



Joy^{to the} World

ADEL-GRAM 1996

Impossible as it seems, it's already the second week in December. Turkey leftovers have been gobbled up, we've had our first snowfall, the house is bedecked in Christmas finery, and each day I find myself eagerly anticipating the arrival of the mail. Today's looked promising. We received:

TWELVE credit card offers
ELEVEN pleas for Money
TEN discount flyers
NINE in-store coupons
EIGHT college catalogs
SEVEN monthly bills
SIX political promises
FIVE GOLDEN OPPORTUNITIES
FOUR insurance premiums
THREE thank you notes
TWO wedding announcements
AND
A PARTRIDGE IN A PEAR TREE?

Alright I confess to exaggeration here, the point being that while we did receive an abundance of mail, there was not one Christmas card to be found. "Is the world not doing Christmas cards this year?" I lamented. Then it occurred to me that I had yet to put ~~paper~~ myself. So here I sit, sipping pineapple-coconut tea, gazing out the window, waiting patiently for one inspired thought. So far my brain has been offering up trivia ~~like~~ wonder how many snowflakes it takes to cover our whole yard", and "I think I'll put candles in the freezer to see if they really will burn longer and drip less."

I don't know, maybe pineapple-coconut tea is too tropical for Christmas thinking; maybe I should try apple-cinnamon!

Well, here I am again. The apple-cinnamon was helpful, even more so with the addition of a gingerbread cookie. (I've heard that peanuts are brain food, but personal experience teaches that cookies rule).

1996 on the Adelgren homefront has been a year of health and peace, for which we are grateful. It's also been a year of change. Our family residents decreased by one in

February when Rebecca, as part of her senior year, left to study at the Indianapolis Training Center. (part of the Gothard Ministries) She completed her studies and graduated from EQUIP in May and now works there at ITC homeschooling court appointed juveniles. Her "home away from home" is a renovated 4 star hotel near downtown Indianapolis. We've visited there twice in the past ten months and are thrilled with the ministry as well as with Rebecca's personal growth. Becks will be home December 19 to January 4th, then returns to Indy to complete the school year with her "students".

I asked Susan what I might say about her this year. Aside from the mundane (17 years old, senior year, raising 2 Seeing Eye pups, working part time, plans to go to Indianapolis to train with EQUIP in July 1997, etc.), she said, "Oh, just say 'Susan, our precious daughter is the sunlight of our lives. She's the greatest!'" (H-mmm. It's a good thing we're studying humility next semester.)

Well, Susan is right. She is precious, and sunshine to our hearts. Happily, this Christmas she will be joined by her also precious and sunshiny siblings, who all plan to come home during the holidays. We eagerly anticipate their arrival with **great joy!** Eric and Patricia live in Shippensburg and so will have less than five miles to come for the celebration. Amy and Patrick will travel from Charleston on the 21st. Damon and Kellie will arrive on the 26th, bringing with them a most blessed gift (TRUMPET FANFARE here!).... our **first grandbaby, Annaleigh Mae, born Sept. 6th!** At three months, she is a red-haired, green-eyed, cuddly, sweet-natured little lamb chop, and we can hardly wait to get our hands on her! We haven't seen her since she was ten days old, and that's a long time between rockings! How we **thank God** for this firstborn of the next generation!

Paul completed his ordination studies and was ordained in September. Becoming Reverend and Grandpa the same year is pretty heady stuff, I'd say. But Paul's quite humble about it all and says that Annaleigh only has to call him Reverend Grandpa on Sundays! Aside from preaching, teaching, and shepherding his flock, Paul keeps busy with garden work, home maintenance (you know, the Honey Do list) and has even returned to the racquetball court this year.

Paul and Susan have been invited to a church in eastern PA in March to speak on the father-daughter relationship. This thrills Paul, as equipping parents is a subject dear to his heart. I asked this duo if I could tag along. They kindly pointed out that I was neither the father nor the daughter. I volunteered to chauffeur; they reminded me that night driving isn't my favorite. I said I'd hold their notes; they don't plan to use any. (Looks like pizza take-out and dog sitting for me!)

Everybody seems to be branching out around here. Things are changing in my life too. "Snow on the roof" more aptly describes the top of my head than the top of our house these days. I was contemplating one of those "only your hairdresser knows for sure" deals, but now that I'm a grandma my frosted curls seem just right. Also in the physical realm, I've decided to adopt some kind of physical fitness routine this year. I did do a few calisthenics last week and plan to do a few more after the holidays! Paul says I

may need to adjust my goals a bit. He's right! To me, cardio vascular training means taking deep breaths, weight lifting is getting up out of one's chair, and sit-ups are what the dogs do to get a bone. Saint Paul was surely talking to me when he said "bodily exercise profiteth little"! I do hope to tax my brain a bit more than usual, though, and start work on a devotional book. In addition, my plate continues to be pretty full at church, and I love being Paul's helpmeet.

In our church family there is so much we do to celebrate Christmas. After all, Christ's entrance into earth's history some 2000 years ago is absolute proof of God's mercy and love for us... that's definately worth celebrating! But the church's activities plus our own preparations at home leave me somewhat harried and short on time to actually focus on the person of Jesus Christ and the incomparable gift that was given through His coming to earth.

So far this season I have been to choir practice, to planning meetings, and to church. I have been to celebrations and I have been shopping, but I realize that until I have been to Bethlehem, my heart cannot be satisfied, and my Christmas will be incomplete.

No wonder the angels proclaimed the birth of Christ to shepherds. They were out in the country, apart from the hustle and bustle of the town: perhaps they were the only ones whose minds and hearts were quiet enough to receive and respond to the Good News! It is my quest this Christmas season to STIFLE MYSELF... that I might sense in my own heart the awe, the wonder and fear, the unspeakable joy of those who first celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ... Son of God, King of Glory, Messiah, and Savior to all who will to be saved.

Dear Hearts, we send our love and wish you a most joyful and deeply worshipful Christmas.

Rejoicing in Christ,

"Take time to be holy... The world rushes on;
Spend much time in secret... With Jesus alone.
By looking to Jesus... Like Him thou shalt be;
Thy friends in thy conduct... His likeness shall see."

William D. Longstaff