

## A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS – 14

JANUARY – MARCH, 2009

**New Year's thoughts, 2009.** It was 11:40 PM on New Year's Eve. My aide had put me to bed around 10:00, and shortly thereafter the nurse had given me my medicine and started my tube feeding. I had the TV set tuned in to the festivities that were going on in Times Square. I was all set to watch the ball drop, indicating the start of 2009. The next thing I knew, it was 12:20 AM! Happy New Year! Sleepily, I thought, "Oh, well. It will seem like only a few months until it is New Year's Eve again! Maybe next time I'll stay awake."

Also, an image from the past was prominent in my mind this holiday. It took place on New Year's Eve, 1953. I was home from college for the holidays, and, since I had no other plans, I had agreed to babysit for the Shenk's on December 31. I was determined to be on my knees in prayer when 1954 arrived, and I was! The image in my mind shows me kneeling by the sofa in the Shenk's living room as the calendar transition was made. The thing I find hard to comprehend about this picture is that it happened 55 years ago! But then, how long are 55 years supposed to feel? God knows all about my mixed-up perceptions of time, for with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day!

**Tuesday, January 13, 2009.** January is almost half over already; time is moving along as fast as I thought it would. In these past two weeks I have outlined a plan to turn the rest of my essays and writings into books. This will be a massive project, but a satisfying and enjoyable one as well – as long as I resist the temptation to set deadlines for this work. I really do like having things organized, and that's what this project is all about.

My mind is also formulating elements of the next few services here at Sky View. The theme for February is always love, in honor of Valentine's Day. Now THERE'S a broad subject! I've been thinking of Jesus as God's valentine to us; we'll see what happens with that thought.

**Tuesday, January 20, 2009.** What a long anticipated day this is – Barack Obama's inauguration day! On TV I followed the whole two-year process that led to this day as if I were taking required college courses that were all intertwined. These courses included U.S. government; U.S. and world geography; U.S. political history; economics; journalism; biography; religion; and sociology. My mind and my memory expanded as I thought on these things. Of course God was always first in my mind as I studied the subjects of the day. I couldn't help realizing that much of the Old Testament concerns earthly governmental matters, too! I am pleased with the results of this election and pray that God will be honored in this country as we move forward into the difficult challenges facing us now. What a great time to be "living life on two levels"! (See my essay by that name: [http://www.vernakwiatkowski.com/PDF/AD33\\_LifeTwoLevels.pdf](http://www.vernakwiatkowski.com/PDF/AD33_LifeTwoLevels.pdf))

**Sunday, January 25, 2009.** I want to tell you about some other things that have been on my mind in the past few weeks. I have been listening to The Bible Experience, a Christmas gift from my daughter Marty and her husband Ed. It really IS an Experience to hear on CDs the words of Today's New International Version (TNIV) of the Bible read dramatically by well-known actors, musicians, and clergy, with unobtrusive musical and other sounds in the background! So far I have listened to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and part of Acts, as well as 1 Samuel; some of the disks I heard twice. I understand that sales of The Bible Experience are going well. I hope so! I would love to think of the whole earth blanketed with the beautiful sounds of God's Word!

Also in January I listened to two books on CDs, both by Mildred D. Taylor: Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry and The Land. Andrea, my reflexologist, introduced me to Mildred Taylor's books. They came at just the right time, for the stories helped me to understand the background for some of the racial tension that still exists in this country. I long for a time when all of us would live together with love, respect, and honor as our guiding principles! Perhaps we've taken a step in the right direction with the election of President Obama, but there's a long road ahead. On the other hand: Nothing is impossible with God!

In addition, my mind was planning February's service, a delightful task. It is finished now, and includes two new poems. The first is result of my thinking of Jesus as God's valentine. Here it is:

#### God's Special Valentine

I'm thinking of Jesus as God's special valentine  
Lavishly offered to everyone in humankind.

"I love you," declares this most beautiful valentine,  
"And I want to know whether you will be mine."

You'll see that this valentine is red, BRIGHT red,  
For God's love required that his blood be shed.

I received God's valentine a long time ago,  
So I can say this – for I speak what I know –

Our love bond still holds with ev'ry passing day.  
I know that my valentine will never go away.

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice."  
That's easy, since Jesus is my valentine of choice!

The second is a new verse for Jesus Loves Me, with words appropriate for those of us at Sky View:

Jesus loves me as I age,  
And life's billows 'round me rage.  
He will love me when I die;  
I will live with him on high!

