we serve.

Making an elderly person happy isn't hard—all they really desire is our time, patience, and love. The gifts of love and patience are transformative, for they reduce stress and anxiety, foster emotional well-being and strengthen intergenerational bonds — both with their families and their care givers. Using these gifts with kindness and understanding has the power to make the aging process more positive and



meaningful for both our elderly Residents and for all of us who care for them.

With COVID restrictions easing, we look forward to filling our Home with Christmas joy and festivities. After living through the social distancing and separation, the simple joy of being together as a St. Joseph's Home family is extra special!

We are once again able to come together to celebrate our favorite



traditions —Christmas carol sing-alongs, afternoons of cookies and hot chocolate, watching Christmas movies, Santa and his helpers bringing gifts, a special Christmas Mass and delicious Christmas dinner.

While we know that these special traditions bring much joy and happiness, we also know that the underlying sense of knowing one is loved and cared for is what brings the greatest joy to our elders.

BR. MARTIN



On Saturday, August 12th at their 2023 Marian Conference, the Conventual Franciscan Friars awarded one of our dear St. Joseph Family members, Br. Martin Schmitz, O.F.M. Conv., along with Fr. Bernard Geiger O.F.M. Conv., the 2023 Kolbe Award. With much love and enthusiastic support, 26 Little Sisters and Residents attended the Conference and award presentation.

The Kolbe Award is given in recognition of those who mirror St. Maximilian Kolbe's charism of evangelization through Marian consecration. Br. Martin is the last surviving founding member of the Marytown community, established in 1948.

Marytown serves the spiritual needs of a broad community of people—locally and nationally—through a Eucharistic Adoration apostolate, prison ministry, daily Masses, weekday Confessions, catechesis, retreats and conferences. The USCCB declared Marytown, the National Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe in 2000. The Conventual Franciscan Friars of the St. Bonaventure Province live together there in community. These sacred grounds have been a sanctuary of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament since 1928.

We are blessed not only to have Br. Martin as a Resident, but Br. Tom Hercegovics is a treasured member of our activity staff. Plus, three Franciscan postulants are volunteering here each week during their postulancy.

Congratulations Br. Martin and thank you for the humble witness of your life in serving our Lord and our Blessed Mother.

Jesus is Waiting for You

'Jesus is waiting for you in the chapel. Go and find him when your strength and patience are giving out, when you feel lonely and helpless. Say to him: "You know well what is happening, my dear Jesus. I have only you. Come to my aid..." And then go your way. And don't worry about knowing how you are going to manage. It is enough to have told our good Lord. He has an excellent memory!'

St. Jeanne Jugan

We are very blessed to have a beautiful chapel available to us 24/7. Mass is offered every day, the Sacrament of Reconciliation offered twice a month — or a phone call away in between, and the Blessed Sacrament is exposed for Adoration after the 11:00am Mass until 5:00pm on the first Friday of each month, every Sunday from 4:30pm-5:30pm, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 4:30pm- 5:00pm.

Every day is special in our Chapel, but when the Christmas Season arrives it is mystical. Our larger than life Nativity transports us to the stable in Bethlehem. We can almost envision ourselves standing beside the shepherds, marveling at the Child Jesus. Gazing on the face of Mary and Joseph, we can feel their love for the Son of God who is entrusted to their care. It is there that we can open our hearts and tell Him our deepest desires.

In the crazy days before Christmas, when there seems to be so much to do and so much noise, Pope Francis also encourages us to pause for a moment of silence in front of a Nativity scene "and confide to the Lord what's going on in your life. Talk to Him about the people and situations closest to your heart. With him, take stock of the year that is ending, sharing your hopes and worries." A Nativity scene, he said, "celebrates the closeness of God."

Every day is special in our Chapel, but when the Christmas Season arrives it is mystical.

Pope Francis likes how most Nativity scenes portray the baby Jesus with his arms open, "to tell us that God came to embrace our humanity," which helps people discover "the nearness of God. It is to rediscover that God is real, that God is concrete, that God is alive and vibrant. He's not a far-off lord or detached judge, but he is humble love that came down to us."



