



## OUR MISSION

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.

*“If God is with us, it will be accomplished ... God will help us; the work is his.”*

SAINT JEANNE JUGAN

## SAVE THE DATE

**August 23, 2019**

150th Anniversary Mass and Reception

**October 25, 2019**

St. Jeanne Jugan's Birthday

**November 17, 2019**

Spaghetti Dinner

## Celebrating 150 Years in America

*Yesterday and Today: an Original Gospel Charism*

By Sr. Constance Carolyn, Lsp

The Little Sisters of the Poor arrived in the United States during a particularly painful period in our nation's history. The nativist movement of the 1850s, the Civil War and the failures of Reconstruction left an untold human toll, vast economic devastation and a profound racial divide in their wake.

This is the historical and social context into which the Little Sisters stepped when they arrived in New York on September 13, 1868. Like a healing balm, the Little Sisters of the Poor brought a much-needed infusion of humble service and merciful love to America.

First, the Little Sisters personified the Church's preferential option for the poor and most abandoned. In the early decades of our nation's

history, elders depended on their children or personal wealth to assure a comfortable old age. Poorhouses, modeled on England's "Poor Laws" sheltered the indigent elderly, but they were characterized by primitive, often subhuman conditions.

By the 1850s, benevolent societies and fraternal organizations began to organize old age homes and other forms of assistance for those able to pay monthly dues while they were young so that they could receive help in their old age. What was novel about the Little Sisters' mission was that they came to America specifically to care for those who could not pay their own way.

The second mark of originality in the Little Sisters' charism of hospitality

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The Little Sisters' habits have changed over the years!

# Yesterday and Today

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was its universal embrace. In a century characterized by nativist propaganda and unapologetic racial discrimination, the Little Sisters opened their doors to the needy elderly regardless of race, religion or nationality — Catholic and non-Catholic, immigrant and native-born, black and white.

Third, through their compassionate care for the infirm and the dying the Little Sisters offered a powerful witness of the sacredness of every human life until the very end, regardless of personal status, ability or wealth.

The Industrial Revolution had encouraged a utilitarian mindset that treated human workers as machines and erroneously associated self-worth with status and wealth. Those perceived as unproductive were cast aside. The Little Sisters' loving care of the poor and their accompaniment of the dying offered a counterbalance to the dehumanizing forces at work in 19th century American society.

The following advice of Father LeLièvre to the Little Sisters testifies to these ideals: "We must consider the elderly's needs and not our own. Let us not prefer the younger, more able ones, or the most capable, but the blind, the disabled, the paralyzed, the one-armed, all who suffer from decrepitude or who have entered into their second childhood: these are the ones deserving of our preferences ... As poor as he is, the pauper is a man ... with the dignity of a man."

Finally, the Little Sisters of the Poor brought to

America a powerful testimony to absolute faith in God's Providence. They arrived with almost nothing and set up shop in empty buildings, depending on the generosity of the local community to provide all that was needed to care for the poor.

On seeing all that the Sisters received in their first collecting rounds, the Mother Superior in one home wept as she exclaimed, "O Providence! O Providence!" The Sisters in another Home expressed their sense of wonder, "Divine Providence provided according to our needs ... We were quite overcome with gratitude towards the good God; who disposed so well people's hearts in our favor."

We have outlined four characteristics of the Little Sisters' charism of hospitality that brought a unique Gospel message to 19th century America:

1. The preferential option for the poor and most abandoned;
2. universal charity, without regard for race, creed or nationality;
3. profound reverence for the dignity of every human life;
4. absolute trust in Divine Providence.

These were the values personified by the founding Little Sisters in America. They are no less relevant today than they were in the post-Civil War era, for they also respond to the wounds in our 21st century culture and the longing in contemporary hearts for God's merciful love.



