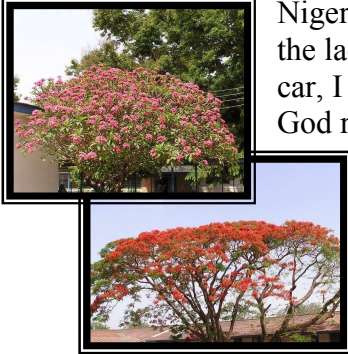


April Update

Blooming Trees: April is the ending of the dry season. It is not my favorite month in Nigeria because it is hot and sticky and everything is brown due to the lack of rain. One day as I was driving along, sweating in my car, I looked up and saw the beautiful blooming trees. I thought God really is amazing in how he designed nature. When all the grass and plants are brown and the flowers have no blooms, that is when he makes the trees burst forth with beautiful colors. We have an awesome God! I now have something beautiful to focus on to get me through the hot and dry months until the rain comes.



Mission Encouragement Trust Retreat: My friend Nicky and I went to a Single Missionaries Retreat in George, South Africa. The Carmel Retreat Center is located on a hill overlooking the sea. It has beautiful flowers and vegetation all over the grounds and down its many walking paths. There were thirty-one missionaries that attended and fourteen staff. It was a wonderful week of rest, Bible study, praise and worship, small group sharing times, and quiet times with the Lord. There was also a doctor for any medical needs or check-ups and a hairdresser. I took advantage of the opportunity to get my hair highlighted.

The teaching was on the covenant love of God. We went through the four great covenants made with Israel-Abrahamic Covenant, Mosaic Covenant, New Covenant, and the Davidic Covenant. We learned about God's unconditional love-Deuteronomy 31:6, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." We looked back at the covenants of the Old Testament, where it all began and the pattern of God's covenants. Not just focusing on the New Covenant and stopping at salvation. I knew a lot of the information about the covenants, but the speaker really made the Old Testament Covenants and the New Covenant go together so well that it gave me lots of new insights. I think I understand it at more of a heart level now, rather than it just being head knowledge.

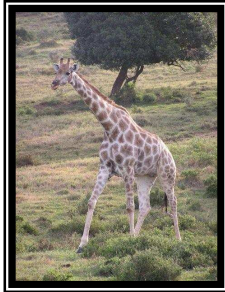
I had a wonderful time getting to know lots of people working in many different countries. We were totally spoiled for the whole week with lots of good food, special gifts, counseling, and many people praying over us. I really loved the free time to spend with God meditating on His word and lifting up my struggles to Him.

South Africa Holiday: Nicky and I decided that since we were going to be in South



Africa for the retreat, we would extend our time and take our yearly holiday there. We had a wonderful time. We traveled from Cape Town up the coast to Durban. We went to the top of Table Mountain and had some beautiful views of the city and the sea. I took a tour around the Cape Peninsula and stood at the most south-western point of Africa. I saw the little African penguins and ate some great seafood.

In Jeffrey's Bay, we went horseback riding on the beach with some big sand dunes, which was fun until my horse decided it had been too long since he had seen the sea and took off galloping straight into the water and nearly pitched me into the sea. My legs were soaked and just about numb since the water was ice cold. Makes for a good story I guess. Ha. We also took some nice long strolls along the beaches just listening to the waves and watching the surfers. Many of the places we stayed we had a beautiful view of the sea from our balcony.



We went on two safaris and saw tons of animals. One of the safaris was from

three until nine at night. We went on an afternoon safari and an evening safari and then ate a traditional meal cooked over the open fire. We saw lots of elephants, zebra, giraffe, wildebeest, hartebeest, lions, monkeys, buffalo, blesbuck, and warthogs.



We also went to the Oribi Gorge, which is

about three hundred meters high and about 27 kilometers long. When we got there, there was a long line of people waiting to do the gorge swing. It is similar to bungee jumping, but you are harnessed at the waist and you swing out at the bottom and then get pulled back up. I opted for walking around and taking in the scenic views.

In one of the hostels, we spent the night in a tree house surrounded by so many trees we felt like we were in the jungle. There were monkeys running on the roof as well. The last day we were in Durban and spent the day shopping in the world's largest shopping mall in the Southern Hemisphere. We have not been to a mall in a long time and when we walked into this huge mall we were a little overwhelmed. Overall, we had an amazing time eating lots of good food, getting some needed rest, and having some great adventures that we will never forget. If you would like to see my photos of the retreat and South Africa, you can go to my website gaylynnnigeria.com and click on the pictures icon.

Praise:

- A wonderful time of fellowship, rest, and time in God's Word at the retreat.
- A great holiday full of good food, beautiful views and unforgettable adventures.
- The temporary therapist at the hospital has decided to stay until July when the new therapist will arrive.

Prayer Request:

- Pray for our street boys ministry. We have had several boys caught stealing repeatedly and have had to be kicked out of the center. Pray for wisdom for the staff as we try to raise these boys to be able to function in society.
- Pray for our City Ministries staff, as several of our Nigerian leaders are sick.
- Pray for the playground that is in the process of being built at the hospital.
- Pray for the salvation of a M woman I am witnessing to at the hospital.
- Pray that I will find one good friend in Jos as my two close friends have moved to another city in Nigeria.

Gay Lynn McCrady