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Sacred Stories

A Grateful Recovery, a Humbling Return



spirituality

Suggested Sacred Text

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

The year 2016 started well for me: a surprise family trip to Disney World with my husband and our four healthy children made me stop and thank God for all my blessings. One of those is what I get to do for a living: help new mothers develop breastfeeding skills in our Family Birth Center.

Then, in early April, I experienced headaches, dizziness, visual changes and elevated blood pressure. Little did I know that a storm was brewing in my brain in the form of a tumor, and it would change my life.

I'll always be grateful to the coworkers who made me see a doctor. I resisted, but they gently let me know they wouldn't take "no" for an answer. I soon knew the reason for my symptoms: hydrocephalus due to a large cyst. A subsequent MRI revealed more: a likely benign, but very large brainstem hemangioblastoma that had taken over half of my right cerebellar space. Neurologists determined that either surgical removal or coagulation therapy would be very risky.

Suddenly, many things that had seemed important to me fell away, and it was just me and my family, praying that God's plan included more time together here on Earth. I was grateful to be referred to a medical center with a neurosurgeon who was able to remove the tumor; but, I was scared when the surgeon told me the surgery would probably leave me with numerous disabilities.

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He was correct. My goal was to be able to return to the work that means so much to me, and I'll never forget my first day back on the job: October 25, 2016.

I still have some visual, swallowing, hearing and balance challenges. Even in the midst of these challenges, I know God is and has been with me. God is clearly present and with me in my family and remarkable caregivers; and, the love and support I receive every day from our Birth Center

"family" has been critical to my ongoing recovery. I thank God every day for the chance to return to the work I love. I am blessed with the gift of continued life and humbled to help demonstrate the constant presence of God to others; it's truly a sacred opportunity.

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Questions for Reflection

What in your life has caused things that seemed important to fall away?

Who stayed present with you through that time?

Who in your life surrounds you with love and support, every day?