

STORIES OF GRACE 2021

Extending the Compassion of Jesus

compassionate
MINISTRY

BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH

Prayers & Reflections

from across the ministry



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stories, and images
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BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH

A publication of the Center for Ministry Formation

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Dear Bon Secours Mercy Health Associate,

The call to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus is at the heart of who we are as individuals and as a ministry. Improving the health and well-being of the communities we serve and bringing good help to those in need flow from our commitment to be the compassion of Jesus in the lives of those we touch.

As we continue to respond with generosity and care to the needs of so many, we know how vital extending compassion is during times of illness and suffering.

As a way of sharing the fruits of the *Stories of Grace 2021: Compassionate Ministry* program with the wider Bon Secours Mercy Health ministry, we have compiled this collection of stories and prayers entitled “Stories of Grace 2021: Extending the Compassion of Jesus.”

We hope this booklet will serve as a source of inspiration and reflection for each of us as we continue to pursue together the ministry of extending Jesus’ compassionate care to all our sisters and brothers.



As emphasized in the program, compassion is a virtue that can be cultivated and developed. Sharing our stories is an important way we can encourage one another and grow in our commitment to the mission entrusted to us by our founding communities.

These stories highlight the profound compassion offered by our associates each day. The prayers stir within us the flame of compassion and love that touch the heart, stimulate the mind, and embolden each of us to live more deeply our sacred mission.

At this time of year, we pause in a special way to give thanks for the many blessings in our lives. We are confident that “Stories of Grace 2021: Extending the Compassion of Jesus” will renew our appreciation for the ministry we share and fill our hearts with gratitude for the service being offered by so many.

With Gratitude,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Starcher Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Starcher
President and CEO



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sr. Anne Lutz" in a cursive script.

Sr. Anne Lutz, CBS
Chief Sponsorship Officer

“Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

Desmund Tutu

Gospel Story of Compassion

Widow at Nain

Luke 7:11-17

Soon afterward, Jesus journeyed to a city called Nain. His disciples and a large crowd accompanied him. As he drew near to the gate of the city, a man who had died was being carried out. He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A large crowd from the city was with her.

When the Lord saw her, he was moved with compassion for her and said to her, "Do not weep." He stepped forward and touched the coffin; at this the bearers halted, and Jesus said, "Young man, I tell you, arise!" The dead man sat up and began to speak. Then Jesus gave him to his mother.

Fear seized them all, and they glorified God. They exclaimed, "A great prophet has arisen in our midst," and "God has visited his people." This report about him spread through the whole of Judea and in all the surrounding region.

Scripture texts in this work are taken from the *New American Bible*, revised edition © 2010, 1991, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington, D.C. and are used by permission of the copyright owner. All Rights Reserved. No part of the New American Bible may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the copyright owner.

Reflection

To more fully appreciate the depths of the compassion Jesus extends to the widow in the gospel story, it is important to place Jesus' actions in context.

First, the woman is a stranger to Jesus. They do not know each other, they are not members of the same community, and they are not family. For a man to speak to a woman in public, a woman who was not a member of his family, was an act of radical inclusion.

Second, the woman is a widow who has lost her only son. In Jesus' day, the death of a widow's only son was an economic catastrophe. It would have left her completely destitute and marginalized, leaving her without resources.



Third, Jesus touches the coffin. This was a profound violation of Jewish purity laws that the gathered crowd would have instantly interpreted as a dramatic act.

Last, and most important, Jesus saw. He noticed, he paid attention, and he acted. In this powerful story, Jesus encounters a woman enduring life-altering loss. He immediately understands the woman's plight and, not limited by the customs and norms of his culture, he extends compassion to her.

Not only does his compassion transform the challenges she was facing, he also reveals the profound bond between God and all God's people. To extend such compassion is our shared call.



God of compassion,

Throughout his ministry, Jesus embodied your compassion for all, especially for those who are poor, outcast, and vulnerable. Inspired by the compassion he offered to the widow of Nain, may we extend your compassion to all those we encounter today and every day.

May the example of your son, Jesus, in his loving response to the needs of the widow, renew our commitment to build more compassionate communities and a more caring world. With confidence in you, we pray.

Amen.





compassionate R Y

“compassion ASKS US

to go where it hurts, to enter into the places of pain, to share in brokenness, fear, confusion, and anguish.

compassion CHALLENGES US

to cry out with those in misery, to mourn with those who are lonely, to weep with those in tears.

compassion REQUIRES US

to be weak with the weak, vulnerable with the vulnerable, and powerless with the powerless.

compassion MEANS

full immersion in the condition of being human.

