



# Messages from Maryhill

A Newsletter for Maryhill Manor Families

February, 2006

**GREETINGS!** It is hard to believe that the first month of the New Year has already come and gone! Time certainly does go by quickly!! That means that one month has already gone by since we all made those New Year's resolutions! ☺ At Maryhill, we have started a "Weight Watchers at Work" program to help our staff members reach their wellness goals and stay as healthy as possible. The group meets on Wednesdays at 4:00 and is open to anyone in the community who works outside of their home. If weight loss is one of your goals and you are employed, feel free to join us on a Wednesday afternoon. If you would like more information about the program, you can call Jodi Gross (437-2258). Jodi is a Resident Assistant on our staff and a great inspiration to us all as she has lost 110 pounds since beginning her weight loss program! Congratulations, Jodi! January marked the beginning of the new Medicare D program. Everything has gone quite smoothly for our residents and their pharmacy needs under this new program. When there have been issues of a particular prescription that has not been covered under a certain plan, the physicians we work with have been very helpful in working through this to find the solution that works best for the resident. If you have questions about this program, feel free to contact Lynette Schmitz, Director of Nursing, who is the lead person at Maryhill on this new government program. - Blessings to you...Nancy Farnham, Administrator

## Staff Spotlight: NDLTCA Caregiver Awards

The North Dakota Long Term Care Association is once again sponsoring Caregiver Awards. Nursing home residents or their family members may nominate someone for this award. Established in 2000, the award provides recognition for any caregiver, including nursing assistants, dietary aides, housekeeping personnel, maintenance staff, etc. All nominees are included in a book that includes a summary of the kind words from the nomination. The person chosen for the award is given a cash prize during the annual NDLTCA Convention in Bismarck. Last year we were honored to have six members of our staff nominated for this award. We hope you will consider making a nomination this year. There are forms posted by the front door at Maryhill or you can call the NDLTCA office at 701-222-0660 or go to their website for more information and forms ([www.ndltca.org](http://www.ndltca.org)). Thank you

## For Your Calendars...Feel Free to Join Us Anytime:

February 3<sup>rd</sup> – Students from Mrs. Lindemann's class visit at 1:40p.m.

February 9<sup>th</sup> – Joseph DeMasi entertains with music at 1:30p.m.

February 14<sup>th</sup> – Valentine's Day – candlelight supper

February 23<sup>rd</sup> – Midinity Group entertains at 4:45p.m.

Tuesdays at 9:30 – Music with Larry Nelson

Tuesdays at 1:00 – Ecumenical church service

Thursdays at 9:30 – Catholic Mass



*"Those who love deeply never grow old;  
they may die of old age, but they die young."*

*-Benjamin Franklin*

# EDUCATION CORNER: Feeding Tubes and Ethical Directives

There has been much discussion, concern and confusion over the use of feeding tubes in recent years, but even more so with the media coverage that surrounded the death of Terri Schiavo in March of last year. For several months her story was in the news almost daily and this generated much discussion amongst the general public. Many of us began to ask ourselves questions like: “What would I want done if it was me?”, “What would I do if it were my spouse?”. Though the conversations are sometimes difficult, it is good to discuss our feelings on these types of issues with those we love and to put “advance directives” in place so our wishes will be known and carried out if there comes a time when we cannot speak for ourselves. If you are interested in a form to help you put together your own “advance directive”, please talk with a member of our case management staff. Since Maryhill Manor is a Catholic Healthcare organization, sponsored by the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, we would like to share some information on how the Catholic faith approaches this issue. The following information is from an article titled [Are Feeding Tubes Morally Obligatory?](#) by Daniel P. Sulmasy, O.F.M., M.D., Ph.D, who is a Franciscan medical doctor and ethicist.

“The Church has always taught that suicide and euthanasia are morally wrong. The Church, however, has never required that a person do everything medically possible to prolong life. This tradition is very old. In the fourth century A.D., St. Basil the Great wrote in his *Long Rules* (Q.55), ‘Whatever requires an undue amount of thought or trouble or involves a large expenditure of effort and causes our whole life to revolve, as it were, around solicitude for the flesh must be avoided by Christians...’...the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services in the United States have not been changed...these Directives state: ‘There should be a presumption in favor of providing nutrition and hydration to all patients, including patients who require medically assisted nutrition and hydration, as long as this is of sufficient benefit to outweigh the burdens involved to the patient.’...The main issue in the case of Terri Schiavo was actually not the feeding tube itself but rather who should decide whether she should have the feeding tube. She had left no ‘advance directive’ (such as a living will or durable power of attorney for health care) stating what she would have wanted done in such circumstances or who should make medical decisions on her behalf. Deciding what to do for her would have been easier if she had left such a directive. Broadly speaking, the Catholic Church supports advance directives, provided these are executed in a way that is consistent with Church teachings...The Church’s deepest worry about patients like Schiavo is that they – or even patients who are not as debilitated as she was – will come to be considered mere burdens. The Church worries that their dignity will be impugned if they are thought of as ‘vegetables’. It is indeed a failure of charity if we decide not to provide medical treatment for patients merely because we don’t consider them worthy of our time and resources. But this does not mean that we can never act with a spirit of profound Christian charity and humility, fully respecting the dignity of dying persons, if we decide that it is best to let them return to their Maker. We can never kill patients, but we can, under certain conditions, allow them to die....One should need little more proof that the Catholic tradition of forgoing extraordinary means still endures than the fact that Pope John Paul II himself declined hospitalization in his final illness. He forswore multiple life-sustaining treatments (including a permanent feeding tube) in a manner taught consistently by the Church, from St. Basil of Caesarea to Mother Teresa of Calcutta. As Christians, we consider human life a precious gift. But we always recognize, humbly, that the human body is finite and we look forward to the gift of eternal life promised by our Savior....”

If you would like to read this entire article, it can be found on the internet at:  
[www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Jan2006/Feature1.asp](http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Jan2006/Feature1.asp).



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