

How He said: *I Love You!*

True Stories

By Chariane Quille

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Story Titles

- *As a child*
- Can a Cloud Smile?
- The Door is Shut
- Sound Softened
- The Angel Without Hands
- Starburst
- Rose Petals
- The Butterfly
- Token of Love
- Heart Necklace
- Not a Sneeze!
- Anniversary Flowers
- Moving to Australia
- A Smiling Carrot
- A Unique Valentine's Day Gift
- His Eye is On the Sparrow...
- The Coin
- The Clover
- Tiny Pansy
- The Ring
- A night in Hamlyn, without Pied Piper
- 40 Fingernails + 40 Toenails
- Nail Clippers & Razor
- It Could Happen!
- Olives
- The Sock That Came Home
- The Pen Lid
- It must happen hundreds of times...
- "Their angels do always behold..."
(Matthew 18:10)

- Invisible Umbrella
- The Rain
- Walking on the Water?
- Wedding Gifts from Jesus
- The Golden Egg
- Dreams
- Protection from Accidents
- A Carpentry Miracle
- The Book
- Right-Side Up
- Little Notebooks
- Washing Machine
- Floriade
- Foot Massage
- Surprise Meeting
- Rose Bush
- Rainbows
- Perfect Sweater
- Concert Ticket
- A Very Real Dream
- Heavenly Warmth
- Curtains
- The Way He Made Me
- Healthy and Strong
- Babies
- My Secret Number
- Fisher-Price Toys
- T-Bone Steak
- The Bus Trip
- Excellent Care
- Green Grapes on My Birthday
- Prince William and Kate's Wedding

- Ordering Ice Cream
- Enough Chicken
- Candle's Shadow
- Farmer's Food
- Shooting Stars
- Bouquet of Basal
- Congratulations!
- A Hamburger and Mango Juice
- A Dent in the Car—A Boost of Encouragement
- The Warm Feather Quilt
- Heavenly Roses
- In a 7-Eleven
- My God Shall Supply
- Vanilla Ice Cream
- Love in the Clouds
- Better Than a Bouquet of Flowers
- Camera
- Peace and Calm
- Grandmother's Bible
- My Heart Tree
- John and the Jasmine Flower
- Wedding Rings for Newly-Weds
- The Missing Clamp
- Jesus Brought Me This Far
- The Rain "Tap" Turned Off and On
- Pearls
- God's Blog—About Me

If I was only permitted to speak or express one sentence during my entire life on Earth, there's only one thing that comes to mind that would win hands-down in importance. It's the words my heart longs to ring out long and loud to every human on the face of the Earth:

**Jesus is real, and He loves you—
immeasurably!**

It sounds simple to some, and unbelievable to others. Could it really be true? Is He really around? Is He real? If so, does He actually notice and care about me personally? After all I've experienced, I'm convinced the answer is yes.

This book is my humble attempt to express that phrase through writing up especially memorable, true, amazing, and in many cases supernatural accounts from my life, taken from my personal diaries.

As you enjoy these unique stories from my life you'll probably draw the same heart-stirring, life-lifting, wonderful and thrilling

conclusion: Jesus loves you, personally and unfathomably.

I feel that these secrets and stories that I've chosen to share with you, in my attempt to bring the reality of this truth into your heart, is like me showing you a grain of sand from a wide and far reaching beach, and exclaiming, "Here's a bit of what a beach is like."

These few special reminders to me of how much Jesus cares about us all, can in no way come close to adequately painting the picture. His love is so much greater and deeper than we, in our human mind can ever grasp.

Yet, perhaps if I show you the grain of sand of what I have personally seen, touched, and held in my hands, it will spark your curiosity to want to explore for yourself the vast and all-encompassing beauty of the far-reaching beach of His love for you.

Every day Jesus does special things in each of our lives—sometimes we notice, many times we don't, and other times we notice but don't peg the credit right. It must be sad for Him, but Jesus loves us too much to give up.

On and on throughout our life He just keeps trying to say and show us those three wonderful words: I love you!

*I've found a Friend, O such a Friend!
He loved me ere I knew Him;
He drew me with the cords of love,
And thus He bound me to Him.*

(By James G. Small)

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on Earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the Love of God Above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

(Traditional)

In My Life...

As a Child

As early as a child I was testing out this “Jesus,” to see if He really was on the other end of prayers—and more specifically, my little prayers. I could see the reason for a big God answering when my family needed a house, and we prayed and looked and at long last got the best we could imagine.

Yes, I believed in a vague way that, “The Lord answered our prayers,” but it didn’t touch me deep in my heart. It didn’t grab me personally.

Months later while playing in the nice big yard of that house I found an empty water spray bottle—the kind with the handle that you pump. It was broken inside, and I so wished it would work.

I wanted to spray water on the flowers just for fun. I prayed in my heart for Jesus to make it work for me, and then I tried it again. My heart skipped a beat. My mind was in wonder. Water

came spraying out for the next few minutes, before returning to its non-working state again.

Oh boy! Jesus was not only real and could hear big prayers, but little ones too. He could hear and answer my little prayers for things that made no difference at all in the big scheme of things—just a difference to me, for a moment. I realised He knew what I was thinking, and furthermore cared if I was happy.

I wrote in my diary a prayer or thought to Jesus many years later, when typing up this memory:

“The fact that You heard my little wish and prayer, and answered immediately made such an impact on me, and helped me make a connection with You. I realised that You were real and wanted to have something to do with me and be a part of my life, and would do fun things just to show Your love.”

Can a Cloud Smile?

The creative way He chooses to show His love never ceases to thrill me! Can a cloud smile? Yes! I gasped! It was the biggest “smiley face” I’d ever seen. It would have been “normal” if it was

just one of those, “Oh, that cloud looks like a sheep... and that one looks like a ball of cotton... and that one looks like eyes and a smile.” But no, it was different!

I guess I needed the “pat on my back” right then. I had just spent the semi-rainy night on the grassy ground, with nothing to sleep on but a tarp while we shivered in our sleeping bags. Sounds rough, but for those teenagers it was called “fun”.

I was helping a team of missionaries for a few months in Mexico during 2002. I was the only one available to do something “fun” with the five teenagers that weekend. They begged to go “camping”—freestyle. But since it was a bit drizzly and already late afternoon, and since we didn’t even have a tent, it would be a new experience. This is what they longed for—adventure and nature. After discussing it with the parents extensively, it was decided to be worth a go.

In the near darkness we were dropped off at the foot of a pathway leading up a hilly trail. With flashlights we were able to eventually find a spot that seemed good to camp in. It was flat, and we spread our tarp and set up our sleeping bags for the night.

Attempting to have a cosy campfire was futile. As much as we tried, because the evening dew and light rain had already made the sticks we found too damp, no fire could be coaxed into starting. When the drizzle began to turn into rain we spread out an additional tarp and pulled it completely over ourselves.

There were enough clouds in the sky for them to not only maintain the gentle precipitation but give a hefty downpour.—And in that area of Mexico at the right time of year it could really pour! We all prayed heartfelt prayers aloud as we shivered under our thin protection overhead.

There was no one we could call on for help but the One who holds the cloud's tap in His hands. Wonderfully, the rain did stop quite soon after the teens' and my prayers, and with a wind blowing the clouds away we actually saw the stars as we went to sleep.

It had its own thrill, but not something you'd repeat nightly! With an early start the next morning (not really the kind of bed you enjoy "sleeping in" on) we enjoyed a nice day of hiking, sun bathing on the mountain rocks, playing in the stream, throwing "mud balls" and so forth.

The hiking on the mountain in the warm sun was beautiful, while the cliff edges presented the constant danger of places for any of us to fall, break a bone and sprain ankles. The known presence of rattlesnakes likewise kept me on my toes every second, praying for everyone's safe keeping.

(One very large rattlesnake, or snake of some sort, had been slowly slithering across a path we hiked near that area a couple weeks earlier. I only saw part of his thick body as he slithered around the rock I was walking over. I never saw his head or tail, as he was too big and long!)

After our camping adventure we drove back in a pick-up truck. The father of a couple of the teens had come to drive us home. As many as could fit in the cab did; and another boy and I offered to be in the open back.

I am a strict advocate of safe keeping with cars, but since there was no way around it, and someone had to be in the back, doing so myself would ensure one less teen at risk.

As we sped down the highway in the back of the truck I was pondering with awe at what

had just happened—or not happened. I was so very thankful for the Lord’s amazing safe keeping of us during that trip. I had clung desperately to the Lord in prayer, and He had come through and proved His supernatural power. There hadn’t even been a scratch.

If you had seen the terrain and knew the adventurous nature of this group of teens you would be as relieved and amazed at this miracle as I was.

This was one of the bigger responsibilities and dangerous endeavours I’d tackled yet. It was not done without much prayer and claiming God’s promises continually.

The cold wind swept hard as we zoomed along. I covered myself with every bit of clothing I could scrounge. It was so cold in the windy back of the truck. To entertain myself I began cloud-watching.

The clouds had been noticeably interesting, taking on clear forms of various animals, very distinctly shaped. Then I noticed one that looked like a very large smiley face, but just the side view—like when you draw a “stickman” and it’s looking to the left.

There was a big fluffy perfectly round cloud and on it one smaller grey circle for the eye, and then the half part of the smile. It was perfectly drawn. I was amused.

However, as I looked at it, thinking how neat it was that Jesus was making this cloud display for me, all of a sudden the big circle cloud turned, in the way a head would turn, and you see the face full on. It was freaky! The full curve of the smile and two eyes were now in the perfect position. (Wish I'd had a camera.) I let out a shriek!

Staring directly at me then was a perfectly formed, very large, complete “smiley” face, with two big grey eyes, and a grey smile. It seemed almost alive! More than just the cloud's unusual and special appearance, it was the way it moved that surprised and startled me. I knew there was only one person who could do that—and Who knew that I was watching.

Inwardly I felt Someone from “Upstairs” expressing, “Thanks for helping the young people have a nice weekend. It wasn't your choice of an activity, as tired as you were, but you put others' happiness first. I saw it, and I'm proud of you.”

It was so vivid, and it thrilled me. I love the way Jesus chooses to say hi and show in real ways that He's right there. He shows in very personal ways His deep and amazing love—though remaining invisible. Yes, we need faith to believe “that He is”, as Hebrews 11 says. But He also “is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

The Door is Shut

Keeping our newborn asleep was very challenging, because even the slightest sound would wake him up—whispering, pouring water, using a ballpoint pen to write! And of course sounds from down the hallway of people talking or clanging around in the kitchen.

One time when I was nursing him and he started to drift off to sleep, I was holding real still so as not to disturb him so he could go to sleep. If I moved he would have woken up and been very fussy but unable to sleep for quite a while after that.

The problem was the door to our room was open then, so the sounds were coming in. I hadn't expected him to be ready for sleep then,

but I was glad he was drifting off and resting.

I couldn't get up to shut the door, and it was taking him longer to sleep due to the noises. The sounds may have woken him up entirely for a sad and tired time. So I prayed. "Lord, please can you shut the door?" Jesus was the only one I could get help from right then. And He did it.

I watched as the door slowly and quietly began closing. Perhaps a breeze from the window was used to do it. I don't know. All I know was I prayed, and right away the door slowly shut without anyone around. I was so thankful!

Sound Softened

Another time I was trying to put our little baby to sleep and I had a music tape on. I would put it rather low, but when things got still and quiet then the music always seemed a bit louder later on.

I couldn't get up to turn it down quieter as that would have disturbed his going to sleep, but again it was too loud and would make it hard for him to fall asleep. So, again, I prayed.

“Jesus, is there a way you can make the music quieter?” And then it seemed like something happened. All I can describe it is as if the atmosphere of the room dropped to a lower level, or like an invisible curtain dropped and with a silent click the sound was quieter from the tape.

The Angel Without Hands

The lot had been vacant and unused for the two years we had lived in this area. Then in 2007 for the first time it seemed to be open for parking, with an attendant sitting at the entrance.

I was living in Lebanon, in the “ritzy” area, where ladies doll up for hours to walk to the corner store. I definitely stood out as I struggled—as gracefully as I tried to appear—to push my toddler in the stroller while carrying my newborn baby in the sling. Time for make-up or fancy hair-do’s seemed light-years away.

My husband unexpectedly had to leave the country—with only two days notice—and had been unable to return for several months, due to legalities and visa issues. In his absence I’d had the baby (a sudden C-section weeks before my

due-date), and now had two little ones growing and learning along with me in this new stage of motherhood.

As I was walking with my little boys to the nearby store on a hot summer day, I saw a look I haven't forgotten yet. It's etched in my memory. The new parking attendant looked up into my face. What I saw could only be described as an angel or God looking through him to me.

He had a gentle smile on his face, and eyes were filled with compassion mixed with faith. His eyes seemed to say he knew my situation, and was tenderly trying to encourage me. There was a godly light, a loving warmth in his gaze. It both caught me by surprise as well as deeply encouraged me.

I looked back twice just to see it again. It made me feel so good inside.

What gave me renewed strength for any struggles I faced after that was the fact that this man was handicapped. He had no hands. His arms ended at the wrists. Yet he sat there like anyone else, confident and comfortable with himself and doing his job.

If he could be content, and tackle a job

that it would seem impossible to do in his state—such as counting money, giving change, opening and locking the gate—so could I handle things in my far more fortunate condition. I had hands. What could you say? Comparatively there was nothing I was limited in.

When I returned on my way home, he looked like any other old man, sitting there smoking his hubbly-bubbly. Somehow God had looked at me in that moment, and used the perfect one to do it.

He sat there day after day, through the hot summer sun—at least whenever I went out he was there. Just looking at him gave me a boost of courage.

After leaving the country to join my husband for a few months, and being able to return all together, I found the parking lot closed again, as it always had been, and always was from then on. No sign of this stranger.

But every time I pass that corner I remember “the angel without hands” that held me with his gaze, and helped pull me through a challenging time.

Starburst

The balmy night was perfect for a night-time stroll on the beach. There was also going to be a meteor shower. In the year 2000 on my birthday evening, a group of friends and co-workers and I all went to the beach at night to see the meteor shower, sit and have hot cocoa, talk, and enjoy this evening.

As we were walking on the sandy beach to our spot, I looked up into the sky. I suddenly saw the most amazing, unusual “shooting star”, if it could be called that. The star in the sky exploded with traces of red mixed with white, and then shot across the sky.

I took it as a sign of His personal love and “birthday candle” or “fireworks” for me that He lit at that moment. I’d never seen anything like that before or since. It was huge!

I had wondered whether or not I should go on that evening outing. I was feeling rather emotional, wishing I had someone special to spend my birthday with. Through that sign my loving Creator said He loved me and was near in His special way.

Some people go many years of their life

wishing to see a “shooting star”. I feel so blessed that it’s been a frequent message of His love to me. Whenever I am really in need of a “pick me up”, I love to look up at the stars, and He’ll often encourage me with His presence through a “message in the stars”.

This one on my birthday, however, was nothing like any other star show I’ve ever seen. It was unique, unusually brilliant, outstanding and most of all, heart-warmingly memorable!

Rose Petals

In 2002 I had taken a very big and challenging step. I’d moved away from what I’d known for so many years—what I’d known as “my life”—my work, my friends, my family and parents. I felt the call to go and help a missionary family with their children in Mexico. It was what God had told me to do.

They lived at that time in a semi-out-of-the-way house. There wasn’t much chance for friendships with peers, and most of my exhausting days were spent with the children—five active boys, and one girl.

One evening I was tired to the point of

wanting to crawl, while trying to do the dinner dishes. I was lonely and there was no hope anytime in the near future for companionship. I clung to Jesus' love and His promise to give us strength.

While finishing up in the kitchen one of the children asked me to come and see something. Did I have the strength to go upstairs one more time to see what he wanted to show me?

His mum had been gone to a seminar for nearly a week, to learn some tips on caring for her handicapped little girl. I was trying to be the best nanny I could. I put on a smile and said I'd come and look.

This child brought me to my own room and showed me a display on my bed. He'd picked rose petals of different colours from the bushes outside and sprinkled them all over my bed, with a hand-written note saying Jesus loved me.

It touched me so. I let a tear fall. Jesus could get a message through to me anytime, using anyone. –Even a challenging-to care-for boy.

I didn't have to have my perfect situation of what I thought would make me feel happy or

loved. Jesus loved me, and He could tell me so in any way He was able to. I had renewed strength to keep on.

The Butterfly

In each of our struggles to give children the best, we get a few bumps and scratches, from a colourful array of sources and people, and can have a rough go of things at times. But it's those times when we most appreciate the personalized touches of God's love. Those can be like fuel to keep us going and giving out yet one more day.

