

Almira Factora

NUR 301

World Perspectives: The Christian Nurse

Dr. Lima

Spirituality in Clinical Practice

Nursing has always been my passion and my dream career. I love helping people and I believe I have been called to help those who are in need. When I got accepted into a nursing program, I had a rush of emotions – from excited to nervous and terrified. I knew that nursing school would be a challenge. Indeed, the first semester of nursing school was a confusing and stressful time. It was like learning a whole new language. The studying strategies that I used during my undergraduate program no longer applied in nursing school. I had to learn time management skills and new study habits were formed. Soon, I began to doubt my ability to make it through nursing school. I questioned if all the stress is worth it at the end. Until finally, we started our clinical rotation. My first clinical experience opened my heart to a whole new appreciation for nursing and truly had impact in my spiritual life.

One of the skills we learn early in the first semester is patient communication and how to build rapport with our patients. In the clinical setting, when we meet our patients, we are to practice maintaining eye contact, active listening, compassion, and empathy. On my first clinical experience, I was nervous about meeting my assigned patient. It took a lot of courage to finally enter the patient's room to say "Hello, my name is Almira and I will be your student nurse for today". The patient greeted me with a big smile on his face, told me not to be nervous and that I was free to do any assessment on him. Suddenly my spirit was lifted and I felt confident to talk to him and practice the communication skills that I learned. The patient was very kind and assured me that I was not a burden to him. The patient allowed me to ask him questions related

to his health and perform a head-to-toe assessment, even if his nurse had already asked the same questions and had performed a similar assessment. The patient and I spent the entire morning talking, laughing and sharing stories. He offered a word of encouragement for my nursing school journey. At the end of my clinical day, the patient expressed his appreciation for the time I spent with him. Since he has been in the hospital for a week, he has not had visitors and he was grateful that I spent time with him.

This clinical experience will forever be engraved in my heart. I remember the morning of this clinical day, reciting 1 Peter 5:7, – “Casting all your anxieties on Him, because he cares for you”. It was a challenge to enter the patient’s room because of the anxiety that had taken over me. Thankfully, the patient was kind and because of him, and through prayer and meditation of God’s word, I was able to have a memorable first clinical experience. This experience allowed me to see once again why I chose nursing. I appreciated the communication with my patient and I loved that I was able to make him feel better, even if it was just through sharing stories. It was when I truly realized that nursing means treating patients with kindness, respect, empathy, and compassion.

Then, I remembered how the patient must have been feeling – scared, alone and sad to be hospitalized. It brought tears to my eyes to realize that he had comforted an anxious nursing student despite his own worries being sick in the hospital. But just as I had made his day with my companionship, I was blessed by his kindness and his positivity.

While I had a great first clinical experience, I must remind myself every week that not every clinical experience will be heartwarming. I have had patients ask me to leave their room because they did not want a student, or nurses that refuse to have a student follow them around for the day because we only get in their way. Matthew 5:44 says, “But I say unto you, Love our

enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully persecute you”. I remind myself to be patient and be understanding of the different personalities that I will meet in clinical and in the future when I work as a professional nurse.

Ever since my first clinical experience, I have learned to become even more dependent on God when I feel stressed about school and all the other responsibilities outside of school. I start each day with prayer and a bible verse. This helps set the day for me. Prayer and God’s word relieves anxiety and I know that I can get through the day with God’s help. I also learned to be more intentional with my patients. Every week on clinical day, I ask myself “What is my purpose today? How can I help my patient today?”. I make it a priority to get to know my patients. This allows me to understand my patient’s physical and emotional needs. I realize once again, that although the journey is hard now, it will be all be worth it in the end.