

BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH



STORIES  
OF **GRACE**  
2019

good help | humility | mercy

**Dear Bon Secours  
Mercy Health Associates,**

We are privileged to be part of a ministry founded by courageous women who dedicated their lives in service to people who were poor, suffering and often ignored by society. Just as our ministry's roots go back to the sisters' grace-filled stories, it is through our own stories that we honor their legacy.

This year, leaders across our organization participated in a ministry formation program called Stories of Grace. The program is designed to connect participants to Bon Secours Mercy Health's heritage and help us reflect on our role in furthering Jesus' healing ministry today and into the future.

As a way of sharing this impactful and popular program with all Bon Secours Mercy Health team members, we're pleased to provide you with "Stories of Grace: good help | humility | mercy." May it serve as a source of inspiration and reflection as, together, we extend Jesus' compassionate, healing ministry to all we are called to serve.

Peace,



**John Starcher**  
President and CEO



As emphasized in the Stories of Grace sessions, it is by sharing our experiences that we can encourage one another and grow in our commitment to the legacy entrusted to us. These stories illustrate who we are at heart: our commitment to help people in need and to honor their genuine worth, to humbly recognize and celebrate the gifts each of us gives in service to others, and our commitment to be Jesus' heart and hands each day.

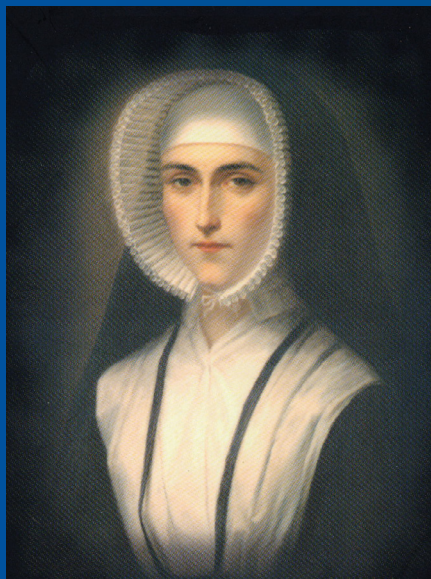


We trust these stories will inspire you as they do us. Through them, we feel profound gratitude for the sisters who founded a ministry dedicated to compassion and mercy. We appreciate how blessed we are to work with committed, talented individuals who, each day, give selflessly in service to others. And we are grateful for the abundance of God's blessings and love.



**Sr. Anne Lutz**  
Chief Sponsorship and Mission Officer

# OUR FOUNDING CONGREGATIONS



**JOSEPHINE POTEL**  
Sisters of Bon Secours



**MARIE-ANTOINETTE POTIER**  
Sisters of the Humility of Mary



**CATHERINE MCAULEY**  
Sisters of Mercy

As a Catholic health ministry, we stand in a rich and compelling tradition from the many founding congregations that started our various ministries. Remembering and celebrating those legacies is an important part of our dedication to our ministry. In recognition of the three congregations that provide a foundation for Bon Secours Mercy Health — Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Sisters of Bon Secours and Sisters of Mercy — we celebrate three Foundation Days each year:

**JANUARY 24**  
**BON SECOURS DAY** — celebrating the date the first Sisters of Bon Secours professed their vows in Saint Sulpice Church in Paris, France.

**JULY 17**  
**HUMILITY OF MARY DAY** — celebrating the Feast of the Humility of Mary which is a central celebration for the Sisters of the Humility of Mary.

**SEPTEMBER 24**  
**MERCY DAY** — celebrating the opening of the first House of Mercy in 1827 in Dublin, Ireland.



## PRAYERS OF FOUNDING CONGREGATIONS



### The Sisters of Bon Secours

In the city of Paris, just thirty-five years after the beginning of the French Revolution on January 24, 1824, a simple gathering of twelve young women took place in the Church of St. Sulpice. Within this ceremony they committed themselves to serve the poor, the sick and the dying in their homes. They made this promise to God and the church in the presence of the Archbishop of Paris. In his remarks to the Sisters, the Archbishop described them as Sisters of Bon Secours or Good Help.

Consider the courage it took for these twelve sisters to move out of their own comfort zone. Consider the grace filled energy that enabled them to go beyond their fears to action. Consider how the love of God transformed their lives so that they could be the compassion of God in their time and circumstance. We celebrate the courage of these first sisters and ask God for the courage we need to live out the mission they have invited us to share.

*O God of mercy and compassion, we pray together in the spirit of Jesus, who courageously and faithfully proclaimed your good news of salvation. Together, we celebrate the work of 12 women, whose mission and courage inspires us to accept the invitation to follow in their footsteps. Strengthen our faltering steps that we may faithfully and courageously live as true witnesses of your love and be good help to those in need. Amen.*



# PRAYERS AND REFLECTIONS

## From across the Ministry

### BRENT WHETSTONE

*Youngstown, OH*

Blessed are you, O God, who has given us this work to extend the healing ministry of Jesus Christ and to bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved!

Blessed are you, O God, who has given us many talents and gifts for the service of others!

We pray that through the work of our hands we will serve with Compassion and Integrity. That we will always value Human Dignity. That through our Stewardship we will be good stewards of our resources all for the Service of our community.

Let us be ever mindful of our promise to make lives better—mind, body and spirit, to genuinely enjoy being of service, and to make health care easier.

*Amen.*

### MARGARET B. TUCKER

*Richmond, VA*

“Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

*St. Teresa of Avila*

### MARK GILBERT

*Mason, OH*

Lord, as I enter this workplace, I bring your presence with me.

I speak your peace, your grace, your mercy and your perfect order in this office.

I acknowledge your power over all that will be spoken, thought, decided and done within these walls.

Lord, I thank you for the gifts you have blessed me with. I commit to using them responsibly in your honor.

Give me a fresh supply of strength to do my job. Anoint my projects, ideas and energy so that even my smallest accomplishment may bring you glory.

Lord, when I am confused, guide me. When I am burned out, infuse me with the light of the Holy Spirit.

May the work that I do and the way I do it bring faith, joy and a smile to all who I come in contact with today.

### DIANNE WILLIAMS

*Ashland, KY*

Wouldn't this world be a better place,  
If we could begin each day  
With the thought of helping someone  
That we meet along the way?  
What if we set out with a prayer  
That through the day we'd find  
A chance to leave some sunshine  
And a joyful heart behind?

### DIANE GERNDT

*Oxford, OH*

#### DANCING WITH GOD

When I meditated on the word GUIDANCE, I kept seeing “dance” at the end of the word.

I remember reading that doing God's will is a lot like dancing.

When two people try to lead, nothing feels right. The movement doesn't flow with the music and everything is quite uncomfortable and jerky.

When one person realizes that and lets the other lead, both bodies begin to flow with the music.

One gives gentle cues, perhaps with a nudge to the back or by pressing lightly in one direction or another.

It's as if two become one body, moving beautifully. The dance takes surrender, willingness and gentle guidance and skill from the other.

My eyes drew back to the word GUIDANCE.

When I saw “G” I thought of God, followed by “U” and “I”.

“God, U and I Dance!”

As I lowered my head, I became willing to trust God to lead and give me GUIDANCE for my life.

*Anonymous*

#### PRAYER...

Dear God,

As I seek your GUIDANCE today, help me to be willing to trust you to lead in every circumstance of my life. May I abide in you as you abide in me. Make us one by the power of your Holy Spirit.

Please create a dance we do together, which becomes a thing of beauty, and draws others to you.

*Amen.*

**BRENDA K. COLLINS**

*Lima, OH*

Hate has 4 Letters, so does Love.  
Enemies has 7 letters, so does Friends.  
Lying has 5 letters, so does Truth.  
Negative has 8, so does Positive.  
Under has 5, so does Above.  
Cry has 3 letters, so does Joy.  
Anger has 5 letters, so does Happy.  
Right has 5 letters, so does Wrong.  
Hurt has 4 letters, so does Heal.  
It means life is like a double edged sword...  
so transform every negative side into an aura of positivity.  
We should choose the better {POSITIVE} side of Life.

*Author Unknown*

**JUDY BRISSON**

*Portsmouth, VA*

“You are all in the places you have been, the sights you have seen, the marvels you have achieved, and every soul you have touched. Each passing moment is another brushstroke on the canvas. So rise, live always with passion and heart, and someday you will look back on your life and see a work of art.”

*Beau Taplin — The Masterpiece*

**DAVID GOODWIN**

*Richmond, VA*

Some of the employees of Bon Secours Mercy Health do not have contact with our patients and some of us don't even work in a hospital. But all of us work together to serve our patients. One example is the Offsite Reprocessing Center in Richmond. Dedicated people are working day and night there to ensure that instruments are sterilized and materials are available for surgery. It is good to remember that it takes more than doctors and nurses to provide patient care. In chapter 12 of First Corinthians.

Paul reminds us that all parts of the body are needed and have different purposes. The eyes may seem important, but the feet and ears cannot serve the purpose of the eyes. And the eyes cannot serve the purpose of the feet or ears. Likewise, those of us who work behind the scenes and have no contact with the patient still have a very important role in the organization. We are called to do the best we can to ensure good help to the hospital staff, so they have the tools, materials and information they need to provide good help to the patients.

**JULIE A. LANDOLL**

*Toledo, OH*

Today may there be peace within. May you trust that you are exactly where you are meant to be. May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith in yourself and others. May you use the gifts that you have received and pass on the love that has been given to you. May you be content with yourself just the way you are. Let this knowledge settle into your bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love. It is there for each and every one of us!  
*Amen.*

**REV. STACIE D. PITTS**

*Youngstown, OH*

Let us put ourselves in the loving arms of our God,  
Change and Loss, it must be realized,  
are two different things.  
Loss takes something away from life.  
Change adds something to it.  
Loss is a black well; change is a fork in the road.  
Loss is not an option; it is a necessary and inevitable part of life.  
Change, on the other hand, is only a possibility.

It can be resisted or embraced.  
It can be seen as temptation or as grace.  
It can be borne reluctantly or it can be chosen.  
God, give us the courage to run unafraid into new situations when times are challenging.  
The courage to admit fear and reach out for a trusted hand.  
The courage to forgive ourselves and others.  
The courage to be silent and to listen to what others are saying.  
The courage to speak when I know I have something to say.  
The courage to believe that life is mysterious, that something wonderful is going to happen.  
The courage to be optimistic, seeing what could be rather than the way they are.  
The courage to believe that what we do matters and to do it with kindness, passion and love.  
The courage to believe with change comes opportunity, help us to be open.

*Amen.*

*Excerpt: Authors Joan Chittister, OSB and Kathleen Magrath, from the book, Crossing the River*

**SAMANTHA FUSCO**

*Greenville, SC*

“May the work I do with my hands reflect the strength of your spirit.  
May the work I do with my mind enlighten those with my God given intelligence.  
May the work I do with my heart be a testament to the passion and love God has given me so freely.  
May my work be a direct result of God's gifts to me.”

*Author Unknown*

**JAMIE MCNEILL**

*Baltimore, MD*

Commit your work to the Lord  
and then your plans will succeed.  
Proverbs 16:3

**REVA KIRK**

*Marriottsville, MD*

Steer the ship of my life, good  
Lord, to your quiet harbour, where  
I can be safe from the storms of sin  
and conflict. Show me the course I  
should take.

Renew in me the gift of discernment,  
so that I can always see the right  
direction in which I should go.

And give me the strength and the  
courage to choose the right course,  
even when the sea is rough and  
the waves are high, knowing that  
through enduring hardship and  
danger in your name we shall find  
comfort and peace.

*Basil of Caesarea (c. 329-379)*

**EMILY V. TAYLOR**

*Richmond, VA*

The morning prayer of a creative:  
God of love,  
stir my spirit  
Open my eyes  
with inspiration  
for your vision  
Give my hands  
gentle wisps  
of hope  
Brighten my soul  
with the colors  
of mercy  
Light my feet  
with Your  
splendor  
Blossom glory  
within me  
this day.

