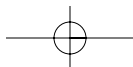
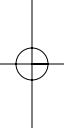
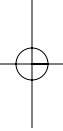
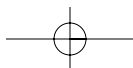
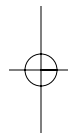
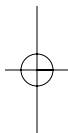
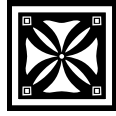


Spirituality in Nursing

STANDING ON HOLY GROUND







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STANDING ON HOLY GROUND

Third Edition

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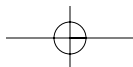
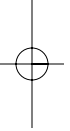
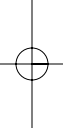
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the many patients, family members, and caregivers, including nurses, physicians, chaplains, firefighters, and police officers, who so generously shared their beliefs and experiences in the hope of clarifying the importance of spirituality in nursing. Some have crossed over to a new life; others continue to live courageously, finding meaning and hope in the experience of illness or in ministering to those who are ill. Their words, quoted extensively in the following pages, are their legacy. I am privileged to be the storyteller.



God called to Moses out of the bush: . . .
"Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on
which you are standing is holy ground."

Exodus 3:4-5

*The nurse's smile warmly embraces the cancer patient arriving for a
chemotherapy treatment.*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse watches solicitously over the pre-op child who tearfully
whispers, "I'm scared."*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse gently diffuses the anxieties of the ventilator-dependent
patient in the ICU.*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse lovingly sings hymns to the anencephalic infant dying in
the nurse's arms.*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse slips a comforting arm around the trembling shoulders of the
newly bereaved widow.*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse tenderly takes the hand of the frail elder struggling to accept
life in the nursing home.*

This is holy ground.

*The nurse
reverently touches and is touched by
the patient's heart,
the dwelling place of the living God.*

*This is spirituality in nursing,
this is the ground of the practice of nursing,
this is holy ground!*



Preface

As the third millennium begins, our society is looking more and more to its spiritual traditions and philosophies for understanding, guidance, and comfort. This is witnessed by the fact that the concept of spirituality, encompassing numerous definitions, is being widely explored in such media as books, newsmagazines, and television documentaries. The nursing community, also, has experienced a resurgence of interest in spirituality, especially in relation to the spiritual needs of those who are ill.

The purpose of this book is to explore the relationship between spirituality and the practice of nursing from a number of perspectives, including nursing assessment of patients' spiritual needs, the nurse's role in the provision of spiritual care, the spiritual nature of the nurse-patient relationship, the spiritual history of the nursing profession, and the contemporary interest in spirituality within the nursing profession. The work is undergirded by the author's research in spirituality and nursing over the past two decades. The book's subtitle and theme, "Standing on Holy Ground," which describes the nurse's posture in providing spiritual care, was derived from nursing studies of the spiritual needs of chronically and acutely ill adults and children experiencing the sequelae of such conditions as cancer (including leukemia and lymphoma), cardiovascular disease, diabetes, depression, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, chronic renal failure, and HIV infection and AIDS. The research included both formal and informal interviewing and observing of patients at home as well as in the hospital setting. The spiritual needs of fragile patient populations—the poor, the elderly, and ventilator-dependent patients in the intensive care unit—were also explored. Data on the spiritual needs and concerns of patients' family members were obtained through interaction with significant others.

In order to expand the database of patient spiritual needs appropriate to nursing intervention, qualitative interviews were conducted with a cadre of contemporary nurses from a variety of clinical backgrounds, including medical-surgical nursing, perioperative nursing, critical care nursing, emergency nursing, community health nursing, psychiatric-mental health nursing, pediatric nursing, gerontological nursing, and parish nursing; the group included nurse clinicians, nurse educators, nurse administrators, and nurse researchers. In addition to providing data on patient spiritual needs, numerous reports of spiritual care provided by practicing nurses were documented. The data derived from patient, family, and nurse interviews are

supplemented by materials excerpted from the author's journal maintained both during the research and while serving as a chaplain intern in a research-oriented medical center. Pseudonyms are used in all instances where naming of study respondents is warranted.

The book presents study findings and implications for care in chapters on nurse-patient interaction, the nurse's role in spiritual care, the spiritual needs of acute and chronically ill persons, the spiritual needs of ill children and the families of those who are ill, the spiritual needs of the frail older adult, spiritual needs in mass casualty disasters, the spirituality of parish nursing, and spiritual needs in death and bereavement.

In this third edition of *Spirituality in Nursing: Standing on Holy Ground*, two new chapters have been added, one exploring spiritual well-being and quality of life at the end of life and the other describing an author-developed middle-range theory of spiritual well-being in illness. The former chapter contains empirical data from three studies examining the spiritual and religious concerns of persons at or near the end of life. The latter chapter describes the development of a middle-range theory of spiritual well-being in illness that nurses may use to guide both practice and research with individuals suffering from a variety of acute or chronic illnesses.

Chapter 3, "Nursing Assessment of Spiritual Needs," contains a number of tools to assess patients' spiritual beliefs, behaviors, and concerns. The author has included a Spiritual Assessment Scale with established validity and reliability, which can be used by nurses in both practice and research, in addition to qualitative tools constructed for specialized research efforts. Finally, a chapter chronicling a spiritual history of nursing describes the spiritual care activities of selected nursing figures from the pre-Christian and early Christian eras to the present. This chapter is grounded in the nursing and theological literature documenting the historical role of the nurse in the provision of spiritual care.

It is understood that the text of a book dealing with spiritual issues must, to a large degree, be influenced by the personal spiritual and religious élan of the writer. Thus, it is important to acknowledge that the author's Christian philosophy of life inspired, guided, and supported the writing of *Spirituality in Nursing*. Although an effort has been made to include examples of patient needs, supported by both data and literature, relative to other religious affiliations, the overall orientation of the work is derived primarily from the Judeo-Christian tradition. It is believed, nonetheless, that nurse readers whose spirituality is guided by another religious ethic will find meaning and inspiration in the poignant nursing examples of spiritual care and compassion as well as in the case examples of patients' spiritual needs.



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