

News From The Homefront

Two tables were against the wall and chairs were stacked next to them. It was our night to eat out and do some shopping, but as I've mentioned before, much of the Australian population go on long holidays in December and January. Things seemed to shut down this year more than usual, or maybe we forgot, and this is normal. Thus, the only place we could find to eat out was a take-away store front that served pizza. They even had a gluten-free crust that I need. I was glad for the antibiotic wipes in my purse as it makes me feel clean to wipe off the tables at some places, and these tables looked as though they had been outside and not wiped for some time. The workers were trying not to be obvious, but we felt as if we were under the microscope. They probably wondered why we would bother to sit down and eat at a take-away store front. However, it was 20 minutes back to our apartment, plus the main K-Mart store was across the street and open. Therefore, a fun evening for us was eating pizza and shopping at K-Mart.

When we moved here, we didn't realize that this is cyclone territory and that there are normally four or five each season. The newspaper made it sound as if Cyclone Blake was going to do a lot of damage and we were told to stock up on food and water. We did what they said and tried to think about food that doesn't need electricity. Since we are new at this, we wondered how many days does a household plan for? In the end, it felt as though we bought picnic food of fruit, vegetables, canned meat, beans, and nuts. The cyclone hit land north of us and all we got was more wind and rain than usual. It's hard to know whether to trust the newspaper and the TV news or go by the weather app on my phone. After all of this happened, I looked at the rental agreement papers and saw that there were three pages telling about cyclones and what to do. Now we are more aware of the protocol.

With all the fires burning around the whole country, this cyclone issue paled in comparison. There has been such a loss of lives, houses, properties, crops, farm animals, and wildlife. For several weeks the main road into Western Australia was blocked due to fires and people were stuck on each side. People were needing to head east to check on their property, and food trucks couldn't get into Western Australia. The news is already predicting that food prices will skyrocket for the whole nation. We have been blessed in that the nearest fire to us, so far, has been about 20 miles away and it didn't last long.

I feel that spiders are smarter than we give them credit. I am not scared of small spiders, but the bigger ones are harder to take. They wait until Frank leaves to run errands and then come out and walk right by me. I scramble around quickly to get a shoe to kill it, but so often I come back and they have hidden themselves. I know God created all creatures, but again big spiders are difficult to live with. And I always wonder how many more big spiders are living with us.

Ever since we moved to Australia, we realized that the flies here are aggressive and try to get into your eyes, ears, nose, and so on. They make special hats with a type of netting or mesh hanging down for workers who are outside a lot. It is common to see people get a small tree branch and wave it back and forth to keep the flies away. One time on a walk with Frank I ended up a step behind him and his back was covered with flies. We wondered if it was the color of his shirt. Most know the children's song, "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly." It really happened as this old lady was taking a walk with her husband and talking at the same time. A fly flew in and down my throat. It choked me up some and grossed me out, but there was nothing to be done about it. Frank said nonchalantly, "That's why I never open my mouth while I'm on my scooter." 😊

A friend in Christ,
Cyd James