I really look forward to hearing that sung at our next service!

**Wednesday, January 28, 2009.** We had another wintery mix storm in our area last night and this morning. I first found out that the prediction had become reality when my night aide came into my room shortly before the shift change at 7 AM. The nurse followed her in, and from them I learned that every 4th floor aide from the day shift had called in, that is, they were unable to come to work today due to the weather. I prayed that God's grace would surround the situation and bring it to a satisfactory end. Eventually enough people were in place to take care of us, thank God! At 9:00 I turned on our local TV station and found that all the schools in our area were closed. But you can't shut places like Sky View! I have a real appreciation for those who came in to make our day as normal as possible, and I certainly understand those who stayed home.

**Saturday, January 31, 2009.** The first month of our new year will be ending in a few hours. It has been a productive month in some ways, with a lot of time spent just thinking. A week ago someone

suggested that I change the title of my newest book – for reasons that made sense to me. A title was needed that would broaden the subject, for certainly my essays have a wider appeal than to those who are ageing and dying. After several possibilities were discussed and discarded, I think we are close to our goal. Will keep you posted.

As for The Bible Experience CDs, I have now finished Acts and heard all of Romans. How exciting! A bonus for me has been the favorable reactions of those who come into my room while the Bible is being read aloud. The extra 10 minutes that a night aide spent with me listening to Acts is a priceless memory; so is the happy pantomimed testimony of a man who has limited use of the English language.

**Monday, February 2, 2009.** When I was asked to change my original title, Heavenly Thoughts on Ageing and Dying, I realized that the title might imply that ageing and dying would be the focus of my essays. That was not my intention at all. I wanted to focus on the heavenly thoughts by which I have lived my life with God for so many years now, thoughts that have allowed me to face all sorts of challenges, even those that some find daunting such as ageing and dying, in a manner that I find adventurous. My aim is to give glory to God, who has been the Solid Rock Foundation of my life, by telling my story in such a way that others may adopt my heavenly thoughts as their own.

Paul invites us to heavenly thinking in Colossians 3 when he says: “Set your minds on things above.” This is obviously how he lived his life. So focused was he on the spiritual realm that he saw hardships as character building, hardly worth mentioning, and certainly not to be despised. He said in Romans 8:28: “We KNOW that in ALL THINGS God works for the good of those who love him.” I believe that too, for (1) it is part of God’s written word and (2) I have experienced it. [This thought to be continued.]

**Thursday, February 5, 2009.** This was the day for Scripture and Prayer with Verna and Friends here at Sky View. As I said, I made LOVE the theme of the entire service. It was as much fun hearing the program carried out as it was writing it. I think it’s wonderful to have fun – to smile – while worshiping the Lord! The two new poems were received well. Marty bought paper with a beautiful heart-studded border from which we made valentines by printing the poem on it. After the service we gave valentines to all the team members who came in from the outside to help us, including those who sat with the residents to help with the singing and readings. There were 11 “friends” here today. One valentine is posted on the door to my room and the rest I will give out to staff members. Spread the joy!

**Friday, February 6, 2009.** [A continuation of the February 2 entry.] I am still trying to think of the perfect title for my book. Sometimes an illustration helps to clarify things. I told you I believe Romans 8:28. Now let me tell you about some things that have happened here in the past week. First, last Friday I asked my nurse who was going to be my aide that evening and was given a name I had never heard of before. I was disappointed, especially since some of the aides that were working on that shift had taken care of me before and knew my routines. Sensing my concern, the nurse said, “Don’t worry. She’s VERY nice. And I’ll have another aide help her, so you’ll have two instead of one.” But the second person she named was also someone I did not know! I decided to relax and not interfere with the wisdom of God (my Ultimate Caregiver) and of the nurse.

And that’s how I met Urcella and Helen, two vibrant, patient, caring, capable aides who laughed easily and went out of their way to grant my every wish. They loved the list of instructions I give to aides who are new to me. All 3 of us enjoyed our time together; it was really fun! How glad I am that I didn’t interfere with the schedule!

