

CHARITY CHAT

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

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

October 2021

Important Dates

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

Cathy Onopa's Residence
1109 Waterstone Drive
Grafton, WI
General Membership Welcome

December 4, 2021 at 11:00 AM Christmas Luncheon

University Club

January 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM LOC Board Meeting

Mary Roets Residence
5554 N. Diversey Blvd.
Whitefish Bay, WI
General Membership Welcome

February 1, 2022 Membership Renewal Drive Begins

March, 2022 Lenten Evening of Reflection

Details Pending

April 19, 2022 at 6:30 PM LOC Board Meeting

Details Pending

May, 2022 New Member Installation

Details Pending

June, 2022 Capuchin Walk for the Hungry

Information not yet available

July 19, 2022 at 6:30 PM LOC Board Meeting

Details Pending

August 25 - 28, 2022 LCUSA National Assembly 2022

Crowne Plaza, Knoxville, TN

September, 2022 Fall Opening Breakfast

Details Pending

October 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM LOC Board Meeting

Details Pending

December, 2022 Christmas Event

Details Pending

Presidents' Message

The end of this calendar year will complete our term as Co-Presidents of the Ladies of Charity. We are so pleased to have been able to work with such a wonderful group of ladies. The pandemic certainly presented some challenges but our members responded so well. We have truly been amazed at the dedication of our volunteers at the Clothing Center who continued their mission during the COVID pandemic and responded with determination, willingness to make changes and creatively work out a solution so we could continue our work.

While we missed the personal interactions with our members, the pandemic resulted in an increased knowledge and reliance on technology as we held many zoom meetings, shared Lenten Reflections on our website and increased our use of email to communicate with our members. It also gave us an opportunity to organize by saving many of our pictures, documents and history electronically, making it easier for future leaders.

We are happy to introduce and welcome our upcoming officers. Susan Westlake and Mary Roets will assume the role of Co-Presidents. Mary, a retired nurse, has been a member of LOC since 2006 and has volunteered on numerous committees and held many positions within LOC. Currently she is our Corresponding Secretary. Mary often volunteers her time at the Clothing Center as well. She is always willing to assist anytime it is needed.

Susan Westlake is also a retired nurse and has been a member of LOC since 2014. Susan has volunteered at the Clothing Center and has handled our September Opening Breakfast over the last few years. In addition to assuming the role of Co-President, Susan has also volunteered to lead the efforts of our Charity Chat publication.

Jude Schubert and Marlene Kollmeyer will assume the role of Co-Vice-Presidents. Jude joined LOC in 2012 and Marlene in 2016. Both Marlene and Jude have extensive backgrounds in working for charitable and not-for-profit organizations and will bring a wealth of knowledge to our group.

In addition, starting January 1st, volunteers have accepted these positions:

- Ali Faber will take over as Corresponding Secretary.
- Mary Johnson will assume the new role of Events Coordinator. Mary will work with the leads of all the events and ensure that events in the upcoming year are scheduled.
- Susan Westlake will take over the lead on the Charity Chat with the assistance of Cathy Seelman.
- Paulette Pecard will continue the efforts of Social Media and Grant & Donor Relations until these positions are filled.
- Cathy Onopa, Ali Faber and Adele Eklund will work together as co-historians.

Our thanks to Nancy Sturino and Pat Matusiak for their wonderful work over the years on the Charity Chat. As this will be their last issue, we would like to recognize their efforts in providing LOC with a publication that has been creative, informative, professional and fun. Great job!

We are truly blessed to have the talent, dedication and willingness to volunteer from so many members in our group.

We look forward to seeing you again in person in the upcoming year. God's blessing to all of you and your families. Stay safe and healthy!

– Paulette Pecard and Cathy Onopa



Paulette and Cathy

Thank You!

On behalf of all of us Ladies of Charity, we thank, inadequately, Paulette and Cathy, for your three year term presidency. Under your strong and wise leadership, LOC is thriving and improving in many ways.

