



Fran's NCF Prayer Journal

DECEMBER 2007



*This Christmas Mary Lou has a new sense of HOPE... ***



Mary Lou had been out of nursing school for 2 years and finally felt like she was getting acclimated to nursing practice in the real world. However, with the 12 hour shifts and the stress of the healthcare setting she felt like she was losing touch with herself. Her friends who were her lifeline were usually working a different schedules. Rotating shifts has made it difficult to keep connected at church and she had been feeling very distant to God. She loved the work of nursing, but realized that her life did not look as she had expected it would after graduation.

A few months ago Mary Lou had begun noticing a nurse a few years older who seemed different than the others. This nurse, Nancy, was gentler with her patients, not harsh with the other nurses, and - most importantly - looked for ways she could help the other nurses. Mary Lou had appreciated Nancy taking an interest in her, asking how she was doing, and giving tips on how to deal with patient situations. One morning after their shift was over, Nancy had invited her to go to coffee where they had gotten to know each other better. Near the end of their time together Nancy had asked her about her relationship with Jesus Christ and Mary Lou was able to share her sense of isolation. Nancy listened and then prayed for Mary Lou to experience a new sense of peace and connectedness with God. Before they parted Nancy asked her if she would like to meet once in a while to share and to help each other grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Since that first time they have met for coffee three times and Nancy has invited her to dinner at her home with her family. Sometimes they look at scripture passages together or pray, but much of the time they just share how things are going at work and in the rest of their lives. Now as the holidays are approaching Mary Lou is filled not only with a new sense of purpose in her nursing, but realizes that she is looking forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus with joy. She no longer feels alone. Instead she feels like God Himself has touched her through her friendship with Nancy. And earlier this week, when Mary Lou found out that a new grad is joining their team at the first of the year, she began anticipating how she will welcome her - help her get adjusted to the unit - and perhaps even go out for coffee once in a while. . . .

(**Based on several real-life situations)



**So the Word became human and made his home among us.
He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.
And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.**

John 1:14 - The Message

Mentoring Task Force

The kind of mentoring / discipleship portrayed in the story above is the **essence** of NCF ministry. We do have groups and CE programs to equip and facilitate networking, but the most important ministry that each NCF nurse and student does is to extend the love of Jesus Christ to our patients, coworkers, students, and other nurses in our community. . ONE at a time. The book of Acts, describes Paul offering this kind of encouragement: "With things back to normal, Paul called the disciples together and encouraged them to keep up the good work in Ephesus. Then, saying his good-byes, he left for Macedonia. Traveling through the country, passing from one gathering to another, **he gave constant encouragement**, lifting their spirits and charging them with **fresh hope**." (Acts 20:1-3. The Message)

The week after Thanksgiving I had the pleasure to be a part of a new work group called the Mentoring Task Force along with NCF staff Skip McDonald, Renee Lick, and Judy Shelly. While mentoring has been an important aspect of NCF ministry all along, we will be developing mentor training and resources to help us all maximize our influence in nursing education and practice. As in the story above, new grads are especially in need this kind of encouragement. Please pray with us as we work to describe what mentoring within NCF should look like and develop a curriculum to help us become more intentional in reaching out to nurses and students in the name of Jesus Christ. Look for announcements in Spring 08.

During this season we celebrate Jesus coming to earth as a human being to enable us to know God in a deeper way. Many are hungry to know God and experience meaning and purpose in life. Let us begin to ask Him to show us the ones He is placing in our paths who are needing the **fresh hope** that can only be found in Jesus Christ.





God's Provision through His People

One way I have been experiencing 'God with skin on' has been through the gifts of many of you who support this ministry so that my expenses can be reimbursed and I can receive compensation for the services I provide as an NCF staff member. Fundraising is an ongoing process and it has been great to see how God has provided in the past five years (yes, I was first appointed to NCF staff in Dec 2001 and began receiving compensation in Aug 03.)

However, circumstances for people change and some of my regular givers can no longer continue due to family situations. Currently I am in need of \$1200 / month to cover the costs of ministry and I have a deficit of \$6,000. Unfortunately, I will need to spend additional time in the coming months to raise the needed support. I feel hesitant to keep mentioning this need each time I write, but I need to keep doing this until I am fully funded.

As you consider your end of year giving and your plans for giving for 2008, would you prayerfully consider beginning to give, giving a year-end gift, or increasing the amount you already give? Most gifts given to a ministry like this range from \$40-100 per month, but any amount can be used to help to bring Jesus Christ to nursing through nurses and students growing in Jesus and establishing witnessing relationships with patients and peers.

Gifts for which you would like to receive a 2007 deduction must be received by the office in Madison, WI by midnight on December 31. They may be given online at www.intervarsity.org/donate, by phone at 866-734-4823, or sent to **InterVarsity Christian Fellowship—PO Box 7895, Madison WI 53707-7895**. Please attach a note that your gift is for Fran McHolm (NCF FMCH).

Thank you for your response! It was wonderful to hear from so many of you last month as you replied to my email. I will continue to pray for the requests you sent.

Please continue to pray for:

- *For the funding for this ministry to be committed and the deficit met.*
- *For refreshment and encouragement for the NCF staff team as we attend the InterVarsity national staff conference in St. Louis, Jan 2-7.*
- *For the Greater Canton brunch on February 23 and the Cleveland brunch on March 8.*
- *For local NCF ministry for nurses.*
- *For NCF student ministry at U of Akron, Cleveland State, Ursuline, Malone, and other schools in this area.*
- *For God to raise up alumni and local nurses to mentor students in their areas.*

On a personal note, Tom and I are looking forward to having Krista and her gang from Texas join us for the week of Christmas. It will be a full and happy house with Michael and family stopping by for the fun. Praying that you will also have a blessed Christmas celebration!

*Many Blessings in Jesus,
Fran*

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