

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*Right before leaving, he gently patted me on the arm. It was one in which I had just hours before received vaccinations. There was a delayed reaction. The physical pain didn't register for a few seconds because the heart pain at the time was more excruciating. Finally, the words came out. "Ouch, that hurt!" and he responded, "Oh, I'm sorry" and I think he truly meant it.*

*That could have been an appropriate dialogue between us (back and forth and back and forth) for the previous two hours. We chose however instead to safely, sporadically, superficially talk. This has become our customary way of conversing over the past few months since our divorce. I'm sure that made the others gathered feel more comfortable.*

*We were attending a grandson's third birthday party and it was also our youngest son's birthday. Family and friends gathered for swimming, hot dogs, cake and ice cream. It was a good celebration. All went well. Everyone had fun. If you had videotaped the festivities, it would have looked party perfect. And the photos taken, I'm sure will turn out just right.*

*Thank goodness, however, there is no such camera contraption that can photograph hearts, for I'm afraid there would have been some heavy-hearted ones captured.*

*I was swimming, holding one of my grans when my ex-*

husband arrived. Another gran said, "Look, Goo-Goo, look. Here's Pop!" With all the enthusiasm I could muster, I said, "Yes, I see!" His eyes and mine met and we cordially but with detachment greeted each other. That's how we do our current dance, entirely different than the previous model of 29 years. In six days it would have been our 30th anniversary. In three months, it will mark the first year of our divorce. Wow, and how my heart aches at this moment as I write to you, Pilgrim, as it did at the party. I awoke at 2:30 this morning. It is now 4:30. I tried to go back to sleep -- drank milk, but it's useless. I might as well arise and write to you, Pilgrim. My clock is set for 5 a.m. in order to catch a 6:55 flight to Detroit to attend a dear friend's son's wedding.

I've been doing well, amazingly well, but still there are unexpected times when my healing heart gets snagged and ripped open once more. The birthday party was such a moment. I thought I was prepared, but on reflection, I really wasn't. My favorite day in this new world of singleness is wonderful Wednesday. I call it that because of the scheduled activities. I have found that for me routines afford an environment for healing. On this day I attend a praise and worship get-together, I have a massage and my hair done. Then it's off to the church for the 5:30 service, supper, choir practice. I leave home at 9:30 and return at 9:30 p.m. About five hours of the day are spent singing to the Lord. Nothing seems to be more beneficial. I've never had such a luxury of

*weekly beauty parlor or massage in my life. I also send myself some roses each Friday. I know this is a huge extravagance and won't go on forever. It took me a little bit of adjustment to be nice to myself. As a wife, mother, grandmother for so many years, my needs were sometimes shelved. This was not a poor, pitiful, pearl world. It was the reality and my choice. In this new world that I've entered, I pray that I'm not becoming selfish, but rather a better steward. The biggest gift I can give my family is being okay. Of course, I'm totally, completely resting on the Lord. He is loving me, healing me, comforting me. The bouquets, bubble bath and beauty parlor just remind me how much I am loved by love. Why, do you know, Pilgrim, if you could put every drop of love into a bottle that you have received in your whole lifetime, it wouldn't even come close to the quantity of our Lord's love for each one of us. It's just that sometimes situations and circumstances cloud our perspective.*

*Right now, I am wounded. Have you, Pilgrim, ever experienced such a season of woundedness? It is part of our human condition. If you are a lover of life and people, at some point you are bound to experience a broken heart. In such a world, I think it's even more essential to totally lean on our loving Lord. He said He came to heal the brokenhearted and that is part of the Good News, His Good News. During such a season, listen even more intently to His Voice. Rest even more profoundly in the reality that you are His beloved.*

*I've found that taking bubble baths and slow walks,*

*listening to beautiful music and songbirds, hugging grandchildren and friends and smelling yellow roses help remind me of His love.*

*I feel like one of the best gifts, as I said, to give my grown children at this time is to be O.K. I know they are hurting too during the transition time. Boy, do I wish I could take their pain and hurt away, but I can't. I can, however, pray and live. It touched my heart that one of them asked with deep concern at the end of the party, "Mom, are you O.K.?" I smiled and said, "Yes," but I wasn't really and I said, "The wound was oozing once more." So that when I arrived at church for choir practice, I told the choir director I just couldn't sing tonight. She gave me a big hug of understanding. She had been in that divorce world herself. I went home and cried -- not hysterically, not uncontrollably. I just needed to do a little more mourning -- mourning for the dreams that would never be, for the family that would never be the same, and to get my eyes back on the Lord who I know is mourning too.*

*The next day when seeing a friend whose children and mine are close, she stated, "I don't know how you do it," referring to my attending the birthday with my ex. I said, "You know how I do it." And she did and does -- by the grace of the Lord.*

*Divorce is hard. Death is hard. Disease is hard, Pilgrim. Have you experienced some of those dastardly "D" words yourself? I love, claim, grasp, and hold onto the statement,*

*"All things work for good for those who love the Lord." That is a truth. I love what Joseph says to his fearful brothers, fearful that Joseph would seek revenge after their betrayal. "You meant it for evil. God meant it for good." Yes. God is working His purpose out and all will be well, all will be well -- in Jesus.*

*As I finish this letter to you, Pilgrim, I'd like to quote the slogan at the Delta Airlines ticket counter. It says:*

*"Recommitting, revitalizing, strengthening." For me, I'd like to add:*

*By your grace, I am recommitting myself to You, Lord Jesus.*

*By your grace, I am revitalizing myself in You, Lord Jesus.*

*By your grace, I am strengthening myself in You, Lord Jesus.*

*And yes, precious child of mine, I am O.K. Thank you for asking. And I pray that you are too and also you, precious Pilgrim, because of Jesus, we are all O.K.*

*We are kingdom dwellers.*

*Your sister in Christ,*

*Lucy*

*God bless.*