

People Are Born To Shine!

A newsletter rooted in the Christian faith created to inspire and support all people, irrespective of nationality, race, and religion.



ACT OF KINDNESS

Decorating for Dax

Would you decorate your house a little early this Christmas for Dax the two-year old toddler?

Dax Locke, is a two-year old toddler, who has been battling with acute myeloid leukemia since July 2008 and is now losing his fight with only a few weeks to live.

Like every child of his age, Dax is fond of glowing objects, and his parents, Julie and Austin, decided to set the Christmas tree a little early this year, under which Dax is finding a present each day!

The neighbors, Trish Hurtgen and her husband, decided to support the Locke family by putting their own lights up and encouraging other neighbors to do the same while initiating a project called "Decorate for Dax". Soon the entire block was filled with lights and decorated trees! The couple built a website to support Dax and his parents and they invited people around the world to decorate their houses and post their messages and pictures on the web. The "Decorate for Dax" silent initiative attracted millions of supporters from the four corners of the world; www.decoratefordax.com now has pictures and decorations from families in Canada, Germany, Australia, and all of the United States. Troops in Afghanistan also joined their prayers with Dax and his family by setting their own lights displaying Dax's name!

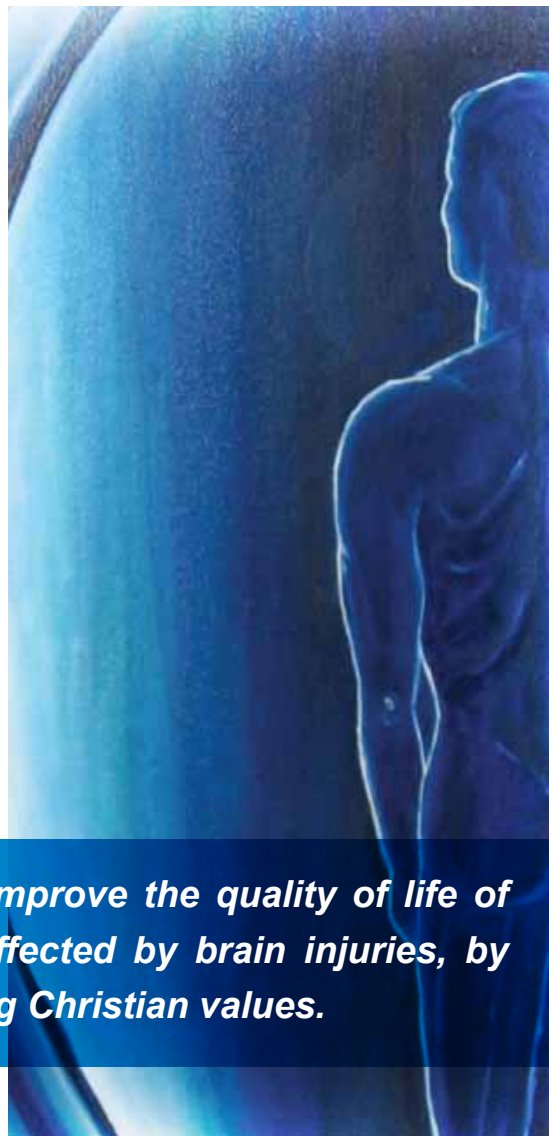
The Naji Cherfan Foundation's main objective is to improve the quality of life of children, adolescents and adults, especially those affected by brain injuries, by raising awareness on the love of God and by promoting Christian values.



Dax has spent most of his illness at Saint Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, but is now home in Illinois, Washington trying to make it for Christmas. The family is asking people to donate to St. Jude's in Dax's name www.stjude.org and is also asking supporters to pray for a miracle in this season. Join us in prayers for all the children who are battling Cancer this Christmas!

Source: cnn.org

Acute myeloid leukemia is a cancer of the myeloid line of blood cells, characterized by the rapid growth of abnormal white blood cells that accumulate in the bone marrow and interfere with the production of normal blood cells.



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HEALTH

What are “Consumer Rights”?

There are four major rights that consumers should be aware of while purchasing a product or buying a service. Do you know that you have rights as a consumer? Moreover, do you know that manufacturers or providers should comply with these rights? We shall be allocating an article about “consumer rights” in every future issue of “People Are Born To Shine” newsletter to shed more light about the violations happening in this field and how it is affecting people’s health and quality of life. Here are the four basic consumer rights every person should be aware of and even fight for!

THE RIGHT TO SAFETY

The consumers’ right to safety means that products they purchase must be safe for their intended use, must include thorough and explicit directions for proper use, and must be tested by the manufacturer to ensure product quality and reliability. Business firms should also be aware that consumers and the government have been winning an increasing number of

product-liability lawsuits against sellers of defective products. Yet another major reason for improving product safety is the consumer’s demand for safe products. People will simply stop buying a product they believe is unsafe or unreliable.

THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED

The right to be informed means that consumers must have access to complete information about a product before they buy it. Detailed information about ingredients and nutrition must be provided on food containers, information about fabrics, laundering methods must be attached to clothing, and lenders must disclose the true cost of borrowing the money they make available to costumers who purchase merchandise on credit. In addition, manufacturers must inform consumers about the potential dangers of using their products.

THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

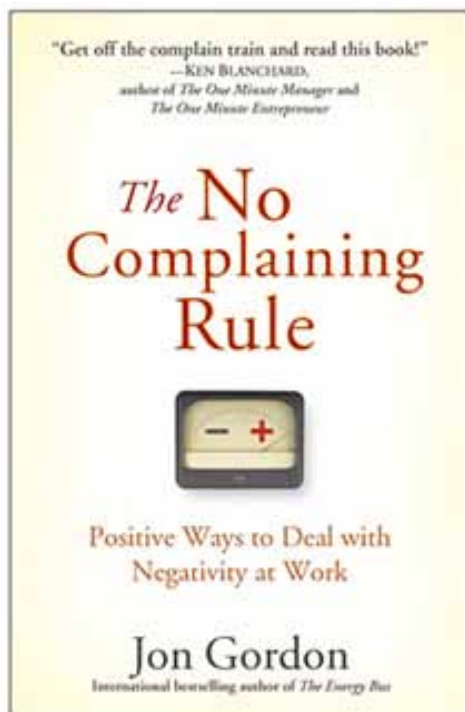
The right to choose means that consumers have a choice of products,

offered by different manufacturers and sellers, to satisfy a particular need. Competition and the resulting freedom of choice provide additional benefits for costumers by reducing prices.

THE RIGHT TO BE HEARD

The fourth right means that someone will listen and take appropriate action when costumers complain. Today, businesses are listening even more attentively and many larger firms have consumer relations departments that can be easily contacted via toll-free phone numbers. Actually, one of the services every consumer today expects to receive from the companies he or she selects to purchase things from is consumer support.

Source: Jonathon Hardcastle, ezinearticles.



ENTERTAINMENT

Book of the Month!

The No Complaining Rule

“It’s Tuesday morning and Hope walks into her office with puffy eyes, a swollen head and a broken heart. Unfortunately her company, EZ Tech, is in worse shape than she is. The fact that their computer batteries are catching on fire are the least of their problems. Employees have been posting negative comments about management on internet blogs for the world to see, the media is attacking the credibility of the company, morale is at an all time low, negativity is at an all time high and the stock price is falling faster than the Titanic. As head of Human Resources, Hope is charged with finding a solution to overcome the biggest challenge in her company’s history. In the process of battling her own adversity she discovers *The No Complaining Rule* and other positive ways to save her company and herself from ruin.”

In the spirit of his international best selling book, *The Energy Bus*, Jon Gordon once again shares an inspiring and enlightening story that reveals a powerful way to tackle the biggest problem in business and life today... negativity. It costs organizations billions of dollars and impacts the morale, productivity and health of individuals and teams. Based on an

actual company that created and implemented *The No Complaining Rule*, Gordon delivers an engaging story filled with innovative ideas and practical strategies to develop positive leaders, organizations and teams. For managers, team leaders or anyone looking to turn negative energy into positive solutions, *The No Complaining Rule* shares powerful principles and an actionable plan to win the battle against individual and organizational negativity. When you implement *The No Complaining Rule* you’ll spend less time and energy on problems and more time focused on solutions.

Source: Jongordon.com

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Staying Healthy After 60



You would be surprised to know much common sense advice is scientifically proven to be effective, especially with staying healthy after 60. The following tips can ultimately reduce your health costs, ~~doctors' bills~~ and medical expenses. They are scientifically proven recommendations that you can share with your partners, parents and grandparents and help them improve their quality of life!

WATCH YOUR DIET.

It is no secret that a well-balanced diet has a positive impact on the body, the mind, and even the soul! By following these simple steps a person over 60 can not only recover more quickly from an illness, but can also prevent poor health and disease.

Stay away from saturated fat found in butter and red meat by substituting it with the good fat found in olive or canola oil and salmon. Limit your intake of refined sugar in foods such as white bread, white rice, and pasta. Instead eat whole grain bread and high fiber foods such as brown pasta to control the ~~of~~ sugar level in your blood. It is also important to take a daily multivitamin while calcium supplements are advised for women.

MOVE!

It has been proven that an improved cardiovascular fitness and low blood pressure were increasingly prevalent in people aged above 60 who rode their bikes or walked on their treadmills for 20 minutes twice a week. It is never too late to start exercising! Walk the block with your neighbors, walk the dog several times a day, swim if you have the chance and park the car at the end of the parking lot when going to the supermarket. Add some music to your moves and dance or lift free weights from time to time! Weight bearing exercise can help you maintain strong bones and slow the process of bone cell absorption! Yoga and meditation classes can have a positive influence on your balance and breath.

A CONSTANT LEARNER:

Research has shown that the more you exercise the mind the better memory skills you have. The mind is considered a muscle that can be strengthened by keeping a high level of

intellectually boosting activities. Reading daily newspapers or entertaining books is very beneficial, as well as enrolling in a language or computer course. Attending cultural events or being in a group that encourages you to build conversations and exchange thoughts can also stimulate the brain and keep it active.