Here's one such time that happened to me several years ago—when I wasn't married yet, but very involved in caring for children while helping a team of missionaries in Mexico in 2002.

I had a pet butterfly for nearly three days. It would not leave my side, and no matter where I placed it, it would fly back to sit on my arm and shoulder.

I had a pretty rough day, the day before. I felt like a failure and had people upset at me.

I was exhausted from trying to do everything from watching the kids to overseeing

the teen's activities, making the schedule, cooking, laundry, house clean up, teaching the toddlers, putting them to nap and caring for them. We were all very, very busy. I was usually constantly on the go from 6 am till 11:00 or so at night.

I woke crying, feeling at the bottom one morning, after a particular blunder. It was one of those bad-if-you-do, and bad-if-you-don't situations. I had to make a tough choice, together with one of the mothers, and we chose what was best for the children and young people.

An adult friend of ours got miffed, misunderstood our actions, and I was the one to get blamed for the tension that followed.

I began the day with the added weight of feeling like I was the "bad guy." I couldn't stop crying, probably mostly from exhaustion. Then one of the kids told me of a butterfly that was outside. He had a bit of a ripped wing, and was wet.

I put him in the sunshine to dry off and hopefully fly again, but he came again to the door, and crawled on my finger. From that moment on he would not leave me. He perched

on my arm or shoulder, no matter what I was doing. All of a sudden I felt loved and not alone.

I needed to cook so I tried to put him on a plant, but for him that wouldn't do, he just flew back to me again. When he got hungry and thirsty, his long tiny tongue was extended all the way out. I put a drop of juice from a piece of pear on my hand, and touched his tongue to it. It was enough for his meal then.

At night I had to place him somewhere, so I put a box by my bed with a cover on it, with air holes. In the morning he was still alive and happy to be my partner for the next day again. He stayed with me all the next day. That night he again slept in the box.

The next day I was going out to several places with a couple of others. My pet butterfly came with me of course—he'd have it no other way. One of the times we got out of the car, a wind seemed to take him away and he disappeared. His mission was accomplished, and I was greatly encouraged by this angel butterfly friend.

My heart still warms at the thought of it. God can use the most unusual and special things

to touch and cheer our hearts, while we are giving our all to cheer and care for others, as He's asked us to.

Token of Love

In the early 2000's I was having personal struggles of my own. Having no sign of "that special someone" in my life seemed to make every step an uphill climb. My work then could be considered a light load. But for me at the time it was oh so hard.

I was caring for one dear little girl, while her parents both worked. I was often with her for 10 hours a day, and found it wearisome at times, because after playing the role of a stand-in parent, I didn't have the "reward" of then having a husband's arms to rest in when the day was over.

There wasn't much challenge at the time for me, but on I braved, doing the best I could, and all the while, unbeknownst to me, being trained for what my future would hold.

One day the mother bought a box of second-hand crayons for her girl. With joy the little girl promptly dumped the whole pack all

over the floor, while her mother and I looked on. Ah... *one more mess to clean up...* we both initially thought.

Then I noticed something else mingled with the crayons. An earring! Just the style and shape I liked, and matched the colour of clothes I happened to be wearing that day.

Surely there wouldn't be a pair in this second hand box of crayons. But I was wrong. There were two earrings indeed. I smiled.

I wouldn't have found a pair more perfectly suited to my tastes if I'd gone out to shop for some.

The girl's mother was glad for me—as they were not her taste of jewellery, and she was glad to have this little way to tell me thank you for caring for her daughter that day. I wore them often, and my heart perked up every time I did.

Heart Necklace

As a going away gift, my dad had given me two little crystal hearts to go on a necklace. I wore them often.

While helping with a team of missionaries,

I stayed in the girls' room. It wasn't an ideal set up, as there wasn't adequate closet space or shelving at the time for each of us to settle comfortably. Keeping things tidy was a challenge if not impossible.

After six months it was time for me to move on. I had just a few weeks left, and I was trying to pack up and collect things. To my disappointment I noticed my necklace and both hearts had gone missing from my bedside. I prayed for a miracle to find them.

A few days later I saw someone swinging a chain around—and found out it was mine! They'd found it in some other part of the house. Great! One down, two to go!

A few days later I spotted in the middle of our bedroom floor one of my little crystal hearts! I was amazed and very grateful. I would have been happy with at least just one, but I prayed again, just in case He wanted to bring the last one to me.

A week later, heart number two is was our floor! –Just sitting there waiting to be noticed. Jesus is so sweet. It really touched me.

Not a Sneeze!

I never had hay fever before, but in the few weeks before having the new baby, I seemed to be sneezing a lot more than usual. I wondered if I was going to start being subject to the unwelcome yearly condition.

It wasn't too bad, just a touch compared to what others were getting. But maybe that was to amplify the supernatural miracle that occurred.

I had to have an unexpectedly early C-section, and it was a wonderful thing to be healthy, and that no one in my family or any co-workers had colds or coughs at that time. I was thankful for that. The last thing you need to do while trying to heal such a deep and painful wound is to cough, sneeze, or even laugh too much.

From the moment I had the baby, till three weeks later, I did not have a single sneeze! Not even a little coughing or choking on water, or anything of the sort. And believe me, it's something you'd remember if it happened!

Once, when it had been about two and

half weeks into my healing I felt a sneeze coming. I was thinking “Oh no, what’s this going to feel like?!” Bracing myself for the worst, the “Ahh...” part started, but then just stopped half-way and vanished.

It wasn’t like those “I feel like I’m going to sneeze,” and then it just doesn’t come. It was different, I had begun. But the part where it would pull and tighten my abs just didn’t happen. When the first sneeze happened later on it was doable.

I’m often choking a bit on water, since I need to drink plenty of water. But to not have even the slightest “Cuh!” or anything during the time when I was the most sensitive while healing, it was a divine touch of His tenderness and compassion and care for the smallest things.

Anniversary Flowers

On our wedding anniversary a few years ago our son came and handed me a spray of little white wildflowers he’d picked while outside. I thanked and hugged him and set it on the bathroom sink to decorate it. The stem was

pretty short so I didn't put it in a cup of water.

A few hours later I noticed that it was still bright-looking and not withered at all. The next day, the same thing! The blossoms of the small white flowers were still as fresh as if they had just been picked. It was a least a week or so that these little flowers lasted, without being in a cup of water and not wilting in any way or getting brown.

I took it as a little sign of love and an “anniversary gift” from Heaven for us. A small, but noticeable and sweet way for Jesus to say He loves us and was congratulating us!

Moving to Australia

We'd moved to Australia with our family of three children, (ages 4 years old and under), 2010. After staying in the home of kind friends for three weeks, a small but nice house accepted us as tenants.

We were surprised and happy to have a place of our own to move into, and so quickly. There were 14 other applicants for the house, but we were the ones chosen, thankfully.

We were to move in the next day. The house was still bare, and we didn't have enough money to go out and buy everything new that we needed. All we had was prayer and faith.

Then the miracles started. And by the time we went to sleep in our new house for the first time, 48 hours after signing the lease, we had mattresses and blankets—and the miracles just had begun. By the first day, and all throughout that first week we received—nearly all for free, from kind and generous folks:

- Mattresses
- Quilts for all the beds
- Electric water kettle & toaster
- 3 chests of drawers
- Plates & tea mugs
- Pots & pans
- Office desk
- Dinning table & chairs
- 2 wooden closets
- Nice carpet, the perfect style & colour that would be needed

--Heaters

--Lounge set to borrow (made our main room look great for all the visitors while the rest of the house was still getting set up.)

--A big trampoline

--Water filter

--Washing machine and dryer (for 1/8 the price we nearly had to pay)

--Refrigerator

..and on the list went!

We'd been missionaries overseas for 30-some years, so coming back here was like starting from scratch. But God has ways of saying thank you for serving Him. He's done so much to provide quickly all that our family needed.—And He hasn't stopped yet!

A Smiling Carrot

While eating dinner with my children, shortly after my birthday in 2010, I exclaimed in happy surprise at what I saw on my plate. If I'd mixed the food in my bowl a hundred times it still wouldn't have formed what I saw.

There on my plate was a perfectly formed smiley face, made with food. It was made with a slice of carrot, raisin eyes, and a cashew nut for a smile. Those were parts of the veggie dish we were eating that night. I showed my plate to my 4-year-old without saying exactly what it was that I had noticed, but it was so clear he saw it immediately too.

We laughed together and my food remained unfinished. I just couldn't bring myself to eat this last bite of love! To have it all perfectly, symmetrically formed, looking right at me in an upright position was Jesus' way of saying hi and letting us know that He cared and was there with us. We took a picture of it!

A Unique Valentine's Day Gift

It was nearing the end of January, 2011, and I had been thinking earlier in the day that Valentine's Day was coming up. I was thinking how I wanted something special to happen, but then brushed it off as a silly thought, not for busy mummies of young children.

We have a wonderful marriage with "romance on the go", with a hug here, a word of appreciation there, a quick kiss good-bye or welcome home, is being what we mostly manage to fit into our busy life.

I reminded myself that there would be no fancy dinner out or chocolates! (Due to my dietary constraints, and our children's needs in the evenings.) Then I turned my thoughts outward, like I like to do—I wondered what I could do to cheer others up, and moved on from the "what can happen to make me feel special" thoughts.

We came back that day from our one-day camping trip and got the mail out of our box. Our mail that day held a fun surprise.

My tooth had been hurting off and on for a few months. Some days I couldn't even drink water without lots of pain. Other days the pain was dormant until food got stuck in the

wrong place. I had to have dental floss in my pocket at all times. It was the only way to cope with it. When I flossed the painful area, it relieved the discomfort.

The thing that had stopped me from being able to get dental help was that for some reason my health card had expired. With it the dentist trip would be affordable; without it, totally impossible.

We didn't know why mine was the only one that had expired. We were trying to find the time to one day go in to the office to ask about it and hopefully be eligible for a new one.

So the mail that day held a new health card for me. We hadn't asked for it. But the timing was right. Great! Within seconds my dear husband was phoning to make a dentist appointment.

"The soonest appointment is on February the 14th," the lady on the phone said. "Will that be alright?"

Jesus had given me a gift of love for that special day. A practical and appreciated gift!

Then to top it off, my plans for doing something special for others on that day worked out in a miraculous way. I had planned and hoped to make gift bags for mothers at the hospital who

had just given birth and were there recovering during Valentine's Day.

However, being short on funds to buy the items to put into the mother/newborn gift bags seemed beyond what we could do. I prayed for the supernatural supply of funds to do it, if it was something Jesus wanted me to do.

A day or two before Valentine's Day we were doing our weekly shopping, and were pleasantly surprised at what happened. Just that day—and never again has it been repeated while we were there—there was a wonderful offer.

For only two dollars a bag, customers could fill up all the fruits and vegetables that they could fit, into as many bags as they wished to. It had such a dramatic difference on the total cost of our shopping that we were able to then use the funds we'd saved to purchase things for the new mothers.

So on Valentine's Day we made our first stop at the dentist, and my tooth was promptly pulled. Surprisingly, there was no pain then or afterwards. And on we went to the maternity ward to deliver our gift bags to some very happy mothers. A wonderful day it was!

His Eye is On the Sparrow...

After three days and nights of holding, cuddling and praying for my little 1-year-old, trying to feed him and get him to drink water, I was ready for a miracle. He was teething four molars at the same time.

He didn't want anything to enter his mouth. He came down with a fever, and the dehydration was causing constipation for days now. As I put him to sleep that night I sang aloud, "His eye is on the sparrow," and a mysterious happening occurred, telling us Jesus was indeed there with us.

I believe that Jesus has all things under control, and is fully aware of every aspect of our lives and the needs of our little ones. He knows when things seem real difficult. He brings good out of it in the end and gives grace and endurance through it.

I learned tenderness in this time, as it's all I could do: show love, care, gentleness, and faith that my little one would be healed soon. I felt different. I wasn't stressed and uptight about the disarray. I wasn't weeping in despair. I knew we'd round the bend soon enough.

I used what little time I had for quality, enjoyable, educational and inspirational activities

with my other children. I couldn't "accomplish" anything. I couldn't wash the dinner dishes or even pick the dirty clothes up off the floor—my arms were filled, holding my child.

So the night of the third day came, and I prepared something quick and easy with my left hand (that is becoming nearly as good as my right hand now) for the other young children to eat, while holding the little one with my right. My husband had been away for a few days for work, and was using the vehicle. It's really all we could do then.

When I had a few minutes of peace from the fussing of the little one I would take time with the other children, give them my time and some input, or read a Bible story. I tried to do what I could to show that I cared about them too—since nearly my full-time and attention was on the littlest.

I couldn't clean up what we used, since we usually couldn't even finish it before the next bout of crying started. As a result it had reached the point that the house didn't have a spare spot clear to do things in, it seemed!

My husband was to be back that night. I was entertaining thoughts like: "Yay! We can find order again, and hopefully peace, healing and

comfort for the little one, take him for medical advice or attention if it seems needed.” Though, because of the prayers of others, he was handling it with bravery, just asking for cuddles most of the time.

So now for the mysterious. It was evening— 12th of February, 2011. The lively boys were playing in the next room. I’d just finished, once again, helping the little guy to sit on the potty for awhile while distracting him—singing on the guitar, giving stories, playing with toys, and so forth.

It was a good attempt, but no victory yet, just more discomfort. He only wanted to nurse all day the day before, not eat or drink anything else, but today he didn’t even want a pacifier or to nurse, for the first time ever. He just wanted some water and juicy fruits and a few veggies. So by the evening my breasts were feeling painfully engorged, wishing he’d nurse—for his and my sake.

I put him in my bed to cuddle him to sleep and hope for more. The ceiling light was on in the room, blaring in our faces. He was too tired from the rough days and nights to care.

However, I really wanted it off. But if I got up to turn it off, he’d toss, cry and probably fall

off the edge of the bed. I chose to forgo, and told myself to just be content as it was, with the bright light shining in my eyes.

I sang softly, “His eye is on the sparrow and I know He watches me” as I pulled the covers over us. Blink!

What? Did the electricity go off? I wasn’t even all the way lying down yet. The light had been suddenly turned off. I could see the computer mouse light still on, and the hall light on. Electricity was definitely on, just our light turned off at the second I wanted it to. No one was there. I had full view of the place where the switch was. The other children were in the next room.

Ah, the warmth I felt. Jesus was near and watching over us. I froze halfway sitting up when it had suddenly turned off, and all I could whisper in my heart was, “Thank You, Thank You”.

Jesus showed me through it that He was here. And somehow I knew we were going to be okay, that things were going to get better soon. To my relief the baby then nursed and went to sleep. Beautiful moments!

The Coin

It is said that some things bring or predict good fortune: finding a penny, or a 4-leaf clover, for example. Well, I don't know about that, but I'm always ready for something special to happen, something rare, something to make me feel I've been noticed by Someone bigger and better.

I found a penny one day. Now that wouldn't be so amazing if I were say, in the US or Canada, but here in Australia it has been nearly 20 years now since the 1 cent coin has been removed from circulation. The smallest coin used now is a 5 cent. We've been living in this house for nearly a year now.

Every Sunday the large trash bins are rolled out to the side of the road to be in place for the garbage truck on Monday morning. So it's been moved out of its spot 40-50 times.

Then one fine day a few weeks ago, after moving one of the trash bins I noticed a coin on the ground, where the trash can had been sitting. It was very old. I wiped and rubbed it to try to read what it was. "1 cent". Pretty cool!

The Clover

My son, 5 years old, likes to feel special and to have special and unexpected events happen to him. He can feel sad if something rare happens to someone else, and not to him.

Awhile back I had to pause on Bible stories that told of amazing accounts. It made him feel left out—that others were seeing angels and all that, but not him. He's over it now, but he is always happy for fun, encouragement-boosting happenings.

One day while camping, he and my husband were peacefully sitting in the shade of a tree, chatting. There was clover all around them and they playfully looked for four-leaf clovers. Though it's rare to find one, it has happened on many occasions to others.

"Has anyone ever found a five-leaf clover?" he asked his daddy. An answer was being given to the effect of, "I don't think so", or "I never heard of it..." As the words were being spoken, right in front of them there where they were looking was just that! He and his dad found a five-leaf clover! He felt pretty special.

Rare and unique happenings might not happen every day—but we each are special to Jesus. And so are the children. Let's remind them

today of our appreciation for their individual beauty and how they hold a special and fond place in our hearts—no matter what.

