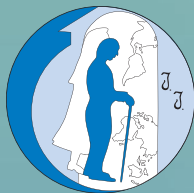


Serenity

no. 172 • Little Sisters of the Poor • October 2016



Like Simeon and Anna the elderly reveal a world
of hidden power where God loves to hide himself.



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: Stained glass window of the Presentation in the Temple, Corpus Christi Catholic Church, Celebration FL.

Inside Back Cover: Detail, icon of the Presentation in the Temple, by Philip Davydov and Olga Shalamova, Saint Petersburg, Russia.

Outside Back Cover: Photo from World Youth Day, Krakow, July 28, 2016.

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It's all about *relationships* between the young and the old!

Chances are you've heard part of this headline before. "It's all about relationships" — we hear this in reference to leadership styles, business dealings and fund raising strategies — we even use it in relation to the Church's efforts to evangelize!

Our foundress Saint Jeanne Jugan might not have known the benefits of our contemporary means of communication, but she understood well the importance of relationships. She often counseled the young Little Sisters that they should be little in order to be close to the elderly. In fact, she replaced the term "servants" with "sisters" in the Congregation's name to better capture the family spirit she envisioned for her homes.

The Sisters were to think of themselves as the "little sisters," or granddaughters, of their elderly Residents. "They were

to bring them a certain quality of relationship, a presence, a closeness which would draw these people out of their isolation and free them from their anguish” (Leclerc, E. *The Desert and the Rose*, p. 47).

In her latter years Saint Jeanne Jugan was able to imbue the novices with her spirit simply through her presence among them. “Sr. Mary of the Cross! Ah! If you only knew how good she was! She was so gentle, forgiving us immediately,” one of her novices remembered many years later. “She spoke firmly when necessary, but she thought no more about it afterwards.” Another Sister testified, “Her charity touched the hearts of all; we were at ease with her, like a mother in her family, and each one could say to herself: ‘How kind she is; she loves me. I feel right at home!’”

Like our foundress, Pope Francis emphasizes the quality of relationships between the young and the old — so much so that his parting words to the participants and volunteers at World Youth Day this summer were about the elderly!

“Do you want to be the hope for the future or not?” he asked them. The first condition, he said, is to remember — to understand where one has come from, the memory of one’s people and family. A young person who has no memory of all that he has received from those who have gone before him is no hope for the future, he said.

How do we go about remembering? By spending time with the elderly! “If you want to be hope for the future, you have to receive the torch from your grandfather and your grandmother,” Pope Francis told the young, for the elderly represent the wisdom of a people.

Pope Francis’ parting World Youth Day message was exhilarating for us Little Sisters. The beautiful and truly evangelical potential realized when the young and the old come together in meaningful relationships — the theme of this issue of *Serenity* — is a powerful source of hope for the future! 🌺



Jesus, Mary and Joseph with Simeon and Anna.

The *elderly* as experts in the spiritual *works of mercy*

In the spring issue of *Serenity* we reflected on the corporal works of mercy in relation to older persons — how they can be practiced both *toward* and *by* the elderly. In this issue we will consider the spiritual works of mercy, specifically, the unmatched potential of the elderly to practice them in the heart of their families and in society.

The spiritual works of mercy include:

- counseling the doubtful;
- instructing the ignorant;
- admonishing the sinner;
- comforting the sorrowful;
- forgiving injuries;
- bearing wrongs patiently;
- praying for the living and the dead.

The wise person connects the past with the future

We could say that older persons are natural counselors, comforters, teachers and admonishers. This is largely thanks to their accumulated experience and wisdom, as Popes John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis have all emphasized. “The elderly do not usually take part in social and political activity, but you still can contribute a great deal to making the world a better place,” Pope Saint John Paul II wrote in his *Letter to the Elderly*. “You have experience to share, wisdom to impart, tolerance to teach, though these are not always evident to younger people. Your words of peace and love are greatly needed in today’s society.”