During the stressful pandemic, when our store was closed, your persistence made it possible to create a system to continue our work with the help of school social workers to get clothing to the children who were in need. You enabled members to meet by Zoom and upgraded our website and technology. Moving forward, LOC has a strong base to continue to spread our message using current technology.

So we cannot Thank You enough!

We also want to thank Cathy Seelman and Peggy Cavanaugh (they're sisters) for their invaluable help in producing Charity Chat under three different and wonderful presidencies. Of course, all who contributed articles based on the exceptional work of the Clothing Center and other missions as well as multiple various events have our gratitude. Cathy Liska's column has been a special addition and we thank her.

This is our last Charity Chat but it will be in good hands under a new presidency and leadership with the help of Lee at the Shorewood Press. Lee, Noah and Sam have been immensely helpful and we thank them too.

Thank You Everybody!

– Nancy Sturino and Pat Matusiak

UPDATES

Christmas Luncheon - Save the Date!

The 2021 Christmas Luncheon will be held at the downtown University Club on Saturday, December 4th from 10:30 am until 1:30 pm. Our special guest will be Father Mike Bertram, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish. He will join us for lunch and get us ready for Christmas by guiding us in an Advent reflection. Plan to attend and enjoy the company of our wonderful Ladies of Charity

and guests. Watch for your e-mailed invitation and reply promptly to secure your seat at this very special event.

– Mary Johnson

P.S. Because of the rise in COVID cases, the September Opening Breakfast was cancelled as it was felt it was not safe to get together at this time. Next Year!

Lenten Evening of Reflection

The Lenten Evening of Reflection was a virtual event this year. Paulette sent out an email asking for feedback on the event to determine its success but did not get enough of a response to make a judgment. So she looked at the number of hits on the website. The

increased website hits from December 2020 to March 2021 would indicate that we did have good interest in the Lenten Reflections program. As this is such an appreciated and well-attended event every year, we are hopeful it will be in-person next year!

New Directory

Our last Directory, from 2015, has been updated and you should have already received a copy. Thank you to all who helped update information and get it done – Annette O'Brien, Tracy Hobbs, Anne Rice as well as Mary Roets and Susan Westlake for their work to make the membership drive a successful one.

If you did not receive a Directory in the mail, please let Annette O'Brien know.

Membership Committee

Please welcome and embrace our newest Ladies of Charity members: Piera Dyer and Terri Adrian!

As of now, we do not have any new member activities or a New Member Installation scheduled due to COVID 19. We hope we can formally welcome our new members next May!

Please notify Anne Rice or Tracy Hobbs if you know of any prospective members.

Lastly, the Membership Committee would love to welcome any Ladies Of Charity members who might like to join in recruiting new members.

Thank you,

Tracy Hobbs tdhobbs4@gmail.com 414-861-0370

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

A New Role for Mary

Mary Johnson, a former LOC president and member for over 15 years, has taken on the position of LOC Special Events Coordinator. In this new role, Mary will work with other LOC volunteers by overseeing the planning of three annual events, the Fall Opening Breakfast, Christmas Luncheon, and Lenten Evening

of Reflection. She will arrange the meetings for the volunteer group and assist with organizing the various components of each event such as the date & time, invitations & RSVPs, venue & menu, speaker & program. Mary looks forward to the camaraderie that develops while having fun working with other LOC members.

Annual Fund Appeal

Our Annual Fund Appeal began the end of September. All members should have received information in the mail and via e-mail. Donations are always welcome and can be made at any time by accessing our website at www.locmilwaukee.com. We appreciate the

generosity of our members in supporting our mission and thank all of our members who donate time, talent and treasure. You make it possible to help so many children in need!

