



Left to right: Volunteers chat with John Jankowski. Sr. Dorothy visits with Cecilia Joh and other Residents, as they wait for the arrival of the Blessed Sacrament. Residents line the petal-strewn path to welcome Jesus' arrival in a cloud of incense. Margarita Cifuentes being interviewed by an EWTN reporter.

## National Eucharistic Pilgrimage Becomes a Reality for Residents Thanks to the Support of Volunteers, AJJ, and Sisters

Our Residents recently had the opportunity to participate in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage as it journeyed from the National Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament and made several stops in our Brookland neighborhood enroute to The Saint John Paul II Shrine, located next door to our Home. The path of the Pilgrimage, the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Route, began in New Haven, CT, and passed through several eastern states and cities.

In a heartwarming display of faith and community, our "little family" of Residents, Little Sisters, Volunteers, and Associates from the Association Jeanne Jugan (AJJ) gathered to welcome Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Thirty Residents, ranging from the most infirm to the most independent, formed an 'honor guard' along the Shrine's driveway, scattering fragrant flower petals in the path of the procession. Volunteers ensured the Residents' comfort with hats, chairs, and water, engaging them

in conversation, while awaiting the procession's arrival.

The sight of the Eucharist approaching in the distance, accompanied by so many faithful, was truly moving. Led by a server bearing a tall crucifix, our Eucharistic Jesus, processed in a cloud of incense, under a linen canopy, surrounded by priests, altar servers, and worshippers in total silence, along the flower-petal-strewn route.

Our little family warmly welcomed the body of Christ, and the procession culminated at the JP II Shrine with hymns and moving testimonies.

Afterwards, participants enjoyed lunch in our auditorium. "The elderly were so happy to have played a role in this unforgettable day," said Sr. Constance, "which showcases the joy our Residents experience when sharing in moments of faith and community."

This Pilgrimage, comprising four routes, began simultaneously around the country – the St. Junipero Serra

Route in San Francisco, the St. Juan Diego Route in Brownsville, TX, and the Marian Route in northern MN. The routes form a cross over our country, traverse 6,500 miles, touch 27 states and 65 dioceses, and converged in mid-July in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress.

"We are grateful to all the Volunteers and the AJJ who made this experience at the John Paul II Shrine possible for the Residents," said Mother Margaret Regina. "It was a true blessing to participate in the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and witness the power and beauty of our Eucharistic Jesus in our midst."

If you'd like to volunteer, contact Nikki Wade at [volwashington@littlesistersofthepoor.org](mailto:volwashington@littlesistersofthepoor.org) to arrange a tour.

For more on the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, visit <https://www.littlesistersofthepoor.org/blog/> or <https://www.littlesistersofthepoor.org/serenity-magazine/serenity-magazine-july-2024/>



Left: Cecilia Joh, with a plate of watermelon to enjoy later, captures the festive spirit in her red, white, and blue scarf. Center: Later in the week, our 'Popsicles on the Patio' social brought more summer fun. Francine Whitley, our activity director, shares a special moment with Maria Ruhland, who enjoys an Orange Creamside. Right: Sr. Francis Catherine joins Marian O'Brien for an impromptu sing-along; and encourages moving their arms in time to the music. Music with its natural rhythm, encourages seniors to move their feet and hands, which gets their blood circulating and is, simply put, fun.

## Red, White, and BBQ

### *Celebrating the 4th of July with Favorite Eats and Summer Fun*

What better way to ensure our Residents enjoy summer – despite high temperatures and heat advisories – than with a colorful July 4th barbeque held in the cool comfort of our auditorium? The room, transformed by a vibrant sea of red, white, and blue decorations and balloons, was brimming with patriotic spirit thanks to the creative efforts of our devoted activities team.

A highlight of the event was the performance by guest keyboard musician and vocalist, Gurda Williams. Her rendition of patriotic classics had everyone's toes tapping and voices singing along. The playlist included many heartwarming favorites from "I'll Keep You in My Heart" and the "Star-

Spangled Banner" to "God Bless the U.S.A."

As Gurda's voice filled the auditorium, the Little Sisters, dedicated staff, and volunteers served a much-anticipated lunch of traditional summer foods, featuring freshly grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, complemented by baked beans, corn on the cob, potato salad, and juicy watermelon slices.

The taste, smell, and texture of food can be extraordinarily nostalgic, bringing back deeper memories not just of the taste of the food, but also of places and loved ones. This celebration brought forth many smiles.

The festivities continued into the afternoon with a cozy movie session.

Thanks to our closed-circuit TV system, Residents could watch the film *The Boys in the Boat*, from the comfort of their rooms or join friends at popular viewing spots like the second-floor lounge and the breezeway. This thoughtful setup fosters both independence and social connection, making the experience enjoyable for all.

