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## Archbishop Celebrates UM-St. Joseph Medical Center Partnership at Ecumenical Blessing Ceremony

12/17/2012

Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore today presided over a joyous blessing service in the St. Francis of Assisi Chapel celebrating the "new" University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center and its continuing Catholic identity.



L-R: Ribbon cutting celebrating the opening of the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center in Towson. Robert Chrencik, CEO University of Maryland Medical System; Edward Gilliss, Vice Chairman of the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center Board; Dr. Mohan Suntha, CEO of University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center; Archbishop Lori; Sister Evelyn Grudza, O.S.F., UM-SJMC Spiritual Care; Francis X. Kelly, Chairman of the University of Maryland St. Joseph Medical Center Board.

UM-St. Joseph joins the University of Maryland Medical System, a private, not-for-profit entity, as its first faith-based institution, where loving service and compassionate care are an integral part of the hospital's mission.

In his remarks, Archbishop Lori spoke about the importance of maintaining the hospital's 148-year-old Catholic identity which involves adherence to church teaching, helping the poor and caring for the totality of a patient's mind, body and spirit.

During the chapel ceremony, which drew a standing-room-only audience, blessings also were delivered by Rabbi Steven M. Fink of Temple Oheb Shalom Congregation and Imam Earl El-Amin of the Muslim Community Cultural Center of Baltimore.

Also participating in the service were Mohan Suntha, M.D.M.B.A., President and CEO of UM-St. Joseph; Susanne DeCrane, Vice President for Mission Integration; Sr. Evelyn Grudza, Sister of St. Francis of Philadelphia; Fr. Robert Phillips, Chaplain; Michele McKee, Director of Nursing Services, and Priscilla Sparrow-Eley of the Serpick Infusion Center at the Cancer Institute.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony and speeches in the hospital rotunda followed the blessing service, followed by a buffet luncheon. Speaking at the ribbon-cutting were Dr. Suntha, Sen. Francis X. Kelly, Chairman of the UM-St. Joseph Board, and Robert A. Chrencik, President and CEO of University of Maryland Medical System.

The partnership begins a new chapter in St. Joseph's proud history, Senator Kelly told the crowd. "This community loves St. Joseph Medical Center. They had a few blips, they got some bad publicity but this didn't apply to everything here. Ninety-nine percent of what goes on here is going great," he said.

Dr. Suntha and Mr. Chrencik spoke about the value to UM-St. Joseph of joining a medical system consisting of 12 hospitals with a total of 18,000 and an integral relationship with the University of Maryland School of Medicine faculty. The emphasis, they said, will remain on delivering the highest quality of compassionate and skilled care to everyone who comes to the medical center seeking help.

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#### Hospital Information

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