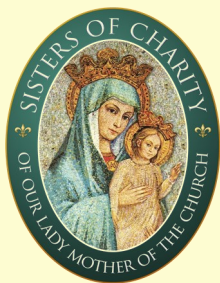


WINDS OF CHARITY

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Sisters of Charity
of Our Lady
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54 W. Main Street
Baltic CT 06330

Development Office
Phone: 860-822-6323

E-mail:
development@
sistersofcharity.com



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Sisters of Charity : Renewing the Vision; Deepening the Hope

Recently, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church held our 2024 Chapter of Affairs and of Elections. These “Chapters” are mandated by the Church and are held every six years in Religious Institutes and Congregations.

The Chapter of Affairs is a time to consider the signs of the times in the light of the Holy Spirit’s inspirations to keep alive the ministries and apostolic works of the Sisters who serve the people of God. By taking time to ask ourselves meaningful questions, we come to know ourselves better as well as the needs of the communities we serve through education, healthcare, social services and any other area where God may be calling us.

For example, when the Sisters of Charity were founded, our charism was to serve the poor, especially through schools, but soon the Sisters recognized the need to provide shelter for the homeless, food for the hungry, loving care to the elderly and to those on the margins of society.

At our Chapters we discuss ways to more effectively carry out our mission, and we may even decide that there is a need to take

on more responsibility in certain areas. Most important, however, is our consideration of the holiness of each Sister, as we study the place of prayer in our lives. We will be more effective in our efforts to draw others to the Heart of God when our lives are rooted in prayer. Therefore, in our Chapter we discuss ways to balance prayer and ministry, our common life and our common prayer, and we look for ways to open ourselves to a more intense Sacramental life.

These two weeks of Chapter brought us closer to one another, and brought about an ever renewed love for the holy vocation to which each of us has been called. We laughed, we asked forgiveness of one another, and we rediscovered the beauty that graces the souls of our Sisters. We came to the end of our Chapter of Affairs with a greater desire to be set afire for the beautiful task of loving service. And we gave thanks to God for having called us to be Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. *Cont’d on p. 2*



(l. to r.) Sisters Lucette, Mary Grace, and Mary Sarah review information in preparation for discussions. ➔

***You are with us
as we go forward in faith and hope. Thank you!***

From p. 1

Immediately following the Chapter of affairs we held our Chapter of Elections. On this solemn but joyful day, we elected the five Sisters who will lead us through the next six years, along the course set for us in the previous two weeks of the Chapter of Affairs.

***The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church
invite you to pray with us in gratitude
for our newly elected Superior General
and her Councilors, 2024-2030***

**Mother Mary David Riquier, SCMC Superior General
Mother Mary Jude Lazarus, SCMC Vicaress (First Councilor)
Mother Marie Christina Van Beck, SCMC Second Councilor
Mother Marie Julie Saegaert, SCMC Third Councilor
Mother Mary Katherine Gruber, SCMC Fourth Councilor**

***May the joy of serving
always be part of their leading.***



***(l. to r.) Mother Katherine Gruber, Mother Marie Julie Saegaert,
Mother Mary Jude Lazarus, Mother Mary David Riquier,
and Mother Christina Van Beck.***

With deep gratitude for your generosity, and in celebration of the beginning of Year 3, the Year of Mission, of our National Eucharistic Revival, the Sisters of Charity will be sending you a very special Eucharistic-themed gift in January 2025. We pray that this devotional gift will help deepen your love for Our Lord Jesus Christ, present in the Holy Eucharist, and remind you often that He is with you always.

***Thank
you for
standing
with us.
Together
we are
making
a
difference
in the
lives
of so
many.
You
are our
helpers
and our
heroes!***

On July 16, at 4:40am, 15 sleepy Sisters silently filed through dark Motherhouse hallways, heading for the Chapel. There we received a double blessing from our newly-elected and previous Superiors General, Mother Mary David and Mother Marie Julie, praying for a safe trip and closeness to Jesus at the long-awaited National Eucharistic Congress, the first in 84 years! Our spiritual Mothers encouraged us to “mother each other” during our pilgrimage. We began doing so on the 16-hour journey in three vans, as we texted our progress and when we caught up with each other at rest stops. A most welcome stop was for Holy Mass, arranged for us in Ohio. At 11:30pm we arrived at our Airbnb in Indianapolis and gave thanks to God for a safe trip. We share with you here a few highlights from the Congress. All of the inspiring talks and events can be accessed online.

