

Ah! Bright Wings

GOD'S GRANDEUR
IN CREATION AND RE-CREATION



WRITTEN WORKS | *vol. 3*

INTERIOR COVER

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

-Gerard Manley Hopkins, "God's Grandeur"

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Haiku

BY RILEY KROSS

With its modest form haiku is on one level something I simply enjoy writing. On another level, haiku for me is a spiritual practice of attention. Traditional Japanese haiku focuses on the natural world, the different seasons, the quiet moments and small details of life. In a few short lines (and not always with a 5-7-5 syllable count!), haiku attempts to offer a shift of perception whereby the poet and, hopefully, the reader sees something anew even if they've seen it a hundred times before. Writing well outside of Christian influence, the earliest Japanese haiku poets often attributed this type of perception as spiritual insight. If "the world is charged with the grandeur of God," as Hopkins tells us, we should not be surprised. For me, the type of perception haiku offers is like a tiny resurrection—a syllabic brush with eternity. Written as short prayers, haiku slows me down to look for God's presence in the created world and the commonplace moments of my life and to offer praise and thanksgiving. The following haiku are images of spring—the Easter season.

watermelon rind
tossed in the dirt and grass
Holy Feast for ants

pollen swirling air
the world swept in fine green gold
bee buzz in my throat

I see my child
yet I long for my child—
short walk through green grass

flowers return!
I close my eyes
bells ring in my chest

So much must happen
inside a nose—
rosemary

morning sky with moon
above my kitchen sink—
full glass of water

Phlebotomy

BY ZACK CLEMMONS

The blood truck stopped somewhere
in Kansas where pale oblates
stepped up into the sterile trailer
and stepped out paler
while Nurses piled their plump offerings
in a woven-reed creel.

These aged acolytes, clad in white,
pallid in the portable fluorescence
perform their rite precisely -- direct the bodies
to the padded altars, ply them
with questions sincere as exorcists
and, after confirmation and cleansing, open their veins.

The blood snakes smooth, in unseen pumps:
the steel needle transfixes its sheath,
interrupts its return from the hand
to the four loud chambers of the heart,
sluices up through a false channel
then fills the powdered plastic pouch.

She has just pressed gauze to the small
lanced spot and lifts the bag to the pile when
Wait, says the donor, half a quart lighter,
Let me see that. Wordlessly she hands over
the sealed and supple sac, still warm,
And hears this:

Bless, o Lord, to the weak channels
sick for oxygen, starving for strength,
this, your blood as much as it was ever mine.
Bear life to the world.

He offers again the blessed ichor
to the Nurse, who wordlessly places it
back in the blood basket, which by a trick
of evening light shines like a golden bowl.

Somewhere
in Kansas the blood truck rolls on
and somewhere, in a new body,
that blood circulates still.

Vision

BY FR. DANIEL LOGAN

(for John Blackbourne, d. 1741)

*Nunc,
amice Lector*

Lift up your heads
and the hands
which hang down
feeble knees
would not allow
joints intact
on crooked paths

qui vivit

fond of gardens
Rabboni
sent her to report
doubtful story
so I outran Cephas
but that old fisherman
took his silver head
further in

morte perire nequit

I think again
of the linen
how He made his bed
after Sabbath and

the harrowing
reading Daniel
here in the Aegean
“I heard but
did not understand,”
he said, near the end
and I think of You
in linen resumed
above the waters
of Babylon
pierced hands raised
in grateful orans,
“Many shall run
to and fro,”
You said, aloft,
“But as for you,
man greatly loved,
go
with understanding incomplete
shut the words
within codex sealed
tight as a lion’s mouth
I have prepared peace
where thou shalt stand
and, in standing, see.”

*quisquis sis
Ex hinc disce,
qui es,
et quid eris*

Majestic Brother,
I recall the spiced aroma
in Your hallowed tomb
but I am alone
and can only return
to the warmth
of your holy breast
when I was a young man
and was content to be
the one You loved
and led

Son of man,
what will be
the outcome of
these things
I was submerged in oil
boiling
and cherish with all your saints
the anointing
that teaches us all things
and abideth within

But Lord
the eleven
dispatched by sword
and I, even I, only
am left with your word
“What about this man?”
Cephas asked,
“Let’s say
he remains?”

