

CHARITY CHAT

"To serve rather than be served with humility, simplicity and charity"

Association of the Ladies of Charity, Milwaukee, WI

January 2017

Important Dates

January 24, 6:30pm: LOC Meeting at Claire Wycklendt's, 4485 N. Woodburn
All welcome

March 22, 5:30pm: Evening of Reflection with Fr. Tim Kitzke, Milwaukee Catholic Home

April 25, 6:30pm: LOC Meeting at 4485 N. Woodburn • All welcome

May 1, Annual Fund Drive begins

May 23, 6:30pm: New Member Installation at Holy Family Chapel with reception following in the Kerstein Parish Center

June 16: Capuchins' Run-Walk for the Hungry at Polish Fest

July 25, 6:30pm: LOC Meeting at 4485 N. Woodburn
All welcome

August 31: Clothing Center Opening Day

September 7-10: LCUSA 400th Anniversary Celebration and National Assembly in Kansas City, Missouri at the Downtown Marriott

September 23: 60th Anniversary Celebration of Milwaukee Ladies of Charity and Opening Breakfast (tentative)

October 24, 6:30pm: LOC Meeting at 4485 N. Woodburn
All welcome

December 2: Christmas Luncheon (tentative)

Message from the Outgoing President



Mary Johnson

I hope that all of you had a wonderful Christmas and that there were many special moments that filled you with joy. I believe that as Ladies of

Charity we are able to bring a measure of joy to the Milwaukee families that we serve. Thank you all for your gracious and generous service to those who live in poverty.

I have some joyous news to share with you! I'm happy to report that as of January 1st, we have a few new leaders. I feel very blessed that Claire Wycklendt is taking on the presidency for a 2-year term and she has both Cathy Onopa and Paulette Pecard as her co-vice presidents (they're sisters-in-law!). It is with a grateful heart that I turn over the leadership to these very capable women.

Over 6 years ago, Mary Domer and I said "yes" to the call of taking on the Ladies of Charity leadership as co-presidents. It was the era of "the Marys" and it was such fun! Then, at the end of 2014, Claire Wycklendt offered to be a vice president during 2015 and 2016. Again, I felt the call and volunteered to stay on as president for an additional 2 years. Dear ladies, we are all called to be leaders in some way and saying "yes" contributes to the vibrancy of our organization. Looking back on my tenure as president, I appreciate the opportunities I had to serve and grow my leadership skills. I am

proud of our Vincentian mission, our international status, and the work we do in our Milwaukee community.

This year our organization celebrates its 60th year as a chartered LOC chapter. Last September, Mary Domer, Claire Wycklendt, Cathy Liska, and I attended the National Assembly in Queens, NY. I hope that some of you will join me at the national assembly in Kansas City in September 2017 as Ladies of Charity, founded by St. Vincent de Paul in 1617, turns 400.

Message from the Incoming President



Claire Wycklendt

Welcome to the 60th Anniversary year of our Milwaukee Ladies of Charity chapter and the 400th Anniversary year of the international organization!

Being a member of the Ladies of Charity has become so important to me. Cathy Onopa asked me to join the Ladies of Charity over 35 years ago. Her mom, Jane Schieffer, was serving one of her numerous terms as president, and the group met at my parish, Holy Family. I put her off, saying I'd help on an on-call basis but wouldn't join until my youngest child finished grade school. My family helped when the Clothing Center moved from the St. Vincent de Paul store on Fond du Lac Avenue, to

continued on page 2

Membership Update

The 2017 membership directory for the Ladies of Charity of Milwaukee will be published next month. Based upon preference indicated on the membership form, all members will receive either a paper or electronic copy of the directory. As of January 1, 139 active members are expected to be included in the directory. –Katie Kasper

Help Wanted

Co-chairs needed for the September Breakfast for our 60th Anniversary and the Christmas Luncheon. No experience necessary! Contact Claire Wycklendt by phone (414-778-1190) or email (claire.wycklendt@gmail.com).

Message from the Incoming President *continued*

St. John de Nepomuc on 38th and Keefe, to Blessed Trinity near Hampton, and to our current, and best location at St. Francis of Assisi. I did officially join in 2010 and now I'm honored and humbled to be President. I look forward to working with our talented and experienced board: Co-Vice-Presidents Cathy Onopa and Paulette Pecard, Corresponding Secretary Terri Klug, Recording Secretary Annette O'Brien, and Treasurer Jill Ecklund. And I greatly appreciate the guidance provided by our past Presidents, Mary Johnson and Mary Domer, and our Lay Spiritual Moderator, Cathy Liska.

