



SERVICE EXCELLENCE IN ACTION

Chaplain Feels Privileged To Serve Patients And Staff

A certified chaplain with Holy Spirit Pastoral Care, Sister Ann Marie Marabella, CPS, makes it her mission to visit every patient in the Ortenzio Heart Center everyday. "When you come to the hospital, you have no control over anything, so it can be frightening," she says. "I try to be there for the patients. We talk about their concerns. I connect them with a social worker who may help them. I call pastors to let them know their parishioners are here."

For the last eight years, Sister Ann Marie has developed a reputation as someone who applies herself completely and gives every minute of her time, according to Sister Margaret Washington, director, Pastoral Care.

"She is well known throughout the entire hospital," Sister Margaret says. "She is so open to everyone that doctors, nurses and people from all professions come to her and really feel confident in being able to talk to her. This is a gift."

Sister Ann Marie admits she has a knack for listening. "Nurses will come to me; doctors have come to me," she says, adding that she is there for whoever needs her. "I'm not judging. I'm just listening. They feel very safe. It is quite a privilege for me."

But it is the comfort she brings patients before surgery that she finds most meaningful. "I am there to listen to the patients and support them, never judging. I especially want to be there before they go to surgery," she says. "We pray together, giving them support and letting them know the Lord will be with them, guiding the hands of the surgeon."

Despite her affinity for the role of chaplain, Sister Ann Marie was late to her vocation, having only entered religious life in 1995 as a Missionary Sister of the Precious Blood. She worked in retail, insurance and banking before her mother became ill and she found herself in different circles, often in the presence of sisters.

"I volunteered at a hospice for AIDS patients for eight years. That is where I got my vocation," remembers Sister Ann Marie, adding that at one time the sight of blood would make her pass out. "If God wants you to do something, he gives you everything you need."

She has found everything she needs at Holy Spirit, as well. "Many of my patients come in and tell me this is why they come here, because someone will pray with them, be with them and support them," she says. "I love it here at Holy Spirit. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else."

SHARE the SPIRIT Quarterly Magazine
Issue 4, 2016

Holy Spirit Hospital
Harrisburg, PA