

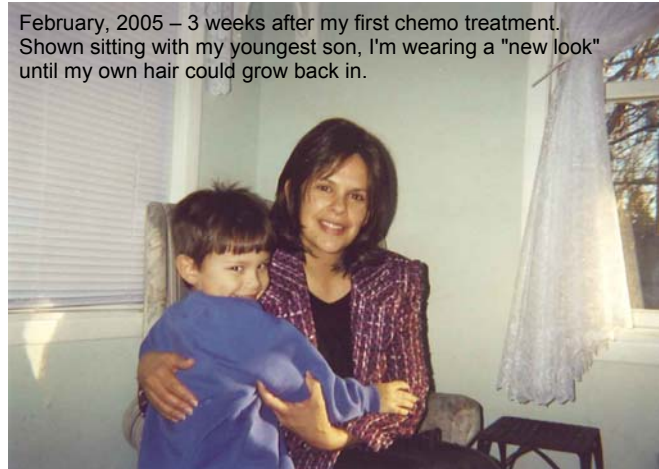
## “Be a Light in the Dark Place”

by Patricia Nevius

I was born into a wonderful family. Luis and Monica Ruck, originally from Peru and Trinidad respectively, raised my two brothers and me in a loving and caring environment. Mom successfully juggled childrearing and an opera career, while Dad worked his way up the ladder of a renowned company as an electronics engineer.

My brothers and I were doing well. I would later follow my mother’s career path in show business. By the time I was 19, I had traveled around the world as a result of my singing/dancing career. My older brother, Luis, realized his dream of playing professional soccer, while my younger brother, Roberto, prepared for what would be a successful career at Arthur Anderson. Our family was success driven, and though we weren’t overtly religious, we were faithful to the local denominational church; still, something was missing.

In 1981, my father’s co-worker, Bob Smith, came to our home in Silver Spring, Maryland, to teach us the *Search for Truth* Bible study. Conviction came upon us, and we collectively saw the need to be baptized. In November of that year, the whole family piled into the car to go to Pastor James Kelley’s church in Arlington, Virginia, to be baptized in the wonderful name of Jesus Christ. We would all subsequently receive the Holy Ghost; one by one, falling for



February, 2005 – 3 weeks after my first chemo treatment. Shown sitting with my youngest son, I'm wearing a "new look" until my own hair could grow back in.

Jesus like dominoes. Despite that, I continued my career in show business. However, I felt that God had something very special for me to do off stage. In 1986, I auditioned for the Broadway show "Cats" and was hired for the principal role of Demeter. I was thrilled, yet filled with apprehension. It was the comforting voice of my undershepherd, Pastor James Kelley, who told me to “be a light in the dark place.” Amid all the lights of Broadway, I was being summoned to bring the true Light to her stages.

Broadway would be exciting, yet trying. The Lord opened opportunities to teach Bible studies between shows, and there was where I met my soon-to-be husband and future pastor, Jim Nevius, who himself was a punk rocker. He and I both attended a Pentecostal church on West 92<sup>nd</sup> Street in Manhattan, and in May of 1988, I agreed to marry him. Thus began a most amazing spiritual journey, starting with hurricane Gilbert plowing through our honeymoon resort of Cozumel, Mexico where we, along with everyone on the island, were miraculously delivered. We prayed for that island because it had no Apostolic church. Today, thanks to the dedication of Reverend Wynn Drost of Mexico and other ministers of the Gospel, there are many.

The miracles just kept coming. Soon after we returned, both of us left show business through obeying the call of God. We embarked on a call to ministry, moving out to Metuchen, New Jersey, where our present church, A.C.T.S., is located. God gave us four lovely children – three boys and a girl, all with God’s promises upon their lives. Our firstborn, Jacob, was healed of asthma. Our second, Jeremy, was saved from choking to death by the miraculous intervention of God. Our third, Jonny, was blessed with a healing from pneumothorax which he experienced shortly after birth. Our fourth, Joanna, was born with an extra chromosome, which, owing to prayer, has had little effect on her. In spite of her diagnosis with Down’s Syndrome, it was prophesied over her that she would be "God’s gracious light" and would "have the gift of healing." At four years old she is a praiser of God, and a blessing to our worship services.



Over a year and a half later – cancer free! I'm enjoying a moment here with our "miracle child".

Things were going well. God was blessing. Until, in December of 2004, after a routine mammography, the doctor came back to me with a diagnosis of breast cancer. I hearkened back to what God had told me years earlier; what I call my "twofold commission". It is, first, to answer "yes" to Jesus' rhetorical question "when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith in the earth?" (Luke 18:8b). The second part of the commission is the one that Pastor Kelley had given me: "Be a light in the dark place." There was no darker place for me than the diagnosis of cancer, yet God was again entrusting me to shine His Light and show my faith. Many times He had brought me through triumphantly, yet now those times seemed so easy, so effortless, so minor in comparison. I wondered: was I prepared for this?

God is merciful even in sickness and distress. A preacher friend had given me a passage of scripture (Psalm 71:18-21) four months prior to the diagnosis, which I suddenly recalled:

*Also Your righteousness, O God, is very high,  
You who have done great things;  
O God, who is like You?  
You, who have shown me great and severe troubles,  
Shall revive me again,  
And bring me up again from the depths of the earth.  
You shall increase my greatness,  
And comfort me on every side.*

God's gentle word was fulfilled throughout the medical process. He put in the hearts of our church and community to help me, by bringing food, picking up the kids, helping with errands. I finally connected with my neighbor, who had received a quite similar diagnosis twelve years ago, and who, miraculously, was receiving chemotherapy from the same oncologist as me – and at the same time no less!

To this day, neighbors, friends, even doctors, comment on the amazing recovery that God has affected in my life and body. God helped me sing at our district conference a day after receiving a very strong chemical, Adriamycin, and, on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005, after the last chemotherapy treatment, I sang "God Bless America" at Metuchen's Memorial Day parade and ceremony. Our church, A.C.T.S., is



Just after my 7<sup>th</sup> & final chemo treatment – singing with my boys at Metuchen's Memorial Day Celebration.

growing like never before. People are coming to God from everywhere, being baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost. I am letting His Light shine through me, even in the midst of trials. And, through it all, I've learned to trust and believe Jesus. "...when the Son of man comes, shall He find faith in the earth?" My answer to that question is a resounding "YES!"