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A Tumour in the Pancreas

There are occasions in life where reversals in health impose themselves irremediably, but where the family and confidence in God make one see the other side of the problem.

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Several months ago, my father had to be hospitalised for several days when he came down with pancreatitis. From then on, he had to follow a routine to observe the extent and

possible secondary effects of that illness.

According to the initial diagnosis, he would have to undergo an operation on his gallbladder, a rather complicated process. It was a matter of avoiding a stone from the gallbladder producing another pancreatitis with worse results. After various x-rays, the specialist called us in to comment on the results and gave us the worst news we could have expected: they had discovered a tumour located at the head of the pancreas. In most cases the tumour spreads in 24 months, normally turns malignant and therefore is fatal.

The only thing that could be done was aggressive surgery, with a very high probability of mortality. In my father's case, his age and medical antecedents would make it too risky.

The doctor told me that he would like us to reflect on what to do. It was a

huge dilemma for all of us: either proceed with surgery with all the risks that entailed, or to let things follow their course with medication (chemotherapy) at the appropriate time. In the face of this situation, I started to pray to our beloved Blessed Don Alvaro, only asking him that that the coming months with my father would be as happy as the previous ones and that he would not have more suffering, that we would bear the situation calmly and with love for God; and that whatever might happen, the family would remain united just as we had been since our mother had passed away in 2013.

After we had discussed the matter, we spoke with the doctor, and my father told him that he did not want his life to end in an operating theatre; that he was joyful and serene, extremely serene, and that he was very happy to be with his family

and he would accept whatever God sent him. We all saw my father totally, peacefully abandoning himself to God. We felt very proud and that made me pray even more.

The specialist referred us to the surgeon specialising in pancreas, so that we could proceed with the treatment. The surgeon sought to get another NMR for the month of October 2020. When we went to the radiology unit to request the procedure, they told us they did not have appointments available until 2021, due to the pandemic, and those would have to be done in another hospital 60 km away, with the danger that would involve. Although we explained to them that this was a serious and urgent case, and it could not wait, since what the surgeon would do depended on how this illness developed, in the reception of the radiology unit there was little they could do.

At that moment there was a cancellation of another case for the same procedure, and this allowed them to schedule my father for the following day. The following day, my father returned to the hospital for his procedure. We, the surgeon included, were all hoping that the tumour had not grown, although we had little hope. Two days later, the surgeon called us. Surprised and joyful, he told us that they had seen (possibly due to an error) that the tumour was not exactly at the head of the of the pancreas, but rather on its side. Because of its position he was almost totally certain that it was not malignant, and he considered that he would not have to operate or take any aggressive measures.

In these circumstances my father would be able to live peacefully through whatever God wanted, without any problem produced by that tumour. He told us that we were

very fortunate and it was something to celebrate.

Because of this, I am thankful for the intercession of Don Alvaro.

D.B. – Spain

Picture: Andrea Piacquadio -
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