

# CHARITY CHAT

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

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

November 2022

## Important Dates

**December 4, 2022 at 11:00 AM**  
**Christmas Luncheon**  
University Club of Milwaukee

**January 17, 2023 at 6:30 PM**  
**LOC Board Meeting**  
Westlake Residence  
11453 N. Riverland Road  
Mequon, WI  
General Membership Welcome

**Lent 2023 Date to be determined**  
**Evening of Reflection**  
Details Pending

**April 18, 2023 at 6:30 PM**  
**LOC Board Meeting**  
Roets Residence  
5554 N. Diversey Avenue  
Whitefish Bay, WI  
General Membership Welcome

## Presidents' Message

As this issue of Charity Chat goes to press, our beautiful fall is slowly winding down into the Thanksgiving season. We have so much for which to be thankful. The Clothing Center opened the end of August with new hours and the renewal of serving our families in person with masks optional. The response from them and our volunteers has been extremely positive and rewarding. We are also thankful for all the members who volunteered over the summer to help sort, mark and organize our Team Rubicon's "mammoth" donation. We are blessed to have so many of you volunteer your time, energy, and resources to keep this powerful ministry running smoothly.

On May 25th, 2022, we installed and welcomed Duffy Onopa as a new Lady of Charity at a lovely reception where members had the opportunity to socialize and renew friendships. A special thank you goes to our Membership Committee Tracy Hobbs, Anne Rice and Kathleen Valusek for this evening. We'd also like to thank Cathy Liska and Gail Proite-Adams for attending the LCUSA National Assembly in Knoxville, TN and representing our association. Gail and Cathy found the event and speakers to be "exceptional". Recently, our upgraded and fabulous LOC website became available. Thanks to Paulette Pecard for her leadership and to the staff at Digital Media for making this happen. Please check out the website at [locmilwaukee.org](http://locmilwaukee.org) and have fun exploring the dropdown menu features.

Our Fall Opening Mass and Breakfast returned after a two-year hiatus on September 24th, when we were able to meet in person at St. Francis Assisi Parish Church and Hall. Father Mike Bertram began our morning with a very meaningful liturgy and moving sermon. His words left us with an inspiring message of appreciation and thankfulness for the value and meaning of our work as Ladies of Charity. Thank you to Mary Johnson and her committee for their hard work in bringing this wonderful, and delicious, event to us! And, lastly, a big thank you to everyone who has donated thus far to our Annual Fund campaign. Please do so if you are able, as your support is essential to our mission.

With Thanksgiving approaching, we'd like to close our message to you with the prayer found on the bookmark we give to our families at the Clothing Center.

Prayer for My Family

Watch over my family, dear Lord. Help us live in peace and harmony. Grant us the grace to accept each other's faults and encourage each other's strengths. Protect us from harsh words and hurt feelings. Guide us to mutual understanding and support. Bless us with good health and happiness. Give us hearts full of love, patience, and compassion for one another, now and always. Amen.

A blessed Thanksgiving to you and your loved ones,  
Mary and Susan



*Mary Roets and Susan Westlake*

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

**Rising Star Tutoring**  
(Claire Wycklendt)

**Photography of Events and Activities**  
(Mary and Susan)

**Membership, Recruitment of New Members**  
(Kathleen Valusek)

**Social and Digital Media**  
(Paulette Pecard)

*See our new website for full listing of opportunities.*



**Generosity**  
changes everything

# UPDATES

## Membership News

Welcome to Kathleen Valusek who joins Anne Rice and Tracy Hobbs on the Membership Committee; to our newest inductee, Duffy (grand-daughter-in-law of Jane Schieffer, daughter-in-law of Cathy, and sister-in-law of Jennifer); and to recently joined members, Helen Broder, Janet de Toro (mother of Tracy Hobbs, Lisa Pasternak, and Annette O'Brien), Jennifer La Machia, and Mary Nold-Klett (sister-in-law of Mary Johnson), and Mary Mulcahy. We are delighted each of you chose to become a Lady of Charity. We continue to explore ways to reach out to others to become members. We would love to hear your ideas! Please contact any member of the committee.



