



# *The Diocese of Knoxville*

*Living our Roman Catholic faith in East Tennessee*

MEDIA ADVISORY  
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## St. Mary's Legacy Clinic to mark five years of service Mobile medical mission provides health care to the underserved in ET

KNOXVILLE--- Perhaps it is only coincidence that after 90 years serving the health care needs of East Tennesseans, the current owners of St. Mary's Hospital will close its doors in December, right around the time the mobile medical clinic that bears its name will be preparing for its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary serving the medical needs of those living in remote communities in this region.

Established by the Diocese of Knoxville, The St. Mary's Legacy Clinic will mark the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its first community visit on Jan. 14, 2019. The traveling clinic and its mission are directed by Sister Mariana Koonce, RSM, a licensed medical doctor and a former U.S. Navy physician.

Over the past five years, the clinic has served thousands of patients and its mission has now grown to include six East Tennessee communities— Athens, Crab Orchard, Decatur, Gatlinburg, Rutledge, and Washburn.

"Several things strike me about our patient population," Sister Mariana said. "One is just the number of people who seem to be living with nothing. You don't know how they're getting by. The second is that, for many of our patients, their health is keeping them from working and yet there aren't the resources out there to get their health back to a state where they can work. It's a vicious cycle in that they can't work so they don't have insurance, but they don't have insurance to get their health to a place where they can work."

**During the season of Christmas, Sister Mariana would love to discuss the mission of the St. Mary's Legacy Clinic and the upcoming anniversary of its first community visit. She is available for studio interviews the week of Dec. 17 and may be available for on-site interviews if you are interested.**

St. Mary's Legacy Clinic extends the healing ministry of Jesus to East Tennessee by providing mobile medical services to people in under-served areas. With the help of volunteer health care professionals and other community members, the clinic provides primary health care services at no cost to the patient.

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