

**Appendix I**  
**Three Sample Services for Dedication / Commissioning of the Parish Nurse**  
**at a Faith Community or Health Care Institution**

**Litany of Dedication**

*This litany would be appropriate for use as part of a congregational worship service, for the installation of a parish nurse into the ministry that congregation.*

One: As people of healing and wholeness, we entrust our lives to the One who made us. We remind ourselves, each one of us, that we are not alone.

All: As people of healing and wholeness, we entrust our lives to One who heals us. We remind ourselves, each one of us, that God's mercy is new each day.

One: As people of healing and wholeness, we call forth one from among us to serve this congregation as a (parish nurse/faith community nurse).

(NAME), would you please come forward?

(NAME), you have been called to serve this congregation as a parish nurse/faith community nurse). Are you willing to accept this call?  
If so, please say, "I am willing to serve."

(NAME), you have been called to care for the sick, comfort the afflicted, and encourage those who need support. Are you willing to care for those who are in pain?  
If so, please say, "I am willing to serve."

You have also been called to be a leader in guiding the way to walk in paths that bring renewal and hope. Are you willing to serve in this manner, as well?  
If so, please say, "I am willing to serve."

One: Sisters and Brothers, we are called together into ministries of care for the sick and encouragement for healthy living. Are you also willing to serve in this manner?  
If so, please say, "We are willing to serve."

One: Let us pray:

**UNISON PRAYER:**

**Loving God, we pray your blessing upon (NAME) this day as (she/he) begins (his/her) ministry as (parish nurse/faith community nurse) among us and with us in behalf of this congregation. Support, guide, and bless (NAME) as (he/she)**

seeks to answer the call to the ministry of parish nursing, and grant (him/her) your strength, your wisdom, and your renewal. Help (NAME) to care for (his/her) own health and well-being, and help us all to work together to make ministries of caring central to our work, as we follow your call to preach, teach, and heal. Bless us as we minister together to the hurting ones, the lonely ones, the wounded ones, and the weary ones, and help us take care of ourselves so that we may serve you all the days of our lives. It is in your precious Name we pray. Amen.

**Suggested Hymn:** "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

Words by Edwin Hatch 1886

Tune: TRENTHAM, S.M. by Robert Jackson 1894

### Litany of Commissioning

*This litany would be appropriate for use as part of a congregational worship service, for the installation of a parish nurse into the ministry that congregation.*

One: "There is an Indian proverb that says that everyone is a house with four rooms, a physical, a mental, an emotional, and a spiritual [room]. Most of us tend to live in one room most of the time but, unless we go into every room every day, even if only to keep it aired, we are not a complete person." (Rumer Godden)

All: **We dedicate the fruits of our labor to you, O God.**

One: "The lack of meaning in life is a soul-sickness whose full extent and full import our age has not as yet begun to comprehend." (Carl Jung)

All: **Bless our work that it may bring us purpose and satisfaction, and that it may bring our students guidance and insight.**

One: "The great malady of our time, implicated in all our troubles and affecting us individually and socially, is 'loss of the soul.' When soul is neglected, it doesn't just go away; it appears symptomatically in obsessions, addictions, violence, and loss of meaning. Our temptation is to isolate these symptoms or to try to eradicate them one by one, but the root problem is that we have lost our wisdom about the soul, even our interest in it." (Thomas Moore)

All: **Bring healing to our world, O God. Bring peace in our time.**

One: "Healing is discovering how to live life in trust rather than in fear, how to relate to life as friend rather than enemy. It is about falling in love with life; learning to listen and respond to the longing impulses of the heart because these alone guide us to realize life's intention for us." (Anne Baring)

All: **Help us to teach trust, to teach courage, to teach love. Help us to listen, help us to respond, and help us to fulfill your plans for our lives.**

### Prayer of Blessing (Unison)

Gentle and gracious God, bless each person gathered here today. Hear the groaning of our souls as we long for healing and wholeness in the world, in our communities, in every congregation and every home. Hear the tender entreaties of our spirits as we come to you with prayers for our families and for all the world. Hear us know as well lift up our silent joys and concerns to you. (A TIME OF SILENCE). In your precious Name we pray. Amen.