## New LOC Website

As the software that we initially used for our website was becoming outdated, we recently upgraded it and enhanced our website. Please see the new site at [locmilwaukee.org](http://locmilwaukee.org). Changes that you will find include:

- The “Who We Are” section now provides more information on the leaders of our organization and committees.
- A new “Donation/Dues” form allows the donor to specify whether it is a general donation, membership dues, Annual Fund donation, or memorial. Payment can be made by credit card, PayPal. or check.

- Our “Member Corner” includes information on becoming a LOC and on upcoming and past events, and past copies of Charity Chat.
- The “Photos” section includes photos of recent events.

Our thanks to Melissa Hicks and Amy Hietpas from Mosaic Marketing for their work and support of our website. They did a fabulous job!

– Paulette Pecard

## Ladies of Charity National Assembly Seeing Christ in the Faces of Those We Serve

After a two-year hiatus, nearly 100 Ladies of Charity from five regions across the country gathered in person last August in Knoxville, Tennessee for the LCUSA National Assembly. In St. Vincent’s words, “the poor are helped more when we organize”, ultimately the “why” of national assemblies. “Being present announces a love of Ladies of Charity; a gift of ourselves to one another mirrors a love of Christ, Sts. Vincent, Louise, and Elizabeth in a very concrete way” (July 1640).

From the meet and greet reception (“Jeans and Pearls”) to a two-day agenda that included prayer, liturgy, guest speakers, table discussions, break-out sessions featuring a showcase of local projects, delicious meals, and opportunities to step out into the city, the Assembly was exceptional. Featured topics included: *Widening the Frame: Expanding Perspectives on the Impact of Poverty* (Father Ragan Shriver); *A Vincentian Response to Homelessness in America* (Charles Levesque, JD); *Being St. Vincent de Paul: A Primer* (Rev. Patrick J. Griffin); *Who is My Neighbor: Racism and Our Response* (Sandy Figueroa). The Assembly closed with Mass at the Cathedral of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, followed by dinner and a musical gala. Although a commitment of time and expense, the LOC Assembly and trip is a wonderful opportunity. Stay tuned: National Assembly 2023 *Ladies of Charity: We Choose LOVE*, September 7th-9th, Buffalo, NY.



– Cathy Liska

# The Clothing Center

The Clothing Center got off to a slow start this school year, but each week we are seeing the numbers increase. As of this time we are up to clothing about 300 children. Last year we served families remotely, with the assistance of the MPS Social Work staff. This year, we were excited to resume in-person contact with families but understand it may take a bit of transition time for the changeover.

We have a committed group of Clothing Center volunteers, and we still need more, since the Center is now open two days a week, Wednesdays 11:00 am to 2:00 pm and Thursdays, 8:30 am to 11:30 am, and the second Saturday of the month, 9:00am to 12:00 pm. Periodically the Center is also open on Monday mornings to sort, label, and restock, clean, and provide training to new or returning volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Gail Proite Adams ([gailandbill@hotmail.com](mailto:gailandbill@hotmail.com)) or Francie Shea ([fshea@wi.rr.com](mailto:fshea@wi.rr.com)).

Clothing donations have been steady and our racks are full. After Team Rubicon provided needed items to the Afghan refugees, they contacted us to see if we needed clothing. We said YES! Little did we know that they would deliver boxes and boxes of primarily new clothing, which we stored in Father Mike's garage. (Thank you, Team Rubicon and Father Mike!) Despite an abundance of clothing, can you believe we still need items in specific sizes, **especially jeans:** Boys in sizes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 14, 16, 18 and Girls in sizes 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 16.

It is truly an honor and a gift to work at the Clothing Center. LOC members are kindhearted, efficient, and fun, and the incredible people we serve may be poor in material things but have an abundance of spirit. God Bless all of us and THANK YOU.

– Francie Shea



## MISSION OUTREACH

### Capuchin Walk for the Hungry

For the first time in 2 years, the Capuchin Walk for the Hungry was held live, the evening of June 10. Over 1,000 people signed up for the walk this year. We had a Ladies of Charity Milwaukee team of 25. Not everyone from our team was able to join us at Lakefront State Park this year. Some members walked in their neighborhoods and the weather just prior to the Walk was quite stormy which kept some of our team at home. 10 of our LOC team participated in the 2-mile walk through the park and enjoyed the Polish Fest activities after.

Thank you to all who participated and supported the Walk this year. The monies raised help the Capuchin Community Services feed many needy people in our community who experience hunger and food insecurity.

