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NURSING IS A NATURAL BLOSSOMING IN EVERYONE

Christian Science Nurse. SECT. 31. A member of The Mother Church who represents himself or herself as a Christian Science nurse shall be one who has a demonstrable knowledge of Christian Science practice, who thoroughly understands the practical wisdom necessary in a sick room, and who can take proper care of the sick.

The cards of such persons may be inserted in The Christian Science Journal under rules established by the publishers.¹

This By-Law in our Manual is inviting each one of us as members of The Mother Church to recognise that nursing is a divine demand in the healing work.

Jesus as the Wayshower gave us the clearest example of nursing spiritually when he washed the disciples' feet and in humility acknowledged that every man is sent from God to bear witness to God's healing power. He even washed the feet of the one, of whom he knew would betray him. (See John) Jesus was bearing witness to the perfect man of God's creating, who appeared to his individual consciousness where disease and discord appeared to mortal consciousness.

This indicates the relationship we need to have with each other working within the healing practice of Christian Science. Whether, as practitioner with nurse; nurse with patient; patient with practitioner; member with member, church with community. Whatever the combination or relationship, the requirement to each of us is to humbly bear witness to each other's natural spiritual ability to express the tender nursing qualities of God's love.

This becomes easier when we have our priorities right. Our very first priority is to know God, not only as Father, but as Mother. Let me ask you a question, 'Do you feel beloved of the Father/Mother?' Because if there is any doubt in your mind, it is not possible to nurse effectively to one's full potential.

No word can better convey the deep sense of tenderness and love in the healing practice than that of *Mother*. It enfolds all within its embrace and leaves nothing without. It is the consciousness of the unfailing nature of divine Love, infinitely present in this moment of our being, and whose impulse is just to love. This sense of the motherhood of God conceives and expresses all original ideas based on the impulse to just love.

One of the earliest recording of God's nature as Mother is nearly 4,000 years old. "Abraham's concept of 'Almighty God' was as El Shaddai, the Hebrew meaning of (El) is God and (Shaddai) is the Nourisher. [The root word 'Shad' also means a woman's breast]. (Shaddai) means the Strength-Giver, the All-Sufficient One. These terms express clearly the Fatherhood and Motherhood of Deity, as recorded by Abraham in Genesis 17." ²

The Nourisher, the Strength-Giver, the All-Sufficient One. What a wonderfully complete sense of God Abraham had. He witnessed first hand how God's promise of fulfilment displaced ignorance and lack. The false claim of Sarah's barrenness didn't have an option but to disappear in the face of this almighty power. This understanding of God's nature enabled Sarah to give birth to Isaac, the 'child of promise'.

This sense of God as the Nourisher, Strength Giver and All-Sufficient One reveals Him as an ever-living power, which has been present amongst us for all to know and demonstrate throughout all time. In proportion as this wonderful composite definition of God's nature is cherished as the very substance of our being we are able to be more confident in our expression of love in nursing each other.

Nursing is the nurturing of the Christ idea in everyone. A saying by Nikos Kazantzakis (Cretian Writer) says "I spoke to the almond tree -- "Sister, speak to me of God" -- and the almond tree BLOSSOMED." The more I think about this statement the more I feel it illustrates for me the relationship we have with each other, whether as practitioner with nurse, nurse with patient or patient and practitioner. Whatever the combination, the requirement to each of us is to demand the highest from ourselves in viewing each other's spiritual adequacy to express God.

It is recorded in '12 years with Mrs Eddy', page 124, someone said of her that, "Mrs Eddy is a Leader because she permits God to lead her." This observation has been a very helpful lesson in regard to the healing ministry. We are all called upon to express those nursing qualities in nourishing and nurturing the appearance of the whole man in every one with whom we come into contact. If we do this only so far as **'we permit God,** the Nourisher, to love, nurse and nourish us', we put our nursing practice on a basis that cannot fail. Why? Because the mighty spiritual force of God's mothering love is in action and underlying our work.

We are all nurses in so far as we permit God to love and nurse us. I would add, '... as we permit God to love and nurse us **first**'. **This has to be the way.** Our sense of God as the Nourisher, caring for His own, as the source of our every thought and action, appears with strength and power to fulfil whatever is needed each day. Isn't it wonderful to know that in our ministry **we** are fed, supported, cherished, comforted, and are continually being encouraged to grow by our Father, the Nourisher. Our awareness of this truth bears out the fact that the more we express the nursing

qualities, the more God fills us full of inspiration. The more spontaneous we become in our turning to God's motherhood instantly for our answers and guidance as our first aid, the more God's presence with us is evident.

The sequel to the statement about Mrs Eddy is that she was a Leader because she permitted God to lead her was that she very simply responded: "I have not sought leadership. Before the great problems that have been given to me, I have felt myself nothing. There has been a voice saying to me, 'Mary, take yourself out of the way and let God act through you.'" The record follows goes on to say that, on another similar occasion, her reply was, "I can try to un-self Mary. I can try to enter into the place of a little child, to know that God has done it."

The process of getting self out of the way is often illustrated in the Arts. When a dancer, actor or musician has sufficiently put off a false sense of self, then the performance takes control, not as a mesmeric force or human will, but as the very evidence of Soul in active expression.

