

CHARITY CHAT

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

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

January 2021

Important Dates

February 1, 2021
Membership Renewal Drive Starts

March, 2021
Evening of Lenten Reflection

(In person event will not be held due to COVID virus)

April 20, 2021
at 6:30 PM
LOC Board Meeting
Zoom Meeting

May, 2021
LOC New Member Installation
(In person event will not be held due to COVID virus)

June, 2021
Capuchin Walk for the Hungry
Expecting Virtual Walk – details are pending

July 20, 2021 at 6:30 PM
LOC Board Meeting
Zoom Meeting

August 28 and 29, 2021
LCUSA
National Assembly
Crowne Plaza Knoxville
Knoxville, TN

September, 2021
Fall Opening Breakfast
Details Pending

October 19, 2021
at 6:30 PM
LOC Board Meeting
Details Pending

December, 2021
Christmas Gathering
Details Pending

Presidents' Message

We would have never guessed that we'd still be dealing with the COVID pandemic at this time. Although the vaccine is certainly providing some hope for an end, it looks like the precautions will continue for much of this upcoming year. Since this includes social distancing, we are anticipating that many of our in-person events will not be held. We certainly miss seeing all of our members and regret not being able to come together.

This has certainly been an unusual year and our duties as Presidents have been very different. It was suggested by our Vice-Presidents, Mary Roets and Susan Westlake, that we continue to serve as Presidents for another year and we were pleased to accept.

Although we have had many challenges, we are excited to report that a team of our members pulled together to work out a solution that has allowed us to continue our ministry in a different way. We are so pleased that the MPS social workers have helped us work out a new plan so that we can continue to provide clothing to the Milwaukee children in-need while minimizing the COVID risk to our members and the families we serve. A very special thank you to the Clothing Center team for their patience, perseverance and hard work in making this happen!

As with our events, some of the outside programs we support have also been affected by the pandemic. Laundry Love has been closed and Rising Stars Tutoring Program continues to provide some tutoring but not in person or on site.

We have taken the opportunity to work on other tasks, one of which has been to obtain an email address for our organization. This account allows us to more easily respond to inquiries such as those generated by our web page. We can also provide outgoing emails from an organization account rather than an individual member's email. This new email address is info@locmilwaukee.org.

We look forward to using our time this year to further organize, plan and consider our vision for the future. We will work hard on developing some virtual opportunities for our members to attend. Another area of focus will be recruitment for open and new positions. Joining one of our committees is a great opportunity to work with fellow members. Please prayerfully consider helping Ladies of Charity. Additional details on open positions can be found in the separate article in this publication.

God's blessing to all of you. We pray you all remain healthy and safe!

– Paulette Pecard and Cathy Onopa



Paulette and Cathy



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Find something you can do
to help on page 4

UPDATES

Membership News

We will begin our 2021 Membership Renewal Drive in February. Even with the continued closing of the schools, we are pleased to report that we have been able to continue to provide clothing to the children. We have, however, had to cancel most of the member events that we typically hold. We will work hard to provide virtual opportunities for participation in the upcoming year so members can feel more engaged in the Ladies of Charity. We do plan on developing a membership directory this year that we hope you will find beneficial.

A note of thanks to Katie Kasper. She has handled our membership data over the last few years but has had to step back

due to family commitments. Katie also developed our on-line membership form. Katie did a fantastic job and we hope she will be able to join us again in the future! We are so blessed that Annette O'Brien has stepped forward to handle these responsibilities. She is taking this on in addition to her role as Recording Secretary. Thank you, Annette! We hope everyone will take this opportunity to renew their membership. Thank you for your past membership and support. We look forward to your being part of this wonderful group of dedicated and generous ladies who accomplish so much for the Milwaukee children in-need.

Annual Fund

Our Annual Fund Appeal was conducted in early December this year. In spite of the economic downturn caused by the COVID pandemic, we had a large number of members respond. Thank you to all the donors for their contributions. We are so blessed to have such generous donors!



