



AMITA Health
Saint Joseph
Hospital
Chicago
Celebrates
Milestone
Anniversary

OF CARE

AMITA Health Saint Joseph Hospital Chicago has a rich, storied history that spans 150 years.

The hospital was founded by the Daughters of Charity in 1869 and was the first Catholic hospital in Illinois, known then as Providence Hospital. During that time, the hospital was in a small cottage the Sisters were renting with little-to-no finances and served as a center to treat cholera victims. In 1872, the hospital was renamed Saint Joseph Hospital after the patron saint of the sick and the dying. In 1964, patients and staff were moved into a new 500-bed hospital building that still stands today.

In honor of the anniversary, the Hospital Sesquicentennial Planning Committee, led by **Scott Wanner**, coordinator, Presentation Services & Events, planned 150 events over the course of the year. The events culminated in a special anniversary Mass, led by Mark Bartosic, auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Chicago, on June 23. The Mass also celebrated the re-opening of the hospital's Daniel B. Ryan Memorial Chapel, which had been closed for renovations.



A special anniversary Mass was held on June 23.

Additional anniversary events included a concert by pianist Mark Damish in the Chapel.

The Chapel, which features slab-glass windows from Florence, gold mosaics from Venice and an organ from Holland, was refurbished under the direction of **Donnley Phillips**, director of Facilities. “The pews were sanded and re-varnished, all of the brass throughout was taken to a special facility to be polished, the flooring on both levels was replaced and a new organ was installed,” he said. “Our EVS and facilities departments, carpenters, electricians and general maintenance workers all came together in order to preserve the history of the Chapel. This is an important place, not only to associates, many of whom have worked here for decades, but also to community members. This is how we give back to them.”

Father Theodore “Ted” Ploplis, who has served as head chaplain since 1996, said the hospital has always been ahead of its time.

“The year after the Chicago Fire, the Sisters opened the first hospital inpatient psychiatric unit in Chicago. Taking care of mentally ill patients was revolutionary; people didn’t even think of that as being a form of care at that time,” he said. “We had one of the first residency programs and schools of

nursing. During the AIDs epidemic, we were the first hospital to have an inpatient care center for those suffering from the disease.

“Our concern has always been care for the disenfranchised in our community. We are part of the healing mission of Jesus, and we heal as Jesus would have healed. It is our honor, our privilege to care for these people,” said Ploplis.



The site of the first Saint Joseph Hospital building, then known as Providence Hospital, in 1869.



Saint Joseph Hospital in 1890.



The patient ward in 1894.