Tiny Pansy

As a teen struggling with endless emotions and loneliness, I wanted love in as tangible a form as was possible from the One I had given my heart and life to.

On a walk I saw by the side of the road the tiniest, cutest little pansy. It was adorable. I'd never seen this miniature version of pansies before. I picked it and held it carefully all the way home.

The blossom was no bigger than my fingernail, and the stem only as long as my finger. I placed it in a paper cup on my bedside, trying to extend its expected short life as much as I could. A week passed and it still sat there in the water as good as new, cheery and bright. I was happy.

Then the most curious thing occurred—a “never before, never since” thing. From its tiny stem there were roots growing. Roots, that in a short time only got longer and stronger.

I planted it in a flower pot, and with joy saw it grow into a plant with many other blossoms. My Creator—the One Who makes

plants to grow as well—was there with me, continuing to create of my life what He wanted, moulding me through the ups and downs, and bringing blossoms of joy my way.

The Ring

My first gold ring that I'd ever bought was on sale. It was pretty and it had a heart with a diamond-looking stone set inside. I was always checking that it was still on my finger and not lost. It was my first real ring, and I was getting used to the feeling of wearing one.

I wasn't even close to being engaged. As much as I wished for a boyfriend then, there was no hope in sight at that point in my life. Wearing the ring made me feel a sense of belonging or something. It gave the feeling that I was loved and cared for, as kind of a promise of future love that I could see, touch, and keep as a part of me.

Then the inevitable happened while out camping. As we packed to go home, the ring was gone from off my finger! Oh dear! And in the worst place I could imagine losing it. It would be gone forever now, or so I thought.

Though I and the others looked all around, it was rather impossible to even start knowing how to look for it and much less to find it.

What could we do? I returned home, with a sense of loss and a bit of a sadness weighing on me.

But did my face and heart ever lighten up as I took my pillow out of the plastic bag while unpacking from the trip. To my happy surprise out fell the ring! I still have it, 20 years later.

A Night in Hamlyn, Without Pied Piper

“God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble.” (Psalm 46:1)

Some things we face, and long for relief from, not another human soul can help. We are left with the best help option only: God’s intervention.

Appalled is the word that begins to describe my feelings since this plague has hit our city—and we’ve not been spared. This is no made up story. I’m comforting myself by thinking of the millions who endure difficulties and dangers many times worse.

We don’t have snakes here in our back yard, or scorpions. We’ve been spared floods and fire. We have not been robbed. Mice are not

poisonous and aggressive. Things could be a lot worse. But still sometimes it was more than I thought I could take.

We open the sports bag in the outdoor shed, and out run the mice. I move my purse and jacket from the armchair in the sitting room, off another scurries.

Under the kitchen sink, dashing behind the stove, in the closets and drawers. Mice droppings in the corners of every room. Well, usually no more than one at a time is seen or caught each night with our ever-ready traps. But one night it pushed me over the limit.

Now, I'm territorial about my house. It's for people. It's not a zoo, and I'm no entomologist. No hairy foot of any mini bothersome beast is allowed into my kingdom, if I can help it. If they are good creatures, they can go where they belong—outside. If they aren't good, the less there are of them the better the world will be.

So to now be facing these larger-size pests and not being able to do much about it is indeed bothersome, and worrisome. You can't catch them. The mice have disappeared from clear view time and again, or so it has seemed when I was sure they were cornered.

Traps rarely worked, the shop didn't sell any other options that friends and relatives suggested, and poison was decided against when weighing out the pros and cons, with small children and the smell we'd have to suffer through.

Another thing to note is that I nearly never ever wake my husband for the night battles as a mother. Most things God and me can cope with. He works hard all day and often half the night.

So with what bit of rest he can get, it's better to let sleeping dads lie. But what I saw the other night was what I'd consider "worth waking".

I was reading and typing on the computer late, in the room where the children slept. I saw it with the corner of my eye, yet totally unmistakably. A mouse ran across one of the children's beds!!! That was it.

A trap was to be set in the bedroom, and the light would remain on for the rest of the night, while I just worked or something, keeping visual vigil.

Well, things didn't go as planned, my extremely tired husband tried several times to set the trap, but it just wouldn't set—and he didn't want me hurting myself trying.

He pulled a muscle trying in that awkward position. He was tired, and I felt bad. He'd try to get what sleep he could before travelling for the next two days. I would just keep watch of my little ones throughout the night, guarding from these awful intruders.

I saw it next climbing over and behind some boxes. I heard it shuffling behind a dresser. My neck hairs bristled as I saw him feel at home climbing in and around the children's sock drawer. Feeling helpless I just kept doing my writing on the computer. Not even my strong, caring husband could help.

But Jesus wanted to show me how He can be the one to be there for me. When no one could help, He could. It was a deep moment between Him and I. Depending on Him alone, and having Him do the seemingly impossible, was faith inspiring.

The moment was described the next day by my husband, "Did you get the mouse last night? I heard noises resembling Armageddon..."

It made a wrong move, and went behind some little drawers in the closet. Still, being cornered has never been a problem for these beasts. They've always escaped. But the miracle took place this time. I grabbed a shoe, and with

much grunting, shaking and earnest determination got it. A horrible, yet victorious moment.

I even got some satisfying sleep after that. And as I lay there, trying to rest from the ordeal, I felt Jesus so near. I could count on Him when there were troubles that not a soul in the world could help.

(We have since taken new action against such critters, and are at peace. Praise God!)

40 Fingernails + 40 Toenails

It's hard to keep up with every last toenail and fingernail when you have three small children—and the baby usually fussing. I told someone once who helpfully pointed out that one of the children needed their nails clipped, that I was trying to get around to it.

I laughed as I told them that I had 80 nails to tend to each week. So that's about 3-4 clips per nail... times 80! Time to do that has to come from somewhere.

There are lots of "to do's" and varying levels of pressure to tend to each of them. One day while feeling the weight of it all, something

odd, that could be considered miraculous, happened. It's a small thing, but every little thing off a mother's overflowing "to do" list helps.

For some reason, when my baby was a few months old and I was doing that maintenance job I noticed that my 5-year-old boy's nails were still the right length as they were when I cut them last. Next week the same! A month passed, and they were still the same length as a month before.

It was a year and a half before I needed to cut them again. He doesn't bite his nails. Somehow they just seemed to stay right. Maybe bits come off here and there or something. But however the Lord does it, it was an odd and tailor-made miracle.

Just one of those little pressure-lessening things He sent, given the speed our family's nails grow. Since this boy in particular was a baby it was always a thing to keep up with, sometimes every few days, they grew so fast.

Nail Clippers & Razor

My nail clippers are another gift/miracle. They were given to me, second hand when I was a young teen, 20+ years ago. And they still work as good as new and haven't gotten lost, at least

not for long. I just find that notable and one of those tiny things that I don't usually think about, but would be sorely missed!

One time later, after coming home from the hospital with my second child, a friend had kindly cleaned up in our house for us. It was a wonderful gift!

However, as happens when others help to organize, things might be hard to find or are "misplaced". So my trusty razor was gone.

I looked in all the places I was imagining it might have been placed but didn't find it.

Thankfully, I had a disposable one I could use.

Buying replacement blades for my razor was going to be expensive, when they were used up.

So the miracle that happened was that I used this disposable for about a year and it never went dull. And when I did at last find my proper razor and commenced using it later on, when the miracle disposable one was finished, the blades seemed to last a long time.

From the time a friend gave me a pack of blades for my razor until they were all used up, was 10 years and counting. I'm still on the last one now.

Reminders of how God knows about each "hair of our heads" or body—or each fingernail

on our children, is a great heart warmer. He's so close, so real, so in touch.

When things go wrong we wonder where He is, why He let it happen, and what He's going to do to fix it. But I like to stop sometimes to think: *Do I notice then the opposite just as strongly with each thing that is still going right—that He is here, has a purpose in what He's doing, and is keeping things together for us in innumerable ways?*

I'm sure there are zillions of things that I take for granted that He's doing or maintaining. Those things that don't get lost, or broken, or need tending to; those things that keep working well; the children's bodies and all the different parts that keep growing and operating as they should.

We usually just notice the things that go wrong. But for each one of those there are probably 1,000 things that *are* going well.

Perhaps we could use those "go wrong" things as a trigger switch, to remind us of those things that we're glad are still fine. —God's quiet intervention and involvement, in His kind invisible way.

It Could Happen!

Sometimes we get used to nearly everything being “uphill”, and “hard work equals success”. But every now and then we get a surprising break, and it reminds us that the One Who is in charge of things really does keep tabs on what we can take, what we need to “work through” and what it’s best that He just press the “skip” button on. Two things happened in the past couple of years that showed me this.

My husband is a musician, and was travelling for a few days with a band doing weekend shows in a few different towns. –This time we got to go with him as a family with him. We’d had a nice place to stay at a campground, and had rented a cabin.

Most everything was fun, but there had been some glitches. One boy had a hard head-bonk at the play ground. Both older boys got fevers. One boy got a large “cow tick” on him, and it was pretty painful.

We were then off to travel home, with just one more show for him to do. I was in another campground for a few hours with the three boys, one of them sick and needing rest. It was tough.

The accommodation we had worked out wasn't at all what we expected. It hadn't been used or cleaned in a long while and was just not so great.

My husband was already on the late side when he dropped us off at the camp. We just had to cope. The mosquitoes in the camper were plentiful and hungry.

The spider webs all around inside were no comfort. The powerful musty smell drove us outdoors.

Thankfully, the sun was shining. We went to the little playground in the campground. I made a make-shift bed for my oldest atop a picnic table, while watching the others play, as well as trying to prepare dinner, nursing and napping the baby on a blanket on the grass.

I was just holding on, and watching my watch, counting the seconds. Then my husband calls and says he miscalculated, and it would be another extra couple hours than we had originally thought. Oh, dear! I was just glad I hadn't known that factoid earlier. It helped me cope better, taking it one time-chunk at a time.

Then the most unexpected, odd miracle happened. It seemed to come out of the blue. And now when I think of that difficult time, it's a bitter-sweet memory, instead of only bitter!

All of a sudden, from one second to the next, my 3-year-old says he can now pronounce “th” instead of a toddler version of that phonetical sound. I’ve known these things to go on for years. And not only could he say “th” but every word that he’d ever said in his life and was used to saying, he began to say correctly, from that moment on. It was almost as if his brain was “overwritten” with a new file. It was simply outstanding.

It was especially meaningful and great for him as his name includes this sound. So when they did a performance in front of a crowd of people, for their first time, not too long after that, he could hold his head up, and feel less self-conscious, declaring his name boldly. Miracles happen—at just the right time.

The next one happened to the same boy. The training wheels on his bike had been broken for a while. However, since his brother had an operation, and had not been able to ride his bike for 6 weeks, there was a pause, while they all had other forms of exercise.

When the time of waiting was over, they were eager to ride bikes again, and were good to go—except the younger boy’s bike needed to be fixed with new training wheels.

Spontaneously, their dad and their friends' dad had planned a meeting of the children the next day at a big bicycle park. Since their friends were going away for a while, this was a special time—not only to finally ride bikes again, but to see their friends once more before they left.

Then the miracle happened. My younger son, while wanting to try his bike in the back yard the day before, asked me to put him up on it. I did. And he simply started riding. That was it? The next day at the park he was racing around on his bike (without training wheels) with the rest of the children. I just laughed.

I couldn't believe it! No big practicing sessions, or bonks from losing balance, or a worried child saying "don't let go." None of that. He just got on and rode, as if he always knew how!

I was thinking about it, how sad he probably would have felt, if he had been the only one without a bike to ride, or the knowledge of how to do it. Sure we could have used the event to begin learning to adjust without training wheels, until we were able to get new ones. But he would have missed out on such fun and free play "with everyone else". God knew it was what was needed, and gave it in an instant.

Sometimes the struggle to learn things is good, and teaches us much patience, perseverance and on the great list goes. But other times, He knows we need the end result sooner, and we get to skip forward.

Olives

Several years ago I wanted olives, and being a missionary, those of you who know what it's like, you can't always just "snap your fingers" and get every wish granted. Or can you? Apparently you can... at times, if God is in it!

I was the care taker of two cute little children, a 3-year-old girl, and a 2-year-old boy. We prayed together for olives. In a way we were surprised when the answer came. But in a way we weren't, 'cause you tend to get used to answers coming when you depend daily on them. Sometimes it's sooner, other times it's later. But Jesus always does something, and can be counted on.

So a few days later, while playing with the children in the garden, the noise of a chainsaw was heard. The neighbours suddenly got the urge to prune and cut huge branches off their olive tree—with olives on it just the right ripeness to use.

The branches fell over the fence and into our yard, unwanted by them. The little children and I had great fun picking the olives off! With branches on the ground it was just the right height for them to happily pick the olives.

It took about a month until we could eat them, of course, doing the pricking with a fork and salt water soaking procedure. It was a fun way to see a prayer answered! We had enough olives for a long while after that.

The Sock That Came Home

It would be easy to dismiss the mysterious happening of the sock, were it not for the almost electric feeling it gave off when handling after it somehow re-appeared in my bag. I'd gone on a walk with a friend. I had my toddler in the stroller, and new baby in the sling.

The part of the road we had to walk down didn't have a sidewalk and it wasn't easy with the stroller. It was a hot summer day, and trying to get to our destination as quickly as possible, and get off the road was really all we could think about.

I had put my favourite little socks on my newborn. He didn't have many that fit him well. (It's amazing how fast babies grow out of socks!)

While at the most dangerous part in the walk with cars zooming by, I noticed that one sock had fallen off his foot. Going back to retrace our steps was really not a good option. We quickly walked on, and I “gave it up”. Our lives were worth more than a sock.

I didn’t have many means to come by lots of baby supplies. I wouldn’t just be able to go to a shop and buy him a new pair right then, as expensive as baby or any type of clothes were in the area. We relied on charitable clothing donations. Even socks were valuable to me!

I swallowed, accepted the loss, and took the other sock off so both feet would be matching! We were out for a couple of hours, and arrived back home.

When I put away the items from our trip and unpacked the backpack I noticed that somehow there were two socks among the stuff. I was amazed and felt that wonderful feeling of God’s love in such a personalized way. He cared about my newborn’s sock—because it mattered to me.

I began then to think, “Oh, maybe I somehow put it in the bag...and I just didn’t remember...?” We’re far too quick to brush off the supernatural with some down-to-earth

thinking. But really, I didn't notice it coming off, and wouldn't have pulled one sock off his foot and put it in the bag while walking down the road!

I was debating the reality of the amazing occurrence, and attempting to brush it off, but as I held the sock it started to vibrate with that feeling when electricity is going through something. It had a buzz to it. I felt Jesus gently chiding me.

I chose to believe He was capable and kind enough to do such a thing. With a humble and grateful heart I thanked Him. The little ones matter to Jesus, and so do we who are trying to be His hands and smile, His care and love to the children.

The Pen Lid

As a mother of three children, I hope and pray for them to know Jesus' love for them in personal ways as well, validating His reality in their own hearts, and I'm thrilled when such occurrences happen—such as the following account my children wrote about in a letter to their friends:

“One of our favourite things to do is to draw with our new coloured markers. Because

we like to draw amazing pictures—like treaded work vehicles!

“Here is a special little miracle Jesus did for us the other day. For a few days we had been looking for one of the lids to the light blue marker. We didn’t want the marker to get dried out, but the lid just seemed to disappear one day when we used it.

“We just got new bike helmets and read about bicycle safety and wanted to ride them. We drove to a place that had a big area for biking and we wore our new helmets and had a good time riding around.

“When we were at the bike park, mummy looked in the grass in the bike playground area, and was so surprised to see, guess what? A light blue marker lid—to just the same kind of pens that we have.

“It was exactly what we needed. It had some dirt on it, and had been there for a while, it seemed. We brought it home and happily placed it on our pen! Jesus is so amazing. He knows what we are thinking and what our wants are.”

It Must Happen Hundreds of Times...

I just marvel each night, as my boys peacefully go to sleep: They've made it through another day, safe and sound!

My latest motto that has come to me each morning, as I praise God for the gift of another day together with these dear little ones is:

Every day is a gift. Every hour is a miracle. Every minute is supernatural.

By the looks of some of the things these daring dudes try out at the playground, and given the many other possible dangers that go into life these days, it really is a miracle. I pray each morning for safe keeping for another day—and thank the only One Who can do it, each night as He has done so, once again.

Some things happen that remind us just how watchful our wonderful Heavenly caretaker is.

