

The Vocation of a Little Sister of the Poor

Where It All Began



On August 30, we celebrate the feast of St. Jeanne Jugan. To mark this occasion, we will take a closer look at the vocation of a Little Sister of the Poor and how the charism of our foundress is lived today.

It all began on a winter night in 1839, when St. Jeanne welcomed Anne Chauvin, a destitute elderly widow who was blind and paralyzed, into her little apartment. This magnanimous gesture was repeated over and over as she and the generations of Little Sisters who followed her spared no effort to care for the elderly with dignity and respect in a loving family atmosphere. Today in the

Bronx, this mission continues.

A vocation is a call from God. All Christians are called to holiness, but it is up to each one to discern the specific way that God calls. As a young woman, Jeanne Jugan realized that God had a plan for her life, and yet for many years she had no idea exactly where he was leading her. She confided to her mother, "God wants me for himself. He is keeping me for a work which is not yet founded." Years went by before Jeanne saw the unfolding of God's plan, but when He revealed her mission, she followed it with her whole heart.



Sr. Constance and Sr. Charles Patricia led a discernment retreat for young women in the diocese of Arlington, VA in June.

Please join us in praying for vocations and for young people who are discerning God's will for their lives. 

*Lord Jesus,
You tell us that what we do for the least of our brothers and sisters, we do for you. Call many generous young women to follow in the footsteps of St. Jeanne Jugan as Little Sisters of the Poor. Grant them the courage to say "yes" to your call. Help them to recognize you in the person of the elderly poor and to serve you in them faithfully and generously. Amen.*



Sr. Mary James as a Postulant



Sr. Mary James after Perpetual Vows



Sr. Mary James and Rebecca in the Residents' store

A Vocation Story: Giving God to Souls and Souls to God

Sr. Mary James, a native of the Bronx, answered God's call to become a Little Sister of the Poor at the age of 18.

Although she admits that it was not "love at first sight," this call eventually became stronger.

She grew up in an apartment building near the Little Sisters' Home, the sixth of seven children. Sr. Mary James always loved religion and school but did not think she could be a religious herself.

One of the girls who lived in her building invited her to go to volunteer with the Little Sisters. She was not used to being around the elderly and after a

few times stopped going to help with her friends. Later, when she was in high school, the invitation was renewed and she went back to the Home.

Little by little, she fell in love with the Residents.

She worked alongside the Little Sisters and grew to admire them deeply. She felt a deep peace when she was at the Home.

Even though the work was hard, she found herself eager to get there and started going both before and after school. She would help to get the Residents up in the morning and then serve them breakfast. In the evening she

would assist with supper for the sick and give a hand to put the Residents to bed.

She also began going to daily Mass.

Sr. Mary James was struck by the words on a vocation brochure, "To give God to souls and souls to God."

She soon realized that this was God's plan for her and entered the Little Sisters of the Poor, six months after graduating from high school.

Today, having lived religious life for over 60 years, she can make the words of St. Jeanne Jugan her own: "What happiness for us to be a Little Sister of the Poor!"



A Little Sister of the Poor in Formation

Each year our novices spend six weeks in one of our Homes. This is a precious time which permits them to directly experience our mission

and community life, while growing to understand the unity between prayer and our daily activities. This year we had the joy of welcoming a



novice to the Bronx. Sr. Lucía Belén is originally from Argentina and is making her novitiate in Tacna, Peru. During her time here she helped in all areas of the Home and participated fully in the life of the Little Sisters. The Residents shared many special moments with her, grateful for her loving attention.

Our Name, an Expression of our Charism



Every religious family possesses a unique charism. A charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit given to one individual for the good of the entire Church. For St. Jeanne Jugan, this gift was consecrated hospitality to the elderly poor. It is expressed in the name of the Congregation she founded: Little Sisters of the Poor.

Little

The humility and simplicity of St. Jeanne Jugan are reflected in this adjective. She repeatedly exhorted the first Little Sisters, “Be little, very little, very humble before God.” Today her



daughters are called to continue this littleness in their dependence on God’s Providence and in their mission of service to the elderly poor, radiating the love of Jesus, gentle and humble of heart.

Sister

Little Sisters of the Poor are called to be Sisters to the elderly. By our vow of hospitality, we are consecrated to them. Saint Jeanne Jugan said, “Never forget that the Poor are our Lord.” Jesus is present in them, and we know the happiness of being Sisters to the elderly poor in our daily life with them.



