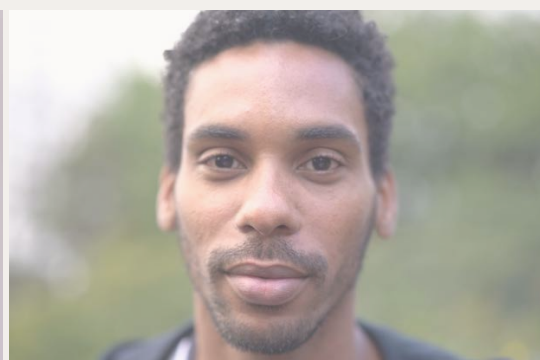
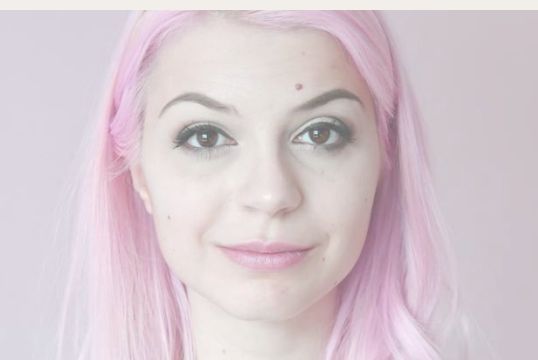




Stories of  
GRACE

2022

HUMAN DIGNITY



Reflecting God's Presence

REFLECTING GOD'S PRESENCE



# **BON SECOURS MERCY HEALTH**

A publication of the Center for Ministry Formation

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# Prayers & Reflections

## from across the ministry

The following prayers, stories, and images submitted by associates from across the ministry are used with permission.

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# Human

## Dignity

We commit to upholding  
the sacredness of life and  
being respectful & inclusive  
of everyone.





# in the image of God...

Genesis 1:27

Dear Bon Secours Mercy Health Associate,

Human Dignity, Integrity, Compassion, Stewardship, and Service. These values guide us in our mission of extending the compassionate ministry of Jesus by improving the health and well-being of our communities and bringing good help to those in need. Each one of our values is crucial to the success of our mission, yet our commitment to human dignity is truly fundamental. Made in God's image and likeness, every human life is of inestimable worth and significance. Each person is a gift to the world and therefore deserves the highest quality care and concern in mind, body, and spirit.

This value we hold is a source of great inspiration for us in health care, yet it also constitutes a great calling. Every day in our world, headlines make clear that dignity is not often valued, respected, and cherished in the way it should be. Such stories challenge us to renew our ministry calling and build a genuine culture of dignity wherever we have the privilege to serve. Towards that end, it is a great encouragement to be able to share and highlight stories of grace at work among us. They are stories about associates who are champions of dignity, embodying this value in big and small ways. They do so for the good of their patients and families, their colleagues and neighbors, and their broader communities. Their stories inspire us to continue affirming and promoting the dignity of everyone we encounter each day.

With gratitude for such good work and service, we gladly make available the following collection of stories and prayers, "Stories of Grace 2022: Reflecting God's Presence." Along with *Called to Serve 2022: Human Dignity*, these resources extend the reach of the *Stories of Grace 2022: Human Dignity* program across the wider Bon Secours Mercy Health ministry. It is our hope that we all may be encouraged by these inspiring accounts. May they remind us that God's presence is truly reflected among us as we protect and defend the infinite value of each human person, made in God's image.



*John M. Starcher, Jr.*

John M. Starcher, Jr.  
Chief Executive Officer



*Sister Anne Lutz*

Sr. Anne Lutz, CBS  
Chief Sponsorship Officer

# In God's Image and Likeness: A Reflection on the Dignity of the Human Person

**“Then God said, ‘Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness.’”**

*Genesis 1:26*

These words from the first book of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures have inspired thousands of years of reflection about the sacredness of human life. Of all that could be said, we at least understand that being human somehow means that humans are called to make God's presence visible to the wider world. To be made in God's image means that, as each one of us is called into being, we reveal something of the Creator's own heart to the rest of the human family and indeed to all of creation. Consequently, from the first moment of life, every human person possesses an inestimable value and significance. Each human being is worthy of our respect and reverence.

The United States Catholic Bishops have said, “The human person is the clearest reflection of God's presence in the world; all of the Church's work in pursuit of both justice and peace is designed to protect and promote the dignity of every person” (USCCB, *The Challenge of Peace*, n. 15). As a ministry of the Church and guided by our mission statement, Bon Secours Mercy Health protects and promotes the dignity of every person, especially those who are poor, dying, and underserved. Our value of dignity is intrinsic to the mission that unites us and for which we as an organization have been called into being: to extend Jesus' compassionate ministry to the world today.

There will always be threats to dignity that we are obliged to face, owing both to our human weakness and the complexities of living in a global society. Yet, we strive to respond conscientiously to such threats. As we work personally to overcome our tendencies to bias, and commit as a society to foster greater inclusion, solidarity, and cooperation, we trust in the presence and inspiration of God.

In the stories and prayers gathered here, God's presence is made manifest, as our associates selflessly share their gifts and talents to affirm and promote the dignity of those they encounter each day. May we all be encouraged by these stories of grace so that we may bear God's image faithfully to a world in need.

