

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*Today I wish we were just enjoying each other's company. Quietly we could share insights we'd gleaned about a very important subject, one which challenges me daily. For me, it's a real balancing act. Sometimes I've got it, more often I don't, but when I do -- ah, there is a lightness, a freedom, a sense of being able to breathe more deeply. There's a space, a quiet, an all-is-right-in-my-world reality. I think it's the way our Lord wants us to operate and to live out our lives. But it's such a challenge in our 21st Century world, which is the noisiest, the busiest, the most chaotic one ever.*

*There seems to be more and more stuff to sort, and there seems to be more and more activities to attend, and we make unrealistic lists of things to do, but can't possibly do them all. Yes, there are more conveniences today, but so what if we don't have to beat the dirty clothes on a rock to clean them? Instead, often we have to work inside and outside the home, be a husband or wife, or a dad or a mom, or a grandmother or grandfather, be a breadwinner, a single parent, a committee member, a volunteer, a medic, a counselor, a chef, a car-pooler. Our roles have multiplied! You name it, often we've got it. That is the responsibility of seeing that this crazy madhouse of a world-whirlwind goes around. Why, my shoulders are getting uptight just thinking about all of these roles and responsibilities we're called upon to do in this modern age.  
Help!*

*Let's see if we can go back and lift some of this load off, see if we can leave some of it, at least for a little while. Most of the roles we can't alleviate, they truly are required responsibilities. We can, however, make a list of all we do and see if there are any activities that are "extra-specially" heavy on us and, if optional, see if we can't gracefully get out of them. Resign in good standing. Get a replacement. Call up and just say "no." Whatever. Leave it, let go, quit.*

*In the past I've had to resign from many activities because of other responsibilities. And you know, many I never picked up again and they're doing just fine. Probably in many instances even better without me--one tired, worn-out, spread-to-thin member can only be dead weight, put a real drag on the whole operation.*

*You know, there have been hundreds of books written on simplicity. Many of them are good and can be helpful. If you like specific directions and "how to" books, go for it. Read a few. I have: "How to Organize Your Closet. How to Prepare a Month's Worth of Meals in Two Days. How to Be a Super Wife and Still Take Out the Garbage. How to Be a Sweet, Kind, Understanding, With-it Mother. How to Be a Compassionate Friend. How to Eat. How to Sleep. How to Exercise. How to Walk. How to Talk. How to Dress." -- Help! It's becoming heavy again! Often I'd implement the suggestions for a week or two, but then I'd be back to my old ways and feel heavier from defeat and a sense of failure -- but, Pilgrim, we are to be "Kingdom Dwellers" -- right here and now on this earth. We are to be different, set apart, unique, lovers of Christ and others. The gifts*

*of the Holy Spirit should be present: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control. That's Galatians 5:22. And it seems that an atmosphere of simplicity helps give these God given gifts an environment in which to flourish.*

*What do I do to try and seek the balance? This little struggling pilgrim tries to go away, like our Lord Jesus did, to a lonely place. My cup gets empty pretty easily and pretty quickly. I've a very leaky vessel and have to constantly seek refill. Daily I try to "sit." Many of you have probably heard of Centering Prayer. I literally go into my clothes closet like to the wardrobe in C.S. Lewis' Narnia World and try to be quiet and listen to the Lord for 20 minutes each day. Often it is the noisiest time of all, but that's O.K. It's a number one priority. I want, yearn, desire, crave to be in an intimate, loving relationship with the Lord. It is He and He alone that gives me strength and solace and direction and calm and quiet. For me, it's like daily planting a stake into the Rock and claiming, exclaiming, "Lord, I'm here. Lord, I love you. Lord, I want to be totally yours. You know me inside and out. You know my negatives. You know my positives. Lord, I yearn for every cell of my body to be surrendered to You and to come under Your Lordship. Make me. Break me. Mold me into Your design, not mine."*

*As I said, this is some of the noisiest time of my day, Pilgrim, in that it is very hard for me to be mentally quiet and that's O.K. I picture myself as a very squirmy young child like one of my grandchildren who can't sit still. He or she will sit in my lap for a second or two and then jump down and run around and then jump*

*back up again. I'm delighted to be with that precious child, even in his or her busyness. I believe our Lord enjoys such visits, too.*

*You think this Heidi-like room I'm sitting in right now feels right, let me tell you, the space and place of quiet with the Lord far surpasses any room. Talk about simplicity! Centering Prayer doesn't take the place of other types of prayer, such as intercession and praise and thanksgiving. It's just an added plus.*

*The struggle for simplicity, Pilgrim, continues. Guess what? Sometimes, sometimes, the struggle gives way to a dance, a dance with the Lord. And it's not about understanding as much as it is about saying "yes." The Lord calls you right where you are. You don't have to get everything right, and then come, you just come -- and sit in His lap and talk and squirm and jump up and down and rest and listen to Love and let Love love. It's in that freedom -- that exercise -- that priority that everything else can flow and flourish.*

*People, places and things take on a new, fresh, lighter dimension. All becomes more about stewardship and holding on lightly. There seems to be a holy detachment that can develop.*

*The image that I'd like to leave with you today which was given by a lady named Mrs. McReynolds. She was a renowned flower arranger-teacher in Birmingham, Alabama. She said when arranging flowers to be sure to leave spaces amongst the blossoms so a butterfly can weave its way through. Spaces. I think it's all about spaces, holy spaces, when we talk about simplicity, or balance or becoming what our Lord intends.*

*We must draw apart from our busy world and we must seek our*

*Lord's face. That space can become a holy place where the breath of God can breathe on us. It's not about doing, but rather being, being available.*

*Spaces. Holy spaces. Might you, Pilgrim, be needing such a world where the butterflies can take flight more easily? I know I do. Now it's time to go sit with you-know-who. Pilgrim, may you have a simple, blessed butterfly space day.*

*I am your sister in Christ,*

*Lucy*