

Chaplain George Guy interview, continued.

How does faith enter into the conversation on your pastoral visits in the hospital?

Faith in God plays a large part of the veteran patient's spiritual preparedness to deal with the challenges of health problems. Their approach to spirituality is often not defined as necessarily holding a specific religious faith tag. I get the patient to understand the blessing of the kind of quiet peace that comes from learning how to pray alone and to listen and not talk as God answers prayers his way. I like to try and explain what contemplative prayer means and how effective using the Anglican prayer beads can be as a prayer aid and for the Episcopalian patient how the prayer beads relate to Morning and Evening Prayers from the Book of Common Prayer.

I donated copies of the Book of Common Prayer to the Chaplains Services Department so they would be available to Episcopalian patients. I often share bedside Morning Prayer and chanting the prayer beads before they have surgery or a special medical procedure. This practice shores up their faith and strength in God!

What have you learned from this ministry?

I have learned that total healing consists of spiritual plus physical healing and that spiritual healing, although present in the mind, is often mistaken for adherence to specific practices. Veterans are specially trained to shut down on principles that are not tangible and some struggle in seeing and believing in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Most veterans want civilians to empathize for their past experiences with compassion like saying, "I am truly sorry for your horrible experiences you faced while serving your country. Please accept my empathy knowing I am so very proud of your service to your country."

I would like to think that I have been instrumental in the hospital's commitment to prevent possible veteran suicides among our younger veterans. This includes a number of women veterans I have seen who were brutally assaulted in the service.

I continue to work well with the Roman Catholic Chaplain to minister to the very ill veterans who have Parkinson's Disease. One of my Parkinson's patients recently received some remarkable treatments and is currently what I like to call my 'Parkinson's Miracle Patient'. I pray with him over the telephone and enjoy teaching him to pray his Anglican prayer beads. He is currently our Parkinson's spokesperson. He calls me Pastor George. I do not fix anyone! I create a positive and faithful environment to accept those things he/she can change and believe in.

Submitted by: George Guy 11/16/2021.