

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

I love to wake up during the night or in the early morning hours with a song in my heart, especially if it's one of my favorite hymns or anthems. But this morning, much to my surprise and delight, a pop tune was playing in my brain. "Your love has lifted me higher than I've ever been lifted before."

I'm sure the reason for this pop rock ringing in my head is that it is the type of music being played once more in my car. All buttons have been re-programmed to pop rock, for a teenager, Alysoun, my goddaughter, is living with us while her father is being treated for cancer.

In order to gauge my new lady friend's world, I let her push the buttons. And when she responds to my routine question of "How was your day?" with the routine answer, "Fine," then I can get a more complete picture through our radio communications. If my companion slouches down in her seat and plays sad and slow tunes, I can respond one way, whereas if I have a singing go-go dancer who's being restrained only by a seat belt, I can respond differently.

Now, back to my morning melody a la Alysoun -- "Your love has lifted me higher than I've ever been lifted before." Yes! Thank you, Lord! Your love has lifted me higher -- and I'm so glad!

This week has been so oppressive! First, I went to Atlanta to my monthly Forum Meeting. This group consists of ten precious ladies from the Southeast. The common bond that brought us together was being married to business executives. And the common bond that keeps us together, however, is our willingness to intimately share our lives with each other. With the sharing comes great compassion and caring. A grand gift, but often a heavy load to carry. And especially this month, for it seemed that each one of us was burdened down -- deep. I left the meeting with my mind and mood in the trenches. We shared -- we cared -- and I dug a trench.

The image that comes to my mind is one of those old black and white World War II movies, where you have a battalion of men who've been bombarded for days by the enemy -- so they've dug in and they're stuck in the rut of a trench. Sure, they have the companionship of their comrades-in-arms hovering next to each other and that is some comfort. But the reality of a trench, I mean a real WWII trench reality -- is that bombs keep dropping, havoc keeps happening and you just dig in deep. There is no real future planning of digging out, you just know the present survival plan of digging deeper and deeper into that trench.

And that's the mood I found myself in as I left Atlanta. I felt like a defeated retreat was being made rather than a ride home. And then I just kept digging my trench deeper and deeper until I couldn't seem to get out. Help! Help! Do you

know where I turned for help? I turned to CNN!

Now I ask you, where in all of my biblical training did it say that when things got heavy, turn to CNN? Did I think that seeing war up close would alleviate the pain and worry? Did I think that by observing conflicts hour upon hour, day and night, I would be helping those suffering? Sure, it did make me have empathy at first, but as I became almost addicted to the reporting, I wonder whether apathy was starting to take its place?

And then, an almost silent, inward scream of, "I can't take this any more!" and finally, thank the Dear Lord, I realized by the grace of God, that I wasn't supposed to take it. I wasn't called to get into the trenches with the troops, but instead, as a Christian, I was called to set my eyes on Jesus. Yes, in all situations -- set my eyes on Jesus.

I then got out my Bible and started reading -- out loud -- reading. Oh, I wish I knew the Word so well that I could skip around, always pulling out the perfect verse for every problem. But no, I guess I'd be so prideful with that gift that it would never work. So where did I begin? Matthew, Chapter 1: Verse 1 -- reading out loud!

Ahhh! I could breathe again! And there was a lightness, so that I felt like I almost floated out of that trench, that self-inflicted trench.

Of course, we are to care and be concerned for our fellow man, but instead of joining them in the trenches via the TV, I

believe they will be better supported on the home front by our constant prayers and praise to our Lord God. For it is He who reigns -- not just on blue-sky days, but He reigns even more brilliantly on dark ones.

A scene that has really stuck close to me this week is found in Matthew 14:22-33. It tells of a storm raging at sea and all the Disciples were being tossed to and fro in their little sailboat and I'm sure, were scared to death. I know that feeling because I've been sailing at Lake Martin, enjoying myself immensely, feeling confident, so confident, in fact, that I sailed a little farther away from home than usual. I didn't worry because the wind was so good and constant. I felt that I could get home quickly, if necessary. Then, all of a sudden from out of nowhere came a storm, with rain and high winds and lightning and white-capped waves. I was scared to death! I can imagine the Disciples' fright and I can imagine the relief felt as their Lord God came to rescue them.

But impulsive Peter, thank goodness for impulsive Peter, he couldn't wait! He jumped out of that boat with total assurance that he was going to join his Lord, right then and there! He was so sure of his and his Savior's relationship that he just knew he could walk on that water just like his Lord. And he could, you know, he could as long as his eyes were on Jesus. His faith made him buoyant! He was buoyant as long as his Savior and not the storm permeated his mind. His footing was sure. But once the darkness of the storm seeped back in,

once more, only then did the sinking begin.

Like Peter, this week I briefly lost some of my buoyancy, for I had my eyes glued to TV and not to my Almighty God. And then -- I read -- out loud -- about a storm where Jesus came and said, "Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid." Matthew 14:27

Ahhh! I can breathe again and float, too! What are you glued to these days?

*I am your sister in Christ,
Lucy*