Henri Nouwen

Housing Assistance & Education

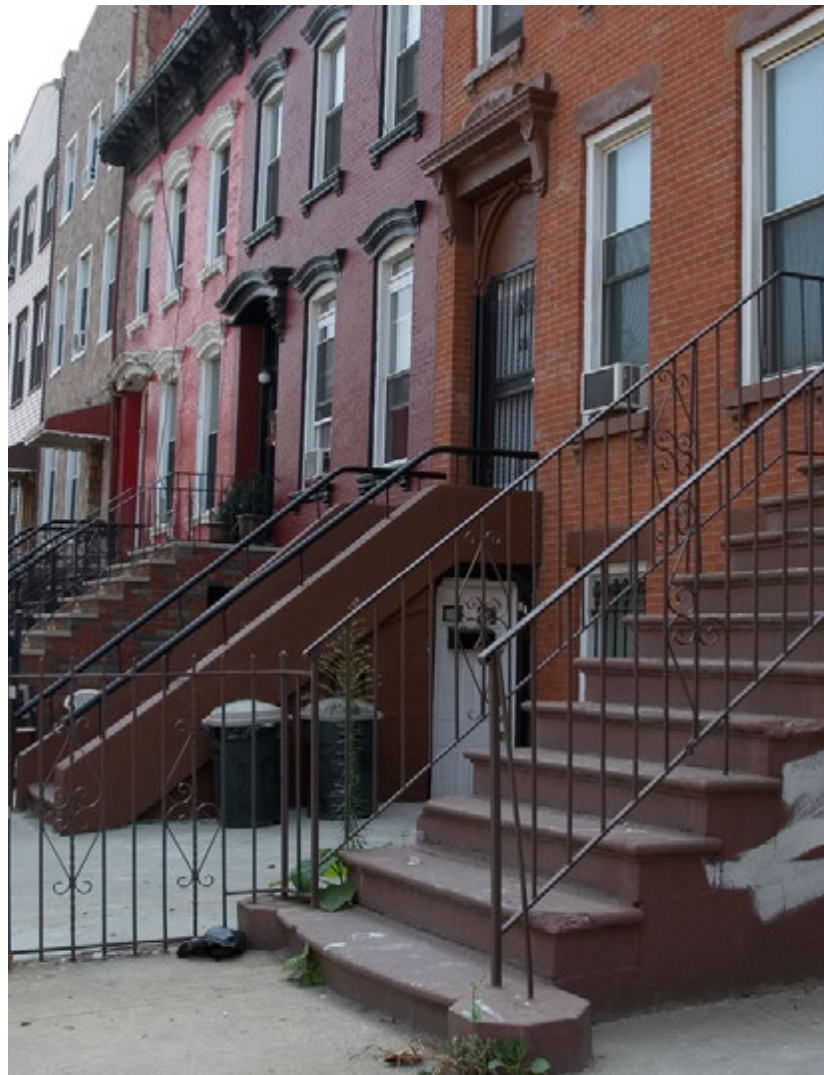


Bon Secours Baltimore

Safe, affordable housing is central to everyone's quality of life. Enterprise Community Partners, a nationally recognized non-profit, notes, "It's common practice to detect and treat disease in medical settings. Yet the origins of illness can be identified long before someone enters a doctor's office. An estimated 70% of differences in health status are associated with people's social and physical environment, including the quality, affordability, stability, and location of a person's home."

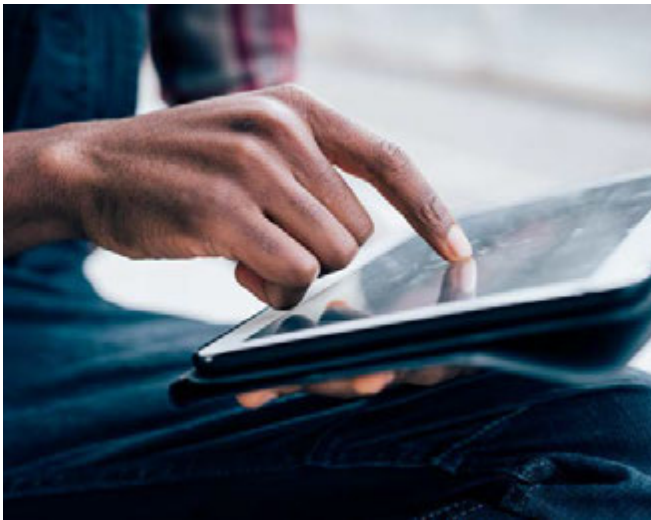
You can see this play out every day in Baltimore, which has one of the highest rates of poverty and rental housing eviction rates in the country. For 30 years the staff at Bon Secours Community Works have provided low-cost rental housing and on-site supportive services; financial education; and rent assistance to prevent eviction in West Baltimore. They had been handling a steady demand to house and help at-risk individuals and families.

Then COVID-19 hit. Residents in any of eleven Bon Secours apartment locations or in rentals in the general community lost employment or had their hours reduced. Public transportation became an issue.



People faced challenges with getting to medical appointments and shopping, figuring out public benefits, attending religious services, and connecting with family and friends. Those behind on their rent remained so even with stimulus checks and unemployment.

In response, program leaders piloted a Financial Education & Eviction Prevention Assistance Program in February 2020. Thanks to the generosity of private funders, including the Bon Secours Mercy Health Mission Outreach Program, grants enabled expansion so staff could meet with people virtually to complete an assessment of their financial situation, develop a financial plan, connect them to other services, and motivate them to attend a Financial Education Workshop.



