

## **COVID: 35 Days with God and Still Counting**

### Timeline of Clinical Events

- May 6 Jackie starts fever.
- May 12 Jackie tested positive
- May 22 Terry starts non-productive cough.
- May 26 Terry tested positive.
- May 30 Jackie checks oxygen-reading of 76%, sees increasingly difficult breathing, to Loyola Emergency Department, Terry admitted to ICU after oxygen treatment in ED
- May 31 Terry intubated and sedated
- June 14 Terry extubated after ventilator oxygen incrementally lowering oxygen until tolerated; moved from ICU Covid ward to private room on different floor, dedicated for Covid patients. Weak and dependent from inactivity, able to sit up in bed for meals.
- June 19 Ambulance ride from Loyola to Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, formerly Rehab Institute of Chicago
- June 22 Daily outpatient, speech, and physical therapies daily, 4-5 hours with breaks.
- June 30 End of day, able to walk laps in gym and walk back to room unassisted, distance of .5 miles
- July 3 Discharged home
- July 7 Telehealth occupational and physical therapy begins, three times weekly, two hours each day
- July 15 Morning walk at normal extended to 1.8 miles, oxygen 92% at end of walk

The above is clinical and chronological information. Please note that there is more to the story, two parts are of equal importance: medical care and spiritual support. I am convinced that both played perfectly balanced and complementary parts in my recovery and continuing progress in regaining strength and endurance.

- ◆ Jackie's clinical skills
- ◆ increasing medical knowledge for treating the virus
- ◆ excellent care at Loyola University Medical Center and Shirley Ryan Ability Lab
- ◆ compassion of staff at both
  
- ◆ prayers, cards, and calls from Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists (monks and laypeople), and Christians, church community, relatives, friends, and people I don't know who heard of my hospitalization
- ◆ hearing Psalm 121 read to me by a chaplain at Loyola while I was partially sedated
- ◆ having an hour conversation with a highly skilled Nepali Buddhist chaplain at Shirley Ryan
- ◆ discovering after I was home that the Director of Pastoral Care at Loyola sang a hymn to me
- ◆ being told by the Reverend Doctor Allison Lundeen that she used imaging prayer for me
- ◆ being asked by staff to pray for them

This has been, and, I expect, will continue to be a life-changing journey for me. It has deepened my faith, strengthened my connection to God, and compels me to speak openly about the gratitude and joy that are now my touchstones.