

Grace Notes

"God's grace for everyday living"

Giving thanks for God's grace

By: **Debora M. Coty**

The name of this column didn't come by chance. As a piano teacher, I'm well aware of grace notes, those interesting little flourishes that augment regular musical notes—to give them breadth and power. They are not necessary to carry a tune, but they add much so the character of the music.

I have long viewed special touches from God throughout my everyday as heavenly grace notes. As a follower of Christ, you know what I mean...those little extraordinary things that happen, more than mere coincidence. They're not necessary or essential for life to carry on, but they immensely enrich the daily routine of living for Christ. They're reminders that every detail of my life is important to my heavenly father and He *is* always working behind the scenes to help me along in my Christian walk.

Recently, I decided to alter my schedule at the last minute and travel to south Florida with my husband to visit his mother post-surgically. Because of my overflowing schedule, he had planned to go alone, but I felt God prodding me to support him and his

newly widowed mother. I cancelled a splint workshop I had been scheduled to teach in my job as a hand therapist on Friday, made quick arrangements for the house, the kid and the dog, and just left.

The looming problem was that I had committed to be in a play for children's church that Sunday and hadn't yet found a costume. I'll admit I didn't stop to pray for God's help for such a low-level dilemma, but I was pretty distressed about it as Saturday morning dawned in an unfamiliar place upon unprepared Debbie.

I made a list of items I needed (some pretty bazaar to outfit the outlandish character I was playing) and promised Spouse I'd have the car back and be ready to go spend the day with his mother at the rehab facility by 10:30am. So I got up at 8am, hit three stores that opened at 9am, and to my surprise, promptly found all the items on my list except one. I had no idea where to look for a goofy red hat in a strange city. There was a mall across the street, but it was only 9:30 and the stores opened at 10:00.

Although it was already ninety degrees out-



side, I felt drawn to the mall, knowing I'd have to wait in the blazing sunshine until the doors opened. Pausing at the intersection in front, I had to make a decision to turn left toward Sears or right toward Penney's. I felt an undeniable nudge to turn right. As I parked my car, I noticed people streaming into the JCPenney store. Puzzled, I joined the throng and found to my amazement that there was a special one-day sale, causing the store to open early and allowing me to find a perfect red hat with ridiculous floppy black plumes for seventy percent off. All was accomplished with plenty of time to get to the rehab center on schedule. I rejoiced, knowing I had just experienced a "God thing."

Now, I know that my small needs were not important in the cosmic scheme of things, but at that moment, they were to me. And therefore, they were to the Lord of me. All the little details fell into place—grace notes in the symphony of the morning—not because I deserved special treatment, but because God was blessing my efforts to put His work first by serving my family and my church.

No doubt, the cynic would scoff and insist it absurd to consider the possibility of divine intervention in the mundane endeavors of human existence. After all, God has wars to prevent and diseases to cure. I'm tempted to talk myself out of recognizing God's hand in intricate areas of my life, reasoning that I am too insignificant for the Creator of the universe to involve Himself in such trivial matters.

Yet Mark 14:2-16 shows us just how intricate God can be in influencing the minutiae of our lives. Every detail was supernaturally pre-arranged for preparation of the last supper, down to a man carrying a pitcher of water (a "woman's job" in that day) in the exact location in a large city at the precise time for the disciples to encounter and follow him home. The upper room of that house was fully furnished, ready, and waiting (all somehow taken care of in advance.) No coincidences there—only divine grace notes.

In this season of thanksgiving for God's blessings, let's not forget to include gratitude for God's customized grace notes in the lives of His children.