

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

One of the hostesses forgot to come to her own party. Not to worry, the table was as bountiful as always, but I did feel compassion for her. I've done the same thing before. Why, even this past month, my husband and I were to be a part of giving a wedding party. Unfortunately, we were out of town for the planning meeting and, unfortunately, we were out of town for the actual event. When I opened my mail Monday, one of the first letters I received was from the groom-to-be. He thanked us for helping host the party and was sorry we couldn't attend. Oh, of course, we'll pay our share, but still there was a sense of regret for we missed out on the festivities and the fun and yesterday so did one of our garden club members. I'm sorry. The loss was ours, the ones not attending, rather than those who were there.

Then there's the "Whew, I barely made it!" syndrome. That would have to have been yesterday's motto. My arrival at church was right on schedule, 7 AM. There are some definite advantages to living just two blocks away. I had allowed a comfortable thirty minutes to set up for the 7:30 Holy Communion service. I drove instead of walking, for I was to leave from there to pick up my mother-in-law for the garden club meeting. I do not like to rush. I've found when I squeeze an activity into a schedule, it doesn't afford for maximum

enjoyment. Instead of peace, I experience pressure. My mind will be on the immediate past or on the immediate future, and by the end of the day, I won't know where I've been or what I've done or whom I've seen. It's all just a big blur of busyness.

Thankfully, yesterday I had padded the planning of the day with plenty of time; therefore there should have been no problem. Right? Wrong. The church was locked until 7:15. Instead of the desired thirty minutes preparation time, I had a rushed, hurried, panicked fifteen. "Whew! I made it just in the nick of time."

I ran to open the front door of the church and there stood a man. He scared me to death, for in all the mornings I've done the preparation for this service, no one has ever used this door. This was his first time attending and as a result of my rushed greeting, will probably be his last. Hurried hospitality just doesn't hack it. Lord forgive. "Whew, I just made it."

After the service I was back on track, and thankfully I had padded the planning of the day with plenty of time. There should have been no problem. Right? Wrong again. I'd locked my keys in the car. I had brought a set into the church, but they were the wrong ones. I walked home as fast as my little short legs and two-inch heels could carry me, got a duplicate set and walked back to church. My lime green silk blouse got a little greener and my set hair got a little limper, but I made it. I called my mother-in-law on the car phone and said I was on the way. "Whew, I just made it!"

When I arrived, she was out in her garden talking to her yardman, and said for me to come in and have a cup of coffee while she finished getting ready. Thank the dear Lord I had padded the planning of the day with plenty of time. There should have been no problem. Right? Wrong again. We left Mary Katherine's, my mother-in-law, without the address and had to go back. We found the right street, but couldn't find the house. We stopped at one house and asked. The man didn't know. We then went to my son's house to call for directions. No one was home. We went back to Mary Katherine's and she called a member who hadn't left who said she would swing by and we could follow her. We did and were one of the first to arrive, for everyone had trouble finding the house for the street numbers aren't in any sequence. That's what caused the problem. "Whew, we just made it!"

Well, while I've been writing to you, the phone has rung twice. The first time it was one of those electronic messages, which I don't like. I instantly hung up. It was immediately followed by a man asking for Mrs. Blow-nt. That's always an instant giveaway and an irritation that they don't know me. I curtly said I was not interested in buying anything over the phone, and I rudely hung up and got back to writing you.

Hello? This is to be an inspirational letter and I don't have time to at least be courteous to another human being whose only fault is that he is trying to make a living? Oh, Lord forgive. I don't know what this rambling letter is all about.

It's giving me a headache just writing about yesterday's "Keystone Cops-like" activity. I can't imagine what it will do to you. Maybe give you some free time. Go outside and smell the roses. Or take a bubble bath. Or go kiss someone you love. Or have a leisurely cup of tea.

Not getting to attend a function or barely making it or just plain saying "no" all seems somehow connected to me today. I guess because I heard someone recently say they were ready for Armageddon. Wow! I'm not! I just sat there. I didn't say a blasted thing. I'm such a chicken. I know there are a lot of ungodly things going on now in our world. I know Sodom and Gomorrah might not seem so alien now. But Armageddon? Please, Lord Jesus, not yet. There are too many of us who are still saying "no" or are not yet coming to the "party," our Lord Jesus' party. I'm an eternal optimist and am putting my faith in Him and in His mercy. There are a lot more "Whew, I just made it!" type people still in the making. And as our Lord Jesus said in the parable of the workers, the wages are the same for everyone who comes, no matter what the hour.

May I read the parable of the laborers. That's in Matthew 20, verse 1. For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the

marketplace. And to those he said, "You too go into the vineyard and whatever is right, I will give you." And so he went. And again he went out about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, and did the same thing. And about the 11th hour he went out and found others standing and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idly all day long?" They said to him, "Because no one hired us." And he said to them, "You too go into the vineyard." And when the evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to the foreman, "Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last group to the first." And when those hired about the 11th hour came, each one received a denarius. And when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, and they also received each one a denarius. And when they received it, they grumbled at the landowner saying, "These last men have worked only one hour and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day." But he answered and said to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what is yours and go your way but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you." The Word of the Lord.

Lord, forgive me that my timing is often so out of sync with Yours. Lord, forgive me for my rudeness on the phone. Lord, may I learn to treat everyone with the dignity that they deserve just by being Your beloved child.

"Whew, I made it just in time!" That's my battle cry for today. May we, precious pilgrims, help with the Lord's recruiting. May his kingdom party grow and His kingdom come.

*I am your sister in Christ,
Lucy*