

The hands we hold are gifts

Ginny Kubitz Moyer | May. 21, 2013 Soul Seeing

I was sitting at my prayer desk the other night, two flickering candles in front of me, letting my mind wander as I looked at the small framed icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help that once belonged to my grandmother. It's an inexpensive framed image, one that she must have had since the 1960s at least, but in the candlelight it shone like pure gold. And as I looked at it -- a picture I see every single day -- I noticed something. For the first time, I realized that Mary and Jesus were holding hands.

That moved me.

I'm forever reminding my kids to hold my hand. Anytime we're in a parking lot or crossing a street, it comes out of my mouth automatically: "Hold my hand." And the boy in question slips a sticky, damp little hand in mine, and off we go (unless it's Luke, my little daddy's boy, who invariably says, "No! I want to hold Daddy's hand!" and runs over to Scott). I feel far more comfortable walking out in public that way, although the terrifying reality is that in a parking lot with huge cars backing out and turning corners, joined hands can only keep you so safe. But still, it's something. And it always moves me when I don't have to say it, when the boys automatically reach for my hand as we cross a street.

They won't do that forever, I know. Give them about 10 years, and they'll probably be about as likely to touch my hand in public as they would be to touch a hot stove. But for now, I love it that Matthew, my big kindergartener with a backpack and homework and serious responsibilities as table captain in his classroom, instinctively slides his hand into mine, knowing that I will always want to hold it.

All this floated through my mind there at my prayer desk, at 11 o'clock on a Saturday night, as Mary and Jesus glowed in the flickering light. And then I returned to my book of prayers (I was praying the Liturgy of the Hours), and I read Jesus' words on the cross: Into your hands I commend my spirit.

Hands again, I thought to myself. This time it's not about holding hands, but about placing yourself in someone else's.

Then I looked at the little statue of Mary that I bought in Lourdes in 2002.

I thought about how perfectly her gesture -- those hands extended, palms out -- captures the sentiment of Christ's words. Into your hands I commend my spirit. It's a gesture of surrender, a gesture that says, "You can use these hands for whatever you need." That's what Mary did in agreeing to become the mother of the Savior. She made the tacit promise that those hands of hers would be there to hold her son's hand, in all seasons and in all things. Even when he got old and mature enough to venture off without her, those hands would always be there anytime he needed the tangible assurance that he was not alone.

And as my mind drifted in and out, I remembered a time when Luke was 2 and a half. He was adorable at 2, but he could also be ever so challenging and ever so independent. We were sitting in a taxi, all four of us, en route

to the airport to take a red-eye to Florida to visit Scott's parents. It was a Friday evening, and I sat wedged next to Luke's car seat, thinking about the five-hour flight ahead of us and the hassle of getting two sleepy boys and two car seats and one stroller and various suitcases through an airport and onto a plane and, later, through another airport and to a rental car terminal and thence to a hotel. And I sat there in the taxi, for a brief moment with nothing to do, bracing myself for the big evening ahead.

And suddenly, without saying anything, Luke reached out his hand and took mine. With that gesture, my mind quieted and my soul began to see. I held his sweet little hand and stroked it and watched the hotels flash past on the freeway and thought: This moment is a gift. This moment in time is precious to me.

There's a lot in parenting that feels out of my hands. That's true for all of us, I suspect. But when one of my boys slips a sticky little hand into mine, I can't help but feel, in some very deep and visceral way, that all is well.

[Ginny Kubitz Moyer is the author of *Random MOMents of Grace: Experiencing God in the Adventures of Motherhood*. She blogs at RandomActsofMomness.com.]

Source URL (retrieved on 07/28/2017 - 12:14): <https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/soul-seeing/hands-we-hold-are-gifts>