“My Tummy Hurts”

Focal Text: Matthew 25:35–40

Try to remember a time when your belly ached. Perhaps it hurt so terribly you wanted to crawl into a ball and cry your pain away. Maybe you felt better when someone brought you your favorite teddy bear and you hugged it tightly. Or maybe your best buddy—a pet dog, cat, or frog, offered a few wet licks to your face or cuddled next to you. Perhaps a loved one brought you some medicine or a cup of warm soup in your favorite bowl. Such kind gestures can surely help one feel better.

Let us imagine together:

There was once a little girl, who got a very bad tummy ache. As the child lay sick in bed, her grandmother came to check on her. She peeped into the girl’s room, kissed her on the forehead, and covered her with one of her colorful and thick homemade quilts. Then she whispered: “Your grandmamma is here.” The little girl drifted to sleep listening to her grandma hum softly. Every note hummed was a drop of medicine that echoed with melodies of love. The next morning, the little girl’s tummy still hurt a little—but she felt better because her grandmamma had been there. She felt special, comforted, and cared for. The young girl remembered that she was not alone.

There are many people all around the world aching and in pain. They are crying because they have a great need for help. Some are crying because their tummies hurt from hunger or thirst. Others are crying because they feel all alone. Our scripture today teaches us how to respond to the aches and pains of people around the world when they cry out for help. Just as our loved ones respond to our cries when our tummies hurt, we should treat others with the same gentle and loving care as the grandmother in our story. We may not know who they are, but they are our brothers and sisters in Christ. After all, we are each members of God’s family. When a member of our family hurts, we often feel their sadness and pain, too.

We can help make people feel loved, welcomed, and special by being kind and offering to help whenever we can, like we do through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering. The OGHS offering provides assistance to families needing food, water, and shelter. OGHS helps children go to school and provides help in times of need. Can you remember how nice it felt to be snuggled in your grandma’s quilt or to have a warm cup of soup when your tummy hurt or on a cold day? The Bible story teaches us that every act of kindness we demonstrate toward others can be felt by God, too.

Each time we give a big bear hug to someone who is sad; God is giving and receiving a hug, too! That’s amazing! When someone is hungry and you share your meal, you also share a meal with God. You not only show them that “You are here,” you also help them know “God is here!”

We may not always be able to respond to every cry in the world; but we can do our best to be friendly; welcome old and new friends; and love our sisters and brothers near and far by sharing what we can. The OGHS offering helps us to do just that.

Prayer: Dear God, when there are cries for someone to help, please help me to care and share. Amen.

Story images: Grandparent, God’s love, blanket, tummy ache, teddy bear, sharing and friendship.

Scriptural images: Hungry, thirsty, lonely, sick, strangers, God, prayer, encouragement, community.