

Marist Minute

5 March 2024

So much in the news lately about cancer, from Australians of the Year to Royalty. Closer to home, my wonderful neighbours while celebrating the birth of their granddaughter found out that the older 3 year old sibling was suddenly diagnosed with cancer. Such a shock for them all. Hard to comprehend really. I feel so helpless with only a listening ear and a hug to offer.

Having hope becomes a lifeline in such cases. Treatment options, positivity, moving forward, percentages, surgery, having a plan of action.

Pope Francis giving his homily on All Saints' Day spoke of hope in such times. Hope, he said, is a little like leaven that expands our souls. There are difficult moments in life but with hope the soul goes forward and looks ahead.

Being surrounded by love and support is also essential in this tough journey - A listening ear and a shoulder amid the devastation and sadness. I was reading an article by Wendy Squires, a journalist, reflecting on her life following a cancer scare. She said about her diagnosis "it isn't a baton race – no one else can take a lap. But damn, the support of others means the world when you are looking down that barrel. Never have I been more grateful to be loved." And Dr Ranjana Srivastava, Australian oncologist, award-winning author and Fulbright scholar observes "Whether treated, cured, palliated or somewhere in between, everyone wants human connection."

Another special friend has terminal cancer. No more treatments, but she has a love of everyday, a zest for life and such faith and hope about the promises to come. Pope Francis said there is a powerful instinct within us that tells us that our lives do not end with death. He added that our solidarity in sharing sorrow and infusing hope, reminds us of that promise of the Kingdom.



Journal Questions:

When have you experienced a hope that expanded your soul?

Who needs your listening ear and human connection?

