

80 Greenridge Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605
May 3, 1985

Dear Family,

With all the comings and goings and missings, I didn't get a chance to properly say "Goodbye," to Charlotte, Bryan, Nancy, Doug, or any of you for that matter.

Thanks, all of you, for a wonderful stay and for the sharing times. Thanks to you for helping with my talk--I never would have made it in or out without ten hands of you looking after all my odds and ends and practically carrying me in there (what a case!) It was really a boost to see Aunt Merrill and Karen and Betsy and some dear friends, too. With a cheering section like that, I had to stay awake through it. Thank you for managing, too. (Come to think of it, Mom DIDN'T!) Just see if I mail your mother's day gift (whatever it is--I have the hardest time choosing for you!).

Thanks, especially to Mom and Dad for the nicest visit I've ever had with them in Utah--they're so super. Nancy and Doug were so fun to stay with and did so many really kind things that made me feel so loved and "at home." Carli and Chelsea were so cute. I miss you all so much. Doug, you come and bring Nancy and the kids in that jeep and come visit us in New York? OK? I'll get up and take you to the train at 6:30 a.m. (I did that to him for the bus on a SATURDAY! He was really a good sport.) The Easter Bunny even came to me at their home and brought me a darling quilted basket that I will use until the day I die. It's so cute, I'm still keeping it on my dresser, but the Easter Bunny hasn't been putting anything in it because he knows I have to lose the 100 lbs. I gained eating Mom's strawberry jam. *Oh, mom -- the kids loved the Easter candy you sent!*

When I got home, everything looked great. The family got along so well without me, I was wishing I'd stayed another two weeks, so they'd have time to miss me. But they made me feel welcomed. When I got home, Teddy about did a ballet (I thought he would forget me!) and Laura and Joy (neighbor across the street) had the whole house ordered and decorated. Big posters all over welcoming me home, and even a banner, all painted with flowers and a welcome. They had out my crystal punch bowl and fancy glasses (red punch, even) and even baked me a cake. It had chocolate frosting and three rows of miniature marshmallows all around the edges, flowers on it, and "Welcome Home, Mom" written in pink frosting.

Dan had to regroup and finish his papers and final exam preparations, so I spent the next two weeks putting in the garden. Dan took a couple of hours and dug up a couple of portions one Saturday, but all the rest I dug myself. What a steam. It about killed me the first day, but after that it felt quite exhilarating. I planted everything this year--it looks gorgeous, if I might say so. Laura and Joy built a crazy fence around a lower portion of the garden and planted their own seeds. We just got it planted and watered well, and the next day the papers declared a drought emergency and told us watering gardens was restricted. Held breath next few days, then it rained one day--then another dry spell. I tried to sneak a little water on my seeds, and one neighbor let me know I could get fined by the police. (I hadn't noticed the restriction in the paper that odd-numbered houses could only water at a certain time on odd days and the same, for evens like us). So I swallowed hard and told him not to worry that our prophet had told us to plant gardens, and we paid our tithes, so our garden had to be blessed. I assured him it would rain and rain and rain, then went in and listened to the weather report for more drought. Well, the very next afternoon it started raining, and it is now raining for the fifth straight day--just the slow, gentle type that makes gardens grow, you know. Just call me Elisha. Or was it Elijah? Just so it rhymes with Hallelujah!

Joy Schuhmacher's parents were in Israel for two weeks, so Joy was here a lot of the time. Before her parents left, she asked me for material about the Mormons, so she could do a report on our religion in her Social Studies class. Broke my heart. Well, she wrote a 15 page report and spent hours asking me questions and getting, you know, reluctant answers. She got an A on her report, which she gave orally to the whole class, and her teacher asked to borrow a Book of Mormon, Marvelous Work, and the 20 odd pamphlets I had given Joy. Tears, tears. What was really heartbreaking was when Joy told Laura she didn't know how she was going to tell her minister (Lutheran,