# Bon Secours Baltimore Partners in Community



The Bon Secours Community Resource Center opened its doors to the public on April 26th, 2022, after a year-long development process that included engaging 85 West Baltimore residents in the center’s design and raising over \$6.8 million to fund its construction. The need for such an amenity in this area of Baltimore City was clear. The Boyd-Booth community of Southwest Baltimore has long been plagued by chronic disinvestment. The neighborhood’s decline can be summarized by a few indicators:

- More than 46% of Boyd-Booth households live below the poverty line vs. 20% for Baltimore City.
- At 24.3%, unemployment is double that of Baltimore City.
- One-third of adults 25 and older do not have a high school diploma, twice Baltimore City's level.

A formerly loved public library branch in Boyd-Booth was closed in the nineties and then sat vacant for over 20 years, becoming an eyesore to the community. Our neighbors pointed to the need for a revival of the old library to help combat the effects of long-term blight. Dionne Burley has been living in Boyd-Booth for over 50 years, 30 of those years living right across the street from the old library. Dionne remarked, “I would say that this is a family community, and at one time it was a tight community. It was full around here: full of energy, full of life, full of kindness. The first change started when they took the library away. There was nowhere for us to go. We spent a lot of time in the

library, not only for books but also for resources. The staff at the library was like our aunts and uncles; they took care of us.”

Dionne participated in the community design process for the Community Resource Center (CRC). Now, from her home a block from the center, Dionne can see a change, even since April.

“The building itself has made a change in the neighborhood already. It is much brighter here. It is open to the people in the neighborhood, already treating them like family. It has the resources for us to get the help that we need to move forward and to explore new things. The gymnasium has given the younger kids something to do to keep their minds focused and be calm and comfortable. The security staff is very friendly and interacts outside with the kids. I see them appreciating that. This area up here is clean and peaceful.

“My dream for this community, and I am looking forward to it, is that it will go back to being all family oriented. They will clean up more, they will make the schools better, and that will give us a better mindset to move forward and to want more from life.

“I can see that the CRC has made its presence known. Even on my block, the area is getting a little cleaner, and the brightness from the CRC building is helping. Bon Secours is a great partner to the community. Now, we just need to get inside the building to get all the resources that are being offered. I know that if someone comes to the building, gets help, and takes that info back to their family and friends then more will follow, just like a domino effect.” ✨

“

**Society as a whole must respect, defend and promote the dignity of every human person, at every moment and in every condition of that person’s life.**

Pope John Paul II  
*Evangelium vitae*, n. 81

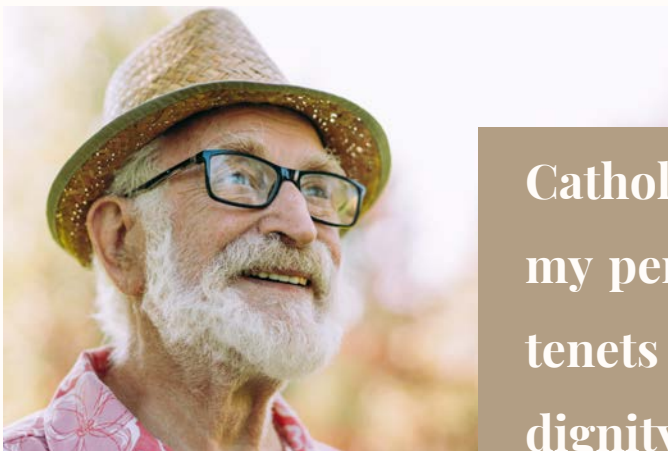


# Respecting the Dignity of Life

I returned to Good Samaritan Hospital as a Gift Officer earlier this year. I was excited to accept the position as I felt like I was coming “home.” I worked previously at the hospital from 1983-1988 as the Director of Palliative Care and had the privilege of working with at least a thousand terminally ill patients and their loved ones during that time. The program provided a full interdisciplinary team of services and integrated both inpatient and home care services. The hospital recognized, before there was a hospice program in our community, that there needed to be a better way to meet the physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs of dying patients.

Each of us on the team felt fortunate to be by the bedsides and in the homes of those we served. We always felt that we got more than we gave. Walking with, not leading, patients and families in their final journey was extremely gratifying. We were often asked by others how we were able to work almost exclusively with individuals that died. It was sad at times but not depressing, and it helped each of us to set priorities in our lives about what really mattered.

A question I was often asked was, “As a person of the Jewish faith, how do you work at a Catholic hospital?” That was not a hard question for me to answer. Principles of Catholic healthcare aligned with my personal beliefs and with the tenets of Judaism: respect for the dignity of life, though the life may be impaired, the provision of care regardless of the ability to pay, exercising responsible stewardship of resources, and contributing to the common good.



**Catholic healthcare aligned with my personal beliefs and with the tenets of Judaism: respect for the dignity of life . . .**



I moved on to work for the new hospice, which the hospital played a critical role in helping to establish. I retired after 32 years working in hospice, yet I knew when I retired that I had finished one chapter but was ready to move on to another. COVID came along, and I used that time to take a long overdue rest and give thought to the next phase of my career.

