

Press Release

Little Sisters of the Poor to Withdraw from St. Joseph's Home in Henrico, Virginia

(10/30/2019) – Today the Little Sisters of the Poor announced with sadness that they will be withdrawing from St. Joseph's Home in Henrico, Virginia. This morning the Sisters met with the Residents, their families, lay Associates, staff and volunteers sharing their decision.

The Little Sisters have served in the Diocese of Richmond continuously since 1874 when Bishop Gibbons met them at the train depot and escorted them to their new Home on the corner of Ninth and Marshal Streets in downtown Richmond. In 1877, having outgrown their initial Home, Bishop Gibbons gifted a larger building on Harvie Street in the Fan District. The Little Sisters commenced construction on an addition to the building which became St. Sophia's Home. Ninety-nine years later, in 1976, the Little Sisters moved to their present location at Michaels Road in Henrico.

In making the announcement, Mother Loraine Marie Clare, lsp, provincial superior, explained: "As part of a strategic plan aimed at strengthening our ministry and the quality of our religious and community life, we Little Sisters have recognized the need to withdraw from a certain number of Homes in the United States, while at the same time dedicating our resources to much needed upgrades and reconstruction projects in others."

The Little Sisters of the Poor are actively seeking a buyer for the Home with the hope of finding another mission-driven sponsor to continue operating the facility and allowing the Residents and staff to remain there. They announced that they will provide periodic updates as the transition process proceeds.

"For more than a century, the Little Sisters of the Poor have been faithful servants and true examples of Christ's loving care and unwavering, tender devotion for the poor, sick, elderly and dying within our diocese," said the Most Rev. Barry C. Knestout, Bishop of Richmond. "I am deeply saddened to see them leave our region as their departure will leave a profound void within our community that is irreplaceable. Yet, I am immensely grateful for the decades of humble service, selfless work, great love and devotion they have provided to the most vulnerable in our community."

In letters to the Residents and their family members, Mother Jeanne Mary, lsp, superior of St. Joseph's Home, also offered the Residents the possibility of moving to another Home sponsored by the Little Sisters of the Poor. "Know that if you wish to go to any of our other Homes so that you can continue to be part of the Little Sisters' family, you will be welcomed with open arms."

Mother Loraine Marie Clare concluded the announcement by thanking all those who have supported the mission of St. Joseph's Home and the Little Sisters of the Poor for so many years. In a special way she thanked the Diocese of Richmond for its leadership in promoting and supporting the mission of the Little Sisters of the Poor for the past 145 years. She assured every one of the Sisters' prayers and support throughout the transition period.

For further information, please contact Rev. Mark Cregan, Esq. at 917.767.2772.