



Little Sisters Of The Poor

ST. AUGUSTINE HOME

Spring 2019

Serving the elderly poor in Indianapolis since 1873.



Little Sisters celebrate 150 years

Welcome to our Newsletter! This edition is dedicated solely to the 150th anniversary celebration of the Little Sisters' presence in the United States of America!

St. Jeanne Jugan was beatified by Pope John Paul II on October 03, 1982 and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI on October 11, 2009. We celebrate St. Jeanne Jugan's Feast Day on August 30 each year. This year, all the celebrations around St. Jeanne Jugan and her mission to serve the elderly poor have taken on a special glow as we celebrate 150 years of service in the United States.

St. Jeanne Jugan, also known as Sister Mary of the Cross, was born on October 25, 1792 in the French region of Brittany. Jeanne grew up as the sixth of eight children, four of whom died very young. Her father, a

fisherman, was lost at sea when Jeanne was just four-years-old. Her mother worked tirelessly to ensure her children had everything they needed, including religious instruction, during a period of great religious and political upheaval, strong anti-Catholic sentiment, and even outright persecution, prevailed during this revolutionary period.

It all started with Jeanne Jugan

Jeanne learned to knit and spin wool and became a shepherdess at a very young age. After receiving a basic education, she took a job as a kitchen maid in a wealthy family at age 16. Jeanne accompanied her mistress, the Viscountess de la Choue, on visits to the poor and the sick. She thus learned the delicate art of bestowing charity on the poor with respect and

tact. As Jeanne matured, she received a marriage proposal from a young sailor, but turned it down on two occasions, telling her mother, "God wants me for himself. He is keeping me for a work as yet unknown, for a work which is not yet founded."

At age 25, Jeanne joined the Third Order of the Admirable Mother, a lay movement founded by St. John Eudes. For several years she worked as a nurse in a hospital in a nearby town. Succumbing to exhaustion, she was forced to leave the hospital and moved in with a friend twenty years her senior. After her friend's death she found another companion with whom to share an apartment. The two middle age women were soon joined by a 17 year old orphan girl.

Two years later, in 1839, Jeanne



His Excellency, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, Apostolic Nuncio enjoys time with Residents, guests and Sisters.



Resident Nora Cummings playing Sarah Peters to a captivated audience.



Seminarians, who served at our Mass of Thanksgiving, enjoy a moment of relaxation at our celebration.

Jugan took in an elderly, blind and partially paralyzed woman, Anne Chauvin, and the community of the Little Sisters of the Poor was born. Within several years this small group grew to a community of over 2,400 Little Sisters.

Expansion to the New World

In 1850, a wealthy young man named Ernest Lelievre met the Little Sisters of the Poor in Paris. By 1855 he was ordained a priest and in 1868, Father Ernest Lelievre, priest auxiliary of the Congregation and ambassador of the Little Sisters to the New World, left France for the United States to pave the way for foundations in America. He met with the archbishop of New York and the bishop of Brooklyn. Archbishop John McCloskey of New York asked for time to reflect and Bishop John Loughlin of Brooklyn gave his assent immediately! Meanwhile, Sara Peter, a wealthy Cincinnati, learned through Fr. Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulist Fathers, that the Little Sisters of the Poor were ready to begin an American foundation.

She let Father Lelievre know she was prepared to do whatever was necessary to prepare the way for a foundation in Cincinnati.

August 28, 1868, the Little Sisters left Brest aboard the Napoleon III. Under the patronage of St. Joseph, (in whose intercession the Little Sisters of the Poor have unbounded confidence), but speaking no English, they set out for the United States. Thirteen homes were established in America in the first four years. As Jeanne Jugan said, "Give us the house; if God fills it, God will not abandon it." And so the Little Sisters' mission in the United States of America began.