When I became aware of the position I now hold and the possibility of returning to the place where my career in Rockland began, I knew it was the right choice. I did not know it at the time, but apparently there was a plan for me. I am delighted to be back at the hospital raising much-needed funds for an institution whose mission inspires my work. ✨





# Bon Secours Hampton Roads

## Special Delivery

One early morning, security professional Robert Hamel saw a gentleman pull up to the main entrance at Bon Secours Mary Immaculate Hospital. The man got out of his car and started waving frantically to get the officer's attention. Hamel proceeded to greet the gentleman who informed him that his wife was giving birth and needed help. Hamel instructed the gentleman to drive quickly to the Emergency Department (ED) where staff would meet him and his wife. Hamel phoned Labor and Delivery and informed them of the situation. Once Hamel arrived at the ED entrance, he took a wheelchair out and placed it next to the car. He then noticed the mother holding the baby's head and part of the body.

Without the care team present, Hamel sprang into action. He helped her get the baby fully removed while the father was watching nervously. Hamel gave the baby to the father and instructed him to hold the baby close to the mother since the placenta was still attached. He took the mother and baby in a wheelchair to the triage room where the ED staff took over. Hamel then remembered that the couple's car was still running in front of the ED. He ran back out to the vehicle, cleaned up the car, and parked it in a safe spot. Hamel retrieved the mother's purse, ensuring that it got back to her, along with the car keys. Hamel is a valuable member of the Allied Universal Security Team at Mary Immaculate Hospital and truly fulfills our Mission and lives our Values. ✨

**All human beings are born free  
and equal in dignity and rights.**



United Nations  
*Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 1*



# prayer

We are all equal as human beings. Sister and brother. Employer and employee. Chief officer and manual laborer. Equally loved before God.

Yet, our system discriminates based on education, abilities, race, luck, and many of God's children are placed into a hierarchy of inequality and discomfort.

We are called to stretch out our arms between the tiny, exclusive tip and the broad, platform of the masses. To form a bridge, to create a way for those made unequal to come together as one in equality, in human dignity.

Loving God, Creator of dignity and all that lives, help us be bridges. Help us cry out for respect and value for all when society forgets that at in our most basic nature, we are all God's children.

*Amen.*

Education for Justice



# Bon Secours Health System - Ireland

## Dignity Across Borders

On Friday, June 3, 2022, Jason Kenny, CEO of Bon Secours Hospital Limerick at Barringtons, and Owen McCarthy, Head of Mission, had the privilege of visiting Limerick Educate Together Secondary School as a follow-up to the funding support of €21,000 from Bon Secours Health System. They thought they were meeting with Eoin Shinnars, Principal, the two Ukrainian teachers and the eighteen Ukrainian students. However, when they arrived, they were met with the aforementioned members of the school community, together with the entire teaching staff and general student body on their final day of the academic year.

Eoin Shinnars spoke glowingly of the generosity of the Bon Secours Health System in funding the partial employment of two Ukrainian teachers to assist with the support and integration of eighteen Ukrainian students into the school community, and of the success of this project thus far. He also spoke proudly of the plans in place for the Summer Programme for the eighteen Ukrainian students and their families, with a primary focus on integration.



One of the Ukrainian teachers and three of the Ukrainian students shared their experience of Ireland, Limerick, and the school community, and of their appreciation for the funding support of the Bon Secours Health System. Jason and Owen were treated to a poem written by one of the Ukrainian teachers, a piece of classical music by a Ukrainian student, and yet another student sang a traditional Ukrainian song for them. The two Ukrainian teachers also prepared a traditional salad in honour of the occasion. They were also presented with a beautiful Genesis piece.

It was indeed a shining example of Good Help to Those in Need. 



“Only respect for life can be the foundation and guarantee of the most precious and essential goods of society, such as democracy and peace. There can be no true democracy without a recognition of every person's dignity and without respect for his or her rights. Nor can there be true peace unless life is defended and promoted.”

Pope John Paul II  
*Evangelium vitae*, n. 101





# A Caring Community

Our providers are at the core of the care we provide as a ministry. Without them we cannot function at the level we need to and sustain our work as a ministry. Because of this, caring for our providers is a top priority. During the week of July 31, 2022, one of our providers, Dr. Randall Morris of CrossRidge Pediatrics and Internal Medicine, was admitted to St. Mary's Hospital in Richmond, VA. After three years of treatment for colon cancer he was nearing the end of life. A lung scan had clearly shown the spread of cancer throughout his body. Dr. Morris courageously decided it was time to transition to hospice care.

One visitor during that week was particularly impactful on the last days of Dr. Morris' life: Dr. George Parker, who has served our ministry as a physician leader, always looking for ways to improve quality while creating a caring environment where patients want to come, and providers want to practice. Having learned about his colleague, Dr. Parker went to the fifth floor at St. Mary's and visited with Dr. Morris. Dr. Parker expressed his care and concern and asked permission to share his situation with colleagues in the Medical Group.



