I would like to personally dedicate this Annual Report to leadership, and to a particular leader, Sr. Mary Loretta. Sister's passing this year marked a milestone in the history of Jennings, and for many of us, our own personal histories. When I met Sister Loretta in the early 1980’s, I was a young administrator at Metro Hospital just joining Jennings as a new Board member. Sister had already been the administrator of Jennings for over a decade.

I always liked to think how things have changed and become so much more complex since then. But as I indulged in a little stroll down memory lane, I found an annual Board report from 1974. The list of major issues for the year included the budget, the fire alarm and nurse call systems, personnel policies, insurance coverage, the Medicaid system, building repairs, and much wringing of hands over the annual State survey. No, the issues of Sister's time felt as demanding and complex to her as ours feel today, but I always got the sense that she had tremendous energy to tackle everything that came her way.

Her commitment and perseverance on behalf of our Mission and the people she served is what is required to drive a person, as well as an organization, to work hard every day toward excellence. Sister Loretta reminded us all that despite the pressures of the day, between her work life and responsibilities to her community of Sisters, she had to remember to recharge and take time for herself. Sister was a person who set high standards for herself and for those around her. In order to know what those standards should be, she took time to reflect and plan for the year, for the organization, and for herself.

She held high expectations, from doing an honest day's work for a day's wage, to looking your part with dignified and respectful attire, to attention to the details of the Board dinners. Sister was not afraid to ask for help, to rely upon Board members, volunteers, and staff to do the job that was required. She recognized that truly important work is worth it, and that people are generally honored to know that they can be of service to a good cause.

She demanded much from folks, but at the same time she was accepting and grateful for each person's contribution, large or small, as long as it was from their heart, it was honest and it was the best that they could do. Forgiveness and understanding of each other's faults and abilities was a given. Sister Loretta appeared to have seemingly simple rules for leadership that tested so true for her. As I saw them, here is the closest I could come to a top ten list (actually seven) for "All I Needed to Know About Leadership I Learned from Sister Loretta."

1. Remain committed and persevere on behalf of Mission.
2. Set high standards for yourself, the organization, and others.
3. Take the time to reflect and plan for yourself and your work.
4. Know when to ask for help, and ASK.
5. Don't expect perfection, but be grateful for each person's contribution.
6. Remember to thank people.
7. Recharge and take time for yourself.

May she rest in peace.

JENNINGS CENTER FOR OLDER ADULTS
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An EXPANSION Year

As a society we are living longer and have different needs for support. Inspired by the foresight of our founder, Monsignor Gilbert Jennings, our expanded campus was the result of continually re-evaluating the changing needs of older adults. We recognized that it is increasingly important to help keep individuals as independent as possible for as long as possible. For some, this meant community-based services such as adult day services or wellness programs, while others sought our assistance for affordable apartments or the care offered by a campus with a full continuum.

In 2003, Jennings Center for Older Adults extended its longtime commitment to serving older adults and their families. The campus celebrated its evolution into a full continuum of care, serving the residential and community-based needs of Northeast Ohio seniors. Jennings added several new residences and services to provide a full continuum of care:

- Adult day services offered in the Eva L. Bruening Adult Day Center at Jennings are a primary resource for caregivers in the community. At-home caregivers receive support in caring for a frail or memory-impaired loved one, while also receiving critical time away from caregiving for re-energizing or managing other obligations.
- Assisted living provides individuals and couples with an apartment that supports independence by providing some assistance with daily tasks and with health and/or personal care. The supportive services, like home-cooked meals, housekeeping and personal care, enable residents to focus on being active in their interests, socialization and personal wellness.
- Assisted living with support for dementia care caters to individuals living with mild to moderate dementia. This specialized program caters to those who do not require long-term nursing home care, but can be more independent with daily assistance, cues and reminders, and a consistent daily routine.
- The Learning Circle Infant and Child Care Center greatly expanded to include more than 70 children, six weeks to twelve years old. Children of staff and the community at-large participate, and the center is instrumental in a very successful intergenerational program which offers daily opportunities for older adults on campus to share time with children.
- Respite suites provide a short-term option for an individual who needs a temporary apartment with supportive services. This service is helpful for a person who has been discharged from the hospital and does not feel quite strong enough...
to return home. Respite suites also offer a solution to at-home caregivers who will be away from their loved ones temporarily.

