



## **Faith, Family, Friends, and Fortitude**

November 26, 2014

I had a moment of grace this week that I will never forget.

It happened in Harbour Grace on Tuesday afternoon when I attended the awarding of the CLB Medal of Fortitude to Second Lieutenant Erin Follett. Erin has given me permission to share her story. Erin has cancer. She was unable to attend the CLB service awards at Government House last week and the Lieutenant Governor was so moved he asked to present the award to her himself at St. Paul's Church in Harbour Grace. Erin is also a young wife and mother of three beautiful children, Alexandra, Abigale and Matthew. The poignant ceremony on Tuesday included a large gathering of family, friends and supporters. Her husband, Wally, was there with Erin who wore her CLB uniform for the occasion. All three of her children proudly wore their CLB uniforms as they played instruments in the band. Even her parents, Major Wayne Lilly, and her mother, Captain Barb Lilly, were there in their uniforms.

It was one of those moments that stays with you. I saw in Erin remarkable courage in the face of adversity and a determination to fight her illness with everything she had. I also saw a woman of faith who not only believed in God but who made sure that her children also believed in God and were taught to love his Son.

The CLB Governor and Commandant, Colonel Al Pelley, spoke at the ceremony and read the commendation for Erin, granting her the Medal of Fortitude. In his comments he stated that the CLB has thrived as long as it has because it is a family in so many ways. And like every good family, it pulls together in difficult times and looks out for the member in need. That was so evident at the ceremony.

Many times over the years I have spoken to people struggling with illness, change and loss and reminded them of the "three f's" that we all need at such times. They are Faith, Family and Friends. I have often told people to lean heavily on all three when the going is difficult. Erin Follett has taught me that there is a fourth word: Fortitude.

On Tuesday I saw an abundance of Faith, Family, Friends and Fortitude in Harbour Grace. I saw it in the community surrounding and upholding Erin Follett and her family in this time of special need. And I saw it yet again in my church. In Erin I also saw an abundance of God's grace, of God coming close.

Now you know why I will never forget such a moment.

Blessings,  
**+Geoff**