At the 2016 National Assembly in New York, we were reminded that "praying and serving" are "one seamless movement for those with a Vincentian heart" and that our service to others can be our prayer. Collecting, sorting and distributing clothing and books, writing and editing articles, raising and managing funds for those in need, coordinating special events, bringing a meal to a neighbor, caring for a family member, volunteering at our parishes, praying at church or home, these are all ways to act as Ladies of Charity. Thank you for all you do!



Left to Right : Claire Wycklendt (President), Cathy Onopa and Paulette Pecard (Co-Vice Presidents), Terri Klug (Corresponding Secretary).
Missing from Picture : Jill Ecklund (Treasurer), Annette O'Brien (Recording Secretary), Cathy Liska (Lay Spiritual Moderator).

Volunteering at Messmer Schools

Although an electrical fire at Messmer Prep in September temporarily closed the gym and four classrooms, the 5th Grade Girls Volleyball Team, coached by Claire Wycklendt, was able to practice outdoors and had a successful first season of school sports. Unfortunately, tutoring by Ladies of Charity was postponed because hallways were closed off and four classes were meeting in the cafeteria and church for most of the first semester.

Claire and Joyce Grundle met with Ms. Gordon, Messmer St. Mary's new principal, in November. She was enthusiastic about welcoming volunteers, emphasizing how much her students benefit from one-on-one interaction with adults. She also suggested that Ladies of Charity could be very helpful in assisting with a book fair at their school.

Interested volunteers must submit a Messmer Volunteer Application, undergo a background check, and complete the Archdiocesan program "An upcoming session of this 3-hour course is January 28 at Marquette University from 9am to 12pm." Attendees must register online at archmil.org where other dates and locations for the required program are listed. Contact Claire at claire.wycklendt@gmail.com to learn more and to obtain a Messmer Volunteer Application. — Claire Wycklendt



Ladies of Charity

Clothing Center Update



The Clothing Center has been busy since the day we opened. From September through December we have served over 850 needy children.

Many thanks to our winter coat donors: Knights of Columbus Lumen Christi, Salvation Army and our many generous friends and members. We are grateful to the generous North Shore Parishes who included us in their Giving Tree traditions: St. Monica, Holy Family, St. Robert and Our Lady of Good Hope.

Anna Lautmann, daughter of member Sally, and her fellow Kohl's employees came to the store and worked for many hours. As a result, Kohl's will donate money to our chapter. Way to go!

We are blessed to have dedicated, faithful, hardworking women who shop for us and show up to the Clothing Center to sort, size, hang and serve our clients with a smile and generous spirit.

—Gail Adams, Sharon Pircon



Loads of winter gloves and hats - donated at Christmas Luncheon



Donations of Work Clothes for Women

Woman's Club of Wisconsin —

813 E. Kilbourn Ave. 414-276-5170

Bottomless Closet — 728 N. James Lovell St.

414-270-2984 Communityadvocates.net

Revenue Sources

The 2016 Annual Fund campaign raised \$10,025! Thank you to Sally Lautmann and Karen Hoffman for chairing this fundraiser, and to all our members who donated and solicited donations from their friends and families. Sally and Karen will assist Cathy Liska and Jude Schubert as they coordinate the 2017 appeal which begins May 1.

Mary Johnson applied again for the Elm Grove Junior Guild Grant which we received in both 2015 (\$7000) and 2016 (\$4830). This year we requested \$5000 and hope to hear from them soon. Sharon Pircon successfully submitted the St. Monica Parish Charitable Grant Application in 2014 (\$1000), 2015 (\$900), and 2016 (\$750) and we

hope to receive another grant this year. Nancy Sturino secured a \$3000.00 donation given by her neighbor in memory of his deceased relative, Rosemary Fergus. This donation was earmarked to purchase coats, gloves, hats and books for the Center.

In addition, we are delighted with the generosity of members as they renew their memberships. Eleven members donated a total of \$995 over and above their membership dues when they returned their renewals. We are always looking for new sources of revenue so please inform us of new opportunities. All this generosity makes the Clothing Center such a success! — Claire Wycklendt

Ladies of Charity Annual Fund Drive

Once again, our members have supported the Annual Fund Drive with great generosity. To date, you have contributed just over \$10,000! That is 11 months of rent... or 5,000 pair of socks and underwear. Amazing!!

