



## LIKE A GIFT FROM HEAVEN

February 2, The Feast of The Presentation also marks the day in 1703 when Marie Louise Trichet was given the habit by St. Louis Marie de Montfort and became the first Daughter of Wisdom.

Polio was a major health challenge especially for children in the 1920s. To meet the need, on January 20, 1924, the New York State Board of Charities granted a license for an orthopedic hospital and clinic at 277 Hicks St. in Brooklyn, NY. The Diocese of Brooklyn built the facility; the Daughters of Wisdom staffed it. The Brooklyn Clinic was a sorely needed reception house and quarantine station in the city. Patients requiring long term care were transferred to St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson, NY. Mother Theresa, the administrator of the Port Jefferson facility, sent four of the best nurses to the new foundation so that they might introduce the same method of care into the clinic that existed in Port Jefferson.

The chapel in the new hospital in Brooklyn offered an oasis for reflection in the midst of the bustling activity surrounding it. Particularly meaningful to the Sisters was a



stained-glass window donated by Reliance Charities. It portrayed St. Louis Marie de Montfort, their founder, giving the habit to the first Daughter of Wisdom, Sr. Marie Louise of Jesus, on the day of her consecration, February 2, 1703; and thereby establishing the foundation of the congregation.

In the late 1940s, the Salk vaccine was discovered. It seemed like a miracle. Now the dreaded disease of polio could be prevented. After years of dedicated treatment of polio patients, on September 7, 1967, the Clinic in Brooklyn closed. Msgr. Asip, who resided at the hospital and worked closely with the Sisters, had the foresight to save the stained-glass windows from demolition. They were put in crates and stored in the garage of a pastor friend of his until 1992. At that time most of the windows were donated to a new church in rural



Georgia. Msgr. Asip put aside the window depicting the founders. He called Sr. Rachel Bouchard a nurse he had known from the Brooklyn hospital, to ask if the Daughters of Wisdom would like to have it. She, in turn, contacted the Provincial Superior who was delighted.

It was during that time when The Daughters of Wisdom had received the good news of the upcoming beatification of their co-foundress. The opening ceremony to commemorate the significant event would now include the solemn blessing of the window of the founders. Pope John-Paul II beatified Marie Louise Trichet on May 16, 1993. The stained-glass window was installed in the chapel of Our Lady of Perpetual Help convent Sound Beach, where it remains to this day. To all those who had ministries at Hicks Street and St. Charles Hospital, it seemed like a gift from heaven. The first Daughters of Wisdom arrived in the United States in northern Maine in 1904. Three hundred sixteen years later Daughters of Wisdom can be found in mission in North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. The congregation numbers over 1,500 members including Associates or Friends of Wisdom.

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