

Sacred Stories

As CommonSpirit Health, we make the healing presence of God known in our world by improving the health of the people we serve, especially those who are vulnerable, while we advance social justice for all.

Compassion

Inclusion

Integrity

Excellence

Collaboration

A New Friend

“Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other’s eyes for an instant?” - Henry David Thoreau

TEXT

I volunteered to work the day shift on Christmas Day because we were short-staffed. I was a little sad to leave my children and go to work. But, during my hour-long drive to work, I decided that I would make this a cheerful day and help my patients to not feel sad about being in the hospital on Christmas. I knew that they, too, would rather be at home with their families.

Most of the patients were in cheery moods, greeting the nurses with, “Merry Christmas!” However, one patient was just plain crabby. I did what I could to make her comfortable and opened the curtains so she could see the white, fluffy snowflakes gently falling outside. But, she remained crabby.

About 5:30 p.m., the dietary aides brought her supper. When I went to help her set up her tray, she complained that she didn’t like any of the food. I told her I could

arrange for another tray, or I could go to the galley and make her some chicken noodle soup. She decided that she would like the soup.

SACRED STORY

When I returned with her warm bowl of soup and crackers, she thanked me and said, “I don’t know why you have been so nice to me all day when I have been nothing but crabby.” I told her, “I know that you don’t want to be here, especially on Christmas, so I was trying to make it a good day for you.”

She began to cry. She told me that her only son had died, she had lost her husband recently and that this was her first Christmas alone. We gave each other a hug, and I sat and listened to her.

I left work thankful that I had a family to go home to - and that I had made a new friend that Christmas Day.

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When was the last time you “looked through the eyes of another” and gained a renewed sense of empathy?

QUESTION FOR REFLECTION