The pilot also included an eviction prevention fund. In 2020, \$48,500 in grant monies helped 59 households bring their rent current. So far in 2021, over \$32,000 has been distributed to 31 households and an additional \$45,000 will be dispersed to those in need. One resident who attended the Financial Education Workshop took the time to let

the leasing office know, “The workshop has been very helpful with being able to create and maintain a savings account along with staying current on my rent.”

The goal of the Financial Education & Eviction Prevention Assistance Program continues to be to improve the health and well-being of the West Baltimore community and its citizens. By combining rent assistance, financial education, and support from Service Coordinators in Bon Secours housing, participants are stabilizing their housing to keep a roof over their heads while they develop essential financial skills that can be passed down to the next generation. 🌟

It Was Love



Bon Secours Charity

She had been with us for over four months in our general medical unit, lying on the bed with her eyes open and glazed over, without any ability to speak. This beautiful 62-year-old Jamaican woman I will call 'Bell' had suffered a massive stroke at home alone. It was estimated she had laid on the floor for 24 to 36 hours before she was discovered and then urgently taken to our hospital for immediate care.

For weeks upon weeks which turned into many months, the medical staff would gently talk with her, administer her medications, tend to her drip lines, and carefully clean her face and body. The chaplains from the Spiritual Care Department would spend time with her, often in prayer and silence, or sometimes playing recorded gospel, which was her music of choice. Amidst the visitation restrictions, her small family was not able to be at her bedside, so we often utilized video conferencing as well.

Gradually, Bell began to have more eye contact with the staff. I recall one day as I held her hand and offered a prayer, she looked right into my eyes with a deep tenderness.



Through her eyes and face, we all could see she was becoming more conscious, more present, and more able to express herself. We were all encouraged to see her improvement and remained committed to giving her the highest quality care possible.

One day, I heard from a nurse that Bell had begun to speak. In near disbelief, I went into her room and approached her bed. With hope and wonder, I said, 'Hello, Bell...' and in return she said with a raspy but strong voice, 'Yes, hello.' I nearly fell into the chair behind me, and then said, 'It's incredibly wonderful to hear you speak, Bell! You sound wonderful!' She said, 'Thank you so much, yes . . . thank you.' I asked if she had recalled all these months she had laid in her hospital bed, and she nodded.

I began to reflect with Bell about how I could not even imagine the challenge and pain she had endured while being unable to speak all this time, of being at the mercy of her own silence. At one point, I blurted, 'I can't imagine how incredibly frustrating this must have been!'

She calmly looked right into my eyes and smiled. She then said, 'Oh honey, it was not frustration, it was LOVE.'

“This is all about
love 

I heard all the voices, all the faces, I knew all the care that was being given to me. When you would come pray and then leave my bed, I would then pray for you, for all of you. Yes . . . This is all about Love.'

Tears fell from my eyes for the next ten minutes or so as I listened to her teach me everything about what caregiving really means. Knowing Bell helps me more deeply understand why I am a chaplain and how love for her and her well-being connects me to all of humanity. 🌸

Momma's Here



Bon Secours Hampton Roads

A short time ago, I had a patient in my department who was nearing the end of his life. During her leadership rounding, Chauntee Dancy-Reid, the Director of the Telemetry unit, discovered that a patient on her unit was the mother of my patient.

Chauntee stopped what she was doing on this very busy Monday to call me and see if we could devise a plan for the patient's mother to see her son during these last hours of his life.

Chauntee and I spoke and agreed that we had to make this happen, and we did! Chauntee and her staff got the patient's mother into a wheelchair and brought her to her son's bedside. She was able to speak gently to him, letting him know that she was there. As I stood outside of the room, I could hear her repeating to him, "Momma's here."

When she was ready, the mother was then brought back to her room where she told the staff how grateful she was to have had the opportunity to spend time with her son. She was tearful but appreciative. At around 6:30 that evening, her son died peacefully in his room, surrounded by several family members, and hopefully knowing that his mother was there to comfort him in his time of need. 🌻



prayer



Merciful God,

You are the God of compassion and grace. The Gospel of John says, "... grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." God, we ask, as part of this ministry, for the strength and compassion to share your grace with our patients, and their families. We pray for your grace in our lives and for your grace to flow from us to those in need.

We ask you to enable us to share your grace with others through the hope and faith we have in you. As part of our willingness to minister the compassionate healing ministry of Jesus, let your grace abound in our lives and let it flow freely from our spirits and lives to the spirits and lives of those we serve. As we receive your grace, let us impart your grace as part of our mission.

We ask you for healing for our land from the pandemic: God heal our land.

We ask you for healing for our patients: God heal our land.

We ask you for mercy during the pandemic: God heal our land.

We thank you for your faithfulness and goodness. We pray in the name of Jesus through whom grace and truth came upon the earth.

Amen.