You said with eyes aglow
as You passed

Now immersed in
the Spirit
on your day
There is more than the wind
at my back
I rest once more
in Your bosom
I am shaken
by holy trumpet
“Write what you see,”
is how You begin

I brace for the vision
I reach for my pen

Resurgam

In The Silence

BY TERESA GEER

The clock on the mantle gently plays the beat of time;
While silence of night steadily coils its shadowed vine.
A mournful dirge whispers softly in my ears;
Bittersweet melody yearning for God to be near.
With awe and wonder I gaze at Empyrean night;
Endless stars cradled in crescent moon's light.
The Earth plays in symphony with celestial moon;
Oceans heave waves onto blonde sandy dunes.
On moonlit stage, fireflies dance with flickered glow,
Awaiting the beckoned call of early dawn's crow.
The screech owl's trill breaks night's stony silence,
Quietly I seek my Heavenly Father's guidance.
For darkened hour reveals what you've already known;
This trodden path I've journeyed paved so long ago.
Oh to hear the bluebird song in dreams for evermore;
Its voice seizes air letting joyous praises soar.
Delicate petals dance upon the dew kissed hills;
Faded moon bows; birth of living hope revealed.
All Earth gives praise to promise of a new dawn;
While clock's gentle beat plays time's unending song.

Learning to Pray

BY CHARLIE RITCH

For Seega

On Friday the parents grin big when their child
takes a turn in the annual talent show.

You grinned big enough for your prominent front teeth
and never once counted the rhythm in your head.
You even winked at the audience like a flirt.
You were the only one, I think, who saw them through the light.

On Saturday, you asked, "Is it wrong I like their attention?"
"The stage is for looking at," we replied.
"It is a world of belief. You must believe, and we will believe too."
We watched you comfort the conflicted heroine,
looking deep into her eyes as she faced
the loss of true love, and while we watched, we all wish
someone would look as deeply into ours.

On Sunday, we point our van to the exit lane
under the green sign and between concrete barriers.
You were old enough, but I was driving.
You raised the topic of the priest's homily on prayer
you said that prayer is remembering to see past the light
and to believe you are always being looked in the eyes.

De Profundis

BY STEPHEN WILLIAMS

For my part,
I am (mostly)
more suited to wakes
than to resurrections,
more inclined to eulogy
than to fairy tale, more pious
to prayerfully hear the hushed
doom from the oncologist's mouth
than I am to declare aloud the soaring
antiphons of unimaginable deliverance.
Merciful Lord, grant now that I (with my
whole heart) might catch hold of Thy
Paschal wing and be borne above to
unencumbered joy, leaving both
my presumptive sorrows and
sharply-hedged bets behind
to sink in the fiery loam of
the sad age that is
now so quickly
passing away.

Healing All Around

BY ALISON RITCH

If the world is charged with the grandeur of God
(And I believe it is, I believe it is)
And if glory from grace is inseparable
(And I believe it is, I believe it is)
Then the world is charged with kindness
There is healing all around, healing all around, healing all around
There is healing all around, healing all around, healing all around

If the Father so loved the world that He made
(And I believe He did, I believe He did)
That He freely gave up His Son for us all
(And I believe He did)
Will He not graciously give us all things?
There is blessing all around, blessing all around, blessing all around
There is blessing all around, blessing all around, blessing all around

When the eyes of my heart are blind
When I receive Your blessings as burden
Open my eyes, open my hands, open my heart
To the healing all around, healing all around, healing all around

Creation Sign

BY PEGGY VANEK-TITUS

A True Story

Create In Me
Create In Me
Create In Me

Some years ago during a particularly fragile time in my life,
attendant with all the fragile buzz words...

... doubt, panic, fear...

I was in need of protection.

External. And Internal.

There were mutterings and pleadings.

These were my prayers.

By way of mutterings and pleadings.

Word had it that others were receiving some relief for their own
ailments from a local psychologist; an author - charming, kind,
sensitive. Definitely all the better buzz words. I made a mental note.

Jesus came to seek and to save the lost. Did Jesus also come to seek
and to save the scattered, lost parts of ourselves?

I asked God for a sign. Is that allowed?

Something personal, specific.

Truth was I didn't trust God to hang onto me. I so wanted Him to
keep me.

I was desperate to have Him hold me.

Late Summer Afternoon

Driving

Hot

Late

Driving

And at once, I am surrounded.

By. Trees.

The trees are thick, green, hovering,
curved around and over my car, enveloping and providing
me with

The Craved Protection.

Branches mimicking arms, embracing me with
metaphorical hugs...

The Holding.

I do not doubt.

It is enough.

Metaphysical Signage.

Church.

An announcement is made that the next series of Sunday
morning classes will be taught by the aforementioned
charming psychologist.

Wait. What?

