

Serenity

no. 173 • Little Sisters of the Poor • January 2017



WATER WITH
BLESSINGS



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.

Cover Photos

Front Cover: Residents and Little Sisters in Tokan, Benin, sample fresh, clean water provided through Water With Blessings.

Inside Front Cover: Summer intern Brook Martin, from Louisiana, serves Residents at Queen of Peace, Queens Village, NY.

Outside Back Cover: Gisella Rowe, a Resident of Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D.C. works on a poster to be used in our prolife music video, *Every Human Life Is Sacred*.

serenity

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*How I would like a Church
that challenges the
throw-away culture
by the overflowing joy
of a new embrace
between young and old!*

— Pope Francis

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Acknowledgments

Pages 15-19: photos courtesy of the Becket
Fund for Religious Liberty, Caleb Lyman.

Called to be God's family of mercy

As he closed the Jubilee of Mercy our Holy Father repeated something he has often said, "This is the time of mercy!" But hasn't the time of mercy come and gone with the passing of the Holy Year? No!

Our Holy Father noted that many concrete signs of mercy have been performed this year. "But this is not enough," he insisted, observing that our world continues to find new ways of assaulting human dignity. "For this reason, the Church must always be vigilant and ready to identify new works of mercy and to practice them with generosity and enthusiasm."

"It is [still] the time of mercy because those who are weak and vulnerable, distant and alone, ought to feel the presence of brothers and sisters who can help them in their need. It is the time of mercy because the poor should feel that they are regarded with respect and concern by others who have overcome indifference and discovered what is essential in life."

This issue of *Serenity* is something of a Jubilee Year round-up, but in more than a few places our works of mercy have only begun! Our cover story highlights a project undertaken by every home in our Chicago province — two homes each in Chicago-land, Missouri and California, and one in Colorado, New Mexico, Kentucky and Minnesota. Through this initiative our Residents and Little Sisters have come to the aid of their less fortunate brothers and sisters around the world by raising funds and awareness of the issue of safe drinking water, and simply by taking up their crochet hooks with a new sense of purpose.

In Washington, D.C. our YOUTH&AGED *for Life* initiative, which we introduced in our last issue of *Serenity*, has taken a




new, rather hip direction as the Little Sisters teamed up with singer/songwriter Janis Clarke and ShalomWorld T.V. to make a professional music video proclaiming to the world that every human life is sacred.

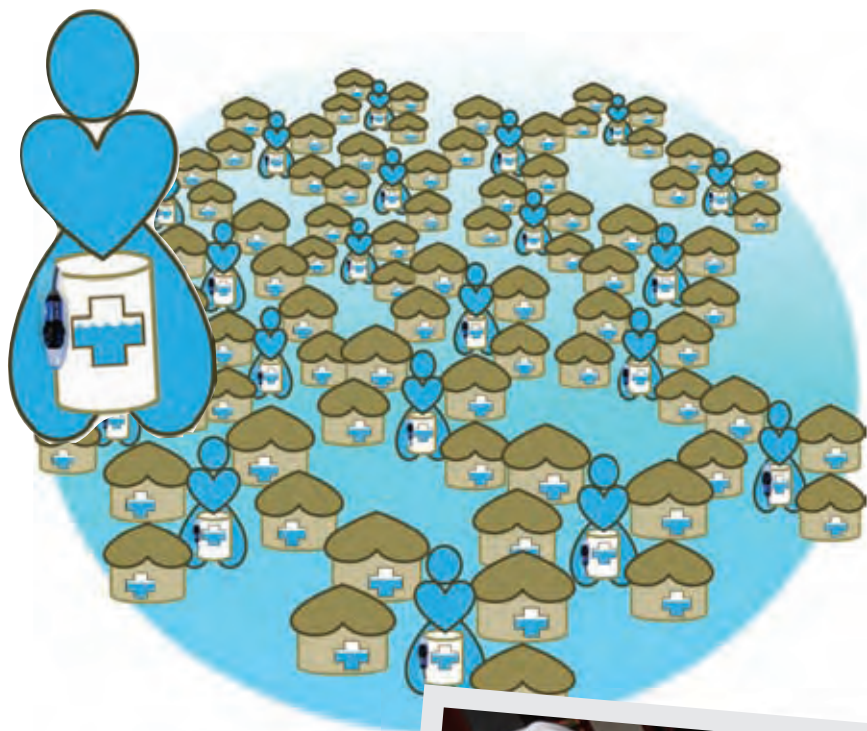
In her original lyrics Clarke wrote *“We are God’s family of love as we lay down our lives for the little ones. We are God’s family of mercy as we stand up and fight for the elderly ones.”* Just as our actions are intrinsic to who we are and who we are becoming, she notes, “God’s family of love and mercy is *who we are and what we do*. And this leads directly to John Paul II’s prophetic call to the Church to be God’s family of mercy most especially to the most needy and defenseless among us — the unborn and the elderly, who, along with the little ones are increasingly in the crosshairs of the culture of death.”