On Sunday afternoon I was reclining in my chair, completely unaware that something unusual was going on, when a man from the maintenance department came in and found my floor flooded with water. He had been working in my neighbor's bathroom, trying to unclog her stopped-up sink. Knowing that the plumbing in our adjoining bathrooms is connected, he decided to check my room just to be sure all was in order. Am I glad he did! There would not have been a problem if my own pipes had been in good condition, but they weren't. He saw the leakage under my sink and knew he would have to replace those pipes, too. But first he turned off the water, got a mop and bucket, and began to remove the water that covered more than half my floor. "I'm so sorry," he said over and over again as he mopped. Though it was not his fault, I appreciated his loving concern.

When he was finished, I asked him to check the heavy cardboard file box that sat on the floor under my desk. As I suspected, the bottom was water-logged. He removed the contents – the last two copies of my book – and then we discarded the useless file box. Just then Leo arrived. On my behalf, Leo asked the maintenance man if my room was likely to flood again. He assured us it would not. He put a paper that said DO NOT USE in my sink where it stayed until the work was finished late Tuesday morning.

NOTE: Despite his assurances, my floor DID flood once more, though not quite as badly as the first time. It seems my neighbor couldn't resist testing the water in her room, not realizing she would cause trouble for me by doing so. While he was mopping the second spillage, he said, "You've got the cleanest floor in the building!" I smiled. I like that kind of thinking!

Leo looked at the two books and found that one of them had been damaged by the water. Immediately, he made a very generous offer: He would take the damaged book home, place each wet page between two sheets of clean paper, and iron it until it was flat and dry. After he had reassembled the book, he would keep that one as his own, and return to me the copy I had given him. That way I would still have two books that I could distribute. The Super Bowl game, which he and I both planned to watch, was to be played that evening. Leo thought he could watch the game while working on the book project – and he did! A memory from long ago came to his mind at just the right time and caused him to marvel. The thought was to refrigerate the wet pages so they wouldn't dry wrinkled or stick together before they could be restored. It worked well for Leo!

Little did I know that my adventure on Sunday was not over yet! The Super Bowl game was so exciting! I am not a true football fan, but I understand the basics enough to enjoy watching a game occasionally. My aide put me to bed and the nurse came to give me medicine and to hook up my tube feeding while the game was still in progress; both watched with me for a few minutes. What happened next is best told by the following note, which I gave to the nurse on Monday:

When you got my food ready last night, you left the end of the tubing on the nightstand instead of connecting it to my feeding tube. For 8 hours the food went on the floor, until my aide found the mistake this morning. I had no idea! Everything sounded right and there was no wetness to alert me. 2-1/2 hours of food remained, which I gladly ate.

Obviously, both of us were distracted last night. I thought I should tell you so we can help each other be aware in the future.

Love, Verna

The only reason the error was discovered was that when my aide had gone to the head of my bed to pull me higher up on the mattress, she stepped in the food on the floor. Just think: if I hadn't slipped down in my bed, ALL my food would have gone on the floor! Romans 8:28 again!

Monday evening Helen came to see me. Smiling broadly, she asked, "How ARE you?" "I am fine," I typed. And I was!

Then Tuesday morning my right foot was injured. My aide had used the lift to get me onto a shower chair. She put slippers on my feet and began to push me across the hall to the shower room. I knew it would be better if she turned me around and pulled me to the shower – but I can't talk! My floor is covered with linoleum tile and the hallway is carpeted. When the sole of my slipper hit the carpet, it got stuck. When the aide continued to push, my foot painfully twisted underneath the chair. My nurse came quickly and so did others. After assessing the injury, the nurse held a phone consultation with my doctor. Together, they decided x-rays were in order for my foot and ankle. Meanwhile, I had a shower and got dressed, my feet clad in soft socks and slippers. My aide, of course, felt terrible about causing the accident. I held nothing against her, considering this another opportunity to experience and dispense the grace of God.

I was so glad to hear that the x-rays would be taken in my room. When the technician arrived with the portable unit, the aides used the lift to place me on my bed where the process was soon accomplished. Several hours later we received word that the x-rays were negative.

On Wednesday I was surprised to see how much the pain had lessened. There was no visible swelling, either. I did write a note to my caregivers asking them to handle my foot carefully. Andrea, my reflexologist, came that evening for our regular appointment. She heard the story and then smilingly said, "If nothing happened, you'd have nothing to write about!" I smiled back. As I said, I like that kind of thinking!

Both good and bad things happen to us all the time. The challenge is to remain stable through it all. That's where the practice of setting our minds on things above is such a huge help. Hmmm ... maybe that would be a good title for my book: Setting Our Minds on Things Above. Will ponder that.