When Dr. Morris agreed, Medical Group leaders prepared a notice that went out the next day, notifying all providers and staff that Dr. Morris was going into hospice and would not return to CrossRidge. He was only in hospice for three days before he passed quietly with loved ones by his side. Those were incredibly significant days for Dr. Morris and his family. There was an outpouring of support and care from many in the medical group, which was healing for all involved. Dr. Parker's request to inform the wider community and Dr. Morris' agreement meant that many were able to voice their care and concern for their colleague during his last days. Those who knew him had time to share their love for

him, and Dr. Morris was able to hear it and know the impact he had on the lives of so many patients and other providers. His vulnerability turned into a cause of strength for our ministry. In weakness a new strength was found and through a caring conversation our ministry was transformed into a place where goodness, kindness, and excellent care were the focus. Dr. Morris was cared for in a way he never envisioned, and our providers were able to care for him and return the good he shared with the world back to him and his family.

As a ministry we are working every day to create an environment where providers are valued and recognized for their contributions. We need to care for them so that they can care for our patients and our communities. This story is a powerful example of what makes our ministry so unique. ✨



*Human dignity is inherent in every person from the first moment of his or her existence. Even under the most challenging circumstances, we never lose that inherent dignity, which brings a unique quality and meaning to everything we do and are.*

Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference  
*Care at the End of Life*






# The Power of Perseverance

Shanita started her career with Bon Secours St. Francis in 1995 as a Certified Nursing Assistant. By 1999, Shanita found herself in the difficult situation of being a single mom, providing for her two young children. The three of them lived in a small apartment in what she described as “not the greatest area,” but they were together and that was all that mattered. She dreamed of giving her children a better life in a safe home and started the process with Habitat for Humanity in January of 2000.

Throughout the Habitat for Humanity process, Shanita met a lot of great people who worked with her on her credit, maintaining work-life balance, and the ins and outs of homeownership. She and her children moved into their new home in November of 2000, just in time for Thanksgiving. Shanita knew she wanted to better herself and work in healthcare but was not sure exactly how. By 2015 Shanita had remarried and went back to school for a bachelor’s degree in Social Work from Limestone College.

She remembered how much she enjoyed working with the patients and staff at St. Francis, and how hearing the prayers over the intercom nourished her spirit when she needed it most.

She returned to St. Francis as a medical social worker in the Community Health department. Shanita describes herself as a people-person and has always wanted to help others. Through her experience with Habitat for Humanity, she is especially passionate about helping her patients find affordable housing.

Shanita says returning to St. Francis feels like her life has come full circle. Working at St. Francis, Shanita is able to live out her calling to help others. She says that assisting her patients out in the community to find the resources they need does not even feel like work! 



# prayer

God of all life,

Help us to appreciate the great gift that is human life formed in your image, a reflection of your holiness.

Help us to recognize you in all whom you have created: children not yet born, families affected by poverty and war, people of different abilities, people from other lands, and all who are victims of hatred and racism.

Help us to bear witness to the dignity of all whom you have created, regardless of stage of life, or wealth, or ability, or color, or creed, for every person is fully equal in your loving eyes.

Share with us your holy knowledge that we are all your children, each bestowed with inherent dignity. May your justice reign forever!

*Amen.*

United States Conference  
of Catholic Bishops







Mercy Health Cincinnati

# Quilt of Love


One morning, I responded to an urgent message requesting a chaplain to contact the son of a patient. The patient, whom I will call Pam, had been admitted the night prior after falling and sustaining a fracture that required surgery. She had spent the day preparing for her husband's funeral and was now going to miss it. Pam's son asked if we could arrange a video conference so that she could participate virtually in the celebration of her beloved's life.

We quickly tested the technology and, after discussing this option with the patient, arranged for me to take a tablet to Pam's room shortly before the start of the funeral. Pam shared with me that she was anxious about possible glitches and asked if I would stay with her throughout the service. I was honored and happy to do that, as she was otherwise going to be alone, with all of her family and friends gathered at the church.


Before the funeral began, I gathered some items that I hoped would help her feel connected to what was happening at the church: an electric tealight candle, a prayer quilt, and a hope jar; and my colleagues graciously worked together to get a beautiful flower arrangement for her room.

Pam was touched by all these gestures, and also by the funeral service that we witnessed together. Afterwards, as she was awaiting transport to surgery, she shared stories about her husband and his family, as well as her son and his family. It was a privilege to hear these sacred stories, and to get to know the man whose celebration of life we had just shared together.

Two days later, Pam joined her husband, following an unexpected medical crisis and transfer to the ICU – exactly one week after her husband passed. As I write this, my heart still feels heavy for her son and his family. What an unimaginable amount of loss in just one week.



I gathered some items that I hoped would help her feel connected to what was happening at the church: an electric tealight candle, a prayer quilt, and a hope jar.



The following week, I discovered the flowers that had been left behind in the ICU, along with the quilt that I placed on Pam the day of her husband's funeral. Ordinarily, we encourage family members to take these quilts home with them after their loved one dies, but this one was left behind, no doubt in the chaos and shock of what had transpired.

I checked the funeral home that had been used for her husband's service and saw that Pam's was also listed there and would be taking place at the same church. I went to the visitation and delivered the quilt to the patient's son, who remembered seeing it in the ICU and was so grateful to learn that it had been given to his mother on the day of his father's funeral.

