

## Faith Community Nursing: Past, Present, Future

### Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe how the history and philosophy of health care and nursing provides a spiritual foundation for faith community nursing.
2. Analyze how the actions of Granger Westberg created a foundation for the practice of faith community nursing.
3. Identify historic events that have contributed to the continued development of faith community nursing.
4. Relate the key aspects of the philosophy of faith community nursing practice to the development of a personal philosophy of this specialty practice.

Adapted from the module: History and Philosophy of Faith Community Nursing. Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Course based on the curriculum developed through the Westberg Institute for Faith Community Nursing which curriculum is owned by the Spiritual Care Foundation, New York, NY.

1

**You're nearly finished with the Foundations Course.  
Have you stopped to ask yourself:**

**What do I believe about Faith Community Nursing?  
What do I value about this specialty practice?  
How does it fit my personal beliefs and value system?**



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

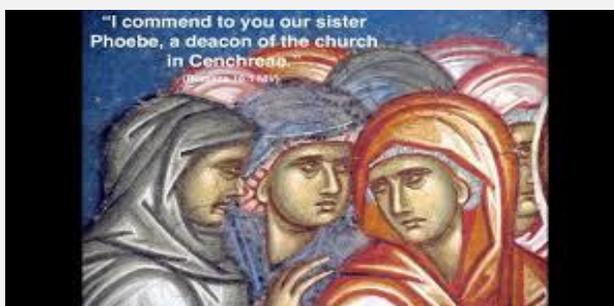
2

Outcome 1: Describe how the history and philosophy of health care and nursing provides a spiritual foundation for faith community nursing.

***"...we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us..."***

Sister Mary Margaret O'Brien

**In the stories of many early religions there are countless models of caring for the sick that speak eloquently to us as nurses today.**



3



**Rufaida, 620 A.D.**

Described as possessing the qualities of an ideal nurse: Compassionate, empathetic, a good leader and a great teacher. She provided health education to the community, helped the disadvantaged, advocated for preventative care and drafted the world's first code of nursing ethics.



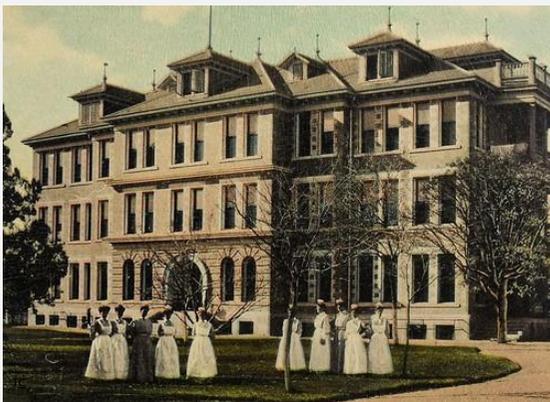
**Florence Nightingale, 1850's**

Cared for soldiers in the Crimean War and later founded her own nursing school.

4

**Women such as Olympia, Marcella, Paula and others took up nursing as part of their contribution to their churches and were instrumental in the early church's efforts to open hospitals to care for the sick.**

**In the U.S. most early hospitals were founded and maintained by religious organizations.**



**The teachings of the Bible, Koran and the Torah urge us to care for the sick and faith communities saw this as part of their mission.**

**(St. Barnabas Hospital; Mt. Sinai; Lutheran Deaconess; St. Joseph's etc.)**

5

**Outcome 2: Analyze how the actions of Granger Westberg created a foundation for our current practice.**

**Granger Westberg, Lutheran Pastor and Hospital Chaplain  
Founder of "Parish Nursing"**



**As a chaplain, Westberg recognized that health care is more than the care of the physical body.**

**"Wholistic" care---care of the WHOLE person.**

**Observed that RNs seemed to instinctively understand "whole person care."**

**Believed RNs could provide a critical link between hospitals and faith communities.**

**In the early 1980's, coined the term "Parish Nurse."**

6

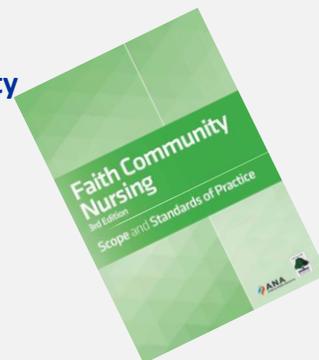
**Outcome 3: Identify historic events that have contributed to the continued development of faith community nursing.**

