

## Ash Wednesday - March 2

*We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.*

*Romans 8:28 (NRSV)*

I have never been out of a relationship with God. I was blessed with wonderful parents who constantly modeled their strength and faith. God has been central in my life through all of my joys and struggles, and He's guided me with all of my major decisions. But I believe my most powerful experience of connection with God was in 2007 when I was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

I had been suffering for months with constant pain in my neck and shoulder and I continually prayed to God for relief or a diagnosis. When the diagnosis came, I experienced not only God's presence with me directly, but also through the love and prayers of others. He provided what I can only describe as a cloak surrounding me. I knew I was going to get through whatever was before me. God showed up in my doctor's care for me, in my staff at school who prayed for me and wore bracelets with my name on them, and in my friends and family that took wonderful care of me when things got rough. I had a mantra that I repeated every day, and it is the scripture at the top of this devotion. God provided me with the strength to stay positive, to go to work every day and still care for my family.

Having cancer changed my life and my relationship with God. When I faced breast cancer ten years later, I didn't despair. I knew God would continue to take care of me.

Joy

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we ask that You continue to be our rock. Help us to always be aware of the many ways that You connect with us and provide care. We are so grateful for the people You place in our paths at the right time to help us see You in our lives. Amen.