If your little blue envelope is still on your 'to do' pile, no worries!! We're happy to receive your gift to celebrate the New Year! As you know, the need is so great and our

resources are very well managed, so every dollar counts!

We're also very pleased to announce the next Chairpersons of the Annual Fund Drive. Cathy Liska and Jude Schubert will kick off the 2017-2018 Annual Drive on May 1st.

Thank you ladies for your willingness to serve our great organization!! —Sally Lautmann, Karen Hoffmann

Membership Committee

We begin the New Year with four new members; Tracy Hobbs, Mary Janowiak, Marlene Kollmeyer and Peg Lohr. Welcome to them.

In November, 2016 there was an "Evening of Relaxation and Information" for potential new members. Three new members joined as a result. The Installation of New Members for 2016 - 2017 will be held on Tuesday, May 23rd, 2017, at Holy Family Parish Chapel with a reception to follow in the Parish Center. Look for more information closer to the event.

Finally, we encourage members to bring a friend or relative to the Clothing Center or to the Evening of Reflection, Wednesday, March 22nd. These are great opportunities to see the LOC mission in action.

— Annette O'Brien, Mary Roets



AmazonSmile: How to donate to LOC when you shop Amazon

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon. When you shop here, 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products (products will be marked as eligible for AmazonSmile donation) will be donated to your chosen charitable organization (\$1.00 for every \$200.00 spent).

Follow these simple steps to setup your donation record. When you first go to smile.amazon.com (can search Amazon Smile to get here), choose Association of the Ladies of Charity of Milwaukee Wisconsin as your charity. From then on, any eligible purchases made on Amazon Smile will be used to calculate the percentage to LOC. Your existing Amazon account can be used at the check-out. You will then see a notation that a donation has been made to Ladies of Charity- Milwaukee. —Mary Domer

Opening Breakfast

For the Opening Breakfast on September 17, the theme was “lavender”, which means calmness and grace. A lavender themed invitation, lavender napkins and centerpieces of fresh lavender in colorful pots accessorized the event. Mass celebrated by Fr. Mike Bertram preceded the breakfast. About 35 members and guests enjoyed a delicious meal in the Solarium at the Milwaukee Catholic Home. The dessert was a Vanilla Bean Panna Cotta with a flower decoration. President Mary Johnson spoke about the upcoming year and introduced Claire Wycklendt as the incoming President. As a souvenir of a wonderful morning, everyone was invited to take some fresh lavender home.

— Pat Matusiak, Nancy Sturino



Opening Breakfast

Christmas Luncheon

2016 LOC Christmas luncheon, “Christmas under the Big Top”, was held on Saturday, December 3, at the Milwaukee Catholic Home. An 11:30 a.m. mass celebrated by Fr. Mike Bertram in the Chapel concluded with a special reflection prepared by our former moderator, Sr. Claire Debs, and read by President Mary Johnson and Vice-President Claire Wycklendt. Lunch for approximately 55 members and guests, followed in the Astor Room. Tables were decorated with a circus theme, including cracker jacks, animal crackers and special strong man/trapeze lady holiday nail files as favors to take home. An installation of new board members took place before dessert was served. The picnic-style luncheon concluded with a delicious warm beignet topped with chocolate sauce and strawberries! Members generously brought gifts of warm, new gloves and hats for the Clothing Center.

— Terri Klug



Christmas Luncheon

Excerpts from Remarks by Sr. Claire Debes

What a circus act we women perform every day of our lives. Look at us. We run a tightrope daily balancing tasks both large and small yet still under control. Steady now! This is not the life of simplicity but the life of multiplicity.

May we find in our prayer life and in our service the strength and flexibility we need to perform in front of the live audience of our city... Liturgy calls us to perform like a circus, making the Gospel visible as a witness to those around us.

2016 National Assembly (Queens, N.Y.) Reflection

Our NYC assembly began with Sr. Regina Bechel, SC. How beautiful and wonderful it was to begin with a talk entitled “First the Heart: Praying with the Spiritual Works of Mercy.” As we learned about Elizabeth Seton, we had the opportunity to learn more about the Vincentian Heart.