– Adele Castillo Eklund



### Rising Stars Tutoring

Rising Stars Tutoring is a program sponsored by the School Sisters of Notre Dame that strives to enhance the achievement of struggling students in the Milwaukee area. Tutors provide one-on-one or small group support, for one or two hours, once or twice a week, at a time that works for the volunteer. The need for tutors is greater than ever as students try to recover from the learning losses of the pandemic. At our September breakfast, Father Mike shared the history of St.

Francis Parish that once had a large grade school staffed by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Tutoring with Rising Stars is a great opportunity for the Ladies of Charity to continue the work of these wonderful sisters. For more information, including a list of the schools served by the program, see [risingstarsmilwaukee.org](http://risingstarsmilwaukee.org).

– Claire Wycklendt

## ANNUAL FUND

THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE RESPONDED TO OUR ANNUAL FUND APPEAL AND HAVE SENT IN THEIR CHECKS.

WE ARE OFF TO A GREAT START! IF YOU HAVEN'T RESPONDED, PLEASE CONSIDER DOING SO.

**Checks may be mailed to:  
Ladies of Charity-Milwaukee  
PO Box 472  
Thiensville, WI 53092**

You may also make your donation on-line at [locmilwaukee.org](http://locmilwaukee.org).  
Access the “Donations/Dues” button at the top of the page.

*Its is through your generosity that we are able to provide much needed clothing to the children we serve.*

# EVENT NEWS

## Opening Mass and Breakfast

Members and guests joyfully gathered for Mass with celebrant Father Mike Bertram at St. Francis of Assisi Church on Saturday morning, September 24th (3 days before St. Vincent de Paul's feast day). The new parish community center served as a beautiful venue for the breakfast. With its high ceilings and multiple large windows, coupled with seasonal decorations of mums and pumpkins, the room was a delightful space to be in. Our spiritual moderator Cathy Laska inspired us with a "Prayer for the Beginning of Autumn". The famous Larry's Market delivered an assortment of delicious quiches, fresh fruit, bagels, and croissants. A high point of the program was a testimonial given by Gail Proite Adams who shared her thoughts about how Ladies of Charity has impacted her life. Her words were both inspirational and passionate. Father Mike provided another high point by sharing his knowledge about the long history of the location we were on—a place where one time a parish school existed and in the late 1960s the site of the first demonstration for civil rights in Milwaukee. The group was energized by being together to pray and celebrate our 65th year as the Milwaukee Ladies of Charity.

— Mary Johnson



## Member Testimonial

The following words are from the testimonial given by Gail Proite Adams at the September Opening Mass and Breakfast.

*For me, being a Lady of Charity means being part of a prayerful, faith-filled group of women. I am so moved spiritually and emotionally each time we attend mass together, singing and praying as a unit. I love that we start and end our meetings with prayer. I love that we can reach out to the membership when prayers are needed and I know prayer warriors are on it. I love hearing the stories of St. Vincent de Paul, Louise Marillac, and Elizabeth Ann Seton. I have come to realize that they are our people. They are a reminder that we are part of something that is over 500 years old. We are part of a worldwide group of women of faith and service. It's our faith and service that has brought us together. It's our shared faith and our shared mission to serve the poor that has become so inspiring and important to me.*

Please see the LOC website for the complete copy of Gail's words.

## A FEW THOUGHTS

Through our commitment and mission as Ladies of Charity, we directly witness the impact of poverty on the lives of others. Several poignant examples of this have occurred since we opened our door this year. On a very warm August day, a man stopped and asked if we had “just anything to eat.” We were able to give him some bottles of water and information about meal sites, and one volunteer gave him money. All of us there were very touched by this encounter. Another morning, a young mother of three small children came into the Clothing Center as volunteers were preparing for the school year. She was living in her car and did not know what to do. Yes, we could offer her clothing and volunteers called agencies that provide housing, but to no avail. Most recently, a man came by just as we had left the Clothing Center. He was looking for blankets for his family and had been to all the sites we suggested as resources. In each of these situations we could not “fix” the problems and felt helpless in the face of them. We carry those moments in our hearts and offer our prayers. We are thankful to be privileged to offer clothing to children in need. The words of St. Vincent de Paul come to mind. *You will soon learn that charity is a heavy burden to carry—heavier than the kettle of soup and the basket of bread. But you must keep your gentleness and your smile. It is not enough to give soup and bread. This the rich can do. You are the servants of the poor... the poor are your masters—terribly sensitive and exacting, as you will see. It is because of your love and only your love that the poor will forgive you the bread you give to them.* Thank you for the love you give as Ladies of Charity through your commitment and prayers.