Living the Dream



Bon Secours Ireland

Pat is an associate in Bon Secours Hospital Cork. He works in the Stores Department and serves the whole hospital as he delivers our many needs and supplies each day. He supports all departments by his swift delivery of goods, but also with his manner and lovely words. "Hey guys! We're living the dream, another day!" These positive and upbeat words do affect us as he says it, even though sometimes we may not even respond or smile at him in the busyness of the moment.



During the pandemic, orders from Stores were mounting daily and Pat, like everyone else, was no doubt (and is) personally challenged by it all. He so impressed me especially in St. Finbarr's and CCU wards, in the midst of the rush of the day and his many trips back and forth making his deliveries. He always had a smile and sincerely inquired, "How is everyone doing?"

His gentle care and compassionate concern for all staff members as well as his hope that the patients and families were coping, has struck me so many times. Pat embodies our mission and the values of Bon Secours on the ground daily in his unassuming way, quietly caring for all of us. This undoubtedly has a wonderful impact on the way we care for those who come to us in need. 🌻



Compassion is . . .



"the feeling that arises when you are confronted with another's suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering."



"What is Compassion?" *Greater Good Magazine*, The Greater Good Science Center at The University of California, Berkeley, <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/compassion/definition>.

The Power of Music



Bon Secours Richmond

Our staff was treating an extremely distressed hospice patient with Alzheimer's whose daughter had requested music therapy. This patient lived in a residence that was under strict COVID guidelines, and no family or therapists were allowed in. Though the patient has since died, her last days were a scramble for her nurse Tricia Shiflett, trying to adjust medications, keeping her from falling, and relieving symptoms.

One day during the height of the pandemic, Tricia entered the room to witness this patient extremely agitated, pulling at her hair, biting the sheets, and crying. The music therapist offered the session online from an iPad set up next to the patient's bed. Facility staff were notified to medicate and, while waiting for the pain medication, the music therapist Robin Rio began singing from the iPad. She sang soothing songs to the patient, playing her guitar and moving without pause from one song to the next. In intervals, she encouraged the patient to take deep breaths and reassured her of the presence of God and staff and the love of her daughter.

Tricia was particularly moved to witness Robin calming the patient into an approximately 10 second stretch of complete silence, where she was calm and breathing peacefully. No one moved or spoke in that peace; the patient sat with eyes closed. It was a true transformation from the patient's state at the beginning of the visit. It reminded us all of the power of compassion and music. 🌻





God of all healing,

We place into your hands all our associates. Pour out your gifts and blessings upon them as they seek to continue our healing ministry. Make them, O God, Good Samaritans, ready to welcome, treat and console all those they meet. Open their eyes to see your presence in the faces of those they serve.

Open their hearts to be attentive to the hurting and afraid. Lastly, open their hands to be the willing and joyful instruments of your healing grace. All this we ask through the one who stretched out his hands in love for all people, Jesus Christ.

Amen.



prayer



A Legacy of Compassion & Kindness



Bon Secours St. Francis

The litmus test for Catholic healthcare is that any person should be able to point at our facility and say, "The healing ministry of Jesus Christ occurs within these doors." For the community we serve, healing takes many forms. One of the obligations of healing is to bring our community to wholeness.

A program that exemplifies this spirit is ProjectSEARCH, a program designed to help high school students on the disability spectrum transition from school to work. One of the most difficult questions for any parent with a child on a disability spectrum is this: "What will happen to my child when I am no longer able to care for them?"

ProjectSEARCH brings hope to what many had considered a hopeless situation.



Just as important as the work skills they learn, the interns are able to grow into the people that their parents understand them to be. Rolando Alleyne, a graduate of the 2020-2021 class, is a wonderful example. On one particularly hot day, Rolando was on his way back to the ProjectSEARCH classroom when he came across a frail, lost, elderly woman in our Emergency Department parking lot. Rolando realized that she was in distress and approached her to see if he could be of assistance. She explained that she was trying to get to our Outpatient Center, which is on the opposite side of the campus.

In a kind and beautiful gesture, Rolando extended his arm and asked if he could walk her there. The woman smiled in appreciation of this act of kindness and

took his arm. Rolando returned to the classroom without mentioning his encounter, but fortunately, his act of compassion did not go unnoticed.

The goodwill and opportunity generated by this program does not go unnoticed by our community. Our continued prayer by hosting ProjectSEARCH is always that we provide a platform that changes the lives of God's people, for the better, and forever.

This joy often resonates in the interns' families. A father of one intern shared the tremendous joy felt by his family when they received the letter of acceptance for the program. They likened this to the scene in the movie "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" when Charlie opened the winning candy bar. He said, "We felt like we had won a golden ticket."



We knew that this was an incredible program, but to get to see and hear the parents of the interns express their emotions as they begin the program has been a powerful foreshadowing of what's to come. ✨



Loving God,

You created us with the capacity to heal, restore and offer peace through our role in this ministry. Help us to be signs of love and compassion in the world today, honoring every person we meet. When our burdens are heavy, renew us. Remind us of the blessing of our calling. Help us to recommit to the compassionate ministry of Jesus.