One: (NAME OF PARISH NURSE), would you please come forward?  
(NAME), you have been called as a (parish nurse/faith community nurse) to this congregation. This is a ministry of our entire congregation, but you have been entrusted with a special role in this work of healing and hope.

(NAME), do you promise to love God and serve God's people faithfully?  
If so, please respond, "I promise, with the help of God."

(TO THE CONGREGATION): Do you promise to love God and assist our parish nurse in the ministries of healing to which we have all been called?  
If so, please respond, "I promise, with the help of God."

**Unison Prayer of Commitment:**

Loving One, bless us, whom you have called as disciples, that we may be a blessing to the frightened and the forgotten. Guiding One, help us to hear your voice and follow your paths in all that we do. Sheltering One, help us plant groves of knowledge that bear fruit in their season.

Help us teach wisdom and understanding. Help us preach justice and mercy.  
Help us bring the balm of love and compassion to a broken world.

Help us, our blessed Lord, always to feel your presence and strength, leading us through the trials and joys of life. Bless and sustain us all, and increase the ministries of healing that you are planning and tending. All this we pray in your Precious and Holy Name. Amen.

**Suggested Hymns:**

There is a Balm in Gilead  
For the Healing of the Nations  
Lead Us from Death to Life  
We Yearn, O Christ for Wholeness

## **Commissioning of New Parish Nurses**

*This commissioning service is suitable for use by a group of parish nurses in a setting of a health system or parish nurse program, or can be adapted to a congregational setting.*

### **Gathering Music**

#### **Call to Worship**

One: Sisters (and brothers), entrust yourselves to the Rock of Ages,  
for you stand on Holy Ground.

All: Sisters, entrust yourselves to the Living Water,  
May it connect you, let you move, let your life flow.

One: Sisters, entrust yourselves to the warmth of the Spirit,  
May it bring you passion and love, let your inner fire glow.

All: Sisters, entrust yourselves to the breath of God's spirit,  
May it inspire you and refresh you and give you peace.

**Hymn:** "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"  
Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life anew  
That I may love the way you love and do what you would do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, until my heart is pure,  
Until with you I will one will, to do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, stir in me one desire:  
That every earthly part of me may glow with holy fire.

*Words by Edwin Hatch, 1886, alt.*

*Tune: TRENTHAM, S.M. by Robert Jackson, 1894*

### **A Time of Silent Prayer**

**Scripture** – Romans 8:26b

*"The Spirit intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words."*

### **Meditation**

#### **Prayer of Blessing** (Unison)

Gentle and generous God, bless each one gathered here this day, whom you have called as your disciples, that we may go forth to touch and bless all those among whom we minister. Guide us by your wisdom, so that we may be empowered to plant hope where it is most needed. Fill us with your courage, to speak the truth

in love, and to act boldly on behalf of those who are in need of healing and understanding.

Touch each parish nurse with tender comfort as they walk with those in pain and fear. When they are weary, hold each of them gently in your loving arms, and plant within their spirits songs of hope and refreshment. Let each of them sing praises daily to you for your faithfulness and loving kindness to all Creation, we pray in your Holy Name. Amen.

**Hymn** – “In Our Hearts and Neighborhoods”

*Tune: Royal Oak (“All Things Bright and Beautiful”)*

*Music by Cecil F. Alexander, 1848 (Public Domain)*

REFRAIN: In our hearts and neighborhoods we sow the seeds of peace.  
We would plant community, love’s harvest to increase.

Verse 1: We work for hope and healing, we seek the lonely soul.  
We stretch out hands in friendship, that God might make us whole.  
(REFRAIN)

Verse 2: We pray for all the children, for youth who need our care,  
For lonely homebound elders whose gifts they long to share.  
(REFRAIN)

Verse 3: Oh, send us forth in courage, equipped with grace to know  
Diversity’s rich garden, God’s love and care to grow.  
(REFRAIN)

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**Benediction**

Help us, loving Creator, always to feel your nourishing presence, calling us on.  
Bless and sustain the ministries of parish nursing that you have called and are calling forth, we pray in your Holy Name. Amen.

**Dismissal to Serve**

Rev. Dr. Deborah L. Patterson, Executive Director, International Parish Nurse Resource Center, St. Louis, 2009.