

Nursing, Needles and Jesus' Tender Heart

When I was a kid, I hated when I had to get a needle at the doctor's office. While this is a familiar feeling among many children (and adults too!), I remember it got to a point where I would dread appointments months in advance. It was a go-to worry for me when I had no other worries. . I laugh at myself now, but it was a genuine concern for me back then. Little did I know that I would grow up to study nursing. Of course, by the time I entered nursing school, I had received many injections to the point where I didn't think twice about getting them.

These days, I am the one giving injections along with helping administer many uncomfortable procedures. I struggle to be the one causing my patients any pain or discomfort. I interiorly wince with my patients when they receive their daily heparin shot. Sometimes I feel like crying right along with a patient if I have to insert a nasogastric tube down their nose. However, there is a reason that I can peacefully continue participating in these procedures during each shift.

The ultimate outcome of the pain or discomfort is healing.

Once in, a foley catheter will finally drain a bladder that hasn't been able to empty itself. The daily heparin shot is preventing clots from forming in the patient's blood while they are bedbound in the hospital. Once in the stomach, a nasogastric tube can deliver the nutrition that a patient desperately needs. Through these temporary painful experiences, the patient's body can become restored and whole again.

A few weeks ago, I was struck by a piercing passage in Fr. Jacques Philippe's book, *Interior Freedom*: "In situations of trial, not knowing why we are being tested often is harder to bear than that testing itself. "What is the meaning?" people ask. "Why?" And they get no answer. When, by contrast, reason is satisfied, suffering is much easier to accept. It's like the doctor who hurts us – we don't get angry with him because we understand that he does it to make us better." (pp. 51)

Sometimes God reveals to us the good that He is doing through our suffering, but other times we do not see it right away. But we do know that He is good and He is the best heavenly physician. So when I read the last line in the passage, I was overwhelmed with the reality of my own experiences in nursing and the good, good heart of my Father.

How often do I decide that God must not care about me because He allows me to experience this current pain? How many times have I dwelt in the self-pity of how abandoned I feel in my suffering instead of running to the deep, compassionate love that my Father has for me? What if, instead, He is allowing this pain so that I can be healed and whole again or preventing me from becoming more spiritually sick? What if He is crying with me when I cry?

If even the broken and imperfect Anna can feel this amount of empathy towards patients in their suffering, I can only imagine what the perfect God of the universe feels for His beloved children.

“Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him, she threw herself at his feet, saying, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, ‘Where have you put him?’ They said, ‘Lord, come and see’. Jesus wept” - John 11:32-35 (continue reading beyond this passage to hear about Jesus proceeding to raise Lazarus from the dead!)

by: *Anna Richard*

DAUGHTER, SISTER, PROUD AUNTIE, WRITER, NACHO ENTHUSIAST, MUSICIAN, BAKER, AND GARDENER.

I AM A NURSING STUDENT AND I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT BRINGING PEACE TO MY PATIENTS. I LOVE TO WRITE ABOUT GOD'S EXTRAORDINARY LOVE AND THE UNIQUE WAYS I'VE ENCOUNTERED HIM.

IN MY SPARE TIME, YOU CAN FIND ME UPDATING MY SPOTIFY PLAYLISTS, DRINKING LARGE CUPS OF TEA AND SPENDING QUIET TIME WITH THE AUTHOR OF LIFE.

YOUTHINK

