

CHARITY CHAT

"To serve rather than be served with humility, simplicity and charity"

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

Winter 2026

Important Dates

January 20, 2026

6:00 PM

LOC Board Meeting

Location TBD

General Membership Welcome

Spring 2026

Lenten Evening of Reflection

Date and Location TBD

Jan 2, Feb 6, March 6,

April 3, May 1

First Friday Mass

Times and Locations TBD

April 21, 2026

6:00 PM

LOC Board Meeting

Location TBD

General Membership Welcome

Presidents' Message

As Fall turns into Winter, one season ends and another begins. Just as my term as President is completed at the end of 2025, another new episode of LOC begins in January. There will be two new Co-Presidents, Kathleen Valusek and Judy Moran, to bring new life, a fresh perspective and much energy.

As I look back at the past two years, I see how all of you supported me through the good times and the challenges, especially through the loss of our beloved home at St. Francis of Assisi. A committee was formed to find a new facility. We needed to prepare for the move and then completely reorganize our system of providing clothing for the needy. It took all our time, talent, and strength to succeed in this new adventure.

You, my dear ladies, energized me, helped to point me in the right direction, but most of all, we worked together, bringing out the best of each other.

This year we got off to a great start in improving the ways we serve our clients. We were fortunate for the first time to receive, for free, 6,000 pairs of underwear from Bombas. What a blessing! We had to make room in our storage area on the second floor and figure out how to make order out of all those boxes. The same was true when the Lumen Christi Knights of Columbus ordered coats in all sizes and multiple boxes were delivered. We are so thankful for their generosity in helping us with our mission.

God has blessed us in so many ways. He has given each of us distinctive talents to use for the good of our organization. I marvel at the ways God has put us all together, using the gifts He has given us to make Ladies of Charity a vibrant organization in helping the less fortunate.

I am truly grateful to have served as your President for the past two years and want to thank each and every one of you for your commitment and service. Please welcome Kathleen Valusek and Judy Moran. They will need your support as we work together to provide clothing to children in need.

Marlene



Marlene Kollmeyer



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Social and Digital Media
(Paulette Pecard)

Parish Outreach
(Jude Schubert)

See our new website locmilwaukee.org for full listing of opportunities.

Generosity
changes everything

UPDATES

MEMBERSHIP

We are blessed with both faithful members and wonderful new faces, with our active members numbering 114, including three new members. In July, we emailed an updated Membership Directory, which includes contact information for all active members, committee assignments, and a calendar of events. Please contact Kathleen Valusek if you would like a printed version of the directory.

CAPUCHIN WALK

Our Ladies of Charity team of 22 raised \$670 for the St. Ben's Community Meal Program at the 20th Capuchin Walk for the Hungry. We were a part of 1,150 registered walkers who raised \$80,000. Please consider joining us next June.

LADIES OF CHARITY WEBSITE (www.locmilwaukee.org)

If you haven't looked at our website recently, you may want to do so! We have added some new features you may enjoy.

In the **"Who We Are"** section you can now view our video highlighting our history and our members over the years--many dedicated and loyal volunteers. Thanks to the Historian Committee for this heartwarming video.

In the **"Member Corner"**, you will find a LOC feature article that appeared in the Catholic Herald, issues of Charity Chat going back to 2018, and information on any upcoming events.

In the **"Photo"** section, you will find many wonderful photos of our events and activities highlighting our volunteers in action.

Always remember, you can make general and Annual Fund donations and memorials in the **"Support Us"** section. New members can complete their membership forms and make payments and current members can renew their membership also.

We welcome any suggestions you may have to enhance our website. Please feel free to reach out to Paulette Pecard at ppecard1@wi.rr.com.



ANNUAL FUND UPDATE

The campaign has begun! We are experiencing a large increase in the number of families served so far this 2025/26 school year, with families in the Lady of Guadalupe area finding us. Families are facing difficult economic challenges, changes in government programs, and, for some, the harsh results of this past summer flooding. The increased need has stretched our inventory, requiring us to purchase needed items so that we can be sure to clothe **"ALL"** children who came to us. Our shoppers are doing a great job finding bargains, but clothing

expenses continue to rise. Your donations allow us to cover these increases. If you haven't responded, please consider sending a check to Ladies of Charity Milwaukee at PO Box 472, Thiensville, WI 53092, or make a secure donation on our website, <https://www.locmilwaukee.org>. Every dollar we receive truly makes a difference. Our sincere thanks for your support. We are blessed to have so many volunteers and donors who provide so much to our mission.

DONOR HIGHLIGHT

LUMEN CHRISTI KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

The Lumen Christi Knights of Columbus, under the leadership of Cathy Liska and her husband Jim, have been a remarkable source of new winter jackets for many years. Each year, the Knights donate boxes of coats, provide personal donations for the purchase of additional jackets, and stand beside us as we do our best to keep our children warm. Thank you, Jim and Cathy, for all you do. You are a gift to Ladies of Charity.