Wisdom does not come automatically with age, however. Its seeds are sown through the experiences of a lifetime, but wisdom matures through prayer and reflection on those experiences in light of the Gospel. “With God’s grace, as one matures, one arrives at wisdom, the realization that we come from God and are going to God.... The wise person is always growing, always learning. The wise person is always connecting the past with the future. Elders share their stories, and in so doing, pass on what they have learned to future generations, through both words and example. Their wisdom does not die with them but guides and enriches generations to come” (USCCB, *Blessings of Age*, p. 9-10).

Pope Francis recently encouraged seniors to realize their special charism: “We are able to remind ambitious young people that a life without love is a barren life. We are able to say to young people who are afraid that anxiety about the future can be overcome. We are able to teach the young who are overly self-absorbed that there is more joy in giving than in receiving.”

Always realistic, our Holy Father admits to older persons that their efforts to show younger generations the way can often be met with resistance and ingratitude. How can we “admonish sinners” when the dominant culture seems to have lost the sense



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than in receiving.

Pope Francis

of God and of the consequences of sin? Pope Francis shows us how to reach the people of our time — by communicating God's mercy, and radiating patience and good humor. And just as the Gospel challenges us to remove the beam from our own eye before we attempt to remove the speck from our brother's eye (cf. Matthew 7:5), our Holy Father demonstrates great humility as he instructs and admonishes. When asked, in his first interview after becoming Pope, "Who is Jorge Bergoglio?" he replied, "... the best summary, the one that comes more from the inside and I feel most true is this: I am a sinner whom the Lord has looked upon ... I am one who is looked upon by the Lord. I always felt my motto, *Miserando atque Eligendo* (By Having Mercy and by Choosing Him), was very true for me" (Spadaro, A., S.J., A big heart open to God. *America Magazine*, September 30, 2013).

An older person himself, Pope Francis gives us a moving example of how to reach out to those who have lost their way. Often referring to the Church as a field hospital, he recognizes

that people today need “the medicine of mercy and not a scold. “[T]he thing the Church needs most today is the ability to heal wounds and to warm the hearts of the faithful. ... [T]he ministers of the Church must be ministers of mercy above all” (*ibid.*). The Pope is speaking here about priests, but the same could be said of the elderly, who are, in a sense, ministers of God in the heart of their families.

Pope Francis desperately wants us to understand that our God is a God of patience and merciful love. If God is demanding — requiring us to renounce our sins — it is because he loves us and desires our true good and happiness; even if we refuse to change our ways, he remains faithful. “The Lord never tires of forgiving: never,” he has repeatedly told the faithful. “It is we who tire of asking his forgiveness. Let us ask for the grace not to tire of asking forgiveness, because he never tires of forgiving. Let us ask for this grace.”

Saint Jeanne Jugan, model of mercy

Our foundress, Saint Jeanne Jugan, also gives us an eloquent example of how older persons can practice the spiritual works of mercy, despite the increasing frailty of old age. During



Saint Jeanne Jugan walking in the motherhouse garden with a novice.

her long forced retirement at our motherhouse she was given no specific responsibilities, but she succeeded in imprinting her founding charism of humility and loving service in the hearts of the novices among whom she lived. She instructed the ignorant, counseled the doubtful and fervently prayed for her young companions in their moments of uncertainty, temptation and need. She was direct and at times demanding in giving them fraternal correction, practical advice and spiritual counsel, but always with a maternal heart. They felt loved by her, and in return, they loved her as a mother. In their old age several of these Little Sisters still attributed their perseverance to her.

The young Sisters who knew Jeanne Jugan admired her spirit of faith and her profound humility, but the most striking example she gave them was the way she bore wrongs patiently and willingly forgave those who treated her unjustly. Placed in a similar situation, most of us would fight back, considering it a matter of justice to reclaim our rightful place, or at least to let others know about the wrongs committed against us. But in the case of Saint Jeanne Jugan, there is not a single recorded instance of her trying to set the record straight or to assert her legitimate authority. Among the numerous testimonies collected in view of her canonization, there is just one incident in which she told the priest responsible for her deposition, “You have stolen my work — but I give it to you willingly!”

