

Nurses Christian Fellowship International European Region Newsletter May 2010

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Editorial

As much of Europe finds itself facing hard times due to the global banking crisis, the Euro sovereign debt crisis and the economic down turn, there is a great search for good value. How can we get the best value for money? Is the cheapest always the best value, or will buying a slightly more expensive version give us something with added value over a cheaper variety?

As we hunt for value, do we also look at *our* values? What do we value most highly as health professionals and as Christians? Is it our professional status, our career or academic qualifications and achievements? Is it our title, seniority, or the regard of our peers?

Jesus reminded his disciples that whatever we value the most will hold our hearts – or *'wherever your treasure is, there also will be your heart.'* [Matthew 6:21].

We therefore need to think carefully about what it that we value the most.

Our governments and health services may value efficiency, saving money, speed of getting patients 'processed' through our

hospitals and health services.

Our patients on the other hand may value a kind or reassuring word, a comfortably made bed, help with eating a well presented and appetizing meal and generally paying attention to the small details that makes them feel like a person and not a patient or a unit in a machine.

God values honesty, integrity, obedience and justice – the Bible again and again calls on God's people to show these values to one another and to him.

So is what we value in line with God's values, and what our patients value? It is worth pausing to reflect on this from time to time in our busy, over full lives, and to focus on where our treasure really lies.

In this edition of EuroNews we look at some of the added value that Christian nurses bring – whether it is in outreach in Armenia, in supporting migrant nurses in Spain or encouraging Christian student nurses and lecturers in England. We are also reminded about where real joy comes from

– not from all the external trappings of our careers or material acquisitions, but from a heart that knows and loves God even as we are fully known and loved by him. And we consider how we can bring those values and that joy into the spiritual care of our patients – helping them to know that they are cared for and valued as human beings.

We hope that the articles in this edition of NCFI EuroNews inspire and encourage you in your own work and professional practice.

Finally, don't forget the regional students spiritual care conference in the Netherlands this November, and the NCFI international conference in Chile in November of next year – details on the back cover.

God bless you.

*The European Committee
of NCFI*

Armenian Christian Medical Association - Nurses Division (ACMA Nurses)



ACMA Nurses Team

On behalf of ACMA Nurses we would like to thank you for your prayers. We have been busy ministering over the spring months, and here is a report of a recent nursing mission that we have undertaken.

From 2 – 11 May we had Kathleen Jackson and Helen Paxton, nurses from Nurses Christian Fellowship Scotland and Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland joining us to run several training courses.

We held seminars for ACMA nurses and from six different Medical Colleges in many marzes (provinces) in two other Medical Centers of Armenia. As a result of holding these lectures in different medical colleges and centres we were able to introduce ACMA's ministry to nurses from around the country. Some teachers and nurses from those centres and colleges asked about joining ACMA. So, we will have more time to introduce them our Lord. Some nursing students had already become ACMA members. We received further invitations from some other medical colleges and also we were asked to collaborate with them. One of the senior teachers from one of medical colleges told us that: "I have been a teacher for 30 years and I cannot give to the students what you have given. We give only theory to nurses, but you teach to our nurses how to love their patients". I think this is a very lovely testimony about ACMA's

nursing ministry, isn't it?

In our ACMA centre which is in Gyumri City (in Shirak marz in the north of the country) we had a three day seminar for ACMA nurses, but other nurses were also invited. About 15 took part in these seminars and our speakers taught us new professional skills. During these days we have also invited a preacher who shared with us God's Word and one of new nurses accepted Jesus as her personal Savior and Lord. So, ACMA nursing seminars do not only bear academic fruit but also spiritual fruit. Because of the salvation of one of our nurses we were all very glad and we give praise to the Lord of the Harvest.

