

GRIST

Diocese of New Ulm Social Concerns Office December, 2005

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

The deepest thing in Christianity
is God's love for earth.
That God is rich in his heaven
is something known also by other religions.
That he wanted to be poor
together with his creatures,
that in his heaven, he wanted to
and did indeed suffer for his world,
and that through his Incarnation
he enabled himself to prove
the suffering of his love to his creatures:
this is the hitherto unheard-of thing.

Hans Urs von Balthasar

The biblical message speaks about the One
who from the very outset is the Neighbor,
Companion and Brother of every human being.

Karl Barth

Let me hear the whole music,
see clear, reach deep.

Philip Booth

Emptiness. But the mere thought of that
brings forth lights as if out of nowhere.
Herod reigns but the stronger he is,
the more sure, the more certain the wonder.
In the constancy of this relation
is the basic mechanics of Christmas.

Joseph Brodsky

What did I know
thinking myself
able to go
alone all the way.

Robert Creeley

God's Word comes as gentle rain
upon the tender grass.

Deuteronomy 32:2

To my small Hearth His fire came –
And all my House aglow
Did fan and rock, with sudden light

Emily Dickinson

Come my Light and illumine my darkness.
Come my Life and revive me from death.
Come my Physician and heal my wounds.
Come Flame of divine love, consume my sins,
kindling my heart with the flame of your love.
Come my King, enter my heart and reign there.
For you alone are my salvation.

St. Dimitri of Rostov

He brought light out of darkness,
not out of a lesser light,
and he can bring thee out of winter,
though thou hast no spring.

John Donne

Good for you, my God,
the child is caught in your net.
I open my eyes—
my earth is all one piece, engraved
with the stalks of flowers, green.
O my God, how embraced we have been!

Amir Gilboa

O Word, firmly uttered by God
to be the support of all things
and to bind them together,
hear my cry.

St. Gregory of Nazianzus

To man of all beasts
be thou not a stranger.

George Herbert

Our lives flow on in endless song,
above earth's lamentation
We hear the real, though far-off hymn,
that hails a new creation

Above the tumult and the strife,
we hear its music ringing

It sounds an echo in our souls,
how can we keep from singing

Hymn Fragment

My soul,
cease rhyming without rhyme or reason.
A mute humility is here in season.

Constantijn Huygens

Nothing happens?
Or has everything happened,
and are we standing now, quietly,
in the new life?

Juan Ramon Jimenez

The God of curved space, the dry
God, is not going to help us, but the son
whose blood spattered
the hem of his mother's robe.

Jane Kenyon,

I do not understand the mystery of grace –
only that it meets us where we are,
but does not leave us where it found us.

Anne Lamott

Quicken us with thy light!

St. Leo the Great

Thy presence is made known
by untraced interventions
like those legendary baskets filled
with bread and wine, discovered
at the door by someone at wit's end
returning home empty-handed
after a day of looking for work.

Denise Levertov

Human truth, both Christian and Jewish,
is verification. It consists in risking one's life
by living it in reply to the Revelation—
that is to say, in reply to the Love of God.

Emmanuel Levinas

If God incarnated himself in man,
died and rose from the dead,
all human endeavors deserve attention
only to the degree that they depend on this,
i.e., acquire meaning thanks to this event.
We should think of this by day and by night.
Every day, for years, ever stronger and deeper.
And most of all about how human history is holy,
and how every deed of ours becomes a part of it,
is written down for ever, and nothing is ever lost.
Because our kind was so much elevated,
priesthood should be our calling,
even if we do not wear liturgical garments.
We should publicly testify to the divine glory
with words, music, dance and every sign.

Czeslaw Milosz

if only you could see
how heaven pulls earth into its arms
and how infinitely the heart expands
to claim this world

Lisel Mueller

If words could hold this world
They would bend themselves to one
Transparency; if this
Depth of the year, arch of the hour
Came perfect to
The curving of one word
The sound would widen, quietly as from crystal,
Sphere into sphere: candor
Answering a child's candor
Beyond the child's question.

Henry Rago

O merciful Redeemer,
friend and brother,
may we know thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
and follow thee more nearly.

St. Richard of Chichester

Immigrant God, You follow me;
You go with me, You are a distant tree;
You are the beast that lows in my heart's gates;
You are the dog that follows at my heel;
You are the table on which I lean;
You are the plate from which I eat.

Karl Shapiro

And now the matchless deed's achieved,
Determined, dared, and done!

Christopher Smart

Ever-homeless Wanderer, I would,
if my heart were pure, invite you in,
to spend the night.

Malka Heifetz Tussman

Father of light,
you reveal to people of faith,
the truth of your Word made flesh.
Your light is strong; your love is near.
Draw us beyond the limits
which this world imposes, to the life
where your Spirit animates every heart.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Unknown