

# Little Sisters of the Poor

SACRED HEART RESIDENCE



Serving the elderly  
poor in Mobile  
since 1901.

## Chaplain at Home

There is something in the Irish accent that gives comfort, especially when that accent comes from a Roman Catholic priest. We have that blessing here at Sacred Heart Residence in our own Monsignor Peter Cunningham.

Fr. Cunningham was ordained in 1956, a few months before being assigned to serve in the United States. Like most priests, he served in eight or nine parishes throughout his many years of active ministry. He was made a pastor of his own church about fourteen years after his ordination.

In 1970, Fr. Cunningham served with Father Jennings at St. Pius parish in Mobile, Alabama. He made no secret of his desire to have his own parish, even though he had great admiration for Fr. Jennings. Those hopes came true when he was assigned as pastor of St. John the Evangelist, in Ozark, Alabama.

Fr. Cunningham served in various parishes over the next few decades, spending

his last thirteen years as the pastor of St. Mary's. At 80 years of age, he faced retirement. At least, he thought he was retiring. Mother Paul, former superior of our home, knew a great opportunity when she saw it. She called Fr. Cunningham and asked if he would be interested in being the chaplain at the Sacred Heart Residence. He had been the confessor for the Sisters during his time at St. Mary's and happily jumped at this opportunity.

One of his most important duties is offering Mass on a daily basis. He is helped by Monsignor Kenneth Klepac and visiting priests from time to time. Often, Fr. Cunningham is beckoned by the Sisters to anoint and pray with our Residents who are about to leave this life. His words no doubt give enormous solace to the Residents as well as their families.

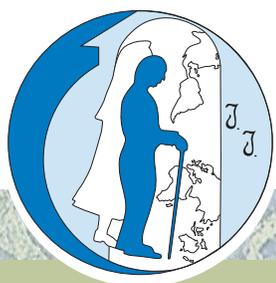
Talking to Fr. Cunningham, there is one attribute that comes across the most — his incredible humility. He is so genuine as a person that it may seem difficult for him to



**Father Cunningham giving a blessing to Resident Bessie Oliver.**

recognize the tremendous impact he has on others. So very often, I run across people who have been served by Fr. Cunningham. Almost universally, they tell me how much they love him and what a wonderful priest he is.

As you walk our halls and listen for that distinctive Irish brogue, take a look at the faces of those who have just encountered our chaplain. You will see a smile and feel the effects of their uplifted spirits. He truly makes a difference! Bless you, Father Cunningham.



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Winter, 2017

# Little Sisters of the Poor

## Chef's Surprise



**David Bedwell**  
**Presidential Medallion Winner**

We are so blessed to have people working at Sacred Heart Residence who embody the spirit of St. Jeanne Jugan. David Bedwell is a perfect example of that charisma. Martha Slay, our dietary manager, says, "David is always reaching out to help others and is so very unselfish."

David has worked for the Little Sisters of the Poor for more than 18 years, beginning in the New Orleans home. When Hurricane Katrina precipitated the closing of that home, he was offered an opportunity for employment here in Mobile.

In 2010, David started chef school. His mentors encouraged him to join the American Culinary Federation. David was certified as a "Culinarian" by the ACF in 2013. Just recently they awarded him the Presidential Medallion "In recognition of your leadership, service and contributions to the

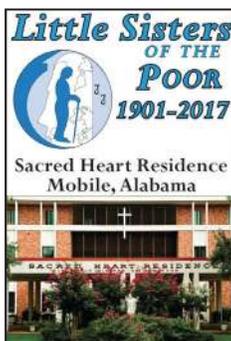
advancement of the American Culinary Federation and the culinary industry." Fewer than 200 of these awards have been given out throughout the nation.

*"God is training me for something very special..."*

David is dedicated to his profession and constantly volunteers at their national and regional conventions and workshops. These events give him the opportunity to see the latest innovations in safety, sanitation and new healthy food dishes.

As to his future with the Little Sisters of the Poor, David states, "God is training me for something very special, something that utilizes my passion for helping others, especially the elderly."

## Our Christmas Present to You:



We are so proud of our Resident, Anna Crow. She has published a wonderful collection of stories and photos depicting the history of the Little Sisters of the Poor here in Mobile.

The Sacred Heart Residence was opened in 1901 in Mobile. From its humble beginnings to our present time, thousands of elderly persons have been cared for in the spirit of St. Jeanne Jugan. Anna's book gives a beautiful picture of life in our home these past 118 years.

Through the sponsorship of so many supporters, this book was published at no cost to the Home. That means that every penny

paid by purchasers goes straight to the support of our Residents.

As a token of our gratitude to those who have so generously supported our mission in 2017, we will be sending this beautiful book as our Christmas gift to you. There are two ways to qualify for this gift.

