

## Getting Acquainted with your 2019 – 2021 KDCCW Spirituality Commission Chair

*Lucy Brown*

Growing in personal relationship with our Lord -- and His discipleship to which this leads -- has long, by His grace, been my great love and quest.

My "known" spiritual journey began at five when I gave my heart to Jesus, responding to a Sunday School teacher's invitation during a visit to my grandparents' Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Bellingham, Washington. After some time my own family became involved in regular church life, a pattern that continued through my growing up years, college days and early marriage. Baptized as a young teen following a spiritual awakening when our church hosted special meetings with a well-known and respected evangelist in our denomination, my relationship with Jesus took a giant leap forward. My parents spent several days' food allotment on a lovely little black leather-bound Bible that I picked out with them at the Bible book store in town. Dad said, "We'll eat oatmeal for a while if we have to. Lucy needs a Bible." And I began reading.

Even so, as I grew older, I often struggled with the reality of God - IS there even one? Do I meet His specifications? Other questions. Spiritually speaking, too often I vacillated between security and insecurity. During my thirty-fifth year the Lord finally broke through to my inner understanding after a time of near spiritual desperation as my first-born approached school age. "How can I honestly bring up this child in the faith, answering her simple but pointed questions when my own faith seems to have such great holes in it?"

But, like a child myself, I was gradually led by an unseen hand across the great abyss by Someone Who knew the way to my heart and what was needed to eventually bring it into sync with His own. By a series of what I've come to call "silver footsteps" one day in 1977 He pierced my longing with His own and changed my life forever. I turned to, what by then was, my little white leather-bound wedding Bible and began to read ... voraciously ... hungrily ... eager to really know this beautiful "Stranger of Galilee" Who had hung on a cross for me.

By His grace and leading, I found love letter after love letter He had left for me in ages past that I might find them in my own day to day living. Jesus became to me a living, very present "Human Being" (as well as God, of course), with active emotions, thoughts, plans and desires. No longer did I wonder if I would be with Him in eternity. I was almost desperate to be with Him. So I read and read with Him in solitude and quiet, holding closeted meetings with Him both in and out of the scriptures. I often murmured to Him during the day and night - sometimes realizing, as did the shepherd-king David, His presence in my sleep.

During my lengthy Protestant years I developed and taught about the believer's progressive bridal relationship with Jesus through the spiritual application of the Song of Solomon and how it relates to other scriptures. This became my "life teaching," so to speak, and it was my pleasure to share it in a variety of ways with many groups in different locales over the years. Growing out of my prayer times since 1978,

this theme became more prominent in my journal and reflective writings as I became more developed in my relations with the Lord.

Little did I realize in those early pioneering years that what I called "bridal relationship with Jesus" (not then well or widely known in the Protestant world to which I was accustomed) has long been termed in Catholic teaching and the writings of many saints, as "spousal mysticism" or "spousal intimacy." I scarcely knew any Catholics and, of course, nothing at all of Pope Saint John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*.

In 1981, I began to know the deep spiritual beauty of a particular Catholic musician's music and, later, began reading his books. I sensed a "home" about which I knew almost nothing exteriorly though most certainly I knew it interiorly. I was mysteriously drawn as the Holy Spirit began astonishingly ordering my footsteps into the Catholic realm. As the years passed I found myself reading and finding solace and companionship more and more within the writings of Catholic saints who were deep into the type of relationship with the Godhead that I knew. I was also lovingly aided by many Catholic brothers and sisters who made me feel welcome within their company.

Finally, the spiritual home for which I had long yearned opened widely enough so that together, my husband and I began official RCIA studies in 2006 and we were received into the Church at the 2007 Easter Vigil Mass. We continue to thrive at Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Norris, Tennessee, and by God's marvelous grace, fan outward as He continues to provide opportunities to serve Him wherever He leads. We are ever grateful. Blessed be His glorious Name forever!

*Lucy Brown*  
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During my first term as KDCCW Spirituality Commission Chair (2015-2017 under President Pat Ryan) I created and developed *The Secret Place*, a free, continuing spirituality resource to aid one's spiritual growth toward a deepening personal relationship with Jesus Christ. *The Secret Place* grows with the periodic release of new issues of *TSP Express*.

(<http://www.kdccw.org/TheSecretPlace.html>)

(The above is a slightly edited version of "About Lucy," pp. 11-13 from *The Secret Place*.)