**EMMA BARKSDALE**

*Greenville, SC*

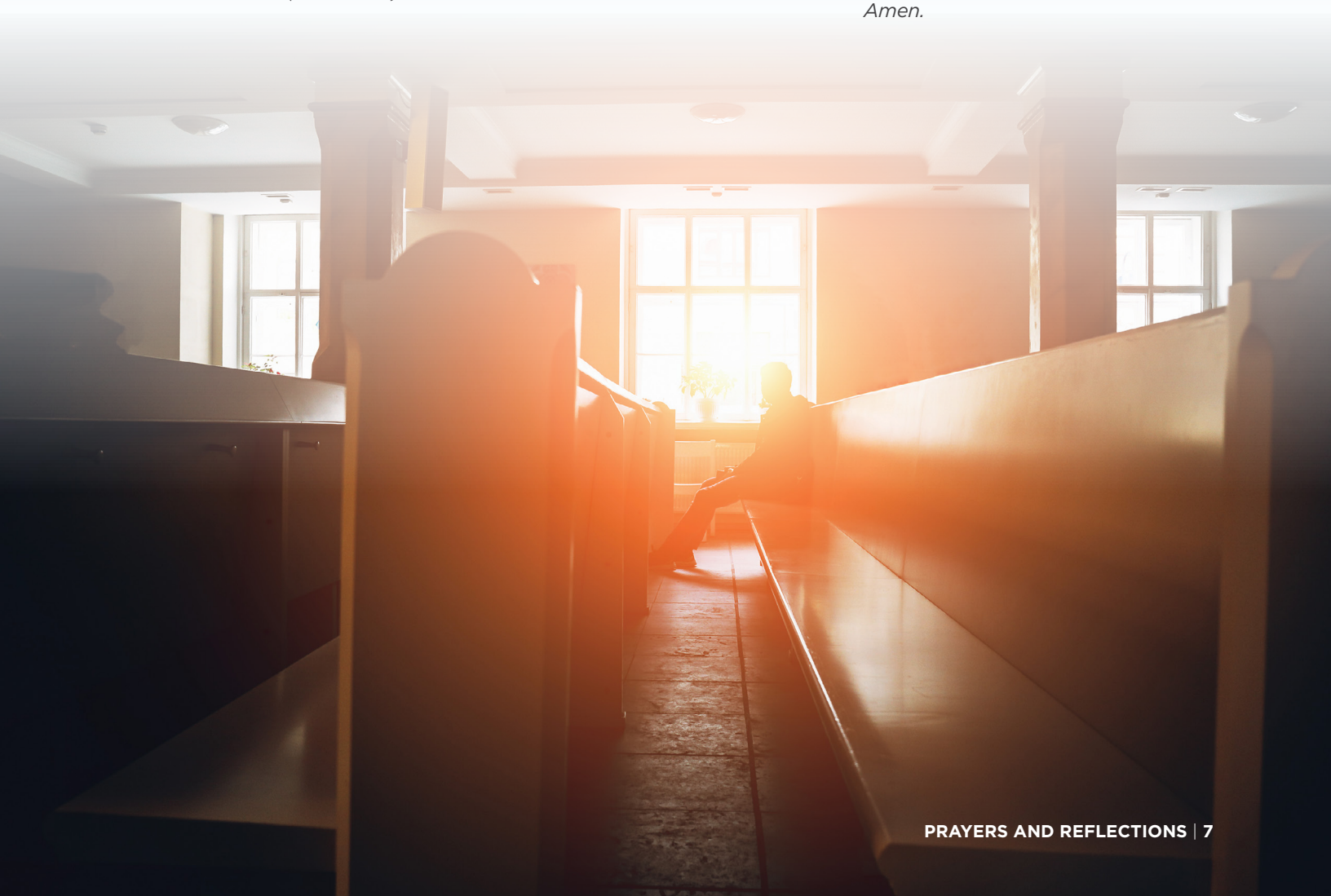
Most Gracious and Loving God  
We cannot thank you enough  
For all the gifts you have given  
each of us  
For life and breath, for joy and song  
That fill our lives each and every day.  
As we come together today we seek  
your wisdom, guidance and courage  
as we do your work!

Loving God we want to thank  
you for giving each of us the  
opportunity to work together!  
Please bless our creativity, our  
ideas and our energy so that  
even the smallest task may bring  
honor to you and to Bon Secours  
Mercy Health.

We thank you for empowering us  
with the gifts of joy, creativity and  
a spirit of service.

We ask these things with hearts  
that love you!

*Amen.*





“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”  
— John 13:34-35

**TERESA HOWARD**  
*Greenville, SC*

“As iron sharpens iron so one person sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17

**KELLY M. HAUN**  
*Greenville, SC*

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” Luke 6:31

**EMILY WHITE**  
*Richmond, VA*

Lord,  
We come into this time and space together  
To change and to be changed.  
We bring with us

Minds willing to learn new things,  
Ears willing to listen to new ideas,  
Voices willing to speak new wisdom,  
Hearts willing to connect in new ways,  
Hands willing to do new work, and  
Feet willing to walk new paths.  
May you bless our time together with your presence.  
*Amen.*

**EDDIE R. DAVENPORT**  
*Norfolk, VA*

**THE KNOTS PRAYER**

Dear God,  
Please untie the knots that are in my mind, my heart and my life. Remove

the have nots, the can nots and the do nots that I have in my mind.

Erase the will nots, may nots, might nots that may find a home in my heart.

Release me from the could nots, would nots and should nots that obstruct my life.

And most of all, dear God, I ask that you remove from my mind, my heart and my life all of the ‘am nots’ that I have allowed to hold me back, especially the thought that I am not good enough.

*Amen.*  
*Author Unknown*

**ALLISON PETERSON**  
*Richmond, VA*

“We’re all just walking each other home.”  
*Ram Dass*



**ALAN W ROCK,**  
*Greenville, SC*

I was in a patient room, preparing it for a new patient that was going on comfort measures: moving in chairs for the family, finding soft music for background, etc. As I did this, I thought of a part of our daily mantra “WHERE ARE YOU? ON HOLY GROUND.”

This missional idea is rooted in the story of Moses and the burning bush. It was holy ground for Moses because he encountered God there, even while doing something as simple as watching sheep. How often do we, in the midst of the ordinary, miss the extraordinary? The burning bush and taking off the sandals remind us that God is in the midst of the ordinary.

It was also holy ground for Moses because he received a call or mission: to share God’s compassion for a community of people treated as slaves. We too have a mission of compassion to our community by improving the health and well-being of all, and to bring good help to those in need.

Finally, it was holy ground for Moses because in his reluctance, God provided his brother Aaron to help him. It is holy ground for us, because we have one another to share together in this call. We are blessed with gifted and giving people, and as a team we are making this holy ground for all who come here.

**YUSHONDA MATTHEWS**  
*Springfield, OH*

**SHARING A SMILE....**

In a world where trouble and turmoil surround us and often times affects our lives, it can cause us to get off course or unbalanced — which can cause us to be unkind and uncaring, showing lack of compassion for others because of what we’re dealing with. However, while going

through the storm one thing that remains constant is that God is and will always remain on the throne. If we continue to trust and have faith in God when we are attacked, we can overcome and stand with a smile because we know who is in control of our situation.

Dear Lord,

As we go through this day and encounter co-workers, patients and their family members, let us remember to share a smile despite what we may be going through. Help us remember to focus on others and our purpose within this ministry and allow You to handle all the trouble and turmoil that surrounds us. Let us impact someone’s day by sharing a smile.

In Jesus’ name, *Amen.*

**ATIF SAEED, SR.**  
*Richmond, VA*

*English translation of Surah Al-Fatiha*

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful:

All Praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Universe

The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

Owner of the Day of Judgement.

You alone do we worship, and You alone we turn to for help

Guide us to the straight path;

The path of those on whom You have bestowed your grace, not (the way) of those who have earned Your anger, nor of those who went astray.

**REV. BRADFORD SMITH**  
*Youngstown, OH*

**PRAYER FOR TRUST IN JESUS**

O Christ Jesus,  
when all is darkness  
and we feel our weakness and helplessness

give us the sense of Your presence,  
Your love, and Your strength.

Help us to have perfect trust  
in Your protecting love  
and strengthening power,  
so that nothing may frighten or  
worry us,

for, living close to You,  
we shall see Your hand,  
Your purpose, Your will through  
all things.

*St. Ignatius of Loyola*

**DAWN R. MURPHY**  
*Cincinnati, OH*

This beautiful quote from Mother Teresa of Calcutta is displayed at my desk. It is a wonderful reminder to me of how to live our lives and why we are all here. It also reminds me of the three sweet sisters located at Bond Hill. Talking to them and seeing them in our hallways always makes me smile and reminds me of how blessed we are to work for such a wonderful ministry. I am thankful for their service and for all the sisters who founded our ministry.

“If you have a chance to make people happy, just do it. Sometimes people are struggling silently. Maybe, your act of kindness can make their day.”  
— Mother Teresa

**ANNETTE M. HALLETT**  
*Toledo, OH*

After 19 years in palliative care, I have learned there is nothing more sacred than the time just before death. Those last hours when fate is inevitable, and the next journey awaits. It is during these moments a life review takes place. Whether by the family or the patient, it

always comes. Sometimes we laugh, sometimes we cry, but always the focus is on the loved one. One cannot help but self-reflect silently along with them. During these times I find myself thanking God for putting me in a place to do very precious things. I walk the path with patients and families that start with heartbreak and emptiness, then lead them toward hope and acceptance. The hope that death is peaceful, dignified and as comfortable as modern medicine allows. But also, the hope that spiritual awareness is enlightened, to know that God is with us and waiting with open arms to envelop loved ones in everlasting life.

**JUDITH CARMICHAEL**

*Baltimore, MD*

Lord, bless me to always be humble and kind.

May I bring light and peace to everyone I encounter.

Please harness any attempts at ego or entitlement into praise and honor to you.

Lord, bless me to bring a smile to someone who may feel alone, comfort to those in need of a hand to hold, and may I always be filled with compassion and grace for those in need.

*Amen.*

**SISTER MARY SKOPAL, S.S.J.**

*Baltimore, MD*

“God is our refuge and our strength and our ever present help in times of trouble.” Psalm 46:1

Good and gracious God,

Being “Good Help to Those in Need” has been our mission for more than 100 years. Over that time, you, have called many to embrace the mission to serve others in your name. Bless all who have served this mission, especially the Sisters of Bon Secours.

As we look back with gratitude for your many gifts and blessings through the years, we pray and beseech you, to continue to send generous servants to provide support, encouragement, and help in any way it is needed. Your love for the people impels us to offer nothing less.

We have seen your blessings here for more than 100 years, and now we look with hope and trust to the future.

In your holy name, we pray. *Amen.*

**BON SECOURS HOSPITAL CORK**

**WORDS INSPIRED BY CARE**

We had an elderly male patient in our care earlier in the year. He was so grateful for the love and attention that was paid to him by our entire staff, he decided to write a poem that he shared upon his discharge from the hospital. I believe it speaks to how much our mission, values and ethos are alive and well as we care for people who come to us for care.

*Hands!*

Hands...that smooth a ruffled bed,  
 Hands...that soothe an aching head,  
 Gentle hands...insert a line,  
 Hands...writing...all the time,  
 Hands who take our pulse at night,  
 Whilst asking softly, “Are you alright?”

Hands who allocate our drugs,  
 Hands sanitized...to kill the bugs.  
 Hands supply our daily needs,  
 Witty, laughing...meals on wheels.  
 Hands who Hoover, clean, and dust.  
 Tho’ no need, they say they must!  
 Gentle hands,  
 Caring hands,  
 Angel’s hands.

“Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

—St. Teresa of Avila







## PRAYERS OF FOUNDING CONGREGATIONS



### The Sisters of the Humility of Mary

Marie-Antoinette Potier believed that “to educate a woman is to educate a family.” From the opening of the original school and orphanage in France, through the call and journey to the United States, the powerful strength of Sr. Marie-Antoinette’s humble heart has inspired and led her community, the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, in transforming the world through justice and peace.

We draw on that very inspiration as our ministry continues to change and grow in response to the needs of today. No matter the name, with over 100 years of service to the communities of northeast Ohio, the evolution of the health care ministry of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary has always sought to share in the healing ministry of Jesus and to serve the underserved in the region.

*Lord of all Love, teach us the strength of true humility. May the legacy of Marie-Antoinette Potier and the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, and Mary’s intercession, be for us an unending grace and guiding light as we serve people who are poor, dying, and underserved. Amen.*

# STORIES OF GRACE

## From across the Ministry

### ASHLAND

#### Bringing healing when recovery was not possible

Julie Harless had worked as a nursing assistant for almost two decades and had recently decided to return to school to become an RN at a local community college in Ashland, KY. Julie, however, began to have significant health challenges, and eventually was admitted to Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital where she was diagnosed with stage 4 lung and ovarian cancer. She soon learned that she was not expected to live to her graduation date in May 2020 and preparations were made for Julie to be transferred to a local hospice program. For Julie, this diagnosis was devastating and made her believe that her dream of becoming an RN would never be achieved.

However, the staff of Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital worked with Julie's classmates and family to plan a surprise nursing pinning ceremony. Nursing students traditionally receive a pin to wear on their uniforms when they graduate. As Julie was wheeled from her bedroom to the hospital's board room, staff of the hospital lined the halls of the hospital and cheered for Julie. Family, friends and fellow students were invited to the board room where the ceremony was conducted by faculty of the program.

During the ceremony, there wasn't a dry eye in the room as ACTC faculty and students read heartfelt messages of love and support

for Julie. She was so proud and thankful for the ceremony and the opportunity to call herself an honorary RN. Following the pinning ceremony, those gathered celebrated with cake and punch prepared by the food services of the hospital.

Nursing Supervisor Mimi Jenkins said, "I'm so proud of our profession and the compassionate people we work with every day! I feel we deliver on our mission every day but today made us extra proud! Great job to all who helped support ACTC in getting this done for this sweet woman. It meant so much to her and her family, just WOW!" After the ceremony, Julie was transferred to a local hospice facility and passed away about a week later.

Every day within our ministry, our associates seek to journey with and bring healing to our patients and their families during some of the hardest moments of their lives. While this journey towards healing does not always mean recovery, it does mean helping to bring a sense of hope and God's love along their journey.

#### "This is why we do what we do..."

Who do we care for at our facilities? Not just our patients but those on the margins and vulnerable within our community. An Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital population health social worker, Stephanie Cassidy, received a referral for a community member who had significant health challenges that had been increasing over the past two years. Upon calling the

community member, Stephanie quickly learned that this community member received support from the government due to being developmentally disabled.

Recently, the community member learned that because she was reaching the age of 65, her government assistance was being reduced, increasing the daily challenges she faced in affording her living expenses. With her increased medical complications, she has also had numerous medication co-pays that further reduced her ability to support herself.

The community member also revealed to Stephanie that she had nothing to eat that day, and only half a cookie and some cottage cheese the day before. She lacked transportation to get to local food pantries and relied on her daughter as her sole means of transportation.

Stephanie quickly provided the patient with an emergency food box that her daughter was able to pick up. This was thanks to a recent partnership between Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital and a local food bank to ensure a ready supply of canned goods and other nonperishable foods to serve as an emergency food supply for patients struggling with food insecurity. Staff at our hospital and various outreach clinics are able to access emergency food boxes for patients that may have food insecurity needs.

Additionally, Stephanie taught the community member about a Medicare savings program which she qualified for to reduce her medication costs, identified area resources for the patient and



connected her with a local church's food pantry.

Interestingly, the community member was not a patient of the Our Lady of Bellefonte Hospital, but was referred to our facility by another hospital. In further discussions with the patient's daughter, Stephanie learned that after the patient's hospitalization at another hospital, she had been advised to contact Our Lady of Bellefonte for additional support. She was reportedly told, "That's what Bellefonte does. We don't do those things."

Our Lady of Bellefonte is committed to serving the poor and the vulnerable — not only within our walls, but to further improve the health and well-being of our communities. Part of this forward thinking approach is to address the social determinants of health and try to fill in the gaps that negatively impact the health and well-being of our community; whether it's food insecurity, housing or other ways we can help to close those gaps.



## BALTIMORE

### A career of care

When your career hits the 60-year mark, it's hard to remember all the details. However, Sister Jean Aulenback, CBS, recalls not only her patients' experiences, but also their actual room numbers from decades ago at Bon Secours.

Her eyes sparkle as she colorfully recounts her experiences as night supervisor in the hospital's intensive care unit, like the time a police chase on Fayette Street resulted in a gunshot shattering the window of Room 227. Narrowly missing the occupant and her nurse, the bullet penetrated the wall before eventually being extracted by a guard she jokingly dubbed "Officer Not So Speedy."

Among Sister Jean's most indelible memories are those of Baltimore's racial unrest of the 1960s. One evening, from the hospital's rooftop, she watched as fires

burned to the east around Johns Hopkins Hospital. Bon Secours, however, appeared to remain unscathed. Nevertheless, the entire city was ultimately impacted by a phenomenon known as "white flight," which began as early as the 1950s.

"Racism was rampant in Baltimore," she said. "Far greater than I experienced in other large cities. I still don't understand why."

But her memories are also of joyful times. She recalls a pregnant woman who arrived in the Emergency Department for an

unrelated health crisis. Sister Jean checked in on the patient every 15 minutes, and on one visit, she said, "the baby just popped out!"

While doctors attended to the patient, Sister Jean began baptizing the newborn, "a practice we were taught to undertake when we suspected a baby might not make it." Several years passed, when one day the same patient visited her, now with her 3-year-old son in tow. "She just wanted me to know things had turned out all right," she said.

### Family affair

For four generations, the Cummings family story has been entwined with that of Bon Secours. It began with Joseph Starr Kirby, born in 1897, as a child was treated by visiting Bon Secours nurses in Baltimore who came to his childhood home in Mount Washington. Later in life, Joseph was the co-owner of Kirimo Laundry of Baltimore, which handled all of the hospital's laundry.

Among his seven children — all of whom were born at Bon Secours — is Lily (Lee-Lee) Kirby Cummings, a 1958 graduate of Bon Secours School of Nursing. Over the last 50 years, Lee-Lee has been a Bon Secours employee, volunteer and patient both in Baltimore and at Bon Secours St. Mary's in Richmond.

Lee-Lee says her greatest reward happens almost daily — as she walks the floors of St. Mary's with her husband; as she volunteers at the front desk of the Hospice House; and as she visits the Bon Secours Memorial College of Nursing, where she's an active member of the campaign committee.

Nursing has become a family legacy with two of Lee-Lee's daughters, Kathleen Cummings, BSRN, a NICU nurse, and Peggy Cummings, director of system marketing, both of whom work at Bon Secours. And, one of her granddaughters is just

finishing her first year as a student, too. "The [nursing] pin being used now is an exact replica of the pin from my student days," she says.

"As a family," she says, "we feel privileged to have been part of the 100 years and proud to continue the legacy of the mission."

## CHARLESTON

### More than diet

Every teammate affects our patients' experience, and Debbie Simmons is a great example of this truth.

Debbie works on the Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital team in Charleston as a dietary hostess.

One of the hospital's recent patients was agitated, paranoid, demented and frustrated with nearly everyone who walked in her room.

When she was about to be transferred to a nursing facility, the patient demanded to talk to someone about Debbie.

The patient proceeded to describe everything she loved about Debbie, including how and when she thought Debbie was calm, caring and made her feel important.

Debbie is the kind of teammate who goes above and beyond with every patient. If a patient can't eat certain foods or has particular food preferences, Debbie will not rest until she is sure the patient is satisfied with their meal. Patients recognize her by name on a nearly daily basis.

Debbie is proof that spending a few extra minutes with patients can go a long way to improving their mood and the quality of their hospital stay.

### Our Mission

Our mission at Roper St. Francis Healthcare calls our teammates to provide compassionate care.

Patient Care Technician Caitlin Hunt did that and more during one recent encounter with a patient, who described Caitlin as entering her life and touching her soul.

The patient was in our neurosurgical unit at Bon Secours St. Francis Hospital in Charleston, and the patient wrote of herself, "Caitlin could not have had a worse patient."

The patient suffered from occasional incontinence but the condition was full blown all night and into one morning.

Caitlin was always there, unplugging her fingers and legs, handling the IV and helping her. The patient wrote, "she could not be more pleasant and helped me maintain my dignity. Truly, she never stopped the whole night."

The patient later discovered that her room was not a short distance from the nurses' station, but Caitlin "always had a smile."

After a long night when the patient could tell Caitlin was growing weary, the patient expressed her desire to go home and take a shower. Caitlin's immediate response was "do you want me to bring you towels and soap?"

The patient described Caitlin as an asset to our team. We're grateful to teammates such as Caitlin who exemplify the compassionate care we strive to provide every single patient.

## CINCINNATI

### The power of pet therapy

Marianne Meyers (Pet Therapy Volunteer) and her certified pet therapy dog Ezzmiralda have been with The Jewish Hospital for six years. Throughout the years they have brought comfort, smiles and tears of joy to many patients, families, visitors and staff members. They have also aided in the stress reduction of staff members as they navigate the important and sometimes heartbreaking work that must be done every day in a hospital setting. Marianne and Ezzy also help train all new pet therapy volunteers as they join the team.

Recently, while training a new volunteer in the hospital, Marianne received word that a patient was dying and had chosen to give the gift of organ donation. Marianne and Ezzy immediately responded by visiting with the family and friends of the patient. They spent several hours with everyone, allowing the young patient's children to hug and cry with Ezzy. The adults in the room also visited with Ezzy, expressing their disbelief, sadness, anger and all the emotions that this type of event can bring. As Marianne and Ezzy stood there in silence providing what comfort they could, they both knew at some level that their silence and acceptance of whatever came their way was the best course of action. Afterwards, Marianne explained that Ezzy needed to receive extra care and attention because she experienced some depression due to the nature of the situation. Marianne, also deeply affected by this experience, immediately asked if we could put a callout to all the Pet Therapy Volunteers to ask if anyone, along with her and Ezzy, would be willing to be on call for when these types of events take place.



Three additional volunteers accepted the role. Action and reaffirmed dedication to Marianne's mission as a volunteer is how many people hope to respond, but often is too difficult after such an event and can lead to the volunteer leaving an organization. Not for Marianne, however, and they both gracefully and compassionately return every week, twice a week, to perform their role. They are much loved by everyone they encounter and are truly healers in every sense of the word.

### The value of dignity

The definition of dignity is "the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect" and it's easy to see why dignity, which is very closely tied to sacredness of life, is among Mercy Health West Hospital's values.

I recently had the opportunity to witness a team of remarkable people honor the life of a man in a unique and moving way and the impact that event has had on me, the staff and the patient's family and friends illustrates the value of dignity.

The Donor Honor Walk is something that LifeCenter, which coordinates organ and tissue donations, introduced to Mercy Health — West Hospital at the beginning of the year as a way to build a culture of donation support and to bring awareness to organ and tissue donation.

There was a particular patient who presented us with a perfect opportunity to offer a Donor Honor Walk. We first discussed the idea with the family the day before organ donation and they agreed it was something in which they would like to participate. The day of donation, Sandi Medley (ICU Manager), LifeCenter and I coordinated the Donor Honor Walk. Sandi notified the leadership team at West Hospital the time the walk would occur and then texted managers and supervisors when the time was confirmed to check on the availability of staff to attend. I worked with the family to prepare them for the walk. At approximately 9 p.m., Sandi assembled 150-plus family members, friends and staff members. They lined the hallway leading to the operating room. We even had nurse managers come back in after going home for the day to participate in the walk.

