



Looking Back With Gratitude...

The last months of the Year of the Lord 2022 proved very eventful for the family of St. Jeanne Jugan and for the whole Church.

General Chapter 2022

Nine Little Sisters from the U.S. took part in the General Chapter which was held at the motherhouse, La Tour Saint Joseph, this past fall. This gathering, which habitually takes place every six years, draws delegates from all over the world.

The participants reelected Mother General María del Monte Auxiliadora for a second term. A native of Spain, she is a familiar face to many in our country since she visited several Homes in the three U.S. provinces at the end of 2021. Her companion on those visits, Mother Joseph Christine, who is Scottish, was also reelected and named by Mother General as her first assistant. The Chapter elected five other Assistants General, including one Indian, two French, one Chilean and one Nigerian, to aid Mother Maria in her demanding task.

Besides dealing with other important matters, the General Chapter revised our Constitutions, after a long process of consultation with each of our communities had taken place last year. For the first time, ten Jeanne Jugan Associates took part in the Chapter and thoroughly enjoyed visiting the places associated with the birth of the Congregation. As a result of time spent in prayer and working sessions with the Little Sisters, their statutes were also revised, and, like the Little Sisters' Constitutions, await approval from Rome.

Mother Celine de la Visitation

No one participating in the General Chapter with Mother Celine de la Visitation would have guessed that the Lord would call her to himself a mere six weeks later, on December 3.



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI and Mother Celine in October, 2009



Mother General María del Monte Auxiliadora

After a short illness, she left this world surrounded by all the Little Sisters of the motherhouse and second novitiate and the grateful prayers of the Congregation worldwide.

Mother Celine, a native of San Francisco, was the first American Superior General of the Congregation. She was elected Assistant General at the Chapter of 1976, and reelected several times until she was elected Superior General in 1996 after the death of Mother General Marie Antoinette de la Trinité. In both of these roles, Mother Celine visited many of the Homes in the U.S.

She labored tirelessly to help the Little Sisters be true to the charism of our Mother St. Jeanne Jugan in the midst of our rapidly changing world. Her hard work on the Cause of our Mother was rewarded by her canonization by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009.

Pope Benedict XVI

Mother Celine greatly loved Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, and we can take comfort in imagining their reunion in heaven when he returned to the Father's house on December 31.

Pope Benedict showed his love for the Congregation in many ways, not only by declaring St. Jeanne Jugan a saint, but also by making a personal visit to St. Peter's Home in London during his Apostolic Journey to the United Kingdom on September 18, 2010. He greeted many of the elderly personally and offered a beautiful address, in which he noted that "care for the elderly should be considered not so much an act of generosity as the repayment of a debt of gratitude."

We thank the Lord for the graces of the year 2022 and we can't wait to see what he has in store for 2023!

Mary Amback - 19 Years of Devoted Service

Nineteen years ago, I started on a new journey that would be more than an occupation, it would be an extension of family, a visual connection of faith and an awakening of purpose. I was “At Home” with the Little Sisters of the Poor.

Working in the dining room as a dietary aide gave me the opportunity to help the Residents in a very personal way.

When you break bread together there is a sharing that connects you in a very special way; you learn likes and dislikes, you hear family stories, moments of triumph and sadness, you become family.

This connection with the Residents was heightened when I moved to the Activities Department. Planning special occasions for the Residents encouraged my creative side. It allowed me to get to know not only the Residents, but their families. Collaboration with other staff to bring events



like the Little Sister’s State Fair to fruition was always exciting and fulfilling. The smiles and joy it brought to the Residents filled my heart with delight.

As the years passed, I eventually moved into the receptionist position. The receptionist is the central hub of the Home.

It was exciting to work closer with the Little Sisters and their day to day needs of providing a Home for our elderly. Each time I

would help or complete a task for a Little Sister, the Sister would always leave me with a “God Bless you.”

Over the years I have been blessed by getting to know the most amazing Residents and their families. I have spent time with not only religious, but musicians, artists, teachers, farmers, service men and women, the list is endless. The common denominator was the blessing they were to me: they gave me more than

I could ever have returned. A very special Resident came to live at St. Joseph’s Home, my Mom. She started out in the apartments before moving into the Home as her needs grew. Mom loved the Little Sisters, and spent the last 14 years of her life, living life to the fullest. She was especially grateful for the ability to attend daily Mass and prayers. She treasured her friends and being able to spend time with them at all the wonderful activities. I will forever cherish my memories of Mom at the Home.

As I enter this new chapter of life, I retire, (so to speak) with 19 years of love and affection for my time as an employee at St. Joseph’s Home. Now, I am on a new Journey that will include time with the Little Sisters of the Poor and the Residents.

