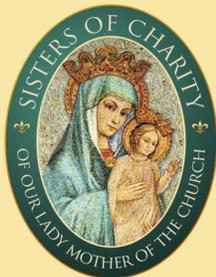


# WINDS OF CHARITY

A publication of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church

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of Our Lady  
Mother of the Church

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## Donate Now!

The Sisters have an online donation portal at...  
[www.sistersofcharity.com](http://www.sistersofcharity.com)

## *Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church 50 Years. Impacting Lives. Making a Difference.*

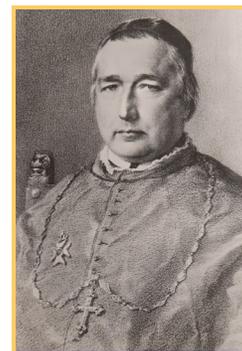
This is a banner year for the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. 50 years since the founding of the American Congregation. But the Sisters of Charity have been in Baltic, CT since 1874. How 50 years? Ours is a wonderfully grace-filled story and we want to share it with you because, after all, this is a banner year for us, and because *you* are an important part of our family.

In 1832, the poor children of a small parish in Holland found in the compassionate heart of their pastor, Msgr. John Zwysen, relief from their distress. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and with 13 women who had consecrated their lives to the service of the Gospel, Msgr. Zwysen began the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of Mercy in Tilburg, Holland to tend to the needs of these children.

Fast forward to 1874. That year, 6 Sisters of Charity responded to the call to serve the poor and the sick in Baltic, CT. Soon they and other young women who joined them were ministering to the needs of the people of God in parishes throughout the state and beyond. Faithful to the vision of Msgr. Zwysen and guided by the Holy Spirit, the Sisters spent themselves for souls wherever there was a need, at whatever the cost, with special attention to the poorest of the poor. In a spirit of simplicity, they served in imitation of Mary, Mother of the Lord.

Fast forward again to 1970. Inspired by the vision of Msgr. Zwysen, Mother Marie Alma Lafond heard in the depths of her soul a call to re-found the Congregation in America. After intense prayerful discernment and consultation, with 89 Sisters of the American Province of the original Congregation, Mother Marie Alma founded a new Congregation: the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, rooted in the spirit of Msgr. Zwysen.

Today, the past is still present as we continue to embrace the charism and mission of Msgr. Zwysen and of Mother Marie Alma. *On pages 2-3 of this Newsletter we share with you some of the highlights of the past 50 years, but the story continues on p. 6.*



*Msgr. John Zwysen, founder of the original Congregation. Below: Mother Marie Alma LaFond, foundress of the American Congregation.*



# SCMC: 1970-2020

Founding of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. Mother M. Theresita Jeannotte appointed Superior General by the Bishop of the Diocese.



13 Sisters profess perpetual vows in the newly established congregation; 5 Sisters profess temporary vows.



June 4, 1970

Aug. 15, 1970



July 1985

Hispanic Ministry added to the ministries of the Sisters of Charity. In the same year, construction began for an infirmary for our infirm and retired Sisters.



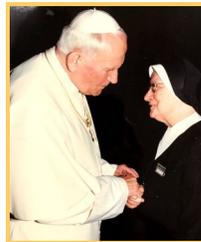
1986

Perpetual Help Center dedicated, the new infirmary for the care of our infirm and retired Sisters.

1988

St. Joseph Living Center, Willimantic, CT dedicated; a state of the art skill care & intermediate care facility for the elderly, inspiration of Sister Christine.

The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church receive Pontifical Approbation, now raised to the status of a papal Congregation. Mother Marie Alma thanks Pope John Paul II.



Mother Marie Alma, beloved foundress of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, united with her Divine Bridegroom. May her noble soul rest in peace.

The Food Pantry ministry begun from the inspiration and under the leadership of Sister Christine.

Nov. 1994

Feb. 12, 1995

1996



2015

Pope Francis inaugurates the Year of Mercy. For the Sisters of Charity, it was a year of living mercy in varied and dynamic ways. Sisters show the Door of Mercy painted at the Motherhouse, Baltic, CT.



Dec. 2016

Mother Mary David receives the *Most Rev. Michael R. Cote Award* for outstanding contribution to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Norwich, CT.



