



The Celebration of a Century

Happy Birthday to our Centenarians

1923 was a good year. Insulin was used to treat diabetes for the first time. The Yankees played the Red Sox at their first-ever home game in Yankee Stadium; Walt Disney founded his new company; Time Magazine published its first issue... and Hilda, Irene, Josie, and Edmée came into the world! Yes, that's right — this year, Saint Joseph's Residence is honored to celebrate the 100th birthday of four Residents! Allow us to proudly introduce our esteemed centenarians:

Hilda was born the third of seven children in Cambridge Square, while her family was en route to a fresh start in Connecticut, having just leased out the old family farm in Maine. With admiration, she relates that her mother and father both attended school until the 5th grade – and they were two of the wisest, most capable people she's ever known. She relates with a smile that she met her husband at a barn dance, and “he looked just like Robert Taylor!” Hilda will turn 100 on March 7. Happy Birthday, Hilda!

Irene was born on April 23, 1923 at St Mary's Hospital in Waterbury, CT, and was baptized at St. Anne's Church. She was the third oldest of a large family made up of four girls and four boys. When asked to share some childhood recollections, she simply chuckled and said, “Well, I just grew up... then worked... until I got to be 100 years old!” Happy Birthday, Irene!

Josephine was born the oldest of five children in South Hampton, England. Having lived through the war years in England, she served her country by working as a switchboard operator. After the war, the ship Queen



Hilda



Irene



Josie



Edmée



Pauline

Mary carried her to the U.S., landing at Ellis Island. Josephine, who has passed her love of jazz music onto her children, enjoys serenading us with an impressive repertoire of jazz oldies. Josephine will be celebrating 100 years of life on May 14 – Happy Birthday, Josephine!

Edmée was born at home on Sunday December 2, 1923, the second of five children. Their parish priest came to her that very day. Edmée is originally from a small village in New Brunswick, Canada, and continues to speak in her native French, as well as English. She has always been a hard worker and is full of the love of God. Happy 100th Birthday, Edmée!

Pauline was born on June 18, 1920, in a small village in modern day Slovenia. She was the youngest of 11 children; her mother died in childbirth. Pauline recounts many happy memories of growing up on the family farm, where they kept pigs, chickens, and the like. At the age of 19, Pauline came to the United States, where she met her Austrian-born husband, Joseph. Pauline makes many daily trips to the chapel to visit Our Lord and pray for us, even at the age of 103! Happy Birthday, Pauline!

Dottie, pictured with Mother Maureen on page 4, will celebrate her 104th birthday on August 29. In 1943, Dottie served her country by joining the Navy. Dottie has led a full and adventurous life which has led her to all parts of the globe. She continues to be a source of energy, fun, and shining wisdom for her many nieces and nephews. Congratulations Dottie, and Happy 104th Birthday!

Forever Young

By Sr. Mary Alexandra



Students from American International College came for an evening of prayer and service



Alex and his mother accompany a group of Residents on a Christmastime outing



Supper with friends from UMASS Amherst while attending the FOCUS conference in St. Louis

“The future of the Congregation depends on the generous response of youth to the call of the Lord.”

This opening line, taken from the Constitutions of the Little Sisters of the Poor, is clear. Although our mission is to the Elderly, it takes everyone of all ages to nurture the vibrant community of Saint Joseph’s Residence. Everyone has a special gift to offer – but nothing compares to the joyous effect that young people have on the Elderly. In fact, the first companions of St. Jeanne Jugan, who became the first Little Sisters of the Poor, were all young women in their twenties.

Pope Francis has said, “Helping the young to discover the living richness of the past, to treasure its memory and to make use of it for their choices and opportunities, is a genuine act of love towards them.”* As a “young-ish” Sister myself, I can testify that the Elderly,

with whom I share daily life, keep me young. Their wit, serenity, wisdom, genuine concern for others — usually accompanied by a sapient (although mischievous) sense of humor — feed my spirit every day and keep an extra spring in my step. I often have the impression that the Elderly are given the prophetic gift to say exactly what needs to be said at the right moment. St. Jeanne Jugan herself said, “The elderly are God’s mouthpiece!” I concur!

Here at St. Joseph’s Residence, we are blessed with many young adult friends who have fallen in love with serving the Elderly. Writing this article provided a great opportunity to ask these young adults to speak for themselves – what drew them to serve the Elderly in our Home, and what keeps them coming back?

Mary, a school nurse, and a regular presence in the Home, shared: “Ever

since I met Sr. Frances and Sr. Michael at my home parish, I’ve been volunteering for our Elders, who bring so much joy to our world. It is rewarding beyond measure to sing for Mass, serve meals, participate in an activity or outing, or say hello and strike up a conversation. God’s presence is alive and well in this lovely Home, and it is nourishing to glorify Him through interacting with His extraordinary Elderly Poor. I always look forward to returning to my “home away from home” and doing God’s work that He calls me to do.”

Ashley is a FOCUS Missionary at UMass Amherst. She shared with me that “I spent a weekend with the Little Sisters of the Poor. I went in not knowing what to expect, but truly had an amazing time. We got to live life with the Sisters, serving the Residents and loving them. It was amazing to see the Sisters’ life of prayer mixed with work.

Warm and Cozy Donation

Good friends of the Home, Philip and Carol Corini, brought extra warmth to our Residents at Christmastime by providing a plush velour blanket for each Resident. They arrived in a mountain of individually packaged Christmas bags, all beautifully prepared to be given. Our Residents say they are the best blankets!! Many heartfelt thanks, Mr. and Mrs. Corini!





