

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*I'm on a tour with my Mama through Norway. As the years have passed, Mama's and my time together has become even more precious. Trips for us have always been seen as valuable, less distracted, shared time. With age, generational differences have lessened. The gray hair and the glasses and the grandmother tales we now share. We seem to be more like soul sisters than mother-daughter kin. I value her wisdom, her fortitude, her positive indomitable spirit. I hope to become more like her as I mature. She says she looks in the mirror now and often sees her mother looking back at her. Hopefully, this will be my future, and Mama's reflection will become more mine. Mother-daughter, female-to-female, generation-to-generation, passing down the truth of time. It's a very important passage, not so much genetic but generically generational.*

*There've been others in my life: my step-grandmother, for whom I'm named; Mrs. Lynch, my favorite music teacher; Aunt Annie Paul, a creative pixie; Joy Box, an encouraging high school English teacher; Willie Ann Tubbs, my childhood nurse. They passed down wisdom, usually with a smile.*

*I didn't know but today is the Feast of Jesus' mother Mary. We're in Bergen, Norway. It's 8:30 and our bus leaves in 30 minutes. I was disappointed to learn that we had to leave so*

*early, for there's no way to attend church. Darn! I pout and look out the window. There I see one breathtakingly beautiful hydrangea bush. Each exquisite blossom holds a hue of pink, purple, or blue, and is offset perfectly by a surrounding brick wall. This is the ultimate four-story, walled-in garden.*

*Being on a tour, our assigned rooms seldom have the best views available. This room is the exception. I don't know who was the landscape architect that came up with the plan for planting one solitary bush in this enclosure, but I do give him or her thanks. A claustrophobic view has been turned into a reflective garden. The bush seems to have realized its awesome responsibility, for it outshines any previous hydrangea I've ever seen. It's as if, one morning, realizing its need to encompass within itself a complete garden, it absorbed a morning dawn as it passed overhead. Or better yet, maybe, just maybe, it put on these colors this very morning in honor of Jesus' mother Mary.*

*Later*

*I have to smile as I recollect the day. As the bus took off, I overheard two ladies who were seated behind Mama and me, already in deep discussion.*

*"My child is my sibling."*

*"No, he's not."*

*"Yes, he is."*

*I laughed to myself. I could understand their confusion. It was the one I also was starting to experience. As Mama and I*

*continued to daily ride next to each other, it was as if we had entered a time machine. We started off as mother-daughter. We now easily could be siblings, and by the end of the trip, we could be the same. We are two human beings experiencing the identical scenery simultaneously.*

*At the first of the trip, I'd punch Mama and she'd punch me to be sure neither one of us missed seeing a mountain or a fjord or a waterfall. We'd exclaim back and forth to each other. Now we have become as one with this incredible environment. It's like walking side by side through the most glorious cathedral in the world, or I would imagine what it must have been like for the first astronauts when they experienced outer space. You wanted to talk at first to your companion to be sure that he or she was seeing and experiencing the same incredible thing you were. You both wanted feedback from the other, to be sure that the perceived reality was the actual reality. After affirmation, you then wanted to sit back and absorb the incredible. Words wane. Silence seemed more appropriate. It helped solidify the scenery into one's psyche. A deep calm engulfed our shared world. We were as one - mother-daughter.*

*On this particular day, it was our Lord's mother who kept entering into my world. For instance, we were leaving the home of composer Edvard Grieg, when our tour guide came up to me and said, "Lucy, have you seen the rose?" I hadn't and didn't know to what she was referring. We retraced our steps to*

*the front of the house. There I was shown a beautiful stained glass window over the front door. It held one perfect rose. She told me the story that Mrs. Grieg had complained to her husband that he was always giving flowers to other ladies, but never to her. On their fiftieth anniversary, her gift was this window with its representation of one perpetually perfect red rose. Although meant for Mrs. Grieg, on that particular day, it reminded me of Mother Mary, for this is her flower.*

*After leaving this home, we drove to Oslo. The bus driver played lovely music, mainly Grieg and some Norwegian folk music. All of a sudden, much to my surprise and delight, for the very first time a Norwegian version of Bette Midler's "The Rose" started playing. I inwardly smiled. It was for me, once more, again a reminder of Mother Mary.*

*I love over and over in Luke's gospel, it says, "Mary pondered it in her heart." That's Luke 2:19 and 2:51. This has become one of my favorite verses and holds great significance for me. In our dining room we have two portraits which hang next to each other. One is of a lady holding a bouquet of Calla lilies. The other is of a young boy carrying a fish on his head. The artist was painting scenes from Mexico. I bought them for they reminded me of Mary watching her son grow and pondering in her heart his every step.*

*As I've matured and taken on the roles of mother and grandmother, it's often to her example that I turn. How did she continually hold her son lightly? How do I do so with my*

*own children and grandchildren? How did she ponder instead of proclaim who he was? How do I allow my children and grandchildren to come into their own gifts, instead of me telling them and others what they are? How did Mary know when it was time for Jesus to start his ministry and thus encourage Him at the wedding? How do I know when it's time to give a little push? What did she feel like when He proclaimed others as his family instead of her? Will I know how to let go and allow my children and grandchildren to grow up into their own families? I picture her always being very near her son, our Lord Jesus, even to the very end, but always at a healthy distance. She knew who He was. She knew what He was. She pondered it in her heart.*

*Pilgrim, I also yearn to ponder Christ, ponder Him in my heart. Do you?*

*I am your bus riding, mother-daughter-grandmother, sister in Christ,  
Lucy*