Donations

Bombas continues to provide socks to the Ladies of Charity with the "Giving Back" program whereby they donate one pair of socks for every pair of socks they sell. We received 2500 pair of socks in 2019 and 3000 pairs for our store in 2020. We have received information from the Bombas Giving Team to expect an email in early February to complete our request for 2021 donation allocations. It's wonderful to receive these socks to add to our distribution!! We thank Bombas for helping us in our ministry!

We received over 200 coats and jackets for children from Catholic Charities!! Coats were being donated to the Salvatorians from Lands End but they were unable to ship these coats overseas at

this time. Anne Haines, who works in Urban Ministry for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, was our advocate, letting Catholic Charities know that Ladies of Charity Milwaukee could distribute these coats from our store. A special thanks to Adams Industries for picking up the large boxes of coats, bringing them to their plant where our volunteers could sort and organize them!

We also put out a request to our members for winter gloves and we received over 100 pairs of gloves!!! Thank you for your help with this donation!

Gift for Noah

Noah, owner of Shorewood Press, supported our Charity Chat newsletter for the past six years. He has sold his business and retired. This John Derian paperweight was our gift to him.

Happy Retirement Wishes!



Memorial Cards

Just a reminder that Ladies of Charity memorial cards may be used to honor an individual or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Cathy Onopa (conopa@icloud.com) to obtain memorial cards. Send the completed memorial card to the family and the check to Cathy in the envelope provided. The monies donated are used in our ministry and the name of the individuals are added to the book containing names of those remembered since January of 2007. The book is placed on the altar when we gather for Mass. Any questions, please contact Cathy.

LOC Clothing Center

The Clothing Center has faced the challenges of living in a Covid world. We had been up and running, shut down for a while, and now are back up and running. We have had to make adjustments in the way we fulfill voucher requests. As our clients are not able to come into the store at this time, the MPS social workers take requests and forward them electronically to Sally Lautmann. Our volunteers fill the orders and bag them. We have teams coming in a couple days of the week to fill orders, sort, label and hang donations. MPS social worker aides come in on Thursday mornings to pick up the clothing orders and personally deliver the clothing to each client's home. It has been a bigger challenge trying to fill the orders with limited information about each child. We have worked to revise the voucher to get the most accurate information about each child.



Once again, our members, their families and friends have stepped up and answered the call for clothing donations. We have received a bounty of clothing and our racks look amazing. While our client numbers are down, we know that as things open up in a post Covid world we will be ready.

The community has continued to generously support our mission. The Knights of Columbus from Lumen Christi has once again supplied us with many boxes of new jackets. St. Monica's, St. Robert's, Lincoln Elementary School - Port Washington and Our Lady of Good Hope also continued to support us with Christmas Giving Trees.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish could not hold an underwear drive but they sent us a cash donation. We have been blessed once again to receive a generous donation of 5000+ pairs of socks from Bombas. Thank you, Cathy Onopa, for arranging this donation. Once again, Cathy Onopa's daughter, Carolyn and her husband Joe, have run a clothing drive for us at their yearly basketball camp, The Chapman Academy. We are so grateful for their efforts. It truly takes a village.

The Clothing Center has done some updating this fall. To maximize our need for space, we were able to purchase new double decker racks that even shorter volunteers can reach. Sally Lautmann and family headed up the design and assembly of the new racks.



Also, special thanks to Presidents Paulette and Cathy O. for their leadership in helping us meet our mission to serve students under these new challenges. Since August, we have met regularly via Zoom to work on our new procedures and discuss adaptations and scheduling.

Thanks to our wonderful team of masked volunteers who have faithfully shown up, worked with our new procedures and continue to fill orders and stock the racks.

Please keep those donations coming.

– Gail Proite Adams – Sally Lautmann – Sharon Pircon – Francie Shea

P.S.

The Covid Crisis has brought mixed blessings to the Clothing Center. Unfortunately, we are not able to interact and personally support the families that usually visit us each week, as we now deliver clothing in a 'touchless' fashion. However, we are delighted that we've been able to develop a plan to keep meeting the needs of these families. A new blessing is the direct email interaction with MPS social workers. As they complete and submit vouchers for their clients, they always include a heartfelt message of "Thanks". They also deserve a big Thank You! If there's ever a doubt that our work fills a need, we think these messages say it all!!

