

Dear Friends,

The beautiful season of autumn is on its way. For the Little Sisters of the Poor, autumn is a time of special milestones for the Congregation, a time of reflection on the life of our Mother Foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan. She was born on October 25, 1792 in a small fishing village in Brittany, France and this year marks the 230<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth. It was in September of 1868, when the seven Little Sisters that Jeanne Jugan sent to America, arrived in New York to spread her mission to the New World. Moving ahead to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, on October 3<sup>rd</sup> 1982, Jeanne Jugan was beatified by St. Pope John Paul II and twenty seven years later, on October 11<sup>th</sup> 2009, she was canonized by Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. Yes, the fall is a very wonderful time of the year for the Little Sisters indeed!

In his homily at her canonization, then Pope Benedict remarked that, "In the Beatitudes Jeanne Jugan found the source of the spirit of hospitality and fraternal love, founded on unlimited trust in Providence, which illuminated her whole life." You see, the Holy Father knew that although St. Jeanne Jugan was the foundress of the Congregation, she was the "collecting" sister who went door to door begging for money, food and gifts in kind all for her beloved poor. That is why she is usually pictured with a loaf of bread and her begging basket bringing the day's collecting back home. In this work she trusted completely in God to help her provide for all in her care. This trust in Divine Providence is alive in the Little Sisters to this day.

At St. Joseph's Home we have two collecting Sisters who visit businesses and stores every week, picking up the food stuffs and gifts in kind just as St. Jeanne Jugan did so many years ago. Many of you might have met them, or other Little Sisters, when they visit your parish and speak to you of our Home and our mission to the aged, and ask for a small contribution to help provide for our Resident's needs. To be able to humble themselves, to beg, is a special grace given to them from God, the same gift that St. Jeanne Jugan was blessed with.

Pope Francis said, "In the poor and outcast we see Christ's face; by loving and helping the poor, we love and serve Christ." And you, our dear benefactors, understand this so well. You see the needs of others less fortunate, strangers to whom you have opened up your heart, and to whom you selflessly support. Jesus spoke about caring for the poor more than any other matter. Through your charity, you are following Christ's teaching by helping us in our work to feed and care for the elderly poor - and we are humbled by your generous giving. You have sustained us through difficult times, when you yourselves were experiencing the same troubles. Even now as everyone struggles with the high cost of every necessity, we know that by responding to this appeal, you are seeing Christ in our Residents.

We thank you for all that you do for us in the only way that we can. As St. Jeanne Jugan taught us, we pray for our benefactors every day, asking that she present your special intentions to God for your devotion and generosity to our Home. We pray too, for peace and an end to the pandemic and these uncertain economic times as we continue to trust in God's Providence to carry us through.

Uniting our prayers with St. Jeanne Jugan may we never tire in saying, "Blessed be God, Thank you, my God, Glory be to God."

Gratefully,

*Sr Mary Thomas I.S.P.*

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

