

NURSES FOCUS ON INTENTIONAL CARE OF THE SPIRIT
By Maureen Bausch, RN, NACC

Parish Nursing/ Health Ministry was conceived by a hospital chaplain, Granger Westberg, in the early 1980's. In ministering to his patients, he recognized that the nurse was in the pivotal role of integrating spirituality and science. In the 1800's, Florence Nightingale had observed this as the art and science of nursing when she stated,

“Nursing is an art, and, if it is to be made an art, requires as exclusive a devotion, as hard a preparation, as any painter's or sculptor's work; for what is the having to do with dead canvas or cold marble, compared with having to do with the LIVING body ~ the temple of God's SPIRIT?”

Faith Community Nursing is the comprehensive title which has evolved since the early beginnings. This is thoroughly described in the Faith Community Nursing Scope and Standards Practice (2005).

Two Nebraska nurses, Sonja Simpson, MSN,RN, HNC,FCN and Susan Ward, PhD,RN,FCN were an integral part of a team of ten authors from around the country who arduously compiled this excellent document. It identifies Faith Community Nursing as a specialty practice by the American Nurses Association and recognizes that intentional care of the spirit is at the core of every area of life affecting wellness, prevention of illness, health promotion, illness care, justice, and advocacy.

Faith Community Nurses are in a position to implement another of Florence's beliefs:

“Neither physicians nor nurses can cure people. What nursing has to do is to put the patient in the best condition for nature to act upon him.”

In 1993, Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center was the first facility in Nebraska to offer a parish nurse training program which has trained over 350 people. The 24th Training will be held in four all-day sessions at Saint Elizabeth on Fridays & Saturdays, **October 3 & 4 and October 24 & 25.**

Nebraska is blessed with four educational providers as follows:

Alegent Health, Omaha: Faith Community Nursing Basic Preparation
Ronnelle Sailors, RN 402-898-8354 or rsailors@alegent.org

Methodist College & Methodist Health Systems, Omaha
Basic Parish Nursing Preparation
Dr. Susan Ward, RN 402-354-4965 or susie.ward@methodistcollege.edu

Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center, Lincoln: Parish Nurse Training
Maureen Bausch, RN, NACC 402-219-7314 or mbausch@stez.org
WEBSITE: www.SaintElizabethOnline.com PARISH NURSE is under
About Us Mission & Spirituality

Saint Francis Medical Center, Grand Island Parish Nursing Course
Diana Wing, RN 308-398-5799 or dwing@sfmc-gi.org

In addition, there are two international organizations:

Health Ministries Association: www.hmassoc.org
ANNUAL CONFERENCE:
Healing Power of Gratitude on June 12 – 15, 2008 in California

International Parish Nurse Resource Center: www.parishnurses.org
ANNUAL CONFERENCE: September 12 -14 in Saint Louis, MO.

The collegiality and dependable support and wisdom of those of us involved in health ministry are crucial to our role as we integrate faith and health in our communities. I am grateful for the ways our connection continues to evolve as we learn from the wisdom of Florence Nightingale, whose deep sense of unity with God became her action for wholistic integration of mind, body, and spirit.