

## *Year-end Reflections: June 2006*

Looking over last school year, we can hardly believe that so much was packed into that period. It was an extraordinary year for us. It was a time of evaluation down to our core, which wasn't always comfortable. It was also a time of isolation and introspection and we ask your forgiveness if you have felt we have neglected you in any way.

As we look ahead we sense we are emerging into a new season in our lives. No, we would have never planned it this way, but we believe that God has had his hand on us in all of this year's contrasting experiences of *hope and despair--debt and jubilee--faith and doubt--joy and suffering--obstacles and creativity--victory and repentance--hurt and healing*. But in everything we give thanks! Our greatest desire is to be living in faith that pleases God, nothing less.

***“A contrite heart you will not despise, O God.”***

We have wondered lately if it is not part of the purpose of God to bring our faith to a new level of contrition and depth. We don't normally think of ourselves as spiritually shallow, but that thought is now under scrutiny. Accordingly, we feel the need to nurture a deeper spiritual life to deal with the complexities of life and ministry. This is a time to increase our commitment to prayer, and to possibly attract some to pray with us and create a prayer-focused core that does not have to be recreated and reassembled each semester. We are blessed to have the guidance of some that have gone ahead of us and who are encouraging and guiding us on this path.

The year brought two unexpected developments: the hiring of Marlene (part-time) and later Gary's transition to lead GFM Florida staff as team-leader in addition to our ministry in the South. No, there is no *new* burden to raise additional funding at this time for Gary's new responsibilities. But what we do need is stable funding at the appropriate level. You can pray for that goal on our behalf.

Though the yard remained a barren mess for quite a while because of left over hurricane debris, we are enjoying green once more all around us; it literally took a few miracles to get it under control. We finally planted some new trees, many of them complements of the Miami-Dade County Adopt-a-Tree program and also some trees we purchased for each other for our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Though it will take a while before we can enjoy all the shade, flower, and fruit, we are assured that after some initial attention and cultivation, God's sun and rain will do the job, kind of like our Christian life and ministry.

We are very grateful for the ministry that took place this year at the universities. As we face the coming year, we feel we are still joining God in a risky adventure (emphasis on *risky*). *We thank Him* for being with us through your faithful prayers and support. *We thank you* for your faith and commitment!

***“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’”*** Mt. 22:37

The statewide *Colloquium on Faith and Scholarship* in Gainesville with Ken Myers (*Mars Hill Audio*) was our big event of the year. Ken had superb content and worked closely with the *InterVarsity* staff to help develop small group discussion questions to process his message in a meaningful way. This year a math lecturer from *University of Miami*, Alison Northup, provided the artistic interlude through her violin and shared her musical journey. This was very encouraging to her, since it is a side of her that she longs to express. In our estimation, it was one the best colloquiums since its establishment four years ago.



*Small group discussion with students and faculty*



*Students at a break during the event*



*Ken Myers (far left) with a group of participants*

The *Christian Study Center* at *University of Florida* is an ideal place for this event. Yet it is evident to us that we need to pray and work towards having our own local conference in South Florida. Miami is a city in growing pains and its growth needs to reflect the strong Christian presence here, especially in two of its most important institutions: two research universities striving for excellence and attracting students, both from the U.S. and internationally.

**"The task of the Christian lawyer is to bring his religious values into the workplace with the hope and trust that God would work through him to revitalize and transform his life as a lawyer, his profession, and ultimately the wider community."**

*The Lawyer's Calling*

By Joseph Allegretti  
Commencement '06

Clayton Lynas  
*University of Miami  
School of Law*



Andrew Dick  
*University of Miami  
School of Law*



***Help lay a solid financial base***

If you would like to participate in serving Christ in the university community, this would be a great time to consider a special gift or increase (between now and June 30<sup>th</sup>) to help meet our budget for this fiscal year. If you are ready to consider monthly support, or would like to make a change in your giving, use the envelope or go to [www.gfmse.org](http://www.gfmse.org).