

Volume 27, Issue 2

Winter 2024

A newsletter of the Sister  
Servants of the Most  
Sacred Heart of Jesus

# The Vine

*I am the Vine, you are the  
branches. Whoever remains  
in Me and I in him will bear  
much fruit, because without Me  
you can do nothing. Jn 15:5*

*Glory be to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus*



**OUR FATHER FOUNDER  
ST. JOSEPH SEBASTIAN PELCZAR  
1842-1924**

# Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



*Glory be to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus*

*From Mother Mary Joseph, SSCJ—Provincial Superior*

Dear Friends, This issue of The Vine is dedicated to our Father Founder, St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar. For those who have never met this wonderful saint, we hope the pages of our newsletter will introduce you to a new powerful example and intercessor for your own spiritual life. More information on his life is available on our Sisters' website [www.sacredheartsisters.org](http://www.sacredheartsisters.org). March 28, 2024 will mark the centennial of St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar's entrance into eternal glory and his feastday is observed on January 19th, the anniversary of his baptism. We thank God for St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and we are planning a celebration of this milestone later this year.

*Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ*

## NEWS FROM JOHN PAUL II MANOR

On October 15, 2023, our new garden walk at John Paul II Manor was blessed and dedicated by Fr. Leo Arnone, joined by our Manor Chaplain, Msgr. Bernard Przybocki. A reception followed.

Thank you to all who so generously donated to this cause. Thank you to Roger Harrington and his crew at Harrington Quality Construction, who told us that they were not only installing sidewalks marked by the rosary, but they were praying it as well. We are also grateful to Fr. Bernard White who donated a beautiful statue of the Agony of the Garden for the walkway.

The inspiration came from resident Philip Arnone, father of Fr. Leo Arnone, pastor of Cresson parishes, thus the project was dedicated in honor of him and his beloved late wife Nancy. Our residents can now safely walk without danger of traffic on a walkway that affords a peaceful place of prayer and solitude.



## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



### FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. JOSEPH SEBASTIAN PELCZAR

“The Incarnation of the Eternal Word is a mystery of incomparable humility and ineffable love ... The very God unites human nature with Divinity; the Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin; the Eternal is born in time; and the Infinite reveals Himself as an infant

...The reason for such unfathomable humility is God’s incomprehensible love - and why incomprehensible - because it is infinite. The desire of the Most Holy Trinity to draw closer to His creature by means of the Incarnation

of the Word, unveils an immeasurable abyss of self-emptying and love.

Behold, who is God and who are we! And yet the Son of God receives our nature and unites Himself with His creation. The manner of this union reveals to us a new abyss of love. The Son of God could have come to earth clothed with majesty, with maturity of age and a glorified body; yet He came in humility, poverty and suffering. He came as an infant

... He came as the child of the Virgin Mother, not only to become our brother in the flesh, but also to share with us the heart of His Mother... He came out of love for one and all

... From the depths of the manger, as from a first pulpit He cries out: “Come to Me, all you who are looking for truth and light, and I will enlighten you.” Whoever approaches Him with faith and inclines his ear in meditation, is the one who will hear that interior call: “Behold, O man, and see. I, the Son of God, became a man, that you would know how good the Heavenly Father is; that you would return to Him through Me.”

“By His Incarnation, the Son of God became the true Emmanuel –God living with His people, for He lived with them throughout His entire earthly life and now lives in so many tabernacles.



He became our Redeemer, Savior and Mediator. He came to be our priest, our sacrifice and our life...By His Incarnation, Jesus Christ offers to His Heavenly Father through His humanity an act of the most precious homage, on behalf of all rational creatures and the whole world.

From His Heart there flows an eternal hymn of glory, worship and love; only one act like this of the Incarnate Word could render greater, immeasurable glory to the Blessed Trinity than all homage offered from an infinite number of worlds possessing even millions of Angels within them

...The Eternal Word exalted human nature above the choirs of Angels – even unto the very Majesty of God, for as the soul of Jesus Christ belongs to God, His Body is the Body of God and His Heart is the Heart of God. It is not surprising then that the Angels sing to Him in Bethlehem and serve Him in the desert, that men fall to their knees before Him and that His Body and His Heart receive the praise befitting God Himself.”

## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



### ACCOUNT OF THE FINAL DAYS OF LIFE AND THE MOMENT OF DEATH OF OUR CO-FOUNDRESS, BLESSED MOTHER KLARA SZCZEŚNA

On January 11, 1916 sick, bedridden, and suffering, Mother Klara, asked Bishop Sebastian Pelczar, present in Krakow, for confession. After confession with Father Founder, she was calm and happy, received Holy Communion daily, and her rosary never left her hand. With the Sisters keeping vigil at her bed, she did not have any conversations so as to keep the religious silence.

One of the Sisters had seen Mother in a dream saying goodbye to the Sisters. When this Sister visited Mother Klara, she told her: "I would like to go already to heaven, but whatever is God's will." When the Sisters wanted to pray a novena with Mother for her health, she replied to them, "Oh, you do not need to pray for health, just that the holy will of God would be fulfilled perfectly."

A few days before her death, she was greatly strengthened and consoled by a vision. From her words, it appears that St. Joseph, her most beloved patron, had come to her. Also, a few days before her death Fr. Daniel Bieleń gave her the holy sacraments.

Two days before her death, on Sunday and Monday, she remained without Holy Communion as she had gotten a paralysis of the esophagus and could take only a few drops of water. She said: "When I will recover, then again, I will be able to receive the Lord Jesus."

On the eve of death, pointing with her hand to the sky, she said: "I would like to be there already." That day, Mother was visited by the Superiors from the military hospitals who only greeted the sick and did not engage in conversation because of her serious condition. At night Mother asked the Sister staying with her: "Have these two Sisters arrived with everything, is the war over?" At 4:00 in the morning to the Sister ending her duty, Mother said: "God bless you!"

On the day of her death, Monday, February 7, 1916, Mother showed no signs of getting worse, she felt somehow better. In the morning, Dr. Majewski came who had been treating her for a long time. At one point, she asked when she could get up, because she felt stronger. 5

About 12 o'clock, the bell rang, the Sisters ended examination of conscience and went to dinner in the refectory. At that time, the heart attack occurred. Mother Klara Louise Szczesna has died a holy death. She suffered very much, but to her last breath, she demonstrated a truly holy patience. Continually, with the acts of prayer, she united her sufferings with the sufferings of our Lord Jesus. A true Mother, loving her Congregation very much.

Almighty merciful God, You have accomplished by your grace that Blessed Klara Szczesna, who was filled with the love of the Most Sacred Heart of Your Son and with zeal for his glory, would dedicate her life to sacrificial and humble service of the most needy. We ask you, grant us the grace that, following her example and by her intercession, we would love you above all and lovingly serve our brothers. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



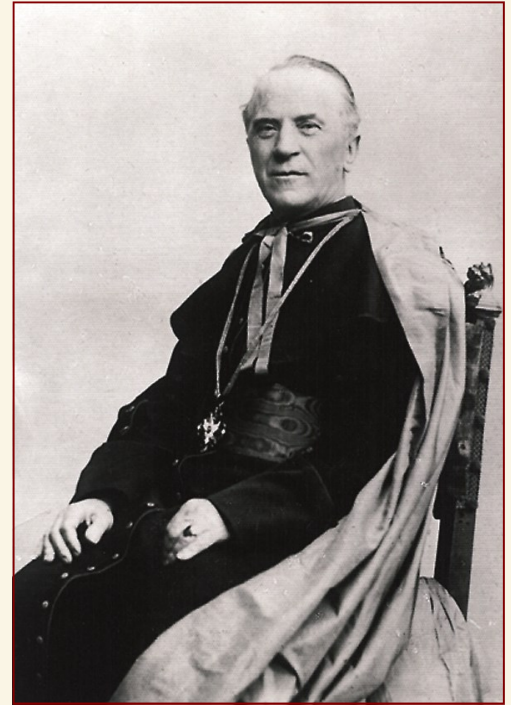
THANK YOU to the Catholic Daughters of America and their helpers for visiting our John Paul II Manor Residents with gifts and carols before Christmas.

We are so grateful to all who visited our Manor—All Saints Boswell Catechetical Students, Mount Aloysius College and Vox Nova. Bishop Carroll High School Students, and the Catholic Daughters of America.

