

Patient is a 5 year old girl with leukemia that has relapsed. I first met the family on a Monday morning around 8:15 when Mom came into the Spiritual Care office looking for a Bible. As the chaplain assigned to her daughter's floor, I introduced myself and offered to come visit. At her request, I came the next day and spoke with her, her husband, and their daughter for about an hour and a half. We spoke about a variety of topics, but the most challenging part was a discussion of whether or not we can or ought to pray that we be able to exhibit certain characteristics. In this case, Dad said that he believed we should not pray for patience, that that is something we must come up with on our own. I felt that Dad *wanted* to pray for it, wanted to ask God's help in getting through this difficult time, and I wanted to assure him that he should do so. Fortunately, Mom stepped in before I did, saying that she prays for patience all of the time. A great discussion about the power of prayer and what our expectations should be ensued. For me, it was the first time I felt really comfortable sharing from my own tradition with patients and families of other faiths. What they expressed in return, and what I found most poignant, is that faced with their situation they welcomed (almost) any idea, any interpretation that would offer them comfort in support- a notion that I have carried with me through further conversations with them and with other patients in the hospital.