DAY ONE: The Congress opened with a thunderous welcome of the pilgrims who had journeyed with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for 60 days, through cities, towns and villages, from north, south, east and west, across this great land. We Sisters of Charity were privileged to be among 60,000 pilgrims who gave them welcome. Then we welcomed Our Eucharistic Lord, the King of kings, as He was carried triumphantly into the stadium, in a 4-ft monstrance, by Bishop Andrew Cozzens, the energizing force for this amazing Congress. The main event of the evening was a time of profound prayer led by Bishop Cozzens. 60,000 people united in adoration of Our Eucharistic Lord. In his introductory remarks Bishop Cozzens praised God, who exceeds all our hopes and desires. He also spoke of the U.S. bishops’ intent that people encounter Jesus, and then go out on mission to bring Him to others. This was a recurring theme of the Congress. Cardinal Christophe Pierre, Papal Nuncio to the United States, conveyed a greeting from Pope Francis. He encouraged us to a deeper relationship with Jesus and a fruitful mission to others. The Cardinal said that our encounter with Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament, opens us to an encounter with Him in the rest of our lives.

DAY TWO: Mother Olga of the Sacred Heart shared stories about encountering Jesus in the Eucharist in the brokenness of our lives and in the trauma of war. “Even on the cross we can still choose to love,” she remarked. Father Mike Schmitz, another speaker, left us with the profound thought: “Knowledge can make you great, but only love can make you a saint.” We have to be emptied of selfishness before we can be filled with Jesus’ love.

During the days of the Congress, religious sisters, priests, deacons, and laity of all ages streamed constantly into St. John Church, located across the street from the stadium, all wishing to spend some quiet time with Jesus. Often with standing room only, this church was our 24-hour Adoration Chapel. The daily liturgies throughout the Congress were truly moments of deep prayer. The jubilant spirit, as we walked along and met other pilgrims, was contagious.

Cont’d. on p. 6



Bishop Andrew Cozzens, energizing force for the Eucharistic Congress, shared with Mother Christina his hopes for the Congress.

“God showed us at this congress how good He is, how much He loves us, and that He’s not done yet.”

-Bishop Cozzens, chair of the National Eucharistic Congress

Sharing with you memories and reflections ...



(l. to r.) Sister Josephine, Sister Mary Jane and Sister Marie Celeste. There was so much happening at the Eucharistic Congress— the inspiring talks, adoration, the various liturgies, the Eucharistic procession, the many encounters with people. In the midst of all of this, we realized that we were called to be united with the maternal Heart of Mary, Mother of the Church, mothering with her the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, through our encounters with the faithful. You too were in our motherly hearts as we prayed in the presence of Our Eucharistic Lord. The Congress was truly a breathtaking experience.



Sister Marie Andre. The experience of the Eucharistic Congress helped to deepen my gratitude and love for this inestimable gift: Jesus living among us— body, blood, soul and divinity. As Jesus has given His all to me, I must give my all to Him, in the brothers and sisters who touch my life. Thank you, dear donors, for your generous and loving support of the Sisters of Charity. You make it possible for us to give our all to those we serve in our ministries.



Mother Elaine. The Eucharistic Congress was amazing. Normally I would not attend such a conference because I can be easily overwhelmed by so many people in one place. However, I knew in my heart that the opportunity to attend was an invitation from Jesus. The procession was a highlight for me. Walking with Our Eucharistic Lord, together with so many believers, while thousands lined the street to see Jesus pass by, touched me deeply. Jesus is indeed alive. And He is calling each of us to a deeper union with Him, to experience His love and mercy, then to proclaim it to all we meet by the witness of our lives.



(l. to r.) Sister Christopher and Mother Joan Clare. Meditating on Jesus' presence in the Blessed Sacrament throughout the days of the Congress reminded us of His unwavering faithfulness. God has never abandoned His people. Not in the past, not now and will not in the future. That was His message to us and we bring that message to you. He will never abandon you because, as He Himself has said: He has loved us with an everlasting love.

*Sisters
of
Charity,
Pilgrims
to the
10th
National
Eucharistic
Congress
July 17-21,
2024*

... on the Eucharistic Congress, July 17-21!

