When Sister Grace Agate, RSM, visited St. Joseph/Candler Hospital in Savannah, Georgia, for the first time on September 24, 2015, she was amazed that everyone kept wishing her Happy Feast Day in honor of Our Lady of Mercy in a city where only eight percent of the population is Catholic.

“The Sisters of Mercy are held in such high esteem in this area,” says Sister Grace who now serves at the hospital as the workplace spirituality coordinator. “In their eyes, I stand on the shoulders of the Sisters of Mercy who came before me and started this hospital in 1875 in response to the need for health care for sick sailors.”

Now Sister Grace is one of four sisters from the Mid-Atlantic Community who minister at the largest health center in Southeast Georgia. Sisters Nancy Donovan, RSM, and Veronica Kovach, RSM, serve as chaplains. Sister Patricia Kennedy, RSM, ministers as a palliative care liaison.

Originally from Brooklyn, New York, Sister Grace was an elementary school teacher for eleven years, served as a director of religious education for six years, taught high school religion for seven years, worked as a spiritual director for five years and served as a pastoral assistant for five years at various parishes in the Brooklyn Diocese. “God is a God of surprise,” says Sister Grace. “Everything I did previously prepared me for this job without me ever even knowing it.”

“Initially I went to Savannah to visit one of my former parishioners who now works at the hospital,” says Sister Grace. “While I was there I met the chief executive officer and he unexpectedly offered me a job! I had no thoughts about moving to the South. I had never worked in a hospital. After my visit, I went home to Long Island and thought about it and prayed about it and decided God was calling me to take this position and share the mission of Mercy with people who work in this large healthcare facility.”

So Sister Grace moved to Savannah in January 2015, joining 23 Sisters of Mercy from across the country who also live and minister in the area. In her ministry, she tends to the pastoral care of over 3,000 staff at these two faith-based, not-for-profit hospitals. “I am a religious cheerleader,” says Sister Grace, “I practice the spiritual and corporal works of Mercy every day in some shape or form.” She meets with staff, attends...
A Message From the President

“This if we love God, we will undoubtedly love our neighbor also; they are cause and effect.”

— Catherine McAuley, Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy

Dear Friend,

These simple words, repeated in many contexts by Catherine McAuley during her lifetime, remind me of each of you, our steadfast Mercy friends and benefactors. How openly and generously you show your love of God through your prayers and gifts for the benefit of God’s people. The great outpouring of your love is evidenced by the many names you will see printed in this fall edition of Mercy Mosaic; printed in recognition of your love of God, through your generosity to us and those we serve. Thank you so much.

We are happy to share with you in this issue of Mercy Mosaic an example of the love of our brothers and sisters as expressed by Sisters of Mercy through our ministry in the field of health care. St. Joseph/Candler Hospital, founded in 1875 and still operated by the Sisters of Mercy in Savannah, Georgia, is but one example of the outstanding Mercy mission and commitment to caring for the sick. In these pages you will also read about the ministry of Sister Eileen McDonnell in New Jersey, whose ministry makes a vast difference in the day-to-day lives of people living with disabilities.

As we strive to continue Catherine McAuley’s focus of serving the poor, sick and uneducated, we are conscious of your role in helping to make our ministries a reality. It is truly because of your generosity by prayer and financial support that our sisters are able to continue the work of Catherine McAuley, whose invitation continues to be to love God by loving all people.

In Mercy,

Sister Patricia Vetran, RSM
President
Mid-Atlantic Community

Sister Grace Ministers to Hospital Staff

Continued from front page

wakes and funerals of their loved ones when possible, provides spiritual direction, develops prayers and rituals, and prays with coworkers when in need. “I am present for them,” says Sister Grace. “I am humbled by the joy, pain and sorrow they share with me.”

“My inspiration in this ministry is Catherine McAuley,” says Sister Grace, “the founder of the Sisters of Mercy. Her quote, ‘When or how are we expected to take up our cross and follow Christ, if we are not to meet with it in those with whom we are associated?’ guides my work every day.”

Prayer Time

Lord, You invite all who are burdened to come to you. Allow Your healing Hand to heal them.

Touch my soul with Your compassion for others; touch my heart with Your courage and infinite Love for all; touch my mind with Your wisdom, and may my mouth always proclaim Your praise.

Touch gently the lives which you have created, now and forever.

Amen.
Sisters of Mercy Mass of Remembrance  
New Jersey and New York

Please join us as we celebrate our annual All Souls Day Mass of Remembrance on Sunday, November 12, 2017, in the New Jersey area at 2:30 p.m., in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, Mount Saint Mary, Watchung, New Jersey; and on Sunday, November 5, 2017, in the New York area at 1:30 p.m., in the Marian Woods Chapel, Hartsdale, New York.

