



Sisters' legacy of providing comfort and care for families and babies in need carries on at Misericordia Hospital

The foundress of the Misericordia Sisters, Marie-Rosalie Cadron Jetté, a widow and mother, dedicated her life to the church to provide unconditional love and refuge to women that had become pregnant out of wedlock—a vulnerable group often marginalized by society.

She embraced these mothers with compassion, helping them gain back their hope, confidence as mothers, and their self-worth, even putting her own safety at risk. She had a Charism of Mercy, and welcomed all with love. Other women joined her in her cause, and they became the Misericordia Sisters, the first religious order in Canada to include midwifery as part of their core ministry.

The Misericordia Sisters carried forward her spirit, compassion, and dedication when they arrived in Edmonton on May 29, 1900 to open a maternity hospital, the Misericordia Hospital, in a converted warehouse. The Sisters accepted their first patient on September 1, 1900.

The Misericordia Sisters welcomed anyone in need, eventually making the hospital a multi-purpose institution, growing to include an orphanage and general medical hospital, always with a focus on mother and babies. This growth led to a need for a more permanent location— and in 1969, the current hospital complex was constructed in West Edmonton.

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– Marnie Kumpula

Mother Rosalie and the Misericordia Sister's Charism of Mercy is carried forward today at the Misericordia Community Hospital, as it is a place of hospitality and refuge. The hospital continues to serve mothers and their babies in their new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), set to open in November 2016, providing premature babies and their families with an environment of healing, surrounded by unconditional love.

The new unit will create an atmosphere of a 'home away from home', says Marnie Kumpula, Program Manager, 3 West, who explains staff will provide the same excellent care in a new space allowing for more comfort and privacy.

The current NICU is a small, open area with bassinets close together, lacking in privacy for families. In the new unit, each family will have a private room, a serene space, where they can support their newborn to flourish. Each room has a sleeping bench with a privacy curtain, and a recliner. According to Marnie, the new space means parents can spend 24-hours-a-day with their babies and have more comfort breastfeeding and doing skin-to-skin care. She says these changes are proven to help babies develop, and will prepare parents to be confident when returning home.

“This increased time spent with parents is proven to reduce the time it takes for babies to meet the milestones they need to meet before they are ready for home,” says Marnie, who is proud to be living forward this legacy of care.

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Misericordia Sisters