

After a tornado devastated a nearby town, we gathered with the people of the town for a healing service. Methodist pastors from throughout East Texas came to welcome anyone from the community and worship with them. We sang, heard an inspiring message, shared in Holy Communion together, and offered other ways to express grief, hope, and faith. I was one of the pastors who anointed worshipers with healing oil and prayed with them. I heard stories from the survivors and was awed and inspired by their faith.

In her sermon, the pastor shared the story of a little boy who was terrified that there were monsters in his room who would eat him while he slept. He cried out in fear for his parents, who came and comforted him, showing him that there were no monsters under the bed or in his closet. But he cried out again and again, letting no one get any sleep. After the third time of getting out of bed and going to her son, her mother tried to offer him this comfort. "Sweetheart, you aren't alone. God is here with you and will take care of you." And her son thought about this before telling his mother, "I know, but I need someone with skin."

There are times when we need someone with skin, someone to hold us, someone to wipe away our tears, a voice to assure us that there are no monsters in the closet. And God understands. He sends us out to a hurting world to be skin for those who need a touch, a hug, a hand to wipe away the tears. Theresa of Avila composed a prayer you may know that talks about this very need:

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

God invites us to have some skin in the game and make a difference in people's lives. Who do you know who needs to feel God's love and compassion? How can you be Christ's hands and feet for them?