

*Come Holy Spirit
Use me to Your glory*

Precious Pilgrim,

It's 2:30 a.m. I'm sitting outside at my sister-in-law's house in Birmingham. She and her son, Sam, are inside trying to get a computer printer to work. He has a school report due today. And earlier this evening he had to unexpectedly relinquish his bed and room to Aunt Lulu, that's me, for it was raining too hard for me to drive home to Montgomery.

Being the Curious George type that I am, when I heard all the commotion outside the bedroom, I had to investigate. Ah, the traumas and trials caused by today's technology. Sam and his mom are busily trying to make this foreign contraption work, foreign to me at least. Knowing that I could offer no help in the solution of the problem, for I know my limitations, I just offered a little encouragement. I also manufactured a little sympathy from my peanut gallery and then quietly took myself outside onto the porch with old faithful, a little yellow pad and pen. I'm on page two writing to you while they're inside getting migraine headaches.

Oh, Pilgrim, I'm so glad I had this awakening as I'm glad I've taken myself out into the night where my ears are met with the surround sound of a flooded creek and with the visual view of an ink black sky. Under most circumstances, such an environment might illicit scary ghost stories like they told at

camp when I was a child. Bored counselors seemed to love to frighten the campers.

You won't, however, be getting such from me, for I wouldn't be able to go back to sleep after our visit.

This night I've come out into the dark to experience the Light, God's Light. Sometimes I think it can only be experienced in darkness.

In your last letter, I told you about walking at the Labyrinth at St. Philip's Cathedral in Atlanta and how it had been a profound serendipity surprise gift. The primary take home value was a deeper sense of the heart of God, that core of love, that centered-love from which all other love flows.

I think we are to seek His Face each day, to go into the quiet with openness and vulnerability, trying, by His grace, to just sit and be with Him, our Father God, our Abba Daddy. We are to try, by His grace, to be as dependent as a babe in his or her parent's arms. Such resting in Him allows His Holy Spirit to flow and fill us with His love. I believe this is a deep truth. I pray not too heavy or too uncomfortable to share with you, Pilgrim. I do believe this experience laid the groundwork for yet another one to come forth.

Forgive, pray, embrace. Forgive, pray, embrace. Forgive, pray, embrace. Can you mentally diagram those three identical active verb sentences? All I can come up with is a perfect Trinity triangle. I think that's a good shape for a visual representation of what took place. God was in the midst,

the center, the core of the activity. He was the composer, the conductor, the orchestrator. All I was, was a little musician who was allowed to play the score, His score.

Ah, and I cannot tell you what a profoundly freeing, liberating, expansive melody came forth. "I forgive you. I pray for you. I embrace you."

Oh, over the years, I've had the opportunity to repeatedly try these moves in other situations and scenarios, but sadly, the encounter never seemed to go as planned, probably because of a position on a holier-than-thou high horse.

"My child, see me up here on my high horse? I'll look down, down, down at you and give you my three little gifts. Watch out below! I'm bombing you with a boulder of forgiveness and here comes a massive rock, full of self-righteous prayers and then, just to top it off and be sure I've got you under my spell, let me embrace you like a spider with her web. Now how does that feel? Are you warm and comfy inside? No? Rather you feel like you've been plummeted with rocks and are more weighed down and burdened than ever before? Very interesting." This reconciliation dance did not go as I planned, in fact, it was a total wash out failure. Instead of bringing us together, the encounter pushed us farther apart. I mean, who wants to do the tango with a tempestuous little tyrant who's trying to lead? Lord, forgive.

"Wait. Wait. Come back. This time I'll try not to step on your feet or knock you down."

Pilgrim, that's usually been my luck in life thus far when it comes to being a reconciler. I've taken the lead as opposed to allowing the Lord to choreograph the steps. Last Friday's labyrinth walk helped me to experience God's love at a more profound, deeper level. My hard rock heart was broken, opened, softened and renewed.

Sooo, two days ago, when I forgave and prayed, and embraced, I believe it actually took. The old high horse was nowhere to be found. The old holier-than-thou church lady was missing in action. The gift of reconciliation was offered out of humility and love. There were no hidden agendas, only the sincerity of purpose. The reality is I am loved by Love, you are loved by Love, Pilgrim, therefore, we must love.

There were tears. The gift was accepted. The motive was to heal the heart. It happened. My focus was on the other's needs, hoping all would be well with that person. Ah, but the surprise grace gift was I was set free too. Ah, there is such an expansive freedom in reconciliation. Thank you, Lord. Thank you.

So, what was this all about? Do you want to know the scoop? How it all began? Who did what to whom? Would you like to know every single little gory detail? Sorry. I've forgotten, or at least it doesn't seem to matter anymore. The power of the problem has dissipated. By God's grace and Jesus' cross, soon the memory will totally disappear. In place of the pain has been planted the fragrant blossom of forgiveness. It's

starting to flourish because it was planted, rooted, and will be sustained by God's love.

So, Precious Pilgrim, do you also have some fence mending opportunities? If so, may I encourage you, after a time of preparation and prayer, to go for it. Ah, and then, after the gift has been given, just sit back and watch the blossoms of love come forth.

You might ask, but what if the person is deceased or what if the person won't accept your gift? Never you worry. Your responsibility is the offering of the olive branch and that's all. The rest is up to that person. You never know, the Lord God might have been giving them a season of preparation too. You just do the offering, that's all you are required to do in love.

It's time to go in and to go back to sleep. It seems the computer brains have already turned in. I hope my nephew got his paper done; if not, I'll offer him an old-fashioned pen and yellow pad. I bet at his computer he didn't get to smell the roses in the garden like I did. They strongly remind me of that new fragrant blossom of love that the Lord is cultivating. It's called reconciliation. Bloom, baby, bloom. And how do your flowers grow, Pilgrim?

*I am your footloose and fancy
freeee-er sister in Christ,
Lucy*

God bless.