THANK YOU TO ALL who showed kindness to the Sisters of the Sacred Heart or our residents at our John Paul II Manor.

### **BURNING WITH LOVE: ST. JOSEPH SEBASTIAN PELCZAR**

By Sr. Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ  
Reprinted from Catholic Exchange



A snapshot in time. That's what this moment was; but not some faded black and white photograph or oil on canvas. No, this was real, live and in color — Rome, 1866.

An assembly of cassock-clad clerics at the Polish College was listening intently to an address by Blessed Pius IX, the Pope who only a dozen years before had declared the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. He was greatly esteemed by the students for this and for what one of them would describe as his “angelic bearing, his unyielding steadfastness during hostilities, and his special kindness toward Poles.”

He was a leader who knew his audience. Pope Pius IX was well aware that he was addressing men who were no strangers to suffering or hardship. They were scholars who had known poverty, physical labor, and political upheaval — back home, their country, their loved ones, were locked in a bitter partition of the three occupying forces that held Poland under an unyielding grasp.

It was to men such as these that the Pope delivered a strong and measured exhortation that was to prove decisive and prophetic for one of them. On that first Friday in June, 1866, the Pope gave them this mandate:

“You must revive the Catholic spirit and be as bearers of torches burning in the fog.”

For the doctoral student, Father Joseph Sebastian Pelczar, it was a sacred summons, a clarion call, not unlike the trumpet that sounded daily over the square in Krakow as an echo of warning for impending danger.

Father Pelczar knew that he had to be that fire, that burning torch that would expose the darkness and lead his people into the light of God's love and freedom. He would return to Poland consumed by the ideal, “May my whole life burn for God's glory” and his motto of life, “All for God alone.”

As a diocesan priest and eventually a Bishop, his fidelity to his own interior life through daily mental prayer and rosary, fervent Masses and spiritual reading, and the pilgrimages he took to feed his spirit, would keep alive and fuel that flame of divine charity by which other souls could be enlightened. Later, on one such pilgrimage to Assisi, he professed private vows as a Franciscan tertiary.

Father Pelczar went on to serve as a seminary professor and later as professor and rector of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, yet he was no academic living in some ivy tower. He was ever a shepherd and pastor of souls, acutely aware of the needs of his surroundings.

Father Pelczar supported soup kitchens and the work of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He was an advocate for the poor, for orphans and for education, including trade schools for the people. He set up confraternities to instill devotion in the faithful, and, we're told, when these were no longer effective, he began others.

When Father Pelczar realized that many young women were in moral danger, coming from the country to work in Krakow as domestic help in the homes of the wealthy, he established kitchens and dormitories to receive them. In 1894, he went on, with Co-Foundress Blessed Klara Szczesna, to found in Krakow the Congregation of Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, Franciscan religious devoted to the Heart of Jesus who would be as mothers to these girls, and would also serve the Church as catechists, teachers and care for the sick in their homes. He was docile to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to begin such a venture.

As he wrote of it, “May the Lord forgive my boldness, because until now the founders of religious orders have been saints, but I can be somewhat justified, because in the strange course of events, I saw God's will.”

The Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, now an international Congregation, continue to live their charism first given them by Father Pelczar, that is, to extend the Kingdom of the Love of the Heart of Jesus everywhere.

## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Father Joseph Sebastian's gifts for organization and leadership, exhibited in Seminary and at the Jagiellonian University, did not go unnoticed by Rome, and eventually he was elevated to the episcopacy, being named Auxiliary Bishop of Przemysl, Poland in 1899 and Ordinary in 1900. He was a zealous Bishop who urged his priests to go out to the hedgerows and byways to seek out the people, not waiting for the flock to come to them. Bishop Pelczar undertook three synods in his diocese, so committed was he to fulfilling most effectively the mission God had entrusted to him on behalf of his people.

He was a popular homilist and a prolific writer, who published numerous books on a variety of topics, together with his pastoral letters, sermons and addresses. His ascetical writings are still reprinted today and are considered classics in Poland.

He is hailed in Poland as 'the saint of difficult decision making' and invoked as such, because he struggled early in life with discernment as to whether to be an historian professor or a priest. After prayer and struggle, he came to this conclusion:

"Earthly ideals are fading away. I see the ideal of life in sacrifice, and the ideal of sacrifice in priesthood."

