

NO BIG DIFFERENCE

“Those favored by God are sent into the wide world.”

That is the beginning of a song I learned as a child. I mention it because I believe that the Lord has done me a great service. He not only sent me into the wide world, but rather, into the very wide world. As fate would have it, one could say that I have come to the end of the world, or more exactly, to the lowest point of the globe to find a new homeland in Australia.

In 1955 my wife Rosika and I came to Australia. We spent a year in Adelaide, the capital city of South Australia. In 1956 we packed up and went to Melbourne, which is the capital city of Victoria and the second largest city in Australia. As time passed we were able to start a new life as well as a family with some financial security. This naturally required much work along with thrifty strategy. We were happy and satisfied, and I am certain that this was a blessing from God.

In these 64 years much has changed on this planet, and some things have just disappeared. I described some of this in earlier writings. Since it is now Christmas season, the time to contemplate, remember, and perhaps compare, I will use the opportunity to write about what I do and how I live. I must add that today is the best day to begin. You might wonder why I say that. Today the temperature in Melbourne hit 42°C (107°F) meaning that sitting and writing is the only best thing a person can do in this heat.

In the Apatin newsletter #185, p. 57, I gave a brief description of the seasons in Australia. Now I will write a bit more. When it is summer for you, we have winter; and when you have winter, we have summer. Christmas is in summer here; St. Peter and Paul and our Apatiner church festival fall in winter. During our summer the time difference to Europe is 10 hours, and in winter it is 8 hours. The sun rises in the east and sets evenings in the west, but at noon it stands in the north. The cold winds come from the south, and the warm winds from the north. The moon also has a strange path. (Everything is wrong with the moon.)

We had nice weather for Christmas. Most of the time the daily high temperatures were between 20° and 25°C (70s in Fahrenheit). At night it was between 15° and 20°C (60s in F). The exception was on the 2nd and 3rd days of Christmas reaching a high of 36°C; then on the 2nd day before Three Kings it hit 42° in Moorabbin and Scoresby, the neighboring two suburbs between which my Endeavor Hills lies. We had 44°, but with luck the temps went down to 21° after 6 in the evening. Then I could turn off the air-conditioner and was able to open the front and back doors to cool off the apartment. That really was a hot day, and it is good that we don't have this every year. But there are parts of Australia where the hot temperatures last even longer.

In issue 188, p. 55 I mentioned the house where I live. I wrote that there's all kinds of furniture in my day room. There's a complete dining room with a cabinet, a couch, two armchairs, two stools, two shelves and a pool table, under which there is a coffee table. There's just enough room for me to get through with my walker. The big table with six chairs is closest to the kitchen. That's where I eat, read and write, basically everything which one does at a table. On the couch I take my daily afternoon nap, and the billiard table is used now and then. Most of the time I sit in one of the armchairs and watch television or listen to the radio. I not only listen to the news, but

also have cassettes and videos or DVDs. And that's how I pass the time without boredom even though I live alone.

Now that you know where and how I reside, I can tell you how I live and what I do. Every day I get up at 7 o'clock. To be honest, there are days when it is difficult to leave the warm bed. Right after getting up I take a pill for my heart. Then I have to wait at least half an hour to eat breakfast. During this time I perform the morning ablutions and make my bed. When necessary I water my little garden, which takes about 5-6 minutes. After that I have a shot of Schnaps and can start breakfasting.

For breakfast I usually eat two slices of toast. On one I spread some peanut butter or something that looks like the wagon grease back home. That is Vegemite and contains a lot of Vitamin B. On the other I spread some honey or jelly, mostly apricot or plum preserves. A few times a month I have oatmeal or semolina (Farina). I always drink coffee with milk at breakfast. The past year I drink it without sugar. During breakfast I take a few other medications.

What I do after breakfast depends on the weather and what else I have to do that day. Every week I have to go to the shopping center for supplies. There I buy what I need, and sometimes what I don't need. Twice a month I go to the Hungarian seniors where I play billiards and have some conversation. Because the cemetery where Rosika rests is not far from there, I go to visit. Occasionally I go to the doctor, to the hospital or to church. I do all that with the car.

Most of the time I spend at home. There is always something for me to do. As long as I am able I do everything necessary myself. For the things I cannot do I get help from my daughters-in-law and my sons. I can still cook, bake, do my laundry and clean up. Usually I make chicken goulash and Wiener schnitzel. I use ground beef to make meatballs. Here they are called hamburgers. Only rarely can I cook or bake fish. For soups I can cook chicken soup, vegetable soup, potato soup and tomato soup. My daughters-in-law are good cooks which I am often able to confirm. They bring me things which they have cooked for me, and that's why I don't have to buy any prepared meals. In Australia there are 93 nationalities, and they all have specialties which gives me a variety to choose from. Not only food, but a variety of beverages can be purchased here. So it is no surprise that I have a Schnaps before the meal, and a glass of wine or beer with the meal. I also like to drink cold water or hot tea.

When I don't go out, I try to use my time in the best possible way. I find all kinds of things to do to make the time go by fast. I like to read and write. For that I sit on a chair at the large table. That's where I do all the written tasks which must be done. It doesn't take long until lunch time is here. I always have a good mid-day meal. After eating I rest on the couch for my mid-day nap. When I wake up I look to see if any e-mails have come. I then walk to my mailbox which is about 100 yards downhill from my apartment. Getting down there is easy, but going up gives me problems. I often stop to rest or catch my breath. When I have finished processing the mail I sit on my comfortable armchair and watch TV until it is time for dinner. I then eat and drink and take a few more medications. After washing dishes I return to the armchair and do what I did before. When it's time to sleep I go to the bedroom and go to bed.

During the time that I watch TV my thoughts are not always with what I watch or see. It can happen that I fall asleep. When I open my eyes, the show goes on. I am certain that I did not miss much. My thoughts wander and cause me to have all kinds of other ideas. From where I sit I can look out of the large glass window and glass door. I can see quite far. Every evening at about 9 a large opossum strolls along the fence from

one side to the other. The animal is as big as a cat and has a long tail. That gave me the idea to compare animal life here with that of your animal life. I will limit myself to the area around my house.

Here we have dogs and cats, mice and rats. We have spiders and beetles, mosquitoes and flies. Indoors and outdoors ants crawl around. In the garden I have caterpillars, and the butterflies fly around. The bees and wasps do the same, as well as the birds. So far I have not seen any sparrows or swallows. When the magpies and crows are not flying around, then they hop around the front or back yard making quite a noise. The pigeons are much quieter. As you can see, these are all the same animals, insects and birds which you have.

All this leads one to say that outside of the seasons and several things pertaining to them, there is not much difference between life by you and that which I have. Since I am satisfied with my fate and my life, and am still living, I can say that the Lord has always granted me great favors.