

CHARITY CHAT

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

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

May 2022

Important Dates

May 25, 2022 at 6:30 PM
New Member Installation

St. Monica's

June 10, 2022
Capuchin Walk for the Hungry

Lakefront and Virtual Walk

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

Westlake Residence
11453 N. Riverland Road
Mequon, WI
General Membership Welcome

August 26-27
LCUSA National Assembly

Crowne Plaza, Knoxville, TN

September 24, 2022 at 9:00 AM
Opening Mass and Breakfast

St. Francis of Assisi

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

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

Presidents' Message

Welcome Milwaukee Ladies of Charity from some different faces in this corner. We are privileged to serve in our new role as Co-Presidents and humbled to follow in the footsteps of Cathy Onopa and Paulette Pecard. This issue is the first under our new *Charity Chat* team, Jane Beyer, Cathy Seelman, and Susan Westlake. We appreciate the expertise and commitment of Pat Matusiak and Nancy Sturino, who, along with Peggy Cavanaugh and Cathy Seelman, fashioned and produced *Charity Chat* for nearly a decade, and we thank them.

Mary has been a Lady of Charity since 2006 when she was recruited by Cathy Onopa. She has served in many roles, including Corresponding Secretary, Membership and Evening of Reflection Chair, Clothing Center volunteer, and event planner. Mary is a retired nurse case manager. She and her husband Mike of 48 years enjoy their six beautiful grandchildren and are long-time members of St. Monica's Parish. Susan has been a Lady of Charity since 2014, when she was recruited by Mary Johnson and Evelyn Beyer from whom she heard many stories of the LOC. She has worked to plan and staff events and as a Clothing Center volunteer. Susan is a retired clinical nurse specialist. She and her husband Bill of 56 years are the grandparents of six and former members of St. Robert's before their move to Mequon.

As one of our first official duties, we were proud to send the 2021 Annual Report to LCUSA, Ladies of Charity of the United States of America. The report detailed the extraordinary accomplishment of clothing over 1,000 children, providing an estimated 35,000 volunteer hours, and maintaining fiscal stability, due to the generosity of so many.

These achievements happened despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. The number of volunteers and volunteer days were increased to fill the vouchers generated through the schools, with clothing delivered to families by the school social work staff. Several very large donations of clothing were processed to restock our racks and bins. Outfitting 1000 children takes an incredible amount of clothing and commitment. Although the tasks seemed daunting at times, the spirit of the Ladies of Charity has been undaunting.

Prayer grounds that spirit and our efforts. Our recent Lenten Evening of Reflection, led by Bishop Donald Hying, provided the opportunity for meaningful contemplation and participation in liturgy. We also have been touched these past months by the prayerful and loving response of our members to the loss of Ladies of Charity and family members. And, quietly and steadfastly in the background, we know our members pray for the success of our mission to help those in poverty. We are so blessed.

This spring has seen the growth of efforts to reach out to Catholic schools in our focus areas. We realize this will require fine tuning our procedures, but we have no doubt that the Milwaukee Ladies of Charity are up to the challenges ahead.

Please join us for the installation of new members on May 25th at St. Monica's at 6:30 pm. Do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of help and please keep us in your prayers.

– Mary Roets and Susan Westlake



Mary Roets and Susan Westlake



Generosity
changes everything

UPDATES

Membership News

The Membership Committee, headed by Tracy Hobbs and Anne Rice, has been busy conducting this year's drive. They are pleased to announce that our first in-person **Installation of New Members** since 2019 will be held **Wednesday, May 25th, at 6:30 PM** at the St. Monica Ministry Center. All members are invited to attend the prayer service and reception afterwards. The following women will be installed at this time: Terri Adrian, JoAnne Brown, Piera Dyer, Margaret Henderson, Judy Moran, Maureen Nichols, Duffy Onopa, Mary Presti, Mary Raspanti, Susie Scolz, and Peggy Young. Please contact Tracy or Anne if there is someone else who should be included. Also, please contact them if you know of any prospective members for Ladies of Charity. Lastly, the Membership Committee is always looking for members who would like to encourage others to become Ladies of Charity.