Amen.



prayer

Delivering Joy



Bon Secours St. Petersburg

For the residents of Bon Secours Place in Saint Petersburg, the pandemic had created a sense of isolation from family and friends and the loss of the healing power of human touch. Home Health worker Tammi Dial saw firsthand the negative effects and wanted to do something to bring joy to the hearts and smiles to the faces of the residents of her community.

It was the holiday season so Tammi thought being able to provide a small gift to each resident would offer at least a small ray of sunshine into their lives. Sharing her idea with colleagues and fellow associates, money, candies, cookies, and gifts began pouring in.

Tammi was able to personalize the gifts given, some in honor of Christmas and others in honor of Hanukkah. Doors and rooms were suddenly adorned with decorations capturing the festive spirit of the season.

Dressed as Santa Claus, accompanied by Mrs. Claus and a very dedicated elf, Tammi distributed mugs, blankets, puzzles, crossword books, candy treats, and a great many other gifts to residents in both assisted living and dementia units.

At Bon Secours Place, Santa was able to deliver gifts but more importantly compassion and joy. 🌟





Gracious God,

You call us to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus to all we meet. Open our eyes that we might recognize the suffering experienced by others.

Open our minds to pursuing solutions to address the needs of the sick and suffering of our world.

Open our ears that we might hear the cries of the poor and vulnerable. Open our hearts that we might more freely share the gift of your love and compassion with others.

We thank you for the compassion you shower upon us and ask that you strengthen us to be instruments of your compassion for all of our sisters and brothers. We pray in your name.

Amen.



prayer

Holding a Dying Hand



Mercy Health Cincinnati

Late one evening I got a call from an ICU nurse asking if I could come to the hospital. A patient was dying. Her family members lived too far away or were just unable to come. But they had asked, "Could a chaplain come to the hospital to pray with her?" It would bring them comfort.

When I arrived, I found the nurse standing near the patient's room. She looked a little tired and welcomed me with a smile. "Thanks for coming," and left for a while. The patient was on a ventilator, the machine doing the hard work of breathing for her. I held the patient's hand and told her who I was, uncertain if she could hear but hoping she might feel the presence of someone beside her.

The nurse and I used two phones to call two sets of family members, inviting them to listen in to the prayer I soon would offer. But first, I asked them to tell me something about their loved one. After sharing a few memories, we placed each phone near the patient's ears so she might possibly hear her family's voices, too.



Prayer said and conversation ended, I still felt no one should have to die alone. When I held the patient's hand, whether involuntary or something more, she seemed to squeeze back at my touch and the sound of my voice. Perhaps she could hear and feel. And, even if not, I could still be present.



"You're not alone." The nurse returned to the room. "I can stay for a while longer," I said, "she seems to be aware I'm here." I held the patient's hand for about two hours, occasionally reminding her, "Someone is still here with you." I read some encouraging words from Scripture and sang her a few old songs of faith. To my amazement, she kept holding on—long enough until I finally needed to let go of her hand and slip back home to prepare for my morning shift. Though I didn't really "let go," just handed her to the compassionate presence of the ICU nurse who said she'd continued to keep vigil at the patient's side.

The mission of Mercy Hospital is to: "Extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus . . . to those in need, especially people who are poor, dying and underserved." How often Christ's compassionate acts of healing were accompanied by His physical touch. As Jesus finally prepared to leave His disciples and return to Heaven, he said to them: "The person who trusts me will not only do what I'm doing but even greater things, because I . . . am giving you the same work to do that I have been doing." (Jn. 14:12-13)

The next morning, I checked on her. She had died before the light of dawn. But she had not died alone. The hands of Christ had touched her, because He has given us all His "same work to do." 🙏

Going the Extra Mile



Mercy Health Kentucky

When changes in pricing promised to make purchasing insulin a hardship for diabetic patients in need, the pharmacy team at Mercy Health – Marcum and Wallace Hospital in Irvine, Kentucky swung into action. They worked with Harness Health Pharmacy, the retail pharmacy solution of Bon Secours Mercy Health, to secure a three-month supply of insulin at a price that residents could afford.

The first order under the new program was due to arrive at Marcum and Wallace on Wednesday just as rising floodwaters were threatening to shut down the main road in and out of Irvine. “Twelve patients were waiting on this order and some were completely out of insulin,” said Marcum and Wallace Pharmacy Manager Lisa Patton. “Pharmacist Trevor Freeman spent all day Wednesday tracking the shipment, but they couldn’t deliver it because of the weather.”



Finally, a truck was due to set out with the insulin, with delivery scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, but the truck broke down, meaning the shipment would be delayed until the next day. "The insulin is good for 33 hours once it's packaged to get to us. A delay of one day would ruin it," says Lisa. "Knowing how the lack of insulin could affect those 12 waiting patients, Trevor drove to Lexington before the shipping company closed at 9 p.m. to pick it up. While there, he learned that there were several other packages holding for delivery to Marcum and Wallace's lab and he brought it all back."