father she wanted to join the "Mormon" Church. She kept begging for another Book of Mormon, so she could read it, but we wouldn't give her one until her parents got back and she got permission. Joy asked such deep questions for an eleven-year-old, and I could feel the Spirit working. We are hoping her parents want to read all the material, too. Rev. Schuhmacher isn't too thrilled about us since the young man he was training to be the next minister (Ed H utchinson) joined the Church, with his darling wife. When Ed told Fred he had joined the Church, ~~Ed~~ Fred had a fit! Said, "How can you join that sect? Why they're not even Christians?" Ed said, "Speaking of sects....."

We had a bit of upset recently with Dan's job. His boss called him in to ask if he was willing to transfer, and he said "yes." Then they said the opening they had been considering (a task force with Bell Labs for a two-year term) had closed, so they'd keep him in mind for such opportunities in the future. Then he got a nice bonus and was chosen among the top 5% to get an "Outstanding" rating, so he felt enthusiastic and was happy about the direction his project was going. Then last week, out of the blue, they removed Dan from heading up his project and put him over on another, more technical and not as busy or interesting a job and put a more "management-type" in Dan's place and gave him ^(new guy) two assistants who weren't there before, while telling Dan they were going to box up that ^{former} project, anyway, and limit its scope. Dan let them know he wanted some feedback on the reasons for that, so the Department Head called him in and told him they wanted him to have more experience with managing that ^{new} kind of technical department. The next day they called a big department meeting and told them the Company was slimming up and would trim 50 level 9 positions (Dan is a "9") down to less than 20. Any "9" who didn't want to accept a lower level and lower pay could go you know where. Shaky. After the meeting, though, the Department head peeked into Dan's office and said "I hope you got that message clear yesterday when I told you, you're one of the "9s" we want to keep!" So we guess that's good, though Dan isn't as excited about his project as the one before (the one before was his idea and development). He did say, this will mean a rest, as the other was getting very involved. He finished his finals, and it was just in time to get ready for Mom and Dad Bartholomew's visit. They stayed 2½ days on their way to a mission as guides at the Visitor's Center in Sharon, Vermont, where the prophet Joseph Smith was born. They brought two wonderful older single sisters with them (on their way to Boston), and we had a nice visit. I guess. With my usual proclivity for proper timing, I had this mania to get the garden finished, so kept at it until it was done, then only got two hours sleep cleaning house, shopping, etc. for their visit. By the time they came, I was so tired I was dropping things, spilling, talking backward, and burned and ruined every meal and was probably the most inept hostess they've ever seen. But if I'd waited to plant the garden (and double-dig it), I'd be digging mud the next three weeks.

I just went out, since the rain stopped, and this is so thrilling. Peas, beans, nasturtiums, 3 kinds of spinach, and 4 kinds of lettuce and cucumbers are already up! And lots of little flowers, and my herb garden is thriving. The dogwoods came out in full pink and white glory, birds are chirping, and Spring in Westchester is DIVINE!!!

Public Communications is coming along. Went to Bi-Reg. Council Meeting in Manhattan last Sunday, and I think they're going to let me go ahead with a test run of a publicity insert through the Gannett Chain. Now all I need is a few millionaires to finance this. Oh, and guess what! I'll send along a blurb that went through the whole Gannett chain. A nice preview for my insert which I hope will highlight the Book of Mormon! Oh, Mom, we have a darling new LM in the ward who says she's the daughter of Angus Langford. Since he was so much younger than Grandpa (last child if this is the Angus.), I guess she could be my cousin. I still have to get together with her and check it out. So long for now--we love you all. Sherleney & family

Oh, Bryan! Thanks for your nice letter about the "Church of the Firstborn" business. I didn't mean by "real" Church of the FB that there was a different Church--I was referring to something else--but I see what you're saying, and it makes sense and thanks a lot. Moral: Don't even THINK about such things. I'll send along this clipping and if Mom wants to copy it. OK