He expressed his heartfelt thanks and hugged me twice. It felt as though the care we provided for this lovely woman had come full circle. ✨



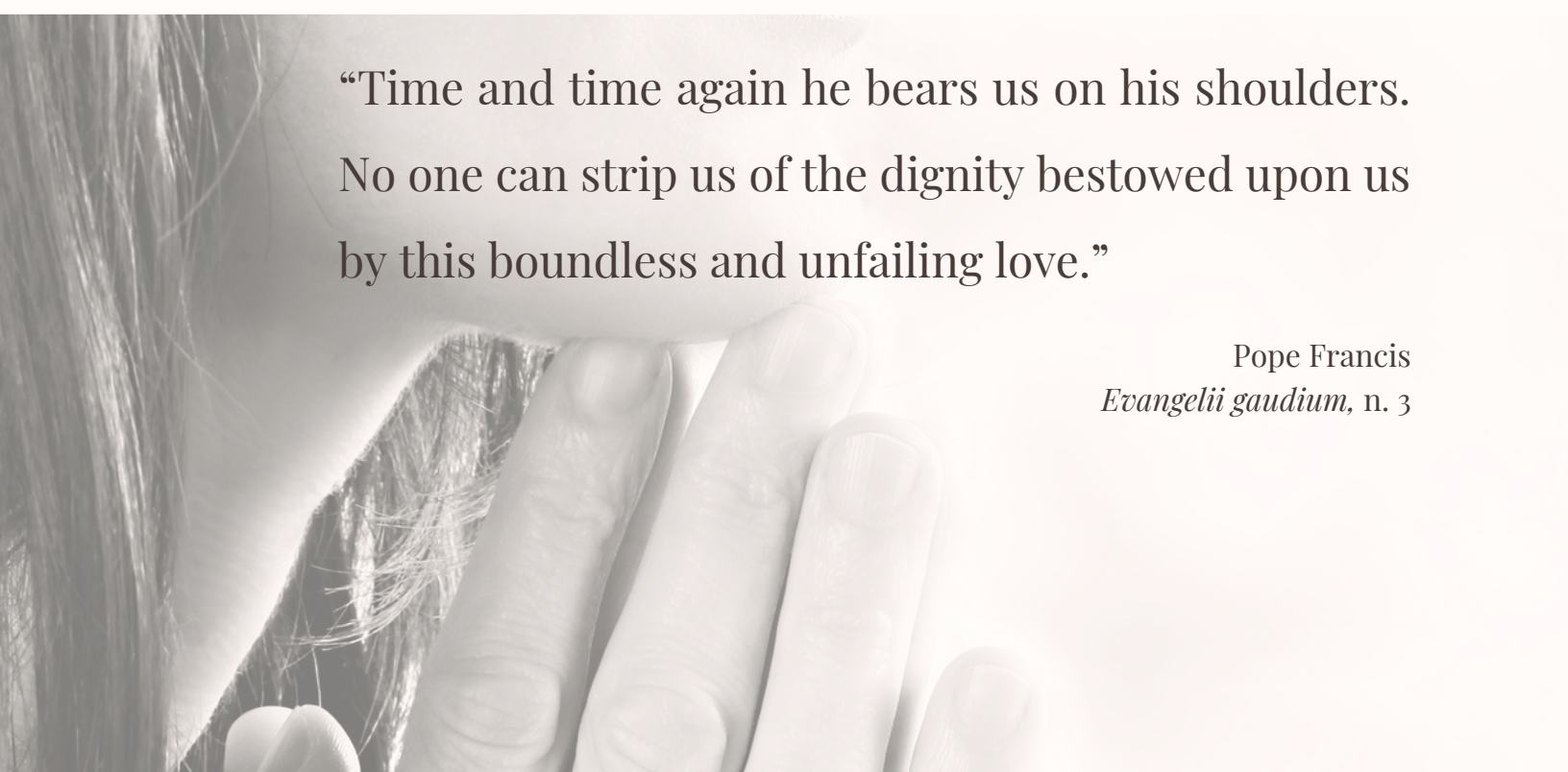


# Hope & Support at Rock Bottom

Unfortunately, as many of us know, drugs and overdoses are something we are seeing way too much of in our area. Recently, in Powell County, a person had overdosed, and his friends thought enough to get him to the nearest medical facility. The patient was dropped off, with agonal respiration and barely a palpable pulse.

The staff quickly jumped into action and contacted 911, performed CPR and administered Narcan. The patient became awake and alert and wanted to leave without waiting for an ambulance. Sandy McCoy, APRN, sat on the ground in the parking lot and talked with the patient about his choices, treatment options, his family, and how he could indeed turn it around. She quite simply met the patient where he was, on a gravel parking lot in Powell County, literally at rock bottom.

This is amazing, because when reviewing the tapes to ensure the timeline was met, Dana Abney, practice manager, stumbled on something even more heartwarming. Rhonda Woosley, PSR, had stopped and could be seen praying for the patient as she walked back into the building. He may not have sought treatment that day, but we must know the words and actions of our staff interacted with him in a way to offer hope out of his life of addiction. ✨



“Time and time again he bears us on his shoulders.  
No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us  
by this boundless and unfailing love.”