The Spirit seems to be saying that we will be God’s family of love and mercy only if we bring new works of mercy and justice to birth in our day in the milieus in which we live and work and according to the unique challenges of our time.

“Let us make every effort, then, to devise specific and insightful ways of practicing charity and the works of mercy,” Pope Francis wrote. “Mercy is inclusive and tends to spread like wildfire in a way that knows no limits. Hence we are called to give new expression to the traditional works of mercy. For mercy overflows, keeps moving forward, bears rich fruit. It is like the leaven that makes the dough rise (cf. Mt 13:33), or the mustard seed that grows into a tree (cf. Lk 13:19).”

“The works of mercy are ‘handcrafted,’ in the sense that none of them is alike,” our Holy Father continued. “Our hands can craft them in a thousand different ways, and even though the one God inspires them, and they are all fashioned from the same ‘material,’ mercy itself, each one takes on a different form.”

So in this New Year let us roll up our sleeves, take out whatever tools or instruments we feel called to wield, and get to work crafting a more merciful and just world! Through our words, deeds and prayers for others let us truly be God’s family of mercy! 



Crochet hooks & water filters



how a whole province practiced
the corporal works of mercy this year

Among our countless blessings, most of us take clean drinking water for granted. Many of our brothers and sisters in Christ do not have access to clean water and they suffer daily from the lack of this basic necessity. The World Health Organization attributes two million deaths each year to unsafe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene. With this reality in mind our homes throughout the Chicago province decided to practice one of the corporal works of mercy in a very concrete way during this special Year by contributing their efforts to a project called Water With Blessings.

About Water With Blessings

The interfaith initiative was born in Central America and has quickly taken on global proportions. It all began with American Ursuline Sister Lorraine Lauter and several medical missionary friends. The group had been visiting a neighborhood in Tegucigalpa, Honduras for several years when they realized that the illnesses they most commonly treated were caused largely by the ingestion of unsanitary water. Although they treated the symptoms, they felt unable to address the root of the problem. Frustrated, in 2006 the group began exploring how they might bring clean water to the area.

According to the project's founders, a chance encounter at a 2007 mission conference led them to the Sawyer PointOne water filtration system, a small, state of the art filter that functions much like kidney dialysis to purify even the dirtiest water. The "amazingly effective" filter, which is guaranteed for a million gallons of clean, safe water, can be set up in five minutes after a single training session, using only a five gallon container and the filtration kit!

Sister Lorraine and her companions knew, however, that the right filter was only part of the solution. "State of the art technology deserves a state of the heart program," they decided. Their website explains what developed next: "The idea was simple: put state of the art water filters into the hands of

mothers and train them to provide clean water, not just for their own families, but for others in the community as well. Passionate about health for their children, dedicated, determined, and generous in spirit, these ‘Water Women’ became our ‘state of the heart’ solution.”

And so Water With Blessings was born! “Before we knew it,” they recount, “the mothers began asking us to send them forth as water missionaries, ultimately bringing Water With Blessings to remote villages that would never have seen a visiting mission team.”

Going global

Beginning in 2011, Water With Blessings began to empower, equip, and entrust Mission Partners — short and long-term missionaries who share the project’s values — to carry Water With Blessings around the world. “In doing so,” the founders note, “we’ve found that the solution that works for God’s thirsty children in Honduras also works in Haiti... in Malawi... in Nepal... and everywhere in between.”

Thanks to the vision of its founders and the power of these partnerships, Water With Blessings is now a global community of more than 12,000 mothers in over 30 countries — and growing!

