***Treasuring our Franciscan Roots While Planting Seeds with Ascension***

**Call to Reflection**

******We are here today to honor our deep connections to our Franciscan Heritage entrusted to us by the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters. There have been seeds of Mission that have taken root over the years in responding to the needs of the time. Our Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare's Mission, much like an oak tree, has grown deep roots. Our roots have given birth to the gifts of valued workplace relationships and friendships that have crossed the boundaries of clinical sites and states. The gift of working side-by-side and doing what is ours to do, has enhanced our sense of Mission, propelling us to work and live with a deeper sense of purpose and meaning as physicians, leaders and associates. Mission is the foundation of who we are as Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare.

In 1879, three Franciscan Sisters arrived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on a mission to provide nursing care to the community. Out of a small house on 4th and Walnut Streets on Milwaukee’s North Side, they began operating their health care ministry. At the same time, a group of Felician Sisters was also providing ministry and health care services to families throughout Wisconsin. Little did either group realize that their missions would link together and evolve over the next century into one of the region’s largest and most respected health care organizations.

The partnership we share with Ascension was formed by those whose shoulders we all stand upon. Our Wheaton Franciscan and Felician Sisters were visionary leaders who recognized how working together served the needs of the people for over 140 years. Throughout these years, we have celebrated how Mission has always been at the heart of our connections across the ministries. All of us have placed great value on our relationship with one another. Our Franciscan Mission and Heritage along with our Catholic Identity has been foundational to how we know ourselves, have come to know and love each of you, and how we have been known and highly respected in the communities we serve.

**A Reading from Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11**

I pray always with joy in my every prayer for all of you, because of your partnership for the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began the good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer for you, *“that your love and knowledge may increase ever more and that you continue to grow in every kind of perception, to discern what is of value.”*

**Reflection Question:**

* How will your Franciscan roots and our history help you to do even greater things in the future?

**Closing Prayer**

**Leader**

May we stand proudly on the shoulders

of all those extraordinary women

who have co-created sacred sanctuaries

of healing and safe dwelling.

We pray in gratitude for the gift of our Wheaton Franciscan Sisters

whose presence in our lives will always

remain a gift that sustains and nurtures us.

May we be guided to do what is ours to do with Ascension.

**Our Response Our Promise (All):**

Let us trust in God’s presence

as we continue to let go, to create new dreams

and believe in new possibilities.

We pray in gratitude for our new Sponsor, Ascension Health.

May we continue to provide exceptional

and compassionate care to patients and families.

Togetherwe will walk hand in hand

to become a gentle, peace-filled, joyful, and compassionate

healing presence for all those we serve and for our world. Amen.