Christian. Psychologist. Twelve. Weeks. For free?

I wonder what the topics are going to be, I mean there's
got to be hundreds to choose from, right?

ME: What's he teaching?

OTHER: We're not entirely sure, but from what he's
shared, he will be centering his study on and around the
subject

of trees.

Beauty

BY PEGGY VANEK-TITUS

I love to people watch. One of my favorites is an ongoing observation of a woman named Beauty.

Today Beauty is on the outskirts of a park. She was supposed to meet up with her dear friend Creativity, but, well, Creativity...
... she got lost, backed up, rerouted, got lost again, accidentally bit her tongue, buried a dead bird she saw lying on the sidewalk, and then just threw her hands up and called it a day.

Not. Uncommon.

So. Beauty.

Beauty is solo, seated, and settled, eating an egg salad sandwich. She's slumped, a bit sore, having lost her balance earlier, tripped on a tree stump.

She's older now. And she's looking older.

Her faded cheeks... the color of a Benjamin Moore paint chip I'd admired, ever so long ago... pink or peach... kind of pinky peach... peachy pink...

...definitely hazy...

... the color I'd imagine to be on countless walls in Brooklyn...

... or Birmingham...

... in rooms stacked with antique furniture,

and when the sun,

the late late sun

hits at just the right moment...

you can see

all the dust.

A man hobbles towards Beauty.

Beauty smiles.

She knows this guy.

Now.

Beauty loves to mimic.

It's the language - the push-pull of the park.

Here he comes.

He crouches.

MAN: What's your sign?

BEAUTY: What's my sign? The cross.

MAN: Aw Beauty, come on now, what's your sign?

BEAUTY: What's my sign? What's your sign?

And Beauty laughs.

BEAUTY: What's my sign?

I say the cross.

I say the cross.

Prayer for Angel Rock Sanctuary

BY CINDY COMER

Written from the porch of Angel Rock on bended knees, asking for God's will to be done in all things. Soli Deo Gloria.

Angel Rock Sanctuary beyond the river is becoming a reality, always has been a place where God is always present, gifting His creation to those who can see, in their hearts, to those who can hear, and to those who receive His Holy Spirit. What a joy, my heart, after so many years of waiting to begin to see the fruits of the prayers held in every breath, and every thought. Thank you Jesus, for granting these gifts to your servant for your glory, and for the praises of our Father. Grant us pilgrimage to this place we call the Sanctuary at Angel Rock. May those who come see the Face of Jesus and experience the miracle. May the weary souls come and find strength and power in your word, oh God, and dwell in your presence. May this kind Place be a respite for those who seek your voice. May our family, of God, members of the body of Christ, His church, be united to serve and reach out in faith and stewardship to make service and witness of your love Sweet Jesus, and our holy Father. May the Holy Spirit touch every corner post, may every line that is drawn between them mark this creation as a dedication to the Holy Trinity alone. Holy Father, we ask that you guide our steps, our voices, our hands, our thoughts, our work, to glorify you and cause all creation who visit here to adore Thee, and praise Thee, and may it be hallowed ground forever and ever, amen.

Lead me, Lord, in the paths of righteousness for your namesake, beside still Waters, and the Green pastures, and in the Valley of the shadows, to bring glory to You, oh Lord, my strength and my redeemer. May every dawn, and every dusk be dedicated to you, oh Lord—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Let every bird song and every murmur of your creation and fragrance of the adorning

flowers and trees be incense to our prayers. If it is Thy will Lord, let us go and pray and bow and build. Let the paths in the valleys, in the rocks, in the hills, beside the river, be a constant reminder that you made these, oh Lord, that every step we would make would be in praise to You. Lord, those who come who do not have thoughts of you, Lord, let what they see, and what they hear and what you planned for them be embedded in their minds and hearts and souls. Holy father, may the minds of your servants have thoughts on the same things—your thoughts, O Lord. Let the sanctuary grow as you have willed, with paths of beauty and truth, revealing places to sit and rest, places to see the beauty of your Hands, kneel among the moss covered ancient rocks in praise of Thee, finding a chapel of your design carved in the trees and rocks of your cavernous temple.

Let our steps lead us closer and closer to the pinnacle of your plan and let those who come to Angel Rock Sanctuary receive your Holy Baptism of the Holy Spirit and believe in you and follow you as Faithful servants, loving You and your creation—all! Let the scent of each animal, each tree, each flower be as incense to you. And may your angels guard us and every living thing that abides in the Sanctuary. May we preserve and adorn your creation and invite all to come and behold our Lord, for He is good! My Shepherd, my Savior, my life!

