

Gifts of Love

Sister Melbourne was mean and grouchy. grouchy. There was no other way to describe her. Just the other day I heard her telling the bishop that children took too much time in testimony meeting. She even said that most of us didn't understand what we were saying; we just wanted attention. I walked out of the chapel feeling very angry.

My anger didn't last, however. It was December and Christmas was in the air. Excitement filled me. I had to smile and laugh, or I think I would have burst. We began singing "Jingle Bells" as we rode home from church, just to let some of the excitement out.

After dinner, Mom and Dad called us into the family room. Every year for as long as I could remember, we had chosen a family who needed some extra help at Christmastime, and we had secretly taken gifts and food to their house. It was one of our family's favorite traditions.

When we were all together, Dad said, "It's time we decide which family to help this year. Do any of you children have a suggestion?"

Some years it had been really easy to decide because of a particular family's needs, but this year we couldn't think of anyone. When none of us said anything, Dad looked at Mom. "Maybe Mom has a suggestion. Sometimes she notices things the rest of us miss."

Mom smiled. "As a matter of fact, I do know of someone who needs our help. Before, we have always chosen a family with children, but this year I think we should help Sister Melbourne."

I couldn't believe what I was hearing! "But, Mom," I protested, "she's not poor or sick, and she's really grouchy. She doesn't even like kids. I think we should choose someone else."

"I agree with April," said my older sister, Beth. "She really is grouchy. It wouldn't be any fun doing something for her. She might even kick our gifts off her porch. Besides, she seems to have plenty of money. She dresses in nice clothes."

I looked at Beth gratefully. It was comforting to have someone older agree with me. Peter spoke up. "She's always telling me to shush, even when I'm quiet."

"I know that Sister Melbourne has enough money to take care of herself," Mom said. "And I know that she isn't very pleasant to be around. But that's exactly why I think she needs our help."

I wasn't convinced, but I listened as Mom continued: "Sister Melbourne has had an unhappy life. She was divorced before she moved here. She has three children who are married. They have children of their own but never come to see her or let her get to know her grandchildren. She is very lonely and unhappy. I think she needs someone to let her know that she is loved. You see, April, you weren't quite right when you said that she wasn't poor."

"You mean she's poor in love?" I asked.

"Yes, and sometimes it's much more painful to be poor in love than it is to be poor in money."

Mom said that instead of buying all our gifts for Sister Melbourne from the store, we should make most of them. All the next week we cut out snowflakes, strung popcorn and cranberries, pasted together red and green chains from paper strips, and made cookies and candy. We bought apples and oranges to go with all the things we had made.

It was Dad's job to get a box just the right size for our gifts and to decorate it. We carefully arranged everything inside the box and put on the lid. Dad added a huge red and green plaid bow on the top.

We all put on our coats and piled into the car. Since the box was pretty big, we decided Dad would carry it to the porch. After he returned to the car, it would be my job to ring the doorbell and run back to them before Sister Melbourne opened her door.

I could feel my heart pounding with excitement as Dad parked far down the street from her house. "April and I will walk to Sister Melbourne's house," he said. "The rest of you must be very quiet so that you don't attract attention."

"Dad," I said, "I'm afraid Sister Melbourne will catch me and get mad."

"She'll never catch you!" He grinned at me. "You're the fastest runner in our family."

Dad carefully set the box on the porch. I waited until he was hidden behind the bushes, and then I ran up the steps, rang the doorbell, and flew down the steps and across the yard to the bushes, where I crouched down next to Dad. "Good work," Dad whispered, putting his arm around me.

The door opened, sending a ray of light out across the snow. Sister Melbourne didn't see the box at first, but as she was about to close the door, she saw it and stopped. She just stood there for a second. Then she bent down and read her name on the top. She lifted the lid, and once again she was very still. Finally she picked the box up and looked around the yard. She was smiling, but there were tears running down her cheeks. "Thank you," she called out. "Thank you, whoever you are."

Dad and I were both quiet for a few moments after she went inside and closed the door. I whispered, "I think she really liked our present, don't you?"

"Yes, I think she really did."

The next Sunday as we were driving home from Church, we looked at everyone's Christmas decoration and we began singing "Jingle Bells" again. When we passed Sister Melbourne's house, I saw our snowflakes in her big front window, and the popcorn and cranberry strings and red and green chains on a Christmas tree that hadn't been there the week before. "I think Sister Melbourne's getting richer," I said.

Mom stopped singing long enough to give me a hug. "So are we."

by Shirley G. Finlinson





Wishing You a Very Merry Christmas!



From:

Margorie Grime, Dave Grime, Cathy Szabolcs,
Lamoine Mikkelsen, Vanessa Hickey, Melanie Kottelenberg,
May Barry and Santa (Al Barry)!



2015 has been an exciting year... So much to be thankful for...

