CommonSpirit

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

Sacred Stories convey ways our mission is being lived out by the gifted people in our ministry. We invite you to use these stories for inspiration, as a meeting reflection, or to encourage discussion with your team.

Ice Cream: Good for the Soul

TEXT

"Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor."
-Romans 12:10 NRSV

SACRED STORY

Working in the emergency medical field, we witness a lot: some good, some not so good. Occasionally, we transport residents from one facility to another for treatments.

For about two weeks, my ambulance partner and I had the privilege of transporting an elderly woman I'll call Deborah for chemotherapy treatments. She grew weaker as the days went by, and no family members had visited her for months. Still, she was a happy soul, and we had fun on our transport trips. She looked forward to seeing us, and we looked forward to seeing her. Though her spirits were high, we knew that she was declining. She was unable to eat much.

One day after a treatment, I asked her, "If you could have anything to eat right now, what would it be?" She told me how she had loved to go to a local, well-known ice cream establishment with her family.

My partner and I waved goodnight and told her we would see her the next day. Then, we looked at each other and knew just what to do. We had no other jobs pending, so we went to the ice creamery and bought her an ice cream cone. We drove back to Deborah's location and found her lying in bed looking at photographs. "Deb, we have a little something for you," we said, and gave her the cone.

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Ice Cream: Good for the Soul

Her eyes lit up and she smiled from ear to ear. We had tears in our eyes – to see her so happy was wonderful. We sat for a while and spoon fed her some of the ice cream she had been craving for so long. She didn't have much, but she loved it and was thankful for our gesture.

We didn't take her for any more treatments, as she died shortly after that, but we are thankful that her last days were the best they could be. I am thankful I had time with Deborah and helped her enjoy the brief time she had left here on earth.

It seems that people always want more in life, but it's the little things that make life so sweet.

From the Sacred Stories Archive

SACRED STORY CONTINUED

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

How can you be more attentive to the little things that might mean so much to the people in your life - loved ones, patients, or colleagues?

When was the last time you surprised someone with one of their favorite things, and what did it mean to them?