

Reflections for a loved one who has died

John Keates in Endymion wrote:

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever;
its loveliness increases;
it will never pass into nothingness.”

Adapted from a reflection by Macrina Wiederkehr (Gold in your memories)

A gift of Life and death

I want my death to be a gift, a birth.
When in that final breath
I breathed myself back into God,
I believe I was drawn back into you also.
Into the world of stars and earth,
plants and birds and animals,
into the roaring sea.
I have become an intimate part
of all the universe.
And so, as I am breathed back
into the heart of this world,
into the hopes and dreams
and joys of people,
into the yearnings
and the tears and sorrows of this world,
I hope my death is both a birth, and a gift.

I want my death to be a gift;
and the only way my death
can be a gift, is
if my living was a gift
to this frantic, confusing, lovely
messy moment in history.

After all, my life was visible and unhidden,
alive with a hope that had no boundaries,
ever aware of the immense goodness,
at my fingertips, within my reach,
receiving and sharing that goodness;
midwiving it into being,
tasting that incredible truth, that
every day is a good day for living
and that every day is a good day for dying.
I want you to see my life as a gift
so that my death may be gift, too.

Into the eye of God Macrina Wiederkehr OSB (A tree full of Angels) adapted.

Our prayer
for your journey into God.
Since you had been given a small storm
a little hurricane

named after you,
persistent enough
to get your attention,
violent enough to have
awakened you to new depths,
strong enough
to have shaken you to the roots,
majestic enough
to have reminded you of your origin:
made of the earth
yet steeped in eternity;
frail human dust
yet soaked with infinity.

You began your storm under the Eye of God
a watchful caring eye
that gazed in your direction
as you wrestled
with the life force within.

In the midst of these holy winds;
in the midst of your divine wrestling
may your storm journey
like all hurricanes
lead you into the eye,
into the Eye of God,
where all is calm and quiet.
Into a stillness beyond imagining!
Into the eye of God
after the storm
into the silent, beautiful light;
into the Eye of God.