

LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

ST. MARTIN'S HOME

Serving the elderly poor in Baltimore since 1869



MISSION STATEMENT

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.

A Christmas Unwrapped

Twinkling lights, tinsel, the perfect bow, wrapping paper – no one will deny the beauty these trimmings bring to the Advent and Christmas seasons and celebrations. But, it is the “unwrapped” Christmas – the simple holiday experiences free of the trimmings – that fosters reflection on the true meaning of this holy day, the birth of Jesus.

Many of our Residents remember Advents and Christmases in the early to mid-1900’s and reminisced about their fondest memories of a Christmas they would always remember. The three Residents interviewed, all deeply religious, spoke of Christmas Mass, brothers and cousins who were altar boys, the crèche and the baby Jesus. When asked about a favorite memory, all recalled an experience filled with laughter and love.

Resident Betty Wojtek could barely contain her laughter when she spoke of the family cat and his participation in a Christmas that counts as one of her favorites. After the family spent hours decorating the Christmas tree, the cat scurried up the tree trunk, balanced precariously on a branch and toppled the tree completely! Laughing, Betty explained the cat had a new home and

“occupation” after that Christmas Day (in the firehouse down the street chasing mice). As an “almost middle” child in a family of 13, Patricia Bateman recalled the burning candles on her Aunt Elizabeth’s tree and gifts of fruits, nuts and hard candy. Helping to get her younger siblings ready for 7:00 a.m. Mass was considered a privilege and those Christmas memories are Patti’s fondest. Celine Morrissey remembers a special gift – a pink taffeta dress trimmed in light blue. She became teary – not over the dress, but remembering her uncle from Philadelphia surprising her with the dress, making sure it was exactly the right size and fit. Seventy-five years later, she remembers his kindness, especially knowing that her family did not have the money to lavish on the dress. What may seem insignificant – a cat, being a middle child, a generous uncle – are actually memories of a Christmas “unwrapped” that connect us to the simplicity of the celebration and not simply the rush to buy and wrap that perfect gift.

Ask yourself, what is the meaning of a Christmas “unwrapped”? Resist the countless hours to create perfect packages, impressive festivities and decorations! Untie the bow, loosen the tape, tear the paper and open yourself to the real gift – Jesus Christ.

Consider sharing these “Christmas unwrapped” gifts with others:

- A firm handshake to a shaky soul,
 - A kind word to a lonely person,
 - A warm smile to the disheartened,
 - A sincere concern for someone troubled,
 - A feeling of compassion for the neglected,
 - A comforting thought for the bereaved,
 - A respect for the dignity of others,
 - A defense of the rights of individuals,
 - A word of witness to help a seeking soul.
- (Source unknown)



Resident Betty Wojtek shares her “Christmas Cat” memory with Sister Loretto



Gifts that “Keep Giving”

Thanks to the generosity of friends, volunteers, and family members, our Residents are blessed with special gifts all year. The response to e-blasts and mailings for Operation Turkey Drop, Giving Tuesday, Easter flowers and Christmas Poinsettias shows the strong support of the mission of the Little Sisters.

Nine year old Catherine and seven year old Eleanor Kent from Immaculate Conception Parish in Towson found that “giving” is more important than “getting.” With their birthdays one day apart, their parents talked with the girls to consider doing something different for their birthday parties. Deciding they already had so many good things in their lives,

the girls decided to give a non-traditional party and invited their friends to bring a toiletry item to give to those in need. Overwhelmed by the generosity of their friends, Catherine and Eleanor had enough items to share with two organizations including St. Martin’s Home. Inspired by their parents and the concept of giving instead of receiving, their “no presents” party became a gift to share with many!

Friends from Walgreens, Columbia recently visited the Home ready to work and play! The volunteers, working with the Housekeeping and Maintenance Departments, washed windows and floors, dusted, and worked in the garden. Working with the Activities Department, the volunteers visited Residents and ended the day with a well-attended Bingo game. Andrew Militello, District Manager, was instrumental in bringing the volunteers to St. Martin’s. He said it “was a wonderful experience and looks forward to coming again.” Paula Snyder, District Loss Prevention Manager, appreciated how the Sisters and



Residents made the group feel so welcome while Store Manager, Hassan Mirzaev, commented on the Little Sisters’ passion for the elderly as they described their mission and care for the Residents in their welcome to the Walgreens volunteers.

There are many volunteer opportunities available at St. Martin’s including office support, friendly one-on-one visits and group activities with Residents. Contact Sister Lawrence Mary at 410-744-9367 to hear the many ways you can share your “gifts” with us!



Nun Run in 2015

As you enter dates on your 2015 calendar, be sure to add Saturday, September 12, 2015, 8:00 a.m., for our 2nd annual Nun Run. With cool, comfortable temperatures, the weather was perfect for runners and walkers to enjoy the route around the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen for our first run. Following a special blessing by Archbishop William E. Lori, the event included a warm-up by Brick Bodies, “motivational” music by DJ Ray Der and food! Expectations for a first year run of 300 registrants were surpassed, and our count hit 836! Sincere thanks to the committee, sponsors, donors, Charm City Run – and of course, the runners, walkers, and Virtual Runners. Visit our website for a slideshow, a list of our sponsors, and photos of this inaugural event!





Sister Constance and Mother Loraine proudly accept the Poverello Medal.