Some things are totally scary—like the time my boy nearly got hit by a car. He hadn't learned yet to use his bike brakes and decided to coast on his bicycle down the driveway that leads to the main road, just missing the car that passed in front of him by literally a second.

I was powerless to stop him, as I was holding the stroller—if I let go, it would have

rolled into the street. I needed those extra pair of hands—God’s! And they were there for us.

Some things are nearly funny—like the time I took my children to the park. After walking there, and sitting down for a picnic, my son says, “Mummy, what’s that leaf thing on your hat?”

I take my hat off to see. Aaah! I don’t like spiders in the least, and where we live there are some very poisonous ones around. But unbeknownst to me I had been carrying around, on my head, a spider rolled up in a leaf, for the past half-hour! It was an ugly looking thing. At least it had the sense to stay there.

There are these spiders that place a dried up leaf into the centre of their web, and stay hidden there—from the sun, and from birds. I’d gone in to a bush area of our yard to retrieve a ball, and apparently got a bit extra while at it. Glad I had my hat on that time!

Then there are the times when we just breathe a sigh of relief, like other “near misses” that would end the fun in a second, and bring us to the clinic instead of playing at the park. Like the time after a long drive to a great nature reserve and playground, our 2-year-old at the start of finally getting to play, trips and falls.

He didn't get hurt, as he missed hitting his forehead hard on the sharp edge of the stone step—by an inch or two. Someone Up There loves us. We had a great day, thankfully, due to that Heavenly intervention.

These little things—and sometimes big things—remind me that there are many more that go on each day, hundreds, that I am most likely blissfully unaware of. There must be countless ways God keeps and protects us each day.

When a small accident or bonk occurs, I've decided to use it to do more than say a short prayer with my little ones for the little hurt to go away.

I use it as a reminder to commit them to the Lord in prayer—for their safe keeping all day, for their decisions, ideas, and that in all they do they will remain safely protected, by the only One Who can keep them in every way.

I do my part—and mostly that part is to “watch and pray”—and He's doing His part to care for us and keep us safe and bring us through the bumps here and there.

**“Their angels do always behold...”
(Matthew 18:10)**

One night in October, 2008, I walked to the bathroom that was in our room suite and saw something that brought a smile. It was one of Jesus’ little messages to me. There is a picture of Jesus that was always stuck on the bedside table beside our son’s bed.

Our oldest was three years old and was sick. He must have also been having tummy issues that caused him to roll around, and was out of his fold-out bed on the floor. Only his head was on the bed, and he was curled up, partly sitting, partly lying down on the warm carpeted floor.

I saw his favourite picture, propped up right beside him leaning on the bed, as if it had been perfectly placed there, totally upright and completely straight. I found it had stuck to his long hair, and somehow in the night through rolling it had travelled with him.

However, to see it placed totally perfectly beside him, was miraculous and heart warming, like Jesus was saying how close He was. And this boy miraculously had a good night’s sleep, though he’d had a cold, was feverish, had slept

most of the afternoon, and his tummy was not comfortable. Jesus was with him and gave him peace.

Invisible Umbrella

Some things can't be explained in the physical, because they are mysterious and wonderful happenings that Jesus alone can do—nor can they be verified by anyone else, because I was alone, or it happened to me alone. But the reality of the event and the way it touched me made a memory, something that He and I alone share, and it's one more proof of His amazing, ever present and all-knowing love and care.

In the late 1990's I lived on a larger property. My bedroom that doubled as an office for me was in a separate building from the main house. It was one of those "raining cats and dogs" days, and I was in the main house kitchen about to walk to my room.

Huge drops of torrential rain were falling. I'm not afraid of getting a little rain on me, but the amount of water coming down per square foot at that moment was stronger than I'd receive standing in the shower!

I didn't have an umbrella there to use, so I decided to wait until it let up. I decided to help

out in the kitchen, put the clean dishes away, and tidied up. I felt the Lord telling me to help out first, and then it would be fine to walk by then.

I did have plenty of work waiting for me to do, so I was rather anxious to make it back to my computer at some point that afternoon! I prayed: "Okay Lord, what shall I do now. Dishes are done, and You said that it would be fine for me to walk afterwards, but the rain is still coming down hard." I prayed and waited for a short reply.

"Go ahead and walk", was the instruction. I didn't have an umbrella or hood or anything to shield me. I opened the door and took the first step, then the next and made my way down the long driveway.

Mysteriously, though rain continued all around, it was as though a Heavenly umbrella was above me. I didn't feel a drop! Wherever I stepped, no rain fell. I made it to my room without getting wet.

These special moments of His love being so near gave me courage to keep holding on to His love, when it was all I had at the time with no other close companion. He was reminding me of His reality and care for me. How I love these special moments and tender, thoughtful experiences.

The Rain

Autumn had arrived, in 2008, and it was the first day of rain in a long time, here in Lebanon. We had planned to take the kids in the car with a friend to go out and do some musical instrument research.

In a place where rain isn't a regular occurrence, it's more dangerous to drive, as people are unaccustomed to it, and many accidents happen more easily.

The man we were going with was soon to arrive at our apartment, where we would get in his car and drive from. But it was raining so hard it was like a curtain or sheet of water, white, coming down. It was definitely not a good idea to take the little children out in this weather.

However, cancelling at the last minute for reasons that this friend might not understand, would have been equally not preferable.

I looked out the window at the pouring rain and prayed. "Lord, if You want us to go, You could stop the rain."

It seemed like there was a lot more where that rain came from looming in the sky. But still, all things are possible. I walked to the next room to talk to my husband about it.

We walked back to pray and look out the window. By the time we'd walked back it'd been about 3-5 minutes. Huh? The rain was stopping!

A minute or two more and it had completely stopped, and stayed that way for the duration of our trip for the next couple hours. The rain resumed when we were home again. Our amazing, wonderful Lord, did it again for us!

Walking on the Water?

In August 2002 there were homeschooling meetings held in another city, and I and the father of a family of six who homeschooled their children attended. He and the family I was staying with lived in the same area of town.

The second day of the meetings was on my birthday, and afterwards we took the bus back. When we arrived in our city, it was bucketing down rain. More than being concerned about getting wet, when looking at the condition of the highway, we wondered how we could possibly cross!

To get from the bus station to our homes there was no other way to go but across this main road. The water was about a foot deep. Cars were stuck and the water was muddy and grimy. I was suggesting we stop our hemming and

stalling and just take our shoes off and walk through it. But if it was that dirty, and we didn't want to ruin our shoes, then walking with bare feet wouldn't be real safe!

As we looked at the flooded road, and the jammed cars trying to struggle through this night, I recalled the story in the Bible of Peter walking on the water. I prayed for some miracle for us to get across and remain dry.

A moment later a quad (like a motorcycle, but with four wheels) was effortlessly driving through. The man on it was coming to help his friend. I ran over and with hand motions and a few Spanish words got the message across, asking if he could help us too. He agreed.

We all four sat on his quad, and a moment later were at the other side of the road—dry. Our wonderful God of miracles helped us—maybe not walk but cross—through the water, without getting wet. —It was a fun birthday gift to end the day with!

Wedding Gifts from Jesus

The day of our wedding was set: it was to be October 18th, 2004. The outdoor site had been chosen. It was the place where we had first kissed, on a woodsy hill. We were putting

together our scripts and things to read and say, the music, the schedule of events, timing it right with the sunset and all.

However, time was running out until the wedding date, and I still needed something to wear and the wedding rings and a pendant on a chain that I was planning to give to my husband as part of the ceremony. Money to get these things was a factor too.

Each of us volunteers received about 5-10 dollars worth each month to cover any personal needs. Some of which I would give to help pay some of the taxi fare so my fiancé could come to visit me each week (as he lived in another town). Some of it I would also set aside to eventually add up to a small gift to give to someone in need, once or twice a year.

What was left I used for either myself, or gifts for people's birthdays, etc. So I usually didn't have much on hand at all, just a few dollars or less sometimes.

So when the day came that I was going to go out to get the things needed for my wedding, I looked in my wallet and strangely there was about 12 dollars. I don't know where it was from. It just seemed to be there when I needed it.

And now for the next miracles—to get a dress and ring and pendant and whatnot with that amount—and to even find the needed items, and in the short amount of time I had that day. I really prayed and claimed God’s promises of supply.

I had this “wish” type of dress that I wanted. My mum had a dress for years which she gave to me. It was of a certain type of material, and creamy white, spaghetti straps, long, etc. She’d given it to me a while back, but I had to give it up, sadly, because I had to really cut down on possessions to travel and move overseas. It wasn’t a “have to have”, and so had to go.

I was sad I hadn’t found a way to somehow hold on to it, as it would have been just perfect for my wedding. So this is what I had in mind when I went out that day, trying to lay it to rest and hoping to find something that I would like equally as much.

I was able to find and buy a simple man’s silver ring for a good price, and a pendant. That was neat! But in all the second hand stores there wasn’t anything that was suitable to be used for the wedding dress. And the fun and fancy looking “wedding” dresses were way, way too expensive—even the second-hand ones.

It was getting late and we needed to go home. We just looked quickly in one last store. And oh! I found it! Almost the very dress I was dreaming of. It was the same type of material, colour, cut, everything, as my mother's dress. There were just a few little differences, that made it even more well-fitted and nice-looking on me.

It was very dirty and dusty looking, however, and looked like it had stains on it. I put it on and just knew "this was it" and it would work out to somehow get it clean enough and looking nice. I was thrilled!

The man came down even more in the price because it didn't look that great at the time. However, thankfully, when we washed it, all the dirt very easily washed out and it looked beautiful!

I was amazed to find what I was looking for. I was then in a completely different part of the world from where my mother had gotten her dress, and in all the shops around nothing had even come close to looking like it thus far. I'd never seen a dress similar to this type as my mum's had been, ever in my life before. So it came as a surprise to see it among all the other second hand clothes.

To top it off, as I and the lady I was out with were going to get in the taxi, we stopped in a cloth shop, and there was a pretty, cream colour shiny cloth cut-off, just the right matching colour, and the man gave it to me for free.

I used it to go over my shoulders as a decorative shawl, adding an extra touch to the outfit. Jesus amazed me again with this whole outing and His supply!

Oh, and earlier I had looked in a box of clothes and items that other volunteers no longer needed or wanted, and I found the perfect, dainty creamy white shoes, that fit just great.

The Golden Egg

It was a scientific phenomenon—at least to me. Ever heard of an egg that after being boiled, painted by a child to resemble a bird’s egg, placed in a decorative nest, displayed on the shelf for months—and then when it was opened one day, was found to have turned into golden coloured glass?

It was like an amber stone, or glass. It didn’t smell in the least. It hadn’t gone bad in any way, but was hard as glass and amber colour, and clear—the “white” of the egg, that is. I still have it.

This happened at the time my husband was gone for 6 months, in 2007, as he was suddenly and unexpectedly refused an entry visa into the country we had been staying and working in as volunteers, after we had taken a short trip to a neighbouring country.

I was allowed re-entry and could return to our house, and thus stayed there caring for our 1-year-old, as well as giving birth to our second child during that time.

Perhaps my heart was like that egg—cooked in the hot water of the difficult situation. But then God gave strength and faith, as good as gold or jewels.

We came through, and my husband was able to return. We were the better for it, having been strengthened through it all. When the newborn, at 5 months old, saw his daddy for the first time, it was as if he'd known him all along. There was immediate bonding.

Dreams

Dreams at night can be a way to do things I miss or don't get to do during the day in "real life".

One day, in September 2012, I had the neatest dream. I was sitting to eat in a restaurant

with a group of others. This was the fanciest restaurant I've ever seen. I've certainly never been in one like it before—even though I've dined in some pretty classy places a few times, because of the generosity of others.

In this dream place the food was very rich and served in courses, so it was very relaxed, with various types of wines served. Portions were small and delicate due to the rich quality of food that it was.

This dream was fun for me, as in “normal life” I can never eat out, or have wine, nor most common foods that others have—such as dairy, sugar, wheat, spices, etc., due to food sensitivities. So it was a special dream treat!

A month previous, shortly before my birthday, in a dream I met with a dear friend who I have known for a very long time, but it's been years now since we've seen each other. It seemed a surprise party was planned for me, and they and I were going for a mini vacation together for a few days.

I don't get to see or talk to many people besides the postman or door-to-door salesmen who come once in a rare while. I have my children and a wonderful husband to interact with, but due to chemical sensitivity I need to

mostly stay at home base. So the next special dream I had was treasured.

In my dream I was meeting one by one all these great people, talking to and hugging each one of them. I wasn't shy meeting and talking with all these people for the first time—people I would love to have a chance to meet.

In those dreams I was able to enjoy some of the two things I miss out on in day to day life. I don't usually remember my dreams, so when I have one that is special, vivid, seems tailor-made, and is remembered the next day, I know it's been planned and was Heaven-sent.

Protection from Accidents

There are countless times when my children have been spared of some ill effect of a fall or bonk—far too many to list. Just this morning my six year old boy fell nearly head-first about a meter to the tile floor, after slipping on what he was balanced on.

He cried loudly and I was sure it was because it seemed he landed on his hand and wrist and that there was something broken. But no, it was because he'd bonked his groin on the way down, on the edge of a chair.

It was painful, but nothing compared to what it could have been—broken arm, smashed face and broken teeth. Within a moment he stopped crying and was absolutely fine.

I could write a chapter at the end of the day of all the times the children were spared the natural effects of gravity and childish exploring. It makes me realise the importance of focused prayer for their safety at the start of each and every day. They survive because of it!

A Carpentry Miracle

Our house is small and needs help in getting organised, and we wanted some tailor-made furniture to suit the needs. We prayed for a long time—sometimes daily on our knees, the kids and I, and made the plans for some things that we wanted to get built.

The thought of what it would cost to get a carpenter to build it wasn't encouraging. After saving for several months we were able to get the wood for it—and then it sat waiting for us to be able to use that wood and get the furniture built.

Around my birthday last year I wrote a friend in this city, who I met at a meeting for Christian homeschooling mums, and we

connected. She's only been able to visit us about twice in the two years we have been here, and rarely communicates via email. So I wrote her about a question concerning our carpentry plans, as her husband is a carpenter and he might have some advice for us.

I went to bed on the certain day of the year that magical and special things happen to me for some reason, thinking that nothing outstanding had happened that day. But then I heard in my heart Jesus saying, "The day isn't over yet."

I went to sleep and woke the next day to see an email back from this couple—the first time ever to hear back that fast. That alone was a miracle! But what the note said surprised me even more. The husband was the one responding and said he'd come in two days and help build what we needed!

He kept his word, and after two visits to our house the main furniture was built—for free! I was a bit in awe about all this, and it just kept coming to me out of the blue that a friend that had passed on to Heaven some time back was helping to pull some strings. He had been a great carpenter and it was something he could have easily done while on Earth.

Somehow I think the Lord used him to influence this carpenter who was totally perfect—nearly unheard of!

This man proved to be all that I had been praying for: Someone who would have the wisdom to make what we needed strongly and well, and to be able to understand my somewhat complex instructions, and be humble and not be full of his own way of doing things or pushy, but preferring our wishes.

It worked out like a dream come true.

The Book

There was a book that I read when I was an older child. I didn't always enjoy reading all that much, but for some reason I read that book several times and liked it a lot. It was about a girl called "Mary Jones", and how she got a Bible at last.

I was wishing for this book to read to my children. I prayed for it, but didn't know how this prayer would be answered. I could probably find it online and order it, but just the shipping cost of one book from overseas is oftentimes more than the book itself!

There is a lady in our city that had offered us many second hand Bibles to send to missionaries overseas. We were able to send several boxes and packages off to teams in places like Uganda, Zambia, India, Fiji, France, Brazil, Hungary, and so forth, for their outreach.

One day she dropped by with another couple of boxes of Bibles for us to send, and said that there were a few missionary story books included as well, for us to use if we wanted them.

It was nearing Christmas time, and it was a day I was really in need of encouragement. I looked in the boxes, and one of the books she was offering us was nothing less than the book I so wanted and prayed for just days before: *Mary Jones and Her Bible*.

Right-Side Up

When I was 11 years old there was a girl who was 14 years old that I liked being around and admired. She was the kind of friend that put others at ease, and had a calming personality.

Many years later when she was married and had a few children, she and I finally met again when she came for a visit to the city I was then living in. She still had that special friendly air about her.

I wanted to give her a gift, but had little time to prepare something. I wanted to make her something—something that would be meaningful and that would be appreciated. I selected and collected various quotations and words of praise to Jesus, and printed them out as little cards.

