



Spiritual Gifts and Faith Community Nursing

Faith Community Nurses International

October 25, 2021

Teresa Darnall DM, MSN, RN



Learning Objectives

Participants will explore what are spiritual gifts and why do we celebrate them

Participants will examine examples of spiritual gifts used in nursing

Participants will explore what losses occur when spiritual gifts are not used

Participants will discuss how the use of spiritual gifts support nursing practice

Participants will determine their own spiritual gifts and discuss how these can be shared in their nursing practice

What are “Spiritual Gifts?”

Christians understand that spiritual gifts are endowments divinely bestowed upon individuals.

These capacities are freely given by God and cannot be earned or merited; they are manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

These gifts are used for the benefit of others and each person should use their gifts to build up the Church.

There is diversity in their distribution—an individual will not possess all the gifts.



What are “Spiritual Gifts?”

In his writings, Paul frequently discusses the use of spiritual gifts, especially in 1 Corinthians.

In 1 Corinthians 12, two Greek terms are translated as "spiritual gifts"

- Verse 1, the word *pneumatika* ("spirituals" or "things of the Spirit")
- Verse 4, charisma, derived from the word *charis*, which means "grace" is used.
- Verses 5 and 6, the words *diakonia* (translated "administrations", "ministries", or "service") and *energēmata* ("operations" or "in-workings") are used in describing the nature of the spiritual gifts.
- Verse 7, the term "manifestation (*phanerosis*) of the Spirit" is used.

Spiritual Gifts and Spiritual Fruits

Spiritual Gifts

- Are capabilities given for the service of God and others
- Spiritual gifts are given instantly for the purpose of ministry
- Gifts, however, are freely and unconditionally given regardless of the ability of the receiver to use them well.

Spiritual Fruits

- Are the good habits, the virtues, the good deeds that come from living as a child of God
- Developed gradually as the person grows in their walk with God
- Fruits appear on a healthy tree

And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:28

- Also called the gift of governing, [\[1\]](#) the Greek word translated "governments" is *kubernesis*, the verb form of which means "to steer" or "to be a helmsman". The nurse is a strategic thinker, able to guide projects, and set and meet goals.
- The FCN with administration gifts can steer the body toward the accomplishment of God given goals and directives by planning, organizing, and supervising others.

Spiritual Gifts in Faith Community Nursing: Administration

...if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Romans 12:8

- Leadership is to stand before the people in such a way as to attend to the direction of the body with such care and diligence to motivate others to get involved in the accomplishment of goals.
- This gift speaks to the various leadership roles found in the Church. While many think of roles leading groups and volunteers as functions outside of the supernatural realm, nurses in these positions are just as in need of supernatural empowerment as are ministers of the gospel.

Spiritual Gifts in Faith Community Nursing: Leadership

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Romans 12:12

- The ability to motivate others "to patient endurance, brotherly love, and good works."
- To come along side of someone with words of encouragement, comfort, consolation, and counsel to help them be all God wants them to be. As FCNs, we help our clients see that God loves them unconditionally.

Spiritual Gifts in Faith Community Nursing: Exhortation

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

John 8:32

- To collaborate and provide individuals, families, and communities information so that informed decisions can be made to have physical, psychosocial, emotional, and spiritual wellness
- Faith-based health promotion is a concept which recognizes the value of intentional integration of faith-informed context in health education and health counseling programs which aim to promote health, prevent disease, or lower risk of disease at the individual, community, and societal levels (Patestos, 2019, p. 35).

Spiritual Gifts in Faith Community Nursing: Health Teaching and Promotion

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick, and you looked after me, I was in prison, and you came to visit me.

Matthew 25:35-36

- To provide holistic care to those who are struggling in living their lives
- Benevolence can include ministry of visitation, prayer, and compassion to the poor and sick. The word used to describe this spiritual gift is *eleeo*, which literally means to have compassion or pity upon through some word or deed.
- The FCN is drawn to the wounded and broken and demonstrates empathy and non-judgment.

Spiritual Gifts in Faith Community Nursing: Benevolence

What are the losses when spiritual gifts are not used

- As nurses, we are frequently called upon to be “all things to all people.”
- However, when we try to do all things, we may be denying others to share their spiritual gifts and grow ministry
- Ask yourself these questions:
 - What spiritual gifts do members of your Health Ministry team have and how can they be shared to support you in your practice?
 - What spiritual gifts do you have that are not being shared fully because you are trying to be all things?
 - How would your FCN practice be more fulfilling to you by using your spiritual gifts?

Using Spiritual Gifts to Support Nursing Practice

- Use leadership and administration gifts to recruit and support volunteers, manage health related projects, and support other FCNs in their practice
- Use benevolence and exhortation to care for and create support groups for those who are marginalized (mental health, grief, substance misuse recovery, single parents)
- Provide health information using plain language to help members of the faith community (and community at large!) to understand how to live a healthier life. Provide information about community resources to support people in maintaining or reaching for optimal health.

In your small group, discuss the following questions:

- ❖ Was there anything surprising to you to see what spiritual gifts you have?
- ❖ What is a spiritual gift that may be “hidden under a bush?”
- ❖ What is one recommendation to give to other FCNs to use their spiritual gifts fully in their nursing ministry?

Have one member of the group be the reporter back to the main group





Wrap Up