## Listening like Mary...

# Years of Blessings, Years of Gratitude

14 Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul join the SCMC Sisters, bringing with them the ministry of the care of the elderly at St. Elizabeth Home, Janesville, WI.



A new auditorium-gymnasium added to the campus of the Academy of the Holy Family in Baltic, CT. St. Michael Center dedicated.

Mother Marie Alma LaFond, foundress, elected Superior General by the Sisters.



Aug. 1974

Feb. 1980

July 1982

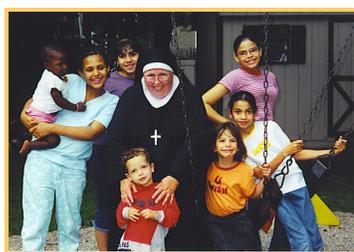
## 50<sup>th</sup>

Feb. 1989

Aug. 1994



The first family knocks on the doors of what would become the Holy Family Home & Shelter in Willimantic, CT, a shelter for single moms with their children.



After being closed for 20 years, St. John School, Old Saybrook, CT re-opened under the leadership of the Sisters of Charity.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony; dedication of St. Elizabeth Manor, an intermediate care facility for the elderly in Footville, WI



Sister Mary Bernard receives the *Most Rev. Michael R. Cote Award* for outstanding contribution to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Norwich, CT.



April 2009

Oct. 2013

## 50<sup>th</sup>

Nov. 2018

Oct. 2019

June 4, 2020

Dedication of *Nazareth*, the new wing of the Sisters' Infirmary, made possible by you, our benefactors.



Sister Mary Patrick receives the *Most Rev. Michael R. Cote Award* for outstanding contribution to Catholic Education in the Diocese of Norwich, CT.



The SCMC's renew their commitment to serve the Church through the apostolates of education, caring for the sick, the aging and the poor, wherever there is a need.

# ...Loving like Jesus

# You have brought beauty to our Chapel.

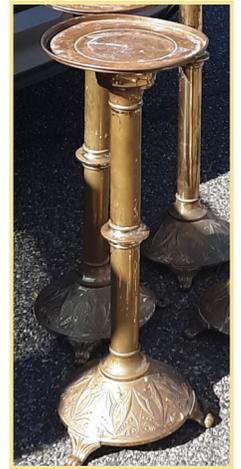
# Before

Recently, we asked you to help us restore the beauty of our Chapel, in thanksgiving to God for His abundant blessings to us during these 50 years. The dearest place in our convent-home, our Chapel, is the center of our hearts and our home. It is the place where we daily meet Jesus face to face in the Eucharist and so we want to make every effort to ensure a beautiful environment, one that is conducive to prayer and radiates a sense of peace.

Last painted some 25 years ago, many improvements and updates were necessary. The photos on this page will give you an idea of the needs before the renovations, and, on the next page, the beautiful transformation you made possible.



- ◆ The ceilings and stained glass windows marred with soot from the many prayer candles burned daily over the years.
- ◆ The painted walls now cracked, faded and tired.
- ◆ Improvements in the sanctuary; need for hand railings.
- ◆ The columns chipped and faded.
- ◆ Tarnished candle stands in need of re-gilding
- ◆ The bronze Stations of the Cross darkened with the years.
- ◆ Inadequate sound system.
- ◆ Poor lighting.
- ◆ Water damage in some areas.



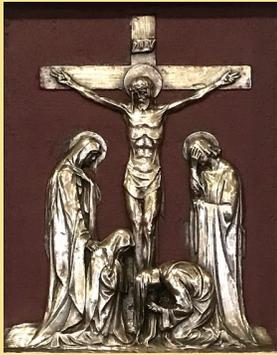
These are just some of the repairs and improvements that your generosity made possible.

*Thank you!*

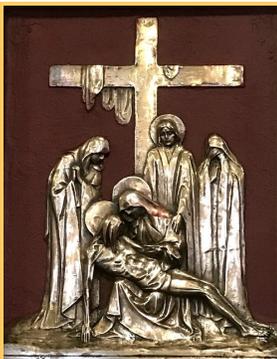


## Thank you!

The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church are deeply grateful to each of you for your faithful generosity. You have made it possible for us to refurbish our Holy Family Motherhouse Chapel. You have made it a beautiful place of prayer and peace, a jubilee gift for our Sisters.



