

DEVOTION FOR THOSE SUFFERING WITH CANCER

Strength

²⁵ “To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. ²⁶ Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. ²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. ²⁹ He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. ³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; ³¹ but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:25-26, 28-31

With cancer come surgeries, chemo and/or radiation. We have our job and family responsibilities and now this gets added in the mix. All of them tire us out. We wonder: When will our strength return? Will we be able to once more do things with our family? Will we be able to do a full day's work again? Will we have the strength to get through all of the treatments?

The physical strength we once knew may come back ever so slowly. The slow return may be very disappointing. We may even try diets, exercise and/or supplements to help the strength come back sooner. We may even discover the axiom “physical strength leaves so quickly and returns so slowly.”

However, we need not despair after a procedure lays us low. In the reading above God reminds us that He is with us, especially in our weary times. In verse 25 He reminds us just who He is, especially compared to anything else in the world. Verse 26 gives us tangible proof of His great abilities. According to the *World Book Encyclopedia*, “with large telescopes astronomers can photograph over thirty billion stars. And, we think there must be billions more beyond the reach of our most powerful telescopes. Not only is He able to name each one but also brings out each one every night. Amazing, isn't it!

Verses 28-30 once more point to the Lord's great power. The proof is in that He created the heavens and the earth and everything in it. There is zero that is made that God did not create from nothing. What's more the Lord has given us a faith that helps us to grasp that fact as stated in Hebrews 11:3, “**By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.**”

BUT, more importantly, the Lord has given us a faith that saves us for eternity. When Jesus said on the cross, “**It is Finished**” (John 19:30), that meant that our salvation was secured.

In the summer of 2008 while on vacation with my family I was sitting at the pool looking up at the sky. I saw three eagles (2 parents and a young eagle) flying high in the sky. I noticed that every once in a while the young eagle apparently needed a rest and would fly up on the mother's back and sit there for a while. After a brief respite the young eagle would resume flying on its own. This cycle of events was done a number of times until they eagles flew out of sight or landed somewhere. In our tiredness we can place ourselves in our Lord's hands and take a rest. He will carry us when we can't seem to go anymore.

When we hear the Lord's forgiveness at the beginning of the worship service, when we hear the Lord speak through His Word and when we receive His body and blood in the sacrament, The Lord is strengthening us so that we can go forward. He is “infusing” us with His strength.

Prayer:

Dear Lord so often I am so weak that it seems I can't take another step. During times like that remind me how much you love me, help me to accept your invitation to rest in your powerful hands and let you carry me on your wings. Amen.