

December 2005

Dear friends,

## Good News of God's Blessings

*By His great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope...(I Peter 1:3).*

I am grateful for hope in Christ, *a Christmas blessing*, and ways I have experienced "living hope" the last months:

***Seeing hope for NCF International ministry*** following a financial crisis last year: I was invited to the July 05 Board meeting in Scotland as past president of NCFI. I thank God for the new Board, their zeal to reach nurses for Christ, and renewed hope for the future of NCFI even though there no longer is a full time General Director. Board members are actively involved in leadership for their regions of the world. We are praying for God's direction in plans for a 2007 NCFI conference for our region: Canada, the Caribbean and USA. During the trip to Europe I also enjoyed spending time with Harry Louden (former NCFI General Director) and his family in England.



***Anticipating God's guidance for the future:*** The NCF Staff Leadership Team and National Council Exec met 9/14-18. I am grateful for these colleagues and our partnership in opportunities before NCF. We give thanks for the possibility of outsourcing production functions of *Journal of Christian Nursing (JCN)* (would retain complete editorial control) to a publishing company specializing in health care magazines and books. This would greatly expand promotion of *JCN*, and make it possible for NCF to have a greater Christian voice in nursing. Pray for wisdom in these plans, as well as developing future leaders for NCF. Pray for God's wisdom as the Staff Leadership Team meets in Madison 1/23-26/06.



Staff Leadership Team

***Experiencing God's hope as a patient:*** I fractured my elbow 9/25 after falling in a slippery parking lot. The last months have included surgery on my elbow (my first time in an operating room as a patient) and physical therapy. The I Peter passage goes on to describe effects of living hope: *In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith... may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed (I Peter 1:6-7).*

I rejoice in how God graciously cared for me, such as providing people to help when I could not use my arm, and answering prayers for healing -- including excellent health care and strength for diligence in elbow exercises in spite of pain. Results of the experience have included greater compassion for others and deepened conviction about the significance of nurses and students revealing the presence of Jesus Christ to patients.

During my recovery I was thankful for sufficient energy to complete ministry priorities for the fall: serving staff, fund development \*, communicating about plans for JCN, hosting filming for an exciting new NCF project – a video curriculum related to the InterVarsity Press book, *Called to Care*, written by Judy Shelly and Arlene Miller. It was fun to find “patient actors” and Madison nurses to be in vignettes and discussion groups, and to see God create resources that will teach others to represent Jesus.

I also enjoyed ministry time in Texas with NCF staff, Jane Hall, and to represent Jesus and NCF at a meeting of the Nursing Organization Alliance in San Antonio 11/17-19. When leaders from over 60 nursing organizations gave introductions I said, “NCF celebrates the good news that God cares for us as nurses, and values our work of caring for patients and colleagues” (an opening for more discussions).

### ***Meeting future Christian leaders in nursing:***

Hosting NCF students from the University of Wisconsin 11/30 was a delight. Bonnie Hann, NCF staff, and I talked about following Jesus in nursing. I also shared about...



### ***A Christmas Gift from Jesus***

*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you and learn from me,  
For I am gentle and humble in heart,  
And you will find rest for your souls.  
For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

Matthew 11:28-30

***Receiving God's blessings through your friendship, prayers and financial support:*** I thank God for you! I pray that you would experience the “Christmas gift from Jesus” in whatever you are facing now and in the New Year.

In Christ's hope,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Mary Thompson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Thompson  
NCF Director

\* Financial support to help with deficits in my ministry/office account may be sent to NCF, Box 7895, Madison, WI 53707-7895, or given on-line at [www.intervarsity.org/donate/](http://www.intervarsity.org/donate/) (put Mary Thompson, NCF in the search box). Thanks for your partnership.