

Frank's December 2009 update

"We have but faith: we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see;
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness: let it grow."

Lord Tennyson

Dear Saints and Aints.

Shalom!

Surveying the breadth of unexplored spiritual possibilities and unconquered spiritual territories – we want to despair - so little conquered, so little achieved, so little progress made in trusting God; *the beam in darkness* - has but little grown.

And, hiding stealthily behind the glaring lights of Christmas decorations, Christmas presents and Christmas dinners, the old year slips quietly almost unnoticed out of our grasp leaving behind but memories and the uneasy thoughts of tasks unaccomplished, promises unfulfilled and longings unsatisfied; the greater our ambitions at its start the more intense the regrets.

"When Alexander (the Great) saw the breadth of his domain, he wept
for there were no more worlds to conquer."

A direct quote from Plutarch's (AD 46-126) Life of Alexander.

In the light of *that, our regrets*, Alexander's despair is the least of our worries. We still have vast unconquered spiritual territories to conquer and untold challenges to meet in the year to come. My heart is thrilled at that prospect. I but do wish that one day the cause of Alexander's tears would be mine...

One of my younger friends observed that my obsession with God and the things of God are a result of old age. If this be the case I regret that old age didn't come 20 years earlier...

Writing inane letters, making DVDs and calendars apart I also preach almost every Sunday and sometimes even during the week. My message this morning was on the lesson learnt from the bellybutton. The initial reaction to the use of that word was stunned silence. But I continued ... When we were small and at times sad mother would sometimes say, "Look at your bellybutton it will make you laugh." I don't think I ever consciously followed her advice but had I done so, I probably would have laughed just thinking of her suggestion. But in today's thought it was not as an object of mirth but of separation; of an end to one relationship and the beginning of a more wonderful one. I suddenly realized, though of course unaware of it at that time, the cutting of the umbilical cord made me an individual in my own right; it provided me with choices - a choice to love my mother or not to love her; a choice to obey or not to obey and the many other choices involved in a relationship.

For me it is a natural process to apply my discoveries of the mechanism of human interrelationship to that with my Father, my God. There was a point in time when the *umbilical cord* that tied me to Satan and the world was cut. I was offered the choices of a free man as whom to obey, whom to follow! I found myself *with* the freedom to choose; the choice to love God or not to love; the choice to serve God or not to serve; the choice to obey God or not to obey; the choice to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior or not. I chose God! *Immanuel* entered my life! And Christmas took on a meaning far beyond the sentimental and trivial with which it is celebrated today.

Everything I have done since is an outgrowth of those choices. Those choices made me a spendthrift; a spendthrift in every sense of the word; I spend my money, I spend my energy, I spend my time, I spend my life in a reckless abandoning for my God and for those under my care and for even those on the periphery of that care. I admit, at times with less joy God might expect from me but not with less sincerity, not with less love.

“My candle burns at both ends
It will not last the night,
But ah my foes, and oh my friends,
It gives a lovely light.”
-- *Edna St. Vincent Millay*

As a result the year about to become history was a busy and, even if not eventful, a challenging and interesting one. We accomplished many things; the compound looks better for it; the facilities offered to the kids have improved; and as a result their happiness - that process is still going on. The finishing touches on the clinic were delayed because our funds were delayed. But before the old year leaves, like Moses from the top of Pisgah saw the Promised Land, it will see the finished clinic. The last thing of the year awaiting completion is the laundry building, “15 x 60”, which also will be a *repair center* for torn clothes, lost buttons and other things that boys are prone to do to their clothes. The washing machines, dryer and sewing machines will make their entrance in late January. The sight of little boys washing their own clothes, with more or less success, will be relegated to history. Grubby little kids, like the poor – will however be with us always but hopefully – less smelly ... Bapu has been even busier as the clinic and the girls’ facilities are his venture plus of course running this crazy outfit. At the girls’ home two guest rooms have been built on top of the dorm and work on the foundation for the new school is in progress.

When I told Bapu we should make another calendar he refused saying, “I have no money.” - His favorite *mantra*... I also had no money but such a minor detail has never deterred me from doing what I think I should do. I made a down payment on the printing job for the calendar and figured I would look after money for the stamps when that time came. That time did come and I found myself with a very generous personal gift from the estate of late Rev. Bernice Gerard a friend and sponsor. We never discover that God’s hand is waiting for us - till we step over the edge of the cliff...

Also for the past four years Bapu and I have been thinking of getting a bigger car to transport our guests and drive in comfort to and fro the girls’ home. Bapu wanted to pay cash to avoid the high interest rates; but to collect that kind of cash, \$25,000, and keep it in the bank proved impossible. There simply were too many needs that gnawed away on our savings. Our Christmas present – the car paid in cash from the aforementioned gift.

When I was a kid I walked with my father; I didn’t try to figure him out. I do the same with my Heavenly Father; I walk with Him and I don’t try to figure Him out; I don’t try to manipulate Him. Over the years He has led me wondrously; I have no complaints! Shall I now forsake His guidance and listen to other voices?

A walk through the big dorm late in the evening when the saintlets, and most of them I perceive to be such, wrapped in whatever they have sleep, is a tonic; though I wrinkle my nose observing that some have a larger *carbon footprint* than others ... Nevertheless the sight of kids at rest; of kids at peace is an antidote to my mental and physical weariness. It is a fitting finale to the old year ... *Paid in full!*

My prayer for you is that the glaring lights of Christmas decorations, Christmas presents and Christmas dinners will not obscure the face of the Savior who's coming among us we celebrate.

And again our thanks for having made the choice to be an instrument in His hand to supply all our needs.

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

Frank, Bapu, Yohan and kids...

We have more calendars and will be happy to send them to you!