## A Special Donation

This past summer, Sandra S, a woman from Jacksonville, FL contacted us through the LOC website, inquiring whether we could use some hand-knit children's sweaters her mother-in-law had made for her children. These are words from the note she sent along.

*I've been cleaning cupboards, closets, and the cedar chest, which is why it's time to deal with memories. My mother-in-law spent hours knitting and sewing for her kids and her beloved grandchildren. I thought quite a while about what to do with her "creations of love". I am certain that she would be so happy to know these sweaters will continue to cover little children with her love. God Bless You All.*



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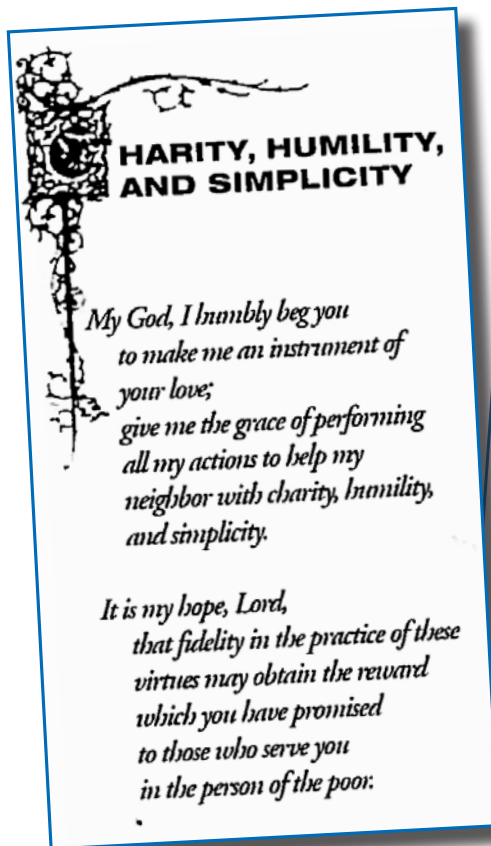
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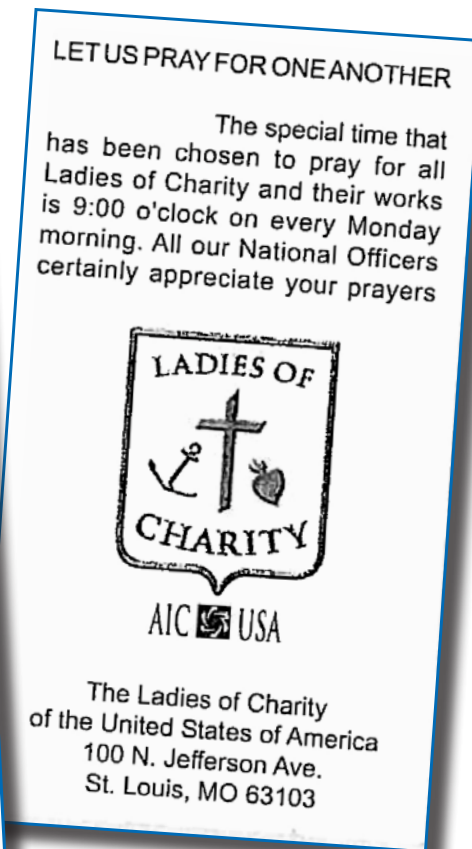
## Cathy Liska Reflection

### Vincentian Tidbits

In this issue, we'll encounter yet another connection to St. Vincent de Paul, Jeanne-Antide Thouret, or St. Joan Antida, as we know her in the US. Born in 18th C. France, the fifth of eight children, she became responsible for maintaining the family household due to the death of her mother. Six years later she entered the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, serving the poor, and fled to Switzerland during the French Revolution, where she cared for the sick. Upon her return to France, she established a school, dispensary, and soup kitchen for the poor. She encountered many challenges with the church hierarchy in establishing the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity France, a branch that remains vibrant and worldwide today on four continents. In 1932, the sisters came to the US to help immigrant families in Milwaukee, where they continue to operate St. Joan Antida High School to this day.



*"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