The Clothing Center Fall 2021

The Clothing Center is open for business using the adjustments we had to make last year due to Covid. While clients cannot come into the store, we are filling orders that are sent electronically from the schools. We fill and bag the orders and then they are delivered to the clients by the social worker aides from MPS. While it is not ideal, we are making the best of the circumstances. The orders are pouring in weekly. We are on track to serve over 1000 children as in the past. With this new system, we now working Monday, Wednesday and Thursday as well as the second Saturday of the month. We have also added Tuesday afternoons. Cathy Liska works with newer volunteers who are sorting, labeling and hanging clothes and filling orders as needed. This couldn't happen without the dedicated volunteers who have faithfully shown up and worked tirelessly throughout the school year and summer.

We are once again the recipient of thousands of pairs of socks from Bombas. They really do donate one pair for every pair they sell. Cathy Onopa has continued to be the contact person. Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was able to hold another sock and underwear drive for us. Last year they sent us a cash donation since they couldn't hold the drive.

The Franklin Educational Foundation held their rummage sale once again and we were invited to take whatever we wanted at the end. Mary and Guy Johnson collected a bounty of clothing for us. Cathy Liska has been working with the Lumen Christi Knights of Columbus to order more winter jackets.

Our Ladies of Charity website has brought in many clothing donations. People looking for places to donate on the internet have been directed to LOC. That's how the Franklin Foundation found us.

Our own members have continued to be very generous with much needed donations. We are moving through our inventory pretty fast since we have been so busy. This means we are always in need of clothing donations. Please continue to collect clothing and encourage your family and friends to do the same. We have been able to give our students nice, clean and stylish clothing because of the generosity of our members, the community, organizations and companies. Thank You.

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

Rising Stars Tutoring Program

This program will restart in November. Several LOC members will resume teaching at Messmer/St. Mary's grade school. Due to the disruption of education, there is an even greater need for tutoring particularly in the primary reading area. If you would like to find out more about this wonderful opportunity to help students, please contact Claire Wycklendt at claire.wycklendt@gmail.com.

Laundry Love

Laundry Love is still on hold. The committee hasn't heard from the financial supporters if they will start up again.

Laundry Love committee will keep Ladies of Charity members informed about if and when they return to operations.

– Jan Zoltan

Volunteers Needed

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

- **Charity Chat** – we are looking for additional members to work with Susan Westlake & Cathy Seelman. Help is needed in collecting articles and photos, editing, preparing layouts and sending newsletters to members. Perfect for someone who may have desktop publishing experience or someone who just loves to write or help with other activities.
- **Grant and Donor Relations** – we would like to form this new team to solicit grants and donations, track donations, issue acknowledgements and handle the Annual Fund Appeal. If you have experience in fundraising or would just find this interesting, please join this group.
- **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. Jennifer Onopa handles this currently but 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.)

Ladies of Charity Capuchin Walk

Twenty-nine of our Ladies of Charity members, family members, and friends joined the over 1,200 people who supported this year's Capuchin Virtual/Actual Walk for the Hungry. The weekend of June 10th, over 58 teams, representing 26 states, participated in this year's Walk with great results! A record amount of funding was raised to help the Capuchin community feed people at the House of Peace Emergency Food Pantry and St. Ben's Community Meal program.

The annual Walk is typically held at Polish Fest on the Summerfest grounds but due to the pandemic was once again virtual this year. Following safety guidelines, a group of 12 of us (with a guest appearance by Claire Wycklendt's newest granddaughter) met at Kletzsch Park on June 10 for a 2-mile walk. It was wonderful to see friends, gather safely, AND help raise money to feed the needy in our community.

Thank you to all who participated in this year's Walk. Hopefully, we will be able to gather next year at Polish Fest 2022.

– Adele Castillo Eklund



Photo by Al Onopa

Ladies of Charity USA

Following Vincent With Humility, Simplicity, & Charity

The 1st Virtual National Assembly of the Ladies of Charity USA, "Following Vincent with Humility, Simplicity, and Charity" was held August 27th and 28th, via Zoom technology. Members chose to participate individually or in small gatherings to pray and reflect on the core Vincentian virtues addressed by identical twin keynote speakers Reverend Richard Gielow, Congregation of the Mission (CM), and Reverend Robert Gielow, Congregation of the Mission (CM). The day began with recitation of the rosary and included the opportunity for small group discussion of the core concepts presented. *Humility*, grounded in thankfulness and prayer, must be the base of our charitable action. "A Lady of Charity remembers that the spiritual and temporal goods that she possesses are purely gifts of God". *Simplicity* allows one to turn things over to God and inspires a Lady of Charity "to act with her eyes fixed only on God". *Charity* toward others is the love of God expressed in the life of a Lady of Charity. "It is in the

