

## Four Million Reasons to Celebrate

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Four million nurses ... it is such a privilege to be a part of this profession and to honor each of you for the work you are doing. As I reflected on this year's theme for Nurses Week, I was reminded of an important truth. We have: *Four Million Reasons to Celebrate ... One Incredible Profession!*

As nurses, we work in different areas – as students, educators, researchers, on mission fields, and in communities, clinics, private industry, and hospitals. We have different educational backgrounds. We are unique as individuals. But we are all nurses. For those of us who follow Jesus Christ, we recognize our oneness extends beyond our profession. We are part of something more: the body of Christ.

*How could being part of the body of Christ support your nursing practice?*

### **THINK ABOUT IT**

This reality of our being unique and yet belonging to each other as one body is described in rich detail in the New Testament:

#### **I Corinthians 12:12 – 26 (NLT):**

<sup>12</sup> *The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup> Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.*

<sup>14</sup> *Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. <sup>15</sup> If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?*

<sup>18</sup> *But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. <sup>19</sup> How strange a body would be if it had only one part! <sup>20</sup> Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. <sup>21</sup> The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."*

<sup>22</sup> *In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. <sup>23</sup> And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, <sup>24</sup> while the more honorable*



*parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. <sup>25</sup> This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.*

These verses remind us of our need for connection. Too often, we find ourselves separated, alone, and isolated...we don't feel \_\_\_\_\_ enough to complete the next shift or the next class or the next day (with any number of words we could use to fill in the blank). Moral injury, burnout, and compassion fatigue are often a part of what we experience in our daily lives taking a toll on us physically, mentally, and spiritually. And if not us, we see these needs in our peers and colleagues. We feel it happening at the bedside. We hear it in the breakroom. We relive it on the drive home.

Being valued is a foundational need we all have. We want to make a difference in the work we do and in the care we provide. It is true for the other members of the healthcare team. Think about the people we work with on a regular basis: nursing assistants, patient care techs, or surgery techs as well as those who work in the lab, imaging, respiratory therapy, physical / occupational therapy, or pharmacy...do they each see themselves as a part of the team? Are they recognized for their work? There are also those who work in registration, dietary, materials, engineering, information technology, or administration. Each person serves a vital role in the care that is provided but can often feel unnoticed.

How are nursing students or new graduates received? Are they welcomed and supported in their learning? Do we communicate and educate in a way that honors the individual? How we receive, interact, and support these men and women impacts our workplace culture, our profession, and the care of those we serve. It impacts us individually as well in the way we show up at work and at home.

As a profession, we have recognized the need for improved civility, communication, and teamwork. We know it affects patient outcomes, patient experience, and employee engagement. Our organizations are spending millions of dollars monitoring, evaluating, and providing training. I wonder how much more could be added to these needs we face if we incorporate all of who we are ... our mind, body, and spirit into our interactions with others? What if we began to see people as Jesus saw people? What if we lived with compassion for each other and for ourselves?

Our presence in the body of Christ means there is support. There is hope. There is value. There is purpose. There is life. There is celebration! Being a part of the body of Christ means:

- ◆ We have a source greater than ourselves, Jesus Christ, to walk beside us in all we experience. *God is our refuge and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble (Psalm 46:1, NLT).*

- ◆ We have brothers and sisters in Christ who can hear our stories and empathize in our pain and celebrate our joys.
- ◆ We can lift each other up through our prayers, a meaningful touch, an understanding look, a note of encouragement, or a Bible verse.
- ◆ We can mentor others as they transition into their practice or new roles of leadership.
- ◆ We can be present for each other in the challenges we face both personally and professionally.

### **DISCUSS IT**

- ◆ Do you feel connected with other believers? Identify the support systems you have or need to develop. Is there a need for a local NCF student or professional nurse group? [Reach out to us](#) if this is an option you'd like to discuss more.
- ◆ In what ways do you need support? What fills your cup so that you can be fully present at home and at work? Who do you have that you trust to share what's going on?
- ◆ Are there other believers where you work who would be willing to pray for you and that you can be praying for as well? You can also reach out to us at NCF to [share your prayer request](#). We have a team of nurses across the country who have volunteered to pray for the needs of other nurses.
- ◆ How can your faith better support the work you do? Think about how your faith does or could make a difference in the lives of those you serve and in your team.
- ◆ Do you need more time connected to the Lord through a regular quiet time, Bible study, prayer, or Sabbath? What is one thing you can do to take that next step?

### **TAKE IT HOME**

- ◆ What are the ways your department / unit works well (or could work well) together? What challenges and opportunities are present? Share your thoughts with someone you trust.
- ◆ Create a plan to begin to address these needs. Start small. Celebrate the successes.
- ◆ Reflect on your own practice and the difference you are making. Take a fresh look at what you have to be grateful for in your day. Start calling out these moments of gratitude.
- ◆ How do other members of your team need support? A smile, thank you, cup of coffee or a simple sticky note left on a keyboard to encourage someone can really brighten another person's day.
- ◆ What's the best piece of advice you ever received about nursing? Share it with us on our NCF [Facebook](#) page during National Nurses Week. #BestNursingAdvice