Pope Francis  
*Evangelii gaudium*, n. 3



# prayer

God,

As I enter this day and these moments that lie ahead of me, whatever comes, I ask that your Spirit lead me, that I might do better and go deeper than my own skills or understanding might equip. Allow me to see in every volunteer, visitor, patient and coworker, the great detail with which You knit us all together, and to treat each person with such exquisite dignity, kindness, and sacredness that they might see your face instead of mine.

I pray that as I go about my daily tasks that humility would lead my every thought and action and my integrity would be sound. Allow me to see the value of each member of the team that surrounds me, as you bring us together as the body of Christ. Show me the giftedness you have breathed in every human heart, that I might recognize and respond to it.

I pray that regardless of my audience, large or small, humble or high profile, they will receive the same version of me, and see compassion, stewardship, service, courtesy, and care – the best I can give, every time. Help me to see the needs that are unseen and allow me to leave space for your heavenly errands. For it is in those joyful blessings we overflow.

May God be Praised.

*Amen.*

C. Young, Springfield, OH





# Sustaining Power of Sacrament

The past few years have taken their toll on healthcare professionals. Physicians, nurses, and respiratory therapists along with many other caregivers have fought to save the lives of men and women infected with the COVID-19 virus. Through their efforts, many people were treated, made recoveries, and have been able to leave the hospital to continue living their lives. One remarkable story of treatment and recovery during the past year at St. Rita's Medical Center in Lima, Ohio is that of Bart Recker.

Bart was diagnosed with COVID and admitted to St. Rita's on September 22, 2021. Like many patients with COVID, Bart knew he might have to be placed on a ventilator. As a person of deep faith, it was important for Bart that he be able to receive the Eucharist before this happened. Bart's request was honored and one of the last things he was given to eat before being put on life support was the Body of Christ.

What no one knew at the start of Bart's hospitalization was that he would need to spend such an extended amount of time on life support. He required the help of both a ventilator to breathe for him, and then a life support machine that helped to oxygenate his blood so that his lungs and heart could rest and recover from the effects of the virus. During his months of treatment, his wife Mindy stayed with Bart in the intensive care unit. She prayed the rosary and read scriptures to him daily. After over one hundred days of treatment, Bart was able to come off the life support machines. When he finally passed a swallow test at the end of January, the first thing he requested was to receive the Eucharist again. Mindy shared that the support she received from Catholic Ministries



during the dark months of Bart's illness were a Godsend to her. She specifically expressed gratitude for the spiritual care offered by Fr. Charles, the Catholic priest on staff at St. Rita's.

Bart's story is one that profoundly touched the members of the Spiritual Care Department at St. Rita's. We witnessed his gratitude for the care team at our hospital as well as his faith in Christ, the great physician and healer of souls. After months of treatment, Bart was able to make a full recovery and return home with his wife Mindy. We celebrate his recovery along with his family's deep faith in the grace and mercy of God. ✨



“The human person is the clearest reflection of God’s presence in the world; all of the Church’s work in pursuit of both justice and peace is designed to protect and promote the dignity of every person.”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
*The Challenge of Peace*, n. 15





# Dignity - One Pastry at a Time

John Jackson is always exuding the mission - the love and light of the Mercy Health mission. Not only does he provide inspiration to the New Life Hospice staff with creativity, motivation, and love, but he also demonstrates that same degree of caring for our patients.

I crossed paths with him at Kiedrowski's Bakery and he shared with me that he had a hospice patient who said they had never tried a famous Kiedrowski's snuggle, one of the bakery's most loved pastries. John could not allow that to happen and wanted to fulfill this patient's desire.



When I met John at the bakery, he was picking up a fresh one to take to their home on his spiritual care visit. He knew he could not allow more time to pass to care for the needs of his patient. John is an amazing soul who always extends the healing ministry of Jesus and sees the human dignity in all, even one pastry at a time. ✨

“Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn, and the poor, are masterpieces of God’s creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect.”

Pope Francis  
*Day for Life Greeting, 2013*



# prayer



Almighty God,

It is often easy to identify that which distinguishes and divides us.

We belong to different political parties, different religious traditions, different ethnicities, races, and genders.

Yet, we remain united in and by our common humanity. Keep us steadfast in your love that we might be moved by a spirit of solidarity to affirm and promote, despite our differences, the dignity of all.

We pray in God's name.

*Amen.*



# Living with Purpose & Dignity

Each day I thank God for giving me the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others here at Urbana Hospital. What a pleasure to work and be able to see and welcome the community, to help those who need services navigate them and to make connections. Within my realm of work, I am privileged to work with volunteers and staff, whether it is getting the morning started with the aroma of freshly made varieties of coffees for all to enjoy, helping someone find their way, taking someone to the Chapel for prayer, or taking time to visit patients and family members. My life has been touched.

I have the honor of coordinating the admission of the swing bed patients, which includes offering a variety of activities. While working on a craft project with a patient, “Elizabeth,” she explained to me that she was not too crafty, but she would try it. She mentioned several times how she was not creative, that she would mess it up and it would not turn out. Then we began talking about life, her home, her pet, her childhood, and family. She said how much she really enjoyed sharing her life story, and how calming that was for her.



