

PREPARATION FOR DEATH

A DAY OF RECOLLECTION

(Saturday, November 1, 2014)

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HOW GOD PREPARES US FOR DEATH

My name is Angela, and unless I am blessed by some new medical discovery or by a supernatural miraculous healing, my time on this earth will soon end. I have pancreatic cancer, stage 4, metastasized. I've already had several surgeries, radiation and chemotherapy. I am currently receiving chemotherapy every two weeks. The chemotherapy can only extend my life for some extra months by slowing down the growth of the tumors; it cannot bring me to remission or to a cure.

And despite the stress, the pain, the aggravation, the unknown of it all – there is also a great peace and joy in the suffering. You might think it's because I'm one of those lucky people who handles suffering better than others – so not true. I am a wimp of the highest order. Every needle prick scares me (just ask the poor lab technicians that do my blood draws) – I have a needle-phobia. Pain leaves me reeling. I have to pray to keep from crying before every chemotherapy session – and each chemo session takes all day. I have always been a wimp when it comes to pain and suffering.

When I was young, attending a Catholic elementary school, the nuns would tell us stories of young people who suffered greatly, died young but became great saints in heaven. I guess the nuns thought that such stories would inspire us to reach for heights of sainthood in our youth. There were examples of saints, such as:

- St. Therese of Lisieux who died of painful tuberculosis at age 24
- St. Bernadette Soubirous who suffered so much physically all her life and died a painful death at age 35

- St. Maria Goretti who was stabbed to death in her teens
- St. Joan of Arc who was burned at the stake at 19
- Young Christian martyrs who were brutally tortured to death like St. Perpetua, St. Agnes, St. Lucy, etc.
- Then, of course, there was St. Dominic Savio who said: “Death before sin” and died at age 15 – well I figured I should have already died a thousand times by the time I heard his quote. It’s not like I hadn’t already sinned -- disobeyed my parents, told a lie or two to get out of trouble, or had acted selfishly or been unkind to my siblings and friends, and the list went on and on.

Well, since I knew I was a wimp when it came to suffering and the thought of dying young just did not appeal to me at all, I decided I didn’t want to be a great “saint;” but that, I would set my sites a bit lower, but not too low, because I certainly wanted to stay out of hell – the nuns said suffering in hell was greater than any suffering on earth -- and besides, it was ETERNAL, FOREVER, NEVER-ENDING and that literally (if you pardon the pun) scared “the hell out of me.” Such thinking was certainly not proof of any wisdom on my part, just childish fear and rationale.

Oh, it’s not that I didn’t love the saints, truly I did and admired them greatly – and still do. And I do love reading about the lives of the saints -- it was just that I knew myself and I knew I was a wimp in the face of suffering and felt I could not meet such high demands so perfectly and so bravely.

What I did not understand at the time was that the saints did not bear-up under the suffering on their own strength, but that God gave them the strength as they needed it. I know that now, and that’s why I can say: I, too, can have joy in my suffering – not in the pain, but in the realization of its value in God’s plan of salvation – for my own soul and for the souls of others.

I now know how God prepares us and gives us strength if we seek His face. You see, God has been preparing me all along for this day and time. And it’s not like God didn’t know He had a wimp to deal with since He knows us better than we

know ourselves. And so you, too, if you seek His face, can trust that God is preparing you all along for the future trials of your life, including death.

Eventually, I set my sites higher than just staying out of hell, and as I sought the face of God across the years, He has given me many consolations and desolations to help me grow in the journey. The more I KNEW God by prayer and studying scripture, the more I LOVED Him and the more I knew He loved me, the more I loved Him, the more I TRUSTED Him. I have grown from a belief in His love to an unquestionable KNOWING of His love (the greatest gift of all from Him). And when you KNOW His love, not just believe in His love, everything changes and you never want to offend Him in the slightest. You understand “Death before sin” -- that sin is an offense not against Law but an offense against LOVE itself – and that you can live trusting in His Divine Providence with all your heart and soul.

I know that He is all goodness and wants only good for me and that He will lead me in the journey, I need not lead myself. I just need to ponder Him and the moments as they come. “Man’s greatness lies in being faithful to the present moment” (*Venerable Solanus Casey*). I see God’s hand in everything. His presence surrounds, His gifts abound.

