

Compline – Saturday, November 7, 2020

St. George's Anglican Church, Cadboro Bay / <https://www.stgeorgecadborobay.ca>

From: Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer by John Philip Newell

Opening

Blessed are you, O God, for you give me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me Psalm 16:7

Be still and aware of God's presence within and all around

Prayer

As it was in the stillness of morning, so may it be in the silence of night.

As it was in the hidden vitality of the womb, so may it be at my birth into eternity.

As it was in the beginning, O God, so in the end may your gift be born

so in the end may your gift of life be born.

Offerings of Thanksgiving

Scripture – Luke 12:32-34

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

For the darkness of the night

enveloping the earth / enclosing the day's labour

thanks be to you, O God.

For the quiet that surrounds me / and your promise of peace deep within me

for the stillness of sleep for my body / and the hope of healing for my soul

thanks be to you.

I bring not only my own weariness / but the tiredness of people who struggle this night.

I bring not only my own pain / but the sufferings of those who cry out.

Hear my soul's prayers for rest, O God, hear my heart's plea for healing.

Recall the events of the day and pray for the life of the world

Poem – “You Are Your Own State Department” by Naomi Shihab Nye

Each day I miss Japanese precision. Trying to arrange things

the way they would. I miss the call to prayer

at Sharjah, the large collective pause. Or

the shy strawberry vendor with rickety wooden cart,

single small lightbulb pointed at a mound of berries.

In one of China's great cities, before dawn.

Forever I miss my Arab father's way with mint leaves
floating in a cup of sugared tea—his delicate hands
arranging rinsed figs on a plate. What have we here?
said the wolf in the children's story
stumbling upon people doing kind, small things.
Is this small monster one of us?

When your country does not feel cozy, what do you do?

Teresa walks more now, to feel closer to her
ground. If destination within two miles, she must
hike or take the bus. Carries apples,
extra bottles of chilled water to give away.
Kim makes one positive move a day for someone else.
I'm reading letters the ancestors wrote after arriving
in the land of freedom, words in perfect English script. . .
describing gifts they gave one another for Christmas.
Even the listing seems oddly civilized,
these 1906 Germans. . . *hand-stitched embroideries for dresser
tops. Bow ties. Slippers, parlor croquet, gold ring, "pretty
inkwell."*

How they comforted themselves! A giant roast
made them feel more at home.

Posthumous medals of honor for
coming, continuing—could we do that?
And where would we go?

My father's hope for Palestine
stitching my bones, "no one wakes up and
dreams of fighting around the house"—

somebody soon the steady eyes of children in Gaza,
yearning for a little extra electricity
to cool their lemons and cantaloupes, will be known.
Yes?

We talked for two hours via Google Chat,
they did not complain once. Discussing stories,
books, families, a character who does
what you might do.

Meanwhile secret diplomats are what we must be,
as a girl in Qatar once assured me,
each day slipping its blank visa into our hands.

Closing Prayer

The stillness of God be mine this night

that I may sleep in peace.
The awareness of the angels be mine this night
that I may be alert to unseen mysteries.
The company of the saints be mine this night
that I may dream of the river of love.
The life of Christ be mine this night
that I may be truly alive to the morning
that I may be truly alive.

Sources:

Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer by J Philip Newell © 2000 by the Canterbury Press.

Poem – Naomi Shihab Nye, "You Are Your Own State Department" from *The Tiny Journalist*.
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