Such was the heroic degree to which Saint Jeanne Jugan practiced the spiritual works of mercy, especially bearing wrongs and forgiving injuries. What was the secret to her sanctity? Jeanne Jugan found consolation and courage in the merciful heart of Jesus, gentle and humble of heart. She saw her life as a continuation of his and, out of love for him, sought to incarnate

**In the trials of
old age he is the
companion of your
pain and you are his
companions on the
way of the cross.**

Saint John Paul II

his humility and merciful love for the poor. Inspired by Christ, she bore her share of his cross joyfully until death.

Only two years into his pontificate and still in his physical prime, Saint John Paul II commiserated with the sufferings of the elderly and encouraged them to forgive those who cause them pain. “By this world which is hard to understand you feel misunderstood and often enough rejected,” he told a large gathering of elders in Munich, Germany in 1980. “Your opinion, your cooperation, your presence is not asked for — that is how you feel and how, unfortunately, sometimes it actually is.” The Pope encouraged seniors to see their own sufferings in the light of Christ’s sufferings, telling them that “in the trials of old age he is the companion of your pain and you are his companions on the way of the cross. There is no tear you have to shed alone, and none you shed in vain. By this suffering he has redeemed suffering, and through your suffering you cooperate in his salvation.”

John Paul II invited older persons to accept their suffering as the embrace of Christ and to “turn it into a blessing by accepting it from the hand of the Father who in his inscrutable, yet unquestionable wisdom and love is using just this to bring about your perfection.” He assured them that “in this spirit — which God alone can give us — it also becomes easier to be understanding with those who through negligence, carelessness, heedlessness, contribute to cause our need, and it becomes possible for us also to forgive those who knowingly and even intentionally make us suffer without, however, completely conceiving how much pain they cause us.” Finally, he encouraged them to make our Savior’s words from the cross their own: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing!” (Luke 23:34).

The elderly as powerful intercessors

We have touched on how the elderly excel at the first six spiritual works of mercy; all that remains is the seventh, praying for the living and the dead. Intercessory prayer is preeminently



Intercessory
prayer — prayer
offered for the needs
of others —
is preeminently a
prayer of mercy.

CCC n. 2634

a prayer of mercy. It leads us to pray as Jesus himself did, since “he is the one intercessor with the Father on behalf of all men, especially sinners.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* beautifully teaches that “since Abraham, intercession — asking on behalf of another — has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God’s mercy” (CCC, n. 2634). It is an expression of the communion of saints, which knows no boundaries. “In intercession, he who prays looks ‘not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others,’ even to the point of praying for those who do him harm” (*ibid.*, n. 2635).

The prayer of intercession is particularly well-suited to the elderly as a work of mercy, since it is independent of physical limitations or distances. Saint Faustina once commented, “If I cannot show mercy by deeds, I can always do so by prayer. My prayer reaches out even there where I cannot reach out physically.” Intercession is the one work of mercy that we can practice



at any time, in any place and in any physical condition in which we may find ourselves.

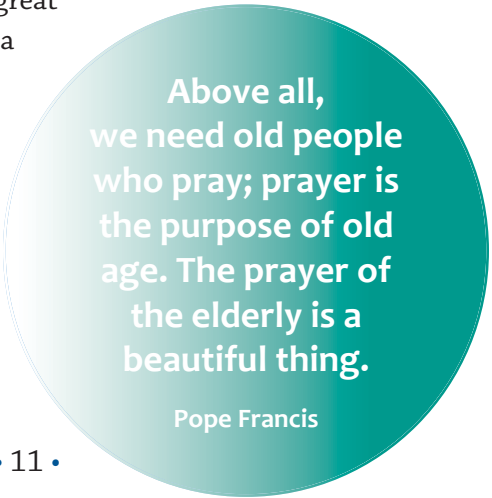
Because it is offered for others rather than ourselves, intercessory prayer calls us to be magnanimous — to have selfless and generous hearts. In his catechetical series in preparation for the World Meeting of Families in 2015, Pope Francis called upon the elderly to make up for those who do not take the time to pray. “Praise and supplication to God prevent the heart from becoming hardened by resentment and selfishness. How awful is the cynicism of an elderly person who has lost the meaning of his testimony, who scorns the young and does not communicate the wisdom of life! How beautiful, however, is the encouragement an elderly person manages to pass on to a young person who is seeking the meaning of faith and of life! It is truly the mission of grandparents, the vocation of the elderly.”

