

April...2014

Dear Friends, far and near,

It was such a long wait.... The answer was near. It was 1945. The war was over and America was celebrating. I was too but with mixed feelings. Now, the State Department would begin to issue passports and I would be going to Bolivia to meet my sweetheart to whom I had said good-bye three years before when he went to Bolivia to serve the Lord as a missionary. Getting ready was no big problem. My wedding dress was made and I had made my veil and I had bought some dishes and some silverware and a few pieces of yard goods. In war time things were very limited.

The day of departure arrived. I traveled with a family with two children. We left from Pensacola on an old liberty ship left from the war. It carried 12 passengers. A trip which should have taken a week, took three weeks. We disembarked at Rio. From there I would go alone across Brazil and on to Bolivia. The family would bring my footlocker when they came by train.

I had never flown before and was very naive. My Spanish was understood by the Portuguese speaking Brazilians but I could not understand them. A linguist can tell you how that works. I boarded the plane and just did what everyone else did and made it to the Brazilian border town where my sweetheart would meet me. I had sent him a telegram so he'd know of my arrival.

The plane landed but there was not a soul to greet me. I managed to get a taxi to take me into town and to the office of the airline. I helped the man understand that I was leaving my suitcase with him and would be back.

I went outside and breathed a desperate prayer to God for help. I walked to the corner and waited for someone to pass. When they did, I asked them where some Americans lived. I knew there were missionaries in that town. They pointed in one direction...I went where they pointed and stopped at the next corner and asked the same question...always following where they pointed. I made many a turn and it seemed I was getting nowhere. As it began to get dusk, I was on a dirt road, going out of town but saw a house up ahead. All of a sudden, a young man came towards me and had a big smile on his face and said "Senorita Julianita". How could he possibly know me? He did! "Senor Robert had your picture by his bed and I knew you when I saw you!!" Do you think God sent him to me? I knew He did! He has been caring for me ever since. That was 69 years ago! Oswaldo took me to the missionaries' home and stayed with them for a week when the next plane would leave for Bolivia where Bob would be waiting.

This chapter of my life will be continued when I write again.

Lately, the Lord has been teaching me much about the need for Christian fellowship. The letters in the epistles, for the most part, are to churches with some individuals addressed. The Church is the Bride of Christ and we are members of that Bride. We are one in Christ and need each other. As members of His Bride we need to worship corporately...with others of like faith.

I have asked you to **PRAY** for me. You have **PROVIDED** for me. You **PARTICIPATED** in our ministry and all this made us **PARTNERS**. For many years we have had a relationship that has been such a blessing to me and just thinking about each of you...churches and individuals...fills my heart with thanksgiving to my Heavenly Father for the many ways He has blessed me and taught me His ways and led me in the path of His choosing.

We are excited in Lake Mary, Florida. Our son Steve and his wife Anita and our son, Ken, the pastor, and his wife, Susan, and their two youngest, Daniel and Becky are coming to visit. They will stay with Cherry in her large home and I will spend my days with them. Steven is a "fixit guy" and told me he'd fix what I need fixed. We will talk and talk and some will drink a lot of coffee. We all love the Lord so will share what we have been learning. We will have a Brazilian meal once and that brings memories we cherish.

I am wearing an event monitor with the idea of maybe getting a medicine to lesson the episodes of A fib. This would be wonderful but is also frightening...the last one put me in the hospital. I pray they will find one that helps because the episodes have been too frequent.

Florida is pretty much the same all year around except for the difference in the annuals they plant. Right now I see a lot of begonias and snapdragons. Friends up north will soon be seeing crocuses and dafodils. Then come the lilacs. How I'd love to see them,,and smell their lovely fragrance.

Even as I write this, many of your faces come to mind and memories are sweet treasures I keep close. Thank you for your love which you show in many ways. Thanks to you who have sent me love gifts that have helped pay my bills, taxes, insurance and a crown for a tooth which I had to have. Some of these monies you sent even before I knew I needed them.

Stilled now be every anxious care,
See God's great goodness everywhere,
Leave all to Him in perfect rest:
He will do all thing for the best.

In His loving care,

Julie Collins