**Saturday, February 7, 2009.** Yesterday I gave my aide Tina a copy of my valentine poem. She read it and then asked if I could simplify the thought for her Sunday School children. In my mulching time this morning, I mentally composed a simple 4 line poem which, I was happy to note, could be sung to the tune of Jesus Loves Me. As I dozed off and on during the next couple hours, I made a concerted effort to retain that poem. Every time I woke up, I checked to see if the verse was still there, and, of course, it was. The tune helped. As soon as I was dressed and in my chair, I went to the computer and typed the following words:

Jesus is my valentine –  
I am his and he is mine.  
Jesus loves me, that's his part,  
I love him with all my heart.

The more I meditate on these simple words, the more I realize they are not just for children. To me they represent the ideal, reciprocal love that God desires to have with each one of us. If I were to title this poem, I might call it "The Big Hug," for to me that's an apt picture for these lines. What do you think?

**Wednesday, February 11, 2009.** Update on my physical condition. This morning I went to the 2nd floor to keep an appointment I had with my neurologist. I hadn't seen him for 2 years. By telling you about my visit, I will be bringing you up to date on several physical problems.

First of all, I gave him this written precaution: "My right ankle hurts from an accident 2/03. X-rays on my foot and ankle were negative. IF YOU MUST HANDLE MY ANKLE, BE CAREFUL, PLEASE." This will let you know that my ankle still hurts. I had a similar injury about 2 years ago and that one took 2 to 3 weeks to heal. I had thought this time the healing might be faster, but maybe it won't.

Another note to the doctor said, "Am wondering about the curving of my hands & fingers. PLS or arthritis? Sometimes the back of my right hand hurts. Tylenol helps." He thought it was PLS.

We talked about the few medicines that I take routinely. My main medicine is something I take 4 times a day to reduce the severity of my spasms. It must really work; my spasms have not increased for years. Three times a day I get 2 puffs from an inhaler of a substance meant to help my bronchial condition. Twice a day I get vitamin E oil mixed with a spoonful of pudding, the only thing I ever take by mouth; everything else goes in through my feeding tube. Once a day I get medicine to prevent acid from building up in my stomach. And that's it, besides the few meds, like Tylenol, that I may have if I need them.

The doctor checked the strength left in my arms and legs and seemed pleased with the results. He saw little change between today and 2 years ago. I mentioned that my reach was certainly more limited. Then he said he wanted to see me once a year and put me in charge of making the appointments.

It was not until I was back in my room that I realized the implications of what the doctor had said. He expected that I would not only be living that long, but would be functional as well! I need to adjust my mindset so it doesn't matter to me how long I live. "One day at a time" is a good motto for dying or living!

**Saturday, February 14, 2009.** Last night I had a very vivid dream in which I was a resident in a nursing home. It was a fascinating mixture of fact and fancy. I had just gotten to the very realistic part where a night aide came in to change me when I suddenly realized that Margaret, one of my night aides here at Sky View, was actually by my bed taking care of my needs. When it dawned on me that the previous part had only been a dream, I began to laugh so hard that Margaret chuckled with me. As soon as she could, she gave me my Lightwriter so I could tell her what was funny. Then we both laughed – and laughed – and laughed. It felt so good!

Right now the Dyers are on their way here from Massachusetts for their Presidents' Day visit. Looking forward to that.

**Friday, February 27, 2009.** One hundred years ago today, a baby girl was born on a farm in Maryland to Norman and Annie (King) Hicks. They named her Florence Eva. On November 27, 1930, Florence married William Ziegler. And on April 18, 1933, I was born to them in Annville, Pennsylvania. Florence died in her 98th year. Happy birthday, Mom!

Now for some catch-up ... During their recent visit, MaryBeth and Charles Dyer both helped me with the huge project of de-cluttering my desk and re-organizing my bookcases. The very fact that I needed help shows how much my muscles have deteriorated. I cannot open a drawer or an envelope or leaf through a pile of papers. Even dropping something into the waste can is hard because my hand does not want to release the item. It also shows changes in the lives of George and Janet, those previously in charge of keeping my desk and bookcases functional and neat. I appreciate all they have done – and continue to do – for me, but for now, due to their current circumstances, I must adjust to the fact that I will be seeing less of them. My workspace is in order now, and I am glad. I like peaceful surroundings.

