

Press Release

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One good deed deserves another – local woman gives back to her community

(PHILADELPHIA, PA) – It only takes an hour or two to help someone through a difficult situation. And that's exactly what Mary McCarthy of the Far Northeast does every week – volunteering for Holy Redeemer Hospice of Pennsylvania.

Says McCarthy: "When my father-in-law died in 1984, a volunteer at Holy Redeemer Hospice helped us cope – whether it was doing some light housecleaning, going to the grocery store, or just keeping my father-in-law company while we took a break. It was an immense load off our shoulders. And it's true about that saying – what goes around, comes around. I wanted to give back."

McCarthy joined Holy Redeemer's volunteer network in 1987 and continues to donate her time, helping grieving families cope during life's difficult situations – even while working full-time in the graphics department at Verizon.

"It's the little things that make a difference," says McCarthy. "I spend maybe an hour or two after work or on a weekend just being with the patient or family – doing some vacuuming and chitchatting for awhile. This helps, especially if a hospice patient only has one family member to rely on. For me, volunteering is a rewarding and fulfilling experience, and it is my hope that more and more people from our community give back."

Volunteers for Holy Redeemer Hospice of Pennsylvania support hospice patients and families in Bucks, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties. They visit private homes and nursing facilities, providing companionship to patients who are coping with life-limiting illnesses. Individuals interested in pursuing this opportunity receive comprehensive training to become familiar with the hospice philosophy, emotional, psychosocial and spiritual aspects of dying, effective communication skills, and issues involving loss and grief.

Says Jean Francis, hospice volunteer coordinator: "Patient care volunteers are emotionally mature, non-judgmental and possess good listening skills because typical volunteer

responsibilities include listening to patients' concerns, encouraging them to talk about their life, helping them write letters and providing respite for a family member or caregiver."

For more information on becoming a Holy Redeemer Hospice patient care volunteer, please call (215) 698-3737. Holy Redeemer Hospice is a non-profit Catholic healthcare organization sponsored by The Sisters of the Holy Redeemer and it is grounded in the mission to care, comfort, and heal.

Editor's Note: November is Home Care and Hospice Month.

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