Maybe it is the words to the song, “You’ve got to have heart, miles and miles of heart.”

***We have the heart and now we are commissioned to do the work.

So all of our chapters work for those in need. From the wisdom of St Louise de Marillac, her thoughts spoke to me. “Do not be upset if things are not as you would want them to be for a long time to come. Do the little you can very peacefully and calmly so as to allow room for the guidance

of God in your lives. Do not worry about the rest. You see a great deal of distress that you are unable to relieve. God sees it also. Bear the pains of the poor together with them, doing all you can to give them whatever help you can, and remain in peace”.

— Mary Domer



From the left, Mary Johnson, Claire Wycklendt, Cathy Liska and Mary Domer



Milwaukee LOC Quilt Square

This is a picture of the quilt block for the quilt being assembled for the 400th Anniversary of LOC in September. Cathy Onopa and Jane Schmitz chose the diamond shape design for our own Diamond Jubilee this year – 1957 to 2017. Cathy Liska stitched the wording for the square. It was mailed to Pennsylvania where the quilt is being put together.

–Cathy Onopa

2017 National Assembly (Kansas City, MO)

Look for more information about the 2017 National Assembly, 400th Anniversary and 60th Anniversary of LOC - Milwaukee, in the July CC issue. If there is enough interest, bus transportation will be considered.

Historical Corner: An Article from Long Ago



In gathering information for the Historical Corner feature, Family Ties, in last July's edition, we learned about something special from Barb Wagner. Barb had found an article in the belongings of her mom, Marian Hoffman, after her death. This article featured the 20th anniversary of the Milwaukee Ladies of Charity. We share below that article from 40 years ago, which Barb believes was probably published in the Catholic Herald, as well as a photo of the LOC cross that Marian presented to Barb when Barb became a LOC. –Susan Westlake

Local Ladies of Charity To Celebrate 20th Year

The 20th anniversary of the founding of the Milwaukee chapter of the Ladies of Charity will be celebrated by the organization's national board of directors and chapter members at a luncheon Thursday, June 2.

The celebration will be at Cardinal Stritch college. The organization's national board of directors headed by Mrs. A. J. Mayer, 5339 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Whitefish Bay, will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the celebration. Archbishop William Cousins will speak at the luncheon.

Mrs. A. J. Prenger, 806 E. Silver Spring dr., Whitefish Bay, is president of the Milwaukee chapter. The group, founded in 1957, has chalked up many successes including founding and operating the

Emergency Clothing Distribution center where clothing is given to children recommended by school social workers. Mrs. Eugene Fons, 6129 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Whitefish Bay, is co-chairman of this project.

Other highlights of the group's 20 year existence are helping to establish both St. Vincent Group Home for Girls in Milwaukee and the Urban Day school in the central city which is celebrating its own tenth anniversary this year.

The group began with only 12 charter members and has grown to a membership of 250. Members visit nursing homes and the Milwaukee county infirmary helping provide weekly masses for residents; sew and knit clothing for needy families, and

make art and craft items to be sold at fundraising events.

Several north shore residents are officers of the Milwaukee chapter. They include Mrs. G. W. Wheeler, 8226 N. 50th st., Brown Deer, vice president; Mrs. H. E. Olive Sr., 5569 N. Shoreland ave., Whitefish Bay, treasurer; Mrs. James Spitz, 5531 N. Hollywood Blvd., Whitefish Bay, secretary, and Mr. A. J. Herr, 4000 W. Rivers Edge cir., Brown Deer, corresponding secretary.

The Ladies of Charity was organized by St. Vincent de Paul in 1617. The organization has chapters all over the world and is known as one of its founder's first great works. It also is the oldest church oriented volunteer group.

For Reflection

Our new Lay Moderator, Cathy Liska, completed a Vincentian Spiritual Moderator's training program following the National Assembly in Queens, New York. This pilot program is the beginning of a certification process for lay spiritual moderators at the local level. Below is Cathy's reflection for LOC members.



Cathy Liska

Tidbits from Vincentian Personalities

Vincentian history is one filled with many fascinating individuals . . . each newsletter will highlight (or perhaps introduce you to) one of them. The first individual is St. Elizabeth Ann (Bayley) Seton, 1774-1821 . . . who became the first native born American canonized by the Catholic Church.