love for our neighbor that we find proof of our love of God". The virtual assembly gave participants the gift of meaningful prayer and contemplation on Vincent's message to us as Ladies of Charity. Several of us accepted the kind invitation of Paulette and Cathy extended to all to gather in person at their homes and enjoyed their warm hospitality and the opportunity to be together for the assembly. Hopefully, Ladies of Charity will gather in person for next year's assembly in Knoxville.

– Susan Westlake

P.S. You have already received an e-mail regarding LCUSA's Lay Vincentian Moderator Formation program to be held virtually on November 11 and 12. If you wish to participate or want more information, you may e-mail office@ladiesofcharity.us or call the office at 816-260-3853 and leave your name and contact information.

The New Parish Center at St. Francis of Assisi

As a member of St Francis of Assisi Catholic Parish in Milwaukee, I am excited to share news about our new parish center, which has been built attached to the church and directly across from the Ladies of Charity Children's Clothing Center. The building is nearing completion and it is beautiful, especially with the cream city brick repurposed from the renovation of another area attached to the opposite end of the Church.

Ladies of Charity who have worked at the Clothing Center have no doubt witnessed the ongoing construction since groundbreaking in June 2020. And those who attended the "tea" hosted by Father Mike Bertram this past summer, were honored as the first group to tour the inside of the new building. (photo at right)

Father Mike shared a bit of history and insight into this project—and here is the nutshell version:

Originally, Capuchin Friars lived in community at the residence attached to the Church. Eventually the Friars spread out to other areas and sometime in the 1970's the parish began occupying that space for offices and meeting spaces. In recent years, the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph (the Midwest Capuchins) had to consider the decrease in Capuchin Friars and needs of the Province. A decision was made to have the Friars live at 5 community sites; the St. Francis residence would be remodeled to serve as one of these sites. Because that would require St. Francis Parish offices and meeting space be moved, the Province included the building of a parish center as part of the overall construction plan at 4th and Brown Streets in Milwaukee. While happy about a new parish center, Pastor Bertram and church leaders recognized a need for additional space for church ministries. The plan was revised with the Province to include a lower level for offices, small meeting rooms, storage, and a warming kitchen. The space would allow for valuable church and community ministries such as Religious Education (children and adults), youth ministry, AA/NA meetings, prison ministry and a tax preparation program. To accomplish this ambitious project, the Province allocated 5-6 million dollars for its residence remodeling and the parish center; the Church committed to an additional 1.5 million for the lower level of the Center.

St. Francis is not an affluent parish; it runs pretty "lean", depending on two full time employees, (one being our Pastor), and many volunteers. The fact that the parish has raised over 1 million dollars so far is pretty amazing. It is a testament to the people of the parish that we have gotten so close to our goal. We are so appreciative of the many Ladies of Charity who have already supported St. Francis parish with individual donations.

As I recently walked around the beautiful space with Father Mike, I recognized how much has been completed in a relatively short time but also realized we will continue in our fund raising into the future to make the space comfortable and useable with furniture, equipment etc. Father Mike sees the new space as not just a parish resource but as a community resource. The Ladies of Charity have added much to this growing community through the work of the Children's Clothing Center and I look forward to a time when we can meet together inside this beautiful new center in the community we can all call home.

Father Mike has created a video with some more information which you can view on the parish website at <https://www.stfrancismil.org/>.

— Jude Schubert



The St Francis of Assisi parish center— attached to the church at the south-west corner of 4th at Brown St. Cream city brick found under plaster in the original church residence was repurposed for the building facade.