"Events like these are made possible thanks to the unwavering support and generosity of our donors and volunteers," said Mother Margaret Regina. "Your kindness helps us create special moments and lasting memories for our Residents, keeping our community thriving, happy, and full of life. Making the Residents happy is all that counts."

## Welcoming New Faces and Bidding Farewell

In keeping with our tradition, everyone gathered at the front door to bid a heartfelt farewell to our dear Sr. Joseph Mary, who embarked on her new assignment at our Home in Indianapolis in May. "We are immensely grateful for Sr. Joseph and the 12 years of dedicated service she has provided to this Home," remarked Mother Margaret Regina, "especially for the compassionate care she has shown to our Residents and her tireless efforts in maintaining our buildings and infrastructure in top-notch condition."

A few days later, we joyfully welcomed Sr. Francis Gabriel from our Home in Baltimore. Sr. Francis has assumed the role of Mother Margaret Regina's assistant, succeeding Sr. Joseph. A Baltimorean by birth, Sister

Francis brings a wealth of skills, experience, and talents that will enrich the lives of all as we work together as a family and in the spirit of St. Jeanne Jugan.

Additionally, we are delighted to welcome Sr. Jacintha Joseph from our Home in Palatine, IL. Born in India, Sr. Jacintha has been in the states for 12 years, dedicating herself to the care and well-being of others. She assists Mother with council duties, and as a certified nursing assistant she provides care to Residents on our 1st floor nursing units, helping to ensure that they receive the highest quality of support and attention.

We are delighted to have both Sr. Francis Gabriel and Sr. Jacintha Joseph join our community and look forward to the many ways they will enrich our Home.



## SPOTLIGHT on Three Women Who Inspire



Miriam (left) gets an assist to her room from Emily Calis after our 4th of July BBQ. Meanwhile, Emma and Theresa Weir (center) share laughter and stories. Elizabeth (right) wearing a tiara and corsage, while celebrating her 100th Birthday in 2018 with cake and song, of course.

This year, as we celebrate extraordinary birthdays for three treasured Residents we are reminded of the strength, resilience, and joy that each one brings to our community. Their lives are a source of inspiration, and we are honored to share in their journey.

### **Miriam Clark**

#### *A Matriarchal Marvel Turning 101*

Miriam, a cherished member of our community with a rich tapestry of life experiences, regales us with enchanting tales of her bustling household, from the daily routine of laundry and lunch preparation to the joy of watching her many descendants grow. As the mother of ten children her stories are filled with fond memories, particularly of Les, her late husband, and their journey of raising a large family.

Hailing from Atlantic City, New Jersey, Miriam is one of twelve siblings and received all her Sacraments at Our Lady Star of the Sea, the same place where she and Les exchanged vows. "We were very much in love," she said.

Their enduring love story spanned 56 years, leaving a legacy that extends to her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, totaling more than 35.

Miriam continues to nurture her family by sending them inspirational gifts, while also uplifting everyone with her words of encouragement. Her unwavering dedication to family, prayer, and community provides solace and inspiration to all those fortunate enough to know her.

### **Emma Staples**

#### *A Vibrant Centenarian*

Emma epitomizes a zest for life. Turning 104 years old this August, she loves a Piña Colada, dancing, and is known for her infectious sense of humor, often delighting everyone with her jokes. Emma participates in many activities like morning exercise, movies, and card games.

Growing up in El Paso, Texas, Emma attended St. Patrick's, a private Catholic school, and was the youngest of three children. After graduating business school, she worked at Western Electric, where she met her husband, Henry Julius Staples.

She raised her two daughters in New Jersey where she held various volunteer and professional roles, including supporting Newton Memorial Hospital, and helping at her daughters'

dance studio. Her family includes two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Emma's faith, humor, and love for dancing make her a beloved member of our community.

### **Elizabeth Jackson**

#### *A Century and Beyond*

Elizabeth, who turns 106 this September, is another jewel in our Home. Featured in our newsletter when she turned 100, her story continues to inspire. Born at the now-defunct Columbia Hospital for Women in DC, she said, "I have no brothers or sisters, but lots of friends and cousins, and they have lots of children. Their children had children, so I have a large family – plus two grandchildren of my own." Elizabeth worked for many years as a cook at Hot Shoppes in Fairfax Virginia. Though she now enjoys afternoon naps, her love for music endures. Sr. Mary Janette frequently plays Elizabeth's favorite music – Gospel and Motown – and often she sings along, especially to her favorite, "Oh Happy Day." Elizabeth's spirit remains timeless.

Here's to cherishing each moment with these extraordinary women.

## 2024 FISHERS OF MEN AWARD

The Little Sisters of the Poor were honored in April at the Guadalupe Radio Network's benefit dinner in D.C. Mother Margaret Regina accepted the 'Fishers of Men Award' on behalf of all the Little Sisters worldwide, calling the recognition "a great encouragement!"

