

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*Last Saturday my husband and I attended a beautiful family wedding. It was a little bit unusual, in that the ceremony took place outside at the bride's family farm. Her grandfather, my Uncle Sam, had bought it when I was a child. I had visited it decades ago and was pleased to have this opportunity to return.*

*It took us a little bit over two hours to drive there. Not knowing how the traffic on the highway or the back roads of Alabama would be, we allowed for plenty of time. So much time, in fact, that we arrived over an hour before the scheduled 5 o'clock service. "Horror of Horrors!" I'm sure some of the busy bee workers must have thought, as they were finishing the preparations. We did offer to help, but it looked like everything was in good hands so we decided to just try and keep out of the way.*

*We learned that the wedding was to be held in the woods beside a pond and the reception was to be held in the barn. I'd been told to expect a transformation to the latter, for the horse stalls had been removed. Goodness, was that an understatement! The barn now looked more like a pavilion and was a wonderful new world to behold.*

*Round tables and chairs had been strategically placed. There was a bounty of fruits and vegetables and flowers and*

*vines and lanterns and candles used to decorate. I felt as if I'd come upon the setting for an abundant harvest festival or better yet, and in actuality, the setting for an abundant wedding feast. I could just imagine how it must have been in times gone by when neighbors, family, and friends would have pitched in and brought some of their own bounty to share, to help make such an event a true celebration.*

*We decided to leave the barn and hand in hand meandered down the dirt road to the pond. There we came across the sight for the wedding under a canopy of trees. Rows of white chairs had been placed in a semi-circle facing the water. A space had been left in the middle, which formed an aisle. And the decorations were once again absolutely perfect. An old canoe was floating on the pond. On a tree, right near where the bridal party would soon be standing, they'd nailed a small, simple wooden cross, which had been decorated with a bouquet of fall flowers. And best, best of all, there were multi-color long ribbons hanging from a few branches of a tree. They were very subtle. You wouldn't have even noticed them at first glance but then, when the wind blew, they seemed to take flight and dance.*

*On arrival to the farm, I'd noticed a limb with similar ribbon streamers at the entrance and thought, "how clever." I'd noticed the same decoration treatment on a limb at the barn and again thought, "how clever!"*

*It was only when we took our seats and sat and waited for others to arrive, did we begin to experience these streamers' full effect. These wind-dancing ribbons were incredible! Why, they seemed to be setting the very mood in which this Holy Matrimony would take place - yes, holy, plus abundantly joyous!*

*About thirty minutes out, four musicians began playing as if to accompany the tree ribbon dancers. They had an almost Irish folk music sound, which was ideal.*

*The other guests arrived and were seated, and then the wedding began. The minister, groom, and best man took their positions up front and then the three lovely bridesmaids, all sisters of the bride, processed down the aisle. At this point, we all stood, as the beautiful bride and her proud father majestically marched forth. The music had stopped. The sounds were of us "ooing and ahing" plus the lyrical laughter of the bride-to-be as she joined the wedding party.*

*The ribbons kept dancing in the trees as if giving their own blessing on this holy, abundantly joyous moment.*

*The bride and groom lovingly made his and her vows to one another. Prayers and blessings were included in the ceremony, plus a friend read a poem and another read John 2:1-12. This scripture gives the account of our Lord Jesus' first miracle at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee when He turned the water into wine.*

*May I include these verses in your letter, Pilgrim. It is to this marriage we are eternally invited to attend. It says:*

*And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: and both Jesus was invited, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing 18 gallons apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And He saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. And when the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse, but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee; and manifested forth His glory: and His disciples believed on Him.*

*After this reading, the minister, The Rev. Huey Gardner, gave a sermon. It's so wonderful, Pilgrim, when new insights are gleaned. Isn't it? That's what happened for me.*

*The newlyweds faced him and it was as if he were talking only to them. We were allowed to listen. I don't remember his words exactly, but I was left with that sense that a holy - abundantly joyous moment had occurred. He said something like it made perfect sense that the first miracle of our Lord's would be at a wedding feast, for a wedding is so symbolic of His relationship with His church. That's us, Pilgrim. And then he said something about those empty vessels and how, of course, our Lord does change, rearrange - fill with the very best - each one of us.*

*The Rev. Gardner also made a comment about most married couples and how they experience a time of emptiness and when that happens, we are to ask the Lord to fill, to replenish the love with His abundant love.*

*Our Lord Jesus abundantly loves, Pilgrim. He abundantly loves - you and me. Abundantly - that word has been living with me ever since the wedding on Saturday. I couldn't wait to get home and look it up in my Bible concordance and read other verses that have that fruitful, blessed, overflowing word included.*

*Such as John 10:10 - Jesus said, I come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

*Blessings, Pilgrim. I think I might go outside now and hang a few ribbons on a limb. Might you? I bet there's another wind dance celebration, which needs to come forth. And may we never forget our Lord's abundant love for each one of us.*

*God bless and Peace.*

*I am your sister in Christ,  
Lucy*