The Water Women — mothers and other women with maternal hearts — are the key to the program. They are invited to make a faith-based commitment to help their own families and their neighbors through the life-saving ministry of filtering water. The project’s founders hope that “adding the ‘God-spark’ will charge and sustain a mother for compassionate, joyful service to her neighbors” so that the resources invested in each local community will be maximized to the fullest possible impact. This model is applicable everywhere, the project founders believe, because “Mother Culture is the same in every corner of the planet!”

Today Water With Blessings enlists the help of short and long-term missionaries to carry the water filtration ministry to



A group of Water Women and their children in Ecuador.

their own sites around the world. Water With Blessings also counts on benefactors to support their global efforts to provide “clean water for all God’s thirsty children” through the distribution of the small filters and the training of Water Women. It costs \$60.00 to equip and empower each Water Woman, who can then provide at least ten people with clean, safe water for ten years.

Little Sisters’ involvement

In 2015 Water With Blessings began a new program to install large-scale filtration systems in institutional settings like our homes in developing countries. The cost of these larger systems is about \$800.00 per facility. This is where our homes in the Chicago province, which includes ten homes from Kentucky to California, got involved with Water With Blessings.

Judy Mitchell, a lay associate at our home in Louisville, knew about Water With Blessings through her parish, which helps provide filters to women in Jamaica. When Judy heard



Sister Maria Guadalupe learns how to install the larger water filters at the Water With Blessings headquarters before leaving for Peru.

about the new institutional-size filters, she immediately contacted Sister Lorraine to see if the homes of the Little Sisters could benefit from the filtration program.

Since first contacting Sister Lorraine, Judy Mitchell has coordinated the installation of the Sawyer water filters in our African homes, including Nairobi and Mombasa (Kenya), Enugu (Nigeria), Tokan (Benin) and Brazzaville (Congo). Mother Provincial Maria Christine writes, “The entire story of Judy Mitchell working with Sister Lorraine Lauter, OSU from Water With Blessings is nothing short of the miraculous intervention of Providence! Wherever there was need for a volunteer to take and install these filters for our homes, there would appear capable and willing volunteers. Thanks to a Filipino volunteer known to some of our staff in Palatine (IL), the water filter system was to be delivered to our home in Manila this past summer.”

A Little Sister has even gotten directly involved in the program. Sister Maria Guadalupe, a member of our community in San Pedro (CA) and a native of Peru, was enlisted to carry and install the filtration system in our two homes in that Andean

nation during her home visit this summer. Before traveling to South America Sister Maria Guadalupe visited the Water With Blessings headquarters in Middletown, Kentucky to receive training on how to install and operate the filtration system.

Ever enthusiastic like the Water Women she has helped empower, in 2017, A.J.J. member Judy Mitchell is hoping to get water filters installed in several of our homes in Sri Lanka and India, as well as our other homes in South America (in addition to Peru the Congregation administers homes in Colombia, Argentina and Chile).



One of the crocheted protective socks in use on a water filter.

Crochet hooks and bottle caps

All of these efforts to bring clean water to those in need were a meaningful way to participate in the Jubilee Year of Mercy, but this is only part of the story. Every home in the province also got involved in Water With Blessings in a very hands-on way by crocheting brightly colored “socks” to serve as a protective wrapping for the ceramic water filters as they are shipped around the world.

From Little Sisters to Residents, volunteers and members of neighboring parishes, everyone spent the Year of Mercy crocheting thousands of the tubular “socks,” which are about the size and shape of empty toilet tissue rolls, with an opening the size of a soda bottle cap at one end. Those doing the crocheting were invited to begin and end their work with a prayer of blessing for

(continued on page 12)



In Minnesota they call them jackets and they crochet lots of them!

Our community of Little Sisters of the Poor in St. Paul is quite limited in number and, in some areas, capabilities. We certainly are not sewers, knitters or crocheters. Few of us had ever held a crochet needle. Little-by-little, watching others work on them, we began to crochet “Water Blessing Jackets” for the water filters. During our community time after dinner and lunch, we spend much of this time crocheting our “jackets.” In other homes they call them “socks;” however, we like to call them “jackets.” Our 93 year old Little Sister crochets one to two jackets each day, and our two begging Sisters crochet jackets as they make their rounds in Minnesota.

An apartment Resident, three employees and three volunteers have joined us in our project, and they are as enthusiastic as we are. Many people contribute to the project by supplying the yarn. One of our volunteers asked her pastor to put an article in her church bulletin asking for yarn, and the first delivery was five large bags full. So, we have a great supply! A group of ladies at a

Lutheran church is also contributing to our work. As of this date, we have sent out 1,000 jackets altogether!