2022 National Assembly

The LCUSA National Assembly, 2022 Vision: Seeing Christ in the Faces of Those We Serve, will be held Friday, August 26th and Saturday, August 27th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Knoxville, TN.. “Ask any of our members who have attended prior assemblies, and you may hear stories of inspiring spiritual uplifting experiences, of ideas received from members

in other parts of the country, the fun of simply being able to refresh and relax in the company of other like-minded women.” (Mary Pat Sullivan, Regional LCUSA Rep.) Please check the LCUSA website for further information and consider attending.

Tribute to Cathy and Paulette Christmas Luncheon 2021

It is hard to know where to begin in thanking Cathy and Paulette for their incredible contribution to the Ladies of Charity for these past three years. That contribution has been to us as members and officers, but more, and most importantly, to the families and children whom Ladies of Charity serves. They have given countless behind-the-scenes hours of their time, energy, and expertise to guide and direct this enterprise and support all of us in our involvement. Thanks to them we have policies and procedures in place for the many aspects that our mission involves. Mary and I are so thankful for this as we move into our new roles. We are thankful as well for their generous offer to extend their two-year term an additional year because of COVID and the many changes that has required.

What has touched us even more than their commitment and hard work these past three years is their gracious and loving way of being, their “Generosity of Spirit”—the openness and willingness to share their gifts without the expectation of receiving anything in return. Their kindness, openness, benevolence, acceptance, hospitality—all these gifts they have freely given. We have no doubt St. Vincent de Paul holds Cathy and Paulette close to his heart as he witnesses in them the directive he gave us so many years ago to support those living in poverty.



The Clothing Center

Although the Clothing Center followed COVID protocols for a second year, the number of children we served has more than doubled from the 2020-2021 school year. As of April 1, 2022, 923 children from the Milwaukee Public Schools received clothing compared to about 400 at the same time last year. Hopefully, we will reach the 1000 mark by the time we 'close-up' shop. We are truly grateful that our ministry continues to serve school age children in need.

In order to expand our outreach to the Catholic schools in the central city, Lisa Barczyk, our Catholic school liaison, gave us a list of schools that showed interest in our ministry. We visited Notre Dame, St. Josaphat, St Anthony, Nativity Jesuit and St Thomas Aquinas Elementary School personnel to explain our mission, voucher system and procedures. We began to serve them very recently.

The wonderful, committed women participating in the Clothing Center directly and indirectly are remarkable and we thank God for their generous spirits. Women pray for our ministry, collect clothing, wash clothing, fill voucher bags of clothing, bring clothing from the various parish 'Giving Tree' initiatives, and maintain the Ladies of Charity website that is an avenue for the larger community to participate in our ministry. We have been contacted by people who heard about our ministry via our website and have welcomed donations from them. This summer, volunteers will be sorting and restocking inventory, thanks to a large donation from Team Rubicon.

We also want to extend our heartfelt thanks to MPS social workers who submit the vouchers representing families in need each week, and to social worker assistants who each week pick up and deliver the bags of clothing to these families. To the members of the Woman's Club of Wisconsin we extend a special thank you for the three separate clothing initiatives they conducted for our ministry and for the grant money they provided. Of course, the



Ladies of Charity member who co-ordinates all this is our own remarkable Sally Lautmann. Thank you, Sally.

As we make plans for the 2022-2023 school year, we hope that we will be able to open wide our Clothing Center doors so that we can interact directly with the awe-inspiring people that enter. Blessings to all and thank you.

– Francie Shea

OUR DONORS

This past year, Ladies of Charity received several large donations of clothing from organizations, including the Knights of Columbus of Lumen Christi Parish, the Woman's Club of Wisconsin, Nu Phi Zeta Fraternity, Bombas, the Crisis Intervention Institute, and Team Rubicon.

Thank you!