Referring to the elderly prophets Simeon and Anna, our

Holy Father invited seniors to become poets of prayer: “Dear grandparents, dear elderly, let us follow in the footsteps of these extraordinary elders! Let us too become like poets of prayer: let us develop a taste for finding our own words, let us once again grasp those which teach us the Word of God. The prayer of grandparents and of the elderly is a great gift for the Church, it is a treasure! A great injection of wisdom for the whole of human society: above all for one which is too busy, too taken, too distracted. Someone should also sing, for them too, sing of the signs of God, proclaim the signs of God, pray for them! Let us look to Benedict XVI, who chose to spend the final span of his life in prayer and listening to God! This is beautiful! A great believer of the last century, of the Orthodox tradition, Olivier Clément, said: ‘A civilization which has no place for prayer is a civilization in which old age has lost all meaning. And this is terrifying. For, above all, we need old people who pray; prayer is the purpose of old age.’ The prayer of the elderly is a beautiful thing.”

As Little Sisters we witness the prayerfulness of the elderly on a daily basis, and we try to make them more aware of the infinite spiritual potential that is theirs in interceding for others, both near and far, and in uniting their sufferings to the redemptive sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of the world. It is not too much to say that for some of our elderly, their sense of mission in praying for their families or the needs of the world is what sustains them in the midst of great diminishment and gives them a reason to go on living as they, like Simeon, long to see God face to face.

Some time ago a number of Little Sisters were discussing the prayer life of our Residents and the eldest member of the group, herself in a wheelchair, unearthed



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Pope Francis

an old book by Rev. Frederick William Faber, an Oratorian and contemporary of Blessed John Henry Newman. A convert to Catholicism, noted hymn writer and theologian, Father Faber authored some of our most well-known hymns, including *Faith of Our Fathers* and *Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All*. In the book in question, entitled *Bethlehem*, he reflected on the first worshippers of the infant Christ, among them Simeon and Anna. “There is a little world of such souls as Simeon and Anna within the Church,” Faber wrote in 1860. “The devotion of Simeon and Anna is eminently a devotion of prayer and church-frequenting ... God comes to holy souls, not so much in heroic actions, which are rather the soul’s leaping upward to God, but in the performance of ordinary, habitual devotions, and the discharge of modest, unobtrusive duties, made heroic by long perseverance and inward intensity.”

Simeon and Anna, like the Little Sister who contributed Father Faber’s thoughts to our discussion, represent “a secret abyss of human hearts in which God loves to hide himself ... a world of rest and yet of power.” These elderly prophets give us a glimpse into an obscure world of holy hidden souls, a mysterious stronghold of God’s glory upon earth. They have an indispensable role and power in the life of the Church, helping — by their intercession and their sacrifices — to save individual souls and to preserve our increasingly godless world from spiritual ruin.

How differently we as a Church and a society would perceive the elderly and disabled if we looked upon them through this spiritual lens, for we would be more aware of their dignity in God’s eyes and would be more likely to value them for the irreplaceable role they play in lifting up the world! How precious are our elderly loved ones and friends who are, in God’s mysterious Providence, intercessors of mercy for us! 🙏



euthanasia

YOUTH & AGED *for life*

At the mid-point of the Jubilee of Mercy Pope Francis exhorted Catholics to establish new, permanent works of mercy as a lasting fruit of this special Year. At Jeanne Jugan Residence in Washington, D.C. an ongoing work of mercy is taking shape in the form of a newly-established intergenerational pro-life prayer group. The group was born as a collaborative effort between the Little Sisters and Janis Clarke, a consecrated virgin and singing evangelist in the archdiocese of Washington.

The group's name, "Youth & Aged for Life," was inspired by a play on words. A native of Canada, Janis was alarmed by developments leading to the legalization of medically assisted suicide in her homeland. Praying one day, it struck her that the word "euthanasia" and the phrase "youth and aged" sound very



similar. Rather than accept the inevitability of euthanasia, she thought, youth and older persons could come together to fight this trend, both by witnessing to the dignity of every hu-

man life from beginning to end, and by helping to build the Culture of Life through intercessory prayer.

