

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.

Just Hands

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“Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands – O prosper the work of our hands!”

TEXT

- Psalm 90:17

I was a begrudging participant in the afternoon’s prayer service –and I was leading it! It was our Spirituality of Work Feast Day, but I was frustrated because I hadn’t found a creative way to involve the entire hospital. To complicate things, only two of us were available to lead the service that day.

We finally settled on a traveling Blessing of the Hands service for each nursing floor. My expectations were low. We began on a medical/surgical floor. Despite a busy patient load, a roomful of nurses and aides participated in the service. My spirit brightened at the sight.

My colleague led the service while I assisted in the blessing. I used a drop of oil to anoint the palms of each participant as I spoke the words, “May the work of your hands bring healing and wholeness to everyone you touch.”

SACRED STORY

Rarely do I literally hold the hands of our staff members, so this was initially an awkward experience. But hands are just hands, right?

Still, the hands that I touched and God blessed do so many things. They wash, bathe, palpate, fluff pillows, care for wounds and change dressings. They check vital signs and straighten rooms.

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They document volumes of patient information and responses to physician orders. They administer medication and reassure anxious family members. The hands I held gesture to communicate and at times, grasp each other in silent frustration. Sometimes, when a patient's life is in danger, they fly around the room in a frenzy of activity.

The act of blessing always has some effect. I began to sense the words and experience were powerful and eye-opening. I realized how wonderful the hands I touched really are. In those hands, I saw faith, commitment, sacrifice, generosity, empathy and love.

I saw hands that bring healing and wholeness to the ones they touch. I saw the loving, vulnerable hearts of our people as I looked into their outstretched palms.

Is there anything ordinary about the work our hands do?

My colleague and I visited several floors that afternoon. I don't know of our impact, but I do know that we were blessed; in God's eyes, our simple hands have an extraordinary and wonderful influence.

Submitted by Reverend Mark Bekkedahl

SACRED STORY
CONTINUED

The author asks, "Is there anything ordinary about the work our hands do?"
What do you think? How is the work of your hands sacred?

How do you bring healing and wholeness in your role?

QUESTIONS FOR
REFLECTION