MISSION OUTREACH

Capuchin Walk for the Hungry

Every year the Milwaukee Capuchins organize a walk to raise money for the Capuchin Community Services at the House of Peace and St. Ben's Community Meal Program. Ladies of Charity has organized a team for many years. This year, there are several walk options. Option 1: register for the Walk that will take place during the first evening of Polish Fest, Friday, June 10th. The Walk will start on the Summerfest grounds and will proceed to Lakefront State Park across the Summerfest lagoon. In addition to a commemorative T-shirt to wear that

night, registration includes entry to Polish Fest for all 3 days of the festival. Option 2: if you feel more comfortable walking in your own neighborhood or park, you may register for a virtual Walk and receive a 2022 Walk T-shirt by mail. Option 3: if you choose to make a donation only, register on the website and a 2022 T-shirt will be mailed to you the week after the event. Information is available on the website at capuchinwalk.org.

– Adele Eklund

Ladies of Charity Stamp Collection

Over the years, LOC has served to offer support to our community and the world at large. It is with deep sadness that one of our missions has come to an end. For over 34 years, we have collected canceled stamps for the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi in St. Francis. This program has now ended with the passing of Sister Margaret Ruddy (formerly Sister Mary Sebastian), OSF, on December 29, 2021. A group of Sisters

is considering whether to continue processing stamps but for now will not be accepting any further stamp donations. Thank you for your support. Please keep the Sisters in your prayers as they mourn the loss of one of their own and continue their faithful work to help those in need.

– Adele Eklund

Rising Stars Tutoring

Rising Stars tutors continue to assist Milwaukee students at a time when the pandemic has disrupted so many children's educations. This affiliated ministry of the School Sisters of Notre Dame endeavors to strengthen reading and math skills of at-risk students in areas of urgent need. My experience tutoring two fourth-graders and one senior kindergartner at Messmer St. Mary this year has been a joy. Meeting with them individually allowed me to focus on each boy's

specific needs and have fun together too. The demand for tutors is greatest at Messmer St. Rose, Messmer St. Mary, St. Agnes and Notre Dame. Scheduling is flexible and can be designed to accommodate the tutor's availability. For more information and to sign up for next school year, go to Risingstarsmilwaukee.org.

– Claire Wycklendt

Laundry Love - Remains on Hold

In Memoriam

Please remember these deceased Ladies of Charity and their families.

Deborah Hangsterfer, age 63, passed away on March 23, 2022. She was a former LOC, the mother of three children and a member of St. Monica Parish.

Julie Peichl, age 64, passed away March 23, 2022. A member since 2018, she was a Clinical Nurse Specialist at Columbia St. Mary's, where she was a help to patients, nurses, and physicians every day.

Corinne Finn, age 79, passed away April 21, 2022. A former medical technologist, she and her husband William raised four children. Corinne was a devoted member of St. Monica's Parish and a long-time member of LOC.

If you would like to donate to LOC in honor or in memory of someone, please contact Cathy Onopa for donation envelopes. You will receive two cards. The larger one is sent by you to the family or recipient, and your check is sent to LOC in the pre-addressed envelope. We are also working to have the ability to make memorial donations on our web site.

A memorial donation is a great way to honor or memorialize a loved one and help the mission of LOC.

EVENT NEWS



Christmas Luncheon

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, our annual Christmas Luncheon was held at the University Club on Prospect Avenue in Milwaukee on Saturday, December 4, 2021. A big thank you goes to Mary Domer who, as a member of the Club, arranged the date and room with our Events Coordinator Mary Johnson. LOC members and guests were dazzled by the view of Lake Michigan from the 6th floor. A festive gaiety ensued as we gathered and enjoyed cocktails. The meal of quiche and a side salad was topped off with a delightful array of delicious Christmas cookies. Father Mike

Bertram's Advent Reflection focused on the virtue of patience, giving us a number of thoughtful examples to help guide our personal preparation for Christmas. The grand finale was the performance of the Joy Singers. Their program included songs that were seasonal, inspirational, and eclectic. Another big thank you goes to Susan Westlake who is a member of the Joy Singers ensemble for bringing their group to us. When this special event ended, it was clear that the Christmas spirit was alive and well.