Janis recounts how the group took shape, “While working together with one of the Little Sisters to organize the holy hour to pray for their Supreme Court case, it became clear that we share a common dream: to help the elderly discover their great dignity in Christ, their great mission for these times, and their critical role in the lives of young people who need them as much as they need the young. Not long after that, *Youth&Aged for Life* was born: a Lord of the Rings kind of fellowship to pray for families, the unborn, and the elderly.”

“Though the world seems to be spinning out of control,” she continues, “the Lord is still in charge, and there is no doubt that our elders and youth are at the heart of His Mercy Plan. No wonder the Enemy works so hard to eliminate them through euthanasia and abortion. These precious folks are some of the Church’s most untapped resources: a huge army of potential intercessors!”

The project is starting small with regular meetings at our home in Washington, in the hope of establishing a template that could be adapted to serve families, parishes, schools and homes for the elderly across North America. Each meeting includes a moment of catechesis, updates on local pro-life initiatives, singing and praying the rosary together. Each participant is encouraged to take their turn praying a Hail Mary so that each one’s voice is heard, because in the Culture of Life we believe that each person’s individual contribution is unique and necessary.

“Imagine inspiring and mobilizing elderly men and women together with youth to be the world changers they were born to be at this critical juncture in history!” Janis reflects. “With Mother Mary as our fearless leader, and the Rosary as our weapon of love, we are unstoppable in Christ!”

As she travels to parishes and schools sharing the Rosary Mission she founded, Janis looks forward to sharing this vision of *Youth&Aged for Life* with Catholics, to help them change the script in a culture constantly pushing euthanasia and abortion as the new normal. “It’s hard for young people to believe in euthanasia when some of their best friends and prayer partners are over 90,” she notes. “And regular contact with young people can inspire the elderly with greater zeal to offer prayers and sacrifices for families and for the unborn.”

Helen Alvaré, who has devoted her life’s work to the defense of life, has lent her support to *Youth&Aged for Life*: “Could there be anything more beautiful — or more representative of the thrust of the entire Christian life,” she suggests, “than this beautiful initiative which both demonstrates and prays for respect for human beings at every stage of their life?!” 🌻





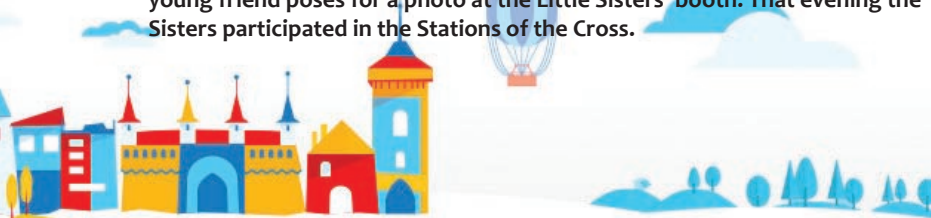
Postcards from Krakow

Whether in Poland, “Krakow in the Capital,” or “WYD in NYC,” our Little Sisters enthusiastically took part in this summer’s World Youth Day festivities!

Above left and center: A group of Little Sisters from several homes in France, including two Americans, joined young people from the diocese of Agen on pilgrimage to Poland.

Above right: Young women participating in a World Youth Day weekend at our novitiate in Queens Village, New York, venerate the cross.

Left and center: At Washington D.C.’s “Krakow in the Capital” celebration a young friend poses for a photo at the Little Sisters’ booth. That evening the Sisters participated in the Stations of the Cross.



THE Joy AND
Hope OF THE
followers
OF Christ



At their Supreme Convention in August the Knights of Columbus presented our Congregation with the Gaudium et Spes Award, their highest honor. We are the twelfth recipients and the first group to be recognized with this award. In presenting the medal to Mother Provincial Loraine Marie Clare, Archbishop William Lori, Supreme Chaplain, cited the Little Sisters' service to the elderly poor and our stand for religious liberty against the HHS Contraceptive Mandate. Mother Loraine's words in accepting the award follow.

