

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

"You can't dream when you're in a fire."

I talked to my beautiful sister, Mary, on the telephone today. She's blonde, blue-eyed and beautiful. Seven years older than I, she's the wise one - the mature one - but also the innocent one, in that there is a freshness about her and a rightness about her that is enchanting.

She was rightly named, for she's the most "motherly" mother I know. She truly means it when she says, "I love staying at home with my family." She is good at saving things and cleaning closets and actually enjoys folding freshly laundered clothes.

Growing up, my two blonde, blue-eyed older siblings used to unmercifully tease me. One of their favorite taunts was to tell me that it was a secret, but that I was adopted, that's why I had brown eyes and brown hair. (They and I obviously never considered Daddy's contribution, or maybe I didn't know of such things at that point in my development.) Anyway, I would be devastated and run crying to Mama. In fact, I think I probably was a good "wolf-crier" and "tattle-taler."

Thank the dear Lord, they weren't too familiar with the Old Testament story about "color-coated Joseph" and how his siblings got rid of him. A desert ditch might have also become my playground! But instead, only doors were slammed and

locked by my sister and I just lost wrestling bouts with my brother. I was better off than Joseph, though I didn't know it at the time! Today, I know they could have both been more convincing in their adoption scam if their argument had been based on closet cleaning instead of hair and eye color. For Mary and I are alike in some ways - but in numerous other ways, there are obviously no shared genes - and that's one of the joys - our differences. I think Mary favors our maternal grandmother for whom she is named - Mary Adelaide Graves White. Our "Gran," as the name implies, was "grand!" She was a lady of genteel breeding - a Virginian through and through, and she'd never let you forget it. But more importantly, she was a lady of the highest standards. She knew about one's duty - one's family loyalty. She was dependable and reliable. Her world was disciplined and orderly. Mary follows in those vast footprints and it's fun for me to skip or run or fall behind them. Mary's good with the "sick;" I'm good with the "silly." Mary's good with setting a beautiful table; I'm good with glitter and glue. She brings a warm glow; I bring, perhaps, candy sprinkles.

The point being, we're different and I love the difference. Once a year, Mama gives us a family trip. To spend the night with your sister for a whole week is wonderful! We have grand "pillow talks." I talk about how blonde and blue-eyed and beautiful she is and she says, "Oh, Lucy! Don't be ridiculous!" - but I know she likes it. And she also sings my praises and I say,

"Oh, Mary! Don't be ridiculous!" -- But she knows I like it, too. It's fun and reaffirming.

Now we have our own individual families, but our firm foundation gives us a lot of common ground on which to stand. We have four children and so does she. We've shared pictures and problems and boasts and advice.

Today we shared heartaches, which I think, are a lot more painful than headaches. Headaches are more prevalent with diapers and carpools. Aspirin and a solitary bubble bath usually alleviate the symptoms. Heartaches are different. The headaches occur usually while the children are at home, but heartaches are more prevalent when they're gone. The headache communication consists usually of petty bickering - the heartache communication consists usually of long pauses over the telephone. With headache problems - the parents have to initiate the solution. With heartache problems - it's the children's responsibility.

Today we shared "heartaches." I said, "Mary, it's hard to dream when you're in a fire." She asked, "Lucy, is that something that you just thought up or is it a famous quote?" I said, "I don't know; it just popped into my brain, but it is a reality, don't you think?"

I must call her back, for there's more to that reality. I want to add something to that statement, "You can't dream in a fire - but you can sing!" What? It's true! I've read over and over in David's psalms - read time and time again in the

psalmist's psalms songs which dealt with heartaches, -- hot, hard, horrible times in their lives and those writings were to be sung. They were to be the Hymnal of the Israelites.

And then I think of Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego. And what does tradition have them doing while in a fiery furnace? Sing!

And lastly, I think about "Choir Day" at the "True Divine Baptist Church" this year. I'm an honorary member of this church's choir. One of the biggest thrills in my life is that each year I get to participate in "Choir Day." There were over sixteen choirs from various churches participating, each singing two or three glorious gospel selections. This year, my church choir was honored with an invitation. The service lasted over four hours - most choirs sang and left - but I stayed and I'm so glad I did!

One of the pillars of the church whom I'd gotten to know over the past four years had grown even taller - for this year, he was seated in a wheel chair. He had had an accident at work. After all the choirs had sung, he wheeled himself up to the front, and with gracious tears, he thanked his church for their love and their support. Then he started singing - all alone - praising the Lord. It was powerful!

I believe you possibly can't dream in a fire - but you can powerfully sing! And I know of no better way to cool the temperature down and make the fire bearable than with "God-centered" singing. It floats up prayers, I think, right to our

*almighty Father - Who can renew visions - renew hopes - and
renew dreams.*

*I've got to go call my blonde, blue-eyed, beautiful sister
and tell her there's more to the quote.*

Your brown-eyed, adopted sister in Christ,

Lucy