

Blessing Hands

Category: Hands

written by Charles Christie | June 3, 2016

During Hospital Week each year, the staff of our Chaplaincy Department go all over the hospital to bless the hands of caregivers. It is a simple ritual to validate the sacred work of caring for others. With anyone who feels comfortable participating, we chaplains take a little lotion, place it on the staff member's hands, and, while clasping their hands, say, "[Name], I bless these hands of yours, which labor in the care and healing of others in the name of the one who brings healing to us all. Amen."

Here are some of the things I've heard in the course of a twenty-four-hour period as I blessed the hands of everyday caregivers, holding their hands and looking them in the eyes:

Bless these hands of yours...
"I just learned my sister has cancer."

Bless these hands of yours...
"I'm having my third surgery."

Bless these hands of yours...
"Come on in my office. I'm signing my divorce papers."

Bless these hands of yours...
"My next-door neighbor was killed in a car wreck last week."

Bless these hands of yours...
"Bless my back—I don't know how much longer I can keep this up."

Bless these hands of yours...
"No one has ever told me that before."

Bless these hands of yours...
"The hospital can keep their barbeque dinner. This is the most meaningful thing of the week."

Bless these hands of yours...
"I look forward to this each year."

Bless these hands of yours...
"Thanks for coming to the night shift—no one ever thinks of us."

Bless these hands of yours...
"This is my third year of this, and I still get chills."

Amen.

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