Mother Christina, (front), and Mother Mary Jude join thousands of pilgrims in prayerful welcome of Our Eucharistic Lord as He was triumphantly carried into Lucas Oil Stadium at the opening of the Eucharistic Congress. They and all the Sisters of Charity who attended the Congress prayed for all our dear benefactors. You and your intentions were very present to us as we carried you in our hearts. How could we not! You are a part of our family.



Sister Alexandria. I was blessed to be a part of this Congress. For 60 days prior to the Congress, Jesus traveled throughout our country in pilgrimage, accompanied by a faithful group of pilgrims. There were stories of conversions, healings, and repentance, as they journeyed through towns and cities until finally arriving in Indianapolis. We will never know the extent of the blessings bestowed upon our country and upon each of us. I give thanks to God for this great blessing, so very much needed at this time.



(l. to r.) Sisters Rafael, Faustina and Irene. Among so many people of all ages and walks of life, there was an overpowering feeling of the oneness of the Body of Christ at the Eucharistic Congress. Truly, the Eucharist makes us one. This experience was a foretaste of the full communion that awaits us in Heaven, in union with the Holy Trinity. And because there is no distance with God, you were not far from our thoughts and prayers.



Sister Gabriela (l.) and Sister Gabriel. The Congress was a truly powerful experience for us. The reverence, the love, the deep faith of those who attended, young and old, religious and laity, was stunning proof that Christ is alive and living among us. Thousands of worshippers gathered in a stadium or processing through the streets, reclaiming hearts for Christ. Praise God! And it doesn't end there. Christ now sends us out on mission to be His presence in the world.



***You
were
with us
in our
thoughts
and
prayers.***

We prayed for you at the Eucharistic Congress.

From p. 3

DAY THREE: This day featured a night of prayer for healing. The keynote speaker, Sister Josephine Garrett, challenged us all —bishops, priests, religious and laity—to look deep into our hearts to see the need for repentance. She exhorted us to “stand up on the two necessary legs of the Eucharistic Revival: (1) A growing relationship with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament through Adoration, Mass, Holy Communion; and (2) repentance and healing through reconciliation.” Father Boniface Hicks, O.S.B. concluded the time of teaching and prayer with a moving Litany of Healing and Repentance before our Eucharistic Lord exposed on a huge altar. He invited us to ask and allow Jesus to touch those places in our hearts that need healing, to admit our frailty and need, and to open ourselves to the healing power of Jesus in the Eucharist. Many were moved to tears.

DAY FOUR: One of the highlights of this day was the one-mile procession through the streets of Indianapolis with Our Eucharistic Lord. Thousands walked in the procession, singing and praying, while thousands more thronged the sidewalks all along the route. Others looked on from second story buildings. The procession ended at the Indiana War Memorial with a time of prayer and solemn Benediction. At the evening event, Jonathan Roumie of the popular series, *The Chosen*, shared his faith in the Eucharist: “Going to daily Mass has changed my life” and, “The Eucharist for me is His heart within me.” Bishop Robert Barron, another speaker, remarked that “The Eucharist is not only for us – it’s for the world, and for 2,000-plus years this Gift has remained in the world to strengthen us on our journey. The one commandment of Jesus that we have kept”, the Bishop said, “is do this in remembrance of Me.”

DAY FIVE: The Congress concluded with the celebration of the Mass with hundreds of bishops, priests and seminarians in attendance. The 30-minute entrance procession was an unforgettable sight. In his closing remarks, Bishop Cozzens reminded us that the Congress does not conclude with the closing Mass. Now begins year 3 of the Eucharistic Revival, the Year of Mission, to bring Christ out into the world. With insistence, the Bishop urged us: “Go! Go! Go! What you have received as a gift, give as a gift. God desires to renew His Church. Walk with one person. Bring that person back to Jesus. Become a Eucharistic Missionary!”

***Be a
Eucharistic
Missionary.
Bring
one person
back
to Jesus
in the
Eucharist!***



***We Sisters hear the
call in the very
depths of our soul.
We hope our
experience of this
grace-filled Congress
will inspire you, also,
to be a Eucharistic
Missionary. Bring
one person back to
Jesus in the
Eucharist!***

You provide for our young Sisters. Thank you!