We know that you have your own needs during these difficult economic times, yet you choose to stand with us. Your faithful generosity touches the hearts of all our Sisters. God bless you for your goodness and kindness to us!



Inserted in this Newsletter is the list of those who have chosen to have their names or the names of a loved one inscribed in our **Golden Jubilee Book of Gratitude**. This book will be placed in a prominent place in our newly refurbished Chapel. Look for it when you join us in October for our annual Mass of Blessing and Gratitude Luncheon. If you are not able to attend, whenever you are in the area, please do stop in for a visit. We would love to see you.

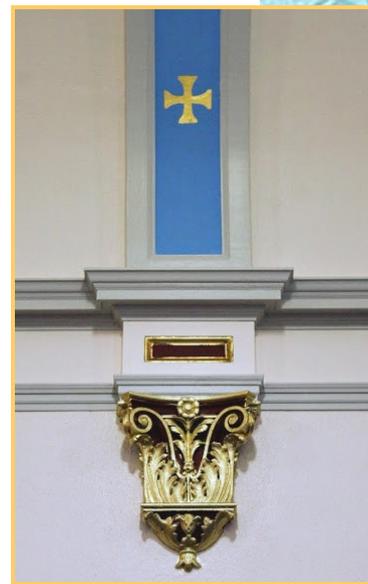


If you have not yet had your name inscribed in our **Golden Jubilee Book of Gratitude** and wish to be included, that is still possible. Additional gifts are very much needed and deeply appreciated to complete our Chapel renovations. Information is available on the reply card of this mailing.



Thank you, dear Friend, for your goodness to us. May Our Lady, Mother of the Church hold you very close to her heart. When we gather in this beautiful place of worship, we will remember you with prayerful gratitude for years and years to come.

# After



## Mark your calendar!



*Mother Anthony never misses this event. She is looking forward to seeing you again.*



*Sister Mary DePaul has marked her calendar. She hopes you have marked yours as well.*

**Fifth Annual Family Blessing Mass and Gratitude Luncheon to honor you and to thank you for all you make possible.**

**October 3, 2020**

**11:00 a.m.**

**Mass of Blessing**

**at**

**the Motherhouse Chapel.**

**Gratitude Luncheon following.**

We will remind you again in our August mailing, but we wanted to send you this save-the-date announcement early so as to secure a place on your calendar. We look forward to sharing the day with you.

For those unable to attend, as in the past, the Mass will be live-streamed on our website.

*Continued from p. 1*

Today, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church serve:

- ◆ In schools as principals and teachers
- ◆ In parishes as catechists and Directors of Religious Education programs
- ◆ In Hispanic ministry
- ◆ In our Holy Family Home & Shelter
- ◆ In long-term elder care facilities at St. Elizabeth Home & St. Elizabeth Manor
- ◆ In ministry to the poor, primarily through our Food Pantry

Faithful to the vision of our founders, Msgr. Zwysen and Mother Marie Alma, we stand ready to serve the Church, wherever there is a need.

For each of us, the recurring theme of the celebrations during our 50th Jubilee Year has been one of gratitude. Gratitude to Almighty God for the privilege of serving the Church and the People of God in the ministries entrusted to us. Gratitude to you, our family, friends and benefactors who sustain us by your prayers and support us by your generous gifts. You have embraced our mission. You are truly a part of our religious family and so we give thanks to Almighty God for each one of you. And we promise to remember you where remembrances are best, at the altar of the Lord. **You are in our hearts and in our prayers.**



*As we look to the future you are there with us.*

*From our hearts, we thank you!*

## ***“Let not your hearts be troubled....”***

**I**t came upon us so suddenly, this pandemic. It’s as if we woke up one morning and found ourselves under stay-at-home orders, and if we dared to venture out for essential business, we needed to don masks and gloves and observe rules of social distancing. Schools closed. Businesses shuttered. All gatherings and events cancelled. Country in lockdown. Most difficult of all, our beloved church services suspended, and at a time when we most needed the Eucharist and the support of our faith community.

For some, this has been a time of deep reflection about priorities and values, renewing family ties, praying together as a family. But for others, this has been and continues to be a deeply difficult and stressful time. Economic collapse. Worry for loved ones or one’s own health and protection. The loss of a loved one and no opportunity to say good-bye. Mounting anxiety over present confusion. Uncertainty about the future.