I walked with the donor and the donor's family through the hallway. The family was ever so grateful to have had this moment to honor their loved one's life. We had over 30 staff members from the floor staff to ED staff and OR staff take time out of their busy shift to pay respects to our patient and his family.

This truly was an AMAZING event! A divine appointment. I am so honored to work for an organization that values the sacredness of life. I am so proud of how all our staff pulled together for such a



sacred moment. The family was so appreciative of our care and their Mercy West “family.”

## GREENVILLE

### Babies and wedding gowns

Perhaps nothing is more paralyzing in life than the loss of a loved one and the period of loss that follows. Grief has almost a yearning quality. Our heart mourns in pain while at the same time our mind tries to comprehend, in a vain attempt to readjust to this new reality — Life without!

While this situation is one of the most difficult for us to process, it is always compounded when the grief is immersed around loss at the beginning of life. This critical impact comes at a time when we are filled with anticipatory joy at the arrival of a child. Our families are celebrating, our friends are ecstatic and our homes are filled with baby treasures. Then disaster strikes...and we are left with a meaningless void in our being. We are submerged in the loss of possibilities, the destruction of dreams and the pain of what could have been. Where is God when the baby we hold in our arms is lifeless?

There's an ancient Gaelic saying that translates to: “Be kind to the people God puts in our lives...one day God will want them back.” Time is a human construct and God is timeless. But God put these mothers and babies in our lives. What do we do?

At Bon Secours St. Francis, Greenville, Chaplain Cindy dedicates her time to families who lose children in-utero or at birth. While there is a practice which provides mementos such as footprints and memory boxes to each family, she saw an opportunity to do more. To honor the dignity of this situation, Chaplain Cindy employs a prayerful response

in both word and action. In addition to blessing and praying for the child, Cindy has also introduced the Tiny Touches program.

In 2019, she sent a request to all associates in our market to donate their wedding dresses. She lined up community seamstresses who used the material from the dresses to create tiny, beautiful silk gowns. Now whenever a mother requests to see her baby, we can present the child in a beautiful gown. While this might seem like a small task, this selfless act of kindness is a visible witness of God's love and presence even at a time of great loss. Thank you, Chaplain Cindy, for all you do for God's people and for living our Mission and Ministry.

### Sr. Rosa's good help

The fundamental component of our healing ministry is God's intense love for God's people radiating throughout our organization. This love manifests itself in various forms, from the kind smile of a volunteer to the compassionate care from our nurses. One patient, Enrique, experienced this love during his recent hospital stay. Enrique was born in Mexico and lives in Texas with his wife Maria and their three children. He holds two jobs, a painter by day and dishwasher at night, and Maria works in environmental services for a local hotel. Enrique is very proud of his children, and is especially delighted that his eldest son Oscar excelled in soccer. He was assured by Oscar's coaches that, even at 12 years of age, his talent would qualify him for a full university scholarship.

Earlier this year, Enrique loaded his family into their station wagon to come to Greenville, SC to watch Oscar play in a soccer tournament. They were particularly excited with this trip as many of the major universities would have scouts present to review the games. It

was a long drive and Maria made sandwiches for the trip. It was on the sideline at the first game that Enrique collapsed and was brought to Bon Secours.

Monday morning began like most Mondays for Sr. Rosa, a Peruvian Bon Secours sister working in St. Francis downtown, with a visit to our Chapel. It was there she met Maria for the first time, who was sitting in the Chapel sobbing. Comforting Maria, Sr. Rosa quickly discovered the family's predicament. Enrique was in our ICU, and the family spent their returning gas money to spend a night in a local hotel. They had no food or money, and spent the previous night sleeping in their car in the parking lot. Sr. Rosa immediately intervened to bring Maria, Oscar and his two younger sisters to the cafeteria to feed them. With assistance from the Mission department, Sr. Rosa arranged for extended stay accommodations. She rallied associates to bring clothing and supplies for the family. She arranged for Maria's father to come from Texas for support, and ensured that all compassionate resources were available to help this vulnerable family. Ultimately, Enrique recovered and went home with his family. The family might forget the score of Oscar's soccer game...but they'll never forget the love shown to them by our selfless Sr. Rosa.

## HAMPTON ROADS

### The Christmas tree

We had over 300 community residents, families and volunteers including a new community partner attend our annual Christmas at the Garden event. From free pictures with Santa to popcorn, apple cider, cookies, hot chocolate and crafts

for the kids, it was a great community event.

I want to tell you a story about an 8-year-old little boy. A volunteer was standing by the little boy when the door prize number was called. He told her, "I hope I win, we've never had a Christmas tree." Well, yes, he won. Volunteers took the tree to his home and immediately came back to me with concerns. He had no socks on, his shoes were falling off his feet, he lives in a one bedroom home with six other family members and had nothing to decorate the tree with. To my surprise, a community volunteer immediately left and came back with a Christmas tree stand, ornaments and lights, and we cut down some of the decorations we had in the garden. Three of us went down to see if it was okay with his mom that he won the tree. I also wanted to determine if there was any way we could assist them. Mom wasn't feeling well so we left the items and I called in Pastor Rodney with The Storehouse. We have now been able to set them up with food from The Storehouse along with medical care with the Care A Van as well as being able to provide them with Christmas from donations from the community itself (which is huge), along with some help from Healthy Communities. It may be one story, but it's an overall community success. Over the last year, I have seen this community improve its health, increase in the number of businesses coming into the area, demolish rundown buildings and create new housing. What a blessing to the mission of Bon Secours.

### Ministry in action: Transformation of care and making a difference in the life of one young man in your community

St. Francis Nursing Care Center (SFNC) recognized the need for a specialized electric wheelchair for an adult SFNC resident who has suffered from cerebral palsy since birth.

Since he is fairly young and active, he has worn out his electric wheelchair and was in desperate need of a new wheelchair if he hoped to maintain his mobility throughout the nursing care center. The need for a new electric wheelchair was brought to the attention of our Director of Spiritual Care by the members of the

Catholic Community who attend Mass at SFNC.

Gilbert's electric wheelchair is the only way he is able to move independently around the center and participate in activities. He is totally dependent on staff and volunteers when his current wheelchair is not working. The wheelchair is difficult to move manually when not functioning and forces him to remain in one place until someone comes to get him. The Catholic Mass participants make every effort to bring him to Mass when staff is not available. But the wheelchair is difficult to move for the age group attending Mass.

"At present, he has Medicaid and for Medicaid to do what is known as a MAP adjustment, it would take approximately 1-2 years to collect all of his patient pay that would



in essence pay for the wheelchair. I personally do not feel that his current wheelchair will last that long,” said Tammy Bouchard, SFNC Rehab Manager.

To purchase a new electric wheelchair for him would cost \$5,000. We were fortunate to use \$2,500 from matching grant money in our foundation combined with a second grant of \$2,500 from the SFNC Foundation. The SFNC Catholic Community banded together to raise private donations to replenish the grant from the SFNC foundation as well. A number of staff members from SFNC have made contributions toward the purchase of the chair. We are happy to report that he has his new electric wheelchair and is completely mobile thanks to the Good Help of Bon Secours.

## HUDSON VALLEY

### A wedding to remember

Joanne had heroically battled pancreatic cancer. During her last admission to Bon Secours Community Hospital, Joanne told the ICU staff she wanted to live to see her niece, Jenna, get married. Joanne and her sister, Mary, raised Jenna. Jenna and her fiancé chose a November 2020 wedding date but moved it to November 2019 when Aunt Jo became sick. It was evident Joanne was rapidly declining. Her sister had been by her side the entire stay, during which Joanne agreed upon inpatient hospice. Mary and Jenna decided to move the wedding date again. Wheels were turning. Jenna and her fiancé flew from their home in California to Port Jervis, New York. They obtained a wedding license and secured a judge for the Saturday nuptials. Meanwhile, Joanne was moved to the Medical-Surgical/ Telemetry unit and discussions

took place to ensure that Joanne could attend the chapel wedding in a comfortable and safe manner. The nursing staff, along with the respiratory therapists, discussed options on how to transport Joanne to the chapel with her hi-flow oxygen and pain management equipment. Should she be transported in the bed, on a stretcher or in a wheelchair? Should the ceremony be held at Joanne’s bedside? Will there be enough room for the equipment? Will there be enough room for family and friends? Every situation was thoroughly discussed and a decision was agreed upon. Two days later the ceremony was scheduled. One of the unit nurses, Kim, went to the local florist and purchased Joanne a bouquet of white flowers for the occasion. Her family provided her a lovely scarf to cover her head and shoulders. Jenna was able to get dressed in Joanne’s room accompanied with her mother, the matron of honor, and other family members. Jenna’s dress was held together with tape and pins as the final fitting had not been completed. The thirty plus family members were excited that Joanne would be part of this special day for her “child.” A recliner chair was chosen. A bipap was in place. Renae, her nurse, medicated her before heading to the chapel, losing the IV poles. The respiratory therapist, Ellie, had extra oxygen tanks camouflaged in the chapel. The nursing assistant, Katherine, was nearby. Joanne was ready. The ceremony was lovely. There was not a dry eye in the house. Although emotions were mixed with happiness and sorrow, love was felt by all. After hugs and countless pictures, Allison, Assistant Director of Food and Nutrition, prepared a beautiful reception with pseudo-champagne and a home-made wedding cake. Joanne was able to participate in the reception before retiring to her room. The family, along with

the Bon Secours staff, was in awe that this all took place within two days. The family said they could not believe how wonderful it was without the stress of planning a big wedding. The family and friends could not have been more expressive of their gratitude for this day. Although only a few staff members are mentioned, it took a team to pull this off. Joanne peacefully passed away two days later. Bon Secours Community Hospital exemplifies “Good Help to Those in Need.” It is not only about caring for the sick and dying, it is about living life to the fullest. It is about compassion and love. Bon Secours Community Hospital celebrates life!

### The power of working together to serve those in need in our community

The Bon Secours Medical Group Ambulatory Care Team and the Community Outreach Provider Program routinely collaborate to coordinate care for the community served by Good Samaritan Hospital.

One case in particular involved a 48-year-old man who had been over-using the emergency department. “Dave” had a history of mental illness, paranoia, stroke, seizures and was homeless. He had been to the ED at Good Samaritan 15 times in 5 months and had a non-healing infection due to his social barriers and poor health literacy and routinely declined admission to the hospital. Our teams were asked to try to assist this patient with resources to decrease his ED utilization and find him appropriate care.

We were able to reach Dave by phone sporadically at first, having to gain his trust. His support system consisted of a gentleman who literally interacted with Dave once outside a Walmart when he brought him some food and clothing. This





person became the only one Dave would trust or listen to. Through continued outreaches to Dave “just to check in on him,” Dave eventually allowed us to contact this “Good Samaritan” to review his medications and determine what other barriers there were for this patient, as well as learning the most effective way to work with him.

Eventually we gained Dave’s trust enough that he would allow us to work with him to get housing. In order to do this, we had to physically see him to do an assessment to fill out the necessary paperwork. We recommended he come to the hospital so we could meet him there, but he refused, finally agreeing to meet us outside the Walmart he frequented.

It was at this meeting where we bought him coffee and spent time sitting on the bench listening to him tell his story that we fully gained his trust. We collected the information we needed to submit the paperwork for his housing but more importantly, he finally accepted admission to the hospital to get the necessary treatment he needed for his infection, blood

pressure and mental health issues. He had a 7-day stay in the hospital and was subsequently discharged to a rehab facility and adult home, without further visits to our ED.

## LIMA

### St Rita’s homecare lending help to the Cooper family

In the early hours of Jan. 22, 2019, James Cooper and his family were rudely awakened to a smoke-filled house. “By the time I opened my eyes everything was black already,” said James. His wife, Dina, woke up to his screams.