All is well, with my soul!

Holy Saturday

BY WENDY WILLIAMS

It is Holy Saturday today. Perhaps this day resonates with my heart more than any other this Holy Week. Jesus is in the tomb. His grief-stricken disciples are preparing to observe the Sabbath, but they are probably feeling no more like observing it than I feel in this moment when it feels grief and sin and evil and death have won. So many times Jesus talked about the Sabbath! Did his disciples recall those things as they prepared—the healings, the eating of grain from the field as they walked? Whatever reassurances they felt then as Jesus responded to the Pharisees are now lost. The work of the last three years, the lives they gave up to follow Jesus—what was it all for? The one to whom they proclaimed, “To whom else could we go?” has been tortured and killed and buried—closed in a dark tomb. The darkness that came in the hour of Jesus’ death covers their hearts still. It covers my heart. I am lost.

Oh, Lord, have mercy! Do not abandon me to the realm of the dead or let your faithful one see decay. Where is your glory? Lord, I want to see it! Heal my blindness—these eyes of mine that tend to focus dark and broken—that I may see the path of life that you make known and the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Raise me up from my bent-overness, that I may look not at the dusty ground and the mire that I walk through but into your face filled with love and the faces around me that bear your image. Restore to wholeness my shriveled hand, that I may take from you the bread of life and living water and offer to others a cup of cold water in your name. Call me out of my dark tomb. Heal what has already started to decay and give me life. Take off my grave clothes and clothe me.

Where is your glory? In the majesty of the mountains and the

vastness of the night sky and in the quietness of the forest it is displayed, but I need to see it most in your work here in this Holy Week. You spoke creation into being and from nothing you have made wondrous things to behold. But in your work this Holy Week you have taken what is so broken and distorted, what is shameful, and you somehow use what has been meant for evil to bring salvation and redemption and restoration. What is more glorious than that? Hold me through this dark Saturday, this day full of sorrow and despair and seeming futility, and bring me safely to tomorrow to the resurrection that is coming.

I have felt sin’s crushing weight—my own sin and the sins of others—but you have taken it from me and laid it upon yourself. In the darkness you have made known the glorious light of mercy and forgiveness and love. Indeed, the darkness is not dark to you! You, Father, love my rebellious and self-righteous self so much that you sacrificed your Son—one with whom you had perfect fellowship. You laid my iniquity on him and could not look upon him. (We often talk of the suffering of Jesus, but you also know the suffering of your Son bearing the consequences of sin.) You, Jesus, loved me enough that you willingly laid down yourself. You took on flesh. You suffered rejection and agony beyond words for my sake. You bore my sin. Let me begin each day reflecting on the glorious beauty of the cross—that place that indeed reveals to me the depth of my sin but also your love that is far deeper still. And while the evil in this world would have consumed me, killing and stealing and destroying, this darkness gives way to the morning. Weeping indeed lasts through this night but joy will follow. You have overcome sin and death and the devil. Let your glorious victory Easter morning be my firm place from which I see all else, so that I can live in this broken world that has much to grieve and not be overcome by it. This is glory—the resurrected Christ, who sits in glory at the Father’s right hand and makes all things—even me—new. Give me eyes to see you.

BACK INTERIOR COVER

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*Cover Image: Albert Bierstadt, "Looking Down Yosemite Valley, California," oil on canvas, 1865. Unframed: 64.50 in × 96.50 in, Birmingham Museum of Art.
"God's Grandeur" from Gerard Manley Hopkins, (1844-1889) Public Domain.*

Program design by Amy Kross

BACK COVER

ORDO

An Eastertide Gallery & Event

Saturday, April 29th, 2023

“God’s Grandeur” + Introduction	<i>Zack Clemmons</i>
Invocation	<i>Fr. Michael Novotny</i>
Haiku	<i>Riley Kross</i>
In the Silence	<i>Teresa Geer</i>
Learning to Pray	<i>Charlie Ritch</i>
Monologues	<i>Peggy Vanek-Titus</i>
“Creation Sign” + “The Spell” (by Marie Howe) + “Beauty”	
Prayer for Angel Rock Sanctuary	<i>Cindy Comer</i>
“Healing All Around”	<i>Alison Ritch</i>
Phlebotomy	<i>Zack Clemmons</i>
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<i>De Profundis</i>	<i>Stephen Williams</i>
“Prelude”	<i>David Templin</i>
Dismissal	



Christ *the* King
ANGELICAN CHURCH