



Serving the elderly
poor in Louisville
since 1869.

Little Sisters' Louisville story begins

As the group of Little Sisters bound for the community's seventh U.S. foundation crossed the Atlantic on their way from France to America during the summer of 1869, Father Lelièvre frantically searched all over Louisville for a suitable property for a convent and home for the elderly.

After ten days he returned to the bishop, discouraged at his inability to find a home for the Sisters. Asking himself why the idea hadn't dawned on him sooner, Bishop McCloskey graciously offered Father Lelièvre an estate he had purchased for use as a seminary, but for which he did not yet have the necessary personnel. He was happy to rent it to Lelièvre for one dollar per year.

When the Sisters arrived on September 22, they expected to go directly to the property Father Lelièvre had obtained, but instead they were driven to the bishop's residence. Bishop McCloskey was excited to see them and provided them with a good dinner before allowing them to leave for their new home. They later wrote that when they arrived at the seminary

property they were afraid to enter the house because they couldn't believe that such a beautiful place was meant for them! They were sure the driver had made a mistake and driven them to the wrong location, but he assured them that he had, in fact, taken them to the

correct address. When they got out of the coach they saw Bishop McCloskey standing on the front steps waiting to welcome them. The bishop showed them around their new home, beginning with the chapel; he then showed them the beds and other furniture he had procured for them, and made a list of other needed items before leaving. After he left they prepared straw mattresses for themselves and placed the nicer mattresses and feather beds the bishop had purchased for them in a bedroom for the elderly.

The next day Bishop McCloskey celebrated Mass for the Sisters at 6:30 a.m. and then they set to work preparing everything for the reception of their first Residents. That evening the bishop's servants arrived with a hot supper ready to eat. The next day Bishop McCloskey dined with Fr. Lelièvre and the Little Sisters in the Sisters' refectory, gave them his blessing and the authorization to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in their little chapel, and then left them to continue their preparations.

The first Resident, a paralyzed old woman, was received on Saturday.

Visitors came bringing all kinds of provisions. The Sisters began their collecting rounds in town and were well received everywhere they went. Two prominent hotels promised to give their leftovers on a daily basis. The Sisters noted that the Residents were happy with what the hotels provided and felt like princes.

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Little Sisters of the Poor

Little Sisters Welcomed to Louisville

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All seemed to be going “too well,” one of the Little Sisters wrote, “so we needed a cross.” This observation was made retrospectively, as the Sister responsible for recording the little community’s joys and sorrows wrote about the trial that visited them in the fall of 1869. “Our Little Sister Sidonie de St. Anne, the only one among us who spoke English, fell ill.”

Sister Sidonie died of typhoid fever on Nov. 5, 1869, the first member of the Congregation to lay down her life in America. She was 28 years old and had made her profession only two and a half months prior. “She was a very good Little Sister who had come to America with a great desire to work for the glory of God,” her companions wrote of her. “She edified us very much during her illness by her honesty, her kindness and her abandonment to God; she thanked us for all we did for her with a sweet smile

and died in peace and calm after having received the last sacraments,” they wrote. “The Residents cried, saying, ‘The only Irish Sister, the only one who could talk to us, and now she is gone!’ It broke our hearts to hear them speaking like this!”

In this moment of great sorrow, the Little Sisters received many gestures of sympathy and support from the people of Louisville. Sister Sidonie was buried in a grave donated by another religious community since the Little Sisters did not yet have a cemetery plot of their own.

Winter was soon upon them. Supporters undertook a fund raising effort on behalf of the Little Sisters and purchased a horse and wagon for them, which facilitated the collecting. “One of the old men, although quite infirm, took upon himself the responsibility of driving the horse and wagon,” They wrote, “He is so proud of this new responsibility and our confidence in him!”

On Christmas day the Little Sisters

received word from the Galt House, one of the two hotels who provided them with leftovers, to bring the begging wagon around at noon. The Sisters assumed they would be given leftovers as usual, so they were quite surprised to find the wagon filled with all kinds of freshly made treats for the old people.

