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Joe McDonald to Retire as President & CEO of Catholic Health

Fifteen year career highlighted by much success and progress for health system

After nearly 15 years at the helm of Catholic Health, Joe McDonald, the health system's longest tenured president & CEO, has announced plans to retire. While an exact timetable has not been set, McDonald plans to remain with the system to help transition his successor, which is expected during the first quarter of 2018. A committee, including representatives of Catholic Health's Corporate Members, Sponsors, Board of Directors and Medical Staff, is leading the search process for a new president & CEO.

"Joe's leadership is unparalleled in our healthcare community," said William K. Buscaglia, Jr., chair of Catholic Health's Board of Directors. "He has guided Catholic Health through some of the biggest changes and challenges the industry has ever seen, bringing stability and strength to our organization, while leading the transformation of healthcare in our community."

McDonald is the third President & CEO in the history of Catholic Health, which formed in 1998, bringing together Catholic healthcare providers from across the region. "While it has been a privilege and honor to lead our healthcare ministry for the past 15 years, the decision to retire at this time is the right one for me, my family and Catholic Health," he said. "As the system prepares to celebrate its 20th anniversary next year, it seems fitting that we look to welcome a new leader to usher in our next decade of service."

A native of Knoxville, Tennessee, McDonald joined Catholic Health in 2002, when the health system was experiencing the growing pains of coming together as a system and struggling financially. Today, as a result of McDonald's leadership, Catholic Health has experienced 14 consecutive years with a positive operating margin, seen significant growth in programs and services, and made tremendous contributions to the quality and safety of healthcare throughout the region.

"Along with his many accomplishments, Joe has never lost sight of the fact that Catholic Health is a ministry of the Church," said the Most Reverend Richard J. Malone, Th.D., Bishop of Buffalo. "He has been a dedicated servant leader, helping Catholic Health strengthen its mission to reveal the healing love of Jesus to those in need. He has shepherded programs and services that provide tens of millions of dollars in charity care and community benefit each year to serve the poor and vulnerable in our community."

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McDonald's tenure has also been marked by more than \$670 million in investments in facilities, medical technology, and clinical information systems, including a \$100 million investment to lead the early adoption of electronic medical records. He also strengthened Catholic Health's relationship with Catholic Medical Partners and established partnerships with Roswell Park, Sterling Surgical Associates and other local providers to improve access to care across the region.

"Joe has been a responsive leader with a clear vision for collaborative relationships with our physician community," said Michael Edbauer, DO, president & CEO of Catholic Medical Partners. "He is committed to supporting the development of physician practices in a rapidly changing healthcare environment."

"While no journey is without a few struggles, we have much to be proud of," said McDonald in looking back over his career with Catholic Health. "The reimagining of Our Lady of Victory into a senior living community, helped breathe new life into the Lackawanna Campus; saving St. Joseph Hospital from closure following the Berger Commission, has reinvigorated care at Sisters Hospital St. Joseph Campus; and the acquisition of Mount St. Mary's Hospital in 2015, helped complete our ministry and strengthen Catholic healthcare services in Niagara County."

While strengthening programs and services has been a priority for McDonald, he is most proud of Catholic Health's commitment to the professional development of its associates. "Our success rests on the people who provide care and service in our hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient centers, and through our home care agencies," he said. "Helping our associates advance their careers and enhance their skills, helps them grow, while directly benefitting those we serve."

Following his retirement, McDonald plans to split his time between Buffalo and Knoxville, continuing his service on local, state and national boards. "I look forward to seeing what a new leader and our dedicated team can accomplish in the years ahead," McDonald added. "For now, I would like to thank our physicians, associates, board members, community volunteers and donors, for the support they have shown me and for their continued support of Catholic Health."

McDonald would also like to thank the Buffalo community for making his family feel at home. "Buffalo's reputation as the city of good neighbors was never more evident than when I relocated here with my wife and young son," he continued. "We settled in the city and the community welcomed us with open arms. My wife Penny, who is a nurse educator, found a home at the University at Buffalo School of Nursing and Buffalo was a great place to raise our son. This community will always hold a special place in our hearts."