

Seventeen Year Old Healed Of Cancer Submitted July 3, 2009
Newsletter Article July Edition By: Catherine Tankink

Looking back now I understand why God allowed me to experience something as serious as being diagnosed with Lymphatic Cancer or otherwise known as Hodgkin's disease at the young age of 17. You see my life up to that point had been one that could easily been compared to as a seen out of the Brady Bunch and my part was "the youngest one in curls". I was the daughter of a retired Air Force Colonel. So needless to say we moved around often. My mother, who had spent the first 7 years of her own adulthood in the convent, was heavily involved in our church communities everywhere we lived. I was part of a devoted Catholic family. My older brother continued in the footsteps of our father and joined the Air Force straight out of high school. He was 9 years older and was no longer living in the same state by the time I was 11. My older sister was fortunate enough to meet and fall in love with her high school sweetheart when she was only 14. Within the following 6 years the two of them were inseperateble and once I got into high school she became married and no longer lived at home.

By the fall of my senior year in high school I started to become ill. At that point I was the last child at home and was heavily involved in extra caricular activities at the school. I was fortunate enough to have my own car, part time job and many friends to share my time with. I didn't spend too much time at home anymore. Prior to the cancer I was a very active and healthy teenager. When I first detected my cancer it felt like I had a knot in the muscle in my neck. Then a short time later it began to spread all around my shoulder area and then to my underarm area. That began to swell and cause me extreme discomfort. Lymphatic cancer occurs only in the lymph node system of the body. I dealt with the discomfort for a month before bringing to my parents attention. After feeling the large lumps my mother immediately took me to the doctors to see what was causing this. I was diagnosed with Lymphatic Cancer. I was shocked and scared. Walking into the doctor's office I was expecting to get sent to physical therapy for pulling a muscle from over doing it with outdoor activities. Being diagnosed with Cancer was the last thing on my mind. I remember thinking I don't want to die. How could God let this happen to me?

My mother was in shock. As a mother of 3 now myself I can only imagine how terrifying that was for her. Every parent's worst nightmare. My mother refused to accept the doctor's results and immediately went into prayer mode. She added my name onto every prayer chain she could think of. She called her childhood friends, some of whom remained in the convent, and had them praying for me as well. There was a wonderful priest, Father Degrandis, who had been touring the country healing the sick. My mother felt lead to take me to the healing service. A few weeks had gone by since I was first diagnosed and I felt weak. I had many medical tests done within that short period of time. I reluctantly went with her to this small, very old Catholic church which had a congregation of mostly African Americans. I soon discovered that St. Nicholas was a very special place. Walking into the doorway of this little old church I could feel the presence of God. They were a very charismatic group who were very vocal with praising the Lord. So being the young teenager that I was I was questioning what this was all

about and choose to sit with my mother at the very, very back of the church. God had a plan for me and it started there at St. Nicholas Catholic Church.

The prayer service was intense. The entire church was filled with a few hundred people who were there for healing. As I sat in the back of the church the lady to my right leaned over and asked me why I was there. I told her that I had just been diagnosed with Lymphatic Cancer. She said it's good that I was there for healing, that God had big plans for me. She knew this because she said that when I walked into the church with my mother she saw angels flying above all around me. She was excited for me and told me not to be afraid, to go up to the front to be healed. God was going to heal me that day. You see the lady I was sitting next to worked for Father Degranis. My mother heard what the lady had told me and then grabbed my hand and walked me up to the front to wait my turn to be prayed over. Standing at the front of the church I remember feeling anxious, embarrassed, afraid and just exhausted. Thankfully I still had my faith that God could heal me and at that moment it was the only thing keeping me there.