**1985—Westberg established the Parish Nurse Resource Center which eventually became the International Parish Nurse Resource Center and now is the Westberg Institute for Faith Community Nursing.**

**1997—ANA designated Parish Nursing as a specialty practice and established the Scope and Standards for Parish Nursing.**

**2005—ANA revised standards and changed title to Faith Community Nursing to accommodate all faith traditions.**

**2012 and 2017—ANA revised Scope and Standards to reflect reflect current practice.**



7

- ❖ **The Westberg Institute for Faith Community Nursing partners with the Spiritual Care Association to provide resources for faith community nurses.**
- ❖ **In 2004 the Faith Community Nurse Network of the Greater Twin Cities was founded by Wanda Alexander and an interfaith group of FCNs to provide education, networking and resources for faith community nurses.**
- ❖ **Over 170 RN's have completed the Foundations Course through FCNN.**
- ❖ **There are over 600 FCNs in the Minneapolis, St. Paul area.**
- ❖ **There are over 15,000 FCNs practicing nationally and internationally.**

**You have become part of this growing, thriving profession!**

8

#### Outcome 4: Key aspects of the philosophy of Faith Community Nursing

1. **Spiritual**—the intentional care of the spirit sets faith community nursing apart from other types of nursing.
2. **Professionalism**—FCNs are professional nurses striving to apply evidence-based knowledge and skills and further the practice of faith community nursing. FCNs treat all persons with respect and dignity.
3. **Wholistic**—FCNs view health as an ongoing process that includes multiple aspects of a person’s life, including spiritual, physical, emotional, social.
4. **Community**—FCNs focus on a faith community or the wider community. They “provide opportunities for the transformation of the community into sources of health and healing.”



9

**Outcome: Relate the key aspects of the philosophy of faith community nursing to your own personal philosophy of this practice.**

**What do I believe about Faith Community Nursing?  
 What do I value about this specialty practice?  
 How does it fit my personal beliefs and value system?**



**Please take 5 minutes to reflect on one of these questions and be ready to share your thoughts.**

[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#)

10

How can all of us, as faith community nurses, carry on the legacy of those before us and pave the road for the future?

## Faithful

- Faithful to our own spiritual beliefs and values while demonstrating respect for those whose beliefs and values are different from ours.
- Faithful to “Wholistic” practices
- Faithful to the principles of professional faith community nursing
- Faithful to continual learning and growing
- Faithful to collaboration
- Faithful to telling others about Faith Community Nursing

11

## Courageous

*Be strong and courageous...do not be afraid.*

- Courage to do what is right and ethical and compassionate.
- Courage to do the “hard things.”
- Courage in the face of change.
- Courage to create and embrace the future.
- Courage to stand up for those who are poor, lonely, hungry, suffering, oppressed.

12

# Nurturing

- Nurture others, but don't forget to...
- Nurture yourselves

*Nurses have an insatiable need to help others...*

*which is our greatest quality and... potentially, our greatest flaw!*

- Be kind to yourself. Forgive yourself. Show yourself grace and patience.
- You are a role model to others in taking care of yourself.
- Who will fill your cup of caring, giving, doing for others?



13

Faithful  
Courageous  
Nurturing

14

### **Dreams for the Future**

**The vast majority of people will be able to explain what a faith community nurse is...and have access to one.**

**FCNs will be paid the same salary and benefits as RNs in other settings.**

**FCNs will demonstrate through evidence-based practice and research the qualitative and quantitative benefits of our practice.**

**Health care systems, government and faith communities will fully understand the contributions FCNs make and will embrace and support our practice.**

**YOU ARE OUR FUTURE! CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS!**