

Christmas, 1997

Dear Friends,

Joe I'm starting this letter looking out at a rainy day at Christensen's Nursery. This has been one of my favorite nursery's over the years. It's about 10 miles from home and it is located in the redwoods, live oaks and beautiful foothills. I'm helping Judy with a wedding and that's the reason I'm here. We enjoyed two beautiful weddings this year (I love weddings). Amy and Mike were married in May. They got married the day after Joey's graduation at Sonoma State. We were so blessed that my Mom and Judy's parents were able to attend both events. Amy and Mike were married in our parish church, St. Joseph of Cupertino. Judy does such a good job of coordinating a wedding and she loves it. They honeymooned in the Caribbean. In July, we journeyed to Boise, Idaho to enjoy their second wedding reception with their Boise friends. They love Boise and enjoy the outdoors such as river rafting (they took us on a trip with their large raft when we were there) and cross country skiing (we're invited this winter to ski with them to spend a weekend in the snow in a yurt).

Joey and Belinda were married in early August and honeymooned in Hawaii. They got married in the church that Belinda's grandmother attended. The rehearsal dinner was at Judy's sister Sue and her husband Tom's place. It was a blessing that many of Belinda's family from way back East were able to attend. It was special to have all the guests holding hands and introducing themselves and telling little fun stories. Joey and Belinda are living in Novato, a city North of San Francisco where Belinda teaches 3rd grade and Joey is working as a carpenter. He loves the outside and says he is learning something new every day.

I lost one of my best friends in September when Judy's dad, Ed Brandl died. Ed's funeral celebration was an inspiration. I believe that Ed is not gone but is living among the saints. I am so glad we have Ed on video tape telling his exciting stories. We were able to do this at Sue & Tom's before Amy's rehearsal dinner.

We visited Becky and Dave this Thanksgiving. Their new house is beautiful and they are settled in Roseburg, Oregon. Becky would like a bit more sun, but she loves the community and her teaching job (she teaches 7th grade English and History and coordinates the yearbook).

Mary and Todd live just a couple blocks from us in Cupertino. Todd works at Hewlett-Packard at the same place that I work and Mary teaches 5th grade. She is so blessed because most of the parents volunteer at school. Mary loves gardening and they have a yard full of beautiful flowers. I helped them start a citrus garden and they have fruit the first year.

Sacred Heart Community Service has started their new building. It is a 6 1/2 million dollar project and I've been involved since the start. They had a major fire in October, but the community was very generous helping them get back to full operations within a couple of weeks. Then two days before Thanksgiving, the first lady, Hillary Clinton, visited for a couple hours and helped distribute Thanksgiving food. Judy was there

photographing and got to shake Hillary's hand. Hillary was in San Jose to pickup her daughter from Stanford. She promised to return in the Fall when we have our new building complete.

We had some excellent apricots this year from our orchard in Hollister. Some as big as tennis balls and I got to dry about 10 trays. We are starting to think about retirement in a couple years and maybe considering building a house on our land. It's so beautiful there in the country with a mountain to the East. I'm on our parish Renew core team. The small groups are beautiful. One of the groups helped one of their members with rent to move into a new place. The Spirit is alive and the harvest is great.

My cousin Bud Travers and I did a major interior renovation and new lawn to one of our Hollister rentals (about 60 miles away). I love a good project, but I hope to wait until retirement to do any more major projects like that. My work at Hewlett-Packard is going well. I am blessed with one of the most fun jobs. I'm a process analyst and I help plan and implement new business processes. I work on local site projects and HP world wide projects. I still ride my bike to work 12 months of the year (this is not Northern Minnesota).

Judy This was an overwhelming year. Two beautiful weddings with the addition of a nice new son-in-law and a lovely daughter-in-law. It is pleasing to see our children happily married.

My father's death reminded us how much he gave us in common sense and a model for living life. All of our children were able to talk to him before he died, and he had words of wisdom for each one. All my siblings (6 of us) were at the funeral and most of the grandchildren and the new great grandchild. He was truly loved by all family and friends, and the church was full.

My mother is adapting well in her assisted living home in Minnesota. We are hoping she will visit us this winter.

Work continues to be interesting, but it was hard balancing work with all the personal things this year.

Nick Nick is our 15 year old foster child. He is in a new school and is doing very well. He got an A, a bunch of Bs and one C. Last week he went to the winter prom and used Joe's tux. We really enjoyed seeing Nick look so dashing and handsome. Nick is spending 4 days a week and vacations at his Mom's house.

Nikki Nikki is our cousin Bud and Elaine's second oldest. She is living with us while she attends DeAnza, our local junior college. She is doing very well in school and is in the process of trying to decide what career to pursue and what college to attend.

A blessed holiday season,

Joe and Judy Tembrock, Nick Vitols and Nikki Travers