Let me give you a few examples of how God prepares us – prepared me: I read the biography of Venerable Solanus Casey many years ago– and he always said to “Thank God for everything” and that stuck firm in my heart. And thus it followed in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 that says: “In all circumstances give thanks for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.” And then Saint Therese, whom I also love, would say: “All is gift. All is grace”-- which I knew in my heart to be true. Then when my sister was dying, one day I was praying and I placed myself at the foot of the cross. And in my heart, I heard our Lady praying at the cross and I could hear her words. And despite her great pain and suffering, she was also praising God. And I learned from that to praise God in all things. And I have consecrated myself to Our Lady, who always brings us closer and closer to Jesus.

Then, before I got diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, I was sitting in my living room and just thinking about Jesus, no great prayer, just a thought here and there...when suddenly I heard a voice in my heart with such clarity and power that said: "Oh, if you only knew the value of a human soul." Now, certainly, as a Catholic I had heard that every soul has value and I did not doubt it; but this time, the voice penetrated my heart and soul with such a deep level of understanding (you might even say an infused knowledge) that my soul fell prostrate before the Lord and I cried out to Him: "Jesus, I will do anything to help save souls, I am willing to suffer anything and to even give my life for souls." And I meant it from the bottom of my heart – holding nothing back. This from a wimp.

Then several months later, I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Now you may be thinking that I got the cancer because I offered myself to God to be a victim for souls. You are wrong. I have pondered this. You see, God knew my future. It's not like when I got the diagnosis, God was surprised and said: "WOW, I didn't know that was going to happen." No, He knew the cancer was coming in the future, so He prepared me so that I could better understand the value of suffering and that with that understanding I could find greater joy and peace and consolation through it all. "Oh, if you only knew the value of a human soul" – so deep and penetrating an understanding that I live for souls and the whole concept of suffering has changed – not the pain, not the aggravation, but the blessing is a hundred fold, nay a thousand fold.

On days when I feel like I can't bear much more, He sends me little unexpected blessings or graces that I recognize. His presence is with me. His hand is in everything. I live in total gratitude. I can truly say without reservation, "Thank God for everything" and "All is gift, all is grace." He has told us: "My grace is sufficient for you..." (*2 Corinthians 12:9*) -- and His grace is custom-designed for each one of us.

I can thank God for everything and praise Him in all circumstances because I know He loves me. And because I know He loves me and wants only good for me, I can trust Him completely, and because I can trust Him completely, I can surrender to His will. I say to myself, "Imagine God created us, gave us life that we might live

with Him for all eternity – that is gift enough. Everything else in life is gravy.” I focus on what God gives – not on what He takes away – for whatever He takes, He refills with other blessings. God is always life-giving....even when we are dying.

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REGRETS

How quickly the future becomes the past. And, as I ponder my life, I do have some regrets -- especially whenever I treated others or myself with less dignity than they or I deserved as children of God.

I recently heard a lecture by Father Robert Spitzer (SJ) on EWTN and I wish I had heard this sooner, but I did not. He said there are 4 levels of happiness (*the discussion below on this topic is a paraphrase of parts of Spitzer’s presentation*):

Level 1: The first and lowest level of happiness is **MATERIAL / PHYSICAL**

- Things, food, stuff, toys, addictions
- PLEASURE seeking: It can be something simple like a chocolate ice cream cone (for us chocolate lovers), or a new outfit, or a new computer or piece of furniture). The first level is seeking pleasure from material/physical things.

Level 2: The second level of happiness is **EGO ENHANCEMENT – COMPARATIVE**

- We seek our happiness in honor, applause, worldly success, status, power, college degrees -- somehow trying to prove that we are superior to others, etc.
- In pursuit of ego enhancement, we seek power, fame, recognition or wealth. It is the belief that the promotion will make us happy; or that the bigger house than our neighbors have will make us the envy of the

neighborhood; or that all our college degrees and other accomplishments will make us more respected. It is showing that “I am more than you by comparison.”

- With a focus on ego enhancement:
 - We can quickly feel jealousy or resentment for those who are comparatively better than we are.
 - We are more likely to fear a loss of esteem – that we might fall off the pedestal, get embarrassed in public, etc.

The first two levels of happiness (seeking the material / physical and ego enhancement - comparative) are INWARD centered, self-centered. The next 2 levels of happiness are OUTWARD centered, other-centered.

