



May 2024 HUG~IN~A~MUG Vol.96

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23a, NIV)

Shalom Aleichem, (Peace to you) Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The real punchline to this oft-quoted scripture, memorized by most of you, and endeared in the comfort it brings us, is in verse 25: *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25, NIV).*

I know, I am just off attending three Zone rallies and road trips back-to-back, witnessing JOY-FULL gatherings of women who step up and out with Paul's clear battle cry,** and without merit, without works, and without law, know, cherish, and practice their faith which is: *through Christ alone!*

I have today's scripture, a large poster on my laundry room door, as I step off and into my garage each and every day, busy with the adventures **He's** laid out for me! And I have the list memorized, nine priceless and Spirit-given virtues. It gives me an "earnest litany" of the practices to one another we must put into action. (The retired, tired educator in me often wonders: "Are children these days even being taught these Virtues in school today?")

The last Rally was a 514-mile journey, across the "huge divide" of still angry, wintry roads: the great Cascade Mountain Range. It truly divides all the "high desert churches," spread out across 8 vast counties and home to 7 struggling congregations, or at least the aging LWML body in most. Yes, all are suffering the aging-out process evident in attendance to our rallying-efforts..... for which we MUST hold them, and their devoted Pastors, in our ardent prayers. And each church ponders what we have to offer our young women and their families; can we even "walk in their shoes" with the struggles facing most if not all young people these days? The facts often overwhelm us....*Time to hear Paul's battle cry and be creative somehow.***

Rallies are big deals by the way! We women dress up, join in large bodies of women whom we've known for upwards of 50+ years. Faces and voices never change. We hug hard, sing loud, commune in The Word, laugh a lot, feast at huge luncheon bars... and spread the word of the community projects, gatherings, and donations for which each church Society is truly committed... and we come away, awed by the love spread and the thanks from the grateful recipients. Our mighty Mites© go a long way, as we dig deep each month to support our Body and that of the National LWML.

Keeping in step, stepping up! That's what we do and keep on doing. Thinking out of the box with our young women and families in mind might be another challenge. Working with our Pastors, we must communicate, perhaps through *Prayer requests daily*, by virtue of an all-call e-mail. This generates and should energize our "Sisterhood and The **Power of Our Prayers.**" This was the theme of my Spring (Rally) Tea Party... and the thought of some "girlie kind of porcelain-tea cup" event nearly tripled our attendance! We must put names with the faces we see on Sundays; emotionally adopt them into our daily prayers, and make contact, knowing that sometimes: aloneness for them is a neon word. AND we can break the silence...With a smile, a phone call, lunch out after Bible Study, lay out a house call perhaps, *or have a 1:1 Tea Party of your own!!* ☺

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

I am continually reminded that I am not forging the way blindly...BUT that God already has ordered my steps (see Psalm 119:133) and I follow Him. And He makes the way...

May our loving Lord Direct your footsteps according to His word.

Respectfully Yours... ☺ Pat Reck, HUG Author