Saint Agnes Terrace is the newest senior apartment service, offering 42 two- and three-bedroom apartments to older adults. These affordable apartments offer an active, independent lifestyle in a safe and nurturing environment. Senior apartment residents on the Jennings campus can access the amenities and health care offerings of the campus to support current or unexpected needs.

The Wellness Center is a focal point of excellence on the Jennings campus. Residents throughout the campus, as well as participants in the adult day center, use this resource to manage their own health care needs. It is both convenient for residents and their family members, as well as a way for residents to be more active in their health care. Health screenings are also available to benefit the community at large.

Jennings' impact is tangible and far-reaching when a continuum of care is in place at a time of need. A man living with Alzheimer's disease can remain at home with his wife with support services offered in the Eva L. Bruening Adult Day Center. A couple, each individual with different health needs, can live together in assisted living and maintain healthy and active lifestyles. Others can find a safe, affordable home in a new senior apartment.

The 2003 campus expansion added not only new physical environments but also a number of other new ventures. Through marketing, grant funding and community spirit, Jennings Center for Older Adults reached out to the community at large. A grant from the Cleveland Foundation in 2002, which provided for a community needs assessment, led Jennings to facilitate the development of the Garfield Heights Senior Partnership. This effort provides quarterly health and wellness programs to older adults in Garfield Heights and the surrounding area. Jennings also supported a number of health fairs by offering information, health screenings and volunteer opportunities.

The Jennings campus has been blessed by the tremendous growth and outreach opportunities for serving others in our ministry to older adults. Many individuals find comfort in our Catholic traditions, beliefs and sacraments that they have celebrated throughout their lives. Others seek solace in the strength of our mission and the daily celebration of values. Through our expansion and dedication, the Jennings campus engages residents, participants, children, families, volunteers, organizations and the community at large to learn, respect, celebrate and strengthen ourselves and each other.
We all know that Sister Loretta was an avid gardener, and so it is fitting that in a final tribute to her we compare her to the flowers she lovingly tended. She considered her gardens the next best thing to the Chapel, for there she communicated very directly with God and shared in His gifts of creation.

The pansy was one of Sister Loretta’s favorites. Their smiling faces greeted us early in the Spring and stayed with us until the late fall. Sister Loretta’s face was like that of the pansy. In her lighter moments, she would radiate a smile that could light up a room. Everyone marveled at her beautiful complexion, probably a gift of working so much outdoors. Sister brought joy to many lives, but she touched especially the hearts of children. Her nephew, little Andy, and her great-niece Erica, both special needs children, were particularly attached to her because of the love she shared with them.

And how many gardens in the area are graced with beautiful pink Park Princess dahlias? Graceful and gracious are the words which describe the Park Princess, and the same can be said for Sister Loretta. Her seemingly hard surface melted down quickly, and we all know the beauty that she held within. She was always hospitable, genuine, and deeply spiritual.

I also have to mention the thistle. No, Sister Loretta did not cultivate these tenacious weeds; she rued them. But in some ways Sister was like the thistle. When it came to speaking up for the needs of Jennings, she was absolutely tenacious. She dug in and held her ground. Her love of family was equally tenacious. She enjoyed nothing more than her time with them. The Michalczyk family reunions were the highlights of her life. Everyone knew that no one could top her vacation stories. She loved her sibling Sister Mary Philomena so much that she shared all but two years of her life with her, following her to Cleveland and to the Sisters of the Holy Spirit.

The rose, Sister Loretta’s favorite flower, demands a lot of attention from the one who cultivates it. Like the rose, Sister Loretta could be very demanding — not for herself but for the quality care of residents and the professionalism of staff at Jennings. Those who were employed by Sister Loretta know how tightly she ran her ship. But the reputation Jennings has for high quality of service stems from the standards that Sister Loretta set in the early days.

While the rose demands a lot, it also gives the ultimate reward of its beauty and fragrance. If you lived up to Sister Loretta’s expectations, you enjoyed the reward of her praise, appreciation, and loyalty. Sister Loretta’s life was marked by perseverance — in her dedication to Jennings, in her love of family and in her steadfast loyalty to her religious community. When you were loved by Sister Loretta, you knew that you had received the highest of compliments.

Even in her last days, Sister Loretta spread her fragrance as she spoke of “the blessing of Community life.” She accepted our personal care humbly and graciously and gave the gift of presence to each of us individually as we looked after her needs. We know that her gratitude will be amply bestowed from her place in eternity. God needed another gardener, so He called home the best.