

A good beginning continues

MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital still honors benefactor's wishes to maintain Catholic heritage

When Baltimore merchant and philanthropist Thomas J. O'Neill donated funds from his estate in 1919 to build a Catholic hospital in Baltimore, one of his wishes was that all people who entered the campus be cared for with dignity, respect and compassion. The hospital, which he asked not to bear his name, was called Good Samaritan Hospital.

Since its founding in 1968, the hospital – renamed MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital in 2012 – has honored O'Neill's wishes, striving to uphold its Catholic identity, and to treat everyone coming through its doors with the dignity and respect they deserve, a key principle of Catholic health care.

Reaffirmation of Catholic tradition

Throughout its nearly 50-year-old history, MedStar Good Samaritan – one of five Catholic hospitals affiliated with the Archdiocese of Baltimore – has remained loyal to its mission of being guided by Catholic tradition and trusted to deliver ideal healthcare experiences.

Last fall, a special Rededication Mass, presided over by Archbishop William E. Lori and concelebrated by Auxiliary Bishop Denis J. Madden and Father Guy Kagere, director of pastoral care at MedStar Good Samaritan, was held in the hospital's Chapel. The leadership, physicians, nurses and members of the MedStar Good Samaritan community reaffirmed the faith-based tradition for which the hospital was originally established.

"Our patients and community look to us – as Good Samaritans – for compassionate care, love, dignity, comfort in times of grief, and respect," said Father Kagere. "Taking time to celebrate our Catholic heritage helps

us remain dedicated to serving those who need us most."

Providing daily faith, peace to help heal

The chapel at MedStar Good Samaritan is a central, visible identifier of the hospital's Catholic identity. Situated on the first floor of the hospital, just off the main lobby, the chapel serves as a place for patients and visitors to find a few moments of quiet and solace. In addition to beginning and ending each day with prayer, Catholic Mass is celebrated each Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and a weekend Mass is celebrated on Saturday evening.

The availability of sacraments is an essential aspect to fulfilling the spiritual needs of patients, their families and staff. Holy Communion is offered daily; anointing of the sick is administered to new patients; and the sacrament of reconciliation is available upon request. In addition, services are provided for Protestant patients, and for those of other faith traditions.

Adhering to its Catholic principles

In December, MedStar Good Samaritan named George Farley as assistant vice president for Mission Integration, a new position for the hospital. In this new role, Farley is responsible for oversight of the campus faith-based initiatives, Catholic identity and the hospital's compliance with the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services.

The purpose of the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health



George Farley



MEDSTAR GOOD SAMARITAN HOSPITAL

Archbishop William E. Lori presided at a Rededication Mass in the chapel last year.

Care Services, as outlined by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, is to make sure that all Catholic Health Care services follow the 72 directives, based on Catholic moral and ethical teaching and arranged into six major categories that guide the provision of care for Catholic Health Care facilities.

According to Farley, "This is an extremely important role in any Catholic hospital and carries tremendous responsibility, acting as a liaison for the hospital and the archdiocese in making sure we are truly a Catholic health care institution."

Nearly 2,000 associates are committed to keeping MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital's Catholic traditions alive, offering compassionate care and service to patients and support to their families. Although Thomas O'Neill is not alive to see the fruits of his generosity, his spirit lives on throughout the hospital's campus, every day for nearly 50 years. ●



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