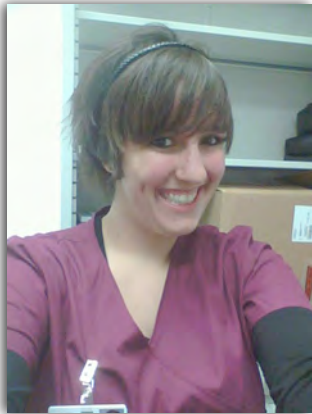


✧ Christmas 2011 ✧

Dear Family and Friends,

Greetings and felicitations from Carl, Carolyn, and Teresa Wenning of Normal, Illinois! 2011 has been another year filled abundantly with the Lord's blessings. It's now time to provide our annual update. We hope you enjoy this little "repost" and will let us know what and how you have been doing as well. This marks the 34th year that Carl has lived here in Illinois, far removed from his family home in Ohio.

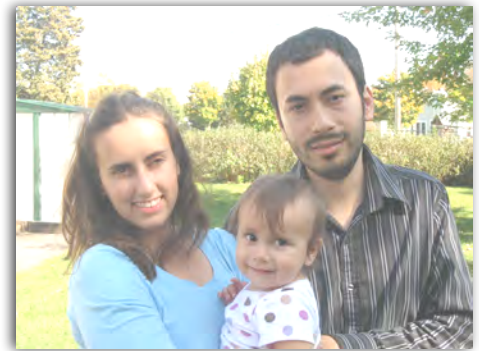


Teresa continues to study at Illinois State University; she is now in her third year of school. On Saturday, January 22nd, she departed for Washington, DC, to take part in the national *March for Life* that took place the following Monday. She went as part of the Catholic Newman Center groups from across Illinois. The bus trip to DC was about 15 hours long and rather uncomfortable. On Sunday, she toured one of the Smithsonian museums and then attended the National Mass for Life at the Washington cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. She watched for over an hour as hundreds of cardinals, bishops, priests, and deacons processed into church for a Mass that was televised. (We watched at home.) During early March, Teresa began working with the *Birth Right* office in Bloomington. In her capacity as a volunteer, she counsels and assists expectant mothers who have nowhere else to turn. (She has even been present at the time of delivery!) Mom and Dad are very proud to see her taking such a strong pro-life stance. ☺ Unfortunately, on March 1st someone threw a chunk of concrete through the driver's side window of Teresa's car while it was parked over night in the street in front of our house. We thought that it might have something to do with her outspoken pro-life position or pro-life bumper stickers on her car. Teresa moved into her own townhouse with two friends on July 12th. Also in July, she started a serving job at Tobin's Pizza where she worked for a couple of months. She decided to major in medical lab science last year, and is now working at OSF St. Joseph's Medical Center in Bloomington as a phlebotomist and lab assistant. This work is closely aligned with her degree at ISU and future career. Teresa has given thought to becoming a crime scene investigator.

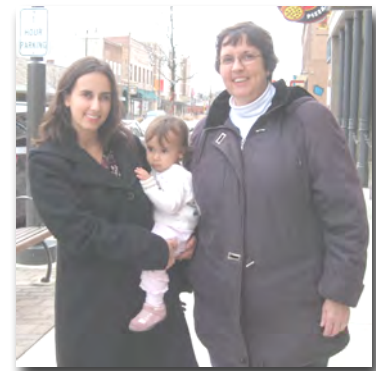
Rebecca, Chrystian, and Thérèse (now just over one year old) continue to do well. On Friday, October 28th, the Illinois Science Teachers Association recognized Rebecca as an *Outstanding New Science Teacher*. She was the only high school teacher to be so recognized. She received a beautiful medallion, \$750 in cash, and the applause and recognition of some 800 who were in attendance at the awards banquet that took place as part of a statewide conference in Tinley Park. Fortunately, Carl was present to see Rebecca receive this recognition. As you can imagine, we are all quite proud of this and her many other accomplishments in science education. She is now in her fourth year of teaching at Cary-Grove High School northwest of Chicago, and fifth year of teaching overall. Earlier in the year the American Association of Physics Teachers named her a Physics Teaching Resource Agent (PTRA), and in November the National Board for Professional Teaching standards recognized her as a master teacher. This latter recognition is a rare accolade with only a small percentage of all teachers being so recognized on a national basis. (Only 40% who apply demonstrate the necessary skills.) Congratulations Rebecca! She is now clearly in the running to be recognized as an Outstanding High School Physics Teachers by the Illinois Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers, only one of whom is so recognized each year.

Chrystian now works as a software engineer for Iusacell of Mexico City. Earlier this year he resigned his position with Motorola to take a position with this telecommunications group. As he is able to work out of his home, he stays home during the day to care for Thérèse. **Thérèse** is now able to speak a few words in Spanish and English, but is much more proficient with the use of American Sign Language. Instead of crying for what she wants, she is able to sign for it. She knows words like ball, book, Cheerios, milk, more, no, peas, and raspberry. This makes for a much happier baby than most, and she rarely cries because of this ability to communicate her wants and needs.