PRACTICE YOUR SOCIAL CHARM!

After 60, social networks ~~sometimes get smaller as the person nears retire and decreases his work time.~~ This can have a negative effect on your health, specifically on your mood and well-being. Involvement in community-based activities and contact with people can lift your spirit and help you stay positive while doing something productive! There are many opportunities for volunteering around you: check your local church, hospital, library, school and health associations!

WATCH YOUR MEDICATION INTAKE.

Some research indicates that people are not always compliant with the doctor's prescription and advice. Many people forget to stay on the medical course prescribed while others choose to stop the medication without their doctor's knowledge. Your medication is prescribed for a reason, and unless taken as instructed, there is a chance that it may not achieve its purpose. This can mean bad health news for you! Consult with your doctor if you plan to stop a medication or if you forget to stay on your course as intended. You could experience unfortunate side effects such as dizziness, shortness of breath, low or high blood pressure, stomachaches, etc.

IF YOU ARE IN PAIN, SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP.

It is very important not to delay doctor's visits if you are experiencing any physical pain. Delayed treatment may affect recovery or even make recovery impossible. Our nervous system uses many means to eliminate discomfort, so by the time, the nervous system responds to illness or injury with pain, damage has already occurred.

SLEEP WELL AND ENOUGH!

While the average recommended sleeping time is nine hours, people above 60 need about six to seven hours of sleep. Keep a ritual of sleep by relaxing and going to bed at the same hour every night. Keeping a high level of activities during the day will help you sleep well at night and can minimize the chances that you will fall asleep while driving or in a meeting.

STAY AWAY FROM STRESS!

Stress cannot be avoided in one's life, but the good news is that it can always be handled in a positive way. Seek counseling, spend time with good friends, talk about your concerns to your family, write a list of stresses and an action plan on how to deal with them, take art classes and exercise, etc. Spread positive energy around and it will come back right at you!

Source: Joan Firra, movementislife.net

EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Learn 8 Ways To Be Thankful

~~Learn Eight Ways To Be Thankful... Especially During Christmas Season!~~

“Cicero said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others”. The English preacher John Henry Jowett wrote, “Every virtue divorced from thankfulness is maimed and limps along the spiritual road”. According to Aesop Fables, “gratitude is the sign of noble souls”. A dear professor of mine just acknowledged a thank-you note I sent him and told me “gratitude is the sign of maturity and wisdom”.

Therese Borchard, editor and writer specialized in stress and anxiety, has written a great article about techniques for how to be thankful. What could be more timely than checking in it for Christmas season!! Here are some of the points she wrote ~~about~~ in her article about the parent of all virtues.

1. It is always a matter of the heart!

Antoine de Saint-Exupery wrote in “The Little Prince” - “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye”. Every time we find ourselves caught in stress or disappointment because things are not the way we want them to be, we need to remind ourselves to look with our hearts instead of our eyes! “Go home and count your blessings” is one of the most famous quotes on gratitude which we need to recite every single day!

2. Watch your language.

Talk to yourself in a nice positive way and do that with others. Borchard quotes Dan Baker, Ph.D., in his book “What Happy People Know”: “Just as changing your life can change your language, changing your language can change your life”. You won’t be able to be thankful if negativity is in the way, and once you practice positive talking to yourself and others, your perception of life will automatically alter. Then the seeds of gratitude will start to grow.

3. Remember good deeds done to you.

Borchard quotes the French proverb “Gratitude is the heart’s memory” and she writes that one of the first steps to thankfulness is to remember a good deed that was done to you. Take a step back every now and then and remember all those who stood by you in thick and thin; remember all your friends who helped you make that important decision, your parents who helped you stand on your feet during a tough time, or the angels you meet everyday who make you smile!

4. Keep a gratitude journal.

Get a journal, write down your blessings, and revisit them especially when you are going into a destructive path. It can enormously help you become a happier person and even a healthier one! Results from a study conducted at the University of California at Davis by psychologist Robert Emmons, author of “Thanks! How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier,” show that gratitude can help you maintain a high energy level, can encourage you



to stay determined while following your life goals, and can even make you sleep better while helping to conquer pain and fatigue!

5. Write a thank you letter.

We all have met people in our lives that have helped us conquer a certain challenge, rise up above sadness, or get on the right positive energy track again! More often than not, we forget to say a proper thank you thinking that there will always be time to be thankful in the future. We may decide to show our gratitude through actions and not words. Guess what? One of the best gratitude exercises suggested by Dr. Emmons, is to compose a gratitude letter to someone who has made a positive influence in our lives and read it out loud face to face.

6. Pay a gratitude visit.

Even more powerful than writing a letter and reading it aloud to someone, is visiting an important person in your life and thanking him/her, or even talking to others about this person! Seligman says: “We do not have a vehicle in our culture for telling the people who mean the most to us how thankful we are that they are on the planet”. Let us start building one!

7. Say a thank you prayer everyday.

Borchard beautifully quotes Meister Eckhart who wrote, “If the only prayer you say in your life is ‘thank you,’ that would suffice”. Every day is a new opportunity and a new beginning. We need to be thankful even for our illnesses, diseases, misunderstandings, and problems, because we “know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him”! Romans 8:28.

