

# **Apostolic nuncio helps Little Sisters celebrate 150 years in Baltimore**

CATONSVILLE - On April 10, 1869, the Little Sisters of the Poor of Baltimore welcomed their first elderly resident.

Her name was Jeanne, the same name as the order's French foundress, St. Jeanne Jugan (pronounced in French similarly to John).

On the eve of the Little Sisters' 150th anniversary of serving in Baltimore, they welcomed a new resident, whose name is John.

Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, joined the Little Sisters at St. Martin Home for the Aged in Catonsville to commemorate the day with an 11 a.m. Mass of Thanksgiving April 10.

Archbishop Pierre, who said in his homily that he is from the same area where St. Jeanne Jugan began her work, has a special connection to the Little Sisters of the Poor, as at one point, they cared for his own mother.

"The Little Sisters have a special place in my heart," he said. "Your work, sisters, among the poor - especially the elderly poor - your solidarity with them, and your accompaniment of them embody how Pope Francis is calling the whole church to proclaim the joy of the Gospel."

"You, following in the footsteps of Jeanne Jugan, must see Christ in the least of your brothers and sisters and love him in the elderly poor," he added.

Archbishop Pierre said St. Jeanne Jugan and the Little Sisters glorify God through their humility and care for the poor, especially in a world that values productivity, as the elderly might not be as productive as they once were.

"The homes of the Little Sisters of the Poor throughout the world, but especially in this country, where many people have great wealth, are a reminder to the elderly poor that they matter, they are essential," he said. "The homes of the Little Sisters of

the Poor provide what no government or social service agency can provide – the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus.”

The Little Sisters take a fourth vow, one of hospitality, which was evident to board member John Danko, who met a new resident while visiting for the Mass. He asked her what she liked most about St. Martin’s Home.

“She said, ‘the kindness,’” Danko said. “That’s the essence – it’s the kindness, the charity, the humility – it’s countercultural today.”

Mother Loraine Marie Clare Maguire, provincial leader of the Little Sisters of the Poor’s Baltimore province, noted that over their 150 years in Baltimore, the sisters have been able to call many elderly family.

“It’s more than a privilege, it’s a gift of our vocation,” Sister Loraine Marie Clare said. “We hope that we’ll be able to serve vibrantly for another 150 years.”

Fellow Little Sister Robert Francis Marie Tait said the sisters take their prayer for the future very seriously.

“I think increase of vocations is our biggest hope for the future,” Sister Loraine Marie Clare said, adding that people are living longer than they used to. “There’s going to be a great need for our ministry in the future.”

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