This special Mass is celebrated in memory of our deceased family members, friends, Mercy Associates, former members and Sisters of Mercy, especially those sisters who died this past year.

Please let Sister Marlene know if you will be attending the Mass in New Jersey. She can be reached at 908.756.0994, ext. 4007, or email mfritz@mercymidatlantic.org. Please let Jacqui Williamson know if you will be attending the Mass in New York. She can be reached at 914.328.3200, ext. 416, or email jwilliamson@mercymidatlantic.org. Also contact either Sister Marlene or Jacqui to provide the names of any persons you would like remembered at this special Mass. The names of those who have passed away since November 1, 2016, will be inscribed in our Book of Remembrance, which will be placed in the sanctuary during the Mass.

(Following Mass, light refreshments will be served.)
We Remember...

Sister Lillian Lizura, RSM
Sister Lillian entered the community on September 8, 1957. She dearly loved teaching the little ones in the primary grades in schools in both the Trenton and Metuchen dioceses in New Jersey for over 43 years. Her kind and generous spirit infused her ministry wherever she was assigned, and her devotion to her students and her own family was an inspiration to others. Sister Lillian is remembered by her family and the Community as a loving, caring person.

May 26, 1940 – March 28, 2017
First Profession: August 17, 1960

Sister Grace Nolan, RSM
Sister Grace’s early ministries were in education, first as an elementary school teacher and then as a principal. In 1970, she opened the Atlantic County office for Catholic Charities, beginning 41 years of service, bringing care to more than 8,000 families and individuals. In 2004, Catholic Charities established the annual Grace Nolan Award, given to a person in the Diocese of Camden who personifies the pursuit of social justice. In 2014, a food pantry in Atlantic City was blessed and dedicated in her honor. Sister Grace was inducted into the Atlantic City Hall of Fame.

February 26, 1940 – April 1, 2017
First Profession: May 15, 1949

Sister R. Frances Hewitt, RSM
Sister Frances taught math for 39 years in the Trenton, Camden and Metuchen dioceses in New Jersey, including 16 years at St. Mary’s High School in South Amboy, New Jersey, and 12 years at Notre Dame High School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. After her teaching career, she worked in the business office at Notre Dame, then as a math tutor at St. Augustine School in Ocean City, New Jersey. An enthusiastic traveler, Sister Frances toured the United States, Canada and Europe. A meticulous accountant, she maintained records of all her assignments, travels and various facts and figures in her lifetime.

January 23, 1919 – April 18, 2017
First Profession: August 3, 1939

Sister Mary Patricia O’Connell, RSM
Sister Pat ministered as a science teacher in Brooklyn and Rockville Centre elementary schools in New York. In her earlier years, she produced and directed musical plays involving the parish’s young people. An enthusiastic coach of Catholic Youth Organization track and basketball for many years, Sister Pat served on the Rockville Centre Diocesan Catholic Youth Organization Board to foster sportsmanship and “love of the game.” Sister Pat loved to travel and especially enjoyed her cross-country jaunts to visit family on the West Coast.

August 2, 1940 – April 18, 2017
First Profession: April 3, 1961

Sister Margaret E. Costa, RSM
Sister Peggy was artistic, creative, talented and collaborative. Initially she taught high school in Dobbs Ferry and Bronx, New York. Then she served on the New York Province Leadership Team and was part of the Transitional Administrative Team that helped prepare for the founding of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. Later she ministered as the director of mission effectiveness at Mercy Hospital in Port Jervis, New York. Following this, she served as the director of development at Mercy Center in the Bronx. Sister Peggy’s enthusiasm for life was contagious.

May 19, 1937 – April 23, 2017
First Profession: August 16, 1958
“Love is repaid by love alone.”

Sister Charlotte McGrath, RSM
A sensitive, refined, good-humored woman of faith, Sister Charlotte was always attuned to the needs of others. Initially an elementary school teacher for 15 years, at the age of 48, she received a Master of Science degree in Library Science from St. John’s University and worked for 35 years as a librarian, serving 18 years at Bishop McDonnell High School in Brooklyn, New York, four years at Holy Trinity High School in Hicksville, New York, six years at St. Francis College in Brooklyn, and seven years at St. Edmund’s High School in Brooklyn.

November 21, 1913 – May 5, 2017
First Profession: September 6, 1935

“God Help Me.”