8. Pay It Forward!

A beautiful way to be thankful to God for all the blessings we have is by passing on the good deeds to others! Giving back doesn’t mean to return the favor to the same person that stood by us in a difficult time. The act of kindness towards us is a million times more meaningful and rewarding when we return this favor by showing an act of kindness to another! Who knows! Chances are it might very well come back right at you!

Source: “12 ways to be thankful” by Therese J. Borchard, thereseborchard.com, psychcentral.com

www.najicherfanfoundation.org

NUTRITION

HEALTH BENEFITS OF APPLES

What's with that focus on the apple??? "The apple of my eye", "The Big Apple", "As sweet as apple pie", "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree". Could there be a reason why apples are so valued by cultures and literature?

"One apple a day keeps the doctor away"!!! A saying known all over the world, right? Ever heard "To eat an apple going to bed, will make the doctor beg his bread"?? Well, did you know that these sayings have been justified by science? Apples hold many health properties, they are excellent detoxifiers and apple juice can destroy viruses in the body.



In one recent study, Riu Hai Liu of Cornell University has found that although apples have only a small amount of vitamin C, eating 100 grams of apple provides the same amount of antioxidant activity as taking 1,500 milligrams of the same vitamin!

Benefits of Apples:

1. Apples clean the teeth and strengthen gums;
2. Apples can lower cholesterol;
3. Apples detoxify the body and have an antiviral property;
4. Apples prevent constipation because they aid in digestion;
5. One large apple supplies almost 30% of the minimum amount of fiber that should be consumed daily.

Best Uses:

1. For people who suffer from inflammation of the joints and rheumatism, eat an apple regularly because it will aid healing;
2. Eating two apples a day will reduce your cholesterol level up to 10 %;
3. Drinking apple juice, 3 times a day, is said to prevent virus from settling in the body;
4. Grated apple, when mixed with live yogurt may be helpful in cases of diarrhea.

Tips:

1. Never buy apples that have not been kept cold since they can be over-ripe in a few days;
2. Apples should be hard. If you can dent an apple with your finger, DO NOT BUY IT;
3. Keep your apples refrigerated. If not, they will decay fast;
4. To prevent apples from turning brown, rub the cut surfaces with a mixture of lemon juice and water;
5. Make sure you do not eat too many apple seeds because they could be toxic if taken in large amount;
6. Canadian researchers analyzing eight popular varieties found that the old standby, Red Delicious, and an apple called Northern Spy contain more disease-fighting antioxidants in their skin and flesh than any other studied. In English this means red apples are better than other apples!



Source: oohoi.com

Apples hold many health properties, they are excellent detoxifiers and apple juice can destroy viruses in the body.

GOSPEL MUSIC CHECK

Holy Night! By: Wintley Phipps



The rich baritone voice of Wintley Phipps and the world-class sound of the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra come together to bring you *O Holy Night*—a brand-new CD of best-loved Christmas carols to fill your holiday season with joyous songs.

A treat for your ears, Wintley's expressive vocals backed by dazzling symphonic arrangements that capture the mystery and majesty of our Savior's birth will uplift your spirit!

Source: rbc.org

FAMILY AND PARENTING

FAMILY VALUES: HONESTY

Teaching Children About Honesty



To be honest means to speak the truth, communicate in an open, upfront way. Honesty is the opposite of cheating, stealing, or manipulating information to conceal it from others. We see evidence every day of how dishonesty is ruining our economical, political, and social lives.

Today more than ever, children need to learn the importance of keeping their word, telling the truth, and being trustworthy. Honesty isn't just the best policy—it's the only way society can function.

Help Kids Learn What's True and False

Teach your child the basic difference between truth and falsehood. To demonstrate, tell a family story, and come up with a true ending and an outrageously false one ("And then a giant bird came and carried Grandma to the mall"). Then ask your child, which he or she thinks is true. While it's normal for young children to have an active fantasy life and sometimes use make-believe to escape blame, correct them gently. You could say, "You're saying that Mr. Nobody spilled the milk, but I think he had some help from you. I need you to help clean it up". By age 6 or 7, kids can be expected to take responsibility for their actions.

Don't Overreact to Mistakes

Children may resort to lying especially when parents are very punitive, even if what they've done is an accident. Children don't want to think of themselves as bad, so they deny having done a bad thing. Explain that you will love them even if they do something bad, but that you expect them to be honest.

Give Appropriate Consequences

If your child is caught in a lie, create appropriate consequences. For example, if she has taken cookies without your permission and then lied about it, take away all cookie privileges for a week. If your child stole money from you or a friend, make him earn it back by doing housework or taking out the garbage. Look your child in the eye and say, "The rules in this family are we don't lie or steal". However, do not label your child "a liar" or "a thief," since kids tend to live up to (or down to) your expectations.

Deal with Exaggeration

Kids often tell whoppers to impress someone. "I color better than anyone else in my class," and "I've been on an airplane 25 times" convey sentiments that children badly want to be real. They exaggerate to feel superior ("My father makes more money than yours," or "I have 500 Transformers at home"). On the playing field, kids may unfairly add points to their game or falsely protest. Rather than label the child a liar, take your child aside and say, "You wish you could do that, but you know it's not true".