It was tedious and took a fair bit of time, but I wanted it to be special. I put them in a box and got it finished just in time before she left to catch her plane. I put each of the few hundred mini cards in the box nicely—with the right side up, all facing the right direction. At last it was ready and I rushed to give it to her.

However, on my way to hand it to her the box fell and out went each card. With no time to lose, I had to very quickly collect them off the floor and put them in the box in any which way.

I had wanted it to be neat and to at least have the cards facing the right way. But that got messed up, and there wasn't enough time to redo it. For some reason it mattered to me.

So after hurriedly putting them all back in, I thought to pray a prayer. I said, "Lord, can you do a miracle, and make every card be turned the right way. I want it to be a gift nicely prepared."

I had to make a move then to give it to her, but on my way I gave a few peeks to check—

and every card I pulled out was put in just right, with the top of the card pointing up towards the top of the little box, and the face of the card going in the right direction too.

I felt Jesus' love and care. If it mattered to me, and I was doing it to show His love and care for someone, then it mattered to Him too. He answered, and it touched me.

Little Notebooks

Something I needed and wanted was a small, blank, lined-paper notebook. I need to write so many things down throughout the day! Shortly after I had this need, a friend was moving to another part of the country and they gave us a few bags of children's materials they no longer wanted or needed.

Among the items given us were two notebooks, just like I needed, and there was even a pen attached to each one—pens that actually worked. Great! No more running around looking for a good working pen to use. I was happy, and so was my 5-year-old, who also really likes little blank note books.

It was thoughtful of Jesus to not only supply for me what I needed, but He knew that my son would want it too, and I probably would

have chosen to share it with him if there had only been one.

Later on, when that notebook was nearly filled and I was going to need a new one, my husband was given a little book as part of a gift package he was given for helping to review student's piano skills at a contest. He gave it to me when he got home, not even knowing that it was what I was going to need. Jesus was so thoughtful.

My work depends on these notebooks, as I get so many ideas and solutions as I go throughout the busy day, and if I don't write them down I totally forget things.

Washing Machine

We had recently moved into our new house and by a miracle we were able to get a washing machine for quite cheap. It worked great. The only thing that those we bought it from said was that the hose bringing cold water to the machine leaked water. And it was true, as we found out.

Where the hose was hooked up to the tap was constantly trickling water. We had to keep a bag on it to catch the drips while using it,

otherwise the dripping water would run down the hose into the machine and get the newly spun load of clothes wet again, if we didn't make it there in time to turn the tap off.

Usually you can keep the tap on at all times, and the water just goes in the machine when you turn the washing machine on. However, we had to keep the cold tap off all the time, except when we needed to wash our clothes—and then quickly turn it off as soon as it was done.

We didn't know how to fix the problem ourselves and didn't want to spend tons of money to get a new hose and have a repair man fix it.

One night the tap was turned off as usual, and we went to sleep.

The next morning the children and I were in the kitchen, and I wanted to wash some clothes in the machine that is in the laundry room right beside the kitchen.

I put the clothes into the washing machine and started to turn on the tap that is hooked up to the hose, like I do each time I need to put on a load to wash. But for some reason it was so, so stuck. I couldn't turn it on. It was very odd.

I used every bit of my strength. I used a towel to give me more of a grip. I tried everything, and it wouldn't turn on. I figure it must have really been dripping, and my husband must have turned it off real tight at night. So I asked him to help me turn it back on.

He tried too, but not even he could turn it on. He hadn't turned it off extra tightly the night before. Hmm.

Then I get the thought, "Just turn the washing machine on, without turning on the tap, and see if water comes in." So I did. And water came pouring in, filling the machine!

The tap was on already, pouring water into the hose. We couldn't make the tap turn any more to turn it on, because it was already on at its highest!

How strange, and how wonderful! And not a single drop of water was leaking from it. It was on so fully and tightly that I couldn't even turn it off if I tried. It was fixed, and worked great from then on.

We were so happy and surprised at this special gift of love from Jesus, being the handyman for us when we really needed someone to do it.

Every time I use the washing machine I'm reminded how Jesus can do the most amazing and unexpected things to help us.

Floriade

We were going to "Floriade" again this year, as a family outing. (It's a spring time fair.) We didn't know what day would be best to go on.

One morning we prayed about what we should do that day as it was vacation and we wanted to go out somewhere. We had planned to go somewhere else that day originally, but then one of the children asked to go on that day to Floriade instead.

My husband and I asked the Lord about it, and He said we could go to Floriade instead of where we had planned to go, and reminded my husband that all the other days that it would be open for visitors were days that would be extra busy with many more people crowding there.

On real busy days it's very hard to find a place to park, and any rides would take extra patience waiting for. So off we went to Floriade.

When we were about to start driving, the children prayed good prayers for us to find a parking place easily. When we got there all the parking places were filled, but we kept having

hope and waiting for a few minutes. Then we saw a lady and her family come to their car as they were leaving. We would get to park in their spot.

We needed to put coins in the machine to get a ticket to pay for the parking, but we saw that we didn't have many coins left. It would take a lot of time to go and find somewhere to get some change.

Then just before the lady and her family drove away they came running to us and gave us their parking ticket, as they still had two hours left on it—so we got two hours for free!

After the end of the two hours my husband went back to get a new ticket to renew our parking permission, but found out that the parking ticket machine didn't work. So he walked to find another machine nearby.

Just as he was about to buy the new ticket another lady came up to him and said, "You can have my ticket!" Her ticket had a long time left on it! So in the end we got to have free parking for our whole trip out.

Foot Massage

I wrote in a note to a friend in October, 2012:

“I've been wanting a good massage for soooo long. My feet especially felt in need of one. The other day I was asking the Lord to work one out for me, somehow, like in my dreams, or something. Then soon before I woke up the other morning, there was this guy in my dream. He was kind of dressed like a doctor and gave me a foot massage. He seemed to be explaining things to me about the parts of my feet, and talking about what he was doing. The next morning there was a big difference in the way my feet felt--they felt just great! Jesus is there for me and can give me what I need!”

(P.S. to the story: And my feet felt so good and different for several months afterwards.)

Surprise Meeting

There was a lady who I met once and never was able to contact again. I didn't have her contact information, and she didn't write or phone me after I gave her mine. Life just stayed too busy for her. *(I have as many friends here in this city as I can count on one hand, ha! And rarely ever see one or hear from them.)*

When she and her two children came for that rare and first visit, we'd bonded so nicely and our youngest kids have nearly the same birthday. I was puzzled for over a year, wondering why she never wrote.

So a year or so later, my family and I went on an outing one day and left later than expected, due to the little one's crying and the care that was needed. I decided to praise the God for the lateness of time. "Thank You Lord for the late start, as there must be something that we need to be delayed for."

We finally left, and after a bit of a drive we arrived at our destination. It did end up being perfect timing after all! At one point while out I looked up and one foot away from me this friend is standing there saying hi! I was so surprised, and so was she.

She said she nearly never goes to that side of town, and I only leave the house about 3-4 times a month, so it was truly a miracle!

Rose Bush

I've always liked yellow roses—ever since my mum gave me a postcard of beautiful yellow roses, when I was 9. Somehow they seemed special or rarer than pink or red roses. I decided

then that yellow roses were my favourite ones, and continued thinking so as I grew up.

There is a big bush in the back yard of the house we are now renting. When the bush is in bloom it has countless miniature yellow roses all over it. When does it bloom? For a few weeks of the year, at the time of our wedding anniversary.

I feel Jesus' love when I don't just receive a rose or a bouquet of roses on our anniversary, but a big full bush of my favourite colour roses!

Rainbows

The few years before our move to the house we now live in were anything but easy. Tears daily washed my eyes, and my heart was in such aching turmoil most of the time, due to things that were beyond our ability to change or make right.

I've been told many times before how just like rain and sun make a rainbow, so do the rainbows of good come into our hearts when our life is a blend of happy times that cheer us, and difficult times that deepen us and cause us to grow in heart and maturity.

Rainbows have been rare and fun to see throughout my life. But during the time we've lived in this house I've seen more rainbows than

I've seen in all my life put together. They are abundant and we get a good clear view of the full arch.

This time in our life here hasn't been totally tear-free, but there has been a great deal more "sunshine" and joy and relief than we've known in years. It was raining troubles before, and now I feel it's the sun coming out again. And to crown these years of beauty we get to see rainbows so often.

He knows our tears and will paint our hearts with fabulous colours made with a mixture of all we've learned and been through, and the cheer He shines down on us.

We're beautified not just because of constant merriment, but by the way His light and love can shine through our freshly washed heart.

Perfect Sweater

Winters get very cold here in the city we live in, and heating is very expensive. It's not uncommon for me to have 3 or 4 sweaters on at a time. Last winter I really needed another sweater, but even buying one second hand sweater is often 10 dollars. So I opted to just pray and ask the Lord to supply what I needed.

The next day someone came with a bag of clothes for me. A friend said, "Here are some clothes someone gave us that we don't need. Do you need them?"

In it was the warmest, best sweater I could have ever wanted. It was just the kind I wanted and used to have years ago, and just the colour I liked—dark turquoise. I wore it day after day in winter, and enjoyed it. It really did the trick!

Concert Ticket

My husband teaches music part time at a music school, and he loves music. He thinks about it. He writes it. He teaches it. He composes and produces it.

There was a concert he found out was going to be playing--one that he really wanted to go to, but it was pretty expensive. He went to work that day to teach piano.

On his way out of the building to come home, someone came up to him and said, "I have these two tickets (to the very concert he wanted to go to). Would you like to have them?"

That was a very special, unexpected gift from Jesus, and he was very happy and took the tickets and was able to go with a fellow musician friend. He hadn't mentioned it to anyone at work

that he wanted to go to the concert. Jesus knew and worked it out.

A Very Real Dream

Many years ago I was unwell, and didn't exactly know what was wrong with my health. The doctors didn't give much insight. I was also going through tremendous emotional turmoil. The man I loved didn't have mutual feelings towards me. It was not meant to be, and he then got together with somebody else. (*In retrospect—thankfully! I have the best husband now that I could imagine. Jesus' tailor-made gift for me.*)

I prayed to have a special dream. I wanted a dream to encourage me, to cheer me, and to lift some of the sad feelings from my heart. There was someone I really wanted to talk to and it was very rare to see them or speak with them. I just thought that they would be able to help me a bit. I asked the Lord for a dream that I could be with them and talk with them.

One morning I woke up after having had a very vivid dream. I hiked through this mountainous area with the very person I wanted to spend time talking deeply with. I was encouraged. It was a nice dream. I had my request answered.

Later on I was even more surprised with what happened. As I went about my day caring for the children, I had a difficult time walking because my thighs hurt. My thighs ached in a way that is felt when you haven't had exercise for a long time and then you go on a strenuous mountain hike, and they ache the next day.

But I hadn't done such a thing because I wasn't very strong and couldn't have much exercise. I was extremely busy with the children as my job during the day, and hardly had any free time either. So that was one of the things I couldn't afford much of--time for myself and caring for myself.

Then all of a sudden I realized and put two and two together. The dream hike and my sore muscles the next day were rather mysterious. My body had actually somehow benefitted from the exercise that had happened in a real and some mysterious way.

Heavenly Warmth

I went to Mexico in 2002 to live with a missionary family. The very first night I arrived it was their teenage daughter's birthday and she and a group of friends and a few others were going out to a movie that evening. I was invited

to come along. I didn't know what to expect of the temperature in Mexico at that time. It was warm when I arrived.

I had taken a shower and washed my hair, put on my short-sleeve outfit and off to a snack out and then to the movies we went. However, by the time night fell it was cold. I had no sweater with me. My hair was wet and I didn't know what to do because I got sick very easily back then.

I often had colds and flus, and I didn't want to get sick, especially when I had just arrived to help care for the younger children. The last thing I wanted to do was to be sick and to pass it on to them.

I prayed for a miracle, for the warmth of Heaven to warm me. As I entered the theatre the temperature was much lower than it was outside. It was air conditioned and I was to sit still for the next two hours in that freezing cold air-conditioned room, when I was already feeling cold.

However, a super-natural warmth surrounded me, and I stopped feeling cold and didn't feel chilled the whole time we watched the movie. I also didn't get sick.

Another time when I was kept warm miraculously was in Canada. We took our young

children to the zoo. It was getting to be late autumn. Often in late autumn snow even falls, and it was very cold. We brought our sweaters and our jackets, and tried to dress as warmly as we could by adding gloves and scarves.

It was a windy and very chilly day. It was the only day we could go to that zoo with the kids and their grandparents, and before I was to have my baby. It was also my son's birthday. So we chose to give it a go.

I was pushing my 2-year-old in the stroller, and it seemed he still wasn't warm enough, because he was just sitting there and the wind was blowing on him. So I took off my jacket and put it on him as a blanket to try to keep him warmer. Then for some wonderful reason, I didn't feel cold—even though I had been cold before I took my coat off.

The whole time my hands felt freezing, but my torso seemed to have a blanket of supernatural warmth on. We saw so many amazing animals and it was very nice. Over all we had a wonderful time. When the trip was over as we got back into the car out of the cold I realised how special it really was that I hadn't felt cold.

As I sat in the warm car I then had that feeling over me that someone feels after they've

been really cold, and then all of a sudden a warmth hits you and you get all tingly and you shake with the chill because the warmth is starting to thaw you a bit.

I realised that actually my body was very cold and I just didn't feel it at all. Jesus had shielded me from the uncomfortable feeling of being cold.

Curtains

The window to our children's playroom needed curtains. It faced the road and we didn't have any curtains to shield it at night—besides the few remaining blinds that hung down.

The only way to get them was for my husband to try to find them when he was out or coming home from work, but usually he didn't feel capable of finding the right size and the right kind. I'd asked before, and it just wasn't a happening thing. I hesitated to bring it up again.

After putting up with things as is, for quite some time, I began to feel that it was something we really needed to do something about. I prayed and I felt in my heart the Lord saying that it was such an easy thing for Him to provide for us. So I asked my husband one more time if he could try

to see if there were any at a second hand charity shop, and I gave him the window's measurements.

To my joy, my husband agreed to try and checked out a second hand shop. He had hardly looked and immediately found some very child-type patterned curtains that would fit our windows perfectly. They were just great! He was surprised and I knew it was Jesus helping to fill the order I'd placed.

The Way He Made Me

When I was a child, for some reason I really wanted to have black hair. I also wasn't comfortable with my stature and figure. I was very short and thin. Once when I was with my friend we asked someone to guess our ages.

My friend was a couple of years younger than me, but she was taller, bigger and stockier. I was eleven and the man guessed, "Hmm, are you six?" I looked quite small. This wasn't a compliment to me. Maybe now being thought of as younger is great—but not then.

As a teen it was difficult for me. I always felt inferior because of that. I didn't feel I was so

pretty or anything. Then as I grew older and I began to care for children and I stopped growing, I realized I wasn't going to get any taller and that was it.

But after a few years of my young adulthood I realized I was actually just perfect in height. When I grew older, in retrospect I would have chosen this exact height, as it is just perfect for caring for young children—which I have done a lot of in the past 20 years.

Some people have a very hard time when young children are in the learning-to-walk stage and they have to lean over. It's strenuous on their back.

However, I can walk straight, without leaning over at all and hold the little children's hands while they are happily learning to walk. Jesus knew, and He was planning the best for me all along.

And my hair colour? Well, that worked out too. I have travelled to so many countries and lived in many different areas and I just seemed to blend in with so many cultures and countries that I've lived in—because my hair isn't too dark nor too light. I don't stand out as a foreigner as much. People often think I am just one of them. So I was glad for that. I like to blend in.

Healthy and Strong

When my children's sensitivities were discovered and much of their diet had to change, I had to do so along with them. I had to only eat what was good for them, especially during lactating times, as even the tiniest bite of something would upset them through the breast milk.

It seems like a trying or hard thing to not get to eat some of my favourite food. But as I stuck to the new, strict diet, the most amazing thing happened. As I stopped eating many of the things I had eaten all my life, my health started to improve—remarkably.

I used to always be sickly and weak, but when I had to change due to my children's needs, my own health improved and I was given plenty of strength. Another thing I gave up was evening activities, as my little ones required plenty of night time care.

I began having to go to bed real early with them every night. But the benefits were definitely worth what it seemed to cost or what I had to give up.

I am now very rarely sick and many other things have changed in my life also as a result of

caring for my children. It was a gift of the Lord's love to give me health and strength when I was adapting my life's habits in order to better care for the babies and children.

I went to the gym once or twice a week for about a year, and as part of the package deal they offered a free test to see how strong you are, or how "old" or good your bones are, and what might be your life expectancy. So I decided to take the test.

