

CHARITY CHAT

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

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

November 2023

Important Dates

Sunday November 19, 2023
2023 World Day of the Poor

Saturday December 2, 2023
Christmas Luncheon
Wisconsin Country Club

Tuesday January 16, 2024
6:00 PM
LOC Board Meeting
Location TBD
General Membership Welcome

Tuesday April 16, 2024
6:00 PM
LOC Board Meeting
Location TBD
General Membership Welcome

Spring 2024
Lenten Evening of Reflection



Presidents' Message

At this contemplative time of year, we would like to reflect on several thoughts in our last Presidents' Message to you. Before long, you will see a new face in this corner, as Marlene Kollmeyer assumes the presidency of Milwaukee LOC in January. Yea, Marlene!

It has been our privilege to serve these past two years and witness the astonishing commitment and service of our members in providing clothing to Milwaukee school children. There are so many essential components in carrying out this mission: gathering, purchasing, and preparing clothing for the children; maintaining and organizing inventory and keeping an

orderly Clothing Center; communicating our mission to area schools; meeting with the families we serve; financially supporting our mission through the generous contributions of members and others who donate money and clothing; and sustaining our endeavors through the development of a strong underlying organizational framework. We are incredibly thankful for all these gifts.

A special joy this fall has been the creation of the much-needed attached garage space at the Clothing Center for inventory management and storage. A particular thanks to Paulette Pecard and Mary Roets for their hard work in spearheading and staffing this initiative, and to Father Michael Bertram and St. Francis Parish for their financial backing of the project. It is truly an amazing space!

We bid a fond farewell to Father Mike as he steps down as pastor of St. Francis and wish him the best as he continues in his role as Director of Capuchin Services. He has been an ardent supporter of LOC and a gift through his liturgies with us for many years. We welcome Father Francisco Javier Rodriquez as the new pastor and look forward to working with him. We were privileged to have Father Javier celebrate our recent Opening Mass.

We have some exciting plans in development for parish outreach under the leadership of Jude Schubert and for an enhanced emphasis on prayer and liturgy in the coming year. Stay tuned!

Please enjoy reading about the activities and plans for our Milwaukee Ladies of Charity in the pages that follow. Our best to each of you,

Mary and Susan



Mary Roets and Susan Westlake

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

Please welcome and embrace our newest members who were installed May 16, 2023 at the Holy Family Chapel: Regina Berger, Mary Mulcahy, Mary Nold-Klett, Sarah Pandl, Therese Pandl, Sue Seewald, and Peggy Young. We are so blessed with each new member. Remember, too, as you talk with friends new and old, that we are always looking for new members to share our mission to help those in need. The 2023 Membership Directory was recently mailed to members. Please be sure to notify Annette O'Brien (annetteobwfb@gmail.com) of any changes in your contact information.

– Kathleen Valusek



DONOR HIGHLIGHTS

St. Francis Parish donated \$2,058 from a second collection held for us.

St. Monica Parish donated \$1,000 from an anonymous donor.

The Lumen Christi Works of Mercy Grant Committee awarded us \$6,000.

The Knights of Columbus of Lumen Christi purchased 12 cartons of coats for us.

PARISH OUTREACH

At the October Board meeting, Jude Schubert presented a comprehensive plan for reaching out to parishes to promote awareness of our mission, elicit support (prayers, advocacy, and donations), and “plant seeds” to attract potential members. Our membership comes from 22 area parishes, with 75% from 5 of those. Jude suggested we ask them “What do you think we can do for/at your parish?” Additionally, there are 8 parishes within a 5-mile radius of the Clothing Center to which we might reach out. Jude is seeking other LOC to join this exciting initiative. Let us know if this is something that catches fire with you.

Be sure that you are not depriving your poor of anything. Always look to their needs so that you can give them the best you have, because it belongs to them.

– St. Louise de Marillac

ANNUAL FUND

The 2023 Annual Fund letters will be going out shortly inviting all members and non-members to contribute to the Milwaukee Ladies of Charity. The number of children we have served so far this year is the highest we have seen since Covid. We have been blessed with many wonderful clothing donations but find we must purchase a growing number of items at increased costs due to inflation. It is our goal to ensure that every child receives an adequate school wardrobe. It is very difficult to tell a parent that we don't have everything

for their child. Your generous donations allow us to meet our goal. Every dollar we receive makes a difference. **We ask that you prayerfully consider a donation to Ladies of Charity.** We appreciate all that our members and other supporters do for us and thank you in advance for your donation. God's blessings to you and your families as we enter the season of Thanksgiving. We are so thankful for you!