Level 3: The third level of happiness is **CONTRIBUTIVE**

- This is where we have charity toward others
- That is where we seek to love and help others

Level 4: The fourth level of happiness is **TRANSCENDENT**

- Seeking God with all your heart
- Making God the number one priority

Now there is nothing wrong with enjoying an ice cream cone and nothing wrong in using our God-given talents to do a good job and succeed at work or wherever we may be.

You may think you were already aware of these 4 levels of happiness (and I certainly was) -- but here is the clincher. IF WE DO NOT SET OUR GOALS TO THE CONTRIBUTIVE AND TRANSCENDENT, WE WILL REMAIN IN THE MATERIAL AND IN THE EGO – AND NEVER FIND TRUE HAPPINESS.

If you don't actually set goals and write down your goals for how you will pursue levels 3 and 4, you will automatically spend most of your life living at levels 1 and

2 – and just dabbling in levels 3 & 4. But I can tell you this from personal experience, at the end of life when you think about your life, the memories that will give you the greatest comfort and peace and joy at dying will be remembering how you lived at levels 3 & 4 and regrets of wasting too much of your life at levels 1 & 2...at least it is there that are my greatest regrets of time and love and potential for good fruit wasted. The worldly accomplishments that you sought seem so insignificant – and just vanity. So please WRITE DOWN goals for how you will live at levels 3 & 4 and read them every day and asses where you are in works of charity and seeking the face of God – you need to PURSUE and not just dabble. Make your legacy statement write it down -- FOR THIS I CAME -- and review it daily until it imbeds in your subconscious mind.

SEEKING GOD IS THE TRUE AND GREATEST ADVENTURE

I can tell you, I have had many experiences in my life, but the greatest adventure is in seeking the face of God with all your heart. Psalm 105 says: “O give thanks to the LORD... Sing praises to Him..... Let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice! Seek the Lord and His strength, seek His presence continually...”

We grow by seeking His face, living in His presence, studying scripture, frequent reception of the sacraments (confession, daily mass / the Eucharist), times of adoration, prayer, etc. There is no greater adventure than pursuing God...I promise you He does not hide from those who sincerely seek His face. The Truth, the beauty, the revelations, the wisdom, the insights, the graces, the blessings, His presence, the gifts He gives are what make life a full life – it is pursuing God totally that gives us the fullness of life, the abundant life He promised -- a life of great adventure. God is the gift; He gives to all who seek Him. Be not afraid...Come to Him...Seek Him. “God does not look at who you were but who you are now” (*Father Michael J. Russo*). It is never too late....Be not afraid.

I would like to share with you a fragment from a poem called “The Spiritual Canticle” by St. John of the Cross. It is how life is when we pursue the love of God with all our heart – the bride seeking the bridegroom of our soul.

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Fragment from The Spiritual Canticle

(Poetry of St. John of the Cross – the bride is speaking)

Shown deeper than before
in cellars of my love I drank; from there
went wandering on the moor;
knew nothing, felt no care;
the sheep I tended once are who knows where?

There he made gently free;
had honey of revelation to confide.
There I gave all of me;
hid nothing, had no pride;
there I promised to become his bride,

Forever at his door
I gave my heart and soul. My fortune too.
I've no flock any more,
no other work in view.
My occupation: love. It's all I do.

If I'm not seen again
in the old places, on the village ground,
say of me: lost to men.
Say I'm adventure-bound
for love's sake. Lost on purpose to be found.

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OUR CHOICE IN SUFFERING: ESCAPE, ENDURE OR EMBRACE

We all have crosses to bear. Eventually they come to all of us. We have 3 choices: to escape, endure, or embrace

- **ESCAPE:** We can't escape. Trying to escape the cross just leads to bitterness. The more we fight, the more anxiety, frustration (even depression / despair) we face.
- **ENDURE:** To endure leads to stoic acceptance – just grin and bear it. “A stiff upper lip cannot sing praises to God; it draws attention to the creature, not the creator” (*Bill Bright*). Mere acceptance does not acknowledge the truth about the cross – that the cross is gift.
- **EMBRACE:** To embrace the cross leads to joy and meaning in the suffering. The Catholic Church has always taught that suffering is a share in the Passion of Christ -- that there is a priceless value in suffering. The cross is gift – sanctification. There truly is joy in the embrace of the cross. Not a singing in the meadow kind of joy but an underlying current of joy like a cool, gently flowing stream within the soul as the soul surrenders to God's plan of salvation and trusts in His goodness and mercy...and His promises. “On the cross, God made even death a place of hope” (*Bill Bright*).

