

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR

Serving the elderly poor  
in Philadelphia since 1869

Spring, 2021  
HOLY FAMILY HOME  
5300 Chester Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA  
19143

[littlesistersofthepoorphiladelphia.org](http://littlesistersofthepoorphiladelphia.org)



## HOLY FAMILY HOME

### St. Joseph the Worker's Intercession Helping Us Through the Pandemic



#### OUR NEEDS

**Nestle Boost Breeze  
8 oz nutritional  
drinks**

**Bottled water**

**XL disposable vinyl  
gloves for kitchen  
use, latex and  
powder free**

Pope Francis has declared a special “Year of St. Joseph.” In his Apostolic Letter, *Patris corde*, Pope Francis writes about St. Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.”

The Vatican News says, “The Holy Father wrote *Patris corde* against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic, which, he says, has helped us see more clearly the importance of ‘ordinary’ people who, though far from the limelight, exercise patience and offer hope every day. In this, they resemble Saint Joseph, ‘the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence,’ who nonetheless played ‘an incomparable role in the history of salvation.’”

This Year of St. Joseph comes at an opportune time.

**Annual  
Appeal  
Novena of  
Masses to  
St. Joseph  
the Worker,  
May 2-10.**

We know that the pandemic has been hard on everyone, particularly on those who have lost jobs. We pray to St. Joseph the Worker for all those who are unemployed or underemployed, that they may find meaningful and productive work. We also pray for those in the health care industry, particularly our staff, who have been working under stressful

and difficult circumstances, while also balancing their personal challenges. During our Annual Appeal Novena of Masses, starting right after the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, May 2 - 10, we pray for you and your intentions. May God bless you all.



Although the Chapel has been off-limits to the Residents during the pandemic, they are able to participate at Mass and Rosary and listen to Father Sullivan's homilies through closed circuit television.



Sister Elizabeth Teresa continues her famous decorating efforts of the Cappuccino Corner. Although the Residents are not allowed in the area, the morale of the staff is lifted by seeing the joyful, colorful holiday decorations.

# LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR



*Sabrina H., a CNA at Holy Family Home, shows how she feels about getting the vaccine. During the pandemic, our staff has worked diligently to care for the Residents and keep them safe, healthy, and happy.*

## Residents' Reflections

### Pray to St. Joseph

In this Year of St. Joseph, our Residents are happy to have the opportunity to be able to reflect on the life and roles of St. Joseph and how they can imitate his virtues. Most of them learned about St. Joseph at home and some, like Paul B., were taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph, "and [I] can never remember being without a statue of Good St. Joseph at school or home." Joseph M., feels very lucky to be named after St. Joseph the Worker, whom he describes as a humble servant of God.

Most of the Residents describe St. Joseph as the foster father of Jesus, husband of Mary, protector of the Holy Family. Maureen S. says that "if I could meet St. Joseph, as I always wanted to, I would thank him for marrying Mary and taking good care of her and Jesus."

When asked for what they prayed to St. Joseph, Jane A. says, "I've only recently begun praying to St. Joseph and I hope he hears me. My son is lost. St. Joseph lost Jesus in the temple. He knows the feeling." Paul prays to the foster father of Jesus for the fatherless or unguided children. Jim M. feels St. Joseph can help the young to be open to the "Spirit" of truth and to be successful in their lives.

Residents also pray to Saint Joseph for a happy death for the terminally ill and dying. Jim has been praying to him "to calm the chaos all around the world." Many have asked his intercession for ending the pandemic.

Since he is the provider for the Holy Family, many have prayed to St. Joseph to help them or others to obtain employment. One Resident "prayed to St. Joseph to get me out of a financial pinch, and he did." Finally, St. Joseph helped Dorothy G. and many others

"to sell my first house. I put his statue in the ground in front of the house and it sold."

While living at Holy Family Home, Jim finds that it is "very inspiring to see the Sisters, staff and Residents turn to [St. Joseph] for his intercession so frequently." They hear about and see the Sisters' dependence on God's providence through St. Joseph's intercession.