God bless you all!
Mary Amback

Little Sisters Dedication Benches

Honor or Memorialize Your Loved One

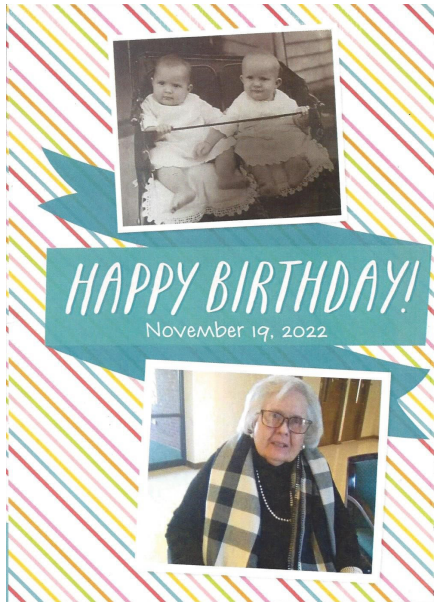


4ft Bench with plaque \$1,200
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- Rust resistant, powder-coated aluminum frame.
- Bronze Bench Plaque with three lines of text.



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Bette Dorsey's 103rd Trip Around the Sun

It is becoming more and more common to celebrate the birthday of a centenarian in our Homes. It's not often, however, that we are able to celebrate a 103rd birthday, and especially of a personality like Elizabeth Patricia Dorsey!

Elizabeth ("Bette") and her twin brother Errol, born on November 19, 1919, grew up in New Haven, KY with three other siblings. (Errol became a hotel master and lived to the age of 90.) After majoring in English at Webster College, Bette entered a religious community where she began her teaching career, sharing her love of English literature with many young people. After Vatican Council II, however, finding that the way of life in her community had changed radically and no longer corresponded to her original call, she left the convent, but continued to attend Mass and pray the Divine Office every day.

As a teacher, she enjoyed attending summer school abroad, especially the summer she spent in Rome. The highlight of that experience, for Bette, was the ability to attend Mass in St. Peter's Basilica every single day.

After a few years, the "magic day" came when she met John Edward Dorsey III, a former monk and an architect. They were married in 1970 in the majestic Cathedral of St. James in Innsbruck, Austria. This marked the end of Bette's teaching career but also the beginning of many wonderful adventures, at home and abroad. Bette describes their marriage as a "holy" relationship, based on "higher" things.

This idyllic period ended in 1990, when John succumbed to dementia. In his last years, "he never had his rosary out of his hands. That tells you so much!"

A widow now, Bette continued to be active, growing spiritually and intellectually. She became a Resident of St. Joseph's Home in 2001. Here she found a partner for her

creative endeavors in another Resident, Jim Vanderhaar (d. Oct. 15, 2022). Together they led Bible studies and taught classes to other Residents, starting with a series on the life of St. Jeanne Jugan. "That was so much fun!" Bette's face lights up as she recalls Jim, with a long pointer, showing the class places on the map which were important in the life of the Foundress.

Fast forward to 2023. Her room at St. Joseph's is a peaceful sanctuary for Betty, filled with books and mementos, where she enjoys visits from her niece, great niece and many other people, sharing spiritual thoughts and insights to help them along their way. She has been a mentor to many. "I've worked hard with anyone I've come in contact with," she said, "if I've seen a 'spark.'"

She likens her life to a rug, made up of many colors. "The best part of all of it," she says, "is the nearness, that I've had most of my life, of Mass and Communion every day."

These days, Bette cannot make it to the chapel for Mass, and her room has, in effect, become her chapel. "Every day, when Sister comes in with Holy Communion (and I've been preparing for it all morning), the whole room lights up!"

Bette was delighted when she heard about the Eucharistic Revival now being celebrated in the dioceses of the U.S. When asked what advice she would give to young people today about what really counts, she suggested, "If it is possible, go to daily Mass. Suppose you choose one day [during the week]. Very soon you'll find out that you want to go on two days, and soon you're going to start finding out many things about yourself!"

Anything else she'd recommend? She replied with twinkling eyes, "I've learned that God wants us to laugh!"

MOTHER'S MUSINGS



Dear Friends,

As usual, the Christmas season flew by, made beautiful here at St. Joseph's Home by our liturgies (for which we thank the visiting priests, who celebrate Mass for us each and every day!) and enjoyable for our Residents, for which we thank our devoted staff and all of you who contributed your time, talent and treasure to making this time truly magical!

As we advance into the New Year (and actually begin to remember to write "2023,") I'd like to turn the rest of this column over to Pope Francis. On New Year's Day, he asked us to look to the Blessed Mother and say: "Virgin Mary, teach us what we should do this year!"

"Mary," he said, "reminds us that, if we truly want the New Year to be good, if we want to reconstruct hope, we need to abandon the language, those actions and those choices inspired by egoism, and learn the language of love, which is to take care.

"This is the commitment: to take care of our lives, of our time, of our souls; to take care of creation and the environment we live in; and even more, to take care of our neighbor, of those whom the Lord has placed alongside us, as well as our brothers and sisters who are in need and who call for our attention and our compassion."

Let us pray for one another, that we'll take this message to heart in 2023. And thank you all for the good examples of "caring" that you give us Little Sisters, day after day!

Gratefully,
Mother Mary Richard

Without You... Where Would We Be?



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*"Father of the
poor, you have
never refused
the prayer of
the lowly."*

J.J. Prayer

IMMEDIATE NEEDS:

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Body Wash, Mouthwash,
stamps, candy and
other snack foods
are always appreciated!

LARGER NEEDS:

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Heat Pumps/Boilers
Wi-Fi