

The Emma and Emily Josephine Spirituality in Nursing Award

I. CRITERIA

Awarded annually to nurses within the Texas Medical Center who embody:

SPIRITUALITY | By prioritizing the spiritual wellbeing of patients and loved-ones in clinical settings.

COMPASSION | By seeking to prevent, alleviate, and console human suffering, across all levels of diversity.

COMMUNICATION | By respecting and relating to the spiritual beliefs and practices of others through words and actions.

COMMITMENT | By cultivating one's own spiritual, mental, and physical resilience.

II. PROCEDURE

Once your institutional community has selected an awardee, please submit the following information to Marianne Florian (mflorian@ish-tmc.org) no later than Monday, March 3, 2025.

NAME OF INSTITUTION

NOMINEE INFORMATION:

- a. Full name
- b. Professional credentials
- c. Work phone number
- d. Email address
- e. Mailing address

SUPERVISOR/NOMINATOR DETAILS

- a. Name
- b. Email Address
- c. Work phone number

SHORT ANSWERS (100 words max.)

- a. How does the nominee embody the award criteria?
- b. Tell a story that demonstrates the nominee's qualifications.
- c. What are some of this awardee's other qualities, achievements, or accomplishments?

III. CEREMONY

Awards will be given at a special dinner to be held on April 3, 2025. More details to follow.

IV. BACKGROUND

Award Namesake Recognition:

Emma Josephine Loeffelholz McMorris lived a vibrant life for 35 years, but advances in early detection of breast cancer were not available in 1958 when she passed away one month after diagnosis. As a young woman, Emma was a bright scholar and tennis player who loved the Opera, performing in her high school Operetta in 1938. She was a 1943 graduate of the School of Nursing at St. Anthony's Hospital, Oklahoma City, OK, and was a member of the Oklahoma Nurses Association and Beta Sigma Phi Sorority. With the call for nurses during World War II, Emma willingly contributed her skills by joining and serving as an Ensign in the Navy Nurses Corps in the Naval Hospital at San Diego, California from November 1944 to January 1946. There, while caring for the wounded soldiers, she met Marine Sgt. Sheridan Andrew McMorris, whom she married. Emma and Sheridan settled in Boulder, Colorado and she was active in the Altar Society and the Christian Family movement of their church, Sacred Heart of Jesus.

To their six children and the many other lives she touched, Emma's legacy is effervescence for life in tandem with a deep devotion to religion, spiritual care, and caring for others. Emma's love for God and nursing are intertwined in my, her daughter's, memories. I recall my mother being the first person to lift me up as a child and pray with me while placing bandages on my tricycle-torn elbows and knees! My mother's presence was an amazing, gentle grace that filled my soul and created lasting sacred moments that began a life-long yearning for God. I believe my mother would want to honor the profession of nursing as it so often is the gentle listening ear that patients turn to as they cope with the processes of illness and healing – processes that frequently draw upon the spiritual longings of the soul.

In 2023, my daughter Emily Josephine, Emma Josephine's granddaughter, needed the critically compassionate care of nurses in the final days of her life on earth. Now, I am able to honor both of these brilliant women – Emma, who embodied the healing touch of Nurses, and Emily, who embodies the precious patients who receive this grand, compassionate care.

Awareness of the spiritual side of a patient's journey allows nurses to hear expressions of spiritual longing and make referrals for spiritual care, thereby providing more holistic caring moments for patients and healthcare professionals alike.

Congratulations to the awardees, and blessings upon each of you in your nursing careers!

Chaplain AnneMarie Wallace, M.Div.