

Benefactor's dreams realized at Good Samaritan Hospital

Richard Nixon and Hubert Humphrey were in the final stages of a contentious presidential campaign in late October 1968, when Good Samaritan Hospital admitted its first patient.

At a cost of \$15 million, on 14 acres at the southeast corner of Belvedere Avenue and Loch Raven Boulevard, the institution "for research and treatment of chronic diseases" was dedicated Sept. 29, 1968 by Cardinal Lawrence Shehan, according to the Catholic Review.

It is among several Catholic landmarks to the philanthropy of Thomas J. O'Neill, a merchant who famously asked Carmelite nuns to pray that his store be spared during the Great Baltimore fire of February 1904.

A grateful O'Neill (1850-1919) bequeathed \$5 million from his estate to the Archdiocese of Baltimore, a gift that would provide the seed money for the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Homeland, benefit what is now Loyola University Maryland, and finally, the construction of Good Samaritan Hospital.

His wish that the hospital not be named after him was honored, although labs were named for him, as was a building on the campus that houses physician's offices.

As it opened 50 years ago, according to the Review, "the Sisters of Bon Secours will supply nursing services and Johns Hopkins (Hospital) will supply physicians and administrative services."

Earlier, the Review reported: "Dedicated to carry out the specific intentions of the founder-benefactor (O'Neill), the hospital's purpose is to provide care for chronically ill patients who can improve with appropriate treatment."

To that end, the Review noted: "Since Baltimore provides excellent in-hospital facilities for children in the pediatric age group, in general, Good Samaritan will limit their admissions to patients 14 years of age or over. Race, color, creed or

national origin will not be factors in admission.”

Since 1998, Good Samaritan has been part of the MedStar network. Its mission ranges from the renowned National Burn Reconstruction Center to offering free training for the community in the administration of naloxone, a lifesaving treatment for opioid overdoses.

According to its website, in fiscal year 2016, it had just over 14,000 inpatient admissions; 370,000 outpatient visits; and generated \$25 million in community benefits.

Archbishop William E. Lori celebrated an anniversary Mass Sept. 18 in the MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital Chapel.