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WHAT IS HELPFUL / NOT HELPFUL FROM PERSONS TRYING TO BE SUPPORTIVE

Father Champagne asked me to share with you some things that are helpful and things that are not so helpful from friends who are trying to be supportive.

Please note, I am speaking of my own personal experiences and preferences; I am not assuming this applies to everyone.

What to say when someone tells you they have a serious or terminal illness

Raise your hand if you know what to say when someone tells you they have a serious or terminal illness? (*No one raises their hand...*)

But you are wrong. You really do know what to say – the truth. And the truth is that you don't know what to say.

HELPFUL: So say that, "I don't know what to say. I'm so sorry to hear this news." And then add whatever you feel is appropriate such as: "I love you. Rest assured that I will pray for you. Let me know if there is anything I can do to help you, etc."

NOT HELPFUL: Please don't minimize the situation with some over-zealous Christian exuberance:

"O how wonderful, you get to see Jesus soon." Yes, some well-meaning Christians have said that to me. But God created us for life. The separation of the soul from the body is not an easy thing. After all, where is it written in scripture that, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus said: "Yippee, I'm coming home soon." No, in reality Jesus prayed...actually sweating drops of blood. "By his example He [Jesus]

freed us from trying to pretend that dying does not hurt; of course, it does” (*Bill Bright*).

Trust me...I had pondered dying before and I thought I was prepared. But when you hear the actual words “terminal” from the doctor, it’s a shock. No matter how prepared you think you are to meet the LORD, it takes a while to process it all....and you’re never quite sure how well you will handle the pain and suffering.

What to talk about
when you see me
or when you call me

HELPFUL: Talk to me as you did before – if we shared stories about your life or your family or our spiritual journeys, let’s speak of those. I am still living. I don’t want to focus on dying. If I want to change the subject to things regarding my health, I will. And please, talk to me as you normally did before. If you didn’t “O shaaaaa” (*a colloquialism of “cher” in French*) me before, please don’t do it now. Don’t change yourself into the friend who now talks to me with that “pity voice.” I don’t want your pity – it’s not helpful -- just your continued friendship, love and support.

NOT HELPFUL: Trying to show how compassionate you are and trying to bond with me by telling me about all the people you know who have, or had or died of cancer is not helpful. And the worst thing you can do is to tell me all the grueling details of how a friend or family member suffered as they were dying of cancer...the debilitating pain in detail, the emaciation, the skin and bones, how they were unrecognizable, etc. I have endured hours of such horror stories. I suffer through them silently because I’m not sure if you need some sort of catharsis or to process a grief and I am the vehicle to help you process it – so I try to be compassionate, but it is not helpful to me. It just scares me.

I feel your compassion when you offer me your prayers, your love, your help, your support. Especially when you offer me your hope...hope in how God is working in

our lives, hope in our prayers, hope in His promises, and hope in the wonder of it all.

What to say
when you call / see me

HELPFUL: When you call, just ask general questions like “What’s happening?” or “What’s going on with you?” If you ask, “How are you doing?” or “How are you feeling?” and I say, “ OK,” please don’t press further regarding my health. If I want to discuss my health issues with you, I will. If not, don’t press.

NOT HELPFUL: Please don’t interrogate me with questions about my health:

- When is your next chemotherapy session?
- How are you handling chemotherapy?
- Is your hair going to fall out / or why haven’t you lost all your hair yet?
- When is your next doctor visit?
- What are the doctors saying?
- How much pain do you have?
- Where is your pain?
- When’s your next test?
- What medicines are you taking?
- And so on....

When I get multiple calls a day, everyone keeps “forcing” me to talk and think about the disease (and dying) over and over again -- I’d really rather focus on life. If I don’t want to talk about my illness, don’t assume I’m in denial. I’m reminded of my illness with every pain, with every pill I take, with every pending doctor appointment, with every preparation for chemotherapy -- do I have to think and talk about it over and over and over again with every phone call – especially answering the same questions over and over again from you and from others. Please don’t send me emails or texts with the same questions – no difference.

And the most annoying is when you ask the same group of questions every time you call /see me.