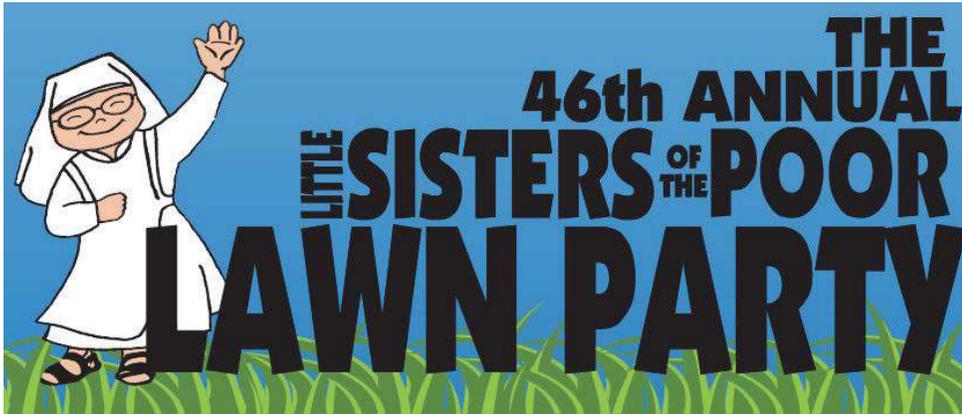
If you have donated at least \$1,200.00 in 2017, you will receive a copy. Also, we will send a copy to anyone who donates at least \$125.00 in the month of December!

This is our way of spreading the story of the Little Sisters of the Poor and all that they have meant to the Gulf Coast and the Mobile area. Please get your donations in early as we have a limited number of copies.

If you wish to purchase extra copies of the book, you may order online at [www.littlesistersofthepoormobile.org/store/](http://www.littlesistersofthepoormobile.org/store/)



**Mother Judith presenting the first copy of the book to author Anna Crow**



There are so many things that must come together to have a successful Lawn Party. The efforts of the staff, volunteers, sponsors, vendors and attendees make this event the most special fundraiser we have each year. Ultimately, it is the prayers of support that make the difference. This year the challenges were formidable. With hurricanes in Texas and Florida, and a small hurricane in the Mobile area one week before our event, the focus could easily have been lost. There was even a forecast of 85% chance of thunderstorms for October 15th, the day of the Lawn Party.

This is where faith, hope and prayers combined to provide a small miracle. Although the surrounding areas were inundated with heavy rains, the Little Sisters called upon St. Joseph and St. Jeanne Jugan to intervene on our behalf. Our Lawn Party was scheduled to conclude at 4:00 pm. At 4:15 pm, the skies released a torrent. All we could do was praise God and give thanks for His help.

Even with those challenges, we are so grateful for the success of this year's Lawn Party. Again, we raised substantial amount of funds which will be a huge blessing to our Residents! Thanks for your support...see you next year!



## Sung Into Heaven

by Tommy Fulton, Development Director

If anyone was prepared to meet God, surely that person was Monsignor Francis J. Murphy. On October 2, 2017, Father Murphy left this world to join his Heavenly Father. All of us at Sacred Heart miss him, along with the thousands of parishioners, families and friends who had been touched by him during his 71 years as a priest.

On a personal note, my parents, S. C. and Betty Jo Fulton, were married and buried by Fr. Murphy, after 50 years of marriage. Every time I saw Fr. Murphy, I saw my parents. On the day of his passing, I was walking down the hall, when another Resident told me that

something was happening in Father's room. I entered the room and saw the Little Sisters and others praying and singing. It was my first time to witness what I had heard so much about, the Sisters spiritual ministry to the dying Residents.

I know in my heart that Fr. Murphy could not have been happier as he was presented to God by those who had cared for him to the end. It was one of the most peaceful and beautiful moments I've ever witnessed, and one of the reasons God has chosen the Little Sisters for this ministry. May Father Murphy rest in peace.



## A Message from Mother



We are celebrating a very special season of the year as you receive this newsletter. The word "Advent" in our faith refers to the coming of Christ into the world. The fulfillment of that anticipation is the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ on Christmas morning.

During this time of silent and prayerful preparation for the coming of our Redeemer and Messiah, we hope to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of you who so generously support our mission. Your contributions are invaluable in helping us continue that mission here at Sacred Heart Home.

One of the most important aspects of Christmas is the knowledge that we are loved by a merciful Father, who created us as one loving family. As we see our residence take on the trappings of the season, we recognize the spirit of family unity that surrounds us.

We sincerely hope that you are able to visit us during this Advent and Christmas season. All of us here wish you and your family the most blessed Christmas season.

May God Bless,  
Mother Judith

## Saints Among Us!



*For the second year, our Residents celebrated All Saint's Day with a visit from Our Lady of Guadalupe Home School. The students chose to dress up as their favorite Saints, then went through the halls entertaining everyone! Sister Clare is seated with the Saints prior to their tour.*

## Save the Date!

**4th Annual Blisters  
for Sisters 5k and  
Fun Run  
Saturday,  
April 14, 2018**