THE CLOTHING CENTER

In just three months since opening the Ladies of Charity Clothing Center for the 2025-2026 year we have clothed 669 students. The number of clients served bespeaks the tremendous need and we are grateful to God that we can help. Thank you to the incredible volunteers who work to provide this help. We go home tired but happy. Special thanks to Beth Boemer and Joyce Grundle for their tireless work in keeping the socks and underwear bags replenished. We give 10 new pairs of socks and 7 new pairs of underwear for each client! The Bombas corporation provides socks and underwear, along with Our Lady of Lourdes Parish which holds an annual drive for us. Other donation sources include parish "Giving Tree" drives, school Lost and Found collections, and members of Ladies of Charity, neighbors, and friends. And, of course, each year the Lumen Christi Knights of Columbus provide winter jackets. We also have had an increase in donations through our LOC website.

Despite these generous resources, our stock needs frequent replenishing, given the growing number of clients served this school year. As of November 20, we clothed an increase of 168 children over one year ago. Our greatest needs now are in the areas of winter gloves, "sweats", and long-sleeved crewneck tops for both boys and girls. Of course, monetary donations are always appreciated.

We are grateful for the generosity of the many resources that contribute to our mission and the Clothing Center volunteers who continue to abide by our core mission: *To Served Rather Than Be Served with Humility, Simplicity, and Charity*. We are extremely grateful to the mothers, grandmothers, guardians, social workers, sisters, brothers, and all who come to our Clothing Center for assistance. They too are examples of *Humility, Simplicity, and Charity*. God bless each one of these courageous people, and each one of you.

– Gail Proite Adams

– Francie Shea



URGENTLY NEEDED CLOTHING

SWEATPANTS IN LARGER SIZES

**LONG SLEEVED TOPS
BOYS AND GIRLS**

**TOPS FOR LARGE SIZE GIRLS
— NOT MATRONLY!**

EVENTS

FALL OPENING BREAKFAST



FIRST FRIDAY MASS AND HOSPITALITY

As I reflect on the gifts in my life, I give thanks for our monthly first Friday prayer initiative. The opportunity to pray together has enriched our spirituality and friendships. Please look for the monthly email with date, time, and location, and join us for prayer and fellowship. Mary Roets



EVENTS

CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Christmas joy was in the air at the Wisconsin Country Club where nearly 50 Ladies of Charity and their guests celebrated the annual Christmas luncheon on December 6, 2025. Cathy Liska wowed us by setting each place with a wreath of chocolates and the DSHA Angelaires entertained us with their holiday show. A special thank you to Gail Proite Adams, Marlene Kollmeyer, Cathy Liska, Judy Moran, and Events Coordinator Mary Johnson for helping to make this a great event.



2026 LENTEN EVENING OF REFLECTION

**STAY TUNED FOR AN EMAIL WITH
INFORMATION REGARDING THIS EVENT.**

MEET OUR NEW CO-PRESIDENTS

KATHLEEN VALUSEK & JUDY MORAN



KATHLEEN VALUSEK

I grew up just outside of Chicago and attended Marquette University, where I met my husband, Kevin. We have been married almost 40 years and are blessed with four children, Kelly, Brian, Erin, and Bridget and four grandchildren. I enjoy reading and work in the Atwater School library. I was introduced to Ladies of Charity by my good friends Marilyn Weiss and Jan Zoltan. My hope as Co-President is to grow our membership and encourage participation in our mission of service and fellowship.

Kathleen has served as Chairperson of the Membership Committee and is a loyal volunteer at the Clothing Center, where she and Judy Moran have done wonders in managing the overflow inventory of donations and Bombas sock and underwear in the up-the-challenging stairs storage room. Kathleen also has served to maintain our book inventory. She pretty much jumps in to help in any way she can. Yea, Kathleen, we are so lucky to have you as our new Co-President!



JUDY MORAN

I was born and raised in Du Pere, Wisconsin, a life-long Packers fan and season ticket holder. A proud graduate of UW-Green Bay and Fox Valley Technical Institute, I relocated to Milwaukee with my chef husband Brian in 1986 and pursued a career in the beauty industry with Aveda Corporation, where I held executive roles based on brand development, marketing, and new business development. My husband Brian and I have two children, Joseph and Anya, who both expecting their first child in early 2026!

I am both happy and honored to serve as Co-President of our chapter. I am privileged to have met so many strong, like-minded and selfless women and marvel at the work of my predecessors and our board members. I learned of Ladies of Charity through Susan Westlake. I am so proud of the work that we do in our community and am humbled by the dedication and results I witness. I look forward to the next two years and am happy to serve you.

Judy is a steadfast volunteer at the Clothing Center, who has brought her organizational expertise to the creation of the upstairs storage area. She has also been an active member of the Events Committee. Thank you, Judy, for your commitment to the Ladies of Charity, and for your willingness to serve as our next Co-President. We are so lucky to have you!

REMEMBERING MARY DOMER

A PILLAR OF THE LADIES OF CHARITY

As we reflect on the history of the Milwaukee Ladies of Charity, it's impossible not to remember the contribution of Mary Domer, a dedicated and passionate member who made a lasting impact on our organization. Mary's journey with Ladies of Charity began in 2006, and it quickly became clear that she would leave an indelible mark on our Milwaukee association.