Sisters to each other as well, we share everything, especially the privilege of serving the elderly together. We are also Sisters to all those who collaborate with our mission: the Jeanne Jugan Associates, our staff, benefactors, and volunteers.

of the Poor

Saint Jeanne Jugan told us, “Making the poor happy is what counts.” We give our lives to those we serve and find our joy in bringing joy to the poorest. We desire to share in the beatitude of spiritual poverty, making a radical gift of self in surrender to God.

The Formation of a Little Sister of the Poor

Discernment – Time spent with the Little Sisters in prayer and service help a young woman to see our life closer, and to experience prayer, community, and mission with us.

Pre-Postulancy – A candidate moves into one of our Homes and participates in the life of the community while pursuing opportunities to round out her spiritual and human formation.

Postulancy – A further period of

discernment which begins in one of our Homes and concludes with several months spent in the novitiate.

Novitiate – A two-year period of prayer and study during which the novices prepare for a radical gift of themselves as Little Sisters of the Poor. This includes two periods of several weeks spent in one of our Homes. The novitiate culminates in profession of the vows of chastity, poverty, obedience and hospitality for two years.

Temporary Profession – Each new Little Sister is sent out on mission to one of our Homes. This period includes an additional year of doctrinal formation, called the **Juniorate**, and the possibility of further training in the care of the elderly. At the completion of their first two years of vowed life, the young Little Sisters remake their vows, usually for an additional three years.

Final Vows – A year is spent at our motherhouse in France in preparation for perpetual profession, when the Little Sisters will commit themselves definitively to their vocation. A Little Sister of the Poor may be sent anywhere in the world!

Mother's Message

Dear Friends,

In his encyclical on religious life Pope St. John Paul said, "In the countenance of Jesus, the 'image of the invisible God' (Col 1:15) and the reflection of the Father's glory (cf. Heb 1:3), we glimpse the depths of an eternal and infinite love which is at the very root of our being. Those who let themselves be seized by this love cannot help abandoning everything to follow him (cf. Mk 1:16-20; 2:14; 10:21, 28). Like St. Paul, they consider all else as loss 'because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ', by comparison with which they do not hesitate to count all things as 'refuse', in order that they 'may gain Christ' (Phil 3:8). They strive to become one with him, taking on his mind and his way of life." (Vita Consecrata)



These words may be some of the most profound and inspiring written on the meaning of a vocation to religious life. I hope you enjoy our newsletter featuring the vocation of one of our Little Sisters. Since our beginning, the Little Sisters have been blessed with young women willing to say "yes" to God's call to be His Spouse and express their love and fidelity to HIM by caring for the elderly poor throughout the world. Thanks to your generosity and so many of our friends and benefactors, we continue to be able to serve the elderly in the USA and throughout the world. Join us in praying for young people, that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit they will find and follow the path Christ has chosen for them!

Mother Gertrude Mary

Save the Date

Sunday, October 18
Celebrating Together: Raise the Roof!

Thank You!

Our gratitude to all those who share in our mission knows no bounds!

If you are already a "member" of our family, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

If you would like to become involved in our mission, please consider one of the following:

- Volunteering - To apply for volunteer service, contact Sr. Raymond Marie at bxvolunteercoordinator@littlesistersofthepoor.org.
- Regular donations, especially recurring gifts (by mail or online)*
- Gifts from your donor advised fund
- Memorial donations
- Remembering us in your will
- Celebrating your birthday, anniversary, or Christmas by asking friends and family to make a donation to support the Little Sisters of the Poor
- Honoring a loved one by making a donation to the Little Sisters or making a gift in memory of a deceased friend or relative
- Praying for our Residents and for vocations

**What if the impact of your gift to the Little Sisters of the Poor could be doubled?! In many cases it can! If your employer offers matching gifts, please consider applying!*



Scan the QR code to donate now.

Our needs:

- EPA approved sanitizing wipes
- Liquid hand soap
- Facial tissues
- Paper towels
- Liquid laundry detergent
- Individually wrapped snacks and candy
- Juice – large bottles
- Small eco-friendly paper plates
- Copy machine paper
- Gift Cards
- Donations toward the cost of entertainment for parties
- Forever stamps
- A NEW ROOF!!

We are a 501 C 3 tax exempt organization with Tax ID #13-1884785.