

The beauty remains

—the pain passes

Although Henri Matisse was nearly 28 years younger than Auguste Renoir, the two great artists were dear friends and frequent companions. When Renoir was confined to his home during the last decade of his life, Matisse visited him daily. Renoir, almost paralyzed by arthritis, continued to paint in spite of his infirmities using a brush strapped to his arm.

One day as Matisse watched the elder painter working in his studio, fighting torturous pain with each brush stroke, he blurted out: “Auguste, why do you continue to paint when you are in such agony?”

Renoir answered simply: “The beauty remains, the pain passes.”

And so, almost to his dying day, Renoir put paint to canvas. One of his most famous paintings, *Bathers*, was completed just two years before his passing, 14 years after he was stricken by this disabling disease.

—*The Best of Bits and Pieces*



A detail from *Les Baigneuses (Bathers)*, c. 1918

When God is going to do something wonderful, He begins with a difficulty. If it is going to be something very wonderful, He begins with an impossibility.

—*Reverend Charles Inwood*

If, after my removal, anyone should think it is worth his while to write my life, I will give you a criterion by which you may judge its correctness. If he gives me credit for being a plodder, he will describe me justly. ... I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit.

—*William Carey, often considered the father of modern Christian missions*

If people knew how hard I worked at my art, they would not consider me a genius.

—*Michelangelo*

I'll take a "5" with a "10" attitude over a "10" with a "5" attitude any day.

—*Author unknown*

Faith to keep on going

Faith is standing your ground when all others desert. Faith is burning your bridges so you cannot go back. Faith is willing to pay any price. Faith is doing what God tells you to do today and believing Him for tomorrow. Faith is the opposite of fear. Faith is choosing God in spite of all other possibilities. Faith is standing on God's Word and not your feelings. Faith is willing to die trusting. That's the kind of faith that works miracles!

—*David Brandt Berg*