When a young woman asks to join the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church, she is received as a candidate. She continues to live her life as before, but she is in regular contact with the Directress of Vocations, who will guide her through a process of discernment before the decision is made to leave home and live with the Sisters.

At the conclusion of the candidacy, the young woman begins her life with the Sisters, as she enters the postulancy. This stage provides the opportunity for her to become more closely acquainted with the life, spirit and mission of the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. The time of the postulancy allows her to focus on deepening her prayer life, following Jesus more closely, developing a deep sense of Church, and giving herself to others wholeheartedly.

Upon successful completion of the postulancy, the young woman is admitted to the novitiate for two years of intensive human, theological and spiritual formation, in preparation for the taking of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. She is guided into an ever deepening life of prayer and begins to participate in the apostolic works of the Congregation. She may also, in the second year, begin formal preparation for ministry by enrolling in a university program.

After the two years of novitiate, she may request to profess vows as a Junior Professed Sister. This means she will profess vows for one year only, as she is still discerning her call to Religious Life. She will do this for three consecutive years. During this time her formation continues, as she experiences the joys and challenges of Religious Life. After a period of three to five years, she may ask to profess final vows, that is, to consecrate herself to God forever.

On August 15, the Feast of Our Blessed Mother's Assumption into Heaven, Sister Marie Celeste Vu professed, for the first time, the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, for the time of one year. We rejoice with her and we give thanks to God for the gift that she is to the Sisters of Charity and to the Church. **We give thanks to you also, as by your faithful and generous support, you have made possible Sister Marie Celeste's journey from candidacy to First Profession of Vows.** Sister will continue her studies at Franciscan University in Steubenville, OH.



Above: After professing her vows, Sister Marie Celeste received the ring, a sign of her consecration to Our Lord.

Below:

Mother Joan Clare (center) and Sister Gabriela (right) congratulate Sister Marie Celeste.



Margaret Cuccinello wants you to know...
There's a day for everything.



National days of celebration, often designated by official proclamations or popular movements, serve a variety of purposes. Some prompt reflection on important societal issues and encourage action. National Volunteer Week, for example, motivates people to build up their communities through volunteer work. These days can inspire individuals to get involved in meaningful ways and support positive change. Estate Planning is so important that it gets a whole week! National Estate Planning Awareness Week occurs each year during the third week of October. It was adopted in 2008 to help the public understand what estate planning is and why it is so vital to financial wellness.

What exactly is estate planning? I hear this question often. It's important to know what it is and what it isn't. Estate planning is more than a legal formality. It is a profound act of care and responsibility which yields significant and deeply rewarding benefits. It involves making thoughtful decisions about how your assets, responsibilities, and personal wishes will be managed in the event of your passing or incapacitation. It is about creating a will, establishing trusts, designating beneficiaries, and making arrangements for any potential healthcare needs. It also involves making decisions about guardianship for minor children and planning for the potential need for long-term care. It is more than a practical necessity. It is a reflection of deeply held spiritual values.

It is also important to clarify what estate planning is not. Estate planning is not merely about distributing wealth or avoiding taxes. It is not a one-time task, but an ongoing process that requires regular updates to reflect changes in your life and circumstances. It is not solely for the wealthy or those with complex financial portfolios. It is a crucial practice for everyone, regardless of the size of their estate. Estate planning provides peace of mind, ensures that your wishes are carried out, and supports your family while contributing to the causes that are important to you. By integrating principles of stewardship, social justice, and family care, you create a lasting legacy that reflects your faith and values. This holistic approach not only addresses practical concerns, it also honors the spiritual dimensions of our lives by leaving a meaningful impact on both our loved ones and the broader community.

I have the honor, on behalf of the Sisters, to assist many of our donors. They find peace in knowing that their estate plans will not only align with their values and beliefs, but also leave a lasting impact on their family, friends and organizations like the Sisters of Charity. If you haven't yet created an estate plan, I encourage you to consider taking this important step. Consulting with an estate planning attorney can help you tailor a plan that reflects your values and wishes. It is never too early to start, and the peace of mind and security it offers are well worth the effort.

Please reach out to me if you have questions or need assistance in finding a qualified estate planning professional. I will be more than happy to assist you. I'm writing this article on August 5th – National Oyster Day. I hope to be finished by tomorrow in order to celebrate National Wiggle Your Toes Day!

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(no spaces!)**