Carolyn was able to visit Rebecca, Chrystian, and Thérèse in Crystal Lake over New Years, during the Easter weekend, and for Thérèse's birthday in October. We three visited with Rebecca, Chrystian, Therese, Carolyn's sister Pam, and Carolyn's cousin, Ruth, over a long 5-day weekend July 7-11th. Pam flew in from Seattle. We spent our time together dining, visiting museums, taking walks in the park, and attending a Civil War re-enactment. Carolyn had a hysterectomy on March 28th. Her recovery time was only a month due to the modern DaVinci robotic surgery that was performed. On May 20th, Carolyn completed her 5th year of working at the



Bloomington Wal-Mart. She received a certificate and pin for her accomplishment. Carolyn's mother's estate was officially (and finally!) closed on September 8th. During September Carolyn supervised the complete remodeling of our bathroom and the reroofing of our house. On November 6th, Carolyn completed her 5th year of working as a Wal-Mart pharmacy technician. During November Carl surprised her with a complete new set of kitchen appliances – stove, refrigerator, microwave/convection oven, and dishwasher. These arrived just in time for the Vieyra family visit during four days over Thanksgiving.



Carl continues to be a failure as a retiree. He taught two courses during spring and autumn semesters at Illinois State University (ISU). On April 1st he presented a talk at Eastern Illinois University. The focus was on using inquiry to teach introductory astronomy. Also during April, Carl wrote several articles including *Professional Knowledge Standards for Physics Teacher Educators* (working with 9 other contributors) that likely will set the trend for the preparation of physics teacher educators on a national – perhaps international basis – for years to come. Carl co-hosted with several physics teaching friends two Modeling Method workshops at ISU on June 6/7 and 13/14, and had three additional articles published in August.

On August 15th, Carl's mother Agnes gave him two statues – the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary – that were first given to her by her own mother. Carl's grandparents received the statues as a wedding gift in October 1920. Carl was deeply honored by this gift. On August 17th Carl had surgery on his left arm to remove three non-cancerous tumors and to repair a pending “trigger finger” in his hand.

On September 17th, Rebecca's birthday, Carl was informed that he was designated the 131st and final founding member of the Nuthampstead Airfield Museum in Nuthampstead, England. This is the airfield where his father Edward worked installing radars on lead bombers during WWII. Our family – including Carl's mother – visited the historic 8th Air Force Station 161 site in 2003. Carl received a commemorative “Founder Member” plaque affixed to which was a shard of runway material and a metal fragment of a B-17G (heavy bomber) that crashed shortly after takeoff on December 24, 1944, and in which two airmen perished. He was deeply touched by the gift and looks forward to a return trip following the opening of the museum that will be located between London and Cambridge adjacent to the Woodman Inn in Nuthampstead where they dined and were “entertained” more than eight years ago.



A series of Carl's publications dealing with the *Levels of Inquiry Method of Science Teaching* resulted in a speaking engagement in Bandung, Indonesia, from October 21-25. There he delivered 8 invited talks about various aspects of physics teaching at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI). He also worked with the 350 or so physics teaching majors at UPI. He spent parts of three days in Japan on his way to and from Indonesia. Carl was treated like a rock star during his stay at UPI. (Elvis?)

All of us – including Rebecca – were shocked and dismayed by the earthquake-tsunami disaster that hit Japan on March 11th. As a family we have a number of friends and acquaintances in Japan but, fortunately, no one we knew was anything more than a bit shaken – both literally and figuratively.

On February 1st everyone was saddened to hear of the death of Carl's 84-year-old Aunt Hilda. Her death occurred during the blizzard of 2011 – a 13-inch snowfall locally with whiteout conditions that lasted two days. (Carolyn was stranded at work and had to stay over night in a hotel that fortunately was within walking distance.) We were unable to attend Aunt Hilda's funeral as a result. Carl's 89-year-old Uncle Ves (Sylvester) – Aunt Hilda's husband – passed away on May 30th following 5 days in Coldwater hospital after a fall at the nursing home where he was residing. Carl and Carolyn were in Missouri on the second day of a week-long vacation when they found out about his death. They immediately turned toward Ohio, picking up Teresa along the way, to attend Uncle Ves' funeral at Wendelin, OH, where he was laid to rest beside his dear wife of 63 years. The same day as Uncle Ves' death, his niece and Carl's cousin Linda Feltz – who lives in South Carolina – was knocked down and nearly killed by a horse. She ended up in the hospital in a coma for several days but – thanks be to God! – recovered. (The “silver lining” to this month was the discovery of a new source of GRITS – a traditional German food of pork and pin oats that Carl loves – in St. Henry, OH.)

We are now down to three cats in our household. When Teresa moved out during the summer, she took PacMan with her. Catarina, Mystique, and Romeo keep us company. Their presence is especially appreciated now that we suffer from the empty nest syndrome. © So, that about wraps up 2011 for the Wenning family of Normal, IL. May yours be a happy and healthy New Year filled with the Lord's blessings. We hope to hear from you soon.

From our family to yours, *Merry Christmas* and *Happy New Year!*

Carl (carlwenning@gmail.com) **Carolyn** (carolynw77@hotmail.com) **Teresa** (twenni2@ilstu.edu)