On 12th of May, 2011, ACMA had organised a very special big spiritual-cultural event dedicated to International Nurses' Day. We invited nurses from all the different hospitals and medical colleges of Armenia and more than 250 nurses took part in this event. We consider it as a blessed evening, because during this spiritual-cultural event we were able to introduce God, His love and mercy through a variety of different Christian songs and poetry. Also we talked about Florence Nightingales who served God through her profession. And now,

ACMA nurses are doing the same! They are using their professional skills and spiritual gifts to serve Jesus Christ. It was the second time that ACMA has celebrated the International Nurses' Day in this manner. Through this event many people got to know about ACMA, and more nurses start joining us.

From 15-23 May, 2011 our nurses took part in surgical clinics. The clinics and operations were performed by Dr. Jany Haddad (Founder and president of ACMA) in three different hospitals; two in Armenia and the third in Nagorno-Karabakh (an Armenian enclave in Azerbaijan). More than 21 nurses have been involved during this period and we can say that during this period another new small team of nurses was started in Nagorno-Karabakh. Our nurses not only helped the nurses in the hospital, but also prayed for patients and shared the Gospel with them. Some nurses became more active and got vision to serve God through their profession.

Please pray :

- That through nursing seminars we will be able to enter more colleges and hospitals and have much more blessings and fruitfulness.
- For more nurses in

Armenia know Jesus as their Saviour and Lord

- For unity, strengthening and enlargement of ACMA nurses
- For new nursing

ministries to be undertaken in Armenia and surrounding countries by ACMA nurses

- For ACMA to become a centre for the qualification of nurses

'That your joy might be full' (John 15:11)

When we talk about joy, what is it that we are actually talking about? Words, so wretched, so difficult!

Words that should create links between us, how subtle they can trick us and separate us! Is there a word that we all would understand the same way? Like the word "joy". Everyone knows what we are talking about. Or do they?

What does the word "joy" mean to you? How do you recognise your joy? Personally I find it almost impossible to define "joy". I need help. And I'm not content with just how dictionaries define it. Joy has to be rejoiced in as life has to be lived.

A Chinese book of wisdom says that "joy" is one of the most powerful words.. So strong, that if an emperor can give joy to the people of his country, the people will be willing to die for him.

A French writer says that joy is peace, joy is tranquility. Joy is a common mundane thing. Joy is present in everyday

pursuits, where it is expressing itself as inner peace and composure.

Scientists have substantiated that in every living being there is an inbuilt aspiration to the optimal well-being, surely on the condition of one's genome and limits. Life has an endless good will towards all that is breathing, from a virus to a bird or a flower to say nothing about a human being. Life wants us to flourish.

What or why are the faces or eyes of our passersby without a smile? Why are our steps so heavy?

Where do we get our depression, anxiety and misery? Where does the nameless tiredness come from in the mornings, mornings without joy?

What takes away our joy from us? Gleefulness that we can see in the wings of the barn swallow? What hinders us to open up and surrender to the light like daisies on the field?



Often we hear people ask how they can find joy in their lives? Joy is not something I can buy. Joy is not outside me. Joy is already in me; God's life is expressing itself in me as joy. Joy is there, patiently waiting for me, all the time it is a delusion to think that life would yield according to my will. Life is waiting for me to yield myself to The Life of God. To be his tool for joy and well-being in the world.

An excerpt translated by Paula Laamanen from an article by Helinä Siikala; MD and a writer Published in the Viesti – magazine March 2011

SSKS
Finland

Book review

Spiritual Assessment in Health Practice
 Wilfred McSherry &
 Linda Ross (eds)
 M&K Publishing 2010
 ISBN-10: 1905539274

This book gives a summary of the state of the art in spiritual care assessment and research. Its aim is to compile what is known about spiritual assessment within health care. It is written and edited by some of the most well known writers and researchers on spiritual care in disciplines such as nursing, medicine, theology and chaplaincy, from Europe and the US. Theoretical, ethical, practical and organisational aspects are discussed in such a way that most health care workers with interest in the field can find critical and practical help to improve spiritual care in practice.

