

*Come Holy Spirit  
Use me to Your glory*

*Precious Pilgrim,*

*Nancy, Nancy Ann Plunkett.*

*How do I write about you? How do I say, "Thank you? Thank you for your love, your hospitality, your encouragement." I remember our first conversation. Goodness, how many years ago has it been - five or six? How did it even happen? Another "God-accident" I believe. I had tentatively sent all of my books to your husband, Norm. How did that happen? Well, after giving a talk at a local church, I was encouraged by some of the audience and told I should be on the radio. So, what did I do? I made an appointment with the manager of a local Christian radio station. We met. I told him my story and showed him the books. He immediately suggested I contact Norm Plunkett at Peachtree Media in Atlanta; in fact, he even made a phone call right then and there to help pave the way. This conversation took place in the busy month of December. Norm and I agreed to wait and meet in January, but in the meantime, I was to send him the books, which I did.*

*Our story, Nancy's and mine, begins just days before that Christmas. What perfect timing for a new beginning. This season is always one of the most thrilling -- Christmas. There truly is a sense of joy, expectancy, anticipation. Hope seems to come forth as we look forward to Jesus' birthday. It was the*

*perfect moment for our lives to connect. The phone rang. I answered it. It was Norm. He said that his wife Nancy hadn't stopped reading the books since they had arrived and for one of her Christmas presents, he wanted her to be able to talk to me. Hello? Pilgrim, do you know what a humbling, sweet declaration that was? As a writer, you never know whether your words will connect with another or not. It's my heart's yearning that I can be used to the Lord's glory and encourage others - but you never know. So to have received such a request made me want to drop to my knees in humble thanksgiving. Then this sweet kind voice came on the phone. I don't remember her exact words, all I know is that she spoke blessings over me and the writings. It was as if she had her arms around me, rather her very heart reached out and encircled mine and there it remains. Her life became a benediction to mine.*

*The next month we met as scheduled. Peachtree Media's office and studio is in the Plunkett's home. Ah, and what a treat. You can't get to the business without first going through the hospitality of their home. You follow a lovely pathway through Nancy's garden to the front door. On entering you are always met with warm hugs. Fresh coffee was always brewing along with fresh baked cookies or sweet rolls. Over these past years most meetings would begin and end around the kitchen table and there would always be prayer. Nancy seemed to be the heart of the home - no, that's not right, the*

*Lord Jesus is the center of that place. It's just that Nancy's hospitality gave off such a warmth and a calm. Her presence made you more aware of our Lord's presence.*

*Invariably, we'd have to go downstairs and work. We'd usually do some recording, some planning, some dreaming, some trying to discern what the Lord would have us to do with the ministry. It took a few years for everything to finally click and for Living Treasure to go on the air. We knew our Lord's timing would be perfect. And it was.*

*One of the shakiest times for me was during my divorce. It was a season of total brokenness. I couldn't imagine how the Lord could use such a vessel or such a radio program - but Nancy always encouraged. She saw the ministry having more opportunity rather than less.*

*As my life was breaking, changing, rearranging, Nancy's was too. Her battle with ovarian cancer began. Oh, and what a battle she did wage. I saw her a few times, talked to her on the phone a few times. Norm was wonderful about emailing and keeping friends informed about Nancy's trials and tribulations, victories and setbacks with this disease. It was an incredible faith walk. I could not imagine the pain, the treatments - blood transfusions, chemo, experimental drugs. She just seemed to keep on keeping on - an awesome witness for the Lord. You see, she was abiding - abiding totally in our Lord. And then she died and now abides eternally in Him.*

*My husband and I attended her memorial service yesterday. The name of the church was "Cross and Crown." What an appropriate name, for I do believe that Nancy did daily take up her cross and follow our Lord, and now wears a crown of glory. Norm made cards on his computer for those attending the service. I'm looking at mine right now. I will always cherish it. You see, it's a victorious picture of Nancy all aglow. She's smiling and waving. It has her name and this quote: "I have experienced the power of His resurrection. I have learned to know Him, suffer and die in Him, and now live with Him."*

*Wow! That's all I can say. Wow! What a witness! What a walk! Thank you!*

*And you know what, Pilgrim? It just doesn't stop there. The chosen gospel reading for the service was John 15:1-17. As you might guess, it was about abiding. Let me quote verses 4 and 5: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except in abiding in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit. For without me ye can do nothing." It was as if Nancy was giving me yet one more gift - a word of God's truth. It was like a fine-tuning of that word "Abide," which the Lord had been pressing on my spirit for months. "Lucy, this is the scripture. These are the words on which I want you to claim, focus, meditate."*

*And then I noticed two banners over the altar, one on either side of the cross. The left one said, "I am the vine." The right one said, "You are the branches." I smiled to myself. Slowly I was getting the message. Why, silly though it might seem, those branches even looked a lot like the microphone contraption we use for recording the radio programs with vines wrapped around them -*

*"Abide."*

*"Abide in Me."*

*"Yes Lord."*

*And you, Pilgrim, Precious Pilgrim, might that be what the Lord is calling you into - a more abiding, fruitful relationship with Him? Nancy, you are a gift. I thank the Lord for you. Your life will always be a benediction to mine.*

*Peace and love to you -*

*And also to you,*

*Pilgrim.*

*Abide.*

*I am your sister in Christ,*

*Lucy*