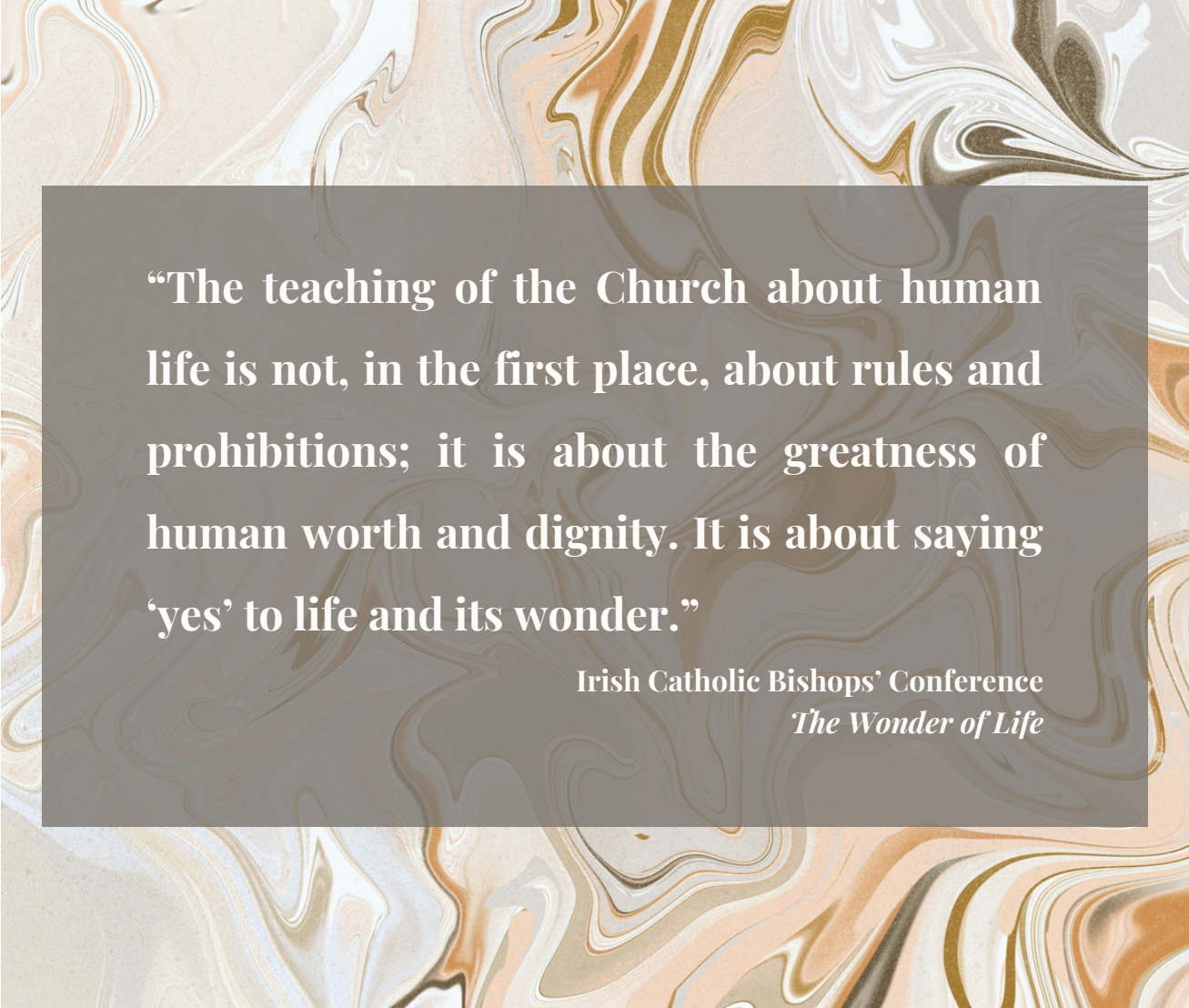
**“You helped me live with purpose, confidence, conversation, and dignity.”**

During this time, I wanted to make sure that she was positive and that her dignity was respected while trying something new, even though she did not feel confident about it at first. Step by step, I assured her that she was doing great.

The craft began with her choosing colors of paint, and as she slowly poured paint in the vase, she was in “awe” watching the colorful swirls of what she was creating. She expressed how she could not believe how beautiful it was, and that she had honestly made it. By the end of our session, she had made one for her sister and a couple for herself.

The next day I returned to her room with a beautiful wreath to put around the vase she created for her sister. The patient was so proud of her projects, and she said, “I know I made that for my sister, but I am going to keep it for myself, honey, because it is just beautiful. You helped me live with purpose, confidence, conversation, and dignity.”

In my work each day, I am always reaching out to make a difference in the lives of others, but to be honest, the difference that others make in my life each day has been such a blessing to my heart and soul. ✨



“The teaching of the Church about human life is not, in the first place, about rules and prohibitions; it is about the greatness of human worth and dignity. It is about saying ‘yes’ to life and its wonder.”

Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference  
*The Wonder of Life*





Mercy Health Toledo

# Healing Flowers



Through the generosity of a benefactor, all the patients who come to Mercy Health Willard Hospital for chemo treatment receive a lovely bouquet of flowers. Each one is different every time and has a simple message of encouragement and support written on the little attached card.