I hadn't been going to the gym that regularly, but I had been working hard carrying children, lifting, rocking babies, and being a busy hardworking mum.

When I took the test I was off the charts in many of the areas as far as being strong and having good stamina. I accredited that to motherhood and having to endure and be strong in all the ways I had to be.

When that test showed that I was above average, and some of the numbers I'd reached weren't even listed as I was above the highest level, it was an encouraging sign of the Lord's love for me. It was like a gift in return for giving my strength and time to care for His little ones.

Babies

I think the Lord has shown me His love through babies, in the way they've loved to be with me. When I was a teen and helped with babysitting, whatever baby I was responsible for always just loved to be with me and would cry to be with me if they ever saw me. I could easily put them to sleep as well.

I think that was the Lord's love through me both ways —to the children so I could care for them as He wanted me to, and also when a child loves you, you know it's the Lord's love—not because of something great you've done for them, or because they are trying to get anything from you. It's just pure real love from Jesus.

My Secret Number

There is a certain number that is my special, secret number—between me and Jesus. As much as I'll tell you is that it's two digits. I won't say what it is, because it's a secret. But the Lord has used it for many years throughout my life as a sign of His encouragement, and that He knows where I am and He knows what I am doing.

Sometimes as a symbol to show me what to do or what choice to make, He uses this number. I am often seeing it just at the right time. It seems to stand out to me in bold bright lights whenever it's displayed somewhere.

It could be written on a ticket to somewhere I am going. It might happen to be written on a billboard just when I am glancing up at that second, a price, a file size on the computer, a ticket number, and so forth.

I just seem to notice it anywhere that it is. It's interesting. Whenever I see it it's almost like a name. It's like my number-name. When I see it I say, "That's me. Jesus loves me." Maybe in Heaven I will find out the mystery of it.

Another odd thing about it is, when I got together with my husband and we were courting, the same thing began to happen to him with my same number.

So he's on the same wavelength as me, and he is always noticing it and seeing it and pointing it out too. Jesus can use anything to get our attention and tell us He loves us, and to Him we are one in a million!

Fisher-Price Toys

It's difficult to find good quality children's toys. Toys nowadays are always breaking and it's a big disappointment for the children and a loss for us parents, especially in the times when we hardly had any finances to get toys with and were beginning to build our family while still being missionaries. If something would break, we felt the loss.

I prayed one time for some good Fisher-Price toys—the kind that were made many years ago – the original type. We were far off in Lebanon at the time. There was no way to find that type of toy there, but I prayed for them anyway.

There was a shipment of clothing sent from Sweden to be given to the poor, but we volunteers were also able to get some of our clothing needs met since clothes were very costly and we had virtually no spending money to get anything we needed.

As I was looking through the boxes to see if any of the spare clothes would fit the children or me, I noticed this little bag on the ground, together with the available items for us to choose from. It looked like a small trash bag and was tied up.

I opened the bag and inside it was a Fisher-Price toy set!

It was a toy cash register and it was very durable and it was made in 1974, and it had all the pieces and was still complete and in perfect condition. We still have it. I was real amazed at the answer to prayer. I wonder what it took to get that bag to me.

Then when we visited Canada a little while later, at a garage sale that was just down the street where I could easily walk to with the children, there were Fisher-Price toys being sold – the original kind that I prayed for, with little people and vehicles and seats they could sit on. I was really touched by the Lord's love in this way that made a difference to me personally.

T-Bone Steak

When I was pregnant with my second child I didn't have sufficient food on some days, due to our situation and finances. It was difficult for me. We didn't have enough funds to get much, but we survived.

One day a restaurant offered to give us a free meal for all of us volunteers that were living there in Lebanon. The owner said we could order

whatever we each wanted from the list. I ordered a T-bone steak. It was the most delicious steak I've ever eaten.

However, right after I ordered, word came back to our table with a clarification and said, "Please do not order any T-bone steaks," because it was too expensive for the restaurant to manage giving that many away. That was the only thing that was an exception that we couldn't have.

However, I had already put my order in even though it hadn't come to the table yet, and thus I was able to have a nice good piece of meat and it was what I really needed right then! The timing was perfect. I got it, but nobody else did. Jesus knew I was the one who really needed it anyway.

The Bus Trip

When I was a missionary, single and in Mexico, I had to take a trip from one city to another alone. It was a several hour bus ride, and I was carrying all my belongings with me. I was a little bit worried and there were several concerns.

Firstly, I didn't want to have to use the bathroom and leave my carry-on belongings up

on the seat unattended. Also, I didn't know what would happen when I had to change buses. How would I get on the next bus, carry my suitcases, buy tickets and find the right bus?

How long would I be waiting at the open-air station, alone with all my things, before the next bus would go? I couldn't see how it would work out, so I just put it into the Lord's hands.

I said, "Lord, You just have to take me from one place to another and take care of me." So I took the bus trip and I never had to use the bathroom for the whole time. It was amazing. That was a wonderful gift from the Lord, so I could stay with my important belongings.

I was glad to not use the public bathroom on a bus—which is not an experience one is too eager for. When I arrived at the first station where I needed to change to the second bus, it was as if I had this sign written on me that said "roll out the red carpet."

I didn't even say a word. I simply got off the bus and people started coming up to me saying, "Do you need help with your bags?"

The bus driver said, "Let me help you with your bags." And he got my bags off. He didn't do that for others.

Another man said, “Do you need a ticket to your next bus? Where are you going? Give me the money; I’ll get it for you.” He had a trustworthy air about him.

I handed him the money and told him where I was going. He ran, bought my ticket, and brought it back to me, while I watched my suitcases being loaded on a trolley.

Another man helped load my suitcases, and they weren’t doing it for tips. It was amazing. It was just miraculous! I just stood there speechless. My suitcases were loaded into the next bus without saying a word or asking anyone. The bus was very soon to leave, and before I knew it I was sitting comfortably on the right bus to go to my destination.

Excellent Care

There are the daily, ongoing miracles of the Lord’s love that I’ve experienced throughout my whole life:

I’ve always had a house to live in.

I’ve always had a good place to sleep.

I’ve had personal protection. I’ve never broken my teeth, nor had any broken bones.

I’ve always had something to eat each day.

My eyes have been strong. I've never needed glasses.

I've never gotten stitches.

I've never been in a car accident.

I've never gotten burned seriously.

I've always had clothes to wear.

I've always had shoes.

There are so many things that happen to so many people that the Lord seemed fit to spare me from. I suppose I get my difficulties in other ways and maybe some people would think I have a tough time in other areas of my life, but this personal protection and personal care is a wonderful example of Jesus' daily love for me.

A lot of it is due in part to my parent's choice to serve the Lord and all their hard work of caring for us. They didn't have tons of resources to provide for us. They just prayed and had to depend on Jesus, so really it was ultimately Him caring for us. And I've been a missionary in several countries myself, as a grown up, and the miracles just kept on. He's cared for me from A-Z.

Green Grapes on My Birthday

One of my favourite fruits is green grapes. When I lived in Jordan, the first birthday I

celebrated there happened to be on the same day as a special outing. It was to a show that was being performed by the volunteers I was working with in a famous place, a very ancient place, where many people would come and watch the show.

However, close by the place we were going lives a very kind-hearted man, who walks with a limp. He can't walk properly, but he's very caring about those in his neighbourhood, as there are many poor who live around him, and he's often asked for help from us volunteers for those in his neighbourhood.

At different times we were able to donate quite a bit to the neighbours—boxes of food and supplies to all those who had need. On day people were going to see the show, he invited whoever wanted to, to come have lunch at his house. They don't have much, but he wanted to make a very special appreciation lunch for us. I happened to be one of the few people who were chosen to go to his meal.

During our visit he showed us his grapevines. He said we could pick all the grapes we wanted and eat as many as we wanted. He grew green grapes! So that was a special touch of love from Jesus.

Prince William and Kate's Wedding

It was advertised that Prince William and Kate of the UK were going to get married, and aired on the news that night. I usually had to go to bed very early to have the strength to care for the children in the night with their challenges, as well as the very early time they rise sometimes between 3:00 and 5:00 am.

I fell asleep, solidly asleep very early in the evening, even though I had been planning and hoping to watch the wedding live with my husband, just for fun, to do something completely different. I woke up the next morning.

Yes, my husband had gone ahead and watched it, but I was totally asleep and had missed it. He knew my sleep would do me much more good than the show. I just chalked it up to one of the many things I missed in the care of the kids.

I took the children to the park the next day, and there was a lady there with a little sweet boy. His name was the same as one of my children—and one of the Royalty as well, oddly. She had a beautiful look on her face and a sparkle in her eyes.

She described the whole wedding to me because she said she saw it the night before, and told me all the things a woman wants to hear, and exactly what the dress was like, and this, that and the other.

I thought it was sweet of Jesus to have someone there to tell me about it since it had been something I had wished I had been able to see.

Ordering Ice Cream

I was going to travel for a few weeks to help a family with their children, since the wife was going to give birth to their seventh child, who would be a handicapped child. They really needed some help.

It was going to be quite a step out of my comfort zone and a new challenge for me. On one leg of my travels I was standing in a line getting a quick ice cream (in the days when I still occasionally ate ice cream).

I felt like I was keeping everyone in the line waiting because it was so rare that I went out to fast food places or anything like that. I wasn't quite sure at this particular joint what the procedure was for ordering and payment and in what order it was done.

I just was fumbling and I felt embarrassed.

Also I was very nervous about my whole trip, going to a whole new situation of people, most of them I didn't know, to do something completely different than I had been doing. In a way I'd been taking care of children so it wasn't completely different, but it was in an environment I hadn't lived in before and in a country I hadn't been in.

I kind of half-mumbled and turned to everyone waiting patiently behind me, because I felt bad with everyone waiting for me to process my order and get the payment done right.

I just said, "Oh, I am doing everything wrong." Then this tall man (a few people back in the line) immediately looked up and said, "Not everything."

I just felt immediately at peace. I felt calm and I just felt the Lord's love. Sometimes I wonder if he was an angel there to encourage me.

Maybe I was fumbling a little with this and that, but the decisions I was making and where I was going and the things I was doing with my life were right.

Enough Chicken

When we bought chicken last year, each package had five or six pieces in it. Now that our baby was older he needed some too. That one package that we usually bought didn't have enough for our whole family's meal. Then, just then, for some amazing reason, the packages at the shop started having seven pieces in them. Just what we needed then!

Candle's Shadow

I let out a little gasp, as it took me by surprise. How very creative, I thought. A very unique way of saying He loves me and was there with me that night.

A large silhouette of the face of Jesus—down to the detail—was displayed on the wall and ceiling above my bedroom door. It was a night I had set aside to spend with Him alone.

I lit a candle and was just getting in cosy in bed with some words of praise to read. Somehow He'd made the candle light shining beside the other items on the table cast that shadow perfectly. But I think He added His own special touch to it.

There was the long eyelashes, just like I think look nice, the beard, and the face silhouette was like it is illustrated in Bible cartoons. I sat in bed communing and talking with Him, and felt very comforted seeing His face displayed like this for me.

Farmer's Food

Sometimes it's fun to pray those "impossible" prayers, asking for things that to my mind seem completely unable to materialise. I like to not limit the Lord, and sometimes I think it offends Him when we think something is beyond His ability.

Knowing His sheer delight in answering prayers and aiding us in any way possible, as we pursue His will, gives the boost of faith to truly ask, "anything in His name". And then I wait with curiosity to see His response.

I was listening to my boys chatting this morning. The older boy said he'd just had some prayer time. The younger boy, who's going through a phase of wanting a bit more proof behind the spiritual principles, questioned him. He wondered if God really does answer prayer.

The older boy reminded his younger brother, “Remember when you prayed for a remote control car for your birthday, and then you got one?”

The younger one continued, saying how He wants Jesus to always give him what he asks for, the second he asks for it—or he didn’t think he could believe that God could really answer prayer.

The older boy posed the thought, “Well, didn’t you pray for the remote control car BEFORE your birthday came? But you had to wait until your birthday to get it. God’s delays are not denials. And if something isn’t good for us then He won’t give it to us. –Like if we pray for some junk food that would make us sick. He gives us what we ask for when it’s good for us.”

It was heart-strengthening to see the faith of this boy helping to lead his younger brother closer to Jesus. His chat and explanation really tells it all in a nutshell.

I know that not each thing I ask for will come to me, right then, or even ever. But I even state that in my prayers. “If You know it’s best, Lord. If not, I trust You to work out something better.” Then at least I’ve opened the door for the miraculous, and it’s amazing to see what does

come about. Such as what happened with our food and shopping situation.

Can an impossible request be answered, tailor-made? Here's what just happened to us.

For months I'd been praying for "something" to work out. It was even hard to know what exactly to ask for, but in prayer I stated our challenges and what would be ideal to have in our situation.

Why was buying our weekly food a problem? I can't leave the house most of the time, due to health and vehicle issues. So I can't shop. Kids can't usually go into a shop due to their chemical sensitivities. So it all falls on my already over-worked husband to do it.

It was draining for him, and took away from the little time he had when he was not working, that he'd rather use to spend time with his children, or rest. I wanted food to cost less, so it was less of a financial strain—as every bit adds up.

We wanted fresher and more healthful food, right from the local farms. Any help in the health department was worth exploring; we know that the plastic packaged, over chemicalized, and long pre-selling storage time that happens in the main shops wasn't helping us any.

How could the Lord answer such a request? To have food come to our door, cost less, and be fresh from the farm?

One morning my five year old woke up and said, “Mummy, in my dream last night there was a message that said, ‘Something special is going to happen tomorrow!’”

And sure enough it did!

The day was nearly over when there was a knock on our door. I was putting my littlest to sleep, but got up as soon as I could to see who it was. For some reason the man waited that long and was still at the door.

I stood there to hear a man telling me everything that was my dream come true. I could hardly believe it. Of all the houses, of all the cities, of all the states in this huge country there was a representative from the team of farmers that wanted to do something new. They wanted to bring food from the farms right to people’s doorstep.

I was a bit in a daze, but worked through the steps of signing up for it. Now, I just “shop” online, selecting what we need that week. We open our door early on Tuesday morning and there is our weekly food in boxes! Fresher, no plastic packaging, and costing less than what we

had been paying at the shop.

I'm taken aback. There really isn't a tailor-made need that is too hard for the Lord to figure out a solution for.

Yesterday, when talking with my husband about it, wondering if it really is cheaper, I looked in the boxes and there were several extra things in our food boxes. I added up the cost of all those unexpected "free" items and it came to a notable amount. My son said, "I just felt in my heart the Lord gave us the extra food today to show us His love."

This miracle didn't happen overnight, and took many months of praying for it—whatever "it" was supposed to be. But "when the desire cometh it is a tree of life", as the Bible verse says. Now instead of feeling drained, we are elated and feel like it's Christmas every week!

Shooting Stars

It was a strange feeling; I felt as if I was going through a minor "break up" or "forsaking" of someone that I had been in love with. My internet had stopped working for a couple weeks—some of my only contact with others is via email. I didn't know if it was a temporary

issue, or if my computer's online wireless feature was at last giving up.

I didn't expect myself to have this kind of reaction, and if it would have happened to anyone else I would have thought of them as "addicted" to getting online.

But since I can't go out much, and not many people visit here, though I'm content in my situation and it provides me time to get done what I need to, I guess friendly notes and work notes began to be a highlight for me.

This happened at a time when I was trying to get a very big project done in a real short amount of time. In actuality, the loss of internet connection during those weeks was probably what gave me the edge, that bit of extra time that I needed to make my goal.

I might not have made it otherwise. But still, I was feeling lonely in a way, and like I'd just given up a connection with my friends.

One of the nights when I was heavy in heart I woke for a few moments and looked up to the window. There was a little crack where the curtain didn't quite cover the window all the way and a few stars were visible, a space of about four inches or so.

Then of all rare things I saw, not just one, but two shooting stars—right then, right in that tiny visibility area. Each star zooming in the direction that enabled me to see it well. I know that certainly wasn't a coincidence. My heart was warmed, and I soon was my happy self again.

Bouquet of Basal

The day could have left me in shambles, and the night that followed it could have crushed me emotionally. But there was a highlight that was just that—a light that seemed to shine in my heart and surround my heart with a glow of warmth. It carried me through.

In the morning my husband tried something new. He went to the nearby farmer's market to see what was available and the price of the fresh organic produce.

He was encouraged—and so were we when he came back with all that good stuff. That perked me up and was fun. But what intrigued me was when he said, "Someone just gave me this bunch of fresh basal for free."