Lenten Evening of Reflection

The Milwaukee Catholic Home offered a lovely venue for our first in-person Evening of Reflection since 2019. The evening began with Mass celebrated by Madison Bishop Donald Hying. LOC members and guests gave a warm welcome to Bishop Hying, who many of you will remember was our speaker for a Day of Reflection 10 years ago. Bishop Hying also was the celebrant for Mass at the LOC National Assembly hosted by our chapter in 2014 at the downtown Hilton Hotel. Bishop Hying presented an inspiring talk, incorporating scripture into his message about how we can and should include evangelization into our spiritual journey as followers

of Christ. His reference to the room where the apostles were called to go forth and do Christ's work made a memorable impression as we Ladies of Charity were gathered together on this evening. Navy-blue uniform pants were collected for our Clothing Center to support our outreach to needy Catholic schools. It was wonderful to pray, share a meal, and be uplifted by Bishop Hying's thoughtful words of reflection. At the end of the evening, we returned home refreshed as Bishop Hying returned to his home in Madison. You may be interested in getting the Bishop's recently published book, "Love Never Fails, Living the Catholic Faith in our Daily Lives".

Opening Mass and Breakfast, Fall 2022

We look forward to resuming our opening Mass and breakfast at St. Francis of Assisi on Saturday, September 24th at 9:00 AM.

– Mary Johnson

Meet Our Members...

by Jane Beyer

We are pleased to begin again our Charity Chat feature Meet Our Members. In this and future editions, we will be highlighting one of our members and their contributions to LOC so we are able to get to know one another a bit better!

This Edition's Featured Member: **Gail Proite Adams**

How did you first become aware of Ladies of Charity and why did you join?

"Long-time member and past president Mary Domer hosted a gathering in her home, in part to recruit new members, and invited me. Mary and I were friends and former classmates both at St. Robert's and Dominican High School. As those of you who know Mary know, she is a good recruiter and one you don't say no to easily! I had retired from my job teaching in 2003 and joined Ladies of Charity a few years later as I felt I would now have the time to commit to an organization like the LOC whose mission I believe in so strongly."

What are the main roles or activities you have been associated with since joining Ladies of Charity?

"When I first joined I handled membership for a few years, but soon the LOC Clothing Center became 'my jam'! Back at that time, the Clothing Center occupied a small space in an old convent on Townsend. It was a rather disheveled space and moreover, a stray cat had taken up residency, and I don't particularly like cats. A short time later, the Center moved to the basement of a rectory off Hampton, as I recall, and it was then I became a regular. Up to this point, Sally Lautmann had been doing pretty much everything at the Clothing Center, which was a monumental task. I was volunteering with Sharon Pircon. Since Sally was looking to step away from running the store, it was over lunch that Sharon and I discussed becoming co-managers. Sally then became Outreach chair for the store, a position she holds to this day. Years later after Sharon moved and began splitting her time between WI and Georgia, Francie Shea willingly stepped into the role of co-manager with me.

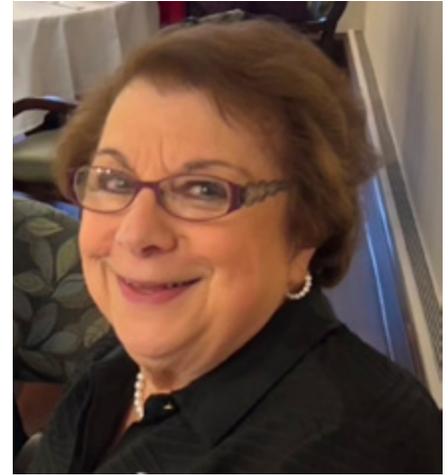
Today the store has evolved into a well-oiled operation with numerous members dividing up the many responsibilities. Each person has their assigned tasks and knows what they need to take care of and by when. It is a very collaborative effort. I love the group I work with at the Center."

What has kept you a part of Ladies of Charity through the years?

"It is really the mission of Ladies of Charity, along with the people and the friendships I have made, that keeps me involved. I embrace the LOC mission and our store's ministry, 'To serve, rather than be served.' It fits me and who I am. Moreover, I feel the dear friendships I have made are an added blessing of doing this work."