“It was just a terrible ordeal,” said James. “It was like living through a nightmare.”

They were able to get their two daughters, Breesyn, 5, and Ardyn, 1, out quickly because they were already in the room with them. But Dina had to go upstairs to get their son, Davyn, 4. When Davyn came out without his mother, James had to act quickly. Without his prosthetic leg, which was lost to the fire, he

crawled upstairs to get his wife out, the adrenaline pushing him on. “There was just no time,” said James. “There was absolutely no time to grab anything. We just reacted at that point, there’s no thinking about it, there’s just do.”

Their house was a total loss, estimating around \$200,000 lost in damage and possessions.

Becky Hauserman, who is the Emergency Program Coordinator at Mercy Health — St Rita’s as well as working for the Red Cross, contacted Donna Cady, Director of Mercy Health Home Medical, Lima. Becky asked if the Red Cross could rent a wheelchair for James to use since his prosthetic leg and wheelchair were lost in the home fire. A rental wheelchair was prepared and donated for James to use until his chair or leg could be replaced.

With the patient’s permission, Donna Cady asked the Red Cross if the Homecare departments could help in any other way. The family was renting their home and found themselves in a very difficult situation. The next day, Home Medical staff anonymously provided an immediate care package to be delivered to Dina’s hospital room so the family could have a change of clothes, including shoes for the children, toothbrushes, blankets and a stuffed animal for each child.

All Homecare departments, which include Home Medical, Home Infusion, Home Health and Hospice came together and within a few short days were able to deliver a van full of clothing, food, gift cards, toiletries and toys to the family. The children were so excited as they had just lost everything brought by Santa just a few weeks before. The Home Medical department arranged for delivery of the items and with friends and family present, they helped carry in box after box of items to help the family begin to rebuild their lives. A cash donation was also given to help with the cost

of deductibles for the prosthetic replacement. The staff at Mercy Health Home Medical, Home Infusion, Home Health and Hospice have sprung into action many times for families in need throughout the community. This is one of many examples of our mission at work!

### Providing safety and care

In the summer of 2019, we received a request from an emergency room to consider accepting a patient. The emergency room was approximately three hours away. We reviewed the case with our psychiatrist who recommended finding placement closer to the ER location. After several hours, the patient presented at our door per private vehicle to be admitted. It was explained that our psychiatrist had not accepted the patient. It was obvious to staff this patient was in a mental health crisis. Our psychiatrist was notified again and an order to admit on 4E, our inpatient behavioral health unit, was obtained.

This patient was a 20-year-old female who was staying in a safe shelter for battered and sexually abused women. She had been rescued as a sex trafficking victim, was not from Ohio and had no family or support. It was told to us that upon discharge she could return to the safe shelter.

This patient was with us for 8 days and responded well to treatment in a healing and nonjudgmental atmosphere. When it came time to notify the safe shelter that the patient would be returning, we were told she could not return, she was “too high maintenance” for them. The patient wanted to return because she had personal belongings at the shelter, saying “everything I have in the world is there.” We worked very hard with the shelter’s director and they still refused to accept this patient back.

This really put the staff in an ethical dilemma, knowing the patient had a right to go where she wanted, that she was concerned she would not get her personal belongings, but also knowing they were going to turn her to the street where she could be retraumatized. Staff just could not see sending her across the state knowing she would be homeless and vulnerable. With much support and discussion, the patient agreed to talk with someone locally about her options in our community. Our social worker reached out to crime victim services who sent three compassionate, kind ladies to talk with our patient. They assured her they could place her in a safe house and retrieve her personal belongings from the shelter. She was also set up with local outpatient mental health care.

The patient agreed to this new plan and was discharged successfully to a safe, understanding home with excellent psychiatric follow up. Our social worker, Lauren Dicke, went above and beyond to work out a plan that was the best for this young lady. She demonstrated compassionate ministry, recognizing the worth and dignity of this woman, and journeyed with her to find a next step that would

continue to provide healing. She demonstrated mercy, kindness and being of good help in a time of great need. Truly our mission coming to life!

## LORAIN

### An example of selfless care

The way we treat our patients is always an extension of our mission and a reflection on the legacy of our founding sisters, demonstrated in their example of selfless care. As a hospital supervisor, Chris Conger, RN, critically thinks throughout his days at the Mercy Health — Lorain Hospital.

One day in the Emergency Room there was a minor receiving care. This patient was struggling with anxiety, anger and depression. Seeing that additional support was needed, Chris came up with a creative idea — the power of presence. He was able to get a football from his car and went to spend time with the patient. It was his time, the compassion that Chris showed, and above all his presence, that showed respect for the human dignity of our patient. During this time, Chris talked with him and took the time to understand what was





## PRAYERS OF FOUNDING CONGREGATIONS



### The Sisters of Mercy

Aware of the needs of so many in her home of Dublin, Ireland and with a particular love for women and children, Catherine McAuley was inspired to give of herself, including her economic means, that the poor, the needy, the uneducated, and the underserved would receive compassionate care. Unlike other religious congregations of her time, Catherine went to the poor

and underserved, outreach that inspired others to refer to the sisters as the Walking Sisters. We remember our foundress and the origin of the Sisters of Mercy and their mission to share the compassion of Jesus with the most vulnerable among them. We commit ourselves to continue in their footsteps that the needy of our day may continue to experience the compassion of Jesus through us.

*God of compassion and mercy, throughout his public ministry your Son Jesus proclaimed and embodied the good news of your mercy and love. Together, we celebrate the dream of Catherine McAuley whose life of care and concern for the most vulnerable around her continues to inspire us as we seek to embody in our own lives and communities her example of selfless service. Strengthen us in our efforts to faithfully and courageously pursue the mission you have entrusted to us. Fill us with your love that we might be true witnesses of your mercy and compassion. Amen.*



on his mind. This child was alone and at one point, Chris held the youth in his arms rocking him, trying to console his fears and anxieties. All of Chris's actions lessened his anxiety and allowed our nurses to provide the care the patient needed. His simple act of kindness and compassion is something that our foundresses would have done. For a young man alone, they would have taken him in their arms to provide a sense of safety, comfort and care. Because of Chris' thoughtfulness and extension of our mission and values, he was selected as our Caring Hands Winner of the year.

## Helping Hand Dignity Kits

Our Emergency Room at the Mercy Health — Lorain Hospital cares for the needs of many people from all walks of life and all different living conditions. We frequently care for the needs of patients who are homeless. Homeless patients do not always have access to resources to meet their hygiene needs.

After seeing multiple patients with the same issues, Heather took it upon herself to create Helping Hand Dignity Kits. She purchased all the supplies for the starter kits that contain the essentials: toothbrush; toothpaste; deodorant; shampoo & conditioner; cleansing wipes; baby wipes; gum and candy; waterproof bag; socks; Chapstick and a comb. All Helping Hands Dignity Kits are available in the Emergency Room for our patients.

While Heather was developing the kits, she also requested winter items such as: gloves; hats; sweatpants; and sweatshirts. Heather's leadership and generosity to care for the needs of our patients is admirable.

She is living in the spirit of the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and continuing their legacy of caring for the needs of all, especially the poor, sick, and underserved.

# PADUCAH

## A baptism

The role I serve as hospice chaplain gives me the opportunity to visit a patient that has been newly diagnosed with a terminal illness. As the first hospice representative to meet with the patient, I have a significant opportunity to minister to patients and to help set the tone for their future care. One patient particularly comes to mind, when I think about the opportunity I have to serve.

I entered a patient's room having just received the hospice consult from the physician. The patient had received all the treatments available to him and he was being discharged home with hospice care. Upon entering the room and introducing myself, the patient said "The first thing I want to do is be baptized." He continued to explain how he had been raised in church, had been saved but was never baptized. For years he had fallen away from the church. He said he wanted to rededicate his life to God and be baptized.

After discovering he has no minister or church connection in this area, I assured the patient that I would be able to assist him. We had an in-depth discussion about his faith and what it means to rededicate one's life. We then joined together with his wife and 14-year-old son for a prayer of rededication. Afterward the patient's wife asked if I would mind coming back in about an hour for the baptism.

Upon my return, when I entered the room, I hardly had room to stand. The patient's wife had called their family to tell them the news and they all insisted on being a part of the service. Upon the conclusion of the service, and when the final prayer was said, there were many tears shed and many hugs given to the patient and his wife.

What a wonderful opportunity to see God working in a patient's life. Thank you for the support you provide that makes opportunities like this happen on almost a daily basis.

## Loss leads to giving to others

In February of this year, my husband Clay and I were very excited to find out we were expecting our first baby. We were anticipating all the things new parents do — a nursery, ultrasounds and firsts of everything. We were devastated when we miscarried in April. As we both worked through the emotions of no longer having our baby, I realized the lack of support and resources available at the time of loss, such as in the emergency room or doctor's office.

After much thought and the need to "do something," I decided that what I did to help me cope may help others. I had a keepsake box and I put all the things that meant something to Clay, me and the baby inside. They were things I could revisit, touch and think about. The box included our ultrasound pictures, outfits and cards that we had received. I knew this was healing to me and I felt led to share this with others who had miscarried.

I reached out to our Foundation President and Mission Director, shared our story and idea and asked for help to implement this idea. I was elated that they agreed this was a worthy cause and a need which had been missed.

We now provide a Forget Me Not Keepsake box to parents which they may personalize with their own story. It includes items that I found helpful such as a keepsake necklace donated by an organization that creates memorial jewelry for miscarriage, tissues, a journal, a prayer card, a list of resources and the story of why the Forget Me Not Keepsake boxes were created.

Miscarriage can be looked at as a taboo subject many are afraid to talk about. That can make going through a miscarriage a very lonely place. I hope that in sharing our story it can help to bring awareness and support to women and families who have been through miscarriage.

I often reflect on this: “The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.” Psalm 34: 18-19.

## RICHMOND

### Short pump emergency center anniversary

In September of 2018, Bon Secours St. Mary’s Hospital opened a free-standing Emergency Department (ED) in the Short Pump, VA community. This was an effort to expand the reach of Catholic health care in the Richmond, VA market and serve a greater population. The new ED is located so that it’s easily accessible by ambulance and by those who live nearby. We believe that serving this community outside the more densely populated portions of the greater Richmond market has saved lives and improved access to our health care services. The story below is just one example of how our presence in the Short Pump community has saved lives and offered patients access to our holistic and faith-based care.

Dennis lives in Short Pump, VA just a few miles from our newly opened Short Pump Medical Center. On July 20, 2019, Dennis was experiencing chest pain while at home and asked his son to drive him to an emergency room. He remembered that the new Bon Secours ER had opened so he asked his son to take him to the Short Pump Medical Center Emergency Room. He

arrived complaining of chest pain and an EKG/tests were conducted that immediately revealed a STEMI/heart attack. The on-site lab arranged for an immediate lights and sirens transport to St. Mary’s Hospital. When the transport arrived at 10:15 a.m., Dennis’ heart suddenly stopped. The team at St. Mary’s began measures to resuscitate him and his pulse was restored within 6 minutes. He was then intubated by an ED doctor and transported immediately to the St. Mary’s Cath Lab to better understand his condition. He had a 99% occlusion/blockage of the left anterior descending artery (AKA the widow maker). Amazingly, Dennis was discharged from St. Mary’s Hospital on July 26 with no deficits, ambulatory and alert!

On September 16, 2019, the Bon Secours Short Pump Emergency Center celebrated its first year anniversary. In the past year, the ED has served more than 9,700 patients (1,326 children), admitted 852 patients, served 1,518 EMS squads, and educated more than 500 guests at their inaugural Public Safety Day! But what really defines the department’s commitment to quality medical care is Dennis’ amazing story. Dennis sent the following message after the anniversary event: “What an incredible day this was for me. I was truly honored and humbled by the invitation to participate at the one year celebration event for the Short Pump Emergency Department. To meet Dr. Lamb was incredible and my feelings are difficult to put into words. He saved my life. I have been truly blessed by God and have been given a second chance at life. Thank you.” Dennis will be forever connected to our organization.