– Paulette Pecard

MISSION OUTREACH

WOMEN'S CARE CENTER

Milwaukee has two Women's Care Centers, one on Farwell Avenue, one on Mitchell Street, and a third located in Madison. Originally founded on the University of Notre Dame campus, currently there are a total of 34 centers in the US. Their mission is to provide assistance, health/education, and totally free services to women wishing to choose life for their babies. Beth and Cathy volunteer weekly to answer phones, provide

diaper restocking, assemble pregnancy kits, restock clothing, and provide other services as needed. Begun in Milwaukee in 2011, the Center continues to grow and serve clients from the metropolitan area in a welcoming, healthy, positive, and nonjudgmental environment.

– Beth Boemer and Cathy Liska

RISING STARS TUTORING

Claire Wycklendt (Messmer) and Lillian Mace (St. Agnes in Butler) serve as tutors. Additional tutors are always appreciated. Hours are now limited to times when non-core subjects are being taught, typically late morning or the last 90 minutes of school.

– Claire Wycklendt

CAPUCHIN WALK FOR THE HUNGRY

We were pretty in pink this year as 15 LOC joined 58 other teams for the walk and weekend admission to Polish Fest. Over \$46,000 was raised, with our team contributing \$640 of the total. Please consider joining us next year for this fun event.

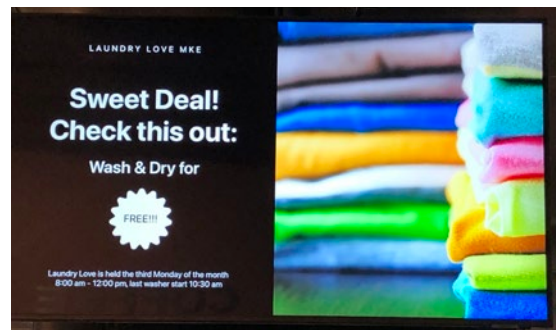
– Adele Eklund



LAUNDRY LOVE

A constant concern for everyone is how to make your money last throughout the month. The costs of a washing machine run from \$9.75 for a large load to \$4.25 to wash a small load. Drying those clothes is about \$3.00. Add in the laundry detergent and it totals nearly \$12/week for a small family to wash their daily clothes not including bedding or towels. That totals nearly \$50 a month.

This is where the Ladies of Charity shine. We help the clients fill their machines, supply the detergent and offer drinks and snacks to pass the time while their clothes wash. If they want our help, we fold their clean, dry clothes and put it in their new laundry bag, supplied by Laundry Love. We hope our help with this simple, common task makes their day easier, gives them dignity and stretches their income.



As St. Therese of Lisieux says, “Remember that nothing is small in the eyes of God.”

If you would like to donate healthy snacks, waters, detergent, please contact me.

– Jan Zoltan, janetzoltan@me.com

THE CLOTHING CENTER

Our Clothing Center opened with a bang. It was a busy summer of preparation in so many ways. Thanks to the guidance and persistence of Paulette and Mary, we have a newly renovated and useable attached garage. It is fresh, clean, and well organized, with shelving, bins and a comfortable workspace. Special thanks to Father Mike and the Parish for the new floor, lighting, and heater. We are so grateful.

We were blessed with a ton of donations over the summer. Thanks to the many volunteers who washed that ton of laundry, sorted, marked, and hung clothing. All of these efforts helped us to be ready when the doors opened in August. We have been busy since that day, with over 400 children clothed so far.

Our Lady of Lourdes held their annual socks and underwear drive, the Women's Club of Wisconsin purchased white socks and collected clothing for us, (thanks to Holly Ryan for spearheading the drive), a UWM dorm collected jeans from students checking out for the summer, and the Knights of Columbus at Lumen Christi parish purchased 12 cartons of new coats. We are so very blessed.

Of course, we have continued needs: long-sleeve tee shirts for boys and girls, boys pants, sweat pants in boys larger sizes. Keep that in mind as you talk with your neighbors and family. And, if you have any spare time, volunteers for the Clothing Center are very welcome.

Thanks for all your support,

– Gail Proite Adams



A special thank you goes to Sally Lautmann for all her efforts in fine-tuning and distributing voucher packets to Milwaukee Public Schools, several Charter schools, United Community Center Schools, plus others. Sally also will be meeting with Milwaukee Archdiocesan staff. Thank you also to all who helped this summer to contact Milwaukee school social work staff. Calls were made to more than 125 social workers! Our increased numbers this fall reflect those efforts. Way to go!