How much we take for granted! We have free, clean, drinkable water, while some poor countries are deprived of life-sustaining water. We have seen the mucky water coming out of pipes that little children who don't have clean water must drink. With the water filters, the mothers are able to clean up the water and keep their children free of disease. Our job is to provide the "jackets" to place around the ceramic filters for shipping so that they do not break on their way to those in need.


During our Christmas Boutique last weekend, the Sisters organized a booth with many pictures of the Water With Blessings project. It was a great success! The Sisters were able to raise awareness of the great need for these filters and the jackets. Asking for donations of yarn, volunteers to help with the project and monetary donations, the Sisters were able to collect a sum of \$850.50. Imagine! This money can buy about fifteen small water filters.

We know we are helping others, however we are actually being helped as a community by working together, assisting each of us to think about our neighbors and to thank God for what we have here.



Residents at our home in Tokan, Benin, admire their new water filtration system.

the Water Women who would receive the fruits of their labors, reminding them that this work is a form of ministry.

Mother Provincial Maria Christine writes of the sock project, “Several thousand of these crocheted socks have been donated to the Water With Blessings project from our homes since April [2016]. For us, it is a small but tangible effort during this Year of Mercy to live out the corporal work of mercy of ‘giving drink to the thirsty,’ especially to those who desperately need clean drinking water. Recently the coordinator at Water With Blessings has asked our homes to contribute crocheted socks to Ecuador following the devastating earthquake there. They are sending 4,500 individual water filters to that country and need the protective socks. This has been a great project for our recreations. Little Sisters and others who never crocheted have taken up the challenge and love doing them because they are small and very much needed. We think Saint Jeanne Jugan would be very pleased to see such coordinated efforts with our religious family. A beautiful gesture of solidarity has been initiated throughout the province with this water filtration project!” 

A large group of people, many wearing white robes, are gathered in front of a multi-story brick building. They are singing and releasing numerous white doves into the air. The scene is outdoors, and the building has large windows and a modern architectural style.

Singing the prolife message

Our homes in Denver and Washington, DC have been fighting the culture of death with positive, prolife songs...


Sadly, assisted suicide was approved in both Colorado and the District of Columbia this fall. While we view this as a tragedy, our Little Sisters, Residents and supporters have not ceased to witness to the dignity of every human life at every age, from the moment of conception until natural death.

In Washington our Residents and Little Sisters collaborated on the production of a prolife music video, entitled *Every Human Life Is Sacred*, with Janis Clarke and ShalomWorld T.V.

In Denver our Little Sisters accepted several invitations to speak about the issue of assisted suicide. Thinking “out of the box” for a Little Sister but right in synch with the youngest generation, one of the Sisters penned a rap song in defense of life entitled, *What If I Want to Live?*

It is impossible to cap-



ture the excitement of original music on the printed page, but we hope these scenes from our video production and the lyrics of Sr. Dara’s song will inspire you to pray for the cause of life! 



Opposite page: ShalomWorld crew interviews and films Residents as they make signs to be used during the video shoot.

Left: Janis Clarke and the Little Sisters lead the crowd in a rehearsal for the video.



Above: Bernice Fruitrell, a longtime Resident, greets a young family who has come for the video.

Left: Young and old pray the rosary.



Below: Residents show their enthusiasm for the Gospel of Life.



Every human life is sacred!



View our video at <http://little>



sistersofthepoor.org/events/every-human-life-sacred/ or on YouTube!

What if I want to live?

What if I want to live?
What price on my life could I possibly give?
It's my one ... life ... on earth, there'll be no other
Do you see me as less than any of your brothers?
To breathe and smile and sing and love...
What if I want to live?

Verse 1:

I know you get no financial gain
Funding treatments that could ease my pain
Instead I'm offered a handful of pills
An overdose that's meant to kill
I lose my life, you save some cash
I feel so used, like someone's trash
Whose best interest now do you see?
I was promised choice, where's my liberty?

