

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

Boy, did I get myself into a pickle of a mess! I didn't mean to. Truly, I didn't. It was an accident. I think the problem was brought on by an acute case of mind mush. Maybe you've also suffered from this debilitating disorder. It often crops up when you least expect it. Your surrounding environment will be an unusually stimulating one. You'll feel more alive than ever, excited, enthralled, captivated, and then the glop drops! It's as if a giant jar of molasses has slowly slipped its sticky substance over your brain until it gets stuck and stops. It's very subtle. You're usually not even aware of its happening, nor are those around you. That's the scary part. I wish we had a built-in warning signal that would help us avoid such mishaps. Our Lord God included in our makeup an incredible alarm system. We know when we're tired, hungry, sleepy, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we can discern even more. But I still haven't come across any internal bells, whistles, or lights that go off when mind mush is about to be encountered. All I want is a short tape that silently says, "Warning, warning, Lucy, your brain is almost saturated. You have just ten more megabytes until meltdown. Have a nice day!" Now wouldn't that be helpful? At least, it would have helped me avoid one of the most embarrassing moments of my life.

Let me set the stage. I am sitting in an incredibly beautiful church with two hundred ladies gathered from all over the state. Light seems to be dancing through the surrounding stained glass window. At this church women's state convention, there has been music, singing, praising, praying, preaching, teaching all morning long. My cup was full, but little did I realize how full. I was trying to focus, trying to pay attention. This would have been the perfect time for the warning of mind mush to go off. For in this mind-blown state, all I heard was, "Would all the new board members please come forward." So I did.

I was seated in the middle of the pew and had to awkwardly climb over others and force the end lady who happened to be crippled to once again stand up so that I could get by. Self-consciously, I walked forward and stood next to the president-elect. Then three others arrived. That was all. No more. I thought this was a bit strange for I had just had breakfast with the old and new board members and it was quite a large group. Then I noticed that these four ladies had a service page to read. I asked the president-elect if I could look on with her for I didn't have one. As I glanced over the paper, I noticed words like the president, the vice president, the secretary, the treasurer. It told what each was to say, but I didn't see anything that pertained to me, the devotional chairman. Slowly, for it takes a little time for the mind molasses to melt, it dawned on me that I wasn't supposed to be

up there. I turned my head ever so slightly to the president-elect and quietly whispered, "I don't think I'm supposed to be up here." She said, "No." I wasn't but that she was glad to have me and for me to do whatever I wanted.

Help! Do I stay put or turn around and walk all the way down that long aisle alone and make that dear sweet lady with her cane get up one more time. I chose to stay put. With my head down, I silently read along as each executive board member, notice the word "executive," which I had previously missed, was commissioned. Then, in unison, recited a prayer of their intent to serve the Lord. I quietly joined in. Finally, this part of the service was over. All started hugging and sweetly included me. After the installation, the now president thanked me for standing at her side and said she could feel my prayers of support. Bless her! I told her I thought it was a wonderful lesson in humility.

Oh, humility! I'm not there. I've got a long way to go and that's okay with being humble for I'm not in charge of this gift and neither are you, Pilgrim, if you're having this gift. It's the Lord's to give. We just need to be open to it. I think a lot of that openness has to do with a total soul nakedness. Naked has such an evil connotation as a result of our Adam and Eve fallen mentality. What flashed to my mind when envisioning this word was the heinous crimes committed in concentration camps where the masses were stripped naked and lined up for examination. Soul-nakedness is entirely

different for the exposure is to the one who made us, calls us into being, died for us, loves us and wants us to become His own beloved. A statement was made by Rabbi Herman Schaalman concerning his deceased friend, Cardinal Bernardin: "His way of death confirms that this man did not have two faces, one private, one public. He was inside with his outside, outside with his inside, which is rare."

It is my prayer for each one of us, Pilgrim, that we become more humble, that we become more inside with our outside and outside with our inside, become more transparent and totally Christ-marked so that God's light can shine through each and every one of us more brilliantly. A lesson was learned at the convention. I think by God's grace an embarrassing episode became an enlightening learning one. God's peace.

Lucy