

"Good Morning Alice" by Gise J.VanBaren. Reformed Free Publishing Association, Box 2006, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49501. Softcover, 157pp.

One of Canada's major 1994 news features was Sue Rodriguez, stricken with ALS, commonly known as "Lou Gehrig's disease", who committed assisted suicide. With the help of openly gay, pro-abortionist, NDP MP Svend Robinson, she had tried to have euthanasia legalized, but without success. But the highly emotionally-charged reporting on Sue's suffering helped soften resistance to euthanasia.

Alice VanBaren, the author's single sister, also suffered from Lou Gehrig's disease. Her brother describes in detail the rapid progress of the disease, Alice's struggle with the many adaptations that had to be made to enable her to function as long as possible. Her family supported her throughout the two years of suffering. She died at home in the company of her family, at peace with her Lord.

During the last stages of her illness, Alice received daily notes from an anonymous friend. Each note reflected on a Scripture passage, bringing comfort, hope and joy to her and also her family. She eagerly awaited them each day. Rev. Van Baren used these notes throughout his account and commentary on Alice's story.

The story of Sue Rodriguez was devoid of hope. Although Alice suffered the same illness, her story leaves the reader with hope. She was surrounded and supported by a loving family, her friends and the communion of saints. The author also shows how God sustained Alice in her suffering.

The book gives a Biblical and honest response to suffering. It points to the encouragement and strength God provides to His people in the midst of their trials. As the secular media will increasingly press for the liberalization of euthanasia laws, VanBaren's book will help Christians formulate a Biblical and caring alternative. Gise VanBaren is a pastor in the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, in Loveland, Colorado.

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