Verse 2:

And you might say ...
"What if one day I'm stuck in a chair
Can't brush my own teeth or fix my own hair
My independence seems as something of the past
If in the eyes of others I always come in last
Don't wanna be seen as some kinda freak
In this culture of youth there's no place for the weak."
Well, friend, one word, it's solidarity
Where the weak hold first in the human family

Verse 3:

There are decisions that can be taken back
A mistake that sends one's life off-track
But when the choice is one's own fatal demise
What's done is done, there's no thinking twice

And don't think ending your life affects only you
There'll be countless others left grieving too
Your life is worth more than the sum of your deeds
Ev'ry human brings value to our society

Verse 4:

In my mother's womb God smiled at me
I was in His plan from all eternity
Formed in His image, redeemed by His grace
It's not just for me, but the whole human race.
My unrepeatable "I" has a body and soul
There's a path for my life, with an eternal goal
Since it's all God's gift, I let Him lead the way.
It is He who has planned my last earthly day.



Our home in San Pedro, California was once a school. Today a long hallway, which all who live there call “the bridge,” connects the original section of the building, which houses the office and ancillary services, with the newer wing of the home where the Residents live. As a permanent remembrance of the Year of Mercy, this long, somewhat inconvenient hallway was transformed into a beautiful and prayerful “Bridge of Mercy.”

The inspiration for this project came from Pope Francis himself. During the Jubilee Year of Mercy, our Holy Father encouraged us to practice the

BRIDGE OF MERCY

corporal and spiritual works of mercy. He called mercy “the bridge that connects God to humanity, opening our hearts to a hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.”

Inspired by these words Residents, staff and volunteers were invited to paint portraits of their favorite saints, persons whom they felt



by Sylvia Kennedy, Volunteer


lived a life of mercy and did merciful acts. These paintings were then hung along the walls of the bridge between the administration wing and the Residents' building.

“It’s perfect that we have portraits of our foundress Saint Jeanne Jugan and Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta” hanging in the bridge, our Little Sisters note. “Both of these saints practiced mercy, serving meals



Mother Teresa of Calcutta
by Noreen Ryan, Resident

and giving drink to the elderly and the poorest of the poor, bathing and dressing those in need of assistance, comforting those who were sad or lonely and keeping vigil with the elderly and the poorest of the poor who were dying. They both practiced spiritual works of mercy through their heroic humility and long-suffering. They both found consolation and courage in the merciful heart of Jesus, gentle and humble of heart. Out of their love for Jesus they personified his merciful love for the poor and bore their share of crosses joyfully until death.”

On these pages we present a condensed version of the Bridge of Mercy! 



St. John Vianney
by Tom Laz, Resident



St. Isidore the Farmer
by Gloria Baraja, Volunteer



St. Pio of Pietrelcina
by Pat Deacon, Resident



St. Martin de Porres
by Alice Dover, Volunteer



St. John of God
by Maureen Vittorio, Resident



St. Therese of Lisieux
by Alexis Ulrich, Volunteer



St. Jeanne Jugan
by Pat Deacon, Resident



St. Julian of Norwich
by Sr. Anthony, I.S.P.



St. Vincent de Paul
by Anna Jaksic, Staff




St. Elizabeth of Hungary
by Verla Winans, Resident



Signs and instruments of mercy

One of Pope Francis' greatest hopes for the Jubilee Year of Mercy was that the faithful would make serious efforts to practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Through them, he wrote, "we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy that we may become more effective signs of the Father's action in our lives." Our lay associates at Jeanne Jugan Residence in Pawtucket, Rhode Island took this message to heart and wove the works of mercy into all of their activities this year.

A.J.J. members focused on a different work of mercy each month. Their efforts included assisting the Residents at meal-time (feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty); conducting a clothing drive for the Residents (clothing the naked); visiting the infirm and those who seem especially isolated (visiting the sick; comforting the afflicted); inviting young people to the home to learn more about religious life (instructing the ignorant) and praying for one another's needs and intentions (praying for the living and the dead). May the fruits of their labors continue long into the future! 



*Our little
basilica of mercy*

Together with their chaplain, Rev. Michael Sims, MSC, our community in Melbourne, Australia decided to make the closing day of the Jubilee of Mercy on November 20 a very memorable one for the Residents and friends of the home, and even a few strangers who found their way to their little “basilica of mercy.”

Thanks to the kindness of their local bishop, the home’s chapel was designated an official pilgrimage site for the day so that all who visited there could obtain the Jubilee Year plenary indulgence. In his note to the Little Sisters Most Rev. Terry Curtin wrote, “The power of prayer is truly wonderful ... Saint Jeanne Jugan would be so pleased.”

