



A Lenten Mosaic - Living In Grace Lent 2020

**Devotion for Tuesday,
March 31, 2020**

Grace in Unfathomable Times

By Carol Taylor

We knew the time was near. But on Tuesday evening when we got the call, our hearts were heavy. Since Tuesday evening, we have been able to reflect back on God's GRACE to us during these unusual times.

Chuck's mother, Mary Frances Taylor, had been hospitalized twice in the past two weeks. As she was returned to Rocky Mount Rehab, we learned our visitation rights had been cancelled by the Governor just two hours before. Later that evening, we received a strong taste of GRACE. Her night nurse insisted that her family needed to see her and we were called in. Our presence with her seemed to soothe her and comfort her.

The second time she was hospitalized (the very next week), she returned to a private room under hospice care and was able to have a visitor for a limited time once a day. By Friday she was critical and the family was allowed to visit—one at a time—as often as we wished. There was someone with her at various times during each day after that. GRACE during this unfathomable crisis. Two of our daughters and their children came to her window and sang hymns and Christian songs to her. She opened her eyes and smiled and raised her hand and twirled her finger—the last gesture like that she made in her life. That was GRACE.

Chuck's siblings have gathered in our home—to remember her, to plan her funeral, to talk with her pastor. Our hearts are heavy that we cannot give her the celebration of life that she wanted and that we wanted for her. But, thanks to the folks at the funeral home and her pastor, we are going to do the best we can. More GRACE.

In the midst of it all there have been Facebook posts of love and encouragement, emails and phone calls. There have been flowers delivered which lifts our spirits. The morning after her death, sweet family brought an abundance of paper products (even toilet paper)! At lunch two more cousins showed up with lunch for us. GRACE, grace, God's grace. A friend brought dinner Thursday evening when we were both emotionally and mentally exhausted. GRACE.

Today we meet with the pastor and tomorrow we celebrate Mary Frances and send her home with love and more people are providing dinner and lunch. GRACE, abounding GRACE.

Victoria White, the wife of the pastor of Forest Hills Baptist in Raleigh wrote to my daughter Anna on the evening that Mary Frances died: *It's totally normal to not want to go to sleep tonight because when you wake up, it will be the first day she is gone. As long as today lasts, she was still living. Her heart was still beating. Tomorrow brings a new and painful normal. And you have the added grief of the unknown about how to lay her to rest, so the active grief will be prolonged. Give yourself GRACE. No one is expecting anyone to know how to do this. GRACE upon GRACE.*

Romans 11:33-36

O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

“For who has known the mind of the Lord?

Or who has been his counselor?”

“Or who has given a gift to him,

to receive a gift in return?”

For from him and through him and to him are all things.

To him be the glory for ever. Amen.

Prayer

Loving Creator,

we know in your great love for us,
you see the deep sorrow in our hearts.

Hear our prayers which are offered with such trust in you.

Be with us in both mind and heart

as we renew our lives in your spirit. Amen.

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adapted