

Sacred Stories



Alive with prayer.

By Sally Saf

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I was precepting a new nursing graduate, Liz, who had never taken care of a hospice patient. She was nervous about the hospice process. She thought that she could not do well if the patient passed on. I reassured her that she would do fine.

Liz and I were taking care of an elderly patient who, with guidance of her daughter, decided that hospice was the option for her. As the patient neared the end, and her breathing became erratic, she became unresponsive.

The patient's daughter, with her husband, children, and grandchildren, were in the room. The daughter was nearly overcome with grief. I asked if she would like to get into bed next to her mother and cuddle with her. The daughter liked the idea and was happy to do so. She held her unresponsive mother while the family gathered around. The room became alive with prayer!

During the prayer, the patient unexpectedly opened her eyes and looked at her daughter. She then closed her eyes and passed away a few moments after the prayer ended.

Liz and I looked at each other in awe, sharing in the knowledge that life is sacred in all stages. The sacredness of the moment helped us discover the strength and richness of the bond of love.

Later, Liz and I talked. She was inspired by everything she had witnessed. She said the experience was so much better than she had ever thought possible, it may even inspire her to work with hospice patients and families in the future.

It was certainly a profound experience, and it brings both Liz and I peace to know that we helped this family through one of its most difficult times.