His struggles for his future were not over yet, as he then needed to learn from the Lord if he should become a diocesan priest or a Jesuit. He is an example for all who are seeking to follow the plan of God in one's life.

His love and devotion for the Sacred and Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Virgin Mary radiated from his own spiritual life to shine out in his exhortation to the faithful and his instructions and rule of life given to the spiritual daughters of the Congregation he founded.

On March 28, 1924, stricken with pneumonia he contracted during celebrations for his 25th Jubilee of episcopal consecration, Bishop Joseph Sebastian Pelczar died in the odor of sanctity, finally laying down the torch he had so valiantly and faithfully carried.

He was beatified in Rzeszow, Poland by St. John Paul II in 1991 and canonized in Rome by the same pontiff on May 18, 2003. His feast day is observed on January 19th.

Almighty and everlasting God, from your inspiration Saint Joseph Sebastian, bishop, by word, pen and example taught the ways of justice, grant through his intercession that we will continually grow in a knowledge and love of You. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever.

More information on his life may be found on the Sisters' website at [www.sacredheartsisters.org](http://www.sacredheartsisters.org).



### Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

#### Sacred Heart Province

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**Our Federal ID Number is: 20-812762**

### CAN WE PRAY FOR YOUR INTENTIONS?

Please call our Sisters with your prayer intentions — 814.886.4223 or send us word via our website [www.sacredheartsisters.org](http://www.sacredheartsisters.org).

### MASS INTENTIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AT OUR CONVENT CHAPELS

For each Mass, the Stipend is \$10 for the Celebrant. Please call 814-886-4223.

## Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus



### Sister Augustine Marie Molnar, SSCJ

**May 12, 1980 - November 18, 2023**

Sister Augustine Marie Molnar, SSCJ, age 43, a professed Sister of the Congregation of Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, entered into eternal life unexpectedly on Saturday morning, November 18, 2023, in Jefferson Township, Pennsylvania, from injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident. Sister was currently stationed with the Community of Saint Maximilian Kolbe at the Congregations Province House in Cresson, Pennsylvania.

Sister Augustine Marie was born Georganne Naomi Molnar in Harrisburg on May 12, 1980, to the late George E. Molnar and Naomi (Young) Molnar, formerly of Newport, Pennsylvania.

Raised in Newport, Sister Augustine Marie was a former member of Saint Bernard's Church, New Bloomfield. She was a graduate of Newport Junior-Senior High School, Class of 1998 and, following high school, she went on to further her education at Misericordia University, Dallas, Pennsylvania, where, in 2003, she was a magna cum laude graduate obtaining two degrees – a Bachelor of Arts in

Health Sciences and a Master's of Science in Physical Therapy. She later went on to receive her licensure in Personal Care Home Administration through Temple University.

Sister Augustine Marie entered the Congregation of Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on September 8, 2012, and made her first profession of religious vows on March 19, 2017. She was presently in Juniorate, faithfully preparing herself to make her perpetual profession of vows.

At the time of her passing, Sister Augustine Marie was serving as a physical therapist, aide, and overall support staff member for her Congregations personal care home, John Paul II Manor, Cresson. She was also currently serving as a religious education teacher at All Saints Catholic School, Cresson, and had formerly served in the same capacity at Saint Michael's School, Loretto. Sister had also formerly served as music director for Saint Francis Xavier Church, Cresson, where she was a proficient organist, pianist, and trumpeter.

Sister loved bringing healing through her skills as a physical therapist, and sharing the truths of the faith with youth in Catholic schools, through catechesis, youth ministry, and living out the virtues of faith, hope, and love.

In addition to her parents, George and Naomi, Sister Augustine Marie was preceded in death by her paternal grandparents, Louis and Catherine Molnar; and her maternal grandparents, Charles and Lenora Bloom.

Sister Augustine Marie is survived by her religious Sisters of her Congregation, as well as her sister, Katrina Molnar-Dietz and her husband, Ronald Dietz, of Newport; her brother, Charles Molnar and his wife, Nicole, Harrisburg; her much loved four nieces, Katelynn, Karolynn, Kristianna, and Emerson; her much loved nephew, Corban; her aunts, uncles, cousins, and extended family members.