On behalf of all the Little Sisters of the Poor I wish to thank Archbishop Lori, Supreme Chaplain, Carl Anderson, Supreme Knight, and the K of C board members. Thank you for this night, for this award, for your support in so many ways, and most of all for your service to the Church and her people. You bring God's mercy and hope to so many through your countless works of charity.

We Little Sisters are honored and profoundly humbled to have been chosen to receive the Gaudium et Spes Award. I am happy to mention that Sr. Catherine Emmanuel, our bursar general, is here from our motherhouse in France representing our Mother General.

Although we never would have chosen to become the public face of conscientious objection to the HHS Mandate, we felt compelled to take a stand for the sake of the elderly Residents we serve. Our only desire has been to ensure that we will be able to



continue to care for the elderly poor with dignity and love, just as we have for over 175 years. Together with our Residents we have had the honor of witnessing to the Culture of Life in the Church and in the world.

We Little Sisters of the Poor have been enormously blessed since submitting our HHS lawsuit three years ago. We have experienced moments of worry and anxiety, but we have also had many unforgettable experiences for which we continue to thank God, this evening being one of them.



Mother Loraine with Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and Archbishop William Lori.

Throughout each stage of our journey to the Supreme Court we have come to know many wonderful, courageous and edifying people whom we would never have otherwise encountered, and through whom we have recognized the mysterious workings of God's loving Providence. Even in our most anxious moments we have been upheld by the solidarity of so many people who love the poor and who are committed to the ideals of religious liberty and the dignity of every human life. Through their encouraging words and the assurance of their prayers, as well as their logistical and financial support, these faithful believers have shown us that they know how to walk the talk of the Culture of Life. We are profoundly inspired by their example.

I have been personally enriched by their goodness and I can say the same of all of my Little Sisters throughout the United States and beyond. I have never known the power of prayer as I have experienced it these last three years. We have never felt alone and as I look out this evening at this remarkable representation of the people of God, I feel more supported than ever. This gathering is for me a glimpse of the heavenly banquet.

This experience of solidarity has made me more conscious of the Communion of Saints, for I have seen firsthand that in the Body of Christ, when one member suffers, all suffer, and when one member rejoices all rejoice. As we descended the white marble steps of the Supreme Court on March 23rd after our case was argued, I felt as if I was walking on air. When I saw so many religious sisters, young people and others chanting and applauding, I thought to myself “this is one of the most hopeful, joy-filled, days of my life!” I will never forget it!

This joy and hope are the heart of *Gaudium et Spes*, which still beckons us — over fifty years after the Second Vatican Council — to allow our hearts to be moved by the joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor or afflicted. As Little Sisters of the Poor our hearts are uniquely moved by the plight of the elderly, whose numbers are rapidly growing and whose dignity is increasingly threatened. In this current cultural context we wish for nothing more than to be able to continue responding to the needs of the elderly poor, just as we have done since Saint Jeanne Jugan took in the first old woman in 1839.

It is well known that Pope Saint John Paul II was instru-

Little Sisters with Logan T. Ludwig, Deputy Supreme Knight.



mental in drafting *Gaudium et Spes*, and he cited it more than any other Vatican II document in his papal writings. It no doubt reflects his vision of the Church and the world we share. In his homily at the time of Jeanne Jugan's beatification in 1982 John Paul II noted that our foundress' vision was in what he called "secret harmony" with all that *Gaudium et Spes* would one day say about "establishing a great human family where all men are treated as brothers (n. 24), sharing the world's goods according to the law of justice which is inseparable from the law of charity (n. 69)."

In the same homily John Paul II also observed that Jeanne Jugan wanted her Congregation to spread and become "a real network of family homes where each person would be received, honored and even, to the extent possible to each one, brought to a new widening of his or her existence." He emphasized that "the timeliness of the apostolic message of Jeanne Jugan and her daughters cannot be disputed."

Saint John Paul II prayed that the beatification of our foundress would impart to our Congregation a new élan of fidelity to the spiritual and apostolic charism of our Mother, and that it would draw more and more young women from around the world into the ranks of the Little Sisters of the Poor. This is my hope today as well, as I pray that our heightened notoriety will give birth to a new flowering of vocations. If I may presume to ask you a favor tonight, I ask you to please join us in praying for an increase of vocations to our Congregation so that we can continue to serve the elderly for at least another 175 years.

