

FOCUS ON: ST. JOSEPH

'Love made visible': St. Augustine Home Guild hosts annual fundraiser for Little Sisters of the Poor

By Molly Beck

For The Catholic Moment

On Wednesday, May 3, the St. Augustine Home Guild will host their Hats Off to Spring (HOTS) fundraiser at the Ritz Charles in Carmel to support the mission and daily work of the Little Sisters of the Poor in Indianapolis. The event begins at 10:30 a.m. with complimentary mimosas, raffles, shopping, and time to socialize, followed by a delicious luncheon and fashion show hosted by Indianapolis women's boutique, Secret Ingredient, and emceed by Terri Stacy of WIBC radio. The theme for the luncheon is "Celebrating 150 years," as this year's event coincides with the 150th anniversary of the Little Sisters of the Poor's presence in Indiana.

Founded in France in 1839 by St. Jeanne Jugan, the Little Sisters of the Poor have a straightforward mission, "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."

Although their mission began in France, it did not take long for the Little Sisters to expand, and today they serve the elderly poor in 31 countries and 164 homes around the world.

After establishing their first home in the United States in Brooklyn, NY, in 1868, the Little Sisters were invited to care for the elderly poor of Indianapolis, where they quickly founded a home at 520 E. Vermont St. in 1873. Through multiple renovations and changes, this congregation of women served in the home on that site until 1967, when they purchased land on the southeast corner of 86th Street and Towne Line Road and built the current facility, St. Augustine's Home for the Aged.

As part of the Little Sisters' mission, they strive to be good stewards of God's gifts to them, placing all their trust in his providence and the generosity of others to fund their needs. But how do ten sisters manage to provide care for 96 elderly residents relying only on the



Linda Bear, HOTS co-chair, Sister Marie Cecilia, lsp, Donations Coordinator, and Mary Patout, SAHG President, stand in front of a statue of St. Joseph. The foster father of Jesus is a patron saint of the Little Sisters of the Poor: "As Joseph cared for Jesus, so we care for the poor," said Sister Marie Cecilia. (Photo provided)

charity of others?

The St. Augustine Home Guild (SAHG), an organization of volunteers "who contribute their God-given talents toward improving the daily lives of the residents of the Home," has a lot to do with that effort. Established in 1967, the same year the St. Augustine Home opened, the Guild has followed their mission, "Love made visible," by soliciting funds and volunteers to assist with gardening, laundry, kitchen work, and more.

"The volunteers really come to know the residents personally," said Mary Patout, the current president of SAHG and a parishioner at Holy Spirit in Fishers (part of the Holy Spirit, St. John Vianney Pastorate).

Patout went on to share that volunteers serve in a variety of ways: providing different activities for the residents, making beds, serving in the dining room, driving residents to doctor appointments, and staffing the

onsite store where residents can buy items for \$1 apiece. Additionally, the Guild hosts events for the residents throughout the year, from bingo and karaoke parties to ice cream socials and Oktoberfest. There is even a Resident Companion Program, wherein Guild members will write and send cards to a particular resident as a special bond of friendship.

Linda Bear, a parishioner at the St. Maria Goretti Pastorate in Westfield and one of the co-chairs of this year's Hats Off to Spring event, shared that the Guild has been involved with the St. Augustine Home from the very beginning.

"One of the first projects of [the Guild] was to assist the Little Sisters in making the move from Vermont Street to the home on 86th Street," said Bear.

Additionally, the SAHG was instrumental in having plaques erected on the Vermont Street site in 2017 to commemorate the Little

Sisters' selfless and long-standing work in Indianapolis. And as devoted as the Little Sisters of the Poor are to their mission, so too are members of the Guild, like Patout and Bear, devoted to supporting that mission.

"I have always loved the Guild's motto, 'Love made visible,'" said Bear.

That love is truly visible in everything the Guild does for the residents of the home. Sister Marie Cecilia, who is currently the donations coordinator, or more affectionately, the "Begging Sister" for the St. Augustine Home, could not hide her joy and admiration for the volunteers of the Guild.

"What a providential gift to be surrounded by such beautiful people!" Sister Marie Cecilia spoke of the dedication the volunteers have for their work, describing how, in the early morning after a severe snowstorm, she went down to the laundry expecting to have to manage alone, only to find that the volunteers were already in house with everything under control.

"I said to them, 'Are you a morning person?!'" shared Sister Marie with a laugh.

The St. Augustine Home Guild strives to live up to the teachings of St. Jeanne Jugan, as does the congregation of Little Sisters they serve, "Never forget that the poor are our Lord." This effort to care for the poor is hugely evident in the planning and execution of the yearly fundraiser event. And the volunteers are hoping to make this 150th celebration a banner year for donations.

"The cost of caring for the aged poor is rising for the sisters," said Bear. "We want this year to be the best ever."

Hats Off to Spring (HOTS) Luncheon & Fashion Show "Celebrating 150 Years"

When:

- Wednesday, May 3, 2023

Where:

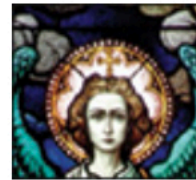
- Ritz Charles, Carmel

Time:

- Doors open at 10:30 a.m., the price is \$60 per person
- Luncheon will begin at noon
- For reservations, call 317-294-1955 (Leave your name and address; invitations will go out in mid-March)

For more information on becoming a volunteer or to donate to the St. Augustine Home Guild, please visit their website at SAHGindy.org. You can also find the Guild on Facebook, [staugustinehome-guildindy](https://www.facebook.com/staugustinehome-guildindy).

Quick Saint Facts: Michael, Gabriel and Raphael



These archangels, messengers sent by God, are the only

ones named in the Bible. In the Book of Daniel, Michael is called "the great prince"; in the Letter of Jude, he argues with the devil over Moses' body; and in the Book of Revelation, he leads the battle against Satan. He is patron of the sick, radiologists and mariners. Gabriel explains Daniel's visions to him in the Book of Daniel, and in the Gospel of Luke announces to Zechariah and Mary the births of their respective sons. He is the patron of messengers and telecommunications and postal workers. Raphael guides Tobiah in the Book of Tobit; he is patron of the blind, physicians and travelers. The church created their joint feast after the Second Vatican Council.