

Faith

We're a rugged breed, us quads. If we weren't, we wouldn't be around today. Yes, we're a rugged breed; in many ways, we've been blessed with a savvy and spirit that isn't given to everybody.

And let me say that this refusal of total or full acceptance of one's disability all hooks up with one thing - faith, an almost divine faith.

Down in the reception room of the Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, over on the East River at 400 East 34th Street in New York City, there is a bronze plaque that's riveted to the wall. During the months of coming back to the Institute for treatment - two and three times a week - I rolled through that reception room many times, coming and going. But I never quite made the time to pull over to one side and read the words on that plaque that were written, it's said, by an unknown Confederate Soldier. Then one afternoon, I did. I read it, and then I read it again. When I finished it the second time I was near to bursting - not in despair, but with an inner glow that had me straining to grip the arms of my wheelchair. I'd like to share it with you.

Roy Campanella - Major League Catcher

A Creed for Those Who Have Suffered

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.
I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey...

I asked for health, that I might do greater things.
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things...

I asked for riches, that I might be happy.
I was given poverty, that I might be wise...

I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men.
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of god...

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things...

I got nothing I asked for - but everything I had hoped for.

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

I am, among men, most richly blessed!