

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Melanie Andrews
Media Relations Manager
St. Joseph Holdings
Phone: (225) 791-1688
mandrews@stjosephholdings.com**

Hospice Care Helps Patients and Families Focus on Living

St. Joseph Hospice Celebrates Seasons of Caring during National Hospice/Palliative Care Month

Hospice care helps patients and families focus on living. This is the message that St. Joseph Hospice is sharing with the community during National Hospice/Palliative Care Month. However, this important message lasts beyond the month of November and is important all year round.

“November is a valuable time to raise awareness throughout our community about care at the end of life,” said Pat Mitchell, Chief Executive Officer. “But the time a family might need us doesn’t follow a calendar or occur only during this season, so our message must make an impression that stays with people all year long.”

Every November hospices across the country reach out to raise awareness of the compassionate care that hospice and palliative care provide patients and families coping with serious and life-limiting illness.

The *Seasons of Caring* theme reminds people that life’s final seasons can be some of the most fulfilling, especially when patients and families look to hospice and palliative care for help.

The hospice team provides expert medical care to keep patients comfortable and able to enjoy time with loved ones. They answer questions, offer advice on what to expect, and help families with the duties of being a caregiver. The team also provides emotional and spiritual support for the entire family, even following the loss of a loved one.

“With the help of hospice, patients and families alike can focus on what’s most important – enjoying life together and living the final seasons to their fullest,” said Carmel Drago, Administrator. “It’s about the quality of life ... about making every day a good day.”

“There’s an inaccurate perception among the American public that hospice means you’ve given up,” said J. Donald Schumacher, president and CEO of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. “Those of us who have worked in the field have seen firsthand how hospice and palliative care can improve the quality of life. And there’s a growing body of research showing that hospice and palliative care may prolong the lives of some people who receive care.”

More than 1.45 million patients receive care from the nation’s hospices every year, reports the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization.

St. Joseph Hospice is locally owned and operated with Louisiana locations in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Houma/Thibodaux, Lafayette, Monroe, New Orleans, Shreveport, and Slidell and on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi in Picayune, Gulfport and Hattiesburg. For more information about hospice and/or palliative care, contact St. Joseph Hospice or visit www.StJosephHospice.com. Additional information on hospice and palliative care as well as advance care planning is available at www.caringinfo.org.

###