


NURSES: INSPIRE, INNOVATE, INFLUENCE
MARY CLEARY IERARDI, RN

Once a nurse, always a nurse

Mary Cleary Ierardi attended nursing school in the 1950s at age 17. Mary will tell you that, “back in those days, many girls did not go on for higher education after graduating from high school.” Her parents felt that it was important for their girls to go on for more schooling. All four girls heeded their advice and went on to become registered nurses.

Mary attended nursing school at St. Mary’s Hospital, began working and married a wonderful man, Bill Cleary. They were blessed with five children and were building a wonderful life together. In a very unfortunate accident, Bill fell off a ladder and died shortly after. Mary very quickly became a single mother of five children, ages 2, 4, 8, 10 and 12 and the sole supporter of the family. Mary’s nursing career served her well in helping to provide for her family. She was a dedicated and caring nurse for many decades.

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service and has been volunteering for more than 20 years. She was the driving force in establishing the Interfaith Health and Wellness Program nearly 20 years ago.

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Nurses who are trained in faith-based nursing provide access to care, health screenings and health education. They provide care in clinics, churches and in the home. These nurses are deeply rooted in caring and provide comfort and encouragement to people who oftentimes have nowhere else to turn to receive health information and resources.

Each year during the month of June, the Interfaith Health

and Wellness Program offers a Faith Community Nurse Basic Preparation Course that provides registered nurses education and support to create health ministry programs in their respective congregations. It is a comprehensive week-long course of study approved for 33 CEUs and recognized by the International Parish Nurse Resource Center.

Mary always has a kind word and smile for others around her. She believes that we should all ask ourselves, “What can I do to make this world a better place?” For Mary Cleary Ierardi, it’s her nursing profession that has become a way of life. One thing is certain, Palm Beach County is a better place because of her!



Following her parents advice, Mary furthered her education beyond high school, attending nursing school at St. Mary’s Hospital.

The Palm Beach Post has teamed with Palm Health Foundation, Tenet Health and VITAS Healthcare to salute nurses. Go to PalmHealthFoundation.org to read more.

Thank  a
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