The event highlighted the theme "Being Catholics in the Age of Eucharistic Revival." Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori led a Mass emphasizing unity with the Lord, followed by prayers and blessings at the dinner. The Little Sisters "revere the sacredness of human

life," he said. "They promote a family spirit. They are compassionate. They are utterly responsible. And they affect the lives of those they serve as well as their families."

The evening was hosted by Erik Rosales of EWTN's News Nightly, featured keynote speaker Debbie Georgianni, who drew inspiration from the life of Carlo Acutis. His devotion to the Holy Eucharist was his gateway to Heaven and his profound words resonated with the audience, urging reflection on living a life pleasing to God.

## MOTHER'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

In this newsletter I would like to share with you some news about the recent unexpected visit of the daughter of St. Gianna Beretta Molla to our Home.

Dr. Gianna Emanuela Molla, St. Gianna's youngest child, was visiting Catholic University for a speaking engagement when she learned that Father Edward Flanagan, ofm, a great admirer of her parents, resides here at our Home. When we heard she was coming to see him, we asked if she would also be able to spend some time with us Little Sisters.

Dr. Molla responded with an energetic "Yes," so all the Sisters were able to share in this special occasion. She arrived the afternoon of April 26, very enthusiastic and eager to speak about her saintly mother. She was even more eager to talk about her father, Pietro Molla, for whom she cared during his final years. Many people believe that he, like her mother, is also a saint. Gianna Emanuela had chosen the field of geriatric medicine because she was very close to her grandmother, and this prepared her well to care for her father. From him she learned how to grow old with inner peace, joy and grace. She reflected that "her saintly parents taught me that the way of the cross is certainly the way of joy, of the most true and fruitful happiness."

Gianna Emanuela told us that she is in the process of sharing his life as she witnessed it each day, hoping that his cause for canonization may be introduced. She noted that we have so many younger people who have become saints in the Church, and she feels strongly that her father's life would be inspiring for those experiencing their "golden years." She wanted us to know how important our life as Little Sisters to the Aged is.

When asked how she thought we could encourage young people to pursue careers at the service of the elderly and foster vocations to our community, she replied that we must teach children to love and respect the elderly from a very young age. Only if we believe that every human person, from the youngest to the oldest and most vulnerable, has equal value, will our society invest in the care of the elderly, she said.

We Little Sisters are privileged to meet many people, like Dr. Gianna Emanuela Molla, who inspire us by their example of saintly living. We pray in gratitude for all of you who support us by your prayer and goodness, even sharing your time with our Residents. Please join us in continuing to pray the "Lord of the Harvest" to send workers into His Vineyard, especially to our Congregation. It's a beautiful life of grace!

*Mother Margaret Regina*



## In Step With Rayona Briggs

### *Human Resources Generalist*

We are excited to introduce Rayona Briggs, who has been with us for a few months now. Rayona offers 16 years of combined experience in the financial sector, specializing in banking and credit unions, with her most recent role as Senior Branch Manager. Her experience in recruiting, onboarding, and employee relations has already made her a valuable addition, helping us to create a positive and thriving work environment.

Rayona is a creative person by nature, with a true passion for interior

decorating and "beautifying anything." In her free time, she enjoys volunteering, traveling, and spending time with her family. She resides in Upper Marlboro with her loved ones.

Rayona is committed to fostering a culture of collaboration and feedback, ensuring that all employees feel supported and valued. Let's continue to support her in this role and work together to create an inclusive workplace where everyone can flourish in the spirit of a Family.

Join us in welcoming Rayona as she continues her journey with us. Welcome, Rayona!



## SAVE THE DATE

**Join Us in Prayer on Our Mother Foundress' Feast Day  
August 30**

Little Sisters around the world celebrate St. Jeanne Jugan on her feast day. Here we mark the day with a Mass. Join us as we unite in prayer to offer our gratitude for the life and example of Jeann Jugan and to pray for vocations.

**Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) Show Some Love: Be the Face of Change  
September 1, 2024 to January 15, 2025**

Remember, you can support our mission to care for the needy aged by

designating the Little Sisters of the Poor, designation number 53116, in your workplace giving. Federal workers, retirees, and government contractors are eligible to donate through the CFC, the federal government's workplace giving program.

**Fall Sweepstakes  
September 17 – Nov 27**

Watch for Sweeps tickets due in mailboxes this September! The Sweeps runs September 17 through November 27, with the drawing on November 28. All funds go to our Fuel Fund to keep the lights on and our Residents comfortable.

**Giving Tuesday  
December 3**

#GivingTuesday is a 'day of giving' the Tuesday after Black Friday, and reimagines a world built upon shared humanity and generosity. More details to come on our website and via email!