

11 April 1994

Dearlly beloved slime-buckets of wrath (that was for Al),
Hello. It's me. I like Kasugai now.

The cherry blossoms are in bloom - it's beautiful. We went to help an investigator move and instead she took us to see the sakura (cherry blossoms) for an hour. I was a little frustrated because in the past the missionaries have "played" with these people a lot - and although technically they're investigators we haven't been able to get a lesson with them since I've been here. Then the next morning I was reading in the Old Testament and ran across the part where "3 score years and ten" is used to mean "a lifetime" and suddenly I remembered an A.E. Houseman poem I read in 10th grade when I was 15 - the lines, "Now of my 3 score years and ten / twenty will not come again" and the ending, "about the orchards I will go, / to see the cherry hung with snow." Then I remembered Taki-san (our investigator) explaining to me that the sakura always come suddenly, all at once, (it's true - one day you notice, "hey, are

those buds on the trees?" and the next day the whole town is draped in pale pink blossoms),
they stay for about a week, and then are gone as suddenly as they came. She said it's a pattern very closely linked to the Japanese aesthetic (sp?) and psyche, from what I could understand. Anyway, suddenly I was so happy that the one April of my only 21st year & maybe my only Sakura season in Japan, I went to see the cherry hung w/ snow for an hour.

Our investigators are hard. They mostly have long histories and mountains of "concerns" and everyone has their own opinion on what we need to do for them, and what we shouldn't say because it will offend them, what they once said to so-and-so, etc. etc. etc. A couple of them have said they want to be baptized "someday." (after she turns 20, after they move to America, after their grandparents die...) and a couple of them say they want to meet w/ us "sometimes."

St. Olsen's b day was Saturday, so we had a surprise party for her in District Mtg.