

Monday - February 22

You will be secure, because there is hope; you will look about you and take your rest in safety.

Job 11:18 (NIV)

When I was 15, my mother dropped me off to work at a nursing home. Besides needing college money, I had to get experience to be selected for the competitive Ohio State University occupational therapy program. So I thought it would be lovely to pour water and read to the elderly. It was more complex. That “awful” job continued six years, through college, and brought me hope that pain could be endured and faith in God’s purposes for our lives.

Mrs. Christian was not old. She was an elementary school teacher struck down by the most severe rheumatoid arthritis I was to see in my next 45 years of healthcare. It hurt her beyond words to move or be moved. She never complained or discussed her life. She asked to be “set up” to write letters 30 minutes daily using the bit of shoulder motion she had with adaptive equipment. She had an elegant boxy script. To my horror she would request that I be her aide. To feel the crackly, light, fragile state of her body being moved scared me. She would comfort me and tell me what a good therapist I was going to be. Let me repeat: She would comfort me.

Later I met a lifelong friend who had been a recipient of Mrs. Christian’s letters. She had been sharing her love, faith and wisdom with her students as they grew. I never knew.

Brenda

Prayer: Holy God, we give thanks for the experiences and people in our lives which shape us for the future. Thank you for those who comfort us even as we try to help them. Amen.