Some would say Elizabeth is not your typical saint. Elizabeth was born into an Episcopalian family of wealth and privilege. Her mother died in childbirth leaving three sad children behind. Her father, a well-respected physician, remarried and when his new wife and seven children joined the family, his three were shunned.

Elizabeth married William Magee Seton (a member of a prominent shipping family) at 19, and soon had five children . Then disaster struck. William's father died, the family business failed and one son developed tuberculosis

and died. Penniless, 29, and virtually alone in a foreign land, Elizabeth and her older daughter, Anna Maria, were befriended by the Italian Filicchi family and were soon drawn to the family's reverence for the Catholic faith.

Upon her return to the US, in spite of opposition from her family and friends, she decided to become a Catholic, receiving her First Communion at age 31. Moving to Baltimore, she opened a small school to support herself and her children. Other women came to join her to form the first American group of Catholic sisters.

Ultimately settling in Emmitsburg, MD, the Sisters of Charity of St Joseph, a name they chose themselves, opened a small school that provided quality education to those who could afford tuition and board, with any surplus funds providing an education to the local children living in poverty. This school is considered the beginning of the Catholic school system in the United States. The women struggled with the cold winters and heavy work and some of Elizabeth's own children as well as several sisters died during those early years. Elizabeth herself eventually died of tuberculosis at age 47. During her lifetime Elizabeth assumed many roles: wife, mother, widow, convert, single mother, founder, educator and advocate for the poor.

A Presidential Gift: When Pope Francis visited the White House, President Obama presented him with an original key to the home of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, a fitting tribute for two people who have so strongly advocated for the poor and marginalized.



Key given to Pope Francis by President Obama

Websites

locmilwaukee.com
aic.ladiesofcharity.us

Facebook

Association of the Ladies of Charity
of Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Officers

President Claire Wycklendt
claire.wycklendt@gmail.com
414-788-1190

Co-Vice-Presidents Cathy Onopa
conopa@icloud.com
414-507-0261
Paulette Pecard
ppecard@mcw.edu
262-242-5447

Treasurer Jill Ecklund
jecklund@kmcstampings.com
414-828-9637

Recording Secretary Annette O'Brien
annetteobwfb@gmail.com
414-962-0505

Corresponding Secretary Terri Klug
terriklug@gmail.com
262-518-0090

Lay Spiritual Moderator Cathy Liska
csliska1343@gmail.com
414-688-4455

Clothing Center

Gail Proite-Adams
GailandBill@hotmail.com
414-352-7377

Sharon Pircon
rpircon@wi.rr.com
414-962-1831

Sally Lautmann
sally.lautmann@gmail.com
414-526-2574

Membership Directory

Katie Kasper
katiekasper87@gmail.com
414-899-6000
See Membership Directory for list
of Board of Directors and
Committee Chairs.

Charity Chat Staff

Nancy Sturino –Co-Chair
nmsturino@gmail.com

Pat Matusiak –Co-Chair
matusiak@sbcglobal.net

Susan Westlake
swestlake2321@att.net

Cathy Seelman
caffy911@yahoo.com

Mary,

I'm trying to get my cards out in good time before all the frantic activities of the parish and Christmas get the best of me! I hope your December is a peaceful and beautiful time of getting prepared for Christmas.

As I look at the new handicap-accessible entrance for the Parish Office that will open very soon, I am humbled by the support that people like you have given to St. Francis Parish in the Golf Outing. I truly mean it when I say that you are **foremost** in my prayers for both Thanksgiving and Christmas for the incredible good you have made possible here at St. Francis.

God bless you and all the Ladies of Charity this Christmas!

Fr. Michael Bertram, OFM Capuchin
Pastor

Father Mike & friends at
Golf Outing and his thank-you



**CHARITY, HUMILITY,
AND SIMPLICITY**

*My God, I humbly beg you
to make me an instrument of
your love;
give me the grace of performing
all my actions to help my
neighbor with charity, humility,
and simplicity.*

*It is my hope, Lord,
that fidelity in the practice of these
virtues may obtain the reward
which you have promised
to those who serve you
in the person of the poor.*

LET US PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

The special time that
has been chosen to pray for all
Ladies of Charity and their works
is 9:00 o'clock on every Monday
morning. All our National Officers
certainly appreciate your prayers

The Ladies of Charity
of the United States of America
100 N. Jefferson Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63103

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