

I'll pray for you anyway

“We more often remember when we have been hurt or wounded,” the spiritual director said. “But kindness and love abound.”

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“I just got back from Walgreens where I bought boxes of band aids, Neosporin, and hydrocortisone cream.”

This was my response to Sister’s Margaret’s inquiry into the summer activities of my children. I try to visit her Benedictine monastery once a month for spiritual direction.

“The kids are doing great,” I said. “But Isaac came home last night all banged up from baseball. He had deep, bloody scratches down both knees and an infected sore on his toe. I was horrified. He hardly noticed.”

Sister Margaret smiled and laughed at this description of my ten-year-old boy.

“It’s so hard to see my baby’s body all beat up like that,” I continued. “But before I put him in bed I made sure he was all clean. I gave him a bath, slathered on the Neosporin and put bandages all down his knees and shins and around his toe.”

“It sounds like *lectio*.” Sister Margaret remarked, which made me smile. She was right. I attended to my son’s wounds just like a person of faith would attend to a sacred text through *lectio divina*—or sacred reading.

“You know,” Sister Margaret continued, “God attends to you in the same way.” Her comment made me pause and contemplate God attending to my wounds, being horrified by my pain, and seeking to speed the healing process through attentive love and care.

She shifted in her chair and leaned forward intently. "I want you to go back through your life and remember all the times you were attended to with love and kindness," she said. "We more often remember when we have been hurt or wounded. But kindness and love abound. Return to those places when you were shown love and kindness and in those places you will return to God."

As I began to consider when I was attended to in love, I recalled what Sister Margaret said to me when I first sat down in the comfortable armchair across from hers. I had not been able to come see her for a few months because of my busy schedule so I apologized for missing. Her response to my apology was, "That's OK. You can miss if you have to. Whether you come or not, I'll pray for you anyway."

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