– Sally Lautmann

Little Girl Dresses

Bernadette Hoeller, a long time member of Ladies of Charity, makes little girl dresses for the non-profit, Little Dresses for Africa. They are headquartered in Rockwood, MI and ship to 87 different countries. Bernadette has made more than 1000 dresses and continues to do so – and she is soon to be 95! Inspiring!



Capuchin Walk

As has been our custom for the past several years, our Ladies of Charity organization has participated in the Capuchin Walk for the Hungry. With the pandemic, there were some definite changes that took place but, with God's help and grace, this event raised more money than last year. The Walk is now held during Polish Fest, which was cancelled due to Covid-19; however, like many other things in our lives, the walk went VIRTUAL this year. We had a team of 26 Ladies of Charity and family members participate virtually. We were able to walk in our neighborhoods, parks or whenever it was convenient for us the weekend of July 17-19.

In all, 52 teams participated in this year's event. 1,538 people registered or made monetary gifts to support this event. To see pictures of this year's event, go to the following website: flickr.com/photos/the_capuchins; then go to ALBUMS and click on 'CapWalk2020'.

Thank you to all our team members this year. No matter how this event will take place in the future, please consider joining us in 2021. We would love to have you join our Ladies of Charity team!

– Adele Castillo Eklund

Postage Stamps

Did you know that your cancelled postage stamps are valuable? For decades, our organization has collected cancelled stamps for the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi. The retired sisters collect cancelled stamps and sell them to collectors around the world. In the last few years, the monies collected have been added toward their Capital Campaign for the construction of a new safer, handicapped-accessible Mother House on Lake Drive.

To participate in this ministry, just cut out your cancelled stamps and save them for me, Adele Eklund, and I will deliver them. Feel free to drop them off at my home or call me and I can arrange to pick them up at your convenience. The Sisters are very appreciative of this ministry and pray for us and the work we do.

– Adele Castillo Eklund
414-507-0254

Volunteers Needed

The Ladies of Charity are in need of members to volunteer in these areas:

- Vice-President for term beginning 1/1/2022. We have one volunteer willing to work with a partner!
- Charity Chat – we are looking for members to take over Charity Chat. A transition period is planned. Duties include collecting articles and photos, editing, preparing layouts and sending newsletters to members. Perfect for someone who may have desktop publishing experience but certainly not a requirement.
- Grant and Donor Relations – this is a new team we would like to form to solicit grants and donations, track donations, issue acknowledgements and handle the Annual Fund. If you have experience in fundraising or would just find this interesting, please join this group.
- Historian – this position would assist in keeping all of our past records, potential moving some of them onto electronic media and ensuring current records are maintained.
- Member Recruitment – this is a new position that would focus on identifying and contacting potential members, encouraging them to join and grow our wonderful organization.
- Photographer – looking for another individual to assist with taking photographs at our events and activities. We already have one member handling this but she would like a partner and back-up.
- Social Media – additional members needed to update and maintain the Ladies of Charity website and the Facebook page. If you love technology and have a creative nature, we need you!

Please consider helping out on these committees. This is a great opportunity to meet and work with other members. Your time commitment on these committees can be flexible to meet your individual needs and schedules. To get more information or to volunteer, please contact Paulette Pecard (ppecard1@wi.rr.com or #414-531-3252).

IN THE TIME OF COVID

"When you can't do what you do, you do what you can."

– Bon Jovi

We are fortunate that our only son, only daughter-in-law and only granddaughter live close to us in Whitefish Bay. We have not, however, been inside their house since Feb 2020, nor they ours.

Short visits are limited right now to masked, socially distanced, shivering meet-ups in our driveway. Longer visits are accomplished on zoom or FaceBook and we are so grateful for those cyber connections.

As Christmas approached so did the sobering thoughts of celebrating in isolation.

Our Christmas blessing was a (weather determined) gathering around the fire pit in our son's backyard a few days before Christmas. We had a blazing fire, a sunset clear sky, and music broadcast over iPad speakers. We had our masks, sat apart around the fire and exchanged gifts and were warmed by love of family.

