

Precious Pilgrim,

"I just told God a story!" "Excuse me, you did what?" "I just told God a story, and I think He enjoyed it."

"Well, of all the audacity!" would have been my natural reaction until yesterday. Even though I've taken a whole notebook of notes on the speaker's and chaplain's talks at this four-day conference, I don't think I'm to replay them to you. If you'd like to get a copy, you can write to Camp Kanuga in Hendersonville, North Carolina. I really think, however, the tapes wouldn't, couldn't do it justice. Some things you just have to experience on your own to appreciate. All I hope these "camp" letters I've been writing to you do is to encourage you to go when possible to a conference or on a retreat, to give yourself the gift of pulling apart, to listen, to learn, and to experience our Lord's Love more profoundly.

So, what's this storytelling time? Well, it's funny what things instantly stick in your mind and what things don't at such a conference. There is just so much "wonderfulness" here, you can't take it all in. That's why I'm taking notes and ordering copies of the taped sessions. A lot still will be lost once we come down from this mountain. I do, however, want to remember the story that the Chaplain told about a little nun.

He went on a retreat to a monastery in the desert. It was his first personal experience with long periods of silence and contemplative prayer. He had the whole class giggling as he retold the feelings of what it was like that very first time when he tried to be still and quiet and listen. He attended a short church service, which

ended with a period of silence. Five minutes went by, then ten minutes, then twenty minutes, silence -- then all the monks and retreatants got up and silently walked out, only to come back in the afternoon to another service which again ended in a twenty minute silent "sit." He related his feelings of agitation, his wanting to fidget and how slooooooow time seems to move. We all laughed hysterically, for we could all relate. For at this conference, we had all experienced the exposed awkwardness of that first attempt at trying to "sit" for a long time in the quiet and listen.

He then told of this ancient little nun who every night at this monastery would rise and go alone to the chapel. When asked what she did, she said that she just went and told God stories. She thought He probably got tired of all the heavy prayers He heard all during the day and thought He would enjoy hearing a story. So, that's what she did nightly. She told God a story. I think that's such a sweet, innocent, refreshing tale. I love it. Just the image of that ancient little nun nightly sitting in that holy place, spinning a tale for her Lord, warms my heart. She was operating out of sheer love for Him and nothing else. That purity of intention has a crystal clear ring to it that must please our Lord God.

This morning, I gave it a try. On awakening, I quickly got dressed and as quietly as possible, went to the conference lodge's porch, which overlooks the lake. I witnessed a 6 o'clock sunrise. What a sunrise! Mist was gliding over the lake, geese were honking back and forth. Their morning wake-up call far surpassed the rooster's. The blue, pink, and golden hues playing back and forth as

the sun made its entrance was breathtaking. I watched with a cup of coffee in a rocking chair. I wanted to clap and whistle and dance and sing and jump for joy, but the whole camp was to be totally in silence and was until the morning service. Instead, I made up a creation of the universe story and prayed it to the Lord. It was so much fun. I hope He enjoyed it. I know it couldn't compare to His actual works, but it was fun pretending and imagining.

What was the story? Oh, that's just between God and me. But try it sometimes. I think you might both enjoy it. There's an intimacy, an innocence -- when you imagine yourself crawling up into your Father God's lap and spinning Him a tale. He knows them all, of course, but He didn't seem to mind.

Now, my precious pilgrim, for the next minutes I'm going to be totally silent and just close my eyes and mentally enjoy sitting in our Father God's lap and just allow Him to love me and for me to love Him. There's room enough for you, so crawl on up. Shhhh. Let's be very still and quiet and enjoy.

Wasn't that wonderful? Peace.

*I am your story-telling, quieted and
loved sister in Christ and so are you,
Lucy*