Model Honesty

Model honesty by admitting when you make mistakes

or returning incorrect change if you've been given too much. Hold yourself to a high standard of honesty.

Kids are highly attuned to parental hypocrisy. Demonstrate the honest behavior you want to see in your children by owning up to errors, for example, "I forgot to make the doctor's appointment" or "I made a mistake at work today". This teaches your child that even though honesty is difficult sometimes, it is not something to be afraid of.

Point Out the Downside of Dishonesty

Explain that even if a friend has gotten away with cheating, there will be consequences to the dishonesty later (she will have trouble on the next math test, for example).

Highlight how destructive dishonesty can be. For example, remind your child that cheating on a test means betraying the teacher's trust and defrauding the other test-takers, as well as failing himself or herself. Point out examples of dishonesty and honesty in the news and public life—crooked business people who go to jail, whistleblowers who tell the truth.

Expect Truthfulness

Set up an "honor code" at home. Choose certain tasks, such as completing homework or making the bed, which you trust your child to do. Explain that when you ask, "Did you make your bed?" you will forgive your child if he or she says "no," but that there will be negative consequences for not telling the truth. Thank your child when he or she tells the truth about something that was difficult to tell you, like, "I broke a dish," or "I failed my math test".

Explain Tactfulness

The only exception to total honesty is when you might hurt someone's feelings unnecessarily. For example, discuss what they could say if they don't like a gift a relative gives them. Practice some tactful ways of expressing gratitude—such as "Thanks so much for the sweater, Aunt Anna. It's a great color" or "It was so nice of you to think of me." Explain what distinguishes dangerous lying (cheating on a test) from hurtful truth-telling ("Your haircut is ugly!").

View Lying as a Tangled Web

Talk about this with kids explaining that it gets harder and harder to correct a lie once you've told it, and you have to tell more lies to keep it going. It's much simpler to tell the truth in the first place to everyone. That way you will not have to remember who knows what.

Source: beliefnet.com

Source: rbc.org

A TOUCH OF ENCOURAGEMENT FROM MARTHA WILLIAMSON

Oh Holy Night!

One lonely soldier's promise changed Christmas Eve in Denver for 40 years!

For over 30 years, my father directed a tiny little choir of professional singers who only sang together one night a year. It consisted of eight local Denver soloists who walked up and down the halls of hospitals on Christmas Eve and sang Christmas carols to the patients who were too sick to go home for the holidays.

The tradition was started by a man named Frank Farmer, Frank had been one of the lost and frightened soldiers recovering in a military hospital at the end of World War II. The story goes, he was just about ready to give up one Christmas Eve, until a small group of volunteers began caroling through the halls and Frank heard the old familiar carols of his childhood for the first time in a long long while. That night Frank promised God that if he ever got out of the hospital, he would start his own little choir of carolers and return to others the blessing of hope that he was given that Christmas.

How often have we found ourselves in trouble, in a jam, or in pain, and promised God that if he would only do this or that, we would give him something in return? Well, first of all, I don't believe God makes deals with us. God is a God of mercy not a God of bargains. I don't think there is anything that we could trade with him to receive his grace. That trade has already been made for us by Jesus Christ.

Not to mention, I think God knows us well enough to understand that most of the times even when we make bargains like that, once the storm has passed, very few of us remember to keep that side of the bargain.

Nevertheless, Frank Farmer was one man who never forgot his commitment to pass on the gift that he was given. He returned to Denver and founded the Frank Farmer Octet, and for almost 40 years, the halls of Denver hospitals were filled with the sounds of caroling on Christmas Eve. My father became the director of that little group when I was a little girl, my mother and sisters later sang in that choir and it was my dream to sing in it too one day! And the night I became a member of the Frank Farmer Octet was the Christmas Eve I will never forget. It was the Christmas Eve I had always dreamed of, but never ever could have imagined.

I was 16 when I was finally allowed to spend Christmas Eve the way I wanted to, just with my parents! Every Christmas Eve I stayed home with a babysitter while my parents spent it doing something that I will always be proud of, they were part of the Frank Farmer Octet in which all members gave up their Christmas each year

to caroling the halls of all the Denver hospitals. Hospitals don't like to keep people there over the holidays, and only the very sick are there on Christmas Eve. Year after year, my parents were part of a beautiful and beloved

Denver tradition that brought comfort to hundreds of the sick and dying and their families. I begged my parents to let me become one of those singers and finally at 16 they allowed me to become an alto in the group. so long before joining them. This was not a Christmas party; it was a Christmas mission, and you never knew from year to year how it would end.

That year we put on our choir robes, turned on the flickering electric votive candles and followed my father up one hall and down the other. We drove in the snow across the town from one hospital to the next until we found ourselves at the last one, which the snow almost prevented us from reaching.