The nine chapters have each a distinct focus. The first chapter deals with the changes in society, health policy and guidelines for practice which have led to an increased interest in spirituality in health care. Chapter two gives a multi-perspective approach to spirituality, presenting and

discussing generic, biological, and religious models for of the phenomena. This book does not move us closer to one universal definition of spirituality; rather it gives the rationale for why we need a variety of definitions. The following chapter focuses on how to recognise and assess spiritual needs, and is a key chapter in the book. Chapter four discusses different models, methods, and tools that can be used in clinical assessment and how both the individual health care worker and the organisation are important so that a safe and supportive assessment can take place. The next chapter deals with how spiritual history-taking can be done in clinical settings. Chapter six gives an extensive overview of quantitative tools used in spiritual care research, organized by seven different facets of spirituality. The chapter concludes that a triangulation of tools is recommended since spirituality is a complex and multidimensional concept. The following chapter discusses how quality can be improved in assessment and delivery

of spiritual care. Chapter eight discusses dilemmas of spiritual assessment such as how to know what to assess when the understanding of spirituality is vague. It also covers the importance of patients and health care professionals to be aware of own spirituality. Perhaps spirituality is best assessed and carried out through good nursing care that affirms value and dignity and enables patients to find meaning and hope? The last chapter follows up on this by discussing how spiritual care is inseparable from the wholeness of care. Wholeness of care includes both the art and the science of spiritual care.

Many of the writers underline the importance of attitudes and being 'present' with our patients, which is fundamental in developing a relationship that opens up for spiritual assessment. Sometimes spiritual



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assessment requires us to be looking for clues that can be hidden at first glance. A mechanistic assessment by ticking of boxes can undermine the phenomena of spirituality. The best assessment of a patients spiritually must always be seen in the context of the patients' total situation. Following up on this is a challenge for both education and research for all professions in health care.

The book raises some important questions that are important to continue to discuss. In assessment there is a huge focus on spiritual needs. The use of the concept "need" in relation to spirituality is just shortly touched. This is a discussion that should be

continued and the search for other concepts and a further development of our professional language is needed. One possibility is to use concepts such as 'life phenomena'. There is also a lack of focus on assessments of spiritual resources patients already use in their healing process or to stay healthy.

Another aspect that is just touched upon is the dilemma between what and how to report what is assessed about existential matters in life, which are often shared in confidence. Lack of reporting or documentation about spiritual issues can also be understood as an ethical response to

patient confidentiality. For example, hospital chaplains have a different tradition to nurses in reporting such phenomena.

This book is recommended to all health care workers with interest in this field, and to all in health care leaders who are responsible for the standard and quality of patient care.

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Second National NCF Conference in Spain

In March this year we were very grateful to the Lord to be able to celebrate our second national residential conference in los Negrals, at the foot of the mountains, just north of Madrid. Approximately thirty five nurses gathered from ten autonomous provinces and several migrant

nurses from South and Central America.

It was a very intense programme. Nurses from each region shared a 5 minute devotional before each session that meant that everyone was included and each one was a real blessing. The theme of the conference "Caring according to Values. Carmen Delia Medina, a nurse educator with

a doctorate in Law was the speaker. She gave an analysis of work throughout history.

In the beginning work was good because it was part of God's plan for mankind. However, with the fall of man work became a curse and a burden for mankind. The Protestant Reformation brought a change in that the

philosophy that work was serving God was restored and it is a moral duty. As Christian nurses our mission field is in our work place and we have the responsibility to improve our professional abilities always seeking to provide the best care possible for our patients and colleagues. We have to care diligently, with a sweet spirit, with honesty and enthusiasm so that our lives speak of the God in Whom we have put our trust. In that way we can bring the Presence of Jesus into our surroundings and be salt and light where we are.

Carmen made an outline of Care like this:

- The care for the other – I am interested in the other and I open myself to his/her need.
- I take on the responsibility of trying to meet that need ,where possible.
- I must be consequent in carrying out the care.
- I must reflect on the subject of if the care that has been given has been adequate.

The parable of the Good Samaritan is a living example on how we should care as Christians.

