

GIFT GIVERS

Agape International Ministries



May 1999



“A Mother’s Precious Love”

*God must have known there would be times
We’d need a gentle touch,
A tender, understanding heart
To love us very much.
He must have known we’d need someone
To listen to our cares —
To comfort and remember us
In loving thoughts and prayers.
So in His boundless wisdom
He sent us from above
The dearest blessing in the world —
A mother’s precious love!*

Author unknown





GIFT GIVERS

Vol. 6, No. 4 May 1999

Published by
Agape International Ministries
© 1999. All rights reserved.

Phone: 512-AMERICA
FAX: 512-263-1962

E-mail: aim@aim4jesus.org
URL: www.aim4jesus.org

P.O. Box 90248
Austin, TX 78709-0248
USA

P.O. Box 1896, Belize City
BELIZE, Central America

PUBLICATION STAFF

Dave Austin
Executive Editor

Wade David
Editor-in-Chief

Glenn Haecker
Graphics / Production

OFFICERS

Dave Austin
Founder/President

A. Edward Cockman
Vice-President

Bonnie Austin
Secretary

Samuel (Dick) Gates
Treasurer

ADVISORY BOARD

A. Edward Cockman
Chairman

Bonnie Austin

Samuel (Dick) Gates

Wade David

Gordon Wilkey
(Missionary to Brazil)

Editors' Note: Views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the publishers, the editors, or other staff members. All Scripture references are from the King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise noted.

The Hand that Rocks the Cradle

At this time of tribute to motherhood, I am reminded of the old adage: "The hand that rocks the cradle shapes the world." I agree, especially if that hand is prompted by the heart. As is the case with anything worth considering, Scripture has much to say about this.

In Genesis 3:20, Adam called his wife Eve (the life-giving one) because she was the mother of all mankind. Later, we learn of another wife who is about to be crowned mother. "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her." (Genesis 17:15-16) And God said, "I will establish my covenant with him and with his seed after him." (Genesis 17:19b) In these passages, we sense the touch of God's hand and heart on the cradle of mankind.

In Exodus, we find Moses, a fragile refugee floating down the Nile sheltered in a bulrush basket which would have wisped past destiny had not the Lord kept his hands upon it. As two mothers touch this cradle, both step into history, though somewhat anonymously. The child's mother risked her own life to save the life of the son God had given her, while Pharaoh's daughter embraced risk in allowing a Hebrew slave to nurse (nurture) for a season the forbidden child taken from the Nile. In time, God was to develop in Moses a redeemer's heart.

All Christians know the name of Mary, the natural mother of Jesus, our eternal Redeemer. In Luke 1:38a, Mary exclaims, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." With this, we can see that our Lord's first cradle was not in a manger, but in a mother's faith-filled heart!

In II Timothy 1:5-6, Paul notes how true faith was first observed in the life of Timothy's grandmother and then in his mother and finally in him. Thus, we see how faith creates a living legacy by going full circle — past, present, and future — in one lifetime.

Whose hand rocked the cradle of your life? No one chose his/her mother, the giver of natural life. But, you are able to choose Jesus, the giver of eternal life. "I am come that they might have life, and that they may have it more abundantly," said Jesus. (John 10:10b) If you have not already done so, surrender everything that you are to Him. If you do, His hand and heart will forever shape your world.

— Pamela Teer

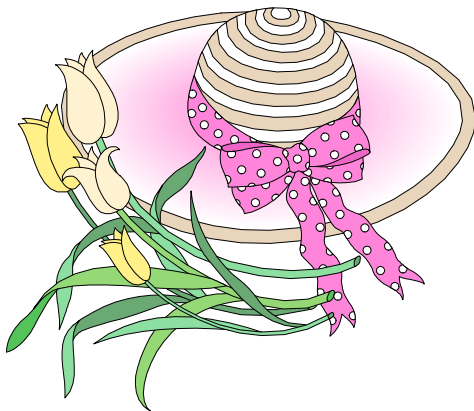
The writer accepted Christ at the age of twelve. Since then, she has served the Lord in many capacities, including both home and foreign missions.

Fond Memories

The following tribute was written to honor Agape Volunteer Dorothy Fiske on her 85th birthday. Her daughter, Dixie, is the author of these fond memories about her mother. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed;" Proverbs 31:28a

Dear Mom,

As I think back on my growing-up years, I seem to find you most often in the yard. Not just one yard but several, and there is always a memory of flowers. In some yards they ran across the front, in others they ran along the sides or behind the house. You have always been a planter. You are most certainly a Gardner, but more than that, you are a planter... I can see your small brown self, dragging a hose, or carrying a shovel to some new destination in the yard. Your style was of a random sort, Hibiscus here, Zinnias there, perhaps bushy Bougainvillias overflowing into the street. It was not uncommon to see you moving a plant that had only known its home for a short time, to a new place, a better spot which had been overlooked.



No one specific event sticks in my mind, but rather the colors, vibrant reds, yellows, purples mixed with the scent of jasmin and orange blossoms. The colors and smells blend together to float like a watercolor in my memory.

At this moment, I now recognize that you really are a free spirit and your yard was your domain. It was a place where you could pinch and plant, sing, pray, nurture and be nurtured in kind with its random beauty that reflected your style. The same faith that accompanied each new plant became the force and sometimes the armor that saw you through some challenging life events. There were times that you had to close the yard but whatever the interruption, you always returned to start anew.

Now, at eighty-five years old, you are still diligent, planting and moving, when the weather permits, still ever watchful for empty spaces to empty a packet of seed, to share your faith and love of God. You have gone beyond your acre, sowing in hospital rooms, prayer groups, and friendships. It is here that you scatter your seeds of love and hope. You can indeed look back and enjoy the bounty of your planting. You are the burst of color in so many lives and I love you very much.

A Little Kindness Goes a Long Way

It is written that we should love one another (John 13:34). Here's a brief account from the Internet which shows how a small act of brotherly love made a big difference. — Wade David

Mark was walking home from school when the boy ahead of him tripped and dropped all of his books, along with two sweaters, a baseball bat, a glove and a tape recorder. Mark helped the boy pick up the scattered articles. Since they were going in the same direction, Mark helped carry the burden. Mark learned that the boy's name was Bill and that in addition to having a lot of trouble in school, he had just broken up with his girl friend. When they arrived at Bill's home, Mark was invited in for a soda and to watch some TV. The afternoon passed pleasantly with a few laughs and some small talk.

The boys continued to see each other around

school. Finally, senior year came, and three weeks before graduation, Bill reminded Mark of the day of their first meeting. "Did you ever wonder why I was carrying so much stuff?" he asked. "I had cleaned out my locker because I didn't want to leave a mess for anyone else. I had saved up a couple dozen of my mother's sleeping pills and was going to commit suicide. But after we had such a good time together, I realized if I killed myself, I would have missed all that fun and so many other good times that might follow. You see, Mark, when you picked up my books that day, you did a lot more. You saved my life!



No Regrets

I have reached the age where my children are grown and my friends' children are leaving or have left the "nest" as well. I frequently hear murmurs of regrets about lost opportunities. Looking back on their child-rearing years, they wish they had made different choices and used those years with their children more productively. When our children are young, it seems that their adulthood is a lifetime away. We are so busy just trying to "live" that we think there will always be tomorrow, next week, or next year, but before you know it, your children are grown. When you are on the other side of those eighteen years, you wonder where the time went.

I had just registered for nursing school when I found out that I was pregnant with our first child. I could have continued with those plans, but in order to attend this nursing program, I had to agree to work a certain amount of time with the hospital that provided the training. My husband was a seminary student who worked the night shift at a brick plant and pastored a small church on the weekends. We decided that nursing school was not a practical choice at that time. We had a precious little boy that spring and nineteen months later, the Lord blessed us with his sweet little sister. After her birth, I began to experience health problems and was unable to have any more children. How thankful I was that I had chosen motherhood over nursing school.

I was a young mother when the Women's Lib Movement was at its pinnacle. I received judgment from my peers for not pursuing a career and at times I wrestled with self-worth issues from the lies that the devil fed my mind. However, I truly believed that my children were gifts from the Lord (Psalm 127:3) and providing a happy home was my career. I had people ask me how I could feel fulfilled. I can tell you that no other career can provide the type of fulfillment you experience when your children ask you to pray with them to receive Christ into their life... or, when they tell their peers that their mom is their best friend... or, when your husband presents you with a trophy for your twentieth anniversary because in his words, "Our children wouldn't have a piano full of trophies without you."

I have been blessed. I know that not all mothers have the choice to be stay-at-home moms. To you I say, "Use the time that you have wisely. Enjoy your children!" To you mothers who are full-time moms, don't let the enemy rob you of the joy of motherhood. Your little ones will be grown before you know it. To all mothers and grandmothers I say, "Have no regrets." Make the most of every opportunity that you are given.

Happy Mother's Day!

No Regrets was written prior to the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado. In light of that tragic event, as we lift those families up in prayer, may we prayerfully consider our relationship with our own children.

— Nancy Haecker

The Cross — from a Different Perspective

A ten-year-old Jewish boy was failing math. After trying everything from tutors to hypnosis, his parents enrolled him in a private Catholic school. After the first day, they were surprised when he walked in after school with a stern, focused, and very determined expression on his face. He went straight to his room, closed the door, and worked feverishly on his studies until bedtime, taking off only a brief time for dinner. This continued for the rest of the semester. When the mother opened his report card, she saw a large "A" under the subject of Math. Overjoyed, she and her husband

rushed into their son's room.

"Was it the nuns that did it, son?" the father asked. "No," replied the boy. "Well, was it the one-on-one tutoring?" "Not really," said the boy. "What was it then?" demanded the father. "The textbooks? The teachers? The curriculum?"

"No, no!" replied the boy. "What happened was that on that first day, when I walked in the front door and saw that guy nailed to the big plus sign, I knew they were *serious!*"

— An anonymous teacher (with a sense of humor)



Hello to all my brothers and sisters this fine day in May. It is so good to be back in control of my mind and thoughts. I was completely out of it for a while, and if it had not been for my friend, Nancy Haecker, helping me the past two months, there would not have been a **Bonnie's Corner** in the past two newsletters. Thank you, Nancy, from the bottom of my heart for being my friend and helping me in my time of need.

Thanks to all of you for your phone calls, your cards and, most of all, for all of your prayers. I am getting stronger each day, but still having to use a walker right now. Hopefully I will be rid of the walker by the time I go back to the doctor. Be in prayer with me that I will walk into the doctor's office on that day just like I had never had an accident.

We talk about special prayer requests, and I have one that I should have mentioned before now. (I really feel bad that I haven't.)

Please remember our friend, Judy Payne, in your daily prayers as she just lost her loved one, February 22nd. Ernie and Judy have been dear friends of ours. We met them when they bought out the German Restaurant here in Austin. It was a favorite restaurant of Dave's and mine. We became friends with Ernie and Judy. They became involved with our ministry; Dave and I became more involved in wanting to eat German food every weekend, which led to more inches and more pounds on both of us. (It was fun putting it on, but not nearly as much fun trying to take it off!)

Ernie and Judy were one of the first five Founding Partners in CAMEM. They also gave honorarily in the Gift Giving Project in honor of others. Ernie was also very involved in the "Feed the Children Program" in Belize.

Ernie had heart surgery a year ago. They performed five bypasses. We thought he was doing really well now, considering he had a mild stroke here a while back, but did not even have to

go to the hospital because of it. While I was in the hospital, Dave called one morning. He told me Judy had called 911, and they did not think they were going to be able to revive Ernie. I was so shocked I couldn't believe my ears. I thought he couldn't mean what it sounded like. Ernie had just been out to our house on Saturday.