What to say when leaving a phone message

HELPFUL: When you call and leave a message, the best thing to say is: “I’m just calling to let you know I am thinking about you, I’m praying for you and I’m here for you. If you need anything at all or just want to talk, call me anytime. I know you have a lot on your plate now so you don’t need to call me back. I love you.”

NOT HELPFUL: It’s not helpful if you take it personally if I don’t call you back right away or on your schedule (such as, “Call me back. I’ll be home between 3:00 and 4:00 today”). I can’t handle a long list of daily call-backs and my schedule is not my own most of the time – the illness has its own requirements and affects my personal schedule, including how I may feel physically day-to-day.

What to send to someone who is ill

HELPFUL: I love it when you send me Mass cards or “I prayed for you” notes, or “thinking of you cards.”

NOT HELPFUL: Don’t send me a card and then get upset (or take it personally) if I don’t call / write to thank you. Do you really require a “thank you call / note” for every act of kindness you do for someone who is ill? Do you really want to place that added requirement on someone who is dealing with a load of burdens already?

How to offer food

HELPFUL: If you like to cook, offering to bring me something you cooked is much appreciated. Please first ask what I can eat. I'm on a restricted diet so I can't eat just anything you cook. Your wonderful "spicy Cajun" food is not on the list of foods I can eat – but I sure wish it were.

NOT HELPFUL: Please don't surprise me by bringing a food offering unless you know whether I can eat it. Also, please don't try to surprise me by leaving food on my doorstep – I may not see it for hours / days – so I may need to throw it away. Both of these gestures from you place me in an awkward position of how to express my gratitude (which I want to do) for your thoughtfulness / kindness – which I truly appreciate.

How to offer help

HELPFUL: General offers to help are nice, but specifics are better. For example: "I'm going to the grocery store tomorrow morning, can I pick up something for you?" If you are a neighbor, offer to put out the trash on trash day – my neighbor does that for me every week, etc.

NOT HELPFUL: Please don't rush me. Don't call me last minute and expect me to make a quick decision. I may need some time to think about where / what help I need at the moment and how you can best help me.

How to put yourself in the other person's shoes

Think about how you feel when you have the flu. There are times when you don't want to talk to anyone. Or, if they do something nice for you, you don't have the energy to call back or write thank-you notes. And if they get upset with you, that's an extra burden you have to deal with because you already don't feel well. And, on days when you don't feel like you have the flu, you're trying to catch up on the daily living requirements that you couldn't do when you had the flu – such

as laundry, sweeping the floor, getting groceries, cooking, paying bills, etc. And you have to get things done now because the flu is going to return in a week. On top of that, your schedule is full of doctor appointments, medications, chemotherapy, etc....so please, I love you as my friend, but don't put extra burdens on me. My schedule is not my own.

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CONCLUSION

Please know that I love my friends. If my remarks may sound “snarky,” it’s only because Father Champagne asked me to comment on what is or is not helpful to me. Please don’t be afraid to speak to me after hearing this thinking that what you say might offend me. I rarely get offended. You see, many of the mistakes I am warning you about, I have made myself when trying to be supportive with friends who were ill or dying. I did not know any better. No matter what you say or do or how you might fumble it, I will still love you for trying to be supportive. I know your intentions are good – and I appreciate it. I can live (and die) with some annoyance.

We human beings are funny. We really don’t know what to do or say. Let me give you a final example. When I go to Mass, I try to sit in the last back pew where no one can sit behind me who might be sneezing or coughing on me since my immune system is compromised with chemotherapy and if I get a cold or flu, it could be deadly.

So, I am at Mass one Sunday morning, and a lovely family (mom, dad, young daughter about age six) are sitting in the pew in front of me. However, daughter and Dad are sneezing and have runny noses (and attempt to cover their mouth with their hands while sneezing). When it is time for the sign of peace, they put out their hands for the greeting, and I say: “Please don’t be offended, I’m having chemotherapy so I can’t shake hands...May the peace of Christ be with you.”

They say to me: “Peace be with you.” I’m thinking, “OK, I dodged that potential bullet.” When Mass is over, they walk out of their pew, come up to me and each one of these three strangers, that I have never seen before until this Mass, give me a great big, tight hug and say they are sorry I am ill and that they will pray for me. Now, you see the humor in this. It’s too risky for a handshake but a hug right in my face is safer? But how can you not rejoice in such kindness and thank God for people showing their heart – even if what they did appears foolish given the circumstances. How wonderful!!! What gift of love!!! You might think this was just one-time “fluke” thing, but something almost identical has happened to me already three times at Mass.