Without this improved access to the new ED, Dennis’ experience would have been much different. If he had to drive further, more time would have been lost and his outcome

would likely have been vastly worse. Our new center saved time and more importantly, Dennis’ life.

### A family connection

Alison Hudson has built a strong familiarity with Bon Secours pediatric programs. She says, “I never imagined our family would have been faced with such a complex medical journey, but we are so blessed to have the compassion and expertise of the Bon Secours family to be our guide.” She recognizes that donor support brings the advanced medical care, continuing education of the physicians and nurses and the comforting resources they’ve discovered along the way. Her oldest twins, Caroline and Riley are 11 and both have cerebral palsy. Her younger twins, Maggie and Abby, are six. All four received care in the St. Mary’s NICU and there have been a few visits to the pediatric emergency department for various medical scares. In the last year, Caroline worked with Bon Secours gastroenterology to start a new diet that has allowed her to be more alert and gain weight. Also, Caroline and Riley both participate in intensive therapy at Richmond Hope Therapy Center. Alison and her husband Craig have several choices for their children’s medical care, and they choose Bon Secours. That says a lot, considering they drive an hour and a half from their home to the various Bon Secours facilities. Alison admits life is crazy with four kids and the array of farm animals, but adds, “In these 11 years, there’s always been someone at Bon Secours who can take care of what we need.” Their Bon Secours pediatric care journey continues, and many families will find themselves also needing medical care for their child. Your continued support brings the Hudson’s and other families’ answers and comfort.

## SPRINGFIELD

### Love in the face of a terminal diagnosis

Last June, Scott Robbins learned that he had colon cancer. What was already a frightening diagnosis took a turn for the worse when he entered Mercy Health — Springfield Regional Medical Center on April 10 to have surgery for a bowel obstruction related to his cancer diagnosis. Unfortunately, his surgical team found that Scott's cancer had worsened, and he was terminal.

This was an unexpected twist that neither Scott, 52, nor Karol Wolfe, 57, his partner of 11 years, had anticipated.

"We always think there's tomorrow," shared Karol, who proposed to Scott in the intensive care unit of the hospital. Scott said yes.

He said, "I always wanted to marry you and was contemplating it but didn't want to be rejected."

"We're procrastinators. We should've done it a while back," shared Karol.

Upon hearing of the engagement, ICU Nurse Manager Kristy Elrod and her team swung into action. "With everyone's help, we were able to get the marriage license and they were married at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, in the hospital chapel."

Scott and Karol wed surrounded by family, friends and Scott's care team.

Together, Scott and Karol have four children. "They are very happy for us," Karol said.

The nurses, doctors and staff on the unit signed cards for the couple and one team member even brought them a wedding cake to enjoy.

Following the ceremony, Scott was moved to a room decorated especially to give it a honeymoon atmosphere. "The people on the ICU unit made everything wonderful," said Karol. "They made this special for us. Kudos to them."

"It was amazing to see everyone work together to help make the day special for Scott and Karol," said Kristy.

Scott was discharged shortly after to receive hospice care at home in Springfield.

### A vehicle of birth

Urbana resident Heidi Tuttle and her mother had no time to get to Springfield because her contractions had become so intense, they were nearly unbearable.

"We got in the car, and I knew right off-the-bat we weren't going to make it to Springfield," Heidi recalled. Her mother said, "All right. We'll go to Urbana. You know there's a doctor

there and we know it's a hospital."

The problem: Mercy Health — Urbana Hospital has no obstetrics department. And, for security reasons, the doors of the facility stay locked.

Knowing baby Faith would be arriving any minute as Heidi's third child, her mother knocked loudly on the doors while Heidi remained in the van, crying with intensity as each contraction escalated. Her water had broken.

"I was in a lot of pain," she recalled. "It was worse than the other two (children)."

At this same moment, Tricia Blanken, a registered nurse who just happened to be delivering blood samples to the hospital that day, arrived on the scene. When she happened upon the situation, she said, "My intention was to help Heidi and her mother into the hospital."

Baby Faith was having none of that.

"Heidi went into the next contraction and said, 'No, I'm going to have this baby right now,'" Blanken said. She literally caught the baby seconds later and wrapped her in her own coat and a blanket from the van.

"I've been a nurse for 18 years. I've never delivered a baby by myself or in a van for that matter," Blanken said. "I was able to catch her by the grace of God right in that moment, which was so exciting. So, at that point, I was screaming as well."

Heidi said she'll be forever grateful to Tricia and Urbana Hospital.

"If it wasn't for Tricia, I don't know what we would have done. It's still crazy to me that I gave birth in a vehicle," she said. "It's not something I imagined."

"Faith is perfect. She's such a great baby," Heidi shared.





## ST. PETERSBURG

### Bringing warmth and light to hearts and lives

What do you get when you mix a lady from England, the color orange, a love of hats and a compassionate spirit? Carol Feller, Social Worker on St. Dominic's Wing at Maria Manor. Carol exemplifies the core values of Bon Secours in the many ways she offers warmth, kindness, hope and peace to both residents and staff alike. It's no wonder her favorite color is orange because Carol's gentle, giving spirit shines like the sun and is echoed in how she is the compassionate heart of Jesus.

Known for her many wonderful and whimsical hats she wears each day, Carol celebrates life with its ups and downs by offering her unique brand of hope and healing. Carol admits healing does not always happen

the way we hope or pray. However, God's grace is evident in the stories of those she serves.

A diehard fan of the University of Tennessee Lady Volunteers basketball team, it is their former coach Pat Summitt who serves as Carol's inspiration. While at the height of her illustrious career and recognized as the finest female college coach, Summitt was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. She bravely shared with the world her diagnosis and continued to serve her students both on and off the court. Carol takes Summitt's message to heart, refusing to give up on anyone because to Carol, God lives in everyone. In her own way, Carol is a loving, guiding coach, leading others peacefully in the game of life. She annually raises money for those with Alzheimer's by taking part in walks and other events. Carol's bright, orange heart is filled with love for her residents

which shows in how she talks with them, not to them. She sees the face of God in those she is called to serve each and every day.

Sitting in Carol's office with its brightly painted orange walls and mixture of photos of her beloved father, cherished grandchildren and role model Pat Summitt, Carol wears a lovely blue hat similar to one worn by Princess Kate. In her warm smile and engaging heart, childlike love of life and immeasurable energy, Carol is indeed a gift from God. A gift to all of us — whether resident, family member or staff — Carol's gracious heart and giving spirit are as evident as the warmth of her smile or the love in her heart.

Indeed, we tip our hat to Carol Feller, thanking her for the countless ways she warms and brightens our lives and hearts with her own unique style of giving and grace.



## Glenda and the little way

Glenda is a ray of sunshine, kindness and humble dedication to the elderly residents of Maria Manor. Her work as a housekeeper is difficult, but rewarding. Residents and her fellow associates praised her work ethic and her character. Little did they know that every day was a struggle and every movement was filled with pain. Glenda began experiencing chronic pain four years ago, but she did not allow it to impact her demeanor or the care with which she pursued her ministry. After visiting several doctors, she was treated for sciatica and tested to see if she had arthritis. All the while she continued doing her work with a smile and attention to detail, although being a housekeeper entailed a great deal of bending, stopping, pushing, pulling and a large amount of walking. Finally, in January of 2019, the source of her chronic pain was diagnosed: Glenda needed a full hip replacement. Even after this Glenda continued to work her physically demanding job and prepare physically, psychologically and financially for being out for a considerable post-op period of time. Glenda worked up until the day before her surgery, doing her job without complaint and with a smile on her face. As soon as she was medically cleared, Glenda returned to continue her ministry at Maria Manor with her trademark warmth and dedication.

## TOLEDO

### Being the recipient

I was rounding on our Med/Surg unit and one of the nurses asked that I visit Bob. She explained that Bob did not have any issues and was soon to be discharged back to the local MRDD home that is his long-

time residence. She simply said, you have to meet him. The late morning sun was streaming in through the window in his room illuminating everything. Bob was sitting up in bed with his caregiver sitting in a chair next to the head of his bed. I introduced myself and could see that Bob had his lunch on the tray table in front of him and he was ready to dig in. I asked what he was having for lunch and his face lit up brighter than the sunshine streaming in. "I'm having a hamburger for lunch and I LOVE hamburgers!" He was so excited. I told him that I did not want to get in between him and his lunch but asked if he wanted to pray before I left. His reaction was amazing. I thought his face lit up when he talked about his hamburger. The insulated lid went back on to his lunch plate and he was radiant! He started to bounce up and down on the bed in joy with the mention of prayer together. He rubbed his hands together. Eventually he bowed his head. I began a prayer of gratitude for Bob's healing and for the gift of God that he is. We thanked God for his caregivers and for everyone who cared for him while he was hospitalized. We offered thanks for his family at the home and a blessing for the joy of this time together.

As I left the room, I told Bob that I would remember him and keep him in my prayers. I was two steps outside his room when Bob called me back in. He proclaimed, "I'll keep you in my prayers too!" Within the time it took me to walk two more steps outside of Bob's room it struck that I had received the better end of this deal of prayer. Make no mistake, I love to pray. But I don't know that I have ever come close to experiencing that level of joy and enthusiasm at prayer. If Bob even sent a small prayer to God for me, he has blessed me more than I could ever return to him. Bob's

joy at prayer is now woven into my driest times and brings sunshine into every prayer.

### Serving those who have served

Early in 2019, I met a patient and his family in the ICU at Mercy Health — Tiffin Hospital. Working as the palliative care nurse, I learned that the patient had been very agitated and combative and was not progressing in his health status. While talking with the family, I learned that their family member was a World War II veteran and served in Japan. Upon further discussion it was determined that he may be re-experiencing some of his combat experiences during this time. The patient was receiving medications to help with his agitation and combativeness.

In late 2018 I also was part of the patient care team for two other WWII veterans who expired in inpatient hospice within our facility. They also experienced agitation and combativeness during the dying process. Recognizing the possible military connection with this other patient, reassurance was given to the family. The family discussed their loved one's service and how proud he was to have served. After discussion with the physician, the patient was transferred to inpatient hospice. He passed away comfortably a few days later.

Tiffin and Willard Hospitals have made it a priority to honor our patients who also served in the Armed Forces. We have a flag pinning ceremony in which the patient receives a flag pin and a thank you from the employees of our hospitals. We also perform a flag ceremony for our Veteran patients who die within our hospital. When this patient died, a flag ceremony was arranged and performed for the family.

I received a note of thanks from the family. The card said, "The family wanted to thank you for that beautiful military ceremony after my father passed. We were so surprised, and it really touched our hearts. I have told so many people about it and I hope more hospitals do this in the future. Our veterans deserve recognition. I think my Dad was looking down and smiling. He was a very proud veteran."

## VIRGINIA BEACH

### A hospital's angel of healing

Archangel Raphael is designated as the Angel of Healing for our world. It is my experience that this powerful celestial being has angelic helpers assigned as healing angels in hospitals. My hospital has such an angel.

Sentara Princess Anne Hospital (SPAH) is co-owned by two health care systems: Bon Secours (faith based) and Sentara (non-faith based). As the Director of Mission in a non-faith based hospital, I seek a variety of ways to source spirituality into the daily lives of patients, families and staff. For the past several years I have become aware of an angelic presence of healing throughout the hospital; a presence that heals in many and varied ways. This healing can encompass many areas of a person's being: physical, emotional and spiritual. Many times I leave our healing angel at the bedside of a patient.

John was angry and frustrated at the nurses; angry and frustrated at the MRI wait times; angry and frustrated at being in a hospital; and angry and frustrated at being sick. As I entered the ICU room, John's wrath exploded. I could tell from his appearance that he was very ill. I asked for everyone to leave the room. Then, we talked. While John's story was specific to him, it was definitive of many Vietnam veterans.

