

Mertz Peters Michaels

Notes from MPM - February 2009

Belated holiday greetings to all. Sorry I didn't get this out sooner, but like many of you I was busy decorating, baking cookies, and anticipating houseguests. We have a standard routine for decorating. A nice young lady named Joey comes here and arranges wreaths and swags on various objects. I didn't design them, so I can say that they are extremely beautiful--deep crimson bows and balls, white roses, and lots of sparkly boughs amid greenery. Then Tim puts up the tree (and anchors it firmly to prevent bad cats from knocking it over). Kristen helps make cookies and does just about everything else.

When my son and his four kids arrived they added the ornaments to the tree. I have lots of them, some beautiful and elegant, most a bit tattered, but cherished for their memories. There are, I admit, a preponderance of cat ornaments. No tinsel, of course. In case you didn't know, cats eat the stuff and it can block their intestines.

The tree survived the attentions of my five actual cats, mostly those of evil Gandalf--and I now have a sixth, a present from the grandchildren. (For some reason they are convinced I can always use another cat.) She's a rescue kitty, a pretty little brown tabby whom we named Vicky. After a few days of spitting and hissing she has settled in beautifully.

The turkey was a trifle overdone--I put it in too early--but no one seemed to mind. Presents were scantier this year and were accompanied by a sermon from grandma, about the hard times so many people are having and an explanation of where their "extra gifts" went--to homeless shelters and animal welfare organizations and food banks. Unlike most sermons, this one was greeted with a round of applause. They are great kids, not only my son's four, but my daughter's two girls. They always make Christmas special.

So now it's time to take down the tree, locate all the objects that were misplaced, and get back to work. The next Amelia is progressing. I refuse to be more specific but I hope to finish it one of these days... Weeks... Months....

Surely the greatest moment of 2008 was the election of a remarkable new president, who represents the best of what this country has and should stand for. Other than that the past year didn't have much going for it. Let's hope 2009 will be better for those, all over the world, whose holidays were far from merry.



Peace. Sala'am. Shalom.