We were so fortunate for that tender moment in the pandemic to know the Christmas message of light in the darkness.

– Marcia Flangan



The Covid Pandemic gave us the gift of our grandchildren!

At the virus outbreak, my daughter, her husband and their 1 year old son, Bobby, left their Chicago high-rise apartment to come live with us for awhile.

During this stay, which turned out to be 9 months, we had the

incredible experience of watching our grandson growing up before our eyes and watching Jenny's pregnancy develop. In December, we welcomed our new granddaughter, Lily. All four of them are living nearby in their own house now but we are grateful for those months of joy and laughter sharing our house with our children and grandchildren.

– Nancy Sturino



What I have learned

Learned I could be peaceful with the quiet simple life of these past months.

Learned I could treasure even more the beloved in my life, family and dear friends and golden retrievers.

Learned I could be more thankful for the riches of my life, including my fellow Ladies of Charity, good books, wine of all kinds, and desserts!

– Susan Westlake

I've called the 2020 Covid lockdown the long, long Lent. The isolation and lack of "busyness" has provided time and space for personal reflection, prayer and gratitude. Conversely, it's also provided a blessing to think outside myself, working with my fellow Ladies of Charity to find a safe way to continue our LOC work to clothe Milwaukee's children in need. It's been a very productive time!

– Sally Lautmann

IN THE TIME OF COVID *continued*

Therese Simonis is one of our young members dealing with family and work during the pandemic. Working from home as a Speech Therapist for MPS has been very strange. She has needed to send her 3-year-old, Mary Kate, to spend time with Grandma Claire so that she can work from home. Therese also deals with virtual school for K-5—all this and expecting baby number 4 at the end of January!

Jane Schieffer is living at the Milwaukee Catholic Home in Independent Living. She says that the biggest loss is contact with her family. “Nobody can hug me!” She definitely misses the personal contact. She states that she still has it good at the Catholic Home but also misses the socialization of eating with others in the dining room. It is difficult to eat her meals alone all the time.

Adele Eklund and her family have made a commitment to stay as close-to-home as possible. This has been challenging at times as she had plans to increase her volunteer work when she retired. Adele is trying to use time in more prayer and reflection as we go through this pandemic but it sometimes feels to her as if she is doing very little to help her community.

I don't think anyone was prepared for what we've experienced this last year (and hope to end that very soon). Working in healthcare, I was amazed at the resilience of our teams and our healthcare facilities learning about and responding to an unknown disease. It's the only time in my career where caring for patients might put your own life in jeopardy. But, I also never remember a time in my career either where we learned so much about a new disease, found new treatments and developed a vaccine with such lightning speed and we owe so much to all of those who made that happen.
– Patsy Haugh

The most significant impact the pandemic has had on my life is the inability to see our children and grandchildren and give them hugs. The loss of contact has created new ways to communicate with our family and friends; ZOOM sessions, multiple face-times and drive-by sightings. A positive result from the pandemic has been the improvement of my piano skills because when you have NO excuse not to practice, you IMPROVE!!
– Mary Roets

Members who passed away. May they rest in peace.

Mary Collentine passed away on January 14th, 2020 at the age of 97. Mary was the mother of 10 children, 27 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren. She was a devoted and active parishioner of St. Monica Parish and member of Ladies of Charity. Mary was in charge of membership for many years and helped to welcome many new members.

Margaret Frieske passed away October 14th 2020 at the age of 99. Marge was a long-time parishioner of Holy Family Parish and a nurse at St. Mary's Hospital. She “recruited” many friends to join Ladies of Charity Milwaukee, including her friend, Jane Schieffer who became our President for 8 years in the 1980's.

Barbara Spalda entered Eternal Life on January 6, 2021 at the age of 83. She was a longtime member of SS. Peter and Paul Parish. Barb was active in service ministries including St. Ben's Meal Program and Ladies of Charity. She worked for many years on our “No Party Party” which is now our Annual Fund, raising money for our organization.