FAMILY: Krissi and James are in Japan for the winter teaching skiing/snowboarding until April returning to Fernie and then moving to Collingwood after being away for 14 years; Mike and Claire settling in Peterborough, looking to set down roots...have a granddog Truckee; and Dave, Mel, Ben and Sam we get to see daily/weekly and watch the grandboys thrive. We are so blessed with devoted offspring and their spouses. A HOME: Bruce and I are on the move again (21 and counting) to Woodvale Court. Lots for Bruce to do...he will have a workshop and we will park our cars in the garage (a first). Thankful for the abundance we have in this BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY. Being 25% Syrian, 50% Romanian and 25% Canadian Indian...I do feel for those without a country...we cannot imagine being in a war-torn country...with a "New Neighbours" group we will be supporting a family of 5 with 3 children. Thankful for the GRIME TEAM...who enable me to have a life...Lamoine, Vanessa, Dave, Cathy, Melanie, Al and May...thanks to YOU we have had our most successful year ever. Top 1% again...79th out of 16,500 Royal LePage sales representatives. Changes coming in the New Year... Bruce and I plan to ski in early part of the New Year in Fernie BC and Dave and family will be joining us for 10 days.

We are looking forward to Family, Old and New Friends and Fellowship over the Christmas Season. Here's to your good health, and may you and yours have a wonderful Christmas and may 2016 be a year of continued Love, Peace and Good Health. ~Margorie

2015 was a busy year for my family as well as real estate. My wonderful wife Melanie continues to build her business as a nutritionist, and keeps getting busier and busier. Sam is almost 3 now, and has blossomed into a lively, animated little toddler. My oldest son Ben is enjoying school, his friends, and has kept himself busy this year with skiing, baseball, art classes, ball hockey and karate. This Christmas I'm thankful for all the clients who have trusted me and the Grime Team to help them in making their big move. I'm thankful for everyone on the Grime Team who puts their effort into making the team great: Lamoine, Vanessa, Al, May, Melanie, Cathy, and Marg (mom). I'm thankful to live in a country without war and political turmoil. I'm thankful for my Mom, Dad, brother Mike and his wife Claire, sister Krissi and her husband James. I'm thankful for my family in England who I hope to see in the near future. And lastly I'm thankful for my amazing sons Ben and Sam, and my incredible loving wife Mel, who continues to put up with my sporadic hours in real estate. Merry Christmas everyone and all the best in 2016! Make it a great year! ~Dave

This year has so quickly passed me by...now I get the chance to pause and remember all the blessings on my journey. It has been such an awesome year for The Grime Team... Thanks SO much to our clients old and new who trust us with a stressful and exciting time in their lives.. It has been my privilege and pleasure to work with SO many wonderful people for almost 22 years now... hopefully helping to make your move as SMOOTH as possible!

My deepest Heartfelt Thanks to my incredible family: Tania & Brian, Carrie & Ryan...& my amazing grandchildren Avery almost 8, Jordyn 5 ½, and twins Carter & Logan who were 2 in September. They all love their Nana...and let me know that every time I get to spend time with them...each one is a Priceless gift to my life!

Christmas the season for remembering the past and for making new memories. Take the time to slow down and enjoy the simple things...let all your family times touch your heart in a special way. May the glorious message of peace and love fill each of you with hope for your future...and may the New Year stretching out in front of you be all and more than you wish it will be!!! *A Very Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Years!!* Blessings to you ALL! ~Lamoine



During the Holiday Season more than ever,
my thoughts turn gratefully to those
who have made our progress possible.
And in this spirit I say simply, but sincerely ...
Thank You and Best Wishes
for the Holiday Season and Happy New Year!
~Vanessa

2015!!! Reflecting back, I see much to be thankful for. I give thanks for my Co-Workers at the Grime Team, my Colleagues at Royal LePage, our Clients (who are the BEST!), my dear Friends, and especially my amazing Family...**for being part of my Life.** I am truly blessed to be part of Real Estate and 2015 has been a whirlwind. Additionally, I thank God that I live in this great country and pray that the volatility overseas will end.



Personally, I have always loved the Christmas Season. I love to take time to watch some Christmas movies, listen to Christmas songs and enjoy the sparkle of the decorations and lights. One of my favorite Christmas movies is "The Grinch"...so in the words of the Grinch: **"What if Christmas, he thought, doesn't come for a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more!"**

Wishing you Heath & Happiness Through-Out the Season and Year to Come!! ~Cathy

That special time of the year has arrived, Christmas. The most important gift that we received this year is good health and the ability to be more mindful of our many blessings. We both appreciate the opportunity to be involved with The Grime Team. Our wish for everyone is to remember Christmas with the childlike excitement of the Christmas Season. Take time to really think and appreciate the peace, love and many blessings that we as Canadians have the privilege to enjoy. ~Al and May

My favourite time of the year has arrived!! I love Christmas...the festive atmosphere, the family moments, the message of love and peace. I think perhaps we will have a green Christmas this year...and I will miss the beauty that a fresh snowfall adds.

2015 has brought many changes to the lives of my family and me. I am so thankful for my hubby Jason, standing by my side and loving me through it all. Our 4 wonderful children are growing up so quickly and I treasure the moments shared together. We've said hellos and good-byes to loved ones. We joined the Grime Team clients and sold our house (brings a new appreciation to what you, our clients, go through!) and are in the process of building a beautiful new home for our family. I can look back at the year with much thankfulness for all the many blessings received and continue to enjoy. I am so thankful for peace, especially with all of the unrest that is happening around the world at this time.

I wish you all a holiday season filled with warm moments and many blessings in 2016! ~Mel