The day’s program included Mass, a Eucharistic procession through the home and then exposition of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the rest of the day. “People drifted in all day and some came back later in the day,” our Little Sisters recount. “Refreshments were available for all those who needed physical nourishment, but the spiritual food was the essential for them all. There was a silent reflection for everyone to quietly ponder over on Christ, our King.”

Two priests made themselves available for the sacrament of Reconciliation throughout the day and the Sisters were pleased to observe a steady stream of penitents of all ages. Late in the afternoon a special Rosary was recited with the following merciful mysteries: Jesus cleanses the Temple; the woman taken in adultery; the feeding of the multitudes; the encounter with Zacchaeus, and the beatitude of the merciful.


The day concluded with evening prayer with the interces-





sory prayers focused on our gratitude and thanksgiving for all the graces given and received during this Extraordinary Year of Mercy and the Beatitudes of Mercy.

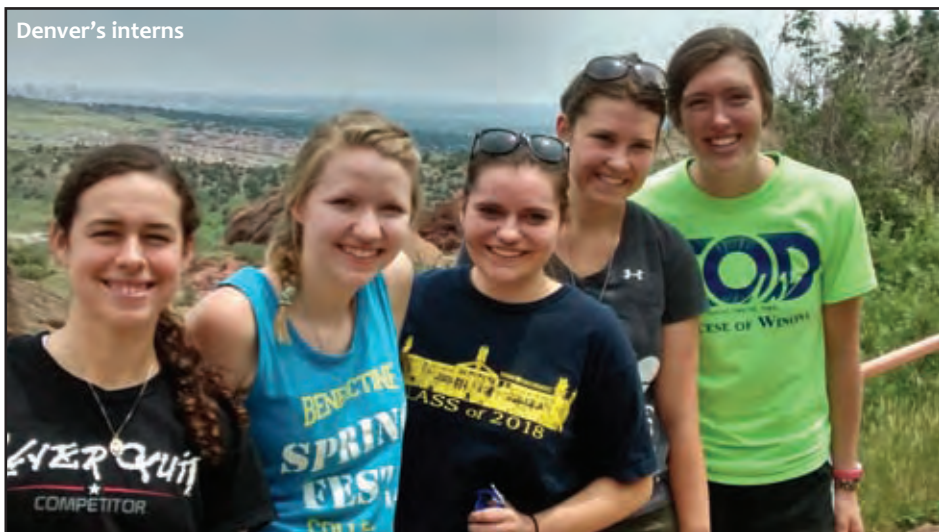
“Everyone agreed that it was a truly extraordinary day of prayer and graces for everyone who took time to be still and enter into our little ‘basilica of mercy,’” our Little Sisters relate. “The presence of the mercy and compassion of the Father was certainly very tangible. We too can all experience this and echo the words of Pope Francis:”

“Yes, I believe it is a time for mercy. The Church is showing her maternal side, her motherly face, to a humanity that is wounded. She does not wait for the wounded to knock on her doors, she looks for them on the streets, she gathers them in, she embraces them, makes them feel loved.” 

When I arrived in Denver I was immediately welcomed by the Sisters, my fellow interns and the Residents. One of the Residents took us interns on a tour and said, “Call your mothers, tell them you’re happy and everyone loves you!” That set the mood for the entire summer.

We interns said morning and evening prayer with the Sisters. Then we helped serve meals and rotated between different activities with the Residents such as leading sing-a-longs, fitness sessions, games, and weekly outings. The Mass was at the center

Denver’s interns



Discovering the greatness that lies in the elderly

**Participants in our Spring into Service summer
live-in program share their experiences.**

of every day. We chose to go out with the Sisters to collect donations at stores and local churches. We had “family dinners” with the Sisters on the patio and sometimes the convent. At the end of the day we interns would enjoy sharing stories about our day. The Little Sisters share Christ’s love with every Resident and em-

ployee, begetting a contagiously joyful environment. The summer service program allows young women to develop friendships with the Sisters and elders. I don't know what I am called to do with my life. But I know I was where I was meant to be last summer. My time with the Little Sisters of the Poor made me realize that Christ wants me to find my vocation. My trepidation for the future was replaced with excitement for the journey.

