

A Good Word for Mary Edwards
September 21, 2008

By the time I got to know Mary, she was in her wheelchair – but her demeanor, her response, her way was always the same – on good days and bad days and all the days in between – in the hospital or at home – when I’d ask the question: “Mary, how are you doing?” “Oh, I’m fine” was always her response. Now I happen to know that this aggravated Kenny tremendously – because when Mary would say that she was fine – she was not always speaking the truth. As a matter of fact – often she was not speaking the truth. And we all knew it. Her body gave out long before her mind. Her body disappointed her long before her will to live ever even thought about wavering.

Mary Edwards was one strong woman. Working her puzzles, reading her books, watching the oldy-goldy TV shows, and her cats – her beloved cats. All of these things filled Mary’s life. A few years ago, our church provided a “care team” for Mary. They were company for her. Built-in friendships. And during those days when she was able to get out and go a little more easily – those friendships took her to pottery-painting and restaurants and even to the Stones and to our house for a Christmas pot-luck feast and gift-giving fiesta! Fun days – seeing her laugh and watching her smile. Close friendships formed that lasted until the end of Mary’s life on this earth. To all of you who gave your time and your lives to Mary, I give thanks. To single out folks is always dangerous – but I do want to say: to Betsy and to Jan – *Well done, good and faithful friends*. Your very lives were a gift to her.

And Kenny – you and Mary certainly lived out those marriage vows: in sickness and in health. Your life together has not known very much physical health, but I pray that as each of you found your way – that your lives were enriched by one another.

And today – I picture Mary in the Forever Presence of God and I have no doubt what she is saying: “Oh, I’m fine.” But this time she really really means it. It is a gift of faith to hold that hope close by and near to us.