

April 2006

Blessed Easter greetings to you! It is always with great joy that I anticipate writing these quarterly letters to you, and be sure that you have been in my prayers.

What a relief that Spring has finally arrived in Indiana. While the official date was March 21st, it took awhile for Indiana to realize it. However, now even this area is beginning to get a real grip on the reality that winter is past. The rains are not yet over and gone, but the flowers are beginning to appear in the land. And for sure the time for singing has come!

Spring! Oh, what a blessed time of year! There is something about this season that simply lights me up. I think it is the reminder of new life, of resurrection, of hope, indeed of life! I absolutely love Spring. How about you?

The last three months have been blessed with wonderful ministry opportunities, many of which I mentioned in my last letter. Two of the very best have been the times of ministry to the Lord at the Fort Wayne House of Prayer and having the privilege of teaching the Song of Songs at my church. I tell you, between worshipping Him, and making every effort to come into agreement with His spoken Word as I pray, then teaching in depth about His love for us, I have been blessed.

In the coming three month period, I'll be ministering in a couple of church settings in addition to the time I spend at IHOP (the house of Prayer!). And as always, I am available for other times of ministry, should you desire such for your church or women's group.

Before I do another devotion, I want to tell you that Sharon and Jeff's son Andrew is finishing his senior year at North Side High School in Ft Wayne. He has been accepted at three universities, and offered substantial scholarships at one or more of them. He still needs to decide which one he'll be attending, but we are all praying for him. In your kindness, would you join the Hoffmans in praying for God's clear direction for Andrew? Thanks so much. Elizabeth is a Freshman at North Side and an excellent student in her own right. Sharon and Jeff are doing wonderfully well.

So until next time, I send my love and prayer to you. Thank you once again for your prayers and your financial support. You and the Lord have sustained me and kept me in these years of change. I am so blessed to be His, and to be graced with brothers and sisters like you.

I recently attended a Prayer Conference in which the primary focus was on “Soaking” in the Lord’s Presence. I understood that the group I was to be with placed great value on encouraging believers to really be content to sit or kneel or lay down or whatever in the Lord’s Presence for extended periods of time.

Knowing I need occasional refocusing by submitting myself to God’s servants who are known to be “God Seekers,” I decided to attend this 4-day event. What a blessing it was. Outside of the days way back when I was a Sister in the Convent in Tipton, Indiana, I have not experienced sustained time in a group given solely to presenting oneself in silence to the Lord for extended periods of time.



My first surprise was to see the picture on the front of the brochure once we registered. This wasn’t the exact picture, but here is a replica: You got it, a jar of pickles! I thought, okay, so.....

It wasn’t until the first session that the lady speaker talked about how cucumbers become pickles. She said that they soaked for an extended period of time in a solution. I also remember her saying that if one were to dip a cucumber into a pickling solution then take it out after a short time, it would remain a cucumber, and not become a pickle. Cucumbers become pickles by soaking in a pickling solution.

I began to get the picture. If I want to be transformed to be more and more like Jesus, there is a direct correlation between a cucumber and me. I won't get transformed by getting a little dipping into His Transforming Presence, I really need to be saturated in Him.

So I set out to read some old recipes about how to "pickle": cucumbers. In some of the older recipes, and after hearing from a couple of ladies at Sunday School, I have learned a bit more about pickling cucumbers.

Old fashioned recipes (as opposed to the "quick" recipes fashionable today) called for cucumbers to be soaked in a solution for upwards to 3 to 4 weeks. As the cucumbers get steeped and soaked, more soaked, still soaked, etc., a scum comes from the cucumbers and rises to the top of the solution. That scum is scraped off the solution.....again more soaking, more scum, more straining off the scum, and further soaking. Some recipes call for the cucumbers to be removed from the pickling solution, the old solution to be thrown away and a stronger solution be concocted. The pickles are then steeped in that solution, scum does its thing, etc. A third solution stronger yet is then made up, and the cucumbers submitted to an extended period of time in it.

Finally, the day comes, and of course, the cucumber has become a pickle. It has been transformed by consistent, sustained soaking in a solution that is tailor-made to transform it from one thing into another. It is literally changed from a cucumber into a pickle.

The spiritual implications are profound, are they not? Father wants to transform us from one glory to another until we become like His Son. His plan and His desire is to "work with us," to sanctify and perfect us into the beautiful friend He has always known us to be. But we so often just see ourselves as "cucumbers." Just an ordinary little cucumber that no one is all that excited about.

Oh, but your Lord is! He sees you with God eyes; He sees you as He designed you to be. He sees you as His beloved. But, you may ask, how in the world can I come to know and experience being the way He sees me? LET HIM PICKLE YOU! Surrender yourself to Him in the barrel of prayer. Devote yourself to Him. Give Him your very best gifts – which are

your time and attention. You stop talking to Him, and just sit for a spell daily before Him in quiet. Ask Him to speak to you, to share His heart with you. Do you know what? I think He will do that! He really wants to share His heart with you and me. He even wants to give us His very mind. Do you remember Paul saying, “.....we have the mind of Christ!”

So how about it? Are you a spiritual cucumber? Would you like to become a tasty pickle? Consider spending sustained, soaking, time surrendered to the heart and the hand, the will and the good pleasure of your Savior. He is the Ultimate Transformer.

More to come! Happy Pickling!!!

Still in the vat,

Robin Lee