As we walked down the second floor, a nurse ran out to us from the ICU and called us in. She gathered us around the bed of a man who was obviously in his last hours. His wife leaned over and whispered something to him, and with a great effort, he gave her a slight nod. "Do you know Oh! Holy Night? It is his favorite" she said. My father turned to my mother and gave her a look that said, "Can you do this"? She nodded, and she began to sing in her beautiful clear soprano with the rest of us humming harmony underneath.

I will always remember how the tempo she picked was somehow in time with the hollowed beats of the heart machine. BEEP, BEEP, ♪ Oh Holy Night, ♪ The Stars Are Brightly Shining ♪ BEEP, BEEP... the longer she sang the more the tears ran down the man's face and the harder his wife squeezed his hands as one after another of us just couldn't sing anymore. But, mother, kept on singing ♪ Fall On Your Knees ♪ BEEP, BEEP ♪ Oh Hear the Angel's Voices ♪ BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP. And he gasped... And he was gone. And through her tears his wife smiled at my mother and my mother nodded at her and kept singing ♪ Oh Night Divine ♪ Oh Night ♪ Oh Holy Night ♪ and it was a holy, holy night. May the miracle of God's love and his free gift of eternal life and peace be yours this year and always. Merry Merry Christmas!



Source: Martha Williamson, atouchofencouragement.com, beliefnet.com

CHECKING IN WITH THE BIBLE

Our Daily Bread: Seeds & Faith



*We're always sowing seeds in life
By everything we do and say,
So let's make sure the fruit we reap
Comes from the good we do each day.*
— Hess

READ: Galatians 6: 7-10

Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. —Galatians 6:7

I read a fable about a man who was browsing in a store when he made the shocking discovery that God was behind a sales counter. So the man walked over and asked, "What are You selling?" God replied, "What does your heart desire?" The man said, "I want happiness, peace of mind, and freedom from fear . . . for me and the whole world." God smiled and said, "I don't sell fruit here. Only seeds."

In Galatians 6, Paul stressed the importance of sowing seeds of God-honouring behaviour, for "whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (v.7). We can't expect to experience the fruit of God's blessings if we don't recognize the importance of doing our part.

It helps to follow the example of others who have sown good seeds. Author Samuel Shoemaker said that a good example can either inspire us or cause us to say, "Oh yes, he (or she) is like that. He is not troubled by temper or nerves or impatience or worry as I am; he is just a happier temperament". Shoemaker continued, "It may not occur to us that perhaps he had to fight for his serenity, and that we might win if we would do the same". Are you weary of the way you are? Ask God for His help and begin sowing seeds of new actions and responses today. In due season the Spirit will give the increase.

The seeds we sow today determine the kind of fruit we'll reap tomorrow.

Source: Joanie Yoder, *Our Daily Bread*, rbc.org
Source: Marvin Williams, rbc.org

TO WATCH

Nicholas: The Boy Who Became Santa



For this season, we have chosen an animated children's DVD, which could make a wonderful Christmas gift! Nicholas was still a young child when he discovered a special secret that changed his life forever: the gift of giving! Here is the fascinating story of the boy whose love and care for others made him one of the most popular figures of all time - Santa Claus! This short movie of 30 minutes is perfect

for children of young ages and displays with humor the wonderful benefits of the value of giving!

Purchase this DVD from the Religious Catalogue of the Global Catholic Network EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network) Merry Christmas!

Celebrating Christmas at Regional Hospitals!

The Naji Cherfan Foundation is touring local hospitals this year to celebrate Christmas with patients, nurses, and doctors unable to be with their families at Christmas. The Foundation is teaming up with the professional singers to bring messages of hope and happiness to hundreds of healthcare providers and patients in Lebanon! The activities are being planned for the 23rd, 24th, and 25th of December in Maten and Kesrwan districts in Lebanon. **"Jesus Is Born! Halleluiah!"**

You are welcome to spread the news with us! Send us an email at ncf@najicherfanfoundation.org to get more information about the places and times!

MYSTERIOUS WAYS: MORE THAN COINCIDENCE

Timeless

In life as in bedtime stories, miracles happen, and such precious moments that take your breath away, those, they become real.

Life has been a shocking rollercoaster for four months. Despair, agony, and misery are but simple words to describe the pain that haunted my days. I dragged my heart to breathe... It had to breathe because he lived through us; he lived through the joy that emanated from our eyes. He had no idea, my father had no clue that he was leaving us for good, on a one-way ticket journey, to somewhere, up there. And so, we pretended, we faked; we lived a double-path life. One in which he believed that he is getting better and recovering soon, and another where we knew that this was not true, that this was fatale, that he was...leaving.

But, we smiled, for he lived on our hope and we lived on his serenity. Praying became a rescue, a cry for help, a pillar of strength; such unknown strength that in time of fear inspires perseverance and in time of death inspires hope. And so, I prayed. I waited, waited more, waited for four months: nothing. No signs of improvement, no signs of hope, and the doctors went from bad to worse news; the heart beatings went from a slow motion track to silence.

He departed after 48 hours of uninterrupted prayers, hugs, holding hands, I love you sentences, and I will see you someday expressions. Going

back to an empty home, a broken warmth, and sigh of apathy; it was dreadful. I hated everyone, questioned every belief, and despised every religion. That lasted for 6 hours, until I woke up the next morning.

