

Dec 2009

Greetings from Grace

Spiritual Life Conference

*It's SLC Conference 2009
Let's leave all our worries
and troubles behind
We'll come to the Saviour,
we'll sit at His feet
With heads bowed and hearts humbled
with him we will meet.*

*Oh, there's fun and there's games,
and good fellowship too
For children and adults
—and plenty of food.
We'll go swimming and shopping
and climbing the hill
And whatever we do, we'll do with a will.*

*But Jesus said, "Come apart by yourselves,
rest awhile
You've walked a long journey,
travelled many a mile.
Let my Spirit refresh you,
my love take control
Let me be to you healing for body and
soul."*

*So we come one by one to our Master and
Lord
To be led by His Spirit and fed by His
Word
We come empty vessels, broken, undone
We'll leave with new zeal for a world to be
won.*

The Spiritual Life Conference in Togo this year was extra special to me, as it was my last Conference before retirement.

All the missionaries and the children were divided into four teams for a special SIM Olympics. One of the contests was poem-writing. The poem at the left was part of my contribution. There were games and quizzes for all ages.

The SIM Swiss director Walter Diem and his wife Marianne were the Conference speakers. Their theme was the Cross, a subject that has been much on my heart lately.

It was good to see them again. They spent a year with me at Kandi before going to the Soudé Bible School to teach. Their messages were a blessing to me.

Praise and Prayer

- Praise the Lord for the arrival of Marc and Hilary Deneufchâtel and their two sons, Simon and Benjamin earlier this year. They are currently studying Monkolé in Parakou. Plans are underway for them to move to Pèdè in January.
- Pray for Don and Erin, who leave for Canada early in December. Because of Erin's ongoing health concerns the Mission has suggested they return home for further treatment.
- Rather than have Marc and Hilary move into the smaller Longworth house, only to move again in a few months into my larger one, I will be moving in January. Pray for them and for me and all the details of moving (and for me, downsizing).
- Pray for the 55 candidates for baptism in Pèdè and Kandi-fô who are finishing their one-year baptismal course and will soon be baptized.

As retirement approaches, my thoughts are turning more and more to old age, etc. Below are some thoughts I shared with the folk at the Spiritual Life Conference. The ones on being an SIM retired missionary are from "The SIM Canada Handbook for Retired missionaries" given me by Anne Noble in the Canadian office. Sorry for the plagiarism, Anne, but these especially tickled my fancy.

MAXIMS ON AGING

- As you grow older, learn to swallow everything with a grain of salt. That's all the doctor will allow.
- Setting a good example for your children takes all the fun out of middle age.
- Even when you have pains, you don't have to be one.
- Ever notice that the closer you get to a particular age, the younger it seems?
- Many of us could use more horsepower and less exhaust.
- People are funny—everyone wants to live a long time, but no one wants to get old.
- Why is it that modern technology can make nearly everything wrinkle resistant—except people?
- There are only three ages of man: youth, middle age and "you're looking well".
- One reason time flies so fast when you're old is because things always move faster down hill.
- Be honest, now, wasn't life better when you had 10 speeds and the bike didn't?

YOU KNOW YOU'RE AN SIM RETIRED MISSIONARY WHEN:

- you keep a bottle of water in the fridge and hot water on hand in a thermos.
- you turn the light off as you leave a room.
- you bargain for lower prices at Wal-Mart.
- you continue... to wash zip lock bags to reuse.
- you are so pleased to have continuous electricity and water supply.
- you forget to turn the lights on—and can't find the matches.
- you can't answer any questions on Jeopardy except the ones on the Bible.
- the most interesting topic of conversation is some other country.
- you see a person of colour and feel connected.

LIFE MAXIMS FOR EVERYONE

- Live so you're neither afraid of tomorrow nor ashamed of yesterday.
- The dog is loved by old and young; he wags his tail and not his tongue.
- People who are busy rowing seldom rock the boat.
- Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.
- When you can't have what you want, it's time to start wanting what you have.
- Blessed are they who are pleasant to live with.
- It's commendable to get in and dig... but be careful where you throw the dirt.
- Life is not about how fast you run, or how high you climb, but how well you bounce.
- One has to be patient to learn patience.
- The important thing about your lot in life is whether you use it for parking or building.