



IV

I see the mason
chip the stone
into blazing accidentals

the spires cast
their Venetian glass like falcons
into the wind

the seraph
at the empty sepulchre
in a suit of lights.

Pauline Stainer
From 'A Blind Man Passes La Sagrada Familia'
(The Lady and the Hare' New & Selected Porms by Pauline Stainer)

ALIVE

It is alive. It is you,
God. Looking out I can see
no death. The earth moves, the
sea moves, the wind goes
on its exuberant
journeys. Many creatures
reflect you, the flowers
your colour, the tides the precision
of your calculations. There
is nothing too ample
for you to overflow, nothing
so small that your workmanship
is not revealed. I listen
and it is you speaking.
I find the place where you lay
warm. At night, if I waken,
there are the sleepless conurbations
of the stars. The darkness
is the deepening shadow
of your presence; the silence a
process in the metabolism
of the being of love.

R.S. Thomas
(Collected Poems 1945–1990)

Funeral Mass for the Late

Father Brian O'Higgins

Principal Celebrant
The Right Reverend
Thomas McMahon
Bishop of Brentwood

St Michael's Church Eastham

Date: _____

ENTRANCE

G.K.A. Bell (1883–1958)

Christ is the King! O friends rejoice;
Brothers and sisters, with one voice
Make all men know he is your choice.

Alleluia.

O magnify the Lord, and raise
Anthems of joy and holy praise
For Christ's brave saints of ancient days.

Alleluia.

They with a faith for ever new
Followed the King, and round him drew
Thousands of faithful men and true.

Alleluia.

O Christian women, Christian men,
All the world over, seek again
The Way disciples followed then.

Alleluia.

Christ through all ages is the same:
Place the same hope in his great name,
With the same faith his world proclaim.

Alleluia.

Let Love's unconquerable might
Your scattered companies unite
In service to the Lord of light

Alleluia.

So shall God's will on earth be done,
New lamps be lit, new tasks begun,
And the whole Church at last be one.

Alleluia.

TWO POEMS

The air is silent, earth is at rest –
Only your peace is near me.

*Yes, you are always close to me
Following all my ways.
May I be always close to you
Following all your ways, Lord.*

FIRST READING

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse 21: 1-7

There will be no more death.

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, 'You see the city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone.'

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: 'Now I am making the whole of creation new,' he said. 'I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty; it is the rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious; and I will be his God and he a son to me.'

This is the word of the Lord.

PSALM

Response:

I will walk in the presence of the Lord
In the land of the living.

How gracious is the Lord, and just;
our God has compassion.
The Lord protects the simple hearts;
I was helpless so he saved me.

Response:

I trusted, even when I said:
'I am sorely afflicted,'
and when I said in my alarm:
'No man can be trusted'.

Response:

O previous in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.
Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.

Response:

Ps 114.

AFTER COMMUNION

John Glynn

I watch the sunrise lighting the sky,
Casting its shadow near.
And on this morning bright though it be,
I feel those shadows near me.

*But you are always close to me
Following all my ways.
May I be always close to you
Following all your ways, Lord.*

I watch the sunlight shine through the clouds,
Warming the earth below.
And at the mid-day, life seem to say:
'I feel your brightness near me.'

*For you are always close to me
Following all my ways.
May I be always close to you
Following all your ways, Lord.*

I watch the sunset fading away,
Lighting the clouds with sleep.
And as the evening closes its eyes,
I feel your presence near me.

*For you are always close to me
Following all my ways.
May I be always close to you
Following all your ways, Lord.*

I watch the moonlight guarding the night,
Waiting till morning comes.

COMMUNION HYMN

W.H. Turton (1856-1938)

O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray
That all thy Church might be forever one,
Grant us at every Eucharist to say
With longing heart and soul, 'Thy will be done.'
O may we all one bread, one body be,
One through this sacrament of unity.

For all thy Church, O Lord, we intercede;
Make thou our sad divisions soon to cease;
Draw us the nearer each to each, we plead,
By drawing all to thee, O Prince of peace;
Thus may we all one bread, one body be,
One through this sacrament of unity.

We pray thee too for wanderers from thy fold,
O bring them back, good shepherd of the sheep,
Back to the faith which saints believed of old,
Back to the Church which still that faith doth keep;
Soon may we all one bread, one body be,
One through this sacrament of unity.

So Lord, at length when sacraments shall cease,
May we be one with all thy Church above,
One with thy saints in one unbroken peace,
One with thy saints in one unbounded love;
More blessed still, in peace and love to be
One with the Trinity in unity.

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 15: 15–16

*I am a priest of Jesus Christ among the pagans
so as to make them acceptable as an offering.*

My brothers, I am quite certain that you are full of good intentions, perfectly well instructed and able to advise each other. The reason why I have written to you, and put some things rather strongly, is to refresh your memories, since God has given me this special position. He has appointed me as a priest of Jesus Christ, and I am to carry out my priestly duty by bringing the Good News from God to the pagans, and so make them acceptable as an offering, made holy by the Holy Spirit.

This is the word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy are those who die in the Lord!
Now they can rest for ever after their work,
since their good deeds go with them.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 12: 35-40

Stand ready

Jesus said to his disciples: 'See that you are dressed for action and have your lamps lit. Be like men waiting for their master to return from the wedding feast, ready to open the door as soon as he comes and knocks. Happy those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. I tell you solemnly, he will put on an apron, sit them down at the table and wait on them. It may be in the second watch he comes, or in the third, but happy those servants if he finds them ready. You may be quite sure of this, that if the householder had known at what hour the burglar would come, he would not have let anyone break through the wall of his house. You too must stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

Kevin Nicholls

In bread we bring you, Lord,
our bodies' labour.

In wine we offer you
our spirits' grief.

We do not ask you, Lord,
who is my neighbour?

But stand united now,
one in belief.

Oh we have gladly heard
your Word, your holy Word,
and now in answer, Lord,
our gifts we bring.

Our selfish hearts make true,
our failing faith renew,

Our lives belong to you,
our Lord and King.

The bread we offer you
is blessed and broken,

And it becomes for us
our spirit's food.

Over the cup we bring
your Word is spoken;

Make it your gift to us,
your healing blood.

Take all that daily toil
plants in our heart's poor soil,

Take all we start and spoil,
each hopeful dream,

The chances we have missed,
the graces we resist,

Lord, in they Eucharist,
take and redeem