**A Prayer for Those Who Have Too Much**

To my brothers and sisters in developing countries.

While I was deciding which oat bran cereal to eat this morning,

You were searching the ground for leftover grains from the passing wheat truck.

While I was jogging at the health center,

You were working in the wealthy landowner’s fields under a scorching sun.

While I was choosing between diet and regular soda,

Your parched lips were yearning for a touch of water.

While I complained about the poor service in the gourmet restaurant,

You were gratefully receiving a bowl of rice.

While I poured my “fresh and better” detergent in the washing machine,

You stood in the river with your bundle of clothes.

While I watched the evening news on my wide screen television set,

You were being terrorized and taunted by a dictatorship government.

While I read the newspaper, and drank my cup of steaming coffee,

You walked the dusty, hot miles to the tiny, crowded schoolroom to try to learn how to read.

While I scanned the ads for a bargain on an extra piece of clothing,

You woke up and put on the same shirt and pants you have worn for many months.

While I built a 4-bedroom house for the three of us,

Your family of 10 found shelter in a one-room hut.

While I went to church last Sunday and felt more than slightly bored,

you looked out upon the Earth and those around you; and felt gratitude to God for being alive for one more day.

My brothers and sisters forgive me for my arrogance and indifference. Forgive me for my greed of always wanting new, bigger and better things. Forgive me for not doing my part to change the unjust systems that keep you suffering and impoverished. I offer you my promise to become more aware of your situation and to change my lifestyle as I work for transformation of our world.

*Sr. Joyce, author, more recently of* Dear Heart, Come Home *wrote the above after her visits to Guatemala and Liberia.*