What else can you share about yourself to help us know you better? Beyond LOC, how do you like to spend your time?

"I am a retired elementary school teacher, having taught 1st grade in Grafton for 32 years. Much of time and interests revolve around my family—this summer, I will be married to my husband Bill for 46 years. Together we share four adult children—three daughters--Lindsay, twins Leslie and Ann, and our son, Trevor. We have four grandchildren and one on the way. I value my time spent with them, enjoy dining out, and belong to two book clubs. I appreciate the support I receive from my husband and family as it relates to my work with and passion for Ladies of Charity. Not only has Bill and now Trevor, through their company provided financial support, if I need someone to co-staff the store on a given day, Bill is right there with me. For birthdays and Christmas, my family has heeded my words that "I do not need anything" and instead give me gifts of clothing donations for the Center. They keep an eye out throughout the year for items from a variety of sources including other donation locations."



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Cathy Liska Reflection



With the travesty of the war in Ukraine looming large in our hearts and minds, here are a few instances of global Vincentian concern, care and groundswell of solidarity, provided via the Famvin.org site

From the Daughters of Charity in Spain:

- Various provinces in the country opened bank accounts for monetary donations; schools collected food, warm clothing, medicines and sleeping bags;
- Daughters of Charity in many regions escorted refugees to safety and provided housing and social services;

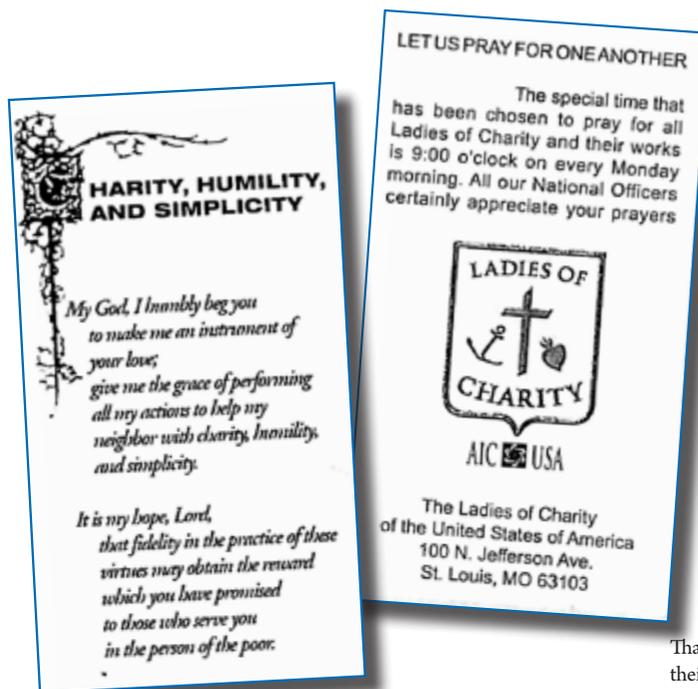
From Italy:

- The Vincentian Family is present within Ukraine; twenty-two Missionaries minister in six cities including Kiev, Buldinka (near Odessa) and Visirka.
- The Daughters of Charity and the Sisters of the Miraculous Medal as well as young lay groups (including LOC) continue to serve the poor there.
- Money, food, sleeping bags, and medical supplies were collected

Suffering Ukrainians have been entrusted to the care and intercession of Blessed Marta Wiecka, a Daughter of Charity, Ukraine. In a recent Famvin video a "4-5 year old little boy humbly bows before the cross and piously raising his small hands, sings a short prayer asking for an end to war and for peace to reign".

The words of Pope Francis speak with forthright honesty: "Humanity, which prides itself on being ahead in science, in thought, in so many beautiful things, is lagging behind in weaving peace. It is a champion in making war.... The peace of all is threatened by partisan interests with political responsibility to examine their consciences seriously before the God of peace, just Father of all"

*St Vincent used to say "Love is creative to the infinity." Ultimately all of this becomes a prayer entrusted to the Father who loves this world.



*"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
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