

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*We've been living for over two years in our guesthouse. We moved out of our home first for refurbishing the 90-year old girl, then she burned and now we've been rebuilding for a year and a half. It's been a long unsettled process.*

*The guesthouse is a converted garage, only 1 room thick. The contractor's trailer is on one side and a dug-out unfinished swimming pool is on the other. There are workmen everywhere and no privacy from 6:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. five days a week. It's quite invasive.*

*There is a workman named Ronald. Over the years he has impressed me like no other. He seems to do the dirty work, literally. The first year was an unseasonably wet one. There was mud everywhere. In fact, it was so bad that it flooded and slimed into the guesthouse three times. That affected our life, but the mud on the street also affected the neighbors. It was awful. It seemed like every time we had a hard rain, which was at least weekly, there would be Ronald, shoveling mud off the street. It was a thankless, hard, but important job. I did and do appreciate his hard work and would always tell him so and he would just shyly smile.*

*Recently, my estimation of Ronald and the work he does went up three fold. I was home most of the day and every time I'd walk through the living room, there he'd be outside, carrying two galvanized paint buckets. I went out and saw that he was hauling*

*mud out of the unfinished swimming pool. The hole had been almost completed, except for the very bottom and that hole had become nastier and nastier over the past year. It was green, gross and no telling what was growing in it. The builder dug the hole, roughly cemented it and was now ready to complete the structure. The only saving grace I'd found in this cesspool-like stagnant watering hole was that it had become a glorious breeding ground for frogs. At night it sounded like I was at the lake with the "ribbits and croaks."*

*But back to Ronald. All day long he carried those two buckets of nasty green yuck out of that hole and dumped them and then would go back in and get two more. Time and time again. I went out and told him "thank you." Sometimes I'd see him holding on to two poles at the top of the stairs, I think, just to catch his breath. It was an awful job. When I commiserated with him, he just quietly said, "It's got to be done" and so he kept on keeping on and on and on. I appreciate his hard work and his attitude. I want to always remember his example. Pilgrim, there are some nasty, hard, unpleasant jobs in this life that do have to be done, and you just do them, don't you?*

*The Bible verse that right now comes to mind is "How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?" That's Psalm 137, verse 4. -- We just do it -- by God's grace -- we just do it -- because as Ronald said, "It's got to be done."*

*You know, I think sadly enough, Pilgrim, most of the worlds we find ourselves in are "foreign lands" -- ones in which the Lord*

*doesn't reign. And we are "to go out into the world and preach the gospel" and sometimes, often, it is hard.*

*Pilgrim, do you have some heavy buckets of yuck the Lord's asking you to clean out of your world? Go for it! I promise He will give you His loving strength. I know by experience. Just ask Him, Pilgrim. He will give you His loving protection. I know by experience. Just ask Him, Pilgrim. He will give you His loving peace. I know by experience. Just ask Him, Pilgrim. And who knows, one day that pool of ours is going to be clean -- and one day this world is going to be set free -- when our Lord comes again! But in the meantime, as His beloved redeemed, we're called to carry a bucket or two --*

*With warm regards & hope for the future,  
I am your sister in Christ,  
Lucy*

*And yes, I can do some reading from the Bible. Daniel 3, chapters 13 through 27.*

*Then Nebuchadnezzar in a terrible rage ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought in before him. "Is it true, oh Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego," he asked, "that you are refusing to serve my gods or to worship the golden statue I set up? I'll give you one more chance. When the music plays, if you fall down and worship the statue, all will be well. But if you refuse, you will be thrown into a flaming furnace within the hour. And what God can deliver you out of my hands?" Then Shadrach, Meshach,*

*and Abednego replied, "Oh, Nebuchadnezzar, we are not worried about what will happen to us. If we are thrown into the flaming furnace, our God is able to deliver us and He will deliver us out of your hand, Your Majesty. But if He doesn't, please understand, sir, that even then we will never, under any circumstance, serve your gods or worship the golden statue you have erected." Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with fury and his face became dark with rage at Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He commanded that the furnace be heated up seven times hotter than usual and called for one of the strongest men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and throw them into the fire. So they bound them tight with ropes and threw them into the furnace fully clothed. And because the king in his anger had demanded such a hot fire in the furnace, the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers as they threw them in. So Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell down, bound, in the roaring flames. But suddenly, as he was watching, Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement and exclaimed to the advisors, "Didn't we throw three men into the furnace?!" "Yes," they said, "we did indeed, Your Majesty." "Well, look," Nebuchadnezzar shouted, "I see four men unbound walking around in the fire. They aren't even hurt by the flames and the fourth looks like a god." Then Nebuchadnezzar came as close as he could to the open door of the flaming furnace and yelled, "Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out. Come here." So they stepped out of the fire. Then the princes and governors and captains and counselors crowded around them and saw that the fire hadn't*

*touched them. Not a hair of their heads was singed. Their coats were unscorched and they didn't even smell of smoke.*

*God bless, Pilgrim. And He does and He does and He does.  
Take care.*