I have wanted fresh basal for a very long time. Our life is such that we don't eat spices (since dried and packaged spices are all factory

prepared we'd stopped getting or using them as we've had to take very drastic diet action to find our kids' key to well being). Also we don't have anything scented in our home, in the quest for chemical-free good health.

The thrill of having fresh and natural basal was a real perk-up. When I smelled it something happened to me. I felt all tingly inside, giddy and lively. It happened again and again every time I smelled it throughout the next couple of days.

Jesus knew how to cheer me emotionally and physically. We made some fun new menus over the next few days. Every bite was like tasting love, pure and personalised love, right from Jesus.

In the Lives of Others...

Congratulations!

—By Brunella

It had taken quite some convincing on my part to get my parent's permission to travel by myself to another country at 17 years old. I was going to attend a training seminar and it was only going to be for a week, but a condition my parents set is that I had to make my own money to pay for it. So I did. But I had just enough.

The day I was due to travel on the overnight train journey, I came down sick with the flu. I made my way to the train station feeling rather weak and a little discouraged by the fact that I may not enjoy the travel as much being sick. At the same time, however, I was excited to be embarking on a new adventure.

I arrived at the platform the train was due to leave from way ahead of time, so I had a chance to think about the travel and the next

few days. I mentally went over my finances and realized I would need to be frugal if I wanted it to last the whole week.

At that point I remembered that I would be arriving at my destination in the late morning of the next day and that would mean I would need to buy breakfast on the train; that was usually more expensive than other places.

Departure time approached and I climbed aboard to find my compartment and berth. Once I was settled and a few minutes away from leaving the station, the controller came and asked for the number of my reservation.

I handed him my ticket and he smiled and said, "Congratulations! You get a free breakfast tomorrow!" and he proceeded to hand me my voucher.

I was overjoyed as it was not only very unexpected but also an answer to my need. When I enquired he said that every day they gave out a certain amount of complimentary breakfasts to passengers on international routes, and today I "happened" to be one of them!

As the train pulled out of the station, I had a warm feeling in my heart, realizing once more how Jesus loves each of us in a very personal way, and looks out for every detail to ensure our happiness! He is just that wonderful!

A Hamburger and Mango Juice

—By Brunella

My husband and I had recently arrived to a new country with our toddler. Everything was very new and exciting: the climate, a new language, making new friends.

However, after this move, we were low on money. We knew God had always seen us through and that He would continue to supply in our new situation.

One day, on my way to an appointment with my 2-year-old in her stroller, I had His sweet reassurance. It was quite a warm day and I had missed lunch at home in order not to be late.

I was standing at a zebra crossing waiting for the light to change. I was feeling hungry and

thirsty, and I remember sending the following thought heavenward: "I would love to have a hamburger and a cold mango juice!"

I also knew I had no cash with me. Just then, the light changed and I pushed the stroller forward to cross the road. As I did so, I saw a piece of paper under the wheel of the stroller and upon looking closer I saw that it was money!

When I picked it up it turned out to be just the right amount to buy my desired meal! I was so happy and touched that God would answer so quickly and perfectly!

A Dent in the Car—A Boost of Encouragement

—By Brunella

It was a difficult time in our lives and our personal faith was being tested in a variety of ways. We were trying to save money in order to make a big move, and in the middle of all this I ended up in the hospital for surgery. The doctors said that my recovery time would be one-and-a-half months. We looked at this as a major setback.

One day during my hospital stay I was lying in bed pondering the situation and wondering how it would all come together. I was especially concerned with the financial side of things as I would be out of commission for some time. The Lord spoke to my heart telling me that just as He had done many times before, He would still provide all we needed, regardless of the circumstances.

While engrossed in these thoughts, my husband walked in for his daily visit. He looked pensive and when I asked him about it, he recounted the following:

Upon leaving the hospital the day before, he got to our car in the parking lot and noticed a slight dent to the driver's door that had not been there before. He also noticed a note under the windshield wiper. It was from the person that had bumped our car with their details so that we could contact them regarding insurance coverage.

This in itself was quite amazing as they could have easily just driven off shrugging all responsibility! When all was said and done, the sum we received from the insurance was above

and beyond what we expected and it was the financial boost we needed.

When I reflected on these happenings, I was overwhelmed at how detailed the Lord is in showing His love. I felt especially touched at the timeliness of His answer, as it also gave us the encouragement we needed at that particular time to be reassured He was with us in our endeavors!

The Warm Feather Quilt

—By Michelle M.

It gets cold for the short winter in the part of Mexico where I lived for many years as a missionary. We had little funds and lived a frugal but joyful life. Having lived so many years as a volunteer missionary, I had learned that Jesus truly does “supply ALL of our needs” (Philippians 4:19) and that prayer is a living, working, daily experience.

I had thought how nice a white feather quilt would be to keep me warm, also not being as heavy as the many blankets I needed to use, so I prayed for one and then forgot about it.

Awhile later someone had given us many bags of clothing and other items. There were several missionaries working together and I liked to let others go and choose what they needed before I did.

When I finally took a turn to look and choose what I wanted, in the very last bag where I looked I found what I had prayed for and forgotten about! There was a beautiful warm white feather quilt. The amazing thing is that everyone said they'd looked through everything and never seen it.

(Actually I've had these types of answers to prayers many times. Such precious touches of our Saviour's love and care!)

Heavenly Roses

—By Michele M.

A dear friend of mine who I worked with on a missionary field, and who now many years later was far away, half-way around the world, told me this very special story.

As her husband had passed into the loving arms of Jesus a year before, I was sending her encouraging Bible readings and testimonies.

I sent her one story of a dear woman who was very much missing her recently departed husband one day in the supermarket, as he had always accompanied her there. He had always bought her a bouquet of yellow roses as they left the store.

While in the store she was drawn to another woman who seemed to be in an emotional turmoil. In spite of her sorrow she found the strength to share some uplifting words with this lady who she didn't even know, and then continued on her way.

Suddenly as she was leaving the store the woman who she had cheered came up to her and thanked her profusely. And to show her appreciation, she held out a bouquet of yellow roses.

This deeply encouraged the dear lady—as how could the stranger know that that was exactly what her husband had always done? She knew her husband was still there.

My story doesn't end there. Unbeknownst to me it was the birthday of my dear friend's husband, who was now with Jesus, when I sent her this very email. She was out that day and wanted to do some little thing in remembrance of her husband and thought of getting some red roses.

After searching and searching all she could find were yellow roses so, although not her favourite, she started thinking how beautiful they were and she went ahead and got them.

When she returned home and opened her email she was so excited and rejoicing as she knew it could be no coincidence that she had gotten the yellow roses. Now her favourite flower is of course, a yellow rose.

In a 7-Eleven

—By Jeanie

Sometimes it's the little surprises and gifts from the Lord that mean so much, to see how He loves to take care of not just our big requests and needs, but little ones as well! A number of years ago while living in Taiwan, my youngest son and I spent a family day together one summer.

I had wanted to treat him to lunch and a special activity; however I didn't have any extra funds for this. So we prayed together and asked the Lord to supply, and then decided to walk around the town.

Since it was a hot day, we soon went to the 7-Eleven to purchase some cold drinks, and there lying on the floor right near the check-out counter I discovered a new large bill!

It was truly a miracle, as somehow no one else had noticed the money, even though the store was packed with people. The Lord takes such amazing care of His children, and we enjoyed a wonderful day together.

My God Shall Supply

—By Lily

Many, many years ago while driving from NYC to Florida with three young children and one on the way, we were extremely short of money—as well as petrol for the small motor home we were traveling in.

In fact, we had only coins and knew that the Lord was not only testing our faith, but pushing us to the limit, or so it seemed to us.

While we were driving (with a constant eye on the gas gauge), I was praying—a lot! Suddenly, we noticed a big billboard advertizing a Bible verse: “My God shall supply all your needs...” With a rush of newly acquired faith, we followed the sign into a private compound, which appeared to be some kind of small factory.

Winding our way to the main office, a wonderful man greeted us and invited us to sit down. On his desk was a very big Bible!

Explaining our life of faith, along with our need for gasoline, he proceeded to inform us that he owned the one gas station in this small town, and then called the station to inform them that a motor home would be coming their way soon and to please fill-her-up at no cost!

This gentleman then offered us the Bible, which we used for many years following. We also stayed in touch for several years and became the recipient of this man’s kindness, generosity and godliness.

You can be sure we went on our way praising God and never forgetting how miraculously He supplies even when our faith fails us.

Vanilla Ice Cream

–By Fleur Céleste

I will never forget the first time I was involved in a car accident. I was 10 years old, living in Madagascar, and our family was going through a very rough time financially.

When I wasn't studying I would often accompany my mum on fundraising, to help support ourselves and our work with the poor. It was often tiring and hard work.

On this particular day my mum, who was sick, was going to the hospital for some tests. She was tired and discouraged and I went along with her, as I was her "favourite little partner".

After our visit to the hospital we thought we could fill up the rest of our day doing some fundraising for our work, as we were in a part of town we usually never went to.

We also hoped to find a decent place to eat, hopefully for free or for a small price, as it was hard to find a place where you could both eat clean, and eat cheap.

As we drove around looking for a good spot to start, we started getting hungry and daydreaming about good food. It was a hot day, and I found myself saying “Mummy, you know what I’d realllly like? Ice cream...”

“Oh yes,” replied Mum, “Vanilla ice cream!”

“Vanilla ice cream!” I echoed. All of this was just silly talk, of course. We were tight financially and the only occasions we bought ice cream were on birthdays. But it didn’t hurt to fantasize!

As we reached a fork in the road, we hesitated as to which way to take. Either way would be fine, as it was basically “unexplored territory”. Finally making up our minds, we swerved left...only to be hit 2 seconds later by a big van! It smacked into the left side of our already old and beat-up car (thankfully I was not sitting on that side) and the two cars screeched to a halt.

I can remember thinking, “Really, Lord? Mummy’s sick, we’re hungry and tired, and now, THIS?!” I’m pretty sure Mum felt the same way, by the look on her face as she got out of the car to examine the damage.

It had been the other driver’s fault, and he was very sorry as he got out of his van and started the “peace talks” with Mum. It turned out he was not the owner of the car, but only the hired chauffeur of a wealthy man, Mr. W.

He got his boss on the phone, and passed him to Mum. Mr W. was a Chinese man, and immediately offered to meet with us to help repair the damage. He invited us to first have lunch with him at a nice, fancy hotel not far from where we had stopped. So off we went!

As we met and talked with this man, we began to realize how wonderful the Lord’s ways were. He had been a Buddhist, but had then received the Lord and became a Christian after the miraculous healing of his wife. It was a truly remarkable story.

His wife had been dying of kidney malfunction, and despite all efforts by the doctors, and prayers to many gods, she was on

her deathbed. That is when someone suggested that Mr. W. pray to the “God of the Christians”. So he did! And shortly after, inexplicably, his wife recovered completely. Since then, he had become a Christian, and was looking for a way to further the Lord’s work.

Lunch was delicious and by the time it was over, he had found someone to fix the car, given us a large donation for our work, and pledged to pay our monthly budget (which he did for a year!). Over the years that we knew him he always continued to be a blessing to our work, and in return we encouraged him in his faith and taught him more about the Bible and the Lord.

He loved all of us, adults and children alike, and considered us to be his family, all the way to the day when the Lord called him to his heavenly reward. So, what had seemed like the most wrong thing that could have possibly happened that day, turned into a wonderful victory for the Lord’s work!

Oh, and I almost forgot... that at lunch, once our fine meal was eaten, the waiter brought us the restaurant’s “dessert of the day”. I’m sure you’ve guessed—vanilla ice cream!

Love in the Clouds

–By Fleur Céleste

As those who've been there know, being a teen is no joke! Although my teen years were relatively smooth compared to some others I know, I can still distinctly remember the inordinate amount of emotions, highs and lows, blood, sweat and tears that accompanied each day.

I must have been 15 or 16 when I climbed out of my window onto a little ledge of the roof one night. This was my favourite place to go, either with my friends, or to be alone.

It was a big ledge and perfectly safe, and from that vantage point you could see the whole city below, and beyond that, the sea and the moon and the stars.

This night was a cloudy one, and I was looking out into the distance and crying over yet another seeming injustice in my life. I cried to the Lord, "Show me that you love me!" I kept repeating it over and over.

I had been looking up at the sky and the clouds, and for a moment or two I closed my eyes to squeeze away all the tears. When I opened them again, I could barely believe my eyes. There, inside the clouds, was a big, perfect, heart-shaped hole!

It was a real perfect heart—symmetrical and all! And it hadn't been there seconds ago. I was so surprised and touched, as I knew it was a direct answer to my heartfelt plea moments before.

I started laughing and crying again, but these were tears of joy and thankfulness that the Lord had answered my prayer. I sat there staring at it for a long time, until the clouds grew out of shape. I wished I had a camera to take a photo of it, so people would believe me!

But although I had no camera, the image of that heart in the sky is forever engraved on my mind. And with it, the remembrance that the Lord cared enough to write His love in the clouds, to an emotional teen girl who wanted a sign.

Better Than a Bouquet of Flowers

–By Crystal

Everybody wishes that somebody would come to their door with a bouquet of flowers and say, “I love you”. It did not happen in my life too often though, but I did have a special gift of love from a very special someone.

It was shortly after the communist walls had fallen that had separated the West from the East, when I came with a group of missionaries to the virgin mission fields of one of these eastern lands. A pioneer team had gone on before to look for housing, but there was just nothing for rent. Instead they found the opposite: there was a great shortage on housing.

We decided to start out living in caravans on a campground. We were not the only ones that had no other choice than camping out. There were businesspeople, too, that shared this lot.

I did not mind, I always loved to live right in God’s beautiful nature, and a caravan was so much less work to keep clean than a big house. But then the winter came and we were still there, and my bed blanket turned out to not be warm enough.

I did not sleep properly anymore because I was so cold. I put extra clothes on, but still I had problems getting warm in bed. We couldn't afford to heat the campers at night too strongly, as it took just too much gas.

The same time I was going through a bit of a rough time in my life. My marriage had fallen apart and I was separated not just from my husband but also from three of my older kids. My heart was tender. And on top of it, it was not always easy for me to handle personality differences with the people I lived and worked with.

There was one lady that I knew had extra blankets, but she told me she needed them herself for her children. But at the time I asked her, she had them stored away. It hurt, and the feeling of not being loved very much came up easily—even if in reality it was not really like this. Having no one else to go to, I went to Jesus with my woes and to let my tears be dried by Him.

My Heavenly Husband went to work right on the spot, to supply my needs—the needs of His little bride. Shortly afterwards, going to the garbage container near where we were camped, I spotted a big blanket, still wrapped in a plastic

bag and with the price tag on it—a brand new big feather blanket! I could not believe it.

I rejoiced and danced—it just really felt as if Jesus was standing in front of me with a bouquet of flowers telling me, “I love you!”

I then slept so nice and warm under it! Thank You dearest Jesus, for being such a loving caring Husband! And I still have this blanket today, and am still sleeping under it in the winter.

“He will cover you with his feathers...”

Psalm 91:4a

Camera

–By Carmel

Last December in Thailand I was seeking to buy a camera , I prayed to find a good deal as this was the year end. I went to Tesco and after looking back and forth at cameras, seeing additional battery requirements etc., I found a flyer which looked like 300 Bhat off this model.

“I want this one”, I said in my broken Thai. The store clerk helped me through payment as well as to finding the right battery. He then took me to costumer care to sign some paper, but as I

went through the cashier I noticed that I only needed to pay part of the price. The camera was 300 Bhat off, but the 'flyer' was another 300 Bhat off anything else bought in that store. Wow!

So Praise God! He really came through. I got not only 300 Bhat off the camera advertised but an additional 300 Bhat off the battery as well.

Peace and Calm

--By Andres

A few years ago when I was experiencing inner struggle and fearful thoughts that I had allowed to enter into my mind, one of the simplest ways my Jesus tried to get through to me and tell me not to worry was when I would suddenly go outdoors.

I would start watching the perfect and immutable order and synchronization of the clouds, trees, wind, sun, birds, weather time, etc.

I felt Jesus was trying to scream at me through all of these things together: I DO LOVE YOU! WHY DO YOU WORRY?!

And thank God that was one of the things that boosted me back up again to having calm trust in Him. The victory was once again a gift from His precious love!