Before she came to the Home, the only saint Mary Lou D. really prayed to was our Blessed Mother. But after moving here she has learned so much about Jesus and the saints through Father Sullivan's homilies and from the Sisters. During this Year of St. Joseph she has become more aware about how special he is and how faithful he was to Mary and Jesus. She and the other Residents are praying more to St. Joseph. On March 19 they started the novena to St. Joseph, to be said the 19th of each month, and they've been praying the Litany to St. Joseph. The apartment Residents also read excerpts of Fr. Frederick Miller's booklet, "St. Joseph: Our Father in Faith."

Dorothy feels that her devotion to St. Joseph has deepened since coming to Holy Family Home and hopes it will deepen even more during this Year of St. Joseph.

*With grateful thanks to Today's Graphics, Inc., for its generous printing of this newsletter.*

## Prayer to St. Joseph the Worker

Oh, St. Joseph, the most loving of fathers, we thank you for your example of a life devoted to Mary and Jesus. Help us in our daily work, so that we may find it an effective means of glorifying our Lord, sanctifying ourselves, and of being useful to the society in which we live. Help us to follow your example and to keep our sight fixed on Mary, our mother, and Jesus who worked with you at your carpenter's bench. We ask that we may lead peaceful and holy lives on earth, the prelude to the eternally happy one which awaits us in heaven forever more. Amen.

St. Joseph the Worker, pray for us.





**Activities Assistant Tina S. visits with Residents and hands out Mardi Gras snacks and colorful beads from their brightly decorated cart.**



**On St. Patrick's Day, Mac M. goes all Irish! She always looks so festive dressed up in the colors and symbols of each holiday.**

## St. Joseph the Protector

The Little Sisters of the Poor hold St. Joseph in great esteem. Their foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan, chose him as Protector of the Congregation, and their Constitutions state, "We will have an enlightened devotion to Saint Joseph, seeing in him a father, in the likeness of our heavenly Father, whose Providence watches especially over little ones."

Growing up, some of the Sisters just knew him as the foster father of Jesus. After becoming Little Sisters of the Poor, they learned more about his virtues. Sr. Amy states that "because of the role he plays within the Congregation as protector and provider, I have developed a personal relationship and deep faith in his powerful intercession."

For Sr. Kathleen, St. Joseph has been an inspiration: "As I live my vow of chastity, I look to St. Joseph who was called to consecrate his sexuality to his role in God's plan of redemption."

The Sisters have witnessed numerous miracles and favors obtained through St. Joseph's intercession. Many, of course,

**The Little Sisters of the Poor hold St. Joseph in great esteem.**

involve financial help, such as a donation check coming just in time to help cover payroll. One Sister, feeling overwhelmed in the new Home to which she was transferred, was whispering a little prayer to St. Joseph when a Resident by the name of Joseph called out to her some words of encouragement. Another Sister prayed to St. Joseph while trying to fill a position. An overqualified applicant came and took the job despite a large reduction in salary.

In our chaplain Father James Sullivan's family, Joseph was a good name for several of his family members to have and live up to. In his priesthood he has come to appreciate St. Joseph as an instrument of God, a man of faith, a man

for mission, faithful to his vocation. From the Little Sisters he has learned to rely on St. Joseph as a provider and protector, so much so that on March 19, 2020 he consecrated himself to St. Joseph "that I may serve the work of Holy Family Home in the same spirit."

## Rollercoaster Ride

When we sent you our fall newsletter back in October, we were hoping that things were starting to ease up with the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, the second wave struck hard in December and January, with 26 Residents and 26 staff members testing positive. Luckily, most of them had mild or no symptoms. We had separate wings for COVID positive Residents, keeping them isolated from those Residents who were not infected. Staff stepped up, working double shifts to cover for those who were out sick. Strict infection control measures were in place, with N-95 masks, shields, gowns and gloves being worn and creating a sci-fi movie atmosphere.

But then came a ray of hope. We received word that COVID-19 vaccine clinics were being scheduled at our Home! There was such an air of excitement and anticipation as staff and Residents signed up and completed forms. On the day that the first dose was administered, there were happy smiles of relief.