Hoosiers celebrate

On March 19, 2019, the feast of St. Joseph, we celebrated 150 years of the Little Sisters of the Poor in America here at our Home. Thoughtful planning with an "all hands on deck" approach preceded the event. There was seamless cooperation between the Little Sisters, staff, volunteers and Residents, who all contributed

their best efforts to create an event worthy of such a momentous occasion. It reminded us of the determination of Father Lelievre and the Little Sisters of the Poor when they first reached our shores!

An unexpected package from Rome arrived just before our celebration. It contained a certificate of blessing from Pope Francis on our Home in honor of the 150th celebration. Now, we were really ready to begin!

Over 240 people attended our Mass of Thanksgiving and the reception that followed. All were moved, some to tears, by the inspiring Liturgy and Archbishop Christophe Pierre's homily, which focused on the service of the Little Sisters of the Poor, our faith in Divine Providence and the protection of St. Joseph.

After Mass Archbishop Pierre, the Apostolic Nuncio, greeted all our guests, who were streaming from the chapel in great number to share our historical themed meal. A native of Brittany just like our foundress, Archbishop Pierre is a

great friend of the Little Sisters.

Stepping back in time

Our guests were then invited to step back in time and visit three different ports of call while enjoying a "Sweet Time at Each Port." The first stop was the Port of Brooklyn, New York, where they met Fr. Isaac Hecker, founder of the Paulist Fathers, played by our Resident Bill Fisher, who gave the Little Sisters their first monetary donation. At this port they learned about the first mission of the Little Sisters in America while enjoying a taste of New York cheesecake. They were also able to view a large painting of the ship that brought the Sisters to America. This painting was *the work of our activities assistant, Claire Thompson*. Also on display was an authentic copy of the ship's manifesto with the names of all the passengers, including our Little Sisters.

The second stop was the Port of Cincinnati, Ohio. Here our guests encountered Sarah Peter, played



We enjoyed laughter and friendship with our Benefactors.



Mother Marie de la Conception played by Resident Dori Hartter.



Msgr. Stumpf, Rev. Bonke, Msgr. Schaedel, Archabbot Lambert Reilly celebrated with us.

St. Michael Challenge Club from Greenfield helped serve appetizers.



Msgr. Stumpf with Jeanne Jugan Associate Ann playing Margaret Haughery.



Everyone, young and old, shared our joy and celebration.



by Resident Nora Cummings, the woman who invited the Little Sisters to begin a foundation in her native Cincinnati. They heard about Mrs. Peter's various trips to France, including the Little Sisters' motherhouse, where she met Jeanne Jugan. Because Cincinnati was home to a very large number of German immigrants, German music played in the background and guests enjoyed apple strudel as they viewed the many pictures of early Cincinnati life.

Finally, our guests traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana. Here they met Margaret Haughery, played by Ann, a Jeanne Jugan Associate, a baker and generous benefactor of the Little Sisters. Also present was Mother Assistant Marie de la Conception in full habit, played by Resident Dori Hartter, whose interview about the beginning of this foundation was shared via CD. This part was transformed into Café Beignet, where the guests were treated to beignets while listening to the interview.

After the tours, some of the guests returned to Lanagan Hall and continued to visit with the Little Sisters and priests. As guests left, our Apartment Residents were at the front door to thank them and give them various souvenirs of Saint Jeanne Jugan. It was a day long to be remembered.

Thank You!

Our deepest gratitude to all our benefactors, volunteers, families and friends who have been intermediaries of St. Joseph and generously gifted and assisted us in time, talent and treasure in caring for the elderly in need for 150 years. We will continue to trust in Divine Providence for at least another 150 years! As Saint Jeanne Jugan taught us, "We must always say: 'Blessed be God. Thank you, my God. Glory be to God.'"

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To learn more about the Little Sisters in Indianapolis please go to: www.littlesistersofthepoorindianapolis.org/our-history/

For the Mission Improbable Podcasts that were featured during our celebration please go to: <http://www.littlesistersofthepoor.org>. Click on 150th Anniversary