Grandmother's Bible

—By Dina Ellens

After her father died, a friend of mine was cleaning out his attic and came across a box with Bibles in it. When she looked in the box of Bibles, she was surprised to see that they had belonged to her grandmother. When she died, the Bibles had been packed away and left in the attic.

As she picked up one of the Bibles and began looking through it, she noticed that her grandmother had underlined certain verses and had also written down poems and prayers in her Bible. As she read the things her grandmother had written, she began to feel God using her grandmother to encourage her.

Her grandmother had underlined the same Bible verses in her Bible that she had highlighted in hers. It brought a smile to her face to know that she and her grandma both shared the same affection for a certain verse of scripture.

There were also prayers that she had written down. Some were prayers asking God to protect her family and to make her children desire to have a relationship with Him. Other prayers were full of praise about how she felt God had blessed her and taken care of her over the years.

Some of the things Grandmother had underlined and written down corresponded with some difficult times in her life. Now as she read Grandmother's Bible, she could see the "trail" she had travelled and how she had moved from hurt to forgiveness, from feelings of loss to feelings of love.

She could also see how much she loved all of her grandchildren. She had taped a lock of her brother's hair in her Bible. She wrote about a special Mother's Day she had enjoyed with all of her children and grandchildren.

It was plain to see that she loved God and that even though she was getting older, she wasn't afraid of what lay ahead because she knew God was taking care of her.

Even though this lady's grandmother passed away a long time ago, she still feels her

presence beside her, helping her to be a stronger and wiser Christian.

Grandmother was able to do this because she wrote about her spiritual journey inside her Bible, which this lady now reads every day.

My Heart Tree

–By Dina Ellens

I once lived in a little room that had a little adjoining garden where I'd often sit and enjoy my morning coffee. Since it had a broad concrete slab, I'd often do my workout exercises there as well.

A couple of months before, the mango tree in my garden had been pruned back because of parasites. So for a while it had nothing but bare limbs and hardly any leaves. However, living in the tropics, after a good rainy season everything soon springs back to life.

One afternoon I was in a bad mood and grumbling away. I'd started on my workout and had gotten to the sit-ups. Then something happened that completely shook me out of my

bad mood. I was lying on my back inbetween sit-ups and happened to look up—straight up into the tree limbs that had been pruned back.

Only now some leaves had grown back. What startled me was the shape they had grown in. It was somewhat of a heart shape with the two sides of the heart uppermost and the point tapering down towards the trunk.

Seeing this totally changed my bad mood into a glad one. Then I remembered that once when I was praying and talking to Jesus, He had said something about how my heart was joined to His and that our hearts beat as one.

I felt so ashamed of my bad mood and instantly started thanking Jesus for this beautiful reminder of His love for me. Even though I forget sometimes, He never forgets and His love never fails.

There are beautiful reminders of His love around us all the time, if we would only take the time to look.

John and the Jasmine Flower

—By Dina Ellens

I have a brother named John and when we were little we used to do lots of things together. Then as we got older, we grew apart. He moved to Montana which is in the middle of the USA and I moved to Thailand and later to Indonesia.

We would still write each other, though. I learned that John was a nature lover. He would often tell me how many deer or rabbits he'd seen in his yard. Or send me photos of an owl or an eagle.

One day, John passed away. I was sad because I hadn't been able to say good bye. I was also sad because I didn't know how close he'd been to Jesus in his last years.

I prayed for Jesus to give me a dream about John or any kind of sign. The next morning I woke up, trying to remember if I'd had a dream. No, no dream. No sign, nothing.

Then when I stepped outside my door, something caught my eye. There was a single flower on my jasmine bush. One single white

flower. I knew that was my sign from the Lord that John was ok. It was as clear and definite as if I'd heard him say, "I'm alright!"

I'd been looking at my jasmine bush every day for a week, waiting for it to blossom. I'd step out of my room each morning and look for blossoms but each time there would only be lots of green leaves. But the day after John's passing, a single, perfect, white jasmine blossom had flowered!

Jesus knew how much John loved plants and animals. He also knew how eagerly I'd been waiting for the jasmine bush to blossom. God used both those things to give me a little sign that John was okay. That was so loving and kind of Jesus to do that for me.

Now whenever I see a jasmine bush in bloom or smell its fragrance, I smile and remember John. I no longer wonder where he is. I know John's with Jesus. He said, "Because I live, you shall live also."

Wedding Rings for Newly-Weds

—By Dina Ellens

When doing evangelical work in England, I met a young couple who were very much in love and engaged and were doing the same evangelical work as I was.

They had spent all their money to pay for their plane fare to come to England. So when the time came for them to be married, they didn't have enough for wedding rings! They had to borrow rings for the ceremony.

Arrangements were made for them to stay in a friend's house in the country for their honeymoon. The first morning there, after their wedding night, the young bride was sweeping the bedroom.

When she moved the bed, she found a beautiful gold wedding ring! Although she tried to find the owner, no one had any recollection of that ring. So she was allowed to keep it.

Hearing about the miracle wedding ring, a friend decided to also buy a wedding ring for the young bridegroom. How loving of the Lord to

provide wedding rings for this young couple in such a miraculous way.

They had given their all to come to the mission field and He had blessed them for it.

The Missing Clamp

—Dina Ellens

I once found a very nice desk lamp with a long neck that you could twist in different directions, called a goose neck lamp. I was so happy when someone gave me the lamp.

“Sorry, it’s missing the clamp piece,” he said, “But maybe you can still use it.”

Without the clamp piece, the lamp couldn’t be secured to the edge of my desk. “Hmm,” I thought, “I can’t go to a store to buy just a clamp piece because they won’t sell it without the whole lamp!”

There was nothing else to do but pray. So I asked Jesus to help me find a new clamp for my lamp.

A few weeks later, I was in a second hand store with the same friend who had given me the

lamp. He came over and showed me what he'd found in a pile of metal screws and bolts.

It was just the clamp piece that I needed for my lamp! And it fit perfectly! Now my lamp is firmly attached to my desk and I can use it all the time. Jesus loves us so much! He takes care of our needs, even little things like a missing clamp!

Jesus Brought Me This Far

—By Michele M.

Very shortly after the birth of her second child, my daughter returned from far across the ocean to continue her missionary work in another country closer to the country I was working in as a missionary as well.

An unexpected break for me came and the Lord led me to take a bus by faith as far as I could, and then fly the rest of the way, as it was the only way to visit her.

She said she would book me some tickets while I was travelling on the bus. But when I arrived at the city from where I needed to fly for unexpected reasons my daughter hadn't been able to book a flight for me.

I had a place to stay with friends but I wanted to use the break time I had to visit my daughter

and new grandchild. I prayed and asked the Lord to do a miracle and provide as I felt strongly it was His will to visit her.

After phoning a few airlines one told me that within an hour a flight was leaving and they had an extra seat at the low price (which was all I could afford) and would hold it for me, and I could pay when I arrived.

My friends told me it wouldn't be possible as the airport was an hour away, but being an old friend and seeing my determination said he would try. I told him in no way did I want him to drive recklessly or go beyond the speed limit, that the Lord would have to do it.

After driving for awhile he said, "Well, guess what? We're making good time and I think you will make it!"

We arrived at the airport and I ran in while my friend came behind with my luggage. They still had the flight and called to the plane to wait, saying that another passenger was coming.

I paid and ran all the way, and there they were waiting, everyone seated and holding the door open for me. That was a beautiful touch of Jesus; love to me and I think just one of the many special extras He's done in my life serving Him.

The Rain “Tap” Turned Off and On

—By Terry (in her 70’s)

We went for a two day trip to do a little 1½ hr. cruise at 1000 Islands, which is East of here on the St. Lawrence River. It was fun and enjoyable. We stayed overnight at a Bed & Breakfast, and then returned home with an enjoyable drive, a good part of which was along the 1000 Parkway close to the river. The Lord did wonderful special miracles for us then too. First was when we were on the cruise, the weather was beautiful, we were on the top of the boat, looking out the front, taking pics, etc. Then towards the end the clouds started gathering and it seemed a thunderstorm was coming. Thankfully, it did not start while we were still on the boat.

Then we headed to the car, got in and closed the doors—and boom! A heavy rain started. Literally the same moment we closed the doors! He is so good to us, isn’t He? It was a heavy rain as we headed back to the BNB, so heavy that we had the windshield wipers on max but they could hardly handle it.

As we arrived at the house 15 minutes later, the rain subsided, and we were able to go into the house without getting wet.

Pearls

—By Chariane

I read a story that I've remembered for many years now about a missionary living in Taiwan named Mary. One day when she went for a bike ride she noticed a pretty little tie-string bag on the road. It looked brand new. She prayed to ask the Lord if she should pick it up, and the He told her to do so.

Mary picked up the bag and was just about to get back on the bike, when she noticed a beautiful pearl earring on the pavement. "What use is one earring?" she wondered, and was about to put it back down on the road.

Then she heard Jesus whisper to her heart, "Why not see if you can find the other one?"

It seemed so unlikely, at least it had never happened to her before, but with a spark of faith she walked a few steps back down the hill searching for any sign of a pearl. And then she saw it! Shining in the sun was the matching pearl earring to the one she had already found!

Mary felt so touched and amazed, being reminded afresh how wonderful Jesus is! Then she remembered why it happened.

A few weeks beforehand, her only pearl earrings had faded and turned grey and she had prayed and asked the Lord to supply some nice new ones.

She had completely forgotten about that little incident until then, as she held the new shiny pearl earrings! Jesus has His ways of making each of us feel loved and cared for in a special way!

P.S. I Love You!

God's Blog—About Me

I guess I'm in the season of life where I'm too occupied living life, keeping up with what I need to as a mother, caretaker and teacher, wife, and all the other related projects I'm into, that I just don't have time to write up blogs and letters to friends about myself. Yet I do yearn for it.

I have times when I just want there to be someone that knows what exactly is going on, can laugh with me at the funnies, and smile at the kids' new accomplishment, can give an e-hug and encourage me through the new challenges, someone I can tell the daily struggles and updates to, who is on the "same page" as I am on in every way.

It's one thing to tell someone who tries to listen as best as they can, but it's different when you are talking with someone who really, really knows exactly what you are feeling and expressing—and to what level of importance something you are saying is to you. Do you know what I mean? Well, anyway...

I never had many friends growing up—the biggest lament as a teen was that I never knew how to make friends. I guess I'm glad I got used to being a loner; to the point that now I totally enjoy it. I don't seek out or crave big social events and partying. Just as well, right? I'm enjoying the rich and full life I am blessed to have, in my own way.

I have the best husband I could have dared to hope for, and love being with my children more than doing anything else in the world. I can tell my husband lots, and try to in the midst of the busy life we both hold.

We try to listen, encourage and be the friend each one of us needs. But our areas of expertise, and focus, wave-lengths, visions, dreams and all, are different, and need to be in order to cover all the areas we need to in our house and home, making a well-rounded base for our children's growth and care.

Someone helped get me on Facebook. It was an attempt to hook up with old friends I'd lost contact with during my few years of travel, followed by marriage, beginning a family, and moving to a new country.

But instead of feeling a sense of “home” and fun, cosy friendships, I had the unexpected reaction of tinges of depression.

When I would go there, and glimpse into my friends’ lives, it was like a cold splash in my face. Reality: they had all moved on with their lives, with or without me, and were doing quite fine! No matter how close we had been, and all the secrets and dreams, fun times, laughs and tears that we had shared, it was all water under the bridge as life flowed along.

The Lord knew what I was feeling, and within the next day or two, unexpected sources of friendship poked their heads up, all at the right moments to lift me. An email here, a rare phone call, a note, a visit, and what not. Someone Up There knew, and timed it right. I pulled through, and am back to my happy self again.

Then the most encouraging thought of all came this morning. God keeps a blog of my life! Even though I don’t have time to write a diary, blog, personal letters, or updated play-by-play of my life, expressing my take on things, there is someone who knows it all, and is keeping track, writing things down.

My every move, thought, action, word, decision, tear, smile, emotion, illness, adventure, scrape, thrill, idea, dream, has been and is being recorded.

It could be a comforting thought—or uncomfortable, depending, I suppose. But today I'm glad for it. Here are some words that tell me that God keeps detailed track of me, writes it down, and is my Friend:

God knows everything about each of us...

Totally beautiful words, priceless:

O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them. How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee.

(Psalm 139:1-18)

But he knoweth the way that I take: (Job 23:10)

Yes, He writes ...

*And in thy book all my members were written
(Psalm 139:16)*

*He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in
white raiment; and I will not blot out his name
out of the book of life, but I will confess his name
before my Father, and before his angels.
(Revelation 3:5)*

*[In to heaven will go..] they which are written
in the Lamb's book of life. (Revelation 21:27)*

*And I saw a great white throne, and him that
sat on it, from whose face the earth and the
heaven fled away; and there was found no place
for them. (Revelation 20:11)*

*And I saw the dead, small and great, stand
before God; and the books were opened: and
another book was opened, which is the book of
life: and the dead were judged out of those things
which were written in the books, according to
their works. (Revelation 20:12)*

Jesus loves us and considers us His friends..

Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. (John 15:14)

I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. (John 15:15)

The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (Jeremiah 31:3)

Ah, so if I never get around to writing a book about my life, it's being taken care of. And I have a friend, to talk with 24/7, listen to, and who knows how my heart feels every moment of the day. Jesus is the best!

Closing Words...

As the days, months, years—and yes, decades—pass, I’ve learned to know and love Jesus personally through countless special touches and displays of His love.

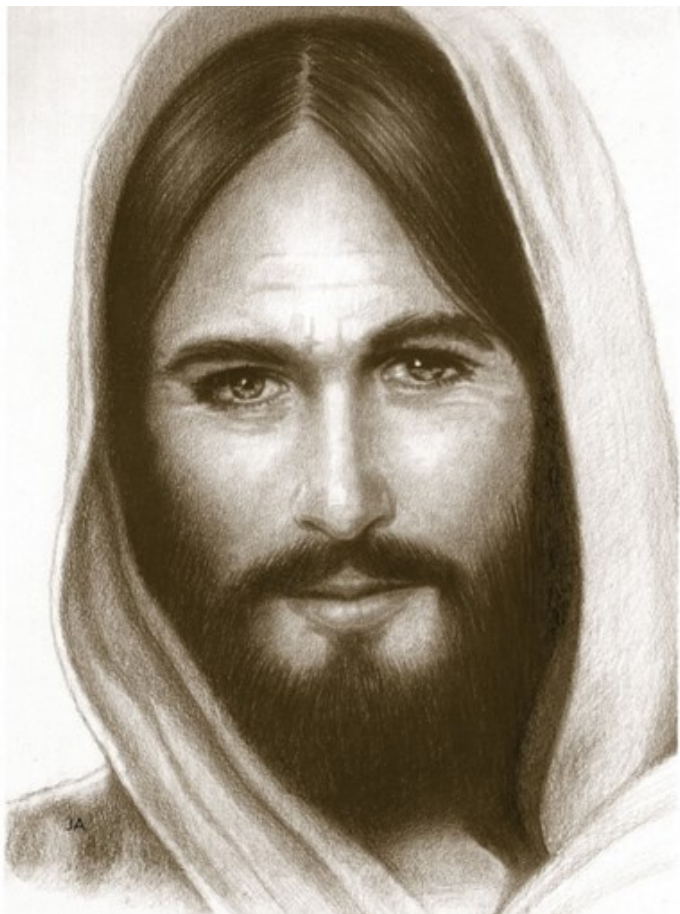
He shows His love in ways that would seem totally insignificant when compared to all the change and miracles that are needed in the world—but that made a world of difference to me.

He has won me—forever, through His love. And faith alone tells me that I make a difference to Him, too.

“We love him, because he first loved us.”

(1 John 4:19)

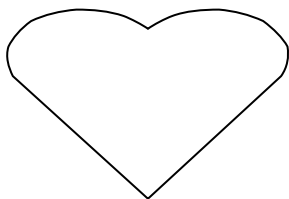
—*Chariane Zuille*



I love you!

*Jesus Christ, God's Son loves you!
That's why He left His heavenly home to live
on Earth for a while, over 2,000 years ago, to
be God's gift of love to the world—to all of us.*

*Do you want to receive the best and most
special gift of all? Say a little prayer to receive
Jesus' gift of eternal life with Him forever! He
loves you!*



*Dear Jesus,
Thank You for coming to Earth long
ago, so that You could bring us love and
forgiveness. I want You to forgive me for the
wrong things that I have done.*

*Please fill my heart with Your love, and
help me to do the things that make You
happy. I'm so glad that You will love me for
eternity—and that because I believe in You,
I will live forever in Heaven with You!*