As I watched many adults slain in the spirit by Father Degrandis over and over again right before me I was still a bit skeptical of what he could do for me. Was this for real? It was my turn. My mother was right behind me with her hands on my shoulders praying in tongues over me. Father Degrandis walked down the row of about 10 people all lined up across the front of the altar praying with his hand extended out in front of them. Each one fell down to the ground except me. I stood there unaffected. I turned to my mom and said it wasn't working. She replied just stay where you are and keep praying. So I stood there as Father Degrandis prayed over his next group and watched and waited as he went down the line one by one and then me. Nope, it didn't work the second time either. I wanted to go back to my seat but my mother would let me. So there I was still standing in the front waiting for him to pray over me for the third time. All I remember is seeing him starting at the front of the line but I have no memory of him after that. I too had been slain in the spirit. I went from a visual of watching others being prayed over to complete darkness. As I lay on the ground my mind revealed a calm, peaceful and vast darkness. It was a feeling like nothing I had ever known. It was complete silence. In a room full of over 100 people I heard not one sound. Then in the distance of my new found darkness I began to see a flame. The flame grew and became brighter. I watched the flame transform into many images. The first was a flame in the form of a young girl slowly and then slowly turning into a young woman. The young woman slowly turned into a pregnant woman. Next the pregnant woman turned into a mother holding an infant in her arms. Last the flame became larger and formed into a dove. It was at that moment God spoke to me and he said "Wait and it will happen".

I slowly opened my eyes and my mother was sitting next to me and I was lying on the floor. I felt such a warm sensation all over my body. I felt as if I had been only lying down for a minute. My body felt well rested, like I had been asleep for hours. My mother told me that I had been out for almost half an hour. That she witnessed my chest turning bright red. That after a few minutes the redness traveled up to my neck. She said she thought she just witnessed God healing me. She asked me what happened, did I see anything? I told her what I had seen and how God spoke to me. Needless to say she was

very excited. As we were leaving she discovered that Father Degranis was going to be having another healing service at a Charismatic convention in New Orleans the following month. I left St. Nicholas that afternoon with a new perspective on God's love. I also felt a grater understanding of my mother and how she was able to devote her life to doing Gods work. For the first time in my life I was looking forward to waiting. God said "wait and it will happen" and I did.

A few weeks went by and I did begin to feel better. I went in to see my doctor to get the results from all the testing they had done on me. While examining me he noticed that the larger lumps had reduced in size. My mother then requested that he take another round of tests on me. She told him of my healing and said that she wanted to see the new results before making any decisions about other forms of treatment. I think he thought we were nuts but he agreed to more testing and so we were off to get that done.

Next stop Louisiana. My mother and I got on a plane and went to Louisiana to attend the Charismatic convention that was being held that spring. So there we were walking into the convention center and low and behold, like a beacon in the night, there was the flaming dove! They had a huge hanging banner of the flaming dove proudly displayed at the front above the stage. It was the symbol of the whole convention. I knew that God showed me that vision of the dove for a reason. Warmth came over me once again. I knew at that moment I had been heeled. It's hard to explain but an immediate joy and sincere gratefulness came over my heart. We stayed for the program and honestly I don't remember much else from that trip.

We returned home and I went in for my follow up visit with my doctor. He was a bit shocked to tell us that the cancer was gone. The second set of tests showed no signs of any of the previous cancer. The only thing he could find was a swollen lymph node under my arm where that huge lump had been! It was confirmed and I was healed! My mother told the doctor that he had just witnessed a miracle. He smiled, shook his head and said something to the effect of "I guess so". He said it must be because he had no other medical explanation for what could have happened. He was the first of many that I would share my story with. I am now 35 years old and have remained cancer free.

I have witnessed first hand the miracle of God. I know now that my life was saved so that I could go forward and share my story. To let others know about my journey. To let others know that they are not alone. Remembering that my vision of darkness into light was peaceful. I hope that whoever reads this will remember to find peace within their own darkness for they will soon be shown God's light.

One of the most profound statements that I have heard is: You either have Faith or Fear. You can not have them both. I choose Faith for God said Fear not.

Sincerely,

Catherine Tankink
Child of Christ