So take heart, when you are in the midst of trial, you also get to experience the very best of people, even if what they say or do at times seems silly or annoying. So, I tell myself, the same thing I tell you....”It’s not all about you, Angela; get over it.” I can live with some well-intentioned annoyance.

Speaking of the Mass – I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE, LOVE the Mass. Go as often as possible -- so many graces...so many blessings...so very beautiful.

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DIVINE MERCY MINISTRY FOR THE DYING

I’d like to share with you a new ministry we are starting at St. Pius X Church in Lafayette, Louisiana -- and I would like to encourage you to volunteer. We are setting up a prayer line whereby friends and family of someone in imminent danger of death can call the prayer line and a volunteer will immediately pray the Divine Mercy chaplet for the dying person.

Jesus’ words in quotes below are from:

Divine Mercy in My Soul: Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska

Jesus told St. Faustina:

“At the hour of their death,

*I defend as My own glory
every soul that will say this chaplet;
or when others say it for a dying person,
the pardon is the same.” (811)*

*“When they say this chaplet in the presence of the dying,
I will stand between My Father and the dying person,
not as the just Judge but as the Merciful Savior.” (1541)*

Divine Mercy Ministry for the Dying Mission:

- To establish an ongoing Divine Mercy prayer line to pray the Divine Mercy chaplet for those in immediate danger of death in order:
 - To shield the dying in God’s mercy – eternal salvation for a soul at the final moments of life
 - To offer peace and compassion for the dying and the family / friends of the dying
 - To gain Jesus’ extraordinary promises when the chaplet is prayed for the dying
 - To promote the beautiful Divine Mercy message to the families and friends of the dying – giving hope to the hopeless
 - To secure the graces promised to those who promote the Divine Mercy chaplet and the Divine Mercy message

So we are looking for prayer volunteers – I’m looking for people who have **holy greed**. A holy greed to gain extraordinary graces for other souls -- especially the dying -- and for themselves.

Jesus told St. Faustina:

*“All those souls who will glorify My mercy
and spread its worship,
encouraging others to trust in My mercy,*

*will not experience terror at the hour of death.
My mercy will shield them in the final battle..." (1540)*

As a prayer volunteer, this is all you have to do. When someone is dying, you receive a text or email (whichever you prefer) asking if you can pray the Divine Mercy chaplet NOW for the dying person. If you can, you text or email your reply that you will pray the Divine Mercy chaplet immediately for the dying person. It takes about 15 minutes to pray the chaplet with fervor. If you can't pray the chaplet at that time, you just ignore the text or email – or you can pray later when you have time -- but you are not committed to pray. It's totally flexible...you pray whenever your schedule allows.

I'll have a sheet where you can indicate your interest and we will contact you in a few weeks when we launch the ministry. We are in the final stages – the volunteer solicitation. I also have Divine Mercy chaplet prayer cards for all of you...take one or as many as you need to share with others.

IT'S HARD – AND THEN A CONCLUDING POEM

I won't pretend that dealing with end of life is easy and that I'm all smiles. It is hard. It is very hard. No, it is more than hard. At times, all you can do is just cry, "Jesus, help me." But in the surrender, in the trust in His goodness, in His promises, in His love, in His mercy, there is a joy that cannot be explained...a gratitude that seeps through your bones, a thanksgiving for all and a surety that all is gift and all is grace...a knowing that there is a true value and meaning in the suffering. And beneath it all: God sustains...hope remains... love proclaims....

I'd like to end by sharing a little poem with you:

I lay me down
I lay me down
I lay me down upon the cross

I lay me down
I lay me down
I count the gift and not the loss

But if tomorrow
tears you see
streaming down my face;
think of me not
as hypocrite
or one who's short of grace

Don't say I lied
when spoke of joy
if sore pain knocked me down;
help me lean
on your faith, my friend
'til my own faith rebounds

And then I'll sing
yet once again
the truth that doth abide,
of joy and peace
upon the cross
when with Him crucified.

I lay me down
I lay me down
I lay me down upon the cross

I lay me down
I lay me down
I count the gift and not the loss.

Poem by Angela

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Thank you for your time today. May God bless you....and may you always know His love, His mercy and may you always abide in His Holy Presence.

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