His car loaded with Styrofoam coolers, Trevor drove straight back to Irvine to refrigerate the insulin and the team worked to get it to grateful patients. "Getting it in the fridge was the key thing," says Lisa. "Once it's cool, it is good to go. Trevor always goes above and beyond and this is just one example of the lengths he will go to care for our patients." 🌸



God of goodness,

As we send our associates back out to do the work you have given them, we pray that when this day is done, you would give them homes of peace and rest, joy, and renewal.

May their friends and families be for them signs of your love, to rejoice with them in the good days and comfort them in the hard days.

Grant that they may be so renewed at home, that they return here with hands ready to embrace and heal. We ask this in the name of the Good Physician himself, Jesus Christ.

Amen.



prayer

Sacred Times



Mercy Health Lima

As a volunteer with the Spiritual Care Department, I often visit with patients, offering space for connection and spiritual and emotional support in times of need. My conversations meet people where they are, accompanying them in whatever direction the need takes them.

Recently, I visited with a former co-worker who was here at St. Rita's Medical Center for care. I had known this person for many years and had last visited with this patient several years ago around the time her husband died. During that visit, she reflected on how grateful she was for their marriage. Now, as she was preparing for her own death, she reflected on how she had been able to make peace with his passing. She felt like she was on that same journey that her husband made two years before. He had gone home, and now she was going home as well. She told me how it was important for her to be able to say goodbye to her children. In our conversation, the patient shared that she felt comforted and that her life had been a good life.



This was one of those sacred times in ministry when we are able to accompany others as they connect with the deep purpose of their life and come to a sense of peace. I felt blessed in that I was the last visitor she received before her death. 🌻



God of all hopefulness,

We live in challenging times, in the shadow of division, sickness, violence, and injustice. And yet, you promise us the fullness of life. In the midst of these uncertain times, fill us with hope in your promise of life and love.

Fill our hearts with the confidence that flows from faith in you and the promises you have made. Keep us mindful of your presence with and among us, trusting that you will never abandon us.

Inspire us through the gift of your Holy Spirit to be a source of hope for others that we might promote unity, health, peace, and justice. We pray in the name of the God who is our source of hope.

Amen.



prayer



United in Glory



Mercy Health Lorain



Dr. Robert Thomas – a family physician in Lorain, embraced his role as the Physician Champion for the United in Glory program, a program designed to strengthen chronic disease measures especially for people of color. This program was conceived as the COVID-19 data began to show the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 for communities of color.

The program was funded by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary, who donated their “stimulus checks” to help start the program with the goal of attempting to close some of the gaps in health outcomes for communities of color.

The Mercy Health Community Health team collaborated with local churches and other non-profit organizations to roll out the program. The program provides access to free health screenings, health literacy classes, monitoring, physical exercise, and the opportunity to journey together with others who share the goal of mental, spiritual, and physical wellness.

Dr. Robert Thomas began exercising daily with the participants of the program while also coaching them with inspirational words. Twenty-five individuals were enrolled in this program, followed and monitored regularly by Dr. Thomas and the Mercy Health Community Health nurses for over 12 months.

In the end, more than 50 individuals participated in this program through the GroupMe App through which Dr. Thomas sent daily scripture and inspirational words to encourage and inspire the team.

After one year of rigorous physical, spiritual, and mental work, participants showed significant improvement on several risk factors such as blood pressure, blood platelet levels – diabetes, cholesterol, weight, and body mass index. Overall, participants shared an increased sense of wellbeing and health. The support and leadership of Ed Oley – Lorain Market President and Catherine Woskobnick – Director of Community Health were instrumental to the success of this program. 🌱



God of light and life,

Each day you give us countless opportunities to make choices. We pray that as we go about our day, we will choose to show compassion to everyone whose path crosses ours. Help us to be mindful that each person we encounter is a special person that you have made in your image and likeness.

In life, it is easy to get so self-focused that we forget the hurt that someone else may be experiencing. May we use every opportunity afforded us to shine your light into the lives of others. Your word teaches us that what we do for the least of our sisters and brothers we do for you. May the compassion we show be a glimpse into your saving grace.

May all this be done for your glory. We pray that through every smile, encounter, or service given, they see you in and through us.

We pray this in the name above all names.

Amen.