Dr Pablo Martinez

gave a wonderful Bible exposition on the life of Joseph, pointing out the ethical questions that are relevant for us today. Joseph speaks to us of his priorities in life as he passes the exams the life presented to him.

1) Family Problems, Being Accepted. The consequence of Jacob's favouritism of Joseph and his own attitude, was that his brothers hated him, planned his death and sold him as a slave. Joseph's reaction to such injustice, loneliness, and loss, was one of acceptance, forgiveness and mercy towards his brothers. Gen. 50:20 & 21.

2) Integrity in face of temptation- Obedience The devil planned a perfect setting for this temptation for Joseph alone with Potifar's wife : the ideal moment, with whom and how , but Joseph's reaction was one of perfect obedience .He said "no" He had good reason to say "no" his faithfulness to God and to his master Potifar. Joseph showed his honesty there was no division between his natural life and his spiritual life.

3) The test of work-excellent stewardship Joseph was thirteen years in prison but in this unjust situation he behaved as a good steward, patient, serving others and having faith in God.

Joseph was not delivered from the injustices that he had to endure in life, but God was with him, giving him His provision, presence and protection. For that reason he was able to pass with honours all the tests he had to face in his life. We can learn from this and make it ours'.

Rosa Lopez explained about the Migrant Nurse Project .A well as the devotionals from each region, we had times of praise and worship, fun, fellowship with new friends, sharing experiences and praying for each other. We learned new ways to face the challenge, as Christian nurses, of showing Jesus to our patients and colleagues. It was a time of great blessing to all who attended. We just want to reach out to the other provinces where as yet there is no group of NCF and to invite them to share in the blessing

Marion Deelen
*NCFI International
 Board and European
 Committee member,
 Madrid*

Christian Nurses & Midwives – England & Wales



Annie Leggett
CNM Student Staff Worker

International Board Member Sue Allen writes:

'Annie Leggett the student worker for Christian Nurses & Midwives (CNM) visited our university at Northampton in central England last week.

It was lovely to have a chat with her about the current challenges in nursing and after showing her around our facilities, which are well equipped with simulation suites, Annie joined us for a discussion and lunch at which five nursing and midwifery lecturers were present. This also gave the opportunity for fellow colleagues to get to know each other and discuss the challenges for Christian nursing and midwifery students.

We hope Annie will be able to work with us to facilitate reflective sessions for students on some of the dilemmas they experience in clinical practice and that the staff in the school will have more of an understanding when literature is sent around for both NCFI and CNM. Two of our staff hope to attend

the student conference in November in the Netherlands and to take some students with them.'

CNM General Secretary Steve Fouch adds:

'CNM has entered into a new partnership with the Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) in the UK. CMF now handles all the administration, membership matters, finances and other back office support for CNM, while Annie Leggett and Steve Fouch are released to serve as the fellowship's Student Field Worker and General Secretary respectively.

Further funding and support has come in to employ a second field worker, and we are slowly starting to build a new network amongst Christian nursing students, nursing lecturers and graduate nurses across England and Wales.

But all of this has been possible because of the support of CMF members who have felt called by God to support the building of a new, strong

Christian nursing movement in the UK, and with the ongoing prayer and financial support of many dedicated Christian nurses and doctors in this country.'

Please pray for Steve, Annie, Liz Capper (CNM' Chairperson and NCFI Trustee)), and all the volunteers on the Council of CNM and running local groups around England and Wales, as they work to build CNM up into a strong fellowship and movement.

Upcoming Events

5th International Student Conference on Spiritual Care

*Spiritual Care and Health Professions: Context and
Practice*

A unique opportunity to meet international colleagues
and friends and learn and discuss about your
professional role regarding spirituality and spiritual
care.

November 3 and 4, 2011 Moses & Aaron Church,
Amsterdam

see www.ncfieurope.org for more details

NCFI World Conference

5-10 November 2012

**'Partners in Care: Unity in Diversity through
Christ'**

Center for Spirituality "Loyola", Padre Hurtado, Santiago,
Chile

More information will become available at www.ncfi.org

or email: ncfi-admin@ntlworld.com

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