Greetings!

As I sit here on Christmas Day looking at stacks of Christmas cards that I had hoped to have in the hands of you, my friends and supporters, I am reminded that sending greetings is good and staying in touch with all of you is important. I know that many of you have kept track of what I have been doing throughout the year via email. I am grateful for email! Ending the year with a nasty cold and lingering cough has slowed me down quite a bit. On the upside it has caused me to rest and reflect a bit, which is also important.

I continue to teach grade four at Faith Academy Mindanao. My primary ministry is still teaching the students of missionaries. In some ways this year has been sort of difficult. In May I broke my left wrist rather severely and dislocated many bones in my left hand. I did have a student with a broken arm at the same time so we were able to help each other out a bit and the whole class came to our aid. However, it has somehow been hard getting back into the routine of things since then.

I continue to spend time with Filipino friends and missionaries The Coderas (a family of NTM Nationals) continue to be close friends. I help them when I can and we encourage each other. I have also met and befriended a new Filipina National NTM missionary working near me. Her name is Rubelyn. She and Priscilla have become friends too. (Rubelyn is black & Priscilla in yellow)

Priscilla continues to live with me. That has been a positive situation for both of us. I am helping her financially to get her masters in guidance and counseling. She is working part time (as needed) at two Filipino schools run by friends of mine and she is also tutoring a seventh grade boy at Faith.

I have had some travel time this past year, teaching seminars for ACSI (Association of Christian Schools International) as well as visiting and encouraging several pastors, churches, and new schools. I love my time working with Nationals! Sometimes it takes a lot of effort to communicate well - there is more to communication than common words - but they are so appreciative when you take the time and truly care.

There are five young girls in Davao whom Priscilla and I spend time with every Sunday. We had them overnight for a Christmas treat. I bought them each a new pair of shoes for Christmas. We also had little bags/stockings of small things like combs, pencils, etc. for each of them. They are all attending church with us on Sundays and attending youth events too. They are from Catholic backgrounds and are growing in their understanding of and relationship with the Lord. They have become 'my girls.'