prayer

Healing Waters



Mercy Health Springfield



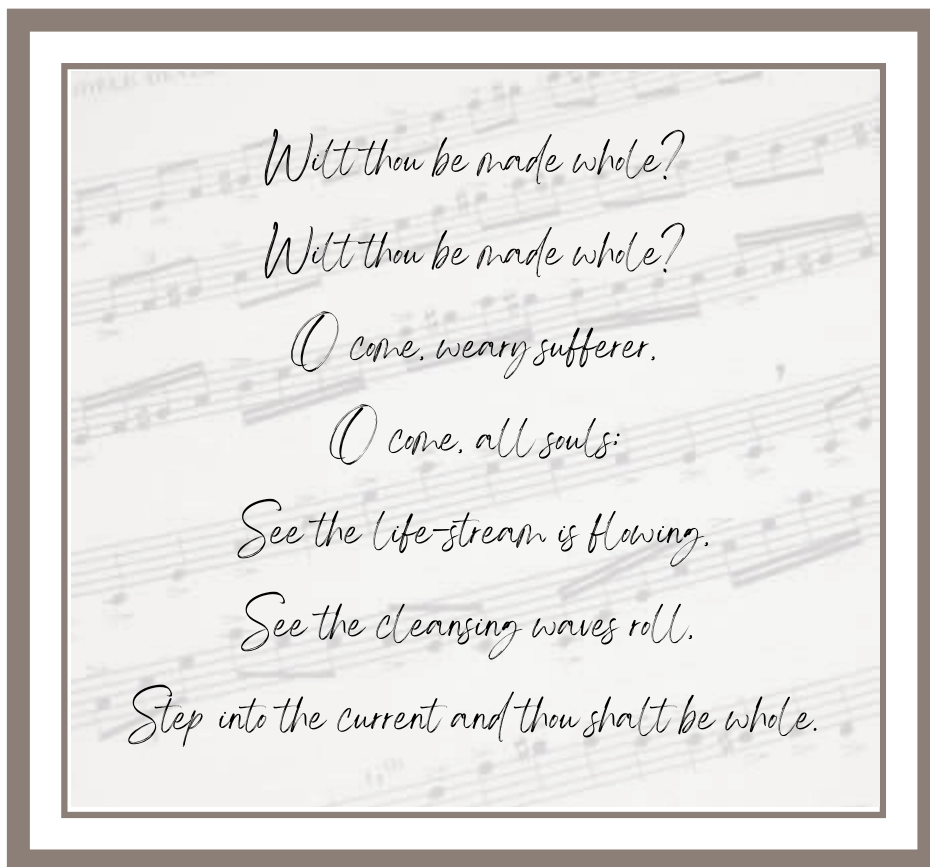
As I walked into room 8 of the inpatient unit here at Mercy Health Urbana, I was greeted by a sweet smile and soft voice. The patient, a woman in her 80s, and her equally sweet husband, welcomed me and my guitar into their lives. We reminisced about their time spent traveling and singing in churches, and how much music has meant to them over the years.

I encouraged the patient and her husband to sing with me as I intermittently provided hymns that were mentioned in our discussion. I sang softly and structured my guitar accompaniment to provide support to the patient and promote relaxation.

The music also provided a “break” from the sounds of a hospital. They expressed their appreciation and frequently sang along. The patient went on to share that they used to have several books filled with their favorite songs to sing at churches, but they had lost these beloved books years ago. A particular favorite song of the couple was about “Bethesda’s pool,” although they weren’t able to recall the title or any lyrics.

After my visit, I searched for and found a song titled "Wilt Thou Be Made Whole." I learned the song that evening and printed the lyrics for the patient and her husband, all the while hoping this was the song described by the patient.

The following day, I was welcomed once again into the patient's room for a visit and handed her her own copy of the lyrics. We started singing, and she immediately said "This is it!" with the biggest smile on her face. We sang through it twice. Truth be told, the patient didn't really need the lyrics, as soon as the music started, she remembered every word. I just wanted to replace the copy of the song that they had lost. Her husband became tearful as he watched his wife sing, and they both were so appreciative. It's a beautiful memory for me, and it shines a light on the power music has to provide us with joy. 🌸



"Wilt Thou Be Made Whole"
Words and music by William J. Kirkpatrick, 1912.

A Story of Grace



Mercy Health Toledo

The young adult patient began their day, as usual, riding their bicycle to work. It was a normal day with a normal ride to work until an accident with a truck. A Mercy Health St. Charles nurse was on the way to work and witnessed the accident. Helping to get the accident victim to the Emergency Department at Mercy Health St. Charles Hospital, the nurse stayed to comfort the patient, gave a police report, and provided support. Thankfully, the patient was able to be released – it could have been so much worse!

Once it was determined that the injuries were amazingly minimal, the loss of the bike loomed much larger. This was the patient's only way to get to work, so the loss of the bicycle was devastating. The nurse went home from work, bought the patient a new bike with their own money, and presented it to the patient. The patient and the patient's family could not believe the compassion and generous spirit of someone who not only stopped to help but stayed with the victim and then provided a new bike so this person could get to work. This is a staff member with a deep understanding of living out our mission and embodying our values every day. 🌟





God of all creation,

Heal the wounds that our greed has brought upon us and our world. Let us give our time, resources, and even ourselves to those in need, regardless of religion, tribe, race, gender, or political persuasion.

Open our eyes to the world that we may listen to those who are sad, depressed, and in sorrow, feel with those who see no meaning and hope, forgive those who have wronged us "seventy times seven times," be kind to those living in shame and guilt, and advocate for the victims of oppression and injustice.

By the presence of the Holy Spirit, may we find new ways to live compassionately in our times.

In Jesus the Christ.

