Willow Award
EXCELLENCE IN END-OF-LIFE CARE

6/3/2026

Dear Willow Award Committee,

We are honored to submit this nomination on behalf of our mother, Virginia Burgess, in recognition of an extraordinary nurse, Christy Seawood, RN, of the Baptist Springhill Stepdown Unit. Our mother believed deeply in the Willow Award and supported its mission for years. It is only fitting that, through her story, we recognize someone who embodies its spirit.

To understand Christy's impact, you must first understand our mother.

Anyone who met Virginia Burgess immediately felt the joy of her smile. She was one of the kindest, most soft-spoken, and genuinely loving women one could know. She carried a quiet strength—simply put, she lived like a saint among us. She was once a nun in the Catholic Church, later a Catholic school teacher, and always a compassionate guide to others. She was also adventurous—even living on a turkey farm at one point.

She spent her career in the funeral insurance industry, becoming a gentle, trusted voice to families navigating loss. We, her children, practically grew up in a funeral home, learning from her how to care for people in their most vulnerable moments.

Because of this, we immediately recognized something special in Christy Seabrook.

Our first interaction came on a Sunday morning after our mother shared, "If they are trying to prolong my life, let me go home on hospice." When we reached out, Nurse Christy returned our call. From the moment she spoke, we felt peace. Her kindness was unmistakable—you could hear her smile through the phone.

Later, we heard her in the room explaining everything to our mom in a voice so calm and caring that we knew, even without meeting her, that she was extraordinary. Most importantly, our mother felt it too—afterward, she was at peace.

The next morning, Mom called to show us her pulse oximeter—worn on her forehead due to limited supplies—still finding humor despite her discomfort. Nurse Christy later shared that she had saved Mom as her last patient of the day so she could spend extra time with her—talking, laughing, and connecting. She even, it seems, briefly supervised Mom's "forehead pulse ox" moment. That small act spoke volumes about her character.

Later that day, Jennifer met Nurse Christy over FaceTime. She was exactly as imagined—radiant, joyful, and comforting in a difficult moment.

After Nurse Christy left for a well-deserved vacation, our mother moved to the Coronary Care Unit, where Jessica, Tyler, and Emily (ER Nurse) cared for her with remarkable kindness. They consistently introduced themselves, explained each step, and cared not only for Mom, but for all of us. We will never forget when Nurse Jessica opened the blinds so Mom could feel sunlight on her face one last time—a simple but deeply meaningful act.

After our mother's passing, Jennifer returned to thank the staff and, by chance, met Nurse Christy in person. She greeted her with a heartfelt hug and sincere sympathy, even expressing gratitude for being included in Mom's obituary—showing how deeply their brief connection mattered to her as well.

Our mother was devoted, deeply loved, and leaves an immeasurable void in our family, her work family, and our community. We will forever be grateful for the tenderness and compassion these remarkable nurses showed to such a magnificent woman. In the midst of our deepest heartbreak, it brings us peace to know that, in her final days, she was surrounded by genuine kindness and love—from someone who began as a stranger, but quickly became family.

Within days, our mother saw Nurse Christy that way—and so did we.

The Willow Award honors those who go beyond clinical care to truly touch lives. Christy Seabrook does exactly that. She brought comfort, dignity, joy, and peace to our mother and to all of us.

For this, we respectfully request your consideration of Christy Seabrook, RN, for the Willow Award.

With sincere appreciation,

Kim, Jennifer, Christy, Chase, Gary

Children of the late Virginia Burgess