

May the road rise to meet you.

May 23, 2020

*From "Maytudes" - a french horn etude project in consultation with Gail Williams,
with one etude created every day during the month of May, 2020*

Version for French horn/piano commissioned by John Schreckengost

from composer Jim Stephenson (from original Maytudes etude book):

I've always known that today's Maytude would be about my father.
Today would have been his 84th birthday. Hence the time signature.

I also knew that I would base it on this text from the Irish Blessing.

Even though Dad had founded and presided over a company steeped deeply in the electrical engineering field, his first and foremost love was always music. As a "side job", he was a church accompanist pretty much all of his life, starting as a teenager, and continuing up until his stroke last year.

When I lived in Florida, he and Mom became "snowbirds", and immediately joined a church there. They joined the choir, and he quickly became the accompanist because his talents for music-making and his giving spirit, were obvious.

The Irish blessing was often sung at that church, and I would often be there as a visiting trumpeter. It's one of my fondest memories of that place.

Dad loved hymns and he loved those harmonies that one might expect in a modern church hymn, hence the F's that appear) He would accompany them beautifully, always ever so musically. When he died just last month, the funeral home asked me to submit a prayer to be used on the prayer-cards they were to create. This one immediately jumped out as the obvious choice. I just love the text.

And so I have created my own setting to go along with the words.

Once again, Dad is my inspiration.
Happy 84th birthday, Dad.