

## **Meditation on Walking in the Steps of the “Master”**

By Fernah Peacey, New Zealand

*So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you. (Deuteronomy 31:6 NLT)*

*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. (Galatians 5:25 NIV)*

*Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. (Ecclesiastes 4:9,10)*

During the Advent season, my thoughts have been drawn to a Christmas Carol, “Good King Wenceslas”. This carol tells a story of the king or master noticing a poor man collecting winter fuel. He talks with his page, who knows where the man lives and then sets out to take the poor man food and fuel. They set out in the deep snow, and the page is struggling in the cold, deep snow. The king, then instructs the page to walk in his steps so that they can complete their mission to help this poor man.



In New Zealand we don't often experience deep snow – usually it is in the high country in the winter. A few years ago, my daughter and her husband walked the South Island Te Araroa trail when there was an unseasonal heavy snow fall. This photo illustrates the hard work involved in walking thru deep snow and we can begin to understand the struggle that the page was feeling.

At the same time Anna and Isaac were hiking the trail, Bruce Hopkins was also hiking the trail and he relates on his podcast (played on Radio NZ) of the real struggle he had walking thru the snow but found the footprints of Anna and Isaac to walk in. As he says in his podcast, he owes them... (listen to his podcast – from about the 4 min, 50 sec [Going for the Record | RNZ](#) ). Without their footsteps to follow in, he struggled to make any progress – falling off the path and then having to get up – which is really difficult when alone and carrying a load. Anna and Isaac had each other and were able to share the load of making the path, and if one fell the other could help them up (Ecc 4:9.10).

As I have thought over this carol there are many messages but for me the main message is that as we go about mission, in our daily lives if we are finding it hard, we need to check that we are walking in Jesus footsteps and keeping in step with the Spirit.

There is also a message to walk with others, follow in their footsteps and give an example or pathway for those we are mentoring. I was interested to notice that the servant knew the poor man and where he lived but his master noticed the need and gave the servant the mission to put together a care package for them to deliver.

And finally the reminder that as we bless others we too are blessed.

#### Questions to ponder:

How does Galatians 5:25 help us in difficult situations? How can I keep in step with the Spirit and be walking in Jesus' footsteps? What does this look like as nurses. What are the opportunities for serving in our places of work and in our communities?

Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10 talks about the strength in not being alone. What is the danger of being alone and what are the benefits of having a friend? Is there someone who I can be helping by being the stronger one for them to follow in my steps? And do I have a mentor/good friend whose steps I can follow?

Do you have a Christian nursing mentor to follow? And are you the one who is helping the newer, younger nurses in their faith? Is there another Christian in your workplace and how can you support each other?

Good King Wenceslas looked out  
On the feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about  
Deep and crisp and even;  
Brightly shone the moon that night  
Though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight,  
Gath'ring winter fuel.

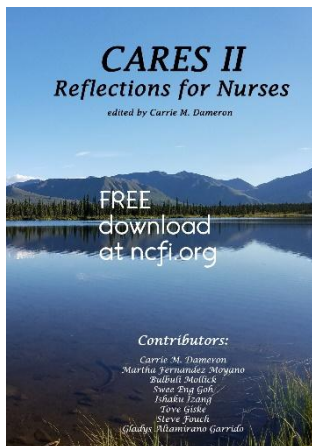
'Hither, page, and stand by me,  
If thou know'st it, telling  
Yonder peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?'  
'Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain,  
Right against the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes' fountain.'

'Bring me flesh and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine logs hither,  
Thou and I will see him dine  
When we bear them thither.'  
Page and monarch forth they went,  
Forth they went together,  
Through the rude wind's wild lament  
And the bitter weather.

'Sire, the night is darker now  
And the wind blows stronger;  
Fails my heart, I know not how,

I can go no longer.'  
'Mark my footsteps, good my page,  
Tread thou in them boldly:  
Thou shalt find the winter's rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly.'

In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the Saint had printed.  
Therefore, Christian men, be sure  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor  
Shall yourselves find blessing.



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