Regardless of where you are in your response to this pandemic, know that the Sisters of Charity sustain you in prayer. As we have so often said, **we are your prayer warriors— now more than ever.** We pray for you and all those affected by this pandemic in whatever way. We join so many in thanking those who daily put their lives on the line to help us all get through this: healthcare workers and first responders; priests administering the Sacraments to the dying; “essential workers” who daily risk their lives to keep food on our tables or provide for our other necessities. If you or one of your loved ones are one of these precious people, know that we support you with our prayers. Let them know that the Sisters of Charity are deeply grateful for the heroic sacrifices they are making to save or preserve lives.

Perhaps fear tugs at your heart as you look to the future. No one knows for sure what that will look like, but what we do know for sure is that Our Lord Jesus is already there, in that place, in that future, in *your* future, and He says to you: “Let not your hearts be troubled.” (Jn. 14:1). He is the risen One who conquered death and darkness at a time very much like this one. He will not forsake you. He will be your light in the darkness.

We Sisters of Charity continue committed to our ministries. Our teachers are teaching from on-line classrooms. They are also reaching out to students and staff to help them cope with the high level of anxiety.

Our Food Pantry and Homeless Shelter, needed now more than ever, continue to supply basic needs to increasing numbers of people, as well as emotional and spiritual support in this time of uncertainty.

We continue to care for the immigrant and the marginalized. In one of our projects we joined with other groups to raise funds to assist those who will not be eligible for federal or state assistance.

With the elderly particularly vulnerable at this time, we are most concerned for those under our care. They are adjusting well to the many protective restrictions placed on them. In one of our facilities, however, our elderly do have a worry. They can no longer see the smiles of the staff as they all wear masks.



*Sister Denise (above) showed up with her walker to join Sister Elizabeth (below) & others in thanking healthcare workers at the local hospital.*



*Above: Mother Joan Clare & Food Pantry staff prepare bags for curbside pick-up. Below: Sister Monica Mary at St. Elizabeth Manor. The residents miss the smiles of the staff.*



## From the desk of Margaret Cuccinello



**T**hank you! When I think of you, these are the first words that always come to mind. Thank you for your ever-faithful love, prayers and support of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church.

I am writing to you from the desk of my stay-at-home office, also known as my dining room table, and I struggle to find the words to share with you. I understand that times are probably tough for you right now as you struggle to adjust to what may very well be the “new normal.” They certainly are for me and my team. Maybe you’ve lost your job as businesses are required to close, or perhaps you are feeling overwhelmed as you juggle working from home and the demands of childcare. Maybe you are feeling isolated as we comply with stay-at-home orders, and you are worried about family and friends. I completely understand. And I get that it may be difficult to consider contributing in such uncertain times. How do I encourage you to continue supporting us amidst such difficult and challenging times?

While you may be unsure of a way to support the Sisters of Charity given the current crisis, creating a planned gift is a powerful way to make a lasting legacy that will impact lives well into the future. We hope you will join the many people who have included the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church in their will, trust, or beneficiary designations.

Writing a will is one of the most important things you can do, though, understandably, scary or uncomfortable, given the current economic crisis. But now more than ever, it’s important to have a plan in place to protect what matters most to you. Now is the perfect time to review your estate plans, and invite family and friends to do the same.



As we continue to grapple with the widespread effects of this pandemic, the ministries of the Sisters of Charity are needed now more than ever. Know that the Sisters pray for you daily. You are a precious gift to all of us. Let us know how we can be of service to you. Take good care of yourself and stay safe.

If you’d like to receive our *Will Information Kit*, free of charge, it’s yours for the asking. Just give us a call at 860-822-6323. We will also be glad to assist you with any information you may need regarding gift planning.

*Margaret Cuccinello*

Margaret Cuccinello

Director of Planned Giving & Major Gifts

**Connect with us on line! [www.sistersofcharity.com](http://www.sistersofcharity.com)**

Follow us on Facebook: Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church.

See how YOUR gifts are making a difference.



*Allow  
God  
to  
use  
you  
without  
con-  
sulting  
you.*

*Mother  
Teresa  
of  
Calcutta*