THE CLOTHING CENTER



OPENING MASS AND BREAKFAST - ONE OF THE BEST!



The 2023 Opening Mass and Breakfast, originally scheduled for Saturday, September 16 was unexpectedly delayed due to COVID concerns. The planning committee of Mary Johnson, Marlene Kollmeyer, Judy Moran, and Paulette Pecard worked with Fr. Mike Bertram's capable administrative assistant, Stephanie Sprewer to come up with a date that worked out (Saturday, October 21), finally!

Fr. Javier, a native of Puerto Rico, educated in the Vincentian tradition, and St Francis Associate Pastor, presided at Mass and gave a very thought-provoking homily about how Ladies of Charity are the hands and feet of Christ. A group photo was taken with Fr. Javier prior to our breakfast and is expected to be featured in the next St. Francis bulletin. Be sure to look for it on line. Larry's Market provided a plentiful assortment of delicious quiches, fruit bowl, and breakfast treats for all to enjoy.

The highlight of the morning was a presentation by Anne Haines, executive director of the Milwaukee St. Bahkita Catholic Worker House. She shared her journey as a follower of Christ and how his Sermon on the Mount teachings led her to open the house, named after the patron saint of human trafficking and slavery. Anne told the heart-wrenching story of Josephine Bahkita, a Sudanese, sold into slavery at the age of seven and suffered brutality for 12 years. She later lived with the Canossian Sisters in Venice, Italy and joined their order.

The Bahkita residence provides a loving home for women who are survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Anne, the mother of 6 grown children, lives at the residence striving to live a life of poverty and solidarity with the women she serves. Anne is inspired by the life of Dorothy Day and told us the intimate story of what led her to choose this way of life. She also talked about the nine pillars of the Catholic Worker Movement that are the foundation for the Bahkita house



ministry. Anne is the recipient of multiple awards including the 2022 Woman of Faith Award and the recently announced 2023 Vatican II Award. To learn more about Anne and the Catholic Worker House organization, visit www.bahkithouse.org.

Heads Up! Christmas Luncheon December 2nd at the Wisconsin Country Club

2023 LCUSA ASSEMBLY REFLECTIONS

The Assembly gave me valuable insights, inspiration, and a renewed sense of purpose. The theme “We Choose Love” was carried through every presentation and event. Featured topics included compassion, human trafficking, domestic violence, and the power of prayer. I left with a wealth of knowledge, new and deepening friendships, and a greater appreciation for being a Lady of Charity.

– Mary Roets

This was my first but hopefully not last Assembly. I found it powerful, moving, and very significant in reconnecting me spiritually and prayerfully with my faith. The experience further enhanced my appreciation for the Ladies of Charity and for its importance in my life. And, it was a lot of fun, too!

– Susan Westlake



Father Richard Gielow, Vincentian Spiritual Advisor to LCUSA for three decades, led a powerful pre-Assembly Morning of Reflection on the value and importance of prayer entitled “A Lady of Charity is a Lady of Prayer”. An excursion to Niagara Falls followed. The day was a beautiful kickoff to the Assembly and a bonus opportunity to gather and socialize with both new and familiar faces.

– Cathy Liska

The Buffalo Assembly was my fifth and in each it has been very evident that we are a part of a prayerful group of women of action. Each of our sister LOC are dedicated to fighting poverty in their own chapter in a variety of ways. Worship and prayer are pivotal: “A Lady of Charity is a Lady of Prayer”. Praying with a group of women all dedicated to service is uplifting.

– Gail Proite Adams

This was my first post-pandemic Assembly and it was everything I needed it to be. The speakers were as always stellar. They made me laugh and cry and remember why I am a Lady of Charity. I came away with a renewed commitment to our organization, a refreshed heart, and a deeper appreciation for the sisterhood I have come to cherish. Give some thought to attending in the future. You won't be disappointed.

– Cindy Patrick

In Memoriam

Please remember in your prayers deceased LOC Jean Larsen who died October 13th. Jean was a LOC since 2008 and a devoted prayer warrior. Please remember also Joseph Grundle, beloved husband of Joyce Grundle, who died October 25th.