After Christmas, several French women came with the gift of a cow. Although not rich themselves, they had raffled a painting one of them had created to finance the purchase of the cow, as well as a dozen chickens. The Little Sisters were thrilled to have a ready supply of milk and eggs with which to nourish the sick.

A reflection from our Little Sisters in Louisville easily sums up the experiences of the community in 1869: “We were quite overcome with gratitude towards the good God, who disposed so well people’s hearts in our favor!”

Reprinted from Serenity Magazine

Little Sisters’ Louisville Journey

Patterson Education Center Hosts Our Home’s History

You are invited to step into a time capsule of the Little Sisters’ Louisville Journey. You will meet our foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan and see how Divine Providence played and continues to play an intricate role in the daily lives of the Little Sisters and the elderly poor they care for. The exhibit opens the first week in February and is scheduled to remain open until October, 2019.

Hours of Operation, Sunday - 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Group Tours can be scheduled by calling 502-582-2971.

If your group would like to schedule for a Little Sister to be present, please contact the St. Joseph’s Home at 502-636-2300, ext. 217.



The Little Sisters’ exhibit will run until October 2019.

Lights! Camera! Action!



Mother Paul was invited to share in the Archdiocese's 30 minute television program, Conversations with Archbishop Kurtz, which aired in January, 2019.

You can watch the episode in its entirety on the Archdiocese' website: www.Archlou.org, scrolling down to Conversations Playlist, Conversations, Segment 2-2019 (January)

Santa Came to Town!

One of our Residents' favorite events is when Santa Claus and Annie's Attic come for a visit. "Annie's Attic is a Christian-based family-owned business that has the desire to help those in need throughout our community or to just make someone smile because they know others care about them. And through that desire to spread joy to others, the Annie's Angels program was born in 2003." (Annie's Attic Website)

St. Joseph's Home has been blessed by the Annie's Angel program for many years.



Santa with Sr. Catherine.



Decorating Gingerbread Houses was a big hit

Blanche shows off her beautifully decorated Gingerbread House.

Elizabeth Celebrates 106 Years!



Elizabeth blows out the candles on her 106th Year Birthday Cake.

New Year Filled with Possibilities

As the ball dropped and the balloons floated through the air, the Residents, Volunteers, Little Sisters and Staff reminisced as they said goodbye to 2018 and welcomed in 2019.



Mother's Musings

by Mother Paul



Dear Friends,

Don't you just love "new beginnings"? They can be challenging, of course, yet here we are at the fresh start of a new year. Those of you who have been reading our newsletters and following us online know what a hugely important year this is for us: it is our 150th anniversary of serving the elderly in the city of Louisville! We have a great desire and invite you all to share in these days of joy and gratitude, as we celebrate 150 years of caring for thousands of God's elderly men and women.

Each day of the past 150 years God has watched over and taken care of our every need, both materially and spiritually. He has worked through You! You have been the Heart and the Hands of Divine Providence, as you and past generations of the good people of this City and beyond have been an integral part of our mission. This mission of love, respect, bodily and spiritual care of God's elderly is more crucial than ever, and we Little Sisters are continuing to serve God's elderly with gratitude and confidence.

During this blessed year of our 150th, please join with us in prayer of thanksgiving to God for all His many blessings upon our Home. Please join us in our special festivities as you see the schedule of the special events which we have planned. You are a great part of this picture of our Home, your presence, interest, your support and prayer encourage and rejoice our hearts. God bless you, and please know you and your loved ones are in our daily prayers.

Mother Paul and Little Sisters

Little Sisters of the Poor 150th Anniversary

CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

LSP History Exhibit

Patterson Learning Center

February – October 2019

Cathedral Mass with Archbishop Kurtz

Cathedral of Assumption

June 22, 2019

150th Anniversary Gala

Galt House Hotel

October 9, 2019

Share in the excitement of the **Little Sisters 150 years in Louisville.**

Shop and benefit the Little Sisters of the Poor St. Joseph's Home Louisville!

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