

# A Prayer Shawl

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## Suggested Sacred Text

**“The Church is catholic because she is the space, the home in which the faith is proclaimed to us in its entirety, in which the salvation brought to us by Christ is offered to everyone. The Church is catholic because she is universal, she is spread abroad through every part of the world and she proclaims the Gospel to every man and to every woman. The Church is not a group of elite; she does not only concern the few. The Church has no limits; she is sent to the totality of people, to the totality of the human race. And the one Church is present even in her smallest parts...”**

— Pope Francis, General Audience, October 9, 2013

## Sacred Story

As a woman of faith, I appreciate that my workplace enables me to weave my spirituality and ministry into the service I provide. One patient of mine, who has since passed, offered a unique opportunity to spread this kind of love. The patient had ovarian cancer. She was on liquid nutrition, had lost quite a bit of weight, and was often cold.

Some women at the church I attend had started weaving prayer shawls for members of our congregation. With each stitch of the shawl, the weaver would say a prayer. My patient was Jewish and I am Presbyterian, so before offering her a shawl I asked her permission. “I know our faiths are different, but our Gods are the same,” I said. “Would you mind if I brought you a prayer shawl?” I asked. I’ll never forget her response. “At this point, I’m not splitting any hairs,” she said.

The women at church made her a beautiful shawl in burgundy red, the patient’s favorite color. She couldn’t wait to show it to her daughter. She loved that shawl and she wore quite frequently. I think it brought her some happiness in her last days.

The prayer shawl helped me look after the patient’s spiritual as well as her physical needs. It’s a wonderful opportunity and feeling to help a patient connect with their spirituality while making them as comfortable as possible.

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## Questions for Reflection

What can you do to help relieve the suffering of another person today?

In what ways are you in need of healing?

*“It’s a wonderful opportunity and feeling to help a patient connect with their spirituality...”*