

Ministry News from

Joe McDonald, President & CEO Catholic Health

Peter Bergmann, President & CEO Sisters of Charity Hospital

After 165 Years, Daughters of Charity Leave Lasting Legacy at Sisters of Charity Hospital Community Calls Sisters to Serve in Areas of Greatest Need

James Polk was president of the United States, the California Gold Rush was underway and the American Flag contained just 30 stars, when eight Daughters of Charity, then known as Sisters of Charity, first came to Buffalo. The sisters arrived in 1848 at the request of Bishop John Timon, the first bishop of Buffalo, to serve in education, social ministry and healthcare, establishing the area's first hospital – Sisters of Charity Hospital – on Pearl Place.

Today, 165 years later, the Daughters of Charity are turning a page in their healthcare ministry in Buffalo, entrusting their rich legacy to the doctors, nurses, support staff and management team, who will carry on their healing work at Sisters of Charity Hospital on Main St. in Buffalo and its St. Joseph Campus in Cheektowaga.

“Entrusting these ministries to others gives us the opportunity to place our sisters where there is great need, as well as provide sufficient numbers for our life together in each local community,” said Sister Louise Gallahue, D.C., Provincial of the Province of St. Louise. “It is clear, the Buffalo sisters are leaving Sisters Hospital in very capable hands and know the healthcare ministry will continue to serve the peo-

Thank you to our Daughters of Charity



Sr. Ann Paul Chenard



Sr. Mary Grace Higgins



Sr. Mary Anne Brawley



Sr. Claire Edwards



Sr. Susan O'Neill

ple of Western New York for years to come.”

Ascension Health, a national health system sponsored by the Daughters of Charity and the Sisters of St. Joseph, will remain a corporate sponsor and member of Catholic Health, ensuring that the health system's mission – to reveal the healing love of Jesus to those in need – will remain a strong presence in Western New York. The sisters will also maintain a residence and ministry in Niagara Falls.

“From the moment the Daughters of Charity arrived in Buffalo in 1848 to begin their hospital min-

istry, the lives of countless people have been improved, both physically and spiritually,” said Bishop Richard J. Malone, Bishop of Buffalo. “The legacy of the selfless service of these grace-filled women of God lives on through generations of Western New Yorkers who will always remember how the Daughters were present to them. I am thankful to God that the Daughters' presence and ministry in our diocese will continue in their work in Niagara Falls.

“On behalf of the entire Diocese, I am profoundly

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Daughters of Charity Leave Lasting Legacy - continued

grateful to the Daughters of Charity. May our Heavenly Father continue to guide and bless them as they move on to a new phase of their ministerial lives.”

By fall of 2014, five Daughters of Charity, who serve at Sisters Hospital and have served in Catholic Health, will say goodbye to their home and travel to new missions in other areas of the country that have great need and fewer resources. For Sisters Hospital and the Daughters – Sisters Mary Anne Brawley, Ann Paul Chenard, Claire Edwards, Mary Grace Higgins, and Susan O’Neill – the next year will be bittersweet as the sisters prepare to say goodbye to a community they have served and the people they have served beside these many years.

“We intend to use the next year to honor and celebrate the Daughters’ service to our hospital and our community,” said Peter Bergmann, President & CEO of Sisters Hospital. “While the sisters will no longer be a physical presence in our hospitals, their spirit of unselfish service, especially to the poor and disadvantaged, will be felt by those we serve and will live on in our name – Sisters of Charity. Their sponsorship of Sisters Hospital will also continue through Ascension Health. We are grateful to be the bearers of the Daughters’ legacy and ask God’s blessings to

remain faithful stewards.”

Founded in Paris, France in 1633 by St. Louise de Marillac and St. Vincent de Paul, and tracing their roots to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in the U.S. in 1809, the Daughters of Charity were among the first communities of Sisters who were not cloistered. St. Vincent instructed them to have “*as a monastery, the houses of the sick; as a cell, a hired room; as a chapel, the parish church; as a cloister, the streets of the city; as enclosure, obedience; as grill, the fear of God; and as a veil, holy modesty.*” This was radical in the 1600s and things are no different today as the Sisters, through their vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and service to the poor, continue to follow these rules and go where they are most needed.

“As a stronger, more unified Catholic healthcare ministry, we will forever be in the debt of the Daughters of Charity for their service to our community and the sacrifices they made to create the foundation on which we all stand,” said Joe McDonald, president & CEO of Catholic Health. “Just like the eight Daughters who arrived in Buffalo in 1848, the seven daughters who will leave our fold next year to continue their calling in other communities, will remain in our hearts and prayers forever.”

Daughters of Charity History in Buffalo

In 1848, eight Sisters of Charity were sent by the Daughters’ Province of the United States, based in Emmitsburg, Md., to Buffalo to serve in education, social ministry and healthcare. As the Sisters – Ann de Sales Farren, Ursula Mattingly, Hieronimo O’Brien, Anacaria Hoey, Clare McDurby, Mary Aloysia Lilly, Mary Eliza Dougherty, and Agatha O’Keefe – arrived, three were sent to establish Sisters of Charity Hospital on Pearl Place, where the first patients, six sailors, were admitted on October 1, 1848. From that date forward, Daughters of Charity have served at Sisters of Charity Hospital. In 1850, the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg, affiliated with the Daughters of Charity, but the hospital retained its original name.

Over the next 165 years, the Daughters ministered to the residents of Buffalo in healthcare and social services, including St. Vincent’s Female Orphan Asylum in 1849; St. Mary’s Infant and Widow Asylum in 1854; Providence Retreat (Insane Asylum) in 1861; Emergency Hospital in 1902; Louise de Marillac Maternity Hospital in 1943; and the Buffalo Diocese Catholic Charities in 1970.

In 2011, four of the five Daughters of Charity’s U.S. Provinces came together to form the Province of St. Louise. Since that time, the Province has been engaged in a study to guide the future alignment of the Daughters of Charity in their missions and ministries, which are spread throughout the country. Several factors were considered, including the number of Daughters; their ability to sustain sufficiently sized communities in local missions; and their confidence in the lay leadership to carry on their works. The results of this assessment were used in the discernment process concerning the future of the Daughters’ community at Sisters of Charity Hospital, where they plan to entrust their works to others.