Seeing the Face of Christ in the Elderly



"Be kind, especially with the infirm. Love them well... Oh yes! Be kind. It is a great grace God is giving you. In serving the aged, it is he himself whom you are serving." St. Jeanne Jugan

When St. Jeanne Jugan encountered a homeless destitute woman living in the streets, she no doubt saw the Lord's face looking back at her. As such, Jeanne could not leave her alone. Jeanne took the woman home and cared for her. This was the beginning of the Little Sisters of the Poor.

In our confused world today, filled with horrors such as euthanasia and assisted



suicide, we Little Sisters strive to help the world to see Christ in the aged.

In one of his general audiences, Pope Francis talked about the elderly having the privileged position of seeing clearly, and with joy, what the true destination of life is. "And what is the true destination of life? A place at the table with God, in the world of God."

We see God in the elderly each day, but it is especially strong in the Christmas Season. It is often said, that Christmas is best seen through the eyes of a child. However, we can say the same about seeing



Christmas through the eyes of the elderly.

Gazing at a Christmas tree, singing Christmas Carols or munching on a Christmas cookie sparks a twinkle in a Resident's eyes. Maybe it's a memory or just the simple pleasure of the moment. It stirs a pure sentiment in our hearts. What a gift for us to share that special moment.

But, it is in watching a Resident pray before the Nativity in our chapel, with such devotion and love, that we are privileged to see the manifestation of God's love on the face of His elderly children.

GIVING TUESDAY

November 28, 2023

DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY

A generous foundation has offered to match each gift that we receive up to \$60,000!!!

This Christmas, give the gift of love, comfort, and quality care to our needy elderly Residents. Your generosity has the power to make a positive impact in their lives.

Giving is Easy:

1. Click on this QR Code to link to our #GT donation page.



2. Donate Online at LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org.
3. Mail a donation in the enclosed envelope.



MOTHER MERCY'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends,

Although Saint Jeanne Jugan never wrote anything, many of her sayings have been handed down to us through the generations. We treasure her words and contemplate their wisdom. In the Christmas newsletter, we are reflecting on some of these words of St. Jeanne Jugan. I hope that you will find them as inspiring as we do.

We are filled with joyful anticipation for the Christmas Season! After years of COVID restrictions, we are finally able to once again plan our group Christmas celebrations and see the smiling *unmasked* faces of our St. Joseph Home family!

After having to close our Chapel in the wake of COVID, I am happy to let you know that it is now open to the public as long as we are not in outbreak mode. As of now (and hopefully from here on out), we are happy to welcome our friends back. It truly is a blessing to have you with us at Mass and Adoration.

As we prayerfully await the celebration of the 'greatest Gift of all', I can't help but reflect upon the gift of our own family of Residents, volunteers, staff, benefactors, friends and Little Sisters of the Poor at St. Joseph's Home. How grateful and blessed we are! When I look at you, I can see the loving, compassionate face of Jesus.

Our heartfelt wishes for a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your loved ones. Please know that we will bring your intentions with us to our Christmas Creche and entrust each intention to the Infant Jesus.

St. Mercy



SAVE THE DATE Amazing Grace Gala

Sunday, April 14, 2024

Featuring the Billy Elton Band,
performing the music of
Billy Joel and Elton John.

Find our Amazon Wish List
at www.LittleSistersofthePoorPalatine.org



Candy Drop

*Help us make this Christmas extra sweet for
our Residents.*

*Drop off a bag of candy (regular or sugar-free)
in our lobby December 3rd- 9th.*

*We hope to make a Christmas Sweets Basket
for each of our Residents!*



SAVE THE DATE

■ **#GivingTuesday**
November 28, 2023

■ **Amazing Grace Gala**
April 14, 2024
Stonegate Banquets
Hoffman Estates, IL

■ **Swing and a Prayer
Golf Outing**
September 15, 2024
The Club at Wynstone
N. Barrington, IL

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.