

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

I love this line found in Psalm 87, verse 6, "The singers and the dancers will say, all my fresh springs are in you." Ah! The effervescent, bubbling-up images that declaration calls to mind.

During the last year my husband and I walked the famous 33-mile Milford Trek in New Zealand. I'll never forget the water. We had glaciers and waterfalls and rivers and streams coming together. One day it rained almost a foot and goodness did that prime nature's pump and set this water show into motion - unbelievable - incredible. With fog and clouds and mist and mountains, you could envision what the world must have been like in primeval time, especially in the rain forests. You felt like if you just quietly stood still long enough, you might see a new birthing of nature come forth. But who could stand still in such an awesome environment? That's why that verse makes such sense to me. "The singers and the dancers will say, all my fresh springs are in you." Of course, those people turn into singers and dancers when there are fresh springs around. You have to jump for joy and sing a song in such an environment, at least, that was my experience.

Ah, and Pilgrim - have you ever had a sip of water from a fresh spring? The water not filtered or bottled, boiled - you just lean over, cup your hands - dip them into this shimmering clear cool refreshing substance called spring water and drink - drink deeply.

I tell you what. It's hard to keep those twirls and trills down in such a scene.

So where actually am I going with this letter of yours today? I don't have a clue! What I did want to tell you was that I was going to a "Gala" tonight. A what? A Gala - which I guess is a fancy name for a dinner dance. It's a fundraiser to benefit our local hospital. We'll wear fancy dress, fancy shoes, and fancy hair. At age 56, I know I will not be the belle of the ball and I shouldn't be. But believe you me, my darlin' Pablos and his Lucía, (that's my husband and I) we will cut a rug a time or two. For you see, the Gala is a paradoxical place for the two of us. As Dickens would say, "it was the best of times. It was the worst of times," but in reverse for us.

Just two short years ago I attended this gala for the very first time. It was my first social outing as a widow. I needed to attend for my godfather and cousin was being honored. My date was my mother. I was miserable. Sorry, Mama.

On that very same night at that very same gala - my darlin' was also there and also miserable. It was also his first social outing as a widower. He had to attend because he had to introduce one of the honorees. No, we did not meet that night - fortunately. I say fortunately because the timing would not have been right. We both were still raw in our grief. We have agreed that if there had been a measurement taken under that tent to identify the two most miserable, we would have won the prize.

A few months later a friend called and asked if I'd go on a date with this very same widower. And I said "no," but I would go

on a walk. We've been walking ever since and today are celebrating our 450th day of marriage.

Ah and last year we went back to that past scene of profound misery - "the Gala" - as husband and wife - and "what a difference a year makes." Why, we danced the night away almost non-stop. By God's grace, the gala of profound misery had been transformed into the gala of profound joy. It was as if negative signs had come crashing together and by God's grace, become one positive sign - one plus sign - one cross sign. Ah, and there is such a profound paradox in that sign of the cross - isn't there? The paradox of the cross - the most heinous symbol of cruelty has been transformed into the ultimate sign of LOVE - God's love you and me by His only begotten Son saying "yes" to it.

"I could sing and have danced all night - I could have danced all night." Well, this year we will do some more dancing in celebration of this new life. And it is all because of Jesus. I don't understand, don't comprehend - the how and the why and wonder of the love of Pablos and Lucia and how we are so blessed. I do believe the "fresh springs" - the new life is always found in Jesus - and often I believe there is mystery and paradox. Often things are not as they seem. I believe "All is well - all is well in Christ" - I know and I claim these words which I read today. Might you claim them too?

They're found in Psalm 30, verses 12 and 13, "You have turned my wailing into dancing; you have put off my sackcloth and clothed

me in joy. Therefore my heart sings to you without ceasing. O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever."

"I might dance all night. I might dance all night."

Take these sack clothes off, Pilgrim. There is an eternal Dance going on and as Christians, there are no wallflowers. Each one of us is being partnered by our Living Lord Jesus.

Peace.

*Your twirling and trilling sister in Christ,
Lucy (alias Lucia tonight)*