Vigil Rites for Sister Augustine Marie were held on Sunday, November 26, 2023, at with the Reverend Father Leo F. Arnone, officiating and viewing hours following. Funeral services for Sister Augustine Marie took place on Monday, November 27th in Saint Francis Xavier Church, 211 Powell Avenue, Cresson with a con-celebrated Funeral Mass commenced at 11:30 AM. The Most Reverend Mark L. Bartchak, JCD, Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown, was Celebrant. The Reverend Father Leo F. Arnone, Pastor, con-celebrated along with other visiting clergy, and the Reverend Father Robert F. Sharman, Pastor of her home Parish, served as Homilist. Committal took place in Saint Francis Xavier Cemetery, Cresson, where Sister Augustine Marie was laid to rest alongside her fellow departed Sisters.

Donations may be made in Sister Augustine Marie's memory to John Paul II Manor, 856 Cambria Street, Cresson, PA 16630.

Funeral Arrangements were made in conjunction with the Wroblewski Funeral Home, Inc., 1442 Wyoming Avenue, Forty Fort, PA 18704 ([www.wroblewskifuneralhome.com](http://www.wroblewskifuneralhome.com)) and the Matthew R. Decort Funeral Home, 532 Main Street, Portage, PA 15946 ([www.decortfh.com](http://www.decortfh.com)).

*Eternal rest, grant unto Sr. Augustine Marie, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace.*

# Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

From October 2-8, 2022, Mother Provincial Mary Joseph Calore, SSCJ attended the Healing the Whole Person Retreat in Alhambra, CA with other Major Superiors of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, led by Fr. John Burns, Sr. Miriam James Heidland, S.O.L.T., and Kim Glass from the John Paul II Healing Center, Tallahassee, Florida. This retreat was introduced to the Sisters of the Province in Advent.



From October 6th - 9th, Novice Mistress, Sr. Angela Marie Igou, SSCJ was in Nashville, TN where she attended the Called By Love weekend of prayer, reflection, and sharing with other young religious on their call as consecrated women religious in the Church. An initiative of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, this year's conferences were led by Sr. Mary Madeline Todd, OP of the Nashville Dominicans and Fr. John Burns of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.



On September 30, 2023, Fr. Aron Maghsoudi took our novitiate to Ridgetop Orchards in Fishertown, PA for a beautiful outing.



In November, we had the joy of the visit of Fr. Gary Szczepankiewicz and Karen Korthals from North Tonawanda, NY

The Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, founded in Krakow, Poland in 1894 by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar and Blessed Klara Szczesna are devoted to extending the Kingdom of Love of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus by prayer, community life and apostolic work in the areas of

Teaching \* Catechesis \* Music Ministry  
Nursing & Personal Care \* Parish Work  
Retreats \* Youth Ministry  
Prison Ministry \* Missionary work

Internationally, the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus serve in the following countries : Poland, Ukraine, Italy, France, Bolivia, Argentina, Jamaica and the United States.

The United States Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus is represented in the Dioceses of: Altoona-Johnstown, Buffalo, Columbus and Grand Rapids and in Mandeville, Jamaica, West Indies.

## Is God calling you?

Do you want to leave everything behind, and offer yourself totally to Him? Are you brave enough to love and suffer, to fall and get up, to smile and cry, and pray? Do you want to join us, the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and proclaim the Kingdom of Jesus' Love everywhere? If your answer is yes! come visit us, experience the spirit of silence, prayer and sisterly life in community.

## Our Congregation is

- ◆ Pontifical ◆ Franciscan ◆ Contemplative-Active
- ◆ Devoted to the Sacred Heart
- ◆ Founded by St. Joseph Sebastian Pelczar & Bl. Klara Szczesna in 1894 in Krakow, Poland

## PLEASE SEE OUR WEBSITE

[www.sacredheartsisters.org](http://www.sacredheartsisters.org)

to join our weekly Zoom meetings with other young women who are discerning God's will and call to holiness for their lives. There is an online form to register for our weekly sessions with our Sisters.

**Sr. Angela Marie Igou, SSCJ—Vocation Director**