



# Poems for Eastertide

Advent Anglican / Spring 2021

# Welcome

After the challenges of a Lenten-like year, it's time to feast on some poetry: that miraculous union of sound and sense, that lyric mystery we cannot master. We never simply read poems. Poems "read" us. The best verse reads into our struggles and anxieties, gives voice to our wordless desires, heralds conviction in our hearts, quickens our contemplation, and ushers us back into the Garden of God's truth, mercy, and love. I have endeavored to select poems that accomplish this feat from a variety of eras and traditions, and look forward to touring them with you during this season of Eastertide. "O, taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).

Deacon Jeremiah  
Eastertide 2021





Week Two

Let mans Soule be a Spheare, and then, in this,  
The intelligence that moves, devotion is,  
And as the other Spheares, by being growne  
Subject to forraigne motion, lose their owne,  
And being by others hurried every day,  
Scarce in a yeare their naturall forme obey:  
Pleasure or businesse, so, our Soules admit  
For their first mover, and are whirld by it.  
Hence is't, that I am carryed towards the West  
This day, when my Soules forme bends toward the East.  
There I should see a Sunne, by rising set,  
And by that setting endlesse day beget;  
But that Christ on this Crosse, did rise and fall,  
Sinne had eternally benighted all.  
Yet dare I almost be glad, I do not see  
That spectacle of too much weight for mee.  
Who sees Gods face, that is selfe life, must dye;  
What a death were it then to see God dye?  
It made his owne Lieutenant Nature shrinke,  
It made his footstoole crack, and the Sunne winke.  
Could I behold those hands which span the Poles,  
And tune all spheares at once peirc'd with those holes?

Could I behold that endlesse height which is  
Zenith to us, and our Antipodes,  
Humbled below us? or that blood which is  
The seat of all our Soules, if not of his,  
Made durt of dust, or that flesh which was worne  
By God, for his apparell, rag'd, and torne?  
If on these things I durst not looke, durst I  
Upon his miserable mother cast mine eye,  
Who was Gods partner here, and furnish'd thus  
Halfe of that Sacrifice, which ransom'd us?  
Though these things, as I ride, be from mine eye,  
They'are present yet unto my memory,  
For that looks towards them; and thou look'st towards mee,  
O Saviour, as thou hang'st upon the tree;  
I turne my backe to thee, but to receive  
Corrections, till thy mercies bid thee leave.  
O thinke mee worth thine anger, punish mee,  
Burne off my rusts, and my deformity,  
Restore thine Image, so much, by thy grace,  
That thou may'st know mee, and I'll turne my face.

Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward  
John Donne



# From 20,000 Feet Heather McHugh (1993)

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The cloud formation looks like banks of rock from here, though rock and cloud are thought so opposite. Earth's underlying nature might be likeness---likeness everywhere disguised by wave-length, amplitude and frequency. (If we got far enough away, could we decipher the design?) From here so much goes by too fast or slow for sight. (Is death a stretch of time in which a life is just a flash?) Whatever we may think, we only think that we will lose. The fetus, expert at attachment, didn't dream that cramped canal would open into sound and light and love--- it clung. It didn't care. The future looked like death to it, from there.



# Late Ripeness - Czesław Miłosz (2004)

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Not soon, as late as the approach of my ninetieth year,  
I felt a door opening in me and I entered  
the clarity of early morning.

One after another my former lives were departing,  
like ships, together with their sorrow.

And the countries, cities, gardens, the bays of seas  
assigned to my brush came closer,  
ready now to be described better than they were before.

I was not separated from people,  
grief and pity joined us.  
We forget—I kept saying—that we are all children of the King.

For where we come from there is no division  
into Yes and No, into is, was, and will be.

We were miserable, we used no more than a hundredth part  
of the gift we received for our long journey.

Moments from yesterday and from centuries ago—  
a sword blow, the painting of eyelashes before a mirror  
of polished metal, a lethal musket shot, a caravel  
staving its hull against a reef—they dwell in us,  
waiting for a fulfillment.

I knew, always, that I would be a worker in the vineyard,  
as are all men and women living at the same time,  
whether they are aware of it or not.

Trans. Robert Haas



# Easter 2020 - Malcolm Gruite

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And where is Jesus, this strange Easter day?  
Not lost in our locked churches, anymore  
Than he was sealed in that dark sepulchre.  
The locks are loosed; the stone is rolled away,  
And he is up and risen, long before,  
Alive, at large, and making his strong way  
Into the world he gave his life to save,  
No need to seek him in his empty grave.

He might have been a wafer in the hands  
Of priests this day, or music from the lips  
Of red-robed choristers, instead he slips  
Away from church, shakes off our linen bands  
To don his apron with a nurse: he grips  
And lifts a stretcher, soothes with gentle hands  
The frail flesh of the dying, gives them hope,  
Breathes with the breathless, lends them strength to cope.

On Thursday we applauded, for he came  
And served us in a thousand names and faces  
Mopping our sickroom floors and catching traces  
Of that *corona* which was death to him:  
Good Friday happened in a thousand places  
Where Jesus held the helpless, died with them  
That they might share his Easter in their need,  
Now they are risen with him, risen indeed.





# Psalm 1

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# Notes

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Les disciples Pierre et Jean courant au sépulcre le matin de la Résurrection / Eugene Burnand (1898)

Supper at Emmaus / Rembrandt (1628)

Sunset / Stock Image / Public Domain

Flying and traveling / leitz-services.nl / Public Domain (2019)

Morsel River Vineyard No. 2 / Joe Bonita (2018)

Coronavirus Sign / Planet Princeton / Empty Street / Yahoo (2020)

Icon of the Four Gospels / The Book of Kells (9th century)