

PONDERINGS ALONG THE PATH

April

Dear Compassionate Friends:

Easter has always been one of my favorite holidays. As well as heralding the arrival of spring (finally) I have always loved the pageantry and traditional rituals associated with Easter. When I was growing up Easter meant a new dress, patent leather shoes and hat. My mother (or should I say the Easter Bunny) took great delight in finding new and creative hiding places for our Easter baskets.

The Easter services at church meant the dark and somber season of Lent was exchanged for the brightness and celebration of Easter. It might still be 20 degrees outside, but we had to wear our new white shoes and light cotton dresses!

When my children were born, I delighted in carrying on the traditions (other than the dresses and hats, since I had boys). I took joy in decorating the house, shopping for special Easter gifts and outfits, and surprising my children with new hiding places for their Easter baskets. We attended and participated in the Easter services at church and rejoiced in the resurrection of the Lord.

After Aaron died, Easter suddenly had a whole different meaning. The first Easter after he died, I was entering into my “angry” phase of grief, and boy, was I mad at God! I was angry that he allowed my child to die, after all the fervent prayers I sent Him, and complete faith I had that Aaron would get a new kidney and get well. I really did not want to hear that when Jesus heard His best friend Lazarus had died, He raised him from the dead. I wanted to know why Aaron had to die and why we didn’t get the miracle we had prayed for. We had Aaron for such a little time on this earth, and he had suffered through so many illnesses and medical procedures. I wanted Aaron here in my arms, not the promise that we would be reunited for all eternity when we died, sometime in the distant future. I felt cheated and betrayed.

It took a very long time to come to the “peace that passes all understanding”. Slowly I came to realize that my prayers were answered, in that I prayed Aaron would get happy and healthy and not have to suffer through any more needles and hospitals. I never even thought to pray that he wouldn’t die. Such a thought was completely unacceptable and foreign to me.

I came to understand that even with a new kidney Aaron would have had to take medication the rest of his life, and suffer through many more blood tests and possibly, more surgeries. I had to give him back to God. I wasn’t ready and I sure didn’t like it, but I didn’t want Aaron to suffer any more. His little body was tired and ready to rest.

This doesn’t mean I was ready to hear “he’s in a better place”. I know Aaron is in Heaven with his daddy, “the very Best Place”, but we had him here with us for such a little time!

One night I had a dream about Aaron. He was running and playing in a big meadow with a huge smile and laughing his little chuckle. He had not been strong enough or felt well enough to run and play for a very long time, and it brought me such comfort! I must believe God and Aaron were sending me a message that he was indeed now in Heaven, and happy and healthy. He was ok!

As we celebrate the resurrection of our Savior and His promise of eternal life, I wish you the comfort of that promise and the healing knowledge that our children live. There is no pain, no suffering, no more sadness in that beautiful Place where our loved ones gone before us now live.

In friendship,

Nadine

