

## John Tefertiller Health Update - 7 May 2010

Greetings friends and family,

This has been a quiet month in which there has been very little happening on the medical front. My chemotherapy treatments ended with the end of March, and except for continuing side effects there is not much else to report.

### State of Affairs

The residual side effects include numbness of the extremities with some “tingling” sensations in the hands and feet. Try walking very far with your feet wrapped in two or three inches of bandages while your feet are “asleep.” That is what's going on. I get around, and even go to work, but sometimes I feel about twice my age. Numbness of my fingertips and stiffness in my hands are also problems. It renders typing, keying in a phone number and many simple tactile tasks to be difficult. Things as simple as using a key to open a door become a process rather than a quick action. It's more of an inconvenience than anything else, but needless to say, I'm not going hiking or taking juggling lessons any time soon!

I am supposed to be getting referred to a surgeon at Stanford for the reversal of my colostomy. There are complications with Medi-Cal that prevent the original surgeon from doing the “take down” procedure, and thus the referral. I have not yet heard from the new surgeon nor had any consultation, so it appears that surgery may be put off until late June or perhaps even July. I would have liked to be done about now, but with the side effects still present it may be just as well that we don't introduce yet another recovery season quite yet.

### What's Coming

With the “take down” surgery still up in the air there is no timetable that I can pass along. I was forewarned that it might take at least a couple of months for the side effects of chemotherapy to recede, so the present situation has not been a surprise. So there is yet one surgical procedure to happen sometime in the next couple of months, but there is no date set. The side effects will diminish with time. (I am finally able to have cold drinks again, but holding the glass can be a dicey proposition!)

### What You Can Pray For

1. As I mentioned in my last newsletter, Medi-Cal has taken the major part of the financial burden off my shoulders, but there will be several thousand dollars of non-covered items. With the hefty share of cost required for Medi-Cal, unless there is a major event or a lot of activity, I have to cover everything up to the share of cost- nearly half my monthly income. But God has been gracious and it has not been a major problem. As far as finances go, I had a major transportation expense this month when I had to replace the engine in my vehicle- so it's a good thing that this has been such a medically quiet period. Our God knows what we'll need and when!
2. Even though my side effects are nothing out of the ordinary, we can still ask God to shorten the recovery time. And we should remember to pray regarding the Stanford surgeons and when should be the right time for the take down surgery.
3. I especially would like to ask people to pray for the spiritual consequences of this last year or so to be made positive in the lives of people who have come through this disease and recovery with me. I can't say enough thanks to God for the generosity of friends over the last year. May they receive from God's hand a reward of salvation and eternal blessing.

## Final Thoughts

In the world people tend to believe that life is either a series of very random events, or that there is some sort of “karma” rewards system. This, of course, engenders a great deal of frustration and disappointment. It is true that God has designed creation with what might be called a principle of reciprocation- everything we do affects more than just ourselves and often reverberates back to us in the form of consequences. We don't live in a vacuum, and we are not immune from the effects of our activities.

When we believe that there is a God and that he rewards those who diligently seek him, we also come to understand that this God knows the end from the beginning and helps us along the way toward his will- and even to our own proper desires. Rather than becoming frustrated or angry at circumstances that seem random, or getting caught up in the idea that our difficulties must be our own fault and we are receiving a “karmic” reward, we can trust in a person- a real person who knows everything about us, yet loved us and sent his only begotten Son to take away our sins. There is nothing random or karmic about God's activity on our behalf. He did what no one else could do to save us from our sins.

I have thought about these things a great deal over the last year, and my trust in God is greater than when I began. So when I say that there aren't enough words to properly express thanks to Him, that is exactly what I mean. The only thing I can do is to accept his loving care and provision and continue trusting.

May we all learn trust in God to the ultimate extent.

John T.