We thank you for the part you have played in enabling us to continue our mission of mercy to the elderly. From the bottom of our hearts we assure you of our gratitude for your countless gestures of kindness toward us and so many others who are the recipients of the Knights of Columbus' work and mission. Please be assured of our heartfelt prayers for you and all your loved ones! 🌸



AGE is only a number

at the Little Sisters of the Poor

by Rachel Curry, *The Record*, Perth, Australia
(reprinted with permission)

Seven Residents of the Little Sisters of the Poor aged care home in Glendalough – including the cousin of an emeritus archbishop and a Sister of Mercy – have celebrated surpassing the milestone of 100 years of age.

Dubbed “the magnificent seven,” the women were congratulated at a special morning tea at the aged care home on Thursday, August 25.

They each received flowers and a plaque from City of Stirling Mayor Giovanni Italiano, while Archbishop emeritus Barry Hickey blessed a cake to be shared with family members.

Aged between 100 and 103, the women have led incredible lives across Australia and beyond.

The most senior of the group, Veronica Mary Repacholi (Bonnie), is the cousin of Archbishop Hickey, who noted during his speech that he was there both in an official capacity and as a proud family member.

Mrs. Repacholi is a former teacher who worked in many country towns in Western Australia, before meeting her husband Sydney in Kondinin and starting her family of two children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Iris Adelaide Smith, who originates from Myanmar, was described as a selfless and loving woman, whose loss of sight hasn't stopped her building a relationship with her two great-grandchildren.

Lois Davis was also born overseas — in Canada — but immigrated to Australia at the age of three, where she raised two children as a single mother and had a successful career as a nurse.

Kathleen Jones, who moved to Perth from South Australia in 2012, worked on remote cattle stations as a cook in her younger years, which is where she met Donald, her late husband of 66 years.

In contrast, Sheila Stade lived most of her life in Western Australia — including 21 years in the country — working as a nurse, raising a family with her husband Eric (Paddy) and fostering a love for ballroom dancing, fishing and motor sports.

Linda Baptist was born in Malaya and worked as the chief





supervisor of the Kuala Lumpur Telephone Exchange, where she was responsible for 500 employees, before immigrating to Perth in the 1980s.

Finally, the self-described “baby of the group” is Sister Hanora McNamara, who entered the Sisters of Mercy more than 80 years ago.

Sr. McNamara worked as a secondary teacher in metropolitan and country schools and was also involved in the formation of young women interested in joining the order.

Speaking only a couple of months after her 100th birthday, she said the key to living a long life was maintaining relationships and having a positive outlook.

“The secret is to keep interested in friends and people and don’t go away and be a hermit. Live life,” Sr. McNamara said.

“I feel very thankful to God for my health, strength, friends and life in general. Life is what you make it. Be happy and you can make others happy.”

Photos: Opposite: Lord Mayor Giovanni Italiano, Osborne Ward Councillor David Michael and Archbishop Hickey congratulate the centenarians. Above: A balloon release capped off the day’s festivities.



YOU ARE
loved AND
worth
ANOTHER'S TIME!

by Anna Wilgenbusch
Holy Family Home, St. Paul, MN

Praised be Jesus Christ!

My name is Anna Wilgenbusch and I have had the privilege of volunteering at Little Sisters of the Poor for the past two years. I was drawn to Little Sisters after visiting their home in Mobile, Alabama, and witnessing their amazingly counter-cultural view of the value of every human life and the Sisters' remarkable hospitality.

This summer, I have been working on a project in which the Residents, especially those who are completely dependent, write poetry. Many Residents immediately denied that they could do such a thing when I presented the idea to them, but they all soon proved themselves wrong. For many Residents, it was helpful to provide them with a first line, such as "If I was a little girl," or for the Residents to randomly select a topic from a list that might be "sunsets" or "my favorite food." The Residents dictated the lines to me while I helped by asking them questions about the subject and we brainstormed rhymes together. The Residents never failed to surprise me by coming up with the most creative rhymes and titles for their poems!