Likewise, this happens as a nurse, practitioner or patient submits to the mandate of God's unconditional love. When we allow God as 'the Nourisher' to feed us spiritually, the divine Principle moves us in such a way that the ministry becomes a natural witnessing to the healing saving power of the everpresent Christ with us. A consciousness filled full of this Christly love cannot entertain neglect, failure or ignorance in any form.

I experienced this sense of spiritual nourishing some months ago, when it seemed right to visit one of my patients and sit with him through the night, whilst his wife was able to have some rest. It was a calling to act in some way as both practitioner and nurse. It was an opportunity to call upon God to show me the nursing skills required. I prayed and listened to know the right way to meet this patient's requirements. I was able to do so whilst continuously praying to fulfil the special needs of that situation. The night was demanding and there were many times when I prayed for more grace to bear full witness to man's conformity to God's will. The effect being that the patient experienced a much more restful night and there was so much more evidence of God's harmonious control present and the patient responded beautifully. This was a holy experience and I was grateful to prove the immediacy of God's motherhood showing me the inherent nursing skills required. I had a very clear feeling that God's love was watching over the whole situation.

When new light is revealed regarding a higher way to do something, however much resistance by mortal mind there would seem to be, it is inevitable that because the origin is Spirit everyone is in for a blessing. It depends where we are mentally, individually and collectively, as to how much of the spiritual idea awakens thought.

In a way, this spiritual idea of nursing in our Manual, it seems has been protected, hidden in embryo over the last 90 years and has been gently nurtured until we were

ready to mentally rise and receive a purer sense of the spiritual idea it represents. The concept of Christian Science Nursing has gone through many states and stages, but it had to be refined, to experience a new birth, be reborn, and be totally detached from any hint of medical connotations or matter-based reasoning. This preparation of thought was necessary for it to spring forth in its own right, as a purely spiritual **idea, whose purpose is to nurse the Christ child of everyone into being.** Christian Science nursing was never born of the mortal dream. It is a divine idea, the form of nursing already born of God and looking for the Mary's of this age to receive this Christ child.

Mrs Eddy foresaw, with her farthest spiritual vision, that The Manual By-Laws will meet the needs for eternity. The nursing By-Law provides at the same time wisdom, for the clearest practical skills to meet the immediate need. We are told that each By-Law was written 'as the occasion required'. We also are aware that Mrs Eddy's vision extended far beyond human conditions to recognise the spiritual requirement, which would embrace the true need throughout all time.

I believe that we do not have a nursing ministry primarily because we have 'x' number of patients needing care. We have a nursing ministry because our spiritual identities are coexistent with God's mothering care, and this care extends to all within the radius of our thought. Our spiritual identities enable us to live out from God, expressing love and letting the Christ govern our hearts and minds. This then silences all false claims, as we are defending the whole man, our divine being in every situation.

I feel the nurse's role is distinct in its own right. What she brings to a situation within her ministry is her unique demonstration, because she is called of God to bear witness to her highest sense of practice. We are each commissioned to prove, as the Master did, the mastery over mortality ultimately benefiting all mankind.

The individual nurse's demonstration is **not dependent** upon the practitioner's work, or the patient's positive or negative response, but solely on Soul's approval of the situation, not material sense approval. Practitioner, patient and nurse have distinct roles and each are individually reaching out to God and are responsible to bearing witness to His presence and power at work.

Each individual nursing demonstration and unfoldment comes from within, never from without. In the highest sense, it is heaven and earth approving as one. It is, then, essential that we do not measure our progress against limited human standards. The tenderness of this spiritual force at work within each one, is the living God, divine Love in active expression, and mankind responds naturally to this mighty power of love healing and saving.'

Today through God's grace we have been given in the healing ministry of Christian Science the greatest treasure the world has ever, and will ever know. The Saviour,

the saving power of God is revealing man's Christ identity as ever-present within the human consciousness. Our love for the ministry of nursing, nurturing and witnessing of this Christ idea as man's true selfhood is the 'certain sound' which mankind is looking for. The compassionate love of God, evidenced through the nursing qualities, **is** having an effect on humanity. Every time we allow the Spirit in our treatments to be nurtured and nursed and bear witness to the word through divine Love, it will take over and heal.

We too need so much in our healing work to declare with spiritual authority, that we nurse spiritually in the name of 'Christian Science'. It is not only the purest form of nursing there is, but **is the highest expression of living**, and is based totally outside the dream. It is not in competition with any other form of care. When practised selflessly it purifies and refines everything it comes in contact with. I am convinced that when we give Christian Science nursing its rightful place in full obedience to the Manual By-Law, it will be seen to be practised effectively. A divine sense of nursing is a continuing natural blossoming experience in the hearts and minds of everyone. The spiritual blossoming of nursing, nurturing and nourishing is an unstoppable power within human thought, because humanity naturally responds to the All-Power of love at work in human consciousness. Christian Science nursing in the future will be seen more and more as an effective healing ministry, not only for every Christian Science church member, but ultimately for all mankind.

¹ The Manual of The Mother Church by Mary Baker Eddy

² Studies in the Bible, Edith Hoyt 107 Early Names for Deity