Sister M. Pius Friel, RSM
Sister Pius was a teacher for many years in the Archdiocese of New York and the Diocese of Ogdensburg in New York. She also ministered as a social worker at Good Samaritan Hospital in Islip, New York, and as administrator at St. Agnes Residence in New York City. She later offered her services as a patient navigator at Dobbs Ferry Community Hospital and St. John’s Hospital in Yonkers, New York. Sister Pius had a very outgoing personality and loved meeting and greeting old friends and new ones with a big smile.

April 11, 1932 – May 24, 2017
First Profession: March 12, 1954

“Fiat Voluntas Tua.”

Sister Mary Shaun Franey, RSM
Sister Shaun attended St. Joseph School in Trenton, New Jersey. There she met the Sisters of Mercy which led to her life of Mercy. Sister Shaun taught at several high schools in New Jersey, including Mount Saint Mary in Perth Amboy, Notre Dame in Lawrenceville, and Mount Saint Mary Academy in Watchung, as well as Georgian Court University in Lakewood. Sister Shaun is predeceased by her sister, Sister Mary Franey, RSM.

April 11, 1924 – June 30, 2017
First Profession: April 23, 1948

“Not my will but Thine be done.”

Sister Virginia M. Walsh, RSM
Sister Virginia was an elementary school teacher at St. Thomas Aquinas, Holy Rosary and St. Brigid schools in Brooklyn, New York. After studying special education, she became an itinerant teacher of the blind. Sister Virginia then ministered in both public and Catholic schools in the Diocese of Brooklyn. Sister will be remembered for her love of the poor, as when she joined the Peace Corps in the 1970s. During her retirement years, Sister Virginia always considered the needs of the poor by making monetary donations and regular gifts of food. Sister Virginia died one day shy of her 94th birthday.

July 9, 1923 – July 8, 2017
First Profession: September 5, 1944

“Be It Done Unto Me According To Your Word.”

Sister Mary Arthur Beal, RSM
Sister Mary Arthur began her ministry in education as a teacher and principal. At the college level, she taught education for 19 years at Georgian Court University (then College), then served as dean of a residence hall and advisor to students. For 15 years, she served as the dean of graduate students, and she directed the expansion of both the college’s degree and state certification programs. Sister Mary Arthur also volunteered as a psychological consultant and provided evaluations for children in Ocean County schools and at McAuley School for Exceptional Children.

April 26, 1922 – July 24, 2017
First Profession: July 28, 1943
Caring for People with Disabilities

“I always listen to where God calls me,” says Sister Eileen. Recently she felt the call to return to serving people with disabilities at The ARC. “This is a population with no voice,” she says. “Thanks to medical advances, people with disabilities live longer, but as they age they have more health issues. I help them deal with these concerns and end-of-life issues.”

“Nursing is so much more than dealing with medical issues,” says Sister Eileen. “It is the person-to-person contact, the chance to alleviate pain and suffering, the opportunity to be a caring, compassionate presence to people in need.”

Through this ministry, Sister Eileen helps serve 88 people in twelve residential settings and 150 people in five different day centers. “Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy, was committed to the suffering needs of people of her time and responded with compassion, joy and a sense of humor,” says Sister Eileen. “I strive to do the same.”
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To receive your next copy of Mercy Mosaic in your email inbox instead of a printed copy, please email lcavallo@mercymidatlantic.org with Mosaic by Email in the subject line.

If your name has been omitted or spelled incorrectly, please accept our apology and notify the Development Office. Thank you.
Promoting Health, Sharing Mercy

“Catherine left her comfort zone to help people,” says Sister Anna Marie. “She went where she was needed.”

Today, Sister Anna Marie helps people in need at St. Helena’s parish in the Olney section of Philadelphia. She is part of a three-nurse holistic healthcare team serving primarily a Vietnamese, Hispanic and older English-speaking community. She promotes healthy living, operates a food bank and provides health education. She also gives pastoral care and visits parishioners who are sick. “I love when seniors feel recognized and connected to the church through my presence,” says Sister Anna Marie.

A parish nurse for the past 22 years, Sister Anna Marie initially was a teacher and principal before embracing nursing as a ministry. One of her first nursing assignments was in Chulucanas, Peru, where she served for six years. For the past four years, she ministered at St. Helena’s.

“I see God at work in each and every one I encounter here,” says Sister Anna Marie.

Sister Anna Marie Lesutis, RSM, RN, (center left) reviews nutritional information with Ana Marie Carmonia, Mercedes Reyes and Catalina Almeida (left to right).

In her work as a parish nurse in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Sister Anna Marie Lesutis, RSM, RN, feels a great affinity to Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy.