

Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your Glory

Precious Pilgrim,

Saturday I went into the woods to pray. Oh, and I am so glad that I did! I had forgotten the awesome holiness found in such a woodland sanctuary. There is a profound quiet – a stillness like no other place. The little noises become more audible; the little movements become more alive. The work of a solitary ant seems to take on more purpose and meaning. The wind blows one single leaf, but not its neighbor. And then, in the next instance, it's the neighboring leaf's turn for a twirl. And pine straw – brown old pine straw – takes on a whole new identity in the woods. It becomes dainty, warm icicles, draping branches and rows of little pine straw tents for creature's dwellings. Grand. How did I find myself in such a marvelous spot? Easy – by being the perfect hostess! You see, we had a fantastic Women's Retreat at our lake house. The theme for the day was prayer. We were mightily instructed on how to become stronger "Prayer Warriors." One of our training maneuvers was a 45-minute "alone time" with our Lord. In silence, we dispersed and found solitary sanctuaries. As a hostess, I chose the less popular woods for my retreat and left the choice lake views for the guests. Thank the dear Lord that I did! The woods were a blessing!

I went rushing into the woods because I couldn't wait to get started. And as I walked, my pace slowed, my senses awakened. I had forgotten the joy, the magical joy of woods – smells found nowhere else – sounds of dried leaves crackling underfoot. I did swish kicks just to see and hear them fly. This was a world that I had known, that I had enjoyed, but had failed to revisit for such a long time. Memories flowed, wonderful childhood make-believe memories of neighborhood children creating their own imaginary worlds for a day.

I had a grand time mentally walking back in time to the wonderful, whimsical world. But as I walked deeper into the forest, I went deeper into my memories. These magical, make-believe worlds gave way to the mystical reality experienced by a twelve-year-old girl.

Oh – and I remembered – I remembered – my first Solitary Sanctuary – my first Holy Ground created by my one-on-ONE encounter with my heavenly Father. I attended Camp Desoto in Mentone, Alabama. Each morning we had group prayer, seated around a beautiful lake, and each evening we had group prayer in our cabins, right before "Lights Out." But if you needed or wanted to be alone to pray, you headed for the woods.

One day, I remember being greatly distressed and thus I retreated to this unknown solitary sanctuary. I walked down a windy, woodland path until I came upon a small clearing. There, a huge "tree cross" had been erected. I remember being profoundly moved thinking this cross was probably much like the original.

And there, for the first time, I met my Lord, one-on-ONE. Of course, there had been numerous times of prayer previously but, somehow, this was different. I had a problem and there was no Mama or Daddy or friend to turn to for advice or backup prayer. It was a total dependency on God alone. It was just us two against the world. It was humbling, but all right. I poured out my heart and it was all right. I cried unto Him and it was all right.

What amazed me so much in the reflection was that I couldn't remember the original trauma that had driven me to the woods in the first place. I thought – “Lucy, Alzheimer's!” Then I thought – “No, Lucy, your ‘mind blank’ was **Τελοσ**-erased.”

“**Τελοσ**-erased” – what in the world is that? Well, let me tell you. It is a grand and glorious thing! Laura Barr, our teacher, told us of a Jewish custom prevalent during Christ's life. Over each prison door “**Τελοσ**” was stamped when a prisoner had completed his sentence; he paid the price required. **Τελοσ** meant “It is finished.” The same exact words our Lord Jesus said on the cross – “It is finished.” He paid the price. Satan was eternally defeated. The communication gaps between God and man no longer existed. The veil had been eternally ripped.

I believe it was because of this act – this “Christ Crucified Act” – that I had **my** “mind blank.” It had been **Τελοσ**-erased – cleansed by our Lord Jesus!

I couldn't wait to go back to our priest, Father Russell, and share this beautiful image. I did and he took it and expanded the vision – and exploded its horizons into the infinite, where it needed to reign. You see, Father Russell is fluent in Greek. I asked if he would mind looking up John 19:30 in Greek, to be sure the translation was the same. I wanted to be sure that “**Τελοσ**” was the exact word used by Christ. Father Russell read, and then smiled. (He smiles a lot.) The exact word Christ used wasn't “**Τελοσ**” but **Τετελεδτοα**. He said that our Lord used the word **Τετελεδτοα**, which was a more active version of **Τελοσ**. He went on to explain that **Τελοσ** was more like a noun and more passive. It's like “the end,” whereas Christ's words for all eternity are more active. A better translation would be “It has been accomplished.” The image of a man's debt being paid and having it recorded with a little wooden plaque nailed above his cell comes to mind, versus the image of “The Man,” our Lord Jesus, paying off our sins being recorded with His sinless body being nailed to a cross. There is no comparison. One is finite; the other is infinite.

I believe we are to live in this **Τετελεδτοα** reality. We are to confess our sins, humbly, to our Almighty God. His Son, our Lord Jesus, then as our eternal Intercessor and Most High Priest, takes them to His Father, where we receive the stamp of **Τελοσ** -- the stamp of forgiveness – “It is finished.” We are to claim this reality!

I believe there is a glorious dance choreographed by our Lord for each one of us. Millions of *pas de deux* – me and the Lord – you and the Lord. Occasionally, I'm afraid, I've been guilty of trying to take the lead and then He and I get stuck doing the “Box Step,” covering the same ground, over and over again. But when I allow Him to take the

lead, ah, there is a flow, a grace, as we twirl towards eternity. Then there are no “stuck steps,” only leaps of joy!

Τελος = Τετελεδτοα

The end = "It has been accomplished!"

Leap children! Leap for joy!

Your sister in Christ,

Lucy