

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

*“Good morning, good morning, good morning to you.
Our day is beginning, there’s so much to do. Good morning,
good morning, good morning to you.”*

*Even though it’s almost midnight and I just woke up, that
is the song that keeps playing in my brain. I went to Headstart
kindergarten for my usual shift from 9:00-to-noon today and
then went and picked up Hall, my one-year-old grandson.
Both sets of his grandparents, meaning primarily the
grandmothers, are taking shifts baby-sitting during the week
while his parents are out of town.*

*My husband ‘s out of town until Thursday, so I’m taking
our shift at Hall’s house. If you think that’s complicated, you
ought to see our two-page computer printout of schedules,
instructions and who takes him when and where. I’m already
exhausted and for the first time, I fell sound asleep without
writing a single word to you today. I even made a conscious
decision and apology. “Lord, forgive. I’m too tired to write.
Good night.”*

*Thankfully the “good morning” song woke me up from a
deep sleep. I also hear Hall making a few light noises,
hopefully they’ll go away soon. I think I have the monitor on
too high so that I hear his every move.*

I couldn't stand it. I let him cry, truly I did, Stuart, my daughter, and then I got him up and gave him a little bottle of milk while rocking him. I'm sure you'll be thrilled, Stuart, when you come home from your trip to find your one-year-old has regressed to a midnight feeding again. Why, by the time you return, we grandmothers might even have it so he's forgotten how to crawl because of our constant carrying. And you were worried about him taking his first step while you were gone? Worry not, my dear, with our constant care, I guarantee, we'll have him more babyfied than toddlerfied.

It's a huge responsibility taking care of a grandchild. I guess I just didn't have time to think about it when we were raising our four. I guess we just ran it like a little army and there wasn't much down time or reflective, analytical time. You just did what you had to do or could do. Often you'd just wing it and pray for the best.

Now that I'm on the other side of parenting, the wonderful grandparenting side, I'm a little bit more cautiously aware of the possible pitfalls. I'm watching Hall like a hawk. I know his other grandmother, GrandMary, is too. When we talked over the phone at the changing of the guard, I picked Hall up at 1:00 at his Mother's Morning Out Program. She reported all the tiny negative mishaps. He had a little bruise on his forehead - I couldn't see it. He hadn't been drinking his milk and a few other little pertinent personal problems that I'll keep private so not to embarrass him later. I

do want to be his favorite grandmother and writing worldwide about diaper rash I know won't put me in good standing with Hall when he's a teenager. So, I'll leave it at that.

The thing that amazes me is that we ladies (GrandMary and I) have been friends for over twenty-five years, way before John and Stuart even gave each other the time of day. Now most of our communications are Hall-centered. She would agree, it is a huge responsibility taking care of a grandchild.

It's a huge responsibility taking care of any child. Today, I was assigned to Mrs. Simon's room at Headstart. They rotate me among the five classes depending on where I'm needed. Mrs. Simon's assistant was sick, so that's where I went. It's one of my favorite rooms, but really they all are. I love Mrs. Simon's bounded freedom. She runs a tight ship, as she should, for she's been a Headstart kindergarten teacher for thirty years. There is discipline with love, which makes for a grand teaching environment. One thing I can't get over is the seemingly endless "Mrs. Simon, Mrs. Simon." All it takes is a hand raised and a "Mrs. Simon" and she stops whatever she is doing and gives that particular child her undivided attention. His or her question or statement is treated as the most important happening of the moment. After appropriately responding, she's ready for the inevitable next, "Mrs. Simon, Mrs. Simon."

What dignity and respect and self-esteem is nourishingly flourishing in that room. She's totally there for them.

Writing you letters has given me a strong sense of community and connectedness with you, my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. The daily discipline has been a good and a hard one. This Holy Week's letters I'll give the usual highlights of the day, but then a tiny slice from our Lord's Passion. Today may I read Mark 14:32-42. This is Jesus praying in Gethsemane.

And they came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground, and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for Thee; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what Thou wilt." And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." And again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. And He came the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man

is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Arise, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

Hmm. Our Lord Jesus Christ at the Garden of Gethsemane. I've been there among those ancient, gnarled olive trees, possibly descendants of the ones that shaded and protected Christ. Those trees stood and stand. The disciples slept and later fled. There are so many, many heart-piercing parts to this scene.

It's late and we have the whole week together to look. I'd like to just leave with looking at the request that Jesus made upon their arrival at the garden. He said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I pray." He wanted them to just be with Him, just to be with Him. Somehow, their just being in close proximity seemed to give Him strength and support. He knew He and He alone would have to walk the next phase of His journey, but He wanted them to be near - and Peter, James, and John, His closest companions, even nearer.

The nearness of friends, the support that community gives. We cannot go it alone. We never have to, for we always have Christ at our side. I'm just so thankful that this tender, tender need of His was reported - that He needed and needs His disciples, wanted and wants His disciples near. I'm usually so acutely aware of my need for Him, of my Lord Jesus that often I forget His, His needs. And I'm so glad of that - His needs for me and for you. And I also take comfort, even though it is

tragically sad, that the disciples fell asleep on the job for I often do. "Lord, forgive. You never do!"

And now, like those others long ago, I must go to sleep for it is late. Until tomorrow - "Good morning, good morning, good morning to you." That might make a good Easter anthem, too, don't you think?

Peace.

Lucy