

# **Good Samaritan Hospital Patient Care Pavilion Groundbreaking Ceremony**

## **Catholic Health**

### **Remarks of Bishop John O. Barres**

#### **West Islip, NY**

**Wednesday, May 11, 2022**

As we gather to celebrate this historic occasion, we keep the people of Ukraine, so many of whom are now refugees in Poland, Romania, Hungary and other parts of the world, deeply in our minds, hearts and prayers.

We pray for the work of Catholic hospitals and Catholic Charities in these troubled and crisis-ridden regions.

They are a Light of Jesus Christ to the world in the darkness of horrible injustice, war and inhuman massacres.

In 1959, Good Samaritan Hospital was founded by the Daughters of Wisdom – the same women’s religious community that founded St. Charles Hospital in Port Jefferson some forty years prior.

Today, we honor the courageous, prophetic and innovative witness of these great “feminine geniuses” who have animated the Catholic Church’s mission of mercy on Long Island.

We remember, too, the dedication, sacrifice, and vision of our Good Samaritan Hospital administrators, doctors, nurses, and staff over the decades. Their spirit of selfless commitment was shown most clearly in the extraordinary heroism displayed here and throughout our Catholic Health hospitals during the Covid-19 crisis.

We also thank God in the present and ask the Holy Spirit’s guidance for Good Samaritan Hospital and Catholic Health in the future.

Our groundbreaking, dedication and blessing of this Good Samaritan Hospital Patient Care Pavilion enhances and expands Catholic Health's service to the common good on Long Island.

Good Samaritan Hospital, and every one of our six Catholic Health sites on Long Island, serves anyone in need, regardless of their faith, race, walk of life or immigration status. We are committed to living the Parable of the Good Samaritan<sup>1</sup> here at Good Samaritan Hospital.

As we break ground, bless and dedicate this Good Samaritan Hospital Patient Care Pavilion, we remember that there is a powerful relationship between our witness to the Gospel of Human Life expressed in the mission of Catholic Health and our belief in Eternal Life.<sup>2</sup>

The French writer Charles Péguy (1873-1914) was once asked what the Lord Jesus would ask each one of us at the moment of our death and individual judgment.

Péguy, echoing our Lord's Parable of the Good Samaritan, responded that Our Lord's merciful and compassionate eyes would gaze into ours and He would ask: **"Where are the others? Where are the others?"**

In other words, Our Lord will ask us what have we done for our brothers and sisters, and in particular what have we done for the poorest and least of them?

Did we aid and serve them in their suffering, their hunger and their health care needs or did we pass them by or ignore them?

In his 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, Our Holy Father Pope Francis states: "The story of the Good Samaritan is constantly being repeated" (71) and "each day we have to decide whether to be Good Samaritans or indifferent bystanders." (69)

And the question goes further than that. Within the question – **Where are the others?** – are the questions: **Where are the unborn? Where are the elderly?** Where are those that our society increasingly looks upon as disposable with no rights and no recognition of their humanity?

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<sup>1</sup> For fine contemporary analyses of the Parable of the Good Samaritan, see Chapter Two, "A Stranger on the Road," of Pope Francis' 2020 encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*. See also Pope Benedict XVI's *Jesus of Nazareth* (Volume 1, published in 2007), Chapter Seven, 194-211.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Sections of these remarks are taken from Bishop Barres' "Where are the Others?": A Statement Celebrating the October 31, 2020 Twentieth Anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II's Apostolic Letter (*Motu Proprio*) Proclaiming St. Thomas More the Patron of Statesmen and Politicians.

Pope Francis writes: “Some parts of our human family, it appears, can be readily sacrificed for the sake of others considered worthy of a carefree existence. Ultimately, ‘persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, ‘not yet useful’ – like the unborn, or ‘no longer needed’ – like the elderly.” (*Fratelli Tutti* 18)

Part of our response to the Lord will be an account of what we did in the course of our lives to defend and promote the life of the unborn and the elderly in the public square<sup>3</sup> – especially in New York State where the so-called “Reproductive Health Act” not only permits abortion till the moment of birth but goes beyond that to permit forms of infanticide.

How is that possibly the law in the richest society in the history of the world, a society that claims to care about the most powerless and marginalized people yet routinely pretends that the most powerless of all do not even exist?

As we break ground, bless and dedicate this Good Samaritan Hospital Patient Care Pavilion, we must also be aware of the clear and present danger that exists to the religious liberty and conscience rights of all Americans.

The HHS “Super Rule” which is currently being proposed and discussed, if implemented as some are advocating, would purport to require doctors, nurses and staff members here at Catholic Health to perform abortions, sterilizations, IVF procedures and transgender surgeries which we as Catholics believe to be immoral and against the common good.

I ask all of us here today to be informed and to be contemplatively active in the public square to prevent and defeat what would be a tragic decision and direction for our country.

Long live the Gospel of Human Life!

Long live Catholic Health’s and Good Samaritan Hospital’s witness and eloquent daily testimony to the Gospel of Human Life!

Long live the Catholic Church’s prophetic witness to the Gospel of Human Life in the United States of America and throughout the world!

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<sup>3</sup> See USCCB’s *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility from the Catholic Bishops of the United States with New Introductory Letter*, 2019.

Long live the Religious Liberty and Conscience Rights of all Americans and all citizens of the World!

On this historic day of celebration, dedication and blessing, I would like to thank Dr. Patrick O'Shaughnessy, our dedicated President and CEO, Dr. Jason Golbin, our Chief Medical Officer, the President of Good Samaritan Hospital Ruth Hennessey, our Administrative Staff, our inspirational Doctors and Nurses, our hospital staff members, Mr. Sal Sodano, the Chair of our Board of Directors, Fr. Eric Fasano, Vicar General of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, and our many kind and generous benefactors.

I would like to thank our patients and families of the past, the present and the future. A special remembrance of the families we have served in Covid-19.

I would like to thank all of you present here today.

May the healing light that streams from the Glorified Wounds of the Risen Christ give comfort, strength and healing to all those we serve.

Our Lady of Fatima and Queen of Peace, pray for us!

St. Joseph, pray for us!

All Catholic saints dedicated to the mission of healthcare, pray for us!