

And then the King will come!



Mark 13:8

Nation will rise against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom.
There will be earthquakes in
various places, and famines.

*These are the beginning
of birth pains.*

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Dear friends and family,

It felt a bit weird to put Mark 13:8 on the front of our Christmas card. But we live weird in times. And, when thinking back to the very first Christmas, I often wonder if Mary was afraid when she felt her first birth pangs. She knew her child would come safely into the world, an angel assured her of that. But did she fear for herself? In those days, many women died in childbirth. During her labour, what did Mary focus on that gave her the strength to endure it?

My friend, Jen, told me about the birth of her first child. When she reached the stage of labour where most women feel they can't possibly go on, her nurse said, "You're having a Baby!" So, Jen looked over at the bassinet that would soon hold her newborn, and gathered the strength to bring her baby into the world.

As we navigate these troubling times, let's gather our strength to endure them by remembering that the labour pains our world is going through, will bring Jesus to live among us once again - in all his Kingly Glory!

Our Salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Romans 13:11

Praise

ILLUSTRATIONS ARE COMPLETED! Wynter Ducharme, a Christian Cree/Metis artist has painted 20 beautiful illustrations for a children's book on the life of Mary Grey Eyes - the first Indigenous woman in the Canadian Armed Forces. Wynter's accomplishment is quite a milestone in the journey of getting this story of faith and courage to the world. Thanks to all who prayed.

THE STORY OF JOSHUA'S FAITH IS BEING SENT TO PRISONS AND YOUNG OFFENDER CENTRES ACROSS CANADA! What a privilege it has been to be a part of the lives of Joshua and his foster mom Sheila. Due to the popularity of Josh's book, *Shopping Cart Boy*, Josh and Sheila are still being asked to speak to groups of vulnerable children and their caregivers. Blessings to all who have prayed and given to make this ministry possible.

WE HAD A SAFE AND MEANINGFUL TRIP TO NEW MEXICO! Jack has always wanted to take me to see the famous Santa Fe Indian Market that he discovered years ago while taking groups of Indigenous youth on mission trips. While there this summer, we were able to share the Gospel with a young man at the Taos Pueblo. And we popped in to encourage our Navajo co-workers who had just completed an exhausting summer, directing a camp for Navajo kids. It was also special to explore the wonders of New Mexico with our daughter Elyse and her family. God is Good!

A Pueblo
storyteller
figurine



Prayer

JACK'S HEALTH - Many of you will know by now that Jack has been diagnosed with an incurable form of cancer called Waldenstrom's Macroglobulinemia. Yes! That's a mouthful! He is presently halfway through a six month course of treatment that the doctors hope will keep the cancer in check and prolong his life. As you can imagine, this has been a difficult adjustment for our family. And we would all appreciate your prayers as we trust God for whatever the future has in store for us.

HOWARD JOLLY - Howard and I are almost halfway through polishing his book of Indigenous reflections on the major themes of the New Testament. I truly believe that this book can be a great help in healing the hurts the Indigenous community has suffered. And it will help non-Indigenous Christians to understand the issues. Pray for us as we continue with this project. **And check out Howard's new YouTube chats called, "Come Sit With Me".**

MARY GREY EYES BOOK - Now it's time for me to buckle down and combine Wynter's illustrations with the Mary Grey Eyes' story. With all that is going on personally, Pray that I'll be able to concentrate on this task. Pray also that I will be able to find help with marketing the book to schools - both Christian and non-Christian.

With Christmas Blessings, Ellen & Jack Hogg