As an Army Ranger who spent 4 years in the country, his experiences were intense and exhaustive. Haunting nightmares, anxiety and uneasiness in many situations compounded his unresolved PTSD issues. A lot of suffering over a lot of years.

Every day I leave our hospital's angel of healing with a specific patient, explaining how our special angel can heal in the way that is most needed emotionally, spiritually or physically. Today, John was that patient with the greatest and most complicated healing need. John would receive the exclusivity of our angel. I explained to John that he would have the angel of healing for one day, then return the angel back to the hospital for another patient. He very quietly and thoughtfully accepted my proposal. I stated that I would check on him the next day.

That Wednesday was sunny and chilly. I recall entering John's room and seeing him sitting on the bed, fully dressed, with a grin on his face. Perplexed, I asked him where he was going. John was being discharged home! He most certainly was not the individual that I had seen the day before. After congratulating him I reminded him of the angel of healing.

I have left our angel of healing with many patients and families. No one has ever turned down the angel. One day a hospital volunteer showed a portrait of an angel that her daughter had painted. I instantly knew that painting depicted our hospital's angel of healing. As a result of conferring with the hospital's senior leadership team, the artist was commissioned to paint a 30x48 acrylic portrait that was presented to the staff and patients. It hangs proudly in our lobby for all to see. Another 30x48 painting, in primary colors, is on the wall in our pediatric tract of the Emergency Room. Our hospital's angel of healing is a continual presence of healing and hope for all!

## YOUNGSTOWN

### A short story of many mercies

Mercy is not solitary and God's grace flows out through the many hearts and hands that do God's work. Volunteers do this great work of mercy in the many volunteer services they perform every day at Mercy Health — Youngstown. The mercy and tenderness of God is there, sometimes hidden among the Lorna Doone cookies they serve the families and visitors as they take the Hospitality Coffee Cart to waiting areas throughout the hospitals. Mercy walks with the volunteers assisting the staff at the Joanie Abdu Comprehensive Breast Care Center as they greet and guide the patients waiting for their testing. Some women feel very apprehensive and afraid of what the test will reveal. Volunteers at the Medical Oncology Unit round on the patients undergoing chemotherapy and other IV therapies and provide warm blankets, snacks and encouragement. Mercy is there in their eyes, voices and tender words. Mercy can disguise itself in many forms. Volunteer golf cart drivers offer rides to visitors and outpatients walking from their cars to the hospital's main entrance. What a relief to get a ride when the burden of sudden illness or a surgical procedure has impacted your family. Mercy can look like a golf cart driver in a red polo shirt and ball cap. Mercy is revealed in our Jobs Training Program that assists special needs student volunteers as they learn important employment skills at our hospitals in a supportive environment and under the supervision of their job coaches. Mercy can be found in the sacred service of the Volunteer Communion Ministers as they distribute communion to the Catholic patients in our hospitals. Christ is entering their rooms through the dedicated



service of our volunteers, helping to heal, console and give hope. Mercy can look like a furry, friendly Pet Partner dog visiting our Behavioral Health and Acute Rehab Units. The visiting Pet Partner teams visit with appropriate patients wishing a visit and the warmth of this interaction soothes, calms and brings smiles to the patients and staff alike. A busy, boisterous pillow stuffing party hosted by our Women's Auxiliary does not call to mind the mercy of God but the pillows the Auxiliary members sew, stuff and distribute will help soothe the pain of patients that have undergone C-sections and other abdominal surgeries. Mercy can look like a colorful cotton pillow with pink and yellow flowers. The St. Elizabeth Hospital Auxiliary is a dedicated group of hospital volunteers that hold various fundraisers throughout the year. Mercy flows out from the funds they raise for needed programs and hospital equipment for such departments as Cardiac Rehab. Funding is provided for nursing scholarships that will assist future nurses in their important work.

The Mercy Health — Youngstown Volunteer Department is blessed with the many dedicated volunteers that give of their time and talent to reveal God's mercy in the services they provide every day at our hospitals. Mercy can be revealed in a cup of coffee and cookie, and served with a smile.

### **A mother and her unborn child**

I received an email in September from the Mahoning County Mental Health Board (MCMHB) Executive Director whom I had recently met. The purpose of the email was to bring me in the loop on a particular situation. The director did not know who to turn to.

There was a 21-year-old, 29-week pregnant young lady incarcerated on a misdemeanor since the first week in August. The reason the judge incarcerated her was to provide her with food and shelter until they could get her the help she needed. She had a diagnosis of bi-polar disorder, schizoaffective

disorder with a major depressive episode. She entered the courts not on medication, very ill and pregnant. And she had no family support available to her.

The courts, MCMHB and other supporting agencies had for weeks tried to get her placed from local hospitals to the state hospital; no one would accept her. I was not able to vet all those reasons. I just knew Bon Secours Mercy Health had to act.

By the time I received the email, she had been without medication for weeks. This had only accelerated her disorders to the point of inflicting self-harm because as the baby would move, she thought she was possessed. She was not only punching herself in the abdomen, she was slamming her head into her cell wall.

I began to make phone calls to our psychiatrist on staff, our Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and our Behavioral Health Institute nursing leadership. Once I was able to get a physician order to admit her, the team was on it in full force and by



that evening she was transported from the jail to be under our care.

We were prepared to keep her if we had to until she delivered. We work for Jesus, and he would not want anything less than absolute care for her and her innocent unborn child. As the medications took effect, she continued to stabilize.

Our CMO worked to get obstetrical coverage for her. Arrangements were made for transportation to the obstetrician's clinic for routine visits, and he agreed to deliver her. The psychiatrist on staff agreed to follow her and provide medications through her delivery.

In October, we were able to transport her to a daytime facility group home. She was anxious to leave the hospital setting and was very agreeable to return to the group home she was in prior. We further coordinated care to have a local crisis center round on her daily and transfer her to their facility if she relapsed until they could contact us.

The compassion of the legal system, the community entities and St. Elizabeth — Youngstown's clinical team was truly remarkable! I was inspired through this ordeal to see Mercy Health — Youngstown serve: Our mission to extend the healing ministry of Jesus, with an emphasis on the poor and underserved. To uphold our values of compassion, preserving human dignity and upholding the sacredness of life. And lastly our promise to make lives better — mind, body and spirit and enjoy being of service and making health care easier!

It was truly an honor and privilege to serve this young lady and her unborn child.

## IRELAND

### A legacy of care: nursing through the World Wars (1914-1945)

The Sisters of Bon Secours, as well as playing a significant role in health care in Ireland, contributed to the care of the wounded in France in both World War One and World War Two. From 1867, when postulants entered Bon Secours in Cork, they continued to go to Paris for their entire novitiate, their nursing training being done in various centres, which led to their 'good help' being called on during both World Wars.

While the care was delivered by many Sisters, we highlight the contributions of two Sisters during World War One; Sr. Emile McNamara and Sr. Mary of the Annunciation Walsh.

Nursing in World War One was exhausting, often dangerous work and the Sisters who served in field hospitals experienced the horror of war firsthand, some paying the ultimate price. Their duties would have included nursing the wounded, housekeeping duties, cooking, distributing food and providing laundry services. Often they risked death by tending to patients with contagious diseases. Nursing Sisters had to deal not only with an exhausting workload, but often under extremely primitive working conditions and desperate climatic extremes. This was the pre-antibiotics age and the ranks of the injured were swelled by infection and outbreaks of infectious diseases.

In spite of these challenges, Sr. Emile and Sr. Mary were able to provide comfort to the sick and injured. They cared for all wounded soldiers alike, officers and enlisted men, rich and poor, no matter their religion or heritage. Motivated by love of God, the Sisters of Bon

Secours compassionately cared for the sick and prepared the dying for eternity.

#### SR. ST. EMILE MCNAMARA

Born Elizabeth McNamara in Mitchelstown, County Cork, she played a vital role in the care of wounded soldiers during World War One, as Directress of the Auxiliary Hospital No. 25 in Normandy, over which she had charge for four and half years. She and her community of Sisters selflessly ministered to the wounded from Ypres and Verdun. At the end of the war, she was honoured by the Belgian and French Governments, and was especially decorated by the Belgian Minister of War at the insistence of the Belgian King. The war took its toll on Sr. Emile's health; she died on August 29, 1923 in the Bon Secours Convent, Eu in Normandy.

#### SR. MARY OF THE ANNUNCIATION WALSH

Born Kate Walsh in Cobh County Cork in 1891, then known as Queenstown, she was the first young woman from Cobh to join the Sisters of Bon Secours, when she entered the Order in 1913 at the age of 22. Having completed two years at the Order's Mother House in Paris, the newly professed Sister began hospital work in 1915 in France. Her active nursing career of 61 years was spent exclusively in France, as part of which she tended the injured and maimed of the two World Wars and won international recognition for her dedicated service. Her good works, courage and dedication were recognised by the French Comité de Recompenses in 1970, when she was awarded the French medal, La Croix de Chevalier de l'Oeuvre Humanitaire. On her retirement in 1976, after an absence of 63 years, Sister Mary returned to the Bon Secours Convent in Cobh where she lived for nine years until her death in 1985 at the age of 94.

## Operation Walk

One of our key community initiative projects in 2019 and 2020 is Operation Walk. It is driven by our own staff here in Galway, three of whom volunteered in Vietnam in 2019, and a further 10 staff, some retired, will travel in 2020 to provide life changing operations in that country.

Operation Walk is a private, not for profit volunteer service organisation, providing free joint replacements for patients with disabling arthritis or other debilitating bone and joint conditions in developing countries. We travel to Hanoi in Vietnam and operate on approximately 70 patients within a two week period. While providing surgery to the patients, we also work alongside the Vietnamese staff providing education in order to upskill their work force.

To be able to provide surgery to our patients, we need to ship the equivalent of a small hospital halfway across the world and set up once we arrive. Last year we shipped just over 1,900kgs worth of equipment with a team of 85 personnel.

Each team member must raise €1500 to cover travel and accommodation; anything left over is put into the charity for purchasing equipment and medication to cover all the surgeries. In 2019, three team members from Bon Secours Hospital in Galway traveled and in 2020, 10 staff will travel.

Our patients in Hanoi are selected by a means test. It is only the very poor and underprivileged patients that are chosen for surgery. These patients are in severe pain, some very disabled and are unable to work or provide for their families. The cost of a joint replacement for these patients would be the equivalent of three full years' wages. Without our charity providing these life changing joint replacements, these patients would never be given the opportunity.

Throughout the country our volunteers hold various fundraising events such as cake sales, table quizzes, coffee mornings, say yes to the dress and spinathons. Our major fundraiser this year was a Black Tie Ball and Auction which was held in the Hermitage Clinic. A total of €15,000 was raised.

For the staff Christmas party, we were very privileged to have Operation Walk Ireland as the chosen charity and raised €1,330 alongside a raffle and table quiz raising a further €1,300.

As a hospital we are very proud of the generosity of our staff, giving of their time and expertise to such a worthy enterprise that encapsulates our values so well.

## The rhythm of prayer and work

The practice of health care is an art as well as a science. In that sense, the ministry of health care is as much a spiritual care process as it is a physical or mental care process — open to the creative and re-creative power of God. In the fast-paced clinical world, at Bon Secours Hospital, Dublin, we ensure that all formal meetings of the hospital begin with a moment of prayer. So, when the nursing teams are entrusting patient care to each other at the change of shift they will begin the handover process with prayer. Likewise, the Patient Safety Huddle, at which 25 heads of departments meet each morning to consider hospital activity and patient safety, will begin with a prayer. Meetings of the hospital management team, ward meetings, and department briefing meetings will each begin with a prayer. In some respects, the routine of the typical day can follow an almost monastic rhythm — with as many as four or five moments of prayer punctuating the day.