While waiting for the paramedics to come, Judy worked with Ernie, trying to do what she could, with 911 on the other end of the phone. She knew there was nothing more that could be done humanly. It was time for him to go home to be with our Lord, where his heart would never fail him again.

Judy will need your prayers as she learns to adjust without Ernie. Every day, they were so used to being together and doing everything together.

If anyone would like to drop a little note of sympathy or encouragement to Judy, just send it to Judy Payne, c/o Agape International Ministries, P.O. Box 90248, Austin, TX 78709-0248. I know it will be very uplifting to Judy to know how much Christians really care about their brothers and sisters in Christ. Judy is raising two young grandchildren alone, and doing a spectacular job of it. Please let her know how much you care, even though you don't know her personally.

Keep praying for JoAnn Roof. (We told you about her accident in **Bonnie's Corner** last month. She fell from a seven-foot wall and was severely injured.) We know the Lord is continually making her stronger each day.

We want to pray for your special prayer needs. Just let us know if you would like special prayer. If you prefer, you do not have to give us the specifics. Also, please let us know if you would rather not have them published.

— *Bonnie*



Quadruple Direct Harvest for New FC's

From its origin, the primary objective of CAMEM was (and is) to help Christian churches become free of debt. Usury from debt on land and on buildings places church members in bondage to worldly lending institutions, robbing the church of valuable resources that could otherwise be directed toward worthwhile ministry.

As an encouragement to small and medium-sized churches, a special provision is being made for a period of seven months only: New Founding Church positions with an initial donation of \$3000 or less, received June through December, 1999, will be given full Harvest Unit credit for the initial donation. The usual \$1500 expansion donation will be waived under this special arrangement. (Please see note below.) In effect, this will quadruple the monthly Direct Harvest (projected \$200, instead of \$50) that would normally be available to a Founding Church starting with a \$3000 donation!

NOTE: All expansion donations will apply if the Founding Church elects to give additional donations at any time in the future. This special arrangement only applies to churches that have been meeting regularly for at least three months. It does not apply to other organizations or missionaries.

Founding Partner Positions Closing

Going, going — gone! In a matter of months there will be no more open Founding Partner positions. All FPI and FPII positions were filled more than six months ago. There are only a few FPIV positions left. Although there are still a good many FPV positions open, growth is accelerating, and these are likely to be filled in a relatively short time.

As CAMEM becomes a large organization, the benefits of being a Founding Partner will become quite significant. By the time that's a reality, however, it will be far too late for those who hesitated.

NOTICE: Although it's unlikely there will be any left, on December 31st, 1999, all open Founding Partner positions will be permanently closed and internalized by the ministry.

Harvest Fund Performance

21.9% Net Gain for April, 1999

We give thanks to Our Provider!

Forward Thinking

By design, CHF is a perpetual fund. While CAMEM anticipates distributing Love-gifts to Seekers until the coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ, there is the possibility that some Seekers may go to be with the Lord before He returns. With this possibility in mind, some have asked, "Who will receive future Love-gifts available from a CAMEM position after a Seeker's departure from this present life?"

Since Seekers own no portion of the Harvest Fund and possess no control over it, CAMEM positions and Love-gifts can not be bequeathed as a part of a Seeker's estate. It would be grossly inappropriate to list CAMEM matrix positions or future CAMEM Love-gifts in your "last will and testament" as if they were among your property and possessions to be distributed to your heirs.

To the unbelieving world, the inability to name a beneficiary to a CAMEM position might appear to be a limitation. In practice, it's not really a problem. You may submit the **Alternate Recipient Nomination** form printed on the facing page. (Additional copies may be downloaded and printed from our Web site at <http://camem.org/doc.htm>) Although nominating an alternate recipient is never binding upon CAMEM, the ministry will give your request due consideration when selecting a recipient to succeed you. We trust that you will nominate worthy Christian individuals and organizations that, like you, are committed to advancing the cause of Christ with the abundance our God is providing through this ministry.

