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Dear brethren in Christ,

Hello to you from New York! I hope and pray you are doing well and always growing in the Lord. Mid-February brought us temperatures below zero, but the frigid weather didn't last as all our snow melted before the end of the month. We're getting light flurries as I type this, but nothing heavy is in the forecast. Medical tests continue to show that my wife Sonia is still cancer-free. However, my Mom, Linda, has been very ill this past month with bronchitis, pneumonia and accompanying ailments. She had an allergic reaction to her medicine which set her back and delayed recovery. I'm at the hospital now with her due to a drop in her blood sugar. She is fine now and being discharged home, but is tired of being miserable. Please pray for her to have a complete and quick recovery.

Our work here in central New York continues to go well. One of our members was restored to the Lord on Sunday to everyone's joy. Our brother Mel repented of straying from his commitment to Christ and of being excessively absent from worship. He let the troubles of this life discourage him into spiritual inactivity. He has now recommitted himself to serve the Lord faithfully and to endure patiently. As he told me, "I just want to go to Heaven with my brethren to be with my Lord. I can't let myself miss out on that."

My wife Sonia is studying frequently with some of the local women. She uses Skype to study online in addition to being with them in person. Her studies with Mara have had good fruit. Mara, a young Christian who wants to break some bad habits, has learned to better control her speech and to wear clothes that are modest. Mara has never had anyone teach her those things and was at first having difficulty knowing what was right and wrong. I'm very happy to see how much she has grown in the last few months. Mara's husband and his friends are still a bad influence on her, but we're hoping the changes she is making will open his eyes to what the Lord can do. I am thankful especially for Sonia and Mom's influence on Mara. Mara has no close friends outside the church, so frequent contact with her is a lifeline to her.

I continue studying with the men on Friday mornings in Cicero. I took David Barry with me to the Florida College Lectures last month. (It was good to see my son Sam and my brother Brian there.) This was David's first time to fly in an airplane and first time to go to Florida. In fact, he has met very few Christians outside his native New York. David was greatly encouraged by meeting more of his spiritual family. He is already making plans to return next year. David's growth is also encouraging to watch. He has been a Christian for 3 years now and shows leadership in worship and is willing to do anything to help. He jumped into song leading for the first time this past summer and does well. He's been bringing his friend Tyler to worship. Tyler was in prison but wants to get his life in order but struggles with proper priorities. Please pray Tyler will listen closely to what the Lord says in His Word as we teach him.

In the coming days I'll be changing my email address. I'll let you know immediately when that happens. My current email address with Verizon keeps getting inundated with spam and it's getting harder to sort through everything. Last month, I bought a smartphone for the first time out of necessity. The brethren here frequently send texts to each other for encouragement, and my old flip phone wasn't up to the task. Taking my new smartphone to Florida forced me to quickly learn how to use it. As a result of my newfound efficiency in communication, I resolved to streamline the rest of my digital life, dumping non-essential apps and stopping distracting notifications. You may laugh at some of this, but I've learned it's important to get control of technology before it gets control of you. I'm very thankful for technology when it helps brings people closer to Christ and to each other. I'm blessed for the ways in which we can chat with each other over the miles. Your encouragement keeps us strong in the work. Keep praying for us here in the Northeast! May the Lord bless you in all the work you do for Him. We love you all!

Your brother in Christ.