We still don't have a new title for my book. A couple times I thought we had it, and then someone would point out a flaw. Five of us are working on the title project: George, Janet, MaryBeth, Marty and I. Others are well acquainted with my writings and with my life, and I respect their opinions.

Currently I am considering Heavenly Thinking – Preparing for Earthly Living with God. Meanwhile, the March service has been occupying my mind. I finished it yesterday.

My doctor stopped by today for my routine monthly checkup. I asked him a question that has been on my mind for a while: Why does my mouth hang open much of the time? He said it was because my facial muscles have lost their tone, due to my disease, to the point where my jaw is too heavy for them to hold up. Immediately I thought of several pairs of pants that I had discarded this past year because the elastic in the waistband had lost its tone. It all makes sense. I am glad to have some understanding of what is going on. Another health note: my ankle is back to normal. It took 3 weeks to heal.

**Monday, March 2, 2009.** The view from my window was quite wintry today. About 5” of snow fell during the night and into the morning. The sky and all the landscape were awash with various shades of gray. I spent some time just gazing outdoors. It was beautiful!

**Tuesday, March 3, 2009.** Just over 2 weeks ago Margaret, one of my night aides, happily told me she was going to Paradise. Although she is a believer in Jesus, I was sure Margaret was referring to an earthly destination, not to her eventual home in Heaven. Was she going to Paradise, Pennsylvania?, I wondered, thinking of a town perhaps 30 miles from where I grew up. But no, the place was not NAMED Paradise; it just SEEMED like paradise to her. Margaret was going home to Jamaica for a big family reunion. I was happy for her. She told me when she expected to return, and then she left. I thought of my aide while she was gone and wondered what happened when she didn't come back to work when she had said she would.

And then at 2:00 this morning I opened my sleepy eyes and saw Margaret standing at my bedside! I was so happy that my cup of joy ran over and splashed on her! She gave me a brief summary of the wonderful reunion, then told me a leg injury she suffered on the last day in Jamaica had kept her from returning to Sky View when she had planned.

From the moment I realized that Margaret was back, my mind combined her return with the promised return of our Lord Jesus. Before he died Jesus comforted his followers by telling them that he would return sometime to take them to his Father's House, so we can all be together with him and each other. What a family reunion THAT will be! And it will never end! The place where the reunion will occur has many names; among them: Paradise! You can see why Margaret's story and the return of Jesus began to blend in my mind!

One thing Jesus did NOT do was give us a DATE for his return. As I was lying in bed, smiling with delight at Margaret, I thought: What fun it would be to wake up and find JESUS smiling at me! Come, Lord Jesus.

**Saturday, March 7, 2009.** I am pleased to announce that my book has a new title! I am so happy with how our committee of five worked together on our quest. We all gave opinions; we all were heard; and in the end, we all agreed on:

SETTING MY SIGHTS ON THINGS ABOVE:  
My Journey with God through Life's Challenges

A series of essays by Verna Kwiatkowski

This title captures the fact that my writings are very personal. The book is not so much a “How To” as a “How I.” Of course, if any readers decide to follow my example, for them it may act as a “How To” book. That’s fine with me!

Now that my point of view firmly in place, I can start writing a new preface, which I will call “A New Beginning.” After that I will go through everything to see what needs to be added, subtracted, or changed to reflect this point of view. I don’t think that will be a difficult or lengthy project, but we’ll see. I want this book to be as excellent as I can make it for the glory of God!

**Sunday, March 15, 2009.** After I entered Sky View and could no longer attend church services, I began listening to preachers on TV. Through a process of elimination, I found two Sunday morning speakers that I enjoy. Listening to them from my bed has been my equivalent of “going to church” for a long time. Today one of them announced that he was going to speak on Romans 8:28. I was glad. I’ve already told you that I believe God works ALL things together for good to those who love the Lord, and so did the preacher.

Part way through the sermon, he asked a series of five or six similar questions, three of which I remember: “Have you ever been bitter toward God? Have you ever been disappointed with God? Have you ever been angry with God?” To each of his questions, I – a 75-year-old woman who can no longer walk or talk, and who permanently resides in a nursing home – answered inwardly with a resounding “No!” Then he said, “If you didn’t answer yes to any of these questions, you are lying through your teeth!” And the congregation laughed! He then reasoned, “Even I said yes to two of them!”

But I was NOT lying! Nor was I laughing. I was stunned! I find it puzzling to think that people who truly believe Romans 8:28 would turn AGAINST such a wonderful God when hard circumstances arise. In difficult times I run TO my God, and there I find refuge, comfort, strength, peace – whatever I need. I hope many members of that huge congregation do the same.

I will continue to listen to this preacher. We are all works in various stages of progress. Lord, continue your work in us until we reflect your glory everywhere, at all times.

**Thursday, March 26, 2009.** Today I finished writing next week’s service. Now I can finish this Penny essay and resume working on “A New Beginning,” the preface for my revised book.

This evening Andrea came to give me my weekly reflexology treatment. Sometimes we listen to soothing music to enhance the relaxation that comes with the treatment. This time I had a perfect CD on hand: Ocean Melody, a beautiful combination of simple orchestration against a backdrop of ocean waves and related sounds, such as sea gulls and other birds, even whales. My neighbor across the hall loaned it to me a few days ago, and as I listened, I knew I had to share it with Andrea while I could.

Part way through the treatment I began to chuckle, for the CD brought a happy memory to mind. On Tuesday I was listening to Ocean Melody when Laura, my physical therapist, came in and started my passive resistance routine. After a few minutes, she went to my window, pulled apart some slats on my shades, and looked out. I wondered what she was looking for, but she said nothing and went back to work. Soon she said, “Oh! Are those bird sounds coming from the CD? I thought the birds were outside and I wanted to see them!” She and I had a good laugh over that!

**Sunday, March 29, 2009.** I continue to do a lot of reading via CDs and visitors who read to me, especially my husband, Leo. He reads to me from a daily devotional book that we have enjoyed for



years, as well as books that are just now coming to our attention, such as all the Mildred D. Taylor stories that are not on CDs. As for The Bible Experience, I have heard all of the New Testament and a large portion of the Old, including the entire poetry section.

Andrea continues to recommend interesting audio books for me to hear. The latest one was Marley and Me by John Grogan. Basically, it's the story of the Grogan's golden retriever, Marley, an exuberant dog that was expelled from dog obedience school. I am amazed at how much I have benefited from that book. Marley and the Grogans, it seems to me, were meant to live together. If I were to characterize the whole story with one word, it would be the powerful word:

### ACCEPTANCE!

Before I go on, let me tell you about the "glasses" I wear when I do my reading. The glasses I wear literally are trifocals that were especially designed to come between my eyes and the things in my line of vision in a way that helps me see clearly. When I put the word glasses in quotation marks, it stands for the way I process the information that is confronting me: my point of view; the knowledge and experience against which I measure new things. For me, the lens of God is always in place, and so is the lens of the Bible and all its magnificent themes, including salvation; redemption; forgiveness; loyalty; acceptance; and love.

While Marley and Me is not a religious book, so many of the big themes kept coming up that my mind often went to God. To me, as I said, the main one was acceptance. John and his wife Jenny were both able to accept Marley for what he was: a big, strong, active, loving dog with flaws! One outstanding characteristic was that Marley was terrified of thunderstorms. Since they lived in Florida, there were many occasions for him to be afraid. If no one was at home with him during a storm, he would go on a destructive rampage that is hard to believe. Besides destroying soft things like pillows and upholstered furniture, Marley actually bit into walls and doors! Instead of being upset with him, the Grogans sympathized with the extent of his fear, and repeatedly cleaned up and repaired their house.

Acceptance is such an active word. It embraces a living being and says "I love you just the way you are." That's how God relates to us. As we read in Psalm 103, he knows how we are formed; he remembers that we are dust. He knows what we fear and offers us comfort when we have to face those fears. He knows our quirky traits, our likes and our dislikes. God even knows our sins; in fact, it was while we were still sinners that Christ died as an atoning sacrifice for those sins.

Amazing acceptance such as that is meant to be passed on to others. "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God," Paul says to the Romans and to us. That brings my thoughts back to Sky View. Here in the nursing home I find daily opportunities to practice acceptance, including chances to accept myself. I can't afford to be upset because my fingers make mistakes in typing, or because I drool (Marley did, too!), or because my aide wants to do things her way instead of mine, or because my neighbor's TV is too loud. With this meditation, I can see that practicing acceptance is a way to inner peace. And it glorifies God! Let's accept one another, then, just as the Grogans and Marley accepted each other and as Christ accepted us.

With this entry I will close Penny 14 and hope to see you again in Penny 15. God bless you.