

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

"I saw it! I saw it!"

These were the words I heard as I walked the bike trail and I'm so glad I did. It was one of God's unexpected grace gifts given and the good news is that I not only perceived it, but then received it too. That means I'm better, and I thank the Lord for that.

Initially, I had spotted the man riding his bicycle and, I thought, mumbling to himself. I then heard an enthusiastic response: "I saw it! I saw it!" It then dawned on me that this gentleman was not alone. I just couldn't see his passenger until they passed me. There his companion, an adorable little three-year-old, was ensconced right behind the adult's seat. I then realized I'd come across a glorious sight to behold - a father showing his son some of the natural wonders of the world.

I don't have a clue what this daddy was pointing out, and that's OK, for this surprise show was for his son only. I do know, just minutes before, I'd stopped to enjoy my own grace gift of a sight.

As I came around a wooded curve, I glanced through the trees and saw a fallen limb resting on the water's edge. And on its farthest end was perched a great blue heron bird. The remaining space was occupied by ten turtles, no less. Each was

strategically standing in line. I guess the former was fishing and the latter were sunning. It was fun to see such a balancing act. When I stopped in admiration, I was thrilled that none of these creatures moved. They stayed in their designated spot, so I chose to remain planted in my place too!

In a few minutes, another walker came around the bend. He asked me in a whisper, "What do you see?" I pointed and we gazed together. Then, he said with the same enthusiasm as the little three-year-old biker would show in just a few minutes, that almost every time he walked the bike trail, he came across such a surprise site. I told him that, usually, that was my great fortune too.

I guess we both became a little too excited for we heard that ever-familiar "kerplop" made by the diving turtles for our conversation had caused them to jump and swim. That's OK. We knew they'd be back on the log again when they sensed the coast was clear and quiet again.

But that old heron - he never made a move! He must have questioned - "Fish or flight?" He must have been a wise old bird, one who knew the ropes and had been around a while, for he kept his ground. As the man departed, he said that these gifts he called "nuggets." Nuggets. As a Christian, Pilgrim, how about we call them "grace-gift-golden-nuggets."

As I write to you, my mind wanders and my imagination kicks in. It starts playing one of those old movies, which portrays the California gold rush. Can you picture such a

scene? I'm sitting on the side of a river with my pan, sifting through soil. Most would fall through the holes, but occasionally there would be a little nugget of gold. Sand, soil, silt, all of that would flow and go and leave the supposedly "good stuff." As Christians, we can transfer such a sight and apply it to our walk with the Lord and "perceiving and receiving" His grace gifts.

But wait a minute! What I seem to have been picking up these last ten days, Pilgrim, is rocks - big old worry rocks, which won't go through any old sieve. Why, they're taking up so much room, that I can't even see "God's golden grace gifts" in my pan! I know they're there. God's grace is always present. It's me that is the problem.

I have been in a swirl of a world ever since we arrived home from our trip. We walked into the house. The phone rang. I learned one of my children had been in an accident. Thank the dear Lord, he will be fine. Of course, we had to go see him the next day and make two more six-hour round trips during the week. We did a little babysitting - a little carpooling. It was my deep pleasure to be allowed to help, just a little but -- Oh Boulderdash!

At the same time when the grans were at school, I was able to work in a little coffee time with a dear friend and receive a hug from another. And I also was able to have lunch with the Tuna Group, who are my soulmate sisters-in-Christ from my old church. It was wonderful to catch up with their

lives, for I have been gone from their world for over five years. It was grand to be reminded that we are connected for life and all eternity, even though we no longer weekly see each other. But -- oh Boulderdash!

What surprises me as I write to you, Pilgrim, is although there was much golden grace gift nuggets hidden in all of these experiences - my child is on the road to recovery and my friends are fine - there were some rocks and boulders I picked up along the way. I learned of a few new worries and concerns that I had not previously known - nothing earthshaking, nothing that needs to be shared, but I just hadn't been aware.

At the same time, I had to do my usual cooking, cleaning, sorting, folding, washing, scrubbing, ironing - what? I was picking up rocks and fool's gold instead of gleaning God's glorious nuggets, His grace gifts that He daily offers each one of us - even on the busiest and most challenging days. The problem was me! (Surprise, surprise!)

Those cares and concerns, I personally was trying to carry around without the help of the Lord. Can you imagine, Pilgrim? Talk about a burden, a heavy load! Lord forgive! That's why His grace gift nuggets weren't being noticed. I'd muddied them up so with my worries and responsibilities that they weren't even recognizable. Oh, Boulderdash!

"Boulderdash!" "What in the world are you talking about, Lucy?" you might be thinking, Pilgrim. Well, believe you me, you won't find that word in the dictionary. I know. I

looked it up. Never daunted by my creative misspelling, I knew there just had to be such a word. Why, I could even come up with my own definition:

Boulderdash (n) is a mechanism that smashes boulders into manageable size rocks. It can even be applied to some of life's larger problems, making them less weighty.

There. Doesn't that sound weighty enough to be included in Webster's? I called my brilliant daughter, who just happens to have a degree in English, to confirm my knowledge.

"Mom! The word is 'Boulderdash.' It's a game. I think each player draws a card and gives a definition for the word drawn. The other players have to guess whether in fact the definition is correct or not."

"Oh, yeah. Well I think with my wonderful new defined word, we would win. Right?" But in case it won't pass the mustard with the Webster's dictionary group, I think I'll just go put my pan of rocks down and meditate on Matthew 11:28-30. I should have done that in the first place!

Jesus said: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart. And you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and My load is light."

Oh, thank You, Lord Jesus, for these words of truth. I can. I will. I do right now put my heavy load down at the foot of Your cross. By Your grace, I take up Your easy yoke and lighter

*load. I can see again. I can perceive and receive your golden
grace gifts once more.*

*Precious Pilgrim, are you burdened today? The good
news is there is no load that we have to carry alone.*

*Remember, our Lord is always with us. Boulderdash!?
Boulder - dash - Boulder - run along now. There is no heavy
load as long as we allow the Lord to help us carry the weight.*

Blessings,

Your lighter than ever

sister in Christ, God bless.

Lucy