## **Four characteristics of the Little Sisters' charism of hospitality**

- 1. The preferential option for the poor and most abandoned;**
- 2. universal charity, without regard for race, creed or nationality;**
- 3. profound reverence for the dignity of every human life;**
- 4. absolute trust in Divine Providence.**



# Jeanne Jugan Association

## An Extension of the Little Sisters' Hands and Hearts



New AJJ members Kate, Bruce, and Karen with Sr. Chantal.



The group poses for a picture after renewing their yearly promise.

This May we had three new members join our Association Jeanne Jugan (AJJ). The AJJ is a group of Catholic lay collaborators who, after a year of formation, make a yearly promise to share in our spirituality and participate in our mission of hospitality to the needy elderly in a committed, ongoing way.

The AJJs at our home stay involved by making welcome baskets for new

Residents, visiting Residents in the hospital, and helping with parties and activities. There are currently over 2,000 Jeanne Jugan Associates worldwide. This is the first time in history that they outnumber the Little Sisters! At this time when vocations are down and our current Little Sisters are aging, our lay supporters are needed more than ever. Please join us in praying with thanksgiving for our new

and current members.

For more information on becoming a Jeanne Jugan Associate, contact Sr. Michael Teresa at 816.761.4744 or [clkansascity@littlesistersofthepoor.org](mailto:clkansascity@littlesistersofthepoor.org). Sr. Michael is our new AJJ facilitator, replacing Sr. Chantal who is now serving at our novitiate in Queens, NY. We are grateful for Sr. Chantal's dedication and wish her well in her new assignment.

### You're Invited!

Please join us as we celebrate the closing of the jubilee year marking the 150th anniversary of the Little Sisters of the Poor's arrival in the United States. We Little Sisters have a long history in Kansas City, too — we've been here since 1882! As a supporter of our mission, you are an important part of our legacy of care for the elderly poor. We would love to share this day with you!

**Friday, August 23, 2019 Mass at 6:00 pm**

St. Regis Parish  
8941 James A. Reed Road (just south of our home)  
Kansas City, MO 64138

Principal Celebrant: Bishop James V. Johnston  
Reception following - stay for music, drinks, and appetizers.

*We'll also draw the lucky cash raffle prize winners!*





## MOTHER'S MESSAGE



During this jubilee year we've enjoyed looking back at our history — both distant and more recent.

It all began so long ago in France, when Jeanne Jugan founded our Congregation by taking in an elderly sick woman who had no home and no one to care for her.

Then, 150 years ago, the Congregation expanded when the Little Sisters arrived in the United States. Not long after that, they came to Kansas City, opening the first home at 31st and Locust in 1882.

Today we enjoy our beautiful modern home here in South Kansas City. Even though the surroundings are different, the needs of the elderly have not changed. The need to be cared for with respect, to feel safe and secure, and to feel valued are timeless — and ageless — needs.

We are grateful to be able to continue the legacy of St. Jeanne Jugan with your help. Please be assured of our prayers.

*Mother Margaret*



Thank you to all who gave to our Lenten collection earlier this year. We had a large cross in the mall area throughout Lent, and on it were little paper crosses. Each one had an item listed that we needed for our residents, ranging from fun things like puzzles, to necessities like bath soap and shampoo. Visitors were invited to take a cross with them, and bring back the item that was listed on it. The response was wonderful!

*We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of Trabon Group, Harvest Graphics, and K.C. Envelope for donating the printing and envelopes for this mailing.*

It can get expensive running a home! Just like houses for smaller families, our family home needs to be kept cool in the summer, and warm in the winter. And that's no small expense — our electricity and natural gas costs average \$24,000 per month!

While we are extremely grateful for those who fund our special programs and projects — we couldn't do them without you — we are always in need of help to pay for the everyday necessities. If you would like your gift to go toward utilities, just fill out and cut out the paper below, and include it with your donation. Thank you!

I'd like to help keep the Residents comfortable this year. Please apply my donation to:

- ☐ Electricity and air-conditioning costs
- ☐ Gas and heating costs