Mary Therese Guzniczak who grew up in St. Robert Parish, passed away on January 11, 2021 at the age of 57. Mary Therese was an active member of Ladies of Charity over the years, serving as our treasurer for a time.

Officers

Presidents

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

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

Vice-Presidents

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

Susan Westlake
swestlake2321@att.net 262-518-0034

Treasurer

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

Recording Secretary

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

Corresponding Secretary

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

Lay Spiritual Moderator

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

Clothing Center

Gail Proite-Adams
GailandBill@hotmail.com 414-352-7377

Sharon Pircon
rpircon@wi.rr.com 414-962-1831

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

Membership

Anne Rice
abrice1005@gmail.com 414-737-2498

Tracy Hobbs
tdhobbs4@gmail.com 262-238-8986

Charity Chat Staff

Nancy Sturino –Co-Chair
nmsturino@gmail.com

Pat Matusiak –Co-Chair
matusiak@sbcglobal.net

Cathy Seelman
caffy911@yahoo.com

Peggy Cavanaugh
peggymarie1201@hotmail.com

Councilors (Past Presidents)

Claire Wycklendt
claire.wycklendt@gmail.com 414-788-1190

Mary Johnson
marykj2423@icloud.com 414-332-2475

Facebook: Ladies of Charity Milwaukee

Website: <https://locmilwaukee.com>

Email: info@locmilwaukee.org

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 472
Thiensville, WI 53092



Cathy Liska Reflection

The Right Reverend Richard Bott is the current Moderator of the United Church of Canada. He composed the following inspirational and heartwarming mask prayer, with permission to share, asking only that it be attributed to him.

It is a lovely way to perceive “a mask” in a different way. In addition, it may be less challenging to wear holding these thoughts in our hearts.

A Prayer as I Put on My Mask

Creator,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
in the wearing of this cloth –
let it be “an outward sign
of an inward grace” –
a tangible and visible way
of living love for my neighbors,
as I love myself.

Christ Jesus
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
in the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but also with my actions.

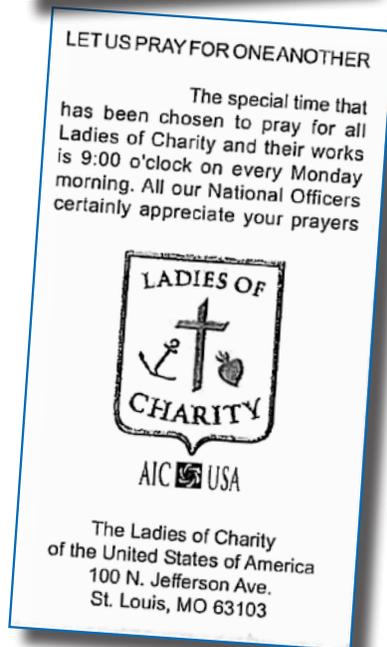
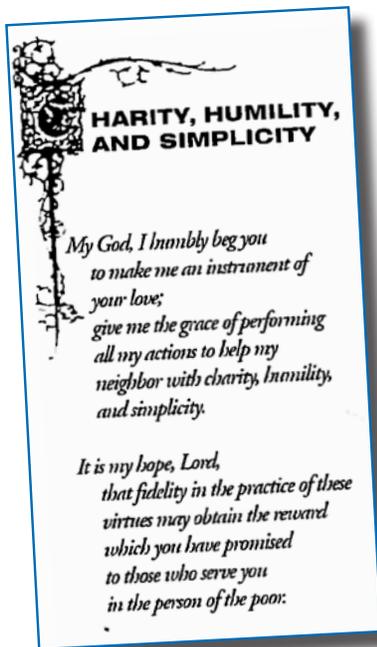
Holy Spirit,
as the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully –
and full of care –
to all those I meet.
May this simple piece of cloth
be shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds,
be filled with your love.

In your Name
and in that love,
I pray.

May it be so.
May it be so.

*Rev. Dr. Richard Bott
Moderator of the
United Church of Canada*

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



*“To limit your desires and your hopes is to misunderstand God’s infinite goodness.”
– St. Therese of Lisieux “The Little Flower”*