One day, a gentleman who was scheduled to come found out he did not need to get chemo that day. However, because the message did not get relayed in time to cancel the flowers, here sat a happy bouquet of sunflowers with delicate greens and a touch of blue in a simple, undistracting basket. The chaplain said, “No problem. I can take them to him.” Try as she might, there was no answer at home. The day wore on, and still no answer. The end of day came and there sat the flowers.

As God would have it, there was a young lady who had a serious surgery that morning (cancer found) and was staying overnight. This chaplain knew exactly who the flowers were really meant for. Those sunflowers spoke of calmness and healing to her. All our bouquets are what we call “Intentional Bouquets.” 99% of the time the flowers go to whomever they were intended. It is that 1% of flowers that have a “mind of their own” and go to the person that the flowers knew they were meant for. ✨

# prayer



O God, give us your gifts so that we may live and work according to your vision for humanity, a vision where all are treated with respect and love because of their great worth in your eyes. May we answer your call to treat all as we ourselves wish to be treated and to promote the healing of all persons, especially those who are most vulnerable.

*Amen.*

Catholic Health Association



# Healing & Transformation

It was spring of this year that the Intermediate Coronary Unit (IMC) met a patient who would forever change our unit. This patient was admitted for altered mental status. Information initially was vague other than that she had the mental age of around seven years old and was found lying on the bathroom floor after a “fall.” She barely spoke a word at all, to the point we questioned if she could speak.

She was very scared and withdrawn. She would not let anyone touch her. She refused to allow anyone to help her into a patient gown. One of our patient care assistants (PCA) was asked to sit with her. Through patience and kind perseverance she was able to gain her trust. It was identified in the ED that the patient had numerous bruises on her face and arms, but the real alarm came when our PCA assisted her in getting cleaned up in the bathroom. The PCA notified the unit manager immediately that the bruising was more than just on her face, for she had extensive bruising and bite marks all over her body. It was clear she was being abused physically, and we also suspected sexually.

Youngstown police, rape counselors and the Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) were immediately notified. This patient was known to the board but had fallen through the cracks after her original guardian passed away. The staff on IMC were called upon to do things we have never had to do. We advocated strongly for this patient to get the care and attention she needed. Even though some things were out of our comfort zone, we did them because our patient, who could not stand up for herself, needed it.

This patient was on our unit for several weeks, working through the court system for guardianship and placement. During that time, the staff went above and beyond to care



**Even though some things were out of our comfort zone, we did them because our patient, who could not stand up for herself, needed it.**



for her. She had nothing! No clothes, shoes, or personal belongings. During her stay, IMC staff celebrated Easter with her, brought her toys, coloring books, clothes, and personal care items. We had a party for her and had our secretary's husband dress up as her favorite Paw Patrol character.

Throughout her stay we watched her flourish into a happy, very talkative, and sweet young lady. She would wait for staff in the morning to greet each one with a smile and a hug, and if one of her favorite employees was off, she made sure to tell them she missed them. The day she left was emotional for all of us. Many had tears. Sad to see her go but happy that she was going to a wonderful home. The representative from the MCBDD said she has never witnessed anything like it. She called it surreal. Staff who were off Facetimed in to say goodbye and wish her well.

This patient made as big an impact on the staff of IMC as we did on her. I know in my heart that it was because of their interventions that this patient did not return to a horrible living situation and now has a chance for a happy, healthy life. IMC staff truly saved this patient's life.

IMC was also recognized by the MCBDD for the care of this patient. IMC understands and values trauma informed care and resiliency! Your willingness to go above and beyond for our individuals means the world! ✨







# Caring for a Best Friend

A true act of Roper St. Francis Healthcare's mission of "healing all people with compassion, faith and excellence" was on full display at Roper St. Francis Mount Pleasant Hospital recently.

Ed Crandall, one of the hospital's new patients, has been caring for his wife's dog, Pepper, for over a year since she died. Sadly, Pepper's health took a turn for the worse, and there was nothing the veterinarian could do to relieve her suffering. Because Ed was not able to leave his hospital room, nurses who had been caring for him decided it was important for him to see his dog of 17 years one last time.

"Because we have therapy dogs, we thought, 'Why not bring Pepper to see him so they could have some quality time together?'" said Helen Clark, RN. After speaking with Ed's daughter, Beth Goodier, arrangements were made to bring Pepper in to see Ed.

"We are just so happy we were able to facilitate this visit, because 17 years is a long time with your best friend," said Helen. Ed spent the next few hours with his dog on his lap and his daughter by his side.

"The most important aspect of this story is the care that I received at Roper St. Francis Mount Pleasant Hospital. They are excellent beyond words," said Ed. ✨



# Blessing for Caregivers

God of Life and Purpose,

You have richly blessed this ministry with incredible people, skilled and talented in their chosen professions and whose hearts are turned outward to the needs of others.

Even in times of challenge and change, you continue to refresh us with resilient caregivers committed to protecting and defending the dignity of all those they encounter. We celebrate them and continue to pray your blessing upon them.

Grant them joy in the cause of service, compassion in the midst of pain and suffering, and a genuine love for humanity that can propel them each day to extend your healing touch to those who desperately need it, especially people who are poor, dying, and underserved.

As ministers of grace, we pray.

*Amen.*

# 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.

# Values

Human Dignity

Integrity

Compassion

Stewardship

Service

# 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

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