Officers

Presidents

Mary Roets
maryroets@gmail.com 414-332-3955

Susan Westlake
swestlake2321@att.net 414-502-6268

Vice-President

Marlene Kollmeyer
marlenekollmeyer@sbcglobal.net 414-628-6791

Treasurer

Jill Ecklund
jecklund@kmcstampings.com 414-828-9637

Recording Secretary

Annette O'Brien
annetteobwfb@gmail.com 414-962-0505

Corresponding Secretary

Ali Faber
cfaber@wi.rr.com 414-559-4773

Lay Spiritual Moderator

Cathy Liska
csliska1343@gmail.com 414-688-4455

Clothing Center

Beth Boemer
bethboemer@gmail.com 414-840-4565

Sally Lautmann
sally.lautmann@gmail.com 414-526-2574

Cathy Liska
csliska1343@gmail.com 414-688-4455

Gail Proite Adams
GailandBill@hotmail.com 414-331-2391

Francie Shea
fshea@wi.rr.com 414-962-5119

Membership

Kathleen Valusek
kvalusix@gmail.com

Charity Chat Staff

Jane Beyer
jane.beyer@yahoo.com 608-692-4539

Cathy Seelman
Caffy911@yahoo.com 414-062-6514

Susan Westlake
swestlake2321@att.net 414-502-6268

Councilors (Past Presidents)

Cathy Onopa
conopa@icloud.com 414-507-0261

Paulette Pecard
ppecard1@wi.rr.com 414-531-3252

Facebook: Ladies of Charity Milwaukee

Website: www.LOCMilwaukee.org

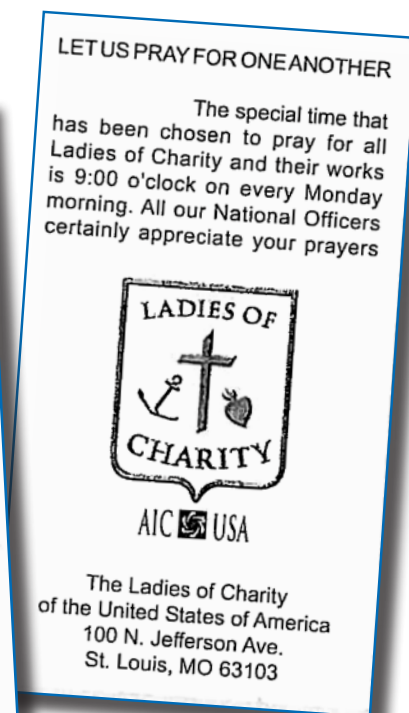
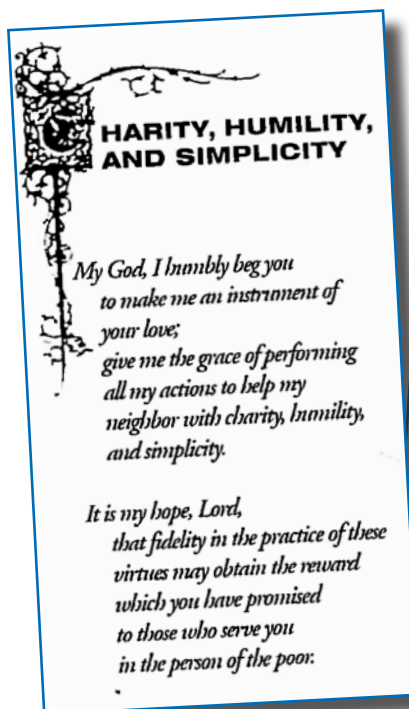
CATHY LISKA REFLECTION

Vincentian Tidbits

Below are a number of key events in the history of Ladies of Charity.

- 1617-1625 Vincent founds the first Confraternity of Charity, with purpose of service to the poor.
- 1629 Louise de Marillac organizes charities in Paris and surrounding countryside.
- 1633 The Daughters of Charity are founded in France.
- 1809 Elizabeth Ann Seton, foundress of The Sisters of Charity of St. Joseph in Maryland, adopts the rules of the French DOC.
- 1857 Catherine Hawkins establishes the first LOC in the US.
- 1921 Marie Hawkins, daughter of Catherine, organizes the first meeting of associations at Marillac Seminary in St. Louis
- 1957 350 LOC from 22 associations, 20 priests and 50 DOC form a national organization and the Milwaukee LOC is founded.
- 2017 400-year anniversary of LOC is held in Chatillon, France, and Milwaukee LOC celebrate 60 years.

We have so much for which to be grateful: the many who paved the way for the association and its continued volunteer work today.



*"To limit your desires and your hopes is to misunderstand God's infinite goodness."
— St. Therese of Lisleux "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