

Wednesday - March 13

We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.

Proverbs 16:9

I am blessed to love my job as a chemotherapy RN & my volunteer work in Haiti. Recently, I was given a rare opportunity to merge my passion for Haiti & my work here in the US. Sometimes I share a bit about what HUT Outreach does in Haiti and upcoming trips. Betty is one of the people I shared with. She is soft spoken and about my age. One day I was sharing my excitement for our church's upcoming trip. Much to my surprise, as I shared, she divulged that she was from Haiti. I have met very few Haitians in Columbus. We were both amazed at this connection. We started speaking in Haitian Creole and talking about Haiti events, life and especially the Haitian foods that we loved! Every week or two, during her appointment, Betty checked in with me so I could speak Creole. She would ask about travel plans, life and even shared in my disappointment over the cancellation of July's PUMC trip. We spoke of her hopes to return to Haiti one day and maybe even to take a trip together. She talked about making me some of my favorite Haitian food. So when I was able to go to Haiti in September, I brought her home some renowned Haitian vanilla. As fate would have it, by then, she was having less frequent treatments and I was not at work for her next several visits, so I just kept the vanilla in my locker. I often thought of her fondly hoping she was enjoying the holidays with her family and couldn't wait to see her and present her gift.

The first week into 2019, I mentioned that I hadn't seen Betty in a while so I guess I needed to take her vanilla home. She must be doing well I thought. My coworker said, "Oh Amy, didn't you know? She died." It was like getting punched in the stomach. My new friend and Haitian connection had passed away just before the holidays. I couldn't contain my grief but I had an afternoon of patients to treat so I said a prayer and pulled myself together. I said "Betty is probably laughing at me up in heaven knowing I have been storing that vanilla in my locker all this time!" My coworker said, "You won't believe this but my new patient in room 2 just told me she is from Haiti." I was in complete disbelief. It hadn't even been 20 minutes!?! This young lady's memories were not so good because her brother recently died in Haiti due to lack of resources. I approached her cautiously and said, "I am told you are from Haiti." "Koman ou ye?" (How are you?) The look on her face was one of shock and confusion as she answered me in her native tongue. Then just as had happened with Betty, we jumped into the usual greetings and banter that Haitians do. She shared with me her many losses due to the conditions in Haiti. She said that she wanted to turn her back on her country. I shared the many things we were doing in Haiti for the past 20 years and she expressed her gratitude. Then I asked her if she liked to cook Haitian food. She replied with a smile "Of course!" That's when I brought her The Gift! The bottle of vanilla still packaged in the special little red and white Haitian plastic bag that she would surely recognize from her youth in Haiti. She exclaimed "Mesi Anpil! Bondye Beni ou!" (Thank you very much! God bless you!) We really connected and before she left she said, "God sent you to me today to give me hope and a new perspective." Little did she know God had sent her to me for hope and perspective too.

Amy

Prayer: Thank you Lord for your perfect timing to show me you are always there. Thank you for the way that you offer comfort through connection with other people. Amen.