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## The luxury of choice

IN THIS ISSUE, YOU WILL MEET Gloria Wiebe, a parish nurse who never imposes religion or spirituality on her clients (pg. 17). She leaves it up to individuals to establish their own link between faith and health. I truly admire Gloria for recognizing faith is as personal a choice as one's career or soul mate. These choices define us as individuals. Without making them on our own, who are we?

As a child, I happily participated in all of the rites of passage the Catholic faith required. I sat quietly in church and listened to my priest. When I started to understand the sermons, and was old enough to disagree, I did. Admittedly, faith hasn't been a big part of my life for decades. Then I had a baby, and found myself surprisingly moved when he was blessed during an impromptu visit to a chapel. Spirituality will become a part of my life again because I want my son to have faith in his. But my influence will be deliberately subtle since the choice to

embrace faith will be his to make.

This philosophy of choice is one that was woven into our last issue of RNJ, and it's also a big part of the stories we bring you here. In fact, it's fundamental to the work of RNs Laura Hanson and Bethany Jeal (pg. 24). When caring for drug users, they focus their attention on what people need and deserve, not on whether the choices they've made in life are right or wrong.

As we all know, you don't need to be a drug user to be on the receiving end of judgement for the choices you've made. But such is life. And as much as this is true; so too is the notion that all of our choices are influenced, whether by those close to us or by complete strangers. The nurses in our cover story (pg. 12) are influencing others through media. Whether they're talking about human rights, the health of our elderly, public health, or other nursing issues, people listen. And they should. After all, the best choices in life are made with a bit of education behind them. **RN**

### Margaret Ruth Page (nee Drummond): 1918–2011

Former RNAO President Margaret Ruth Page (1964–65) passed away March 3, 2011. She was the recipient of the Order of Canada and an RNAO Award of Merit. A graduate of the BScN program at Lakehead University, Page was appointed assistant professor of its School of Nursing in 1973. In 1977, she was promoted to full professor and director. She participated in missions to Pakistan and Malawi (Africa) in the 80s, and was invited to the University of Malawi to establish a school of nursing at the Kamuzu College of Nursing. In 1984, Page accepted the position of Principal at that college. While in the role, she admitted the first group of male Malawi nurses into the program. Donations in her honour can be made to *The Professor Margaret Page Graduate Award in Nursing*, Lakehead University.