



Tradition and commitment to community carry forward Sisters' legacy of care

After a four-day train journey from Ottawa, six Daughters of Wisdom arrived in Castor, Alberta in 1911, to a crowd of townspeople welcoming them with a warm dinner. The town council had offered them an opportunity to open and operate a local hospital, and the Sisters were eager to care for the town.

They were ready to face the challenges ahead. The hospital building had not yet been completed, it didn't have a furnace or most furnishings, and they would have to draw water from a well with a rope and bucket. The biggest challenge was the language barrier—only one Sister spoke English, and had to interpret for all the others, who spoke French.

All of the Sisters were in their 20s, and industrious, and even though there was a lack of resources, they sprang to action and began to prepare the hospital to admit patients.

Eager to help, the townspeople equipped the hospital with furniture for three rooms and a nursery, and provided a washing machine for laundry, and two cows for milk.

With the successful partnership between the Sisters and the townspeople, on November 1, 1911, six patients were admitted to the hospital. Five days later, there were 15.

Today, staff continue the Sisters' legacy of caring for those in need at Our Lady of the Rosary Hospital, considering each act of service as one community member serving another.

Corwin Weber has been at the hospital since 1994, when he began serving in the kitchen as a work experience student. It soon became his afterschool job. Throughout the years, he has served in various roles in the hospital.

In 1996, Corwin returned to the kitchen, where he has been ever since. He is currently the weekend cook. He says this role allows him to cater to resident's sense of tradition.

"When you're serving seniors, tradition is important, especially pancake breakfasts and Sunday dinners. These people would come home after church and have a roast beef or ham in the oven. I try to keep it the same as when they were home with their families," says Corwin, Weekend Cook.

For 15 years, Corwin has been throwing an annual yard party at his farm for residents from both Our Lady of the Rosary and Paintearth Lodge, where he is an afternoon supervisor. Residents are bussed out to enjoy a meal in his large yard, and visit friends.

"So many of our residents were born and raised on a farm, and it's important that at least once a year, they should be on a farm," says Corwin, who explains this is part of taking care of his community.

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