For no obvious reason I searched through my drawer as I was desperately crying. I couldn't breathe, I couldn't think, I couldn't even stand straight...but I had to search in that drawer. I found letters, letters that dad wrote to me. Out of six, I opened one. Instantaneously, I stopped crying. I washed my face, gathered my thoughts, supported mom, walked peacefully, and smiled to dad...for he was not dead, he is just gone.

The letter read "Live everyday with a smile, do not worry about anything, your mom and I will take care of the rest. We are not telling you this with the heart, but we're saying this to you with soul. For the heart, one day will stop beating, but the soul lives on forever. Cesar & Aida, Christmas of 20".

Why the drawer? Why THAT letter? Why did he write that? Why did it give me strength? Unanswerable questions that I don't even think about; I don't care. My faith has helped us through, has led dad to heaven, and today it is bringing him back to me. 2008 was two years ago, but his soul lives on, it is with me at all times, it is timeless.

— Maria-Rita Kassis

PRAYER CORNER

LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF YOUR PEACE:

*Where there is hatred,
let me sow love;
Where there is injury,
pardon;
Where there is doubt,
faith;
Where there is despair,
hope;
Where there is darkness,
light;
And where there is sadness,
joy.*

*O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so
much seek to be consoled
as to console;
To be understood,
as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving
that we receive,
It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying
that we are born
to Eternal Life.*

Amen.

Saint Francis of Assisi

Share your story with us!

Do you have a story that lifts spirits, motivates and inspires people to hold on to their dreams, to change their lives and surpass obstacles? Share your story with us today! Your story can help others!

NCF@najicherfanfoundation.org

Quoteable!

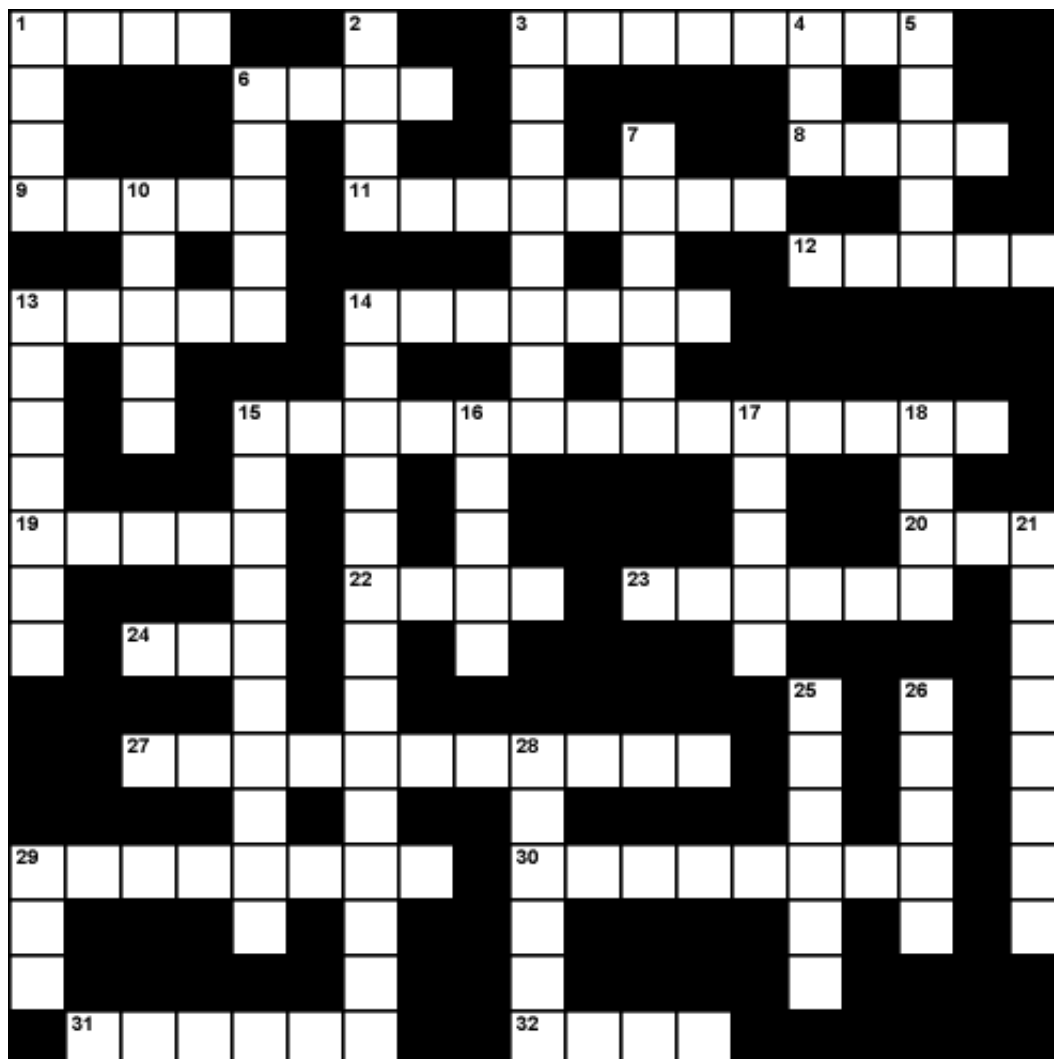
If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies.

— Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Christmas Crossword!

Enjoy the NCF Christmas Crossword Puzzle!
And have a Merry Christmas!

Are you losing your patience? Need that one last word? Want to know the solution? Contact The Naji Cherfan Foundation to receive the solution to the crossword! NCF@najicherfanfoundation.org



Across

- 1-Transportation for going over snow (4)
- 3-Mixture of seasoned ingredients (8)
- 6-Baby's bed (4)
- 8-Period from December 24th to January 6th (4)
- 9-Red-breasted bird (5)
- 11-Twelve days after Christmas (8)
- 12-Alcoholic drink normally served in a bowl (5)
- 13-Jolly (5)
- 14-News (7)
- 15-Goes with the turkey (9,5)
- 19-A type of tree used at Christmas (5)
- 20-The color of Santa's hat (3)
- 22-___ log; traditionally burned at Christmas (4)
- 23-Sanctified (6)
- 24-Cured leg of pork (3)
- 27-Christmas song (6,5)
- 29-Found under the Christmas tree? (8)
- 30-Grace (8)
- 31-Snow falls in this season (6)
- 32-Given at Christmas (4)

Down

- 1-Bright celestial body (4)
- 2-Christmas tree type (4)
- 3-Take aback (8)
- 4-No room here! (3)
- 5-Elvish color (5)
- 6-Sweets; flavored sugar (5)
- 7-Container usually found in a stable (6)
- 10-Beginning of life (5)
- 13-Amazing event (7)
- 14-Written after Christmas? (5,3,6)
- 15-Formal events (10)
- 16-Ring out from churches (5)
- 17-Accompaniment for food (5)
- 18-Printed or written greeting (4)
- 21-Month in which Christmas falls (8)
- 25-Nature of God (6)
- 26-One was born in Bethlehem (5)
- 28-Sweetened milk drink, with eggs and alcohol (6)
- 29-Pastry dish (3)

Source: biblepuzzles.org.uk

HOW I REMEMBER NAJI...

“Conquer one obstacle at a time... one day at a time”

I was working in an electronics store, Radio Shack, in Aventura Mall in Miami, where Naji's father came in a couple of times to buy things and he brought Naji with him so that's how we met; I believe it was towards the end of 1997 or beginning of 1998.

We became very good friends rather quickly; he would always visit me at home or I would go to his apartment, where I was thrilled to be introduced to the delicious Lebanese cuisine of his mother Sana.

I was in and out of the hospital from the age of 15 to 23 because I have a rare condition called Achalasia. It's a narrowing of the esophagus which affects the ability of the esophagus to move food toward the stomach. I've had surgery a total of 14 times, and I thank God I am able to control that now. Naji was so attentive and considerate that every time I was in the hospital he would visit me almost daily, and would sit and keep me company for long hours. I remember how he would hold my hand and tell me that I would be just fine.

My family knew Naji as well, and they loved him very much. Naji was a very likable person, and needed only few moments to win your heart on the very first meeting! One thing I admired the most about Naji, is that he was so persistent when it came to meeting his goals. I remember that he wanted to start driving again while he was in Miami; his parents were not too thrilled with the idea thinking about the risks involved, but that did not stop him! Naji's parents wanted to make sure he was ready and had full control over all of his movements. I think he took three or four different exams in different places proving to all that he was more than ready to drive. After passing all of them, he was finally driving on his own!

It is amazing how we take simple things for granted because they become part of our daily routine; whether it is walking, talking, seeing, hearing or in this case driving. They are all part of our independence and play a big role in being able to be self-sufficient. If one of these simple things were taken from us, would we have the strength to do as Naji did and struggle to regain every bit of it back? Naji always told me that “your mind body and soul must stay strong and positive at all times, persistently focusing on your goal”. He was such an inspiration for me. He taught me that I had to take charge, control my illness, and never let it win over me. More importantly, he made me realize this not only by listening to his words but by seeing the way he lived his life, observing how he confronted fear and challenges, conquering one obstacle at a time... one day at a time



With Love
Emily Nieves

People Are Born To Shine!

People are Born To Shine is a **monthly**, electronic newsletter owned by The Naji Cherfan Foundation focusing on spirituality and health. The objective of *People are Born to Shine* is to raise awareness among our readers on health challenges and disease prevention, while inspiring them to live a fuller, more abundant life guided by Christian values. This newsletter is dedicated to those affected by **accidental** brain injuries.

The content has been carefully selected from sources considered reliable and accurate, however The Naji Cherfan Foundation assumes no responsibility for inaccurate information. the rights of publication and distribution are reserved.

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Publisher: CCM Group; Editorial Consultant: George C. Cherfan; Editor in Chief: Christina A. Bitar;

Layout: Art Department, CCM Group, USA; Contributors: Sana Cherfan, Kelley Nemitz, Karen Solomon, Isabelle Boghossian.