

Dear Friend and Family,

I am always amazed at God's love for us. He loves us so much that He even cares about the little things in our lives. Have you ever prayed for something as basic as getting a haircut? How about getting the rest that you need? Have you prayed for spiritual renewal in your heart and mind? Have you asked for friends to share with? I have, and God has answered.

A ministry called "Women of the Harvest" did a conference in Costa Rica for missionary women and was God's answer to these things for me. My friend and co-worker Sheryl Goll and I traveled to Costa Rica for the three-day retreat and were so blessed by our time there.

As we spent time in small groups sharing and praying for each other I was struck by the love and acceptance that was being shown for one another. There was no competition, no comparing, no struggle for control or attention, and an absence of judging. There was a real eagerness to listen well to others, feel their pain, and take that to the Lord in prayer. What a beautiful example of the body of Christ!



Sheryl and I with our small group.



Women of the Harvest Conference, Costa Rica.

The thing is, we are all human. We all have struggles in our lives. We all need someone to share with and encourage us. But for some reason, it is hard for us to be vulnerable; at least it is for me. I often share about my struggles after I've gone through them. After I've figured things out. After I can also supply the answers. But I don't think that is what God had in store for His children.

Life is difficult, but that doesn't change how much God loves us. He is even there in those difficult times. Do you ever feel lonely? I do. Do you ever feel like Satan is being relentless in tempting you with different sins? I do. Do you ever feel like you can't share those things with others? I do. But that is a LIE from the one who wants to keep us from the TRUTH!

It is so hard for me to let others see my weakness. I struggle to admit failure. I have a hard time when I say something dumb. I want to sound smart. I want to appear strong. I want people to think I have it all together. But I don't! And by trying to cover that up, I miss out on the great benefit of being part of the loving body of Christ.

The TRUTH is we need each other. The TRUTH is we are not perfect. The TRUTH is God is working in each of us according to His perfect will to mold us into the people He wants us to be. The TRUTH is God loves us so much that He has provided us with a community in which we can share His love. Let's take advantage of that!

Seeking to love others well,



Thanks to You, the Summer Won't Slump!

We in OC are humbled by God's generous provision through His people! Let me share one example.

Not long ago, OC missionaries Dave and Debbie Kornfield received an unexpected letter containing a \$500 check. Eileen, a member of one of the Kornfields' supporting churches, wrote, "Please accept this gift to help sustain your physical and travel needs. I was led to give it and must be obedient."

May I tell you why it was so important for Eileen to obey the Lord? Debbie is currently in the U.S. because their college-age daughter Karis needs an intestinal transplant. Over the years, they have incurred large medical and travel costs that have drained their bank account. So you can imagine their gratitude when they received the unexpected gift. Eileen is one of several friends who have blessed the Kornfields in this way. Others have donated air miles which have allowed Dave and daughter Valerie to visit from Brazil.



*Greg Gripenrog
OC President*



Debbie and Karis Kornfield

The story has another chapter. Debbie and Karis were summoned suddenly to Pittsburgh for Karis' transplant surgery, only to have the procedure postponed just after they arrived. They sat in the hospital room together, with all of their luggage, wondering where they would stay now that everything was delayed.

This time God raised up new partners, whom the Kornfields hadn't previously met, whose gift was that of hospitality. Battle and Carol opened their home for as long as the Kornfields need it while awaiting another organ and for the long recuperation time following the surgery. Not only that, Battle and Carol arranged for a special prayer time at their church that greatly encouraged Karis, and Battle frequently rides the bus to work to make his car available for their use.

On behalf of all our missionaries and staff, I want to thank you for every prayer, every gift of hospitality, every dollar, and every note of encouragement that you have given over the years. Your giving has glorified God.

During these summer months, financial support often lags behind. In fact, because of this recurring pattern, the season has been nicknamed "the summer slump." As many people travel during these months, they sometimes forget to send in their monetary support.

Accompanying this letter you will find an encouragement card which you can easily send to your OC missionary. May I request that you write a few words and send it to us in the enclosed envelope? Then we'll deliver it directly to the missionary you specify. As God enables you, please remember your missionary's support needs this summer.

Thanks for sharing in the fruit of our ministry,



Greg Gripenrog