– Angela Cowles, *University of Minnesota, Duluth*

What I wanted to gain by spending the summer in New York (Bronx) was a better understanding of myself, my strengths and weaknesses, and to really form a solid foundation of faith through prayer and service with the Little Sisters of the Poor. I did appreciate the monetary compensation, because I needed money in order to buy hundreds of dollars of books for school this semester and other necessities in paying for college, but apart from needing to cover those costs, I would have been happy to work with the Sisters for free because working in New York didn't feel like work. I thoroughly enjoyed spending time with the Residents.

Initially I was hesitant because I am naturally introverted and soft spoken, but I definitely got more confident as time went on. The Residents had such amazing stories and advice for me. Also, they were hilarious. It brought me so much joy to wake up every morning and serve them breakfast. Likewise, planning activities and getting Residents involved hands-on was super-cool. I'm not the most creative person, but I think we did some pretty interesting crafts. I found it very hard to leave the Residents I worked with by the end of the summer.

– Sarah McBride, *Ave Maria University, Florida*

These past two months have been transformative for me, and have shaped me in the way I view life, death and mercy. This is the year of Mercy, but I didn't really understand what that

looked like in my life until this summer... I have seen and experienced it daily here. Mercy is the love of God as it meets man. Mercy is when we are able to touch God, or his love touches us....

I have learned that life is often painful, and it's not always a physical pain. Sometimes it's the pain of saying goodbye to someone you love, or the life you left behind. Sometimes it's the pain of worrying about a doctor appointment or a grandchild. Sometimes it's the pain that comes from living a broken life. Even though life is painful, pain is not the end. Christ didn't die for us to suffer — he died so that through suffering we might have joy in the resurrection.

Christ wanted us to live joyfully in the midst of suffering. As I was sitting and coloring with one of the Residents she said to me: "We're all in pain, but that doesn't mean I'm just going to sit in my room and rot." There is so much truth in this — we're all in pain, but that doesn't mean life isn't worth living. Our society often looks at people as if they are some sort of a machine. Once they start aging and become disabled they seem to be "broken down." They are of no use to the world. We ought to get rid of them, or at least hide them away. But this couldn't be farther from the truth! The elderly are so precious, and with each passing day they become more so.

– *Katherine Dea, Benedictine College, Kansas*

One of the many takeaways from my time in Mobile was the ability to find beauty in patience. In a world full of rushing around, it was life-changing to enter a place of meditation and peace through the company of 75+ beautiful souls. Through sitting in a Resident's room for hours listening to their life story or stopping to find the beauty in peeling potatoes, God never ceased the outpouring of blessings that came from doing every single task, especially when doing these with love. God knew what our hearts needed and how to satisfy the burning desire within. Also, being able to have a sneak peak into the life of a Little Sister of the Poor made me even more appreciative of religious life. I pray



Summer intern Katelyn Payne at the Chicago produce market with the Little Sisters.

that every young adult gets the opportunity to experience such a prayerful and fruitful time of mission work and discernment.

– Julianna Ortiz, *University of Central Florida*

I had an absolutely wonderful time at the home in Philadelphia. This experience was completely eye-opening for me and gave me a ton of clarity that I was searching for in my life. My time with the people of Holy Family Home made me truly realize how important my relationship with God is to me. It has given me a sincere appreciation for the Church, for its people, and for his creation. By spending a little time with some of the Residents, workers, and Sisters, I have learned the importance of prayer and the joy that he can bring to us if we rest in him.


Ultimately, I have grown in my faith in one of the most beautiful ways that God can show us his goodness, through the joy of serving others. I am extremely thankful that I was given the opportunity to strengthen my relationship with Christ in a way that I have never even imagined.



Bethany Bateman and Brianna Antram make music with our Sisters in Somerville, MA.

I know this is not the end! This is just a little snapshot of how God is working in my life. This experience has allowed me to really see the joy in the vocation to religious life and I am confident that God is calling me to explore this vocation further. I have been able to grow closer to the heart of Christ, and for that, I cannot say thank you enough.

– Shannon Stout, Siena College, New York

To sum up my experience, I would say it changed my life. Everyone at Queen of Peace was so welcoming to begin with and then so inclusive as my two month stay continued. I made true friendships with the Residents and learned so much about caring for the elderly from the Sisters. I think about my time there daily and miss my sweet friends so much! ... My passion truly lies with serving our Lord through serving the elderly. I'm so grateful to the Little Sisters for the program and further showing me how to care for the world's elderly. 

– Brook Martin, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge



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