

A Celebration of Easter through Poetry

The Seventh Sunday of Easter (Ascension Sunday): June 2, 2019

Easter Morning in Wales

by David Whyte

Readers: Marisa Esposito, 8:00; Gerda Leveille 9:30

A garden inside me, unknown, secret,
neglected for years,
the layers of its soil deep and thick.
Trees in the corners with branching arms
and the tangled briars like broken nets.

Sunrise through the misted orchard,
morning sun turns silver on the pointed twigs.
I have woken from the sleep of ages and I am not sure
if I am really seeing or dreaming,
or simply astonished
walking toward sunrise
to have stumbled into the garden
where the stone was rolled from the tomb of longing.

The Servant Girl at Emmaus

(A Painting by Velazquez)

by Denise Levertov

Readers: Rebecca Henry, 8:00; Frances Chamberlain, 9:30

She listens, listens, holding her breath.
Surely that voice
is his – the one
who had looked at her, once,
across the crowd, as no one ever had looked?
Had seen her?
Had spoken as if to her?
Surely those hands were his,
taking the platter of bread from hers just now?
Hands he'd laid on the dying and made them well?
Surely that face -- ?
The man they'd crucified for sedition and blasphemy.

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The man whose body disappeared from its tomb.
The man it was rumored now some women
had seen this morning,
alive?
Those who had brought this stranger home to their table
don't recognize yet with whom they sit.
But she in the kitchen,
absently touching the wine jug she's to take in,
a young Black servant intently listening,
swings around and sees
the light around him
and is sure.

Now I Have Reached the Age

by Wendell Berry

Readers: Peter Chester, 8:00; David Baxter, 9:30

Now I have reached the age
of judgment giving sorrow
that many men have come to,
the verdict of regret,
remembering the world
once better than it is,
my old walkways beneath
the vanished trees, and friends
lost now in loss of trust.

And I recall myself
more innocent than I am,
gone past coming back
in the history of flaw,
except Christ dead and risen
in my own flesh shall judge,
condemn and then forgive.

The Trees

by Philip Larkin

Readers: Patti Cullen, 8:00; Brad Schide 9:30

The trees are coming into leaf
Like something almost being said;
The recent buds relax and spread,
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again
And we grow old? No, they die too.
Their yearly trick of looking new
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh
In fullgrown thickness every May.
Last year is dead, they seem to say,
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

Sonnet 9

by Madeleine L'Engle

Readers: Dee Anne Dodd, 8:00; Wendy Oestreicher, 9:30

Resurrection's not resuscitation.
What, in heaven's name, do we expect?
I'm satisfied with no one's explanation
Which seem to me more fancy than correct.
I know that hour beloved body's gone
And heaven's not pie in some ethereal sky.
It's you I want, familiar flesh and bone.
But my flesh, too, is mortal. I will die.
So what, then, do I hope from resurrection?
I hope beyond my wildest hope unseen
That there will still be some aware connection
"Twixt what we will be and 'twixt what we've been,
And you and I and all we love will meet
When Love has won, and we're at last complete.

Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front

by Wendell Berry

Read by Brian Sahlin

Love the quick profit, the annual raise,
vacation with pay. Want more
of everything ready-made. Be afraid
to know your neighbors and to die.
And you will have a window in your head.
Not even your future will be a mystery
any more. Your mind will be punched in a card
and shut away in a little drawer.
When they want you to buy something
they will call you. When they want you
to die for profit they will let you know.

So, friends, every day do something
that won't compute. Love the Lord.
Love the world. Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it.
Denounce the government and embrace
the flag. Hope to love in that free
republic for which it stands.
Give your approval to all you cannot
understand. Praise ignorance, for what man
has not encountered he has not destroyed.

Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.
Say your main crop is the forest
that you did not plant,
and that you will not live to harvest.
Say that the leaves are harvested
when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit. Prophecy such returns.

Put your faith in the two inches of humus
that will build under the trees
every thousand years.
Listen to carrion – put your ear

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close, and hear the faint chattering
of the songs that are to come.
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful
though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap
for power, please women more than men.
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy
a woman satisfied to bear a child?
Will this disturb the sleep
of a woman near to giving birth?

Go with your love to the fields.
Lie easy in the shade. Rest your head
in her lap. Swear allegiance
to what is highest your thoughts.
As soon as the generals and the politicians
can predict the motions of your mind,
lose it. Leave it as a sign
to mark the false trail, the way
you didn't go. Be like the fox
who makes more tracks than necessary,
some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.