

Spring 2023



We experience the fullness of spring in the month of May. The month when everything is fresh, new and growing, seeing nature's beauty in full bloom.

It is no wonder that May is traditionally "Mary's month," with the blossoming flowers and trees after a long winter, reminding us of the new life that Mary brought into the world with the birth of Jesus. During this month, statues of the Blessed Mother are crowned with flowers and there is an increased focus on Marian devotions. It was on May 13, 1917 that the Blessed Mother appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal.

"Pray the Rosary every day, in order to obtain peace for the world and end of the war" was the message she repeated during each of the six apparitions.

At her last appearance at Fatima five months later, on October 13th, the day the Miracle of the Sun happened, she revealed who she was to Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta, she told them, "I am the Lady of the Rosary."

The Blessed Mother has also appeared in many other places around the world often requesting people to pray the Rosary - for the conversion of sinners, for peace, and to achieve grace. She wishes us to know that she will intercede with her Son, helping to answer our prayers, for she is mother to us all, loving and caring. St. Pope John Paul II wrote, *"To pray the Rosary is to hand over our burdens to the merciful hearts of Christ and his Mother."* He also called for all Christians to *"take up the Rosary once again"* in our daily lives. How badly it is needed in this world of trouble and unrest!

Here at St. Joseph's Home, the Little Sisters and Residents pray the Rosary daily before Mass and say the Divine Mercy weekly. It is common to see Sisters and Residents out for a walk, or sitting on the benches during this mild spring weather, rosaries in hand, praying amidst the beauty and serenity of our grounds. Through the Mysteries of the Rosary we understand the choices of Mary, her joys, her sorrows and sacrifices and that through her we are drawn closer to God. It is through the Blessed Mother that we offer thanksgiving for all of the blessings that have been given to us by our friends and benefactors. For it's your generous donations that make it possible for us to fulfill our mission of caring for the elderly poor.

Pope Francis said, "Let us ask the Mother of God for the grace to be joyful bearers of God's blessing to others, as He is to us." As evidenced by your devoted support of our Residents, you have been given the grace of charity, selflessly sharing what you have been blessed with to help provide for those less fortunate than yourselves. The Little Sisters and the Residents repay you in kind with sincere prayers for you and those dear to you. We pray daily that each of you receive blessings in abundance for the sacrifices you make to ensure that our Residents receive the best of care. As St. Jeanne Jugan said, *"The Hail Mary will take you to Heaven!"*

May God who understands each need and who listens to every prayer, bless you always.

Gratefully,

Sr Mary Thomas I.S.P.

Sister Mary Thomas, I.S.P.
Superior
Little Sisters of the Poor

Tickets for the St. Jeanne Jugan Feast Day 50/50 Raffle will be available early July. Please visit our website: www.littlesistersofthepoortotowa.org for more information and to learn about our Mother General's April visit.