

A Reward for Service

What is the true reward received by our associates in Life Care, American Lifestyles and Life Care at Home? It's more than money, more than fame or recognition, more than a plaque on the wall. Most often, it is something very, very simple.

Mother Teresa told this story in an address at the National Prayer Breakfast in 1994:

One evening we went out and we picked up four people from the street. One of them was in a most terrible condition. I told the sisters, "You take care of the other three; I will take care of the one who looks the worst." So I did for her all that my love could do. I put her in bed, and there was such a beautiful smile on her face. She took hold of my hand as she said two words only: "Thank you." Then she died.

I could not help but examine my conscience before her. What would I say if I were in her place? My answer was very simple. I would have tried to draw a little attention to myself. I would have said, "I am hungry. I am dying. I am in pain," or something. But she gave me much more; she gave me her grateful love. And she died with a smile on her face."

Pain, suffering and death are part of the experience of our associates as they respond to God's call to care for His children. It's an awesome responsibility they assume.

The reward: Gratitude brings a smile and becomes a precious gift.

--Beecher Hunter