



Holiday Greetings

As another year draws to a close, my thoughts turn to the special people who have touched our lives - our family and friends - and this greeting goes out to each and every one of you.

It has been a busy year and we have much for which to be thankful.

Wencl decided to begin drawing Social Security after his birthday in August so he has cut back his hours at work. He still keeps busy working on the house, in Knights of Columbus, and on community and county-wide industrial development committees.

Dan and Lori have a big project going on their house - new shingles, siding, windows and a third stall on their garage. Up until this week the weather was very cooperative and things are moving right along. The children are excited about Christmas, of course, and make it more fun for all of us. Thomas is in first grade and loves school. He is also a Cub Scout so had his first experience selling popcorn etc. He's quite a salesman. Kendra is a very busy little lady - tries - and usually succeeds - to do everything her big brother does. She can hold her own in their disputes, She is a very determined little miss. They are both happy, outgoing children and - needless to say - the joy of our lives.

I am still working almost full time. Something pretty special happened to me this year. It all started when Dan had several episodes of chest pains about this time last year. Thank God it was only a hiatal hernia but until the diagnosis was final his doctors were quite concerned that we didn't have a health history for my side of the family. You probably remember that Wencl lost all three of his brothers and his father at early ages from heart attacks. I decided to see what I could find out. I contacted Catholic Charities in Sioux City and after I obtained a Court Order they began a search for my birth mother. (This was in January). On Feb. 14 I got a call from the social worker saying they had located her. I met her and we spent a day together in March. She was 85 in July, a tiny, tiny lady, sharp as a tack with a wonderful Irish sense of humor. I got all my questions answered except, ironically, the health history. She, too, was an orphan and came out on an orphan train from New York when she was about 2 yrs. old. I have two half-sisters and a half-brother who have never been told about me. She is afraid to tell them and I respect that and will not try to contact them. We talk about an hour on the phone every month, which we both enjoy, and if I think of any more questions, she is more than willing to answer them. We

are tentatively planning to get together again in May. It must have been quite a shock to her to have me pop into her life after 61 years but she says she is so glad she won't have to go to her grave with all those unanswered questions. When I started the search I put it all in the Lord's hands and I feel he was guiding it all the way. When you think about it the trail was pretty cold after 61 years and it only took about a month to locate her. When the social worker called me I said, "You guys are good!" She laughed and said, "Well, my middle name is Colombo." People ask me how I feel and it's hard to explain. I like her a lot and I know we are part of one another but she is not mother. Also I feel like the final piece of the puzzle of my life has been found and put into place - and it's good.

We are anxiously awaiting your Christmas letters.
May the Lord bless you
and hear your every prayer
Not only at Christmas,
but through the coming year.

Love,
Cathy & Wend

Hope this reaches
you. Doris said you
might be relocating