

TO RONALD:

Together we have seen much of God's wonderful creation:  
The world's most beautiful sunrise in Hawaii; the breathtaking sunsets over the Southwestern deserts;  
The amazing Northern Lights in Alaska in the middle of the night; the spectacular myriad of shooting stars in the most unbelievable meteor shower in the pitch-black total darkness at top of Mt. Haleakala.  
The awesomeness of the Grand Canyon and the majesty of the Olympic mountains, the Rockies, and the peaks of Denali on a perfectly clear day.  
The crystal-clear blue water as it touches the sugar-sand beaches of the Gulf of Mexico; the cold waters of the Pacific Northwest as we watch the seals at play;  
The sweet smell of the pineapple fields and the orange groves; the wheat and corn fields of the Midwest.  
The Good Friday Candlelight Procession as it winds silently for miles through the streets of Athens, Greece on its way to the top of Mt. Lycabattus, the entire city in quietness in honor of the solemnity of the occasion;  
Big Ben and Buckingham Palace, the lights of Paris & Notre Dame, the snow-covered Alps of Austria & Switzerland; the Cathedral in Cologne;  
The graceful choreography of the fountains in front of the Bellagio which dance to the gorgeous music of the world's best composers;  
Also, we have experienced much excitement through your career, from the first win 45 years ago, to the last one; from the first gold basketball to the most recent honor;

Final fours from Indianapolis to San Antonio--all exciting.

You have shown me all this and much more---you have shown me life---a most wonderful life!

But these pale in comparison to the blessings God has bestowed on us with the miracle of the birth of each of our children and grandchildren. To hear the "borning cry" of our first-born, Brenda, was an experience like none other. Brad's birth two years later was equally special--our first son. Then, three and a half years after that, the birth of Bob & Bill was also very special---and surprising! Talk about blessings!!! I recently saw a quote that said, "Children pass through your life on the way to adulthood." So quickly, too, I might add. We are so thankful for them, their spouses which give them happiness, and our eight beautiful and talented grandchildren, each so special in their own unique way. We continue to pray daily for God's protection and guidance for their lives.

Tonight is so very special because it is a celebration and a culmination of a lifetime filled with such precious memories and a time of thankfulness for having been able to spend so many great years with you! You have given me your heart, your love and your life, and through you God has blessed me far beyond my wildest dreams. I have loved you with all my heart since I have known you, and as Dolly Parton sings, "I will always love you." And, as the song we heard the other night goes, "I love you more today than yesterday, but not as much as tomorrow." I pray we'll share many more "tomorrows". Thanks for loving me!