

On December 10th, 2022, Associates and Sisters gathered in the Chapel of Villa Madonna Retreat House to celebrate the Associate Commitment for Andrea Lynn Brown and Elizabeth Ann Fleiger. Sr. Mary Ann Maxwell shared her musical gift as organist and the celebration began with the procession of Sr. Pat Poole, SCIC, and Sharon Jacquard, SJ Associate with Andrea and Elizabeth.

The Welcoming was done by Denise Isaacs, SJ Associate. Denise shared that the past Thursday (Dec. 8th) was the Feast of the Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception. "This calls each of us to listen, to be awake to the invitations that mark this time in our lives and to have an "heart open to the whole world".

In 2020 Andrea and Mary Ann Kneeland (SJ Associate) met and later that fall, Sharon and Linda provided education about the Founder and Foundress; St. Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac. Over a period of time videos depicting their lives were shown.

"Early 2020 put a hold on the Inquiry process. You had just been formally introduced to the world "Charism". "Although, the word may have been unfamiliar, the meaning was not. This gift of the Holy Spirit had already been given to you. You had been growing in the expression of this gift throughout your life experiences as Christians, learned from your teachers at schools, your parents, mentors and many others. Your volunteering in nursing homes, community homes, churches, Outflow Ministry and many other works of service that you perform are true examples of the Holy Spirit's influence on you and the Gift of Charism that you carry".

Barb Fennell, also a SJ Associate read from the Word of God: Letter of Paul to the Philippians 2:1-11. This was followed by a reflection by Gertrude Muholland, SCIC. Presentation of Candles then took place by SJ Associates, Mary Ann Kneeland and Bunny Keleher and Associate Pins were presented by Pat Poole, SCIC and Sharon Jacquard.

All Associates who were present also made their recommitment for another year witnessed by the Sisters in attendance with the Sisters also making their recommitment to support Associates for another year. Linda Pye, SJ Associate, prepared and read the Intercessions. A thoughtful poem was then read by Elizabeth Fleiger.

Mary Beth McCurdy, Congregational Leader, gathered all those in attendance around the altar and invited a beautiful blessing with participation of the group.

This wonderful celebration was then followed by a Social that was held in the Dining Room of Villa Madonna where many stories were shared and homemade treats were enjoyed by all.



Sisters, Associates and friends in the Chapel at Villa Madonna Retreat House (Photo: Sharon Jacquard)



**L-r – Sue Bishop, Sandra McNally, Gertrude Mulholland, SCIC, Andrea Brown, Elizabeth Fleiger and Carolyn Evans
(Photo: Sharon Jacquard)**