

Holy Cross Hospital's 50th Anniversary Mass
January 13, 2013

Reflection by Sister Rachel Callahan, C.S.C.
delivered in her absence by
Sister Kathleen Weber, C.S.C.

“Eucharist!” — the word we use to describe what we have just done. The word itself in Greek means “thank you” and this central act of worship in the Roman Catholic tradition can be summed up in two words: to “remember” and to “give thanks.” That is exactly what we are about during the various celebrations, which mark this 50th anniversary of Holy Cross Hospital.

The words of today's first reading are “comfort, comfort my people...” Could there be a better way to summarize 50 years of service to our community? In a couple of days the wise man who served Holy Cross as our ethicist for 30 years, Fr. Philip Keane, will be buried. In his many presentations about Catholic health care he frequently used the maxim “Cure when possible, comfort always.”

We do not have the time here to articulate everything for which we are grateful, to remember all the moments that need to be remembered and honored. Each one of us here has our own personal history with Holy Cross, our own particular memories and moments for which we thank God.

As we do this, I invite us also to reflect on Holy Cross as a living, vibrant organism; a community of healing and caring that like the Body of Christ, has many members all dependent upon one another, all to be honored. The legacy of the Sisters of the Holy Cross — responding to the needs of the poor and the vulnerable — will always be a part of our DNA.

We have been blessed with leaders who have embraced and expanded that legacy, particularly in the past 15 years. But most particularly, we have been blessed by the countless women and men who have served here over the years in every capacity — housekeepers, laundry workers, food service personnel — who together with nurses and physicians safeguard us from infection and contribute to physical healing. Chaplains and social workers tend to the spirit as well as the body. Maintenance, security and support personnel minister to the building just as others take care of the patients who come here. It is impossible to name all the countless support and administrative workers who contribute to our sustainability and help us build trust in our community. And we can't forget those who freely contribute their service: Auxilians, who have raised significant dollars and volunteers, who have contributed to major cost avoidance.

There is simply not one person who is insignificant in this living body, which we celebrate as Holy Cross. We are many parts. We are all one body. In one way or another we each contribute to the healing, the caring, and the building of trust in our community. So today, as we remember and give thanks for our own personal experiences of Holy Cross, let's also rejoice in the hope and the certitude that long after each of us has gone this legacy of service and trust will continue. That is the prayer of our Holy Cross Sisters, living and dead. That is our responsibility to all those upon whose shoulders we stand. That is our pledge to each other as we celebrate our gratitude here today. Glory be to God, whose power at work in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine.

To the next 50 years – Amen! Alleluia!