Amen.



prayer



Mission in Motion



Mercy Health Youngstown

An Austintown Emergency Department registered nurse was driving to work for her evening shift when she noticed a truck driving erratically down the road. The nurse quickly realized something was wrong and followed the patient into the ER parking lot.

The gentleman driving barely got the car parked when the RN approached the vehicle and identified he was having a stroke. Staff assisted him into the emergency department where it was confirmed he had suffered from a cerebrovascular accident or stroke (CVA) and had been symptomatic for two days.

The gentleman was living in the vehicle with his wife and service dog. They had been living in the vehicle for over a year, stopping to sleep in a different store parking lot every night. The couple was from out of state and did not have any living next of kin. The conditions found in the vehicle were deplorable. Both patient and wife were covered head to toe in dog feces. The husband was the sole driver of the truck, as the wife did not have a driver's license. What makes this story unique is the compassion shown by the staff at Austintown Emergency Department.



A department technician collected money from the nurses, techs, and Ensemble registration clerks who voluntarily gave resources so that the tech could go to a store on her break to get the couple new clothes. She even stopped and got them breakfast.

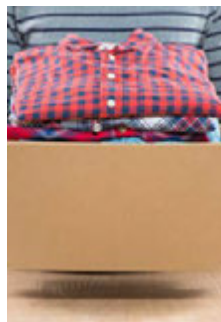
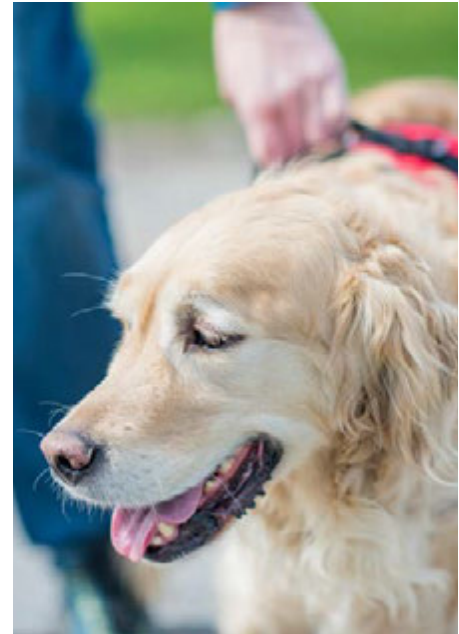
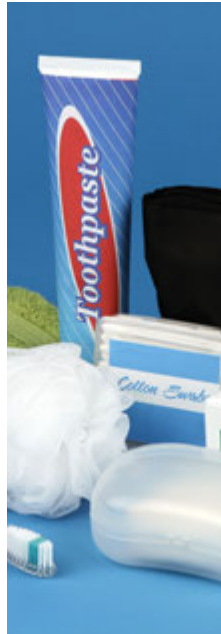
The supplies given to the couple included clothes, toiletries, dog food/bowls, and even some dog toys. However, the kindness of the staff did not stop there. The husband was worried about what would happen to his wife since he had to be admitted.

It was a 90-degree day, and the staff brought the wife into the emergency department and out of the truck for care, even after her husband was admitted. They also cared for the dog.

Social work spent countless hours assisting the wife to get her to a shelter, and to get semi-permanent care for their service dog.

While she waited, the staff gave her a bed to sleep in, a shower, and even cut her matted hair. The wife was eventually taken to a shelter near the hospital so she could visit her husband, and the two have since been reunited at the shelter.

Not only did the staff respond appropriately to the gentleman having a stroke, but they also deepened our ministry's impact by assisting a patient's family member with dignity and compassion. 🌟



"Egg"ceptional Care



Roper St. Francis


Glenn is our Community Paramedic. Going out into the community, Glenn embodies the call to improve the health and well-being of our communities by responding to the needs of patients who may be struggling to receive care and support. For example, last year Glenn began farming chickens and vegetables. Each week, Glenn brings in dozens and dozens of eggs, allowing us to provide patients who may be food insecure with fresh eggs. In addition to the eggs, he often supplies fresh produce as well.

Glenn keeps eggs and other farm-fresh items with him in his paramedicine truck and will often identify patients in need on his home visits. He always makes sure it is okay with the providers before giving. His generous heart does not go unnoticed and our patients are grateful for the eggs and care. Our patients often comment with pride on how they use the precious gift of food and the compassion Glenn provides. This is just another example of our teammates going above and beyond for our patients and community with compassion and care. 🌟





a blessing for caregivers



God of strength,

We ask for your blessing upon all caregivers as they strive to care for the sick and suffering among us. Provide them the strength they need when the challenge seems too great and the demands too many.

Help them to feel your presence always and give them the courage needed to sacrifice on behalf of those they serve each day. May they know the esteem in which they are held and the gratitude showered upon them by the people and communities they serve so selflessly.

Fill their hearts with the power of your consoling love as they strive each day to extend your compassion and mercy to those whom they encounter. Inspire us by their example, that we might be better reflections of your humility and grace and more profound sources of your good help and hope.

Amen.



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

Integrity

Compassion

Stewardship

Service

OUR VISION

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

BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH

bsmhealth.org

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