

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

*Serving the elderly poor  
in Kansas City since 1882.*

Summer, 2017

**JEANNE JUGAN  
CENTER**

8745 James A. Reed Rd.  
Kansas City, MO 64138  
816-761-4744



**JEANNE JUGAN CENTER**



Continuing the work of Saint Jeanne Jugan, our mission is to offer the neediest elderly of every race and religion a home where they will be welcomed as Christ, cared for as family and accompanied with dignity until God calls them to himself.

## The Grace of Age

*To everything there is a season.* Most of us are familiar with this Bible verse from Ecclesiastes. As with everything else under the sun, our lives have different seasons, and each one of those seasons is accompanied by different gifts.

For instance, being around a newborn baby or a giggling child can fill our hearts with joy and remind us of all the possibilities that life has to offer. Our teenage years show us the value of independence and finding our unique way in the world, while middle age can bring the joys of family life.

We can sometimes forget, though, the value of the elderly years. Old age is often thought of as a time when learning is over...a time to sit back, relax, and reap what we have planted. This can be part of it, but there is so much more to it than that! There are plenty of gifts still to be had.

One of the greatest blessings of old age is the gift of time: time to explore hobbies, enjoy nature, listen to beautiful music, drink good wine, time to slow down and look at things from a different perspective. Mainly it's a time to realize that many of the little things in life just don't matter

like we thought they did when we were younger.

If you've ever seen a grandparent interacting with a grandchild it can almost seem like time has stopped for a moment. No one exists but the two of them, the child basking in the patient and attentive love of dear Grandma or Grandpa. What a beautiful gift that is!

We thank God for the elderly that we are blessed to serve, and for the gifts they give us daily. While things may sometimes move a little slower around here, they haven't stopped. There is still plenty of time for the important things in life.

*Gray hair is a crown of splendor — Proverbs 16:31*



*Sr. Louise and Resident Marie stop for a picture.*



*Resident Josephine enjoys bowling with Activities Assistant Gaby.*

# A Simple Note



Summertime always reminds me of family — of picnics, family vacations, and spending time together. In this edition of our newsletter dedicated to the value of the elderly and the gifts of old age, we celebrate what a blessing our Residents are to us and to our employees, whom we also consider part of our “family” here at the Jeanne Jugan Center.

September 10th is National Grandparents Day, and whether you are a grandparent or just have fond memories of yours, it is a good time to remember how the older generation can encourage and enhance the younger ones. As Pope Francis recently said in his homily to the Cardinals, “We are grandfathers called to dream and to pass on our dream to today’s youth: they need it...” Please join us in prayer on that day for all grandparents, past and present.

I am happy to be here in Kansas City. Since my recent arrival, I have been touched by the friendly and kind spirits of the good people I have met, and I am very humbled by the generosity of so many who support our mission. Be assured of our grateful prayers for you and to God for providing for our mission through you. As our Foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan often said, “God has blessed me because I have always greatly thanked His Providence.”

God bless you!

Mother Margaret

P.S. We send our gratitude and best wishes to Mother Marguerite as she moves on to share her talents in our San Pedro, CA home.

## LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

Visit us at [www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org)

### Windows

Like all homes, maintenance here at the Jeanne Jugan Center is an ongoing need. We are blessed to have a new nurse call system that was recently installed and badly needed—thank you to all who helped with that!

Next on our agenda are the windows in our independent-living apartments. The windows, which are over 30 years old, are deteriorating and need to be replaced.

We hope to begin the project later this fall so our Residents can have a cozy winter without drafts. With 33 apartments, though, it’s quite a large and expensive job. If you would like to make a donation to help with the cost, **please write “windows” on the memo line of your check**, and we will gratefully apply your donation to this worthy cause.



**We value your privacy.** Please be assured that we do not sell, rent or in any way share our mailing list or donors’ personal information.

We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of K.C. Envelope, who donated the mailing and return envelopes for this newsletter.

### Ways to Give

Recurring/monthly donations play a valuable role in meeting our operating costs. They enable us to better budget, and provide an income stream in months when other donations are typically lower. It costs \$17,800 *per day* to run our home, and Medicaid pays only half of that. Your support makes our mission possible.

To sign up for automatic giving—you choose the amount and frequency—go to our website at [www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org) and click on “donate.”



*Resident Dale calls the Jeanne Jugan Center “home.”*

Many family and friends choose to remember The Little Sisters of the Poor and the Jeanne Jugan Center in their estate plans. They realize that by investing in the Little Sisters of the Poor, they are investing in the future of our care for the most vulnerable elderly. The Jeanne Jugan Center is the recipient of bequests, trusts, and charitable gift annuities from individuals who recognize that the Little Sisters are making a difference in our community.

For more information contact the Development Office, at 816-761-4744 or [dvkansascity@littlesistersofthepoor.org](mailto:dvkansascity@littlesistersofthepoor.org).

