

Scripture reading: Luke 22:42.

*Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.*

My little brother became very sick on New Year's Eve 1998 and was taken by ambulance to Mission Hospital. There he was diagnosed with a staph infection of the worst kind, staphylococcus aureus, or golden staph. James was always the healthiest member of our family, and never got sick. I honestly do not remember him even having a common head cold growing up. This time was different.

At first, I assumed that he would be in the hospital for a week as they administered heavy antibiotics and other strong drugs. However, as the days passed and his condition worsened instead of improving, he was in a very critical situation.

After the second week, it became apparent that James would never leave the hospital. The night that the doctor gave us that horrible news, I went out to my truck and just drove alone by myself. James was my only brother and my best friend. The weight of it all hit me so hard that my crying turned into uncontrollable sobbing and I had to pull off the road. I prayed for God to please not take my little brother from us, and then suddenly, the strangest peace I have ever experienced came over me. I simply told God I did not understand his purposes, and probably never would, but I somehow knew that his plan was perfect, and it would all be OK.

Years later when I read Luke 22:42 it hit me that was what Jesus was saying to his Father in the garden, and there are no better words to live by.

*Prayer:* Father, please come into my heart and help me remember always that it is your will that not only should be but will be done.

-Submitted by John Holbrook for the Seventeenth Reading of Lent.