

My Story

2019 was not a good year for me, or our family in general. During the spring my fit and active husband was found to have a critical blockage to an artery which resulted in a double heart bypass. It caused worry and concern but he made a swift and full recovery. We gave thanks for the skill and dedication of doctors, nurses and consultants.

The middle of summer arrived and we were shocked to hear that an old friend had not survived a massive heart attack. And our brother-in-law was sinking into dementia.

Then 10 days before Christmas we heard that our 50-year old son, Mark, had taken his own life. He had experienced times of mental illness when dealing with the stresses of life but things were looking good, he had been settled for more than 10 years with a partner he loved, they had moved to a house for which they had so many plans, he adored his two young boys, work had sufficient responsibility and challenges to excite him. It was the last thing we expected at that time and we were devastated. There is a special bond between mother and son and this had been broken. Life was hard. People were so kind and supportive, but my son had gone.

After about 4 months I was asked "Are you getting much comfort from your faith?" As the question came via WhatsApp the reply had to be brief: *"Yes, the faith I have does help. It is not a rosy cure-all but it gives light at the end of the tunnel. Even at the lowest of times there is a confidence that I am not alone, there is the presence of 'something' with me. And the confidence that death is not the end. It is comforting."*

I frequently remember Jesus' offers and promises:

"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest" (Matthew ch.11 v28)

"I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews ch.13 v5)

Have you heard the story of the footprints in the sand?

One night I dreamed a dream. As I was walking along the beach with my Lord, across the dark sky flashed scenes from my life. For each

scene, I noticed two sets of footprints in the sand, one belonging to me and one to my Lord.

After the last scene of my life flashed before me, I looked back at the footprints in the sand. I noticed that at many times along the path of my life, especially at the very lowest and saddest times, there was only one set of footprints.

This really troubled me, so I asked the Lord about it. "Lord, you said once I decided to follow you, You'd walk with me all the way. But I noticed that during the saddest and most troublesome times of my life there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why, when I needed You the most, You would leave me."

He whispered, "My precious child, I love you and will never leave you. Never, ever, during your trials and testings. When you saw only one set of footprints it was then that I carried you."

I know that to be true.

Angela