Caring Today, Building Tomorrow

Our Capital Campaign

We are so blessed this Christmas Season that our Capital Campaign, *Caring Today, Building Tomorrow*, maintained momentum enabling us to stay on schedule with our reconstruction. However, ahead of us we have manifold challenges and opportunities.

God calls on us not to be fearful about our future, but to move forward in faith and joy – because we serve a wondrous God. He invites us to be a part of the care and enhancement of St. Martin's Home in order to serve Him better by caring for the elderly poor now and in the future.

This campaign is an opportunity for each of us to challenge ourselves, to examine the gifts God gives us, and to be open to all the ways God would have us love Him and use our gifts from Him.

This Christmas, please participate in all aspects of *Caring Today, Building Tomorrow*. Consider your gift to the Little Sisters a gift to God and listen to Him as he speaks to you. Times are always uncertain, but God is not.

Our elderly Residents are counting on you to finish the work started, to be a part of His plan. In the words of Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you...plans to give you hope and a future."

Won't you celebrate Christmas with us by being a part of our future?

Dedicated to the Elderly

The Little Sisters of the Poor recently received the Franciscan University of Steubenville Poverello Medal for their dedication to the poor and elderly. The award recognizes organizations and individuals who imitate St. Francis of Assisi by their strength of character, practical Christian charity and love for and service to the poor.

The medal, cast in steel to signify the ideals of Franciscan simplicity and poverty, bears an image of St. Francis giving money to the poor.

Accepting in the name of all the Little Sisters, Mother Loraine Marie Clare said, "I see in this medal the symbol of all the things which matter: to be little, poor, humble and merciful to all those we serve; to treat others as Christ himself and to live in a manner that reflects His very life."

Speaking at the ceremony, Sister Constance Veit said the elderly "have become the contemporary outcasts" of society at a time when their numbers are increasing. The elderly will make up 19 percent of the U.S. population by 2030." She called for a "covenant between generations" to join young and old together.

In July, the Little Sisters were also chosen to receive the "People of Life Award" at the annual Diocesan Pro-life Leadership Conference sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The "People of Life Award" winners are chosen based on their long-term commitment to the Gospel of Life and are often the "unsung heroes" of the pro-life movement. The award acknowledged the Little Sisters and their dedication to serving the most elderly and vulnerable.

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 3, 2015
1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

We announce the first *Tea & Tulips* to benefit St. Martin's Home. Chairwomen Janice Bortner and Cheryl Morraco, along with their committee, are creating a lovely event at historic Gramercy Mansion. Be sure to save the date and plan on wearing your prettiest spring hat! Details to follow!



Mother's Reflections



Dear Friends of the Little Sisters,

Transitioning from one Home to another as a Little Sister is something we are always prepared for in our heads but our hearts often remind us of how we will miss friends left behind. That was the case when I left Delaware in August to assume the role of Mother Superior at St. Martin's in Baltimore – the place where I started my life as a Little Sister 35 years ago.

Emerging from the car my arrival day, there were many Little Sisters, Residents, volunteers and staff waiting to greet me with flowers and words of welcome. What a precious gift we are given as daughters of St. Jeanne Jugan to never be a stranger in any of our Homes. The outpouring of affection was so evident from that first day that any trepidations I had leaving Delaware quickly melted away.

Some of you I have already met but I know there are many of you I have not met yet, and I look forward to doing so. Please make yourself known to me when you visit St. Martin's. It is with a heart filled with gratitude that I thank God for placing me – once again – where love knows no boundaries and our Residents are our greatest gift.

May the Christ Child bless each of you and reward you for your generosity and continued support of our Home each and every day. From all the Little Sisters and Residents of St. Martin's, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and God's peace and love in the New Year.

Sister Joseph Caroline

Sister Joseph Caroline
Superior



Our 10th Annual Gala

Celebrating the Gift, our 10th annual Gala, was Saturday, November 15 at Turf Valley. Over 350 friends supported the annual event. The committee worked diligently to create more than 40 beautiful raffle baskets and the spirited live auction included Ravens box seats and “on the field” pre-game activities, a Baltimore Country Club Golf game for six, a week stay at an ocean-side condo in Ocean City and the opportunity for a group of 8-10 to enjoy a beautifully prepared and served meal by the Little Sisters. Winners of live auction items showed “Celebrity Chef” spirit by donning white chef hats!

Archbishop Lori was honored for his commitment to the Little Sisters and the

Residents. Special thanks to Jennifer Gilbert, Fox45, emcee for the evening, and Jonathan Melnick, auctioneer, who kept the audience bidding to raise money for the winter fuel fund!

A highlight was the “Celebrity Chef” recipe challenge. Selected recipes entered by our Archdiocesan priests were prepared by Turf Valley and served by the priests and their assistants. Guests enjoyed “Pasta all’ Amatriciana” by Fr. Lou Bianco, “Crab Soup” by Fr. Patrick Carrion, “My Mother’s Famous Rolly Polly’s” by Fr. Jerry Francik, and “Chicken Saltimbocca” by Fr. Donald Grzymiski. “Tips” tossed in the mason jars determined Fr. Patrick Carrion the winner. The four priests then generously auctioned their services to prepare a meal to the highest bidder.

Thanks to your support, the 50/50 raffle raised over \$25,000! Money raised from the Gala goes directly to the Winter Fuel fund to keep the Residents warm through the cold months.

Please view the website for a list of our sponsors and donors along with a slideshow, photos and the “Celebrity Chef” recipes.



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