

Moments that Matter

*“Be the change
you want to see
in the world.”*

- Ghandi

St Mary's was born from the belief no one should face a life limiting illness on their own. At a time when so many can feel lost, it is vital that a friendly face who cares and understands can enter into your life, give support, give courage and most importantly, give as many moments as possible.

Moments that Matter is designed to give an insight into real people's lives, to create an understanding of the true impact we make and finally ask you to join us and become a 'Moment Maker' and help ensure the valuable work we do continues.



Take a moment

A kiss is a promise, a kiss is acceptance, a kiss is a bond, and the knowledge I'll be there.

When Sarah brought her mother, Dorothy, to St. Mary's for end of life care, she talked about the importance of a kiss. Her mum gave her a kiss goodnight, every night, for as long as she could remember. A constant gift throughout her life. The idea that one night, that kiss may be her last, added to the feelings of grief.

The nurses arranged for her mother to create a kiss they could laminate so Sarah would always have a kiss from her mum, whenever she needed it.

St. Mary's took a moment and sealed it.

Our care extends further than our patients and these are the moments that matter.



Kisses for keeps

“They made a truly terrible time just that bit easier. We will be eternally grateful.”

*- Gill
(Lee's Mum)*

Lee was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukaemia at 27 years old. He spent 8 months in hospital receiving chemotherapy and a stem cell transplant, before he was out and looking forward to the rest of his life.

Unfortunately, the leukaemia returned and they needed to repeat the treatment. A devastating blow and many more months in hospital; much of this time in isolation. After the second round of treatment, he was left with a real fear of ever having to go back; even returning for clinic appointments became an ordeal.

Less than a year later, Lee was admitted to hospital with pneumonia and told his cancer had returned with little to no hope of recovery.

The only thing he wanted was to go home.

“As a family we were overwhelmed, we were lost. The St. Mary's Hospice at Home team came into our lives and gave us the help we needed to bring Lee home. Without their support, Lee would have spent his last hours in a place where he was unhappy and afraid, instead of at home surrounded by the love of his family.”



Bring him home

"I find great comfort in knowing St. Mary's are there for as long as I need them."

"I thought a hospice was a place to go when you die. It's so much more than that. They enhance your quality of life, teach you how to live better and treat you as a person and not an illness."

At St. Mary's, we believe in Living Well every moment we have left and hold groups for patients and their loved ones on a regular basis with practical tools and techniques to help people cope and enhance their wellbeing.

"It's not about not being well, it is about being as well as you can be and living better."

"The hospice see you as a person and not an illness. That instantly gives you comfort and knowledge they care."

"There is something about doing something yourself rather than having things done to you which is quite empowering. In little ways, I felt quite euphoric after the first session. I walked here, limped here, but as I was going home, I just felt taller. I felt that my eyes were lifted up and I was seeing the world rather than being preoccupied with how rough I felt."

Making the most of every moment we have.



Living Well

“Until you experience St Mary’s, you can never appreciate how perfect the place and the people are. I can’t thank them enough.”

*- Lauren
(Ian’s daughter)*

When you hear the word ‘terminal’ the hairs on the back of your neck stand on end, when you hear them about your Dad, you want the world to stop turning and swallow you up. Your life changes forever. My Dad Ian Ball, my hero, was diagnosed with Terminal Bowel Cancer.

When Dad heard he could go to St Mary’s, he smiled. “How lucky am I to get a place in here, isn’t it just amazing?” said Dad; hard words to hear when I was feeling far from lucky, but he was beyond content, and no longer scared.

The next 3 days were the hardest in my life. We were in the darkest of places as a family, but St Mary’s went above and beyond to ensure we knew they were there for us all no matter what. You realise instantly you are not alone; a loving smile, a reassuring hand on your shoulder. Reassurance at the right time, a true gift.

I take so much comfort knowing they made my Dad feel relaxed, fearless, and happy at the Hospice. Naturally people associate angels with heaven, it’s not true, St Mary’s Hospice is full of them; walking, breathing, caring angels ensuring patients and families are cared for.



My Hero

"I felt at the time and feel now that I am held in the palm of friends who care."

- Helen
(Patrick's wife)

Patrick led a life filled with poetry, fell walks, music and love. A much loved husband father and grandfather, Patrick suffered from Parkinson's Disease, Lewy Bodies Dementia and latterly Multiple Myeloma. Patrick attended afternoon day care sessions and respite care. As his health deteriorated, Patrick entered the Hospice for end of life care.

Being here meant Helen did not have to leave Patrick's side. The family agreed, no tears in the room, just chat, laughter and Patrick's favourite music playing. "We couldn't change what was happening, but if Patrick could sense or hear anything he would think it was a normal day with those he knew and loved."

"Originally I wanted Patrick to be at home, but allowing him to be at St. Mary's gave me days of precious quality time with him. I was able to hold him, lie beside him and talk to him without having to think about the nursing care he needed. Those last days were so calm and peaceful and so full of love that I had no fear for myself or Patrick, he simply fell asleep with my arms around him."

"St. Mary's Hospice gave us that wonderful gift."



The gift of time

*Take a moment
to give a moment*

Thank you for taking a moment to read our stories and thank you to the families who have allowed us to share them.

So, what now?

We'd like to invite you to become a 'Moment Maker'.

By committing £500 each year for a minimum of three years you will join other local companies who have come together to ensure St Mary's Hospice can continue to create moments that matter, to ensure we are able to be there for those who need us, when they need us and for how long they need us.

Be part of a movement that truly cares.

To join please fill in the enclosed Direct Debit form or contact St Mary's Hospice at fundraising@stmaryshospice.org.uk

We'd love to hear from you.



Moment Makers

www.stmaryshospice.org.uk/momentmakers



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