C A M E M

Christian **A**ssets **M**anagement **E**ducational **M**inistry

Alternate Recipient Nomination

It has been my* privilege to be selected as a recipient of Love-gifts from CAMEM as the Lord makes them available. I* have understood from the time of my first donation that CAMEM owes me nothing and that any Love-gifts sent to me by CAMEM are the result of an act of free will on the part of CAMEM. Furthermore, I understand that CAMEM, at its own discretion, freely determines all recipients with whom it chooses to share God's abundance.

Nevertheless, since CAMEM has demonstrated its inclination to benefit me with Love-gifts from the Lord, I respectfully request that the person or organization named below be considered as a recipient in my stead at such time and under such circumstances as detailed below. I further acknowledge that this request is in no way binding upon CAMEM in light of the fact that I own no portion, share, control, or interest in CAMEM, nor in the CAMEM Harvest Fund.

*Alternately, the singular pronouns "I", "me" and "my" may be understood to mean "we", "us" and "our"

Signed _____ Date _____

Seeker _____ ID #

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Please Consider as an Alternate CAMEM Recipient:

Name _____ Day Phone _____
Address _____ Eve.Phone _____
_____ Fax _____
_____ E-mail _____

Please include street, apartment or box number, city, state or province, postal code and country as needed for complete mailing address.

Please Consider the Alternate Recipient Under the Following Condition(s):

Instructions: To bring this request to our immediate attention, you may FAX this form to CAMEM at the number indicated on the CAMEM Contact Sheet. Even if you FAX this nomination form, it is also important to mail it to CAMEM International Headquarters.

Please mail this completed (signed) request to:

CAMEM
P.O. Box 1761
Belize City
BELIZE, Central America

Feeding the Children

There are so many hurting and hungry children around the world who go to school each day without any breakfast. They spend their day at school with nothing to eat because they have no money to buy any lunch. At the end of the school day, they go home, hoping to get a small plate of rice and beans in the evening when their parents return from work.

Last fall, I was fortunate to find a responsible lady to help this ministry address this important need on a local basis. We are about to finish up the first successful year of feeding hungry children a warm, nutritious meal each day at lunchtime in Ladyville, Belize. Last fall, through a process of trial and error, we began feeding fifty children three days a week. Praise God for His favor upon CAMEM. We are now feeding lunch to seventy children five days a week. Working with the principal and teachers at three elementary schools in Ladyville, we have been able to identify the most needy children. Teachers at each school volunteer to oversee the distribution of the food during lunch at their schools. Each day, our cooks prepare a different meal, giving the children a variety. One day they may have stewed chicken and rice with planta (fried banana) and juice. The next day they may have something similar to what we call tacos with fruit and juice. These meals are neither as fancy nor as appealing as what you might see in a school cafeteria here in the states, but they are

warm, tasty, and nutritious. Each month we also provide several large bottles of children's vitamins to be given to the children with each meal.

Last Christmas, with the help of the AIM staff, we took a small Christmas present to each child. The boys were given a matchbox car; the girls received a small doll. Attached to each present was a tag with a handwritten note saying, "Jesus Loves You and so do we." Last December, wanting to share the joy of that moment with all of you, I took about 30 pictures of the children receiving their Christmas presents and their lunches. Sadly, and to my great embarrassment, I discovered later that there was NO FILM in the camera.

Lord willing (and with His help), WE WILL have pictures in the next newsletter of the children receiving their meals. Be in prayer with us that these children (and their parents) will be blessed spiritually, as well as nutritionally, as we go about "Spreading the Love of Jesus Throughout the World." Rejoice with us, knowing that this ministry's practical demonstration of the Love of Jesus is an extension of your generous support and prayers.

Keep JESUS in Your Heart.

May God Bless You and Yours,

— *Brother Dave*



AGAPE INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES
P.O. Box 90248
AUSTIN, TX 78709-0248
USA

Address Service Requested