Our ministry is strengthened by these prayer rituals, which we value as wellsprings of grace and living links to our religious origins and legacy. To assist every member of staff become comfortable in leading prayer in their own immediate context, the Staff Prayer Book was published as a resource. These prayers can be offered in the





context of the Bon Secours family at work or in the context of one's own family at home. Their simple structure and brevity suit those for whom English is not their first language. The colourful drawings and religious images can inspire the young minds and hearts of children. These Catholic prayer books, along with other materials that reflect a variety of faith traditions, are an essential element of the Spiritual Resource Box that we have located in every clinical area of our hospital. These resources serve as a witness to our faith and an invitation to engage with spirituality. By opening up the present ministry of the hospital to God's grace through prayer, we remain connected to our founding vision and mission, and feel strengthened to embrace the future with confidence.

### Bon Secours Values Ambassador Programme at Bon Secours Hospital, Dublin

In the spring of 2019, the Mission Leader launched a new co-worker nominated recognition programme called "Values Ambassador." The aim of the programme is twofold: to encourage hospital staff members to recognise how our Core Values can shape our daily service of the ministry and to celebrate those co-workers who exemplify the Values in their professional lives.

Each quarter, a Core Value is selected and a nomination process is opened so that staff members can nominate the co-worker they believe is most obviously living that particular Value. The co-worker with the most nominations is invited to become that quarter's Values Ambassador. Their photograph is displayed prominently at the hospital entrance and they receive a small prize and certificate from the Hospital Mission Leader.



Anthony Kerrigan was the first ever Values Ambassador nominated by his co-workers at Bon Secours Hospital, Dublin. Anthony works in the admissions office and has the responsibility of ensuring that patient flow at time of admission to the hospital is safe, correct and courteous. He is frequently the first person a new patient will encounter when they enter our hospital. Anthony recognises that people can feel fragile and insecure when they arrive at hospital and he seems instinctively drawn to nervous patients. He uses his communication skills and a warm personality to reassure them and bring them comfort while he is escorting them to where they need to be in the hospital. Anthony was nominated as our Values Ambassador for the value of Compassion and this is what some of his co-workers said about him:

- "Anthony really lives compassion through his sensitivity to the needs of patients."
- "I have seen Anthony go the extra mile to ensure an anxious patient got to where they needed to be on a very busy day for the hospital."
- "If my mom was coming into the hospital, Anthony is the one person

I would truly hope would be there to greet her!"

The message of this Core Values programme is that when we live our values well, and our behaviours are aligned with them, everyone is a winner! Our patients experience excellent care; our co-workers are inspired by each other's generous service and the ministry of healthcare is advanced.

### A lunchtime visit

Mary was 66-years-old and being admitted as an inpatient. A retired school principal, she is discerning, intelligent and independent, but felt completely isolated while in our hospital, as her husband had died some years before, and her three adult children were living and working abroad. Her length of stay was five days, and one of the catering staff, on noticing that Mary did not seem to have visitors, came and asked her if she would like her to sit with her while on her lunch break. Mary gladly accepted, and was really touched by this young woman's courage and generosity of heart.

For Mary, while the nursing and clinical care were excellent, as she had expected it would be, it

was this act of generosity and compassion that said most to her about what is at the heart of Bon Secours Health System — truly good help.

### **Bon Secours Hospital Tralee Community Initiative Funding to Foodshare Kerry**

A key aspect of the Bon Secours Vision is to Reach out Compassionately to the Community. Through our Community Initiative Programme we invest annually in projects that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in our society. This programme is a key way in which we translate Bon Secours (“good help”), our ethos of care, into action in the communities that we serve. Through it, we try to act as a catalyst in tackling social issues by assisting charities/not-for-profit groups in responding to the health care and related social and economic needs of the community.

Foodshare Kerry collects surplus food from food producers and distributes it to charities who deliver it to people in need. We rescue quality surplus food from supermarkets and food producers and make it available to organisations who know how best to redistribute it to those in need.

#### **Objectives**

- To help reduce food poverty through provision of food
- Reduce food waste through rescuing perfectly good food
- Promote the concept of reducing food waste

All of us here in Bon Secours Hospital Tralee would like to sincerely acknowledge the wonderful work being done by the members of Foodshare Kerry in our local communities. They are a true inspiration to us all. We were delighted to be in a position to support this vibrant initiative over the past four years, amounting to a

total contribution of €20,000!

Bon Secours Hospital Tralee is very proud of its association with this innovative project and would like to wish it every success going forward in reaching out to the most vulnerable in our community.

### **Community Initiative Funding for Bon Secours Hospital Limerick Volunteer with Nepal Leprosy Trust**

Nepal Leprosy Trust was established in 1972 and is inspired by Jesus’ compassion to serve the poor and sick. Its vision is to help eradicate leprosy, to overcome prejudice against those affected and to improve people’s standard of living. It is a family of Christian organisations based in Nepal, Ireland and the UK. Its goal is to eradicate leprosy and its associated stigma so that people can lift their lives out of poverty and disadvantage and enjoy health, well-being and respect. It achieves this through medical treatment, social education and village development projects, targeting individuals, small groups and wider communities. The methods it uses are considered best practice internationally and its programme outcomes are statistically measurable.

Many people think that leprosy is eradicated but it is definitely not. There is much we do not understand about how it occurs and is transmitted. It is easily treatable at an early stage but if neglected, can cause immense damage to the body and mind. Those with leprosy have been stigmatised in most societies and the situation is not much different now. The word ‘leper’ is still derogatory. One of the complications of leprosy is anaesthesia due to nerve involvement. This can lead to wounds on the feet and hands and development of ulcers and later loss of digits and

even limbs. These wounds may become infected and deteriorate further. Operative procedures are available to partially counteract the effects of nerve damage. Infection control is of paramount importance in such situations to prevent wound infection and resultant tissue damage. Multi drug resistant bacteria are prevalent in the Indian subcontinent and if infections occur, could be very difficult to treat.

Having completed a Certificate in Leprosy in the last year, Dr. William Dibb, our Consultant Microbiologist, did some volunteer work recently in Nepal where he visited two leprosy hospitals desperately in need of resources: Green Pastures Hospital in Pokhara and Lalgadh in the East of Nepal.

With the support of the Hospital Management Team, Dr. Dibb, an active volunteer with the Nepal Leprosy Trust, successfully applied for €20,000 in funding from the Group Community Initiative Fund and a silent partner. This funding was earmarked for targeted Infection Control initiatives in Lalgadh Hospital and in Green Pastures Hospital. It is hoped that this initiative will provide an improved standard of care and outcome for the patients with leprosy. Ideally, resistant bacteria causing secondary infection will be controlled within the hospital. Wound care will be improved. Several studies have shown that effective Infection Control can save money ultimately and it is hoped that this will apply at Lalgadh. The existence of an Infection Control Committee will provide support and authority for implementation of necessary change. The outcome will hopefully be more effective treatment of the complications of leprosy, leading to less incapacity, more rapid rehabilitation and less disfigurement, leading to more social acceptance.

# WHERE WE SERVE

## ATLANTIC GROUP

New York  
Maryland  
Virginia  
South Carolina  
Florida

## GREAT LAKES GROUP

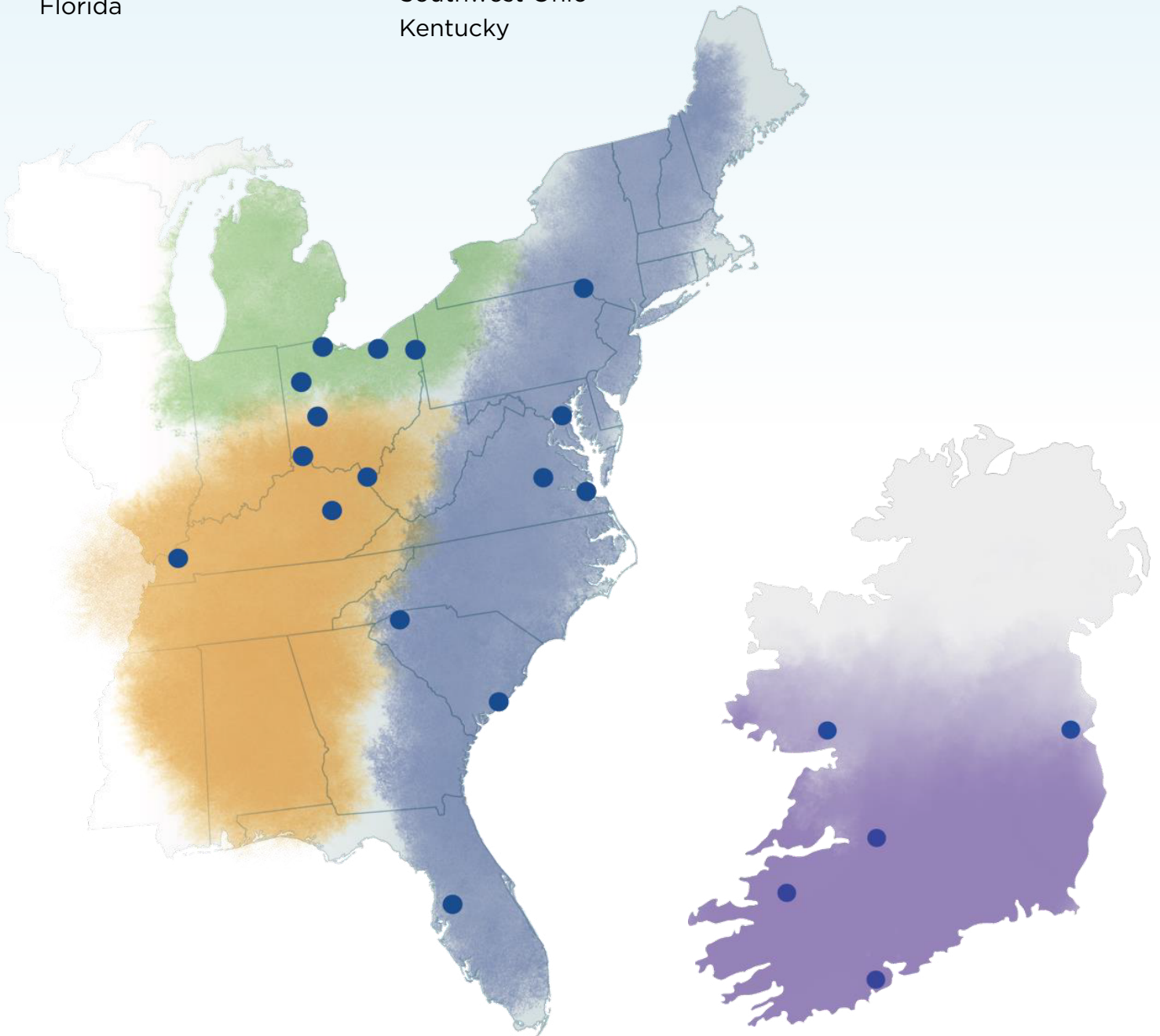
Northern Ohio

## MID AMERICAN GROUP

Southwest Ohio  
Kentucky

## EUROPEAN GROUP

Ireland





# WHO WE ARE

## Our Mission

We extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of our communities and bring good help to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved.

## Our Values

**Human Dignity:** We commit to upholding the sacredness of life and being respectful and inclusive of everyone.

**Integrity:** We commit to acting ethically and modeling right relationships in all of our individual and organizational encounters.

**Compassion:** We commit to accompanying those we serve with mercy and tenderness, recognizing that “being with” is as important as “doing for.”

**Stewardship:** We commit to promoting the responsible use of all human and financial resources, including Earth itself.

**Service:** We commit to providing the highest quality in every dimension of our ministry.

## Our Vision

Inspired by God’s hope for the world, we will be a ministry where associates want to work, clinicians want to practice, people seek wellness and communities thrive.



**BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH**

**[bsmhealth.org](https://bsmhealth.org)**