Things continued to slowly improve. In late February, we were able to lift restrictions once we were out of outbreak status. Residents were back to eating in the dining rooms, they were able to go to the Chapel for Mass, the beauty shop was reopened, and, best of all, family members were allowed to come in for short visits with their loved ones. After almost a year of being cooped up in their rooms, it was like new life came into the Home, with the dining rooms buzzing with chatter, the Chapel filled with the sound of praying, Residents feeling revived after getting their hair done, and happy reunions in seeing family members face to face again.

Unfortunately, after three weeks of "normalcy," the Residents had to go back into quarantine when some staff and Residents tested positive. We will lift restrictions as soon as we can for the well-being of our dear Residents.

**Kelly Caden, Activities Director, on a one-on-one visit with Helen O. around Valentine's Day. Because of the pandemic the Residents have not been able to gather together for large group activities.**



## Faith in Intercession



Dear Friends,

We all know how important St. Joseph is in the life of the Holy Family and how well he cared for Jesus and Mary. One of the most important virtues of St. Joseph was his faith and trust in God, especially when he took Mary as his wife.

When I was a young sister a Resident said to me, "I pray each day to St. Joseph for the grace of a happy death, to be able to receive the Sacrament of the sick and Viaticum before I die." One morning I went into her room and she said, "Sister, I am going to die today and I would like the Sacrament of the sick." I explained to her that Father had just gone home and he would be back the next day. She refused to get up and would not eat anything. I called Father, who came over and gave her the sacraments. As he left her, they both had smiles on their faces.

I prayed the Rosary with her and around 5 p.m. she said, "I am going to die. St. Joseph promised that whoever prayed to him would have a happy death, so I have prayed to him all my life and he is going to help me." I was a little nervous by this time, and as I prayed the Office by her bed, it was then that St. Joseph took her home to Jesus with a smile on her face.

During this year dedicated to St. Joseph let us ask him to intercede for us so that our faith will be strong as his was and that we can do God's will as he did.

Have a blessed and Holy Easter. We continue to pray for all those who are suffering and for an end to the pandemic.

Prayerfully,

*Mother Catherine*

## Emergence

In October 2020, Sr. Mary Grace was at our Novitiate in New York, where there is a section of the yard where butterflies lay their eggs, from which hatch caterpillars. She brought three of these back with her to Philadelphia.

The Sisters and Residents watched as each of the caterpillars slowly grew, shed its skin and spun a cocoon around itself. Because of the cold winter, it took about five months before they would start emerging from their cocoons.

After much patient waiting, the first butterfly was found flying in the jar. When was its birthday? On March 19 – the feast of St. Joseph! Naturally, it was named Joseph.

Two more cocoons are lying dormant. We will have a contest for everyone to guess the date of the next butterfly to come out and the winner will get to name it.



**Ann B. looks in amazement at Joseph, the first of three caterpillars to hatch from its cocoon, making St. Joseph's feast day even more special.**

## Ways to Support

Here are some ways in which you can help us:

- Checks or credit card donations for our operating needs, especially because we cannot have fundraising events due to the pandemic.
  - Donate a Tribute Brick in someone's name.
  - Apply for matching gifts from your employer.
  - Memorials – In lieu of flowers, please have gifts made to Holy Family Home in memory or in honor of a relative or friend.
  - United Way – Our SE PA UWay # is 00307.
  - Planned gifts – Establish a will and leave a legacy gift to Holy Family Home, assuring that your assets are passed on to the people and causes cared about most, while also having tax benefits.
  - Name tax-exempt Holy Family Home as the beneficiary of an IRA, pension plan, or life insurance policy, usually the most taxed assets.
  - Set up charitable gift annuities or a charitable trust, which provide income payments to you during your lifetime and the residual to your beneficiaries and Holy Family Home.
  - Pray for us, for the needs of our Residents and the Home, and for vocations to our Congregation.
- We are most grateful for your generous help!



**Rita F. prepares to receive her first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. She can't wait to see her family again in person instead of on Zoom calls.**



**We were happy to be able to have vaccine clinics at our Home, making it easy for our staff, like Cordelia W., to be vaccinated for their safety.**