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

Mary's commitment to service was deeply rooted in family. She followed the footsteps of her mother, Joan Wohlrab, and her mother-in-law Dorothy Domer, both of whom were longtime members. It was this familial tradition of service that inspired Mary to carry the torch forward, continuing their work, and expanding the reach of the organization in new and meaningful ways.

MILWAUKEE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY: A DEFINING MOMENT

One of Mary's most significant contributions came in 2014 when Co-Presidents Mary Johnson and Mary Domer orchestrated the National Assembly in Milwaukee. This event was a milestone for our organization, and they were instrumental in its success. Their ability to bring people together, organize events, and ensure everything ran smoothly was invaluable. The "Marys" played a vital role in making the Assembly a memorable and meaningful experience for everyone involved.

ACTIVE, CREATIVE, AND INVOLVED

Mary had an uncanny ability to bring new ideas to life and find innovative solutions to challenges that arose. She launched a book giveaway for the children at the Clothing Center. She knew that a book could open up a world of possibilities for a child. By providing free books for our children, she made an impact to be felt for years to come.

A LASTING LEGACY

Her legacy is not just one of service and accomplishment, but her warm and welcoming nature fostered love. Mary's spirit and dedication continue to inspire those who knew her, and her memory will live on in the hearts of all those whose lives she touched. She was a true champion of our mission, and her legacy will continue to inspire future generations of Ladies of Charity.



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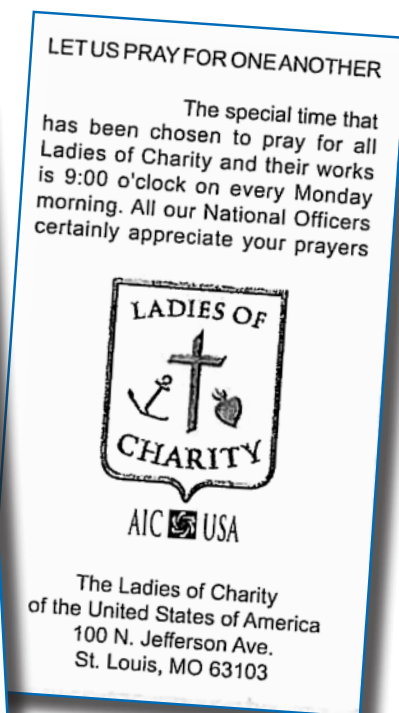
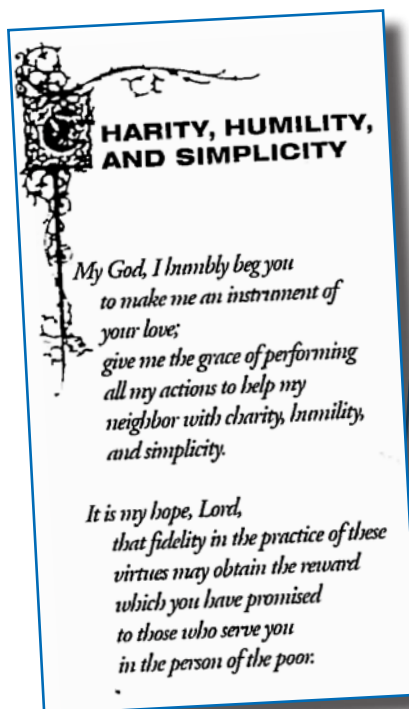
CATHY LISKA REFLECTION

Vincentian Tidbits

Watershed Moments in St. Vincent de Paul's Life

While tutoring the children of a wealthy family, St. Vincent was called to the bedside of a dying estate tenant for confession and last rites. Vincent was shaken by this encounter, struck by the spiritual poverty of these country people, who were often priestless or served by ignorant clergy. He realized that bringing the Gospel to the common people was an immense need and personal mandate from God.

The second decisive event came only a few months later in the small town of Chatillon., where Vincent had requested a poor country parish so he could directly care for souls. A parishioner shared the dire straits of local family in need of food and care, which Vincent spoke of as "the duty of charity and loving one's neighbor" during his Mass homily. The immediate outpouring was overwhelming and Vincent saw an opportunity to create something new: an organized network of laypeople devoted to regular charitable service. He convened a small group of women and proposed the name "Confraternity of Charity" as a lay association of women dedicated to assisting the poor and sick. This became the first organized formal charity for laywomen, a prototype of countless charities to come. It's descendent, the International Association of Charities, including LCUSA, still exists today. "Word and deed, mission and charity", would form the focus of Vincent's vocation. What an amazing beginning to our journey of service as Ladies of Charity.



"To limit your desires and your hopes is to misunderstand God's infinite goodness."

— St. Therese of Lisieux "The Little Flower"

Thank you to Shorewood Press for their friendly service & expertise. Printed copies of Charity Chat are available for purchase at Shorewood Press 1700 E. Capitol Drive Shorewood, WI 53211