Through writing poems, Residents and I have had the most amazing conversations that wouldn't have been possible without the medium of poetry. I have listened to a Resident happily recall her mother making dumplings and I also have heard a Resident explain that she was a valuable player on a boys' baseball team. This project gives testimony to the fact that each person, no matter how old, is a fascinating wealth of knowledge and memories.

Along with writing poems with the Residents, I have found a meaningful ministry in sharing my violin music with those living at Little Sisters of the Poor. Music is proven to have a profound therapeutic effect on the brain and I have certainly witnessed that. I love to see Residents with memory loss recall

(continued on page 30)



When I Look Up

by Michael

When I look up and see you crucified to a cross,
I hope that our salvation is not a loss.
The Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head,
The birds of the air have nests,
The Son of Man has only one place to lay His
sacred head,
And that is on a bloody, stony cross.
For three hours the Son of God
Hangs upon His bloody cross,
The Son of Man looks down
Upon a conquered world,
With His divine purpose,
Smiles down upon a conquered world.

Life Goes by So Fast

by Virginia

Life goes by so fast
So many good things have past
I remember when I was little
I can almost hear Mama playing fiddle
We were very blessed
Although we withstood many tests
I look forward to tomorrow
Happiness triumphs over sorrow



God's Brilliant Sunrise

by Virginia

Oh, see the beautiful sunrise
A gift from God
I watched the sunrise from the mountain
A thousand colors fountain
Many brilliant colors
Even as the day comes, pink hovers
Tomorrow it will happen again
The sky filled with God's colorful pen



(You are loved and worth another's time, continued from page 27)

their mother or father playing violin after I play. Other Residents smile during a song despite their illness.

Although writing poems and playing the violin for Residents has been so enjoyable and memorable for me, I hope that the one lasting effect of my volunteer work is for each of the Residents to know that they are loved and worth another's time. I hope that this project testifies to Little Sisters of the Poor's message that since each life is infinitely valuable to God, they are infinitely valuable to us as well! 🌻



Profession

St. Ann's Novitiate



Below: Our new novices, Sisters Teresa Marie and Angela Marie (2nd and 3rd from left) look radiant!

On July 16 Sister Bernadette Rose made her first profession as a Little Sister at St. Ann's Novitiate in Queens Village, New York. Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila, bishop of Denver, Colorado, Sister's home diocese, was the main celebrant for the profession Mass.



Sixteen Little Sisters recently made their perpetual profession at our motherhouse in France. Among them were four Sisters who had completed their initial formation in the United States.

Below right: Sr. Anna Malia (first Sister in line on the left),



Perpetual Profession

La Tour St. Joseph

originally from Tonga, will be heading to New Caledonia.

Above, left: American Sr. Gemma receives her obedience for Spain!

Right: Sr. Mary Alexandra, originally from Colorado, poses with her parents, Mother General María, Archbishop Pierre-Marie Carré, principal celebrant (left) and Msgr. Edward Buelt.





Youth&Aged Prayer

ALL: Father, we thank you for loving us and giving us life. Help us to cherish our own lives, whether we are young or old, weak or strong, for life is your greatest gift.

YOUTH: Like the Holy Family in the Temple we are young. We thank you that we are fearfully, wonderfully made. We wish to do your will and to offer you our lives as a living sacrifice of praise.

ELDERS: Like Simeon and Anna, we are old. As we look back at our lives we read in them the story of your faithful love. In hope we also look forward to the joy of seeing you face to face.

YOUTH: As the young generation we cherish the wisdom and experience of our elders. Help us, Lord, never to forget all that we owe those who have gone before us, and never to neglect them in their time of need.

ELDERS: As elders we love the joy and energy of the young. Help us to look upon them with a merciful gaze. Never let us close our minds and hearts to all that they have to offer, and to their need for guidance and unconditional love.

ALL: Father, help us to see each person as you see them and as you created them to be. Through our example may we sow the seeds of faith in our families, and may we be instruments of solidarity in the world. Through the power of your Spirit alive in the world scatter the forces of death and transform the hearts of those who deny the sacred dignity of human life at every stage.

We offer this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!



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