An impromptu dance party with Mary



Practicing the foxtrot with a young adult dance group



Men from the Springfield Young Adult Group serve in the Residents' dining room

One of my favorite parts was hearing the Residents speak about why they love the Home. They spoke about how they are all one family."

Sr. Carolyn, who coordinates many of these young adult encounters, said "The young adult volunteers who come to serve our Residents and offer them friendship seem to have an innate gift for relating with the Elderly, which creates an instant bond between the generations. It is very touching to see how the presence of these young people brings a sparkle to our Residents' eyes and a smile to their faces."

We met Alex at a local Catholic young adult gathering. Soon afterwards, he became a regular at the Home. "Over my time of volunteering at the St. Joseph's Residence, I have been touched countless times by God working through both the Residents and Sisters. As spoken about God's Faithful through

the Psalmist, "with length of life I will content him; I shall let him see my saving power" (Ps 91), so is it with the Residents. At all times, whether going to Mass, serving lunch, helping at an event, or just hanging around, the Residents emit the joy of the Lord and a youthfulness that is inspiring to all. Every volunteer experience at St. Joseph's Residence has provided a joyful opportunity to serve, while growing in faith and virtue. In a society that has, quite sadly, seen a significant decline in care for the Elderly, the need for support is ever more important and it has been a blessing to play my role in helping such a valuable group of our society."

Caroline, a student at UMass Amherst, said, "When I first visited the Home of the Little Sisters, I wasn't sure what to expect, but it was a great experience. I loved being able to meet and serve the Residents at the Home.

Both the Residents and the Sisters were incredibly welcoming... I could truly see Christ's compassion and love in every individual I met."

In reflecting on the regular visitations that we enjoy from UCONN's FOCUS group, chaplain Fr. Rousseau likened their interaction with the Residents to the growth of a plant. "The FOCUS students, who by spending time with our Residents, enable the elderly to continually blossom each day. The Elderly enjoy having the young around them, talking with them and listening to them and, once again, just being nurtured by their presence. The young also are nurtured and grow through their interaction with our 'mature' Residents. The bottom line... is clearly and so beautifully growth for all involved."

**Final Document of the Fifteenth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 2018. 35.*

Thank You, Knights!

The Knights of Columbus Supreme Officers present the Little Sisters of the Poor with a Christmas donation of \$10,000 to help the Sisters continue their mission of service to the Elderly Poor.

Earlier this year, the Knights donated \$50,000 to the Little Sisters of the Poor to assist with the purchase of a refrigerated van.



(Photo by Patrick Diener. Used with permission.)

A NOTE FROM MOTHER



Spring is just around the corner and we look forward to the new life which comes with this beautiful season! God is ever present as we experience life in all its beauty. This year we are celebrating the life of four of our Residents who will turn 100, along with two others who will reach the milestone of their 103rd and 104th birthdays! How blessed we are to share in their lives and witness their strength of mind, body and spirit!

I asked Dottie Roberge, who will be 104 years old this year, to give me the honor of having my picture taken with her (above). Another milestone that we are celebrating with Dottie is that she enlisted in the Navy as a W.A.V.E. (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) 80 years ago this year. She is truly a remarkable lady and so young at heart!

New life also comes with those who are young in age! As you will see in this newsletter, we have some wonderful young people who participate in our mission according to their availability and talents while under the ever-present threat of covid, which has caused so much disturbance in the lives of everyone. We are so grateful to each one of them for helping to bring youthful energy to our home and enhancing the lives of our elders!

We receive new life through the generosity of our benefactors and friends, who help us continue our mission of hospitality, bequeathed to us by our Mother, St. Jeanne Jugan. We truly form a family united in the Lord. How our lives are enriched by this special bond which brings us together and makes us one! May our lives be a living 'thank-you'!

Happy Spring! May the Lord bring you and yours "new life" by His Resurrection on Easter!

Mother Maureen and all the Little Sisters

Our Needs

Saint Jeanne Jugan often repeated to the first Little Sisters of the Poor "If God fills the house, he will never abandon it." Since the day Jeanne Jugan opened her heart and home to God in the person of the first elderly Resident, God has continued to provide for the needs of our Residents through the generosity of many benefactors.

Current needs include:

Individually wrapped hard candies/ individually wrapped chocolate candies/ non-alcoholic mouth wash/ Disinfectant Wipes

For Arts & Crafts: seasonal silk flowers/ tacky glue/ large & small hot glue sticks/ quilt batting/ black & white cotton thread (spools and cones)/ paint brush sets

Dining: individually wrapped snacks/ cake mixes/ chocolate chips for baking/ luncheon size paper napkins/ apple and cranberry juices

Laundry: Oxiclean stain remover/ dryer sheets

Gift cards for Amazon, Walmart, Stop & Shop, Michael's, Dunkin' Donuts, etc.

Ways to Donate

- On our website at www.littlesistersofthepoorconnecticut.org
 - Monthly — Request a free calendar of gift envelopes
Call 860-265-1872
 - Matching gifts at your place of employment —
See list on our website
- Ask for envelopes when the Little Sisters visit your parish
- Wills & bequests, stock transfers, charitable gift annuities

Share your email with us —
we have emails that go out often with upcoming events.

*(Please be assured that the Little Sisters of the Poor
do not share any of your private information with anyone)*

SAVE THE DATE

SCONE SALE
Friday, March 17

HAM DROP ACCEPTING GIFT CARDS ONLY
Saturday, April 8

3RD ANNUAL CAR SHOW
Friday, June 23