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# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

## “What Has Kept You Here So Long?”

When long-term employees are asked what accounts for their 20, 25 or even 30 years of service, they inevitably respond, “the Residents!” A close second is the home-like atmosphere that we Little Sisters and our staff lovingly work to maintain.

CNA Ella Howse reflects, “I came here thinking I’d stay a year. That was 20 years ago!” Ella said that the people — both the Residents and staff — drew her in. Asked what is the greatest lesson she has learned from our precious elderly? She answers confidently: “Life!”

Tricia Sisson, with 20 years of service in the kitchen and dining room, said the Center has been “a second home.” Her mother lives in our apartments, adding to the family feeling. “The loving way the Little Sisters and staff treat the Residents is one of the main reasons I’ve stayed. Also, I just enjoy it.”

For Jenny Greenwood, who has served in the kitchen and laundry for over 25 years, the home-like atmosphere is literal: as a teenager, she lived with her family on the property in an old farmhouse. “My father was in charge of maintenance at the old home [at 53rd and Highland] and was asked to move here to keep an eye on things while the new home was being built.” What has kept her here? “The Residents,” she says.

For Pat Benyo, activities director, 25 years of service has “gone fast.” “What a privilege it is to be in a job where you can forget about yourself,” she says. “You forget about yourself in order to serve the Residents, and you receive the gift of meeting so many interesting people and learning what they still have to offer, something our society tends to forget.”

CNA Unease Jackson has 30 years of service. Not only is her mother, Earsielean, a Resident, but Earsielean worked as a CNA at both the old home and at the current one before moving in. Unease

says that the Residents and staff together — whether related or not — are truly a family. “They [the Residents] feel secure, and that is very important to me.”

When asked what lessons she has learned from our Residents, Roxie Lewis, a CMT and CNA who also has 30 years of service, answered, “patience.” She added, “You learn so many things about what life has been like for them. As you learn their stories, you learn details about our history as a society and as a country, so many things that you wouldn’t otherwise know. That is a gift.”

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**20-Year Employees Tricia Sisson (l) and Ella Howse (r).  
Not pictured: Booker Franklin.**

LPN Lynda Hilbus, who is approaching 30 years with the Center, concurs: “Our Residents have so many interesting stories, all unique.” She added that “the love we give to them in our compassionate care is immediately returned to us in their gratitude.”

As for Jenny, perhaps the greatest lesson learned from our elderly is, she says, “Leave it to God, and He will take care of it.” Exactly the spirit of Saint Jeanne Jugan!



**30-Year Employees Roxie Lewis (l) and Unease Jackson (r).**



**30-Year Employee Margie Hankins.**



**25-Year Employees Pat Benyo (l) and Jenny Greenwood (r). Not pictured: Eileen Fitzwater.**

## Resident Spotlight

Sometimes life comes full circle. So it is with two of our Residents, Jean and June. Jean Sweeney and June Smith are identical twins who grew up in Kansas City. As children they went to the same school and liked spending most of their free time together as well. After graduation they both worked at Hallmark Cards as designers and were even in the same department.

At age 20, June got married, and Jean followed suit a couple of years later. As they each moved to their own homes and started families (Jean has four children and June has nine), they still remained close and within driving distance of each other, but had their own lives to tend to.

Now after many years and experiences — the joys of watching their children grow up and the sadness of saying goodbye to their dear husbands — they are together again, and recently celebrated their birthday at the home they share at the Jeanne Jugan Center.

June came here first, in the spring of 2015. Jean would come and visit her and got to know the home and many of the people. After Jean's husband died, she thought about moving in and spoke to Sr. Marguerite, who was the Mother Superior at the time. Mother Marguerite's reply was that "twins should be together!" and put her on the waiting list. When an opening came up, Jean was thrilled. She said, "I'm here because of June ... and God!"

We're happy that the twins are together again, and that they are choosing to spend this phase of their lives with us here at the Jeanne Jugan Center. They are a joy!



*This article is dedicated in loving memory to Jean, who was called home to heaven shortly before the printing of this newsletter. Our prayers are with her family and her sister June, who, like all of us here at the Jeanne Jugan Center, will miss her very much.*



*"Jesus is waiting for you in the chapel. Go and find him there."  
—Saint Jeanne Jugan*

## Prayer and Providence

As Little Sisters, our days are divided into different areas of focus. The main focus of our overall mission is, of course, taking care of our Residents and ensuring their well-being and happiness. Many parts of our days are dedicated to this. However, the main focus of our lives is maintaining a closeness to God and serving him. We do this through our mission of serving his elderly children, but also, and especially, through our prayer life.

This important time that we spend each day with our Father makes all other things possible. This is when we take time out to praise his name, thank him for our blessings, unload our burdens, pray for our Residents, friends, and benefactors, remember those who have died, and pray for the intentions we have been given.

Please be assured of our prayers for you, and feel free to send us your intentions using the enclosed envelope, or through our website at [www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org](http://www.littlesistersofthepoorkansascity.org) under "prayer request."