St. Ann’s Convent and Mary Garden Dedicated

On Saturday, July 26, 2008, the Little Sisters of the Poor held the dedication of St. Ann’s Convent and the convent’s Mary Garden. Bishop Alexander Salazar presided over the ceremonies, which included a blessing, tour and reception.

“We have named this facility in honor of St. Ann, on this the feast day of St. Ann and St. Joachim,” said Mother Marguerite. “Blessed Jeanne Jugan was born in Brittany France which was dedicated to St. Ann. Jeanne grew up with particular devotion to St. Ann and brought this to share with her congregation. In the United States our Novitiate in Queens, NY is named after St. Ann. And, our original home in Los Angeles was known as St. Ann’s Home for the Aged. The patronage of St. Ann for our work in Southern California is re-dedicated today as we entrust our convent wing to St. Ann.”

The Mary Garden is a tradition that dates back to the fifteenth century. The statue of Mary is in a place of honor with a nearby fountain and many flowers that are ascribed by legend to have a special tribute to the Blessed Virgin.

In her comments Mother Provincial Maria Christine explained, “The Little Sisters and I feel somewhat awkward having the spotlight turned on us through today’s blessing. Our greatest happiness, as Little Sisters is when the Residents themselves are the center of our attention at celebrations. They are the only ones who matter.”

“This occasion serves as a reminder to us that this new convent will allow the Little Sisters to live once again a simpler and more silent lifestyle where we can be united within a fraternal community, sharing our common life together. When family life is strong, there is great apostolic energy. For us this means the Residents receive the fullness of our four vows, especially that of Hospitality.”

“All of these benefits, spiritual and material, could not be realized without the confidence and support of many generous donors. Thank you to those who are here today and those who were unable to join us. We continue to remember your intentions in our daily prayers of loving gratitude and in Masses said worldwide for our benefactors.”
On June 21st, the Auxiliary held its annual fundraising event at Jeanne Jugan Residence. Using the theme Summer Olympics LSP STYLE, the group converted the Olympic rings into hearts as a symbol not only of the love and dedication of the Little Sisters for their Residents but also for the generosity and heartfelt support offered by many volunteers, benefactors, and board members.

During the program, recognition was given to eleven doctors who come to the Home to care for the Residents. In combination they have contributed 184 years of medical service to the Home.

Mother Marguerite explained, “Jeanne Jugan was a nurse. She cared for the physical and medical needs of the aged according to the standards of her time. A doctor who had known Jeanne when she worked in the local hospital offered to give free care to the sick and to set up a small pharmacy in the first Home she established in France. Thus began the special ministry of doctors within our Homes.”

Their on-site presence is a tremendous gift to the elderly. But in addition and far more important, the doctors are a most caring and dedicated group. They truly have hearts that merit Olympic level recognition.

To all our doctors, Auxiliary and benefactors we say thank you. Thank you for your friendship, thank you for your service, and thank you for making this evening so very special. May God bless you abundantly for your generosity.
In the late 1990s, the Little Sisters began a number of projects to upgrade their Home, particularly the old administrative building, which was the former Fermin Lasuen High School built in the late 1950s.

At the onset, the Sisters moved out of their existing convent space into the “Retreat House” located at the back of the property and at considerable distance from the Residents. The aging convent space was remodeled for Independent Living Apartments.

The fourteen new apartments were dedicated on Sunday, March 3, 2002. The apartments have been a wonderful addition to the Home and the vitality of the new Residents greatly adds to the family atmosphere.

In 2004, the Little Sisters began a capital campaign to fund the next two phases of construction which would include a medical wing and convent space.

Construction began in July 2005 on the medical space which was dedicated on Sunday, March 19, 2006 as the Fritz B. Burns Medical Wing.

The construction of the convent wing began in 2006. The scope of the project was extended to include seismic upgrades, abatement requirements, fire sprinkler upgrades, a re-roof of the administrative building, hall fire walls in the main corridors of the building, and the convent’s Mary Garden.

In May 2008, after nine years of being “temporarily” relocated, the Little Sisters moved into their new convent. They are experiencing first hand the benefits of the new space. They are experiencing first hand the benefits of the new space. Its central location makes access to the Residents far more convenient and facilitates their ability to provide timely care. In addition, the common areas of the convent comfortably accommodates their shared times of prayer, dining and recreation which is so important to their community life.

We have drawn our strength from the words of our Foundress Blessed Jeanne Jugan, “If God is with us, it will be accomplished.” In the completion of these projects we see manifest God’s providence through the generosity of our benefactors. We thank each and every one of you for your support. We continue to remember your intentions in our daily prayers of gratitude.