The main parish center gathering space is flooded with light from large windows on two sides and from above. Depending on the seating arrangement, this space might welcome up to 200 people. The first formal gathering in the space happened recently with an R.C.I.A (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) class that commenced in October.



The warming kitchen is adjacent to the large gathering space and will allow for access to beverages, snacks or catered meals.



Nice smaller rooms on the lower level will be available for ministries and community groups — (like the Ladies of Charity!). Some will serve as parish offices.

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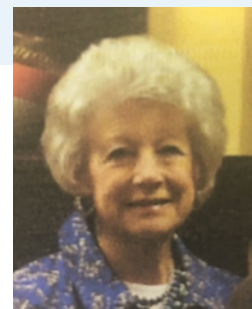
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Cathy Liska Reflection



European women in the 17th C had two alternatives: matrimony or monastery. There was no recognized form of ministry for laywomen. "For 800 years women had no public office in the Church" (SVIII, 809-810), so St. Vincent pursued the direction of promoting lay women to provide for the needs of the poor and marginalized.

Fast forward to the 21st C. BRILLIANT, a 2020 publication from the Word on Fire Institute (categorized as children's biography/intermediate), provides inspiration for this issue's reflection.

Among the 25 Catholic scientists, mathematicians and supersmart people illustrated and written about in this book, I stumbled upon the profile of Sr. Hilary Ross, Researcher and Humanitarian.

California born Mary Ross (1894-1982) became Sr. Hilary upon joining the Vincentian Daughters of Charity.

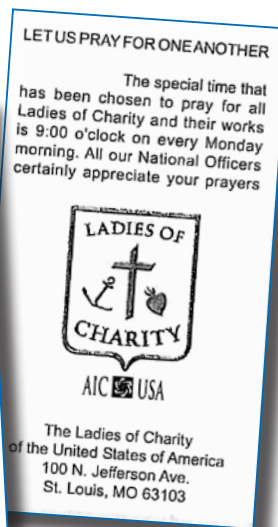
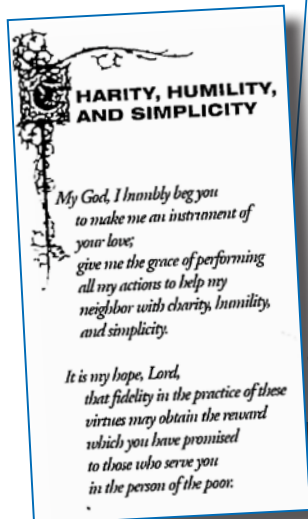
Her life's work included:

- 1) studies in medicine and pharmaceuticals at UW, Madison
- 2) three decades at a leprosarium in Carville, Louisiana, providing care and continuing research for those patient's suffering from Hansen's disease
- 3) additional studies at LSU (1937) of the disease on a chemical level
- 4) discovering along with physicians, a sulfone drug cure, using years of research and notes from work with her patients
- 5) gaining global recognition for her Hansen's Disease expertise and public education on its eradication
- 6) relocating to Japan, (as a Daughter of Charity aged mid 60's), and spending her remaining days caring for disabled children

Sister Hilary Ross was a contemporary convert who continued the work of Vincent de Paul in the 20th C., living and working in service of others. Quite obviously Sr. Hilary Ross embodied Vincent's three charisms of simplicity, humility and charity. She also represents a wonderful, dedicated, Catholic role model for young people to read about and be inspired by.

NOTE: A great read for young minds and wonderful gift idea to share Vincentian lay ministry.

In Memoriam



Geraldine Kallas, a member of Ladies of Charity since 2012, was called home to God on May 1, 2021. Gerri raised her family at St. Monica parish. In recent years, she was a member of St. Eugene parish and the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist. Gerri's Christian faith was always at work and echoed within her family.

Mary Borman, a member of LOC since 2011, was called home to God on 8/13/2021. Mary was an active member of St. Roberts and Lumen Christi parishes. Mary will always be remembered by her family and friends for putting God and family first and for her devotion to the Blessed Mother.

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"*