



In 1930, after his conversion to Christianity, TS Elliot wrote several poems of Lent, I found that this one from Ash Wednesday - Part 6 really speak to me about this week.

*“This is the time of tension between dying and birth
The place of solitude where three dreams cross
Between blue rocks
But when the voices shaken from the yew-tree drift away
Let the other yew be shaken and reply.*

*Blessèd sister, holy mother, spirit of the fountain, spirit of the garden,
Suffer us not to mock ourselves with falsehood
Teach us to care and not to care
Teach us to sit still
Even among these rocks,
Our peace in His will
And even among these rocks
Sister, mother
And spirit of the river, spirit of the sea,
Suffer me not to be separated*

And let my cry come unto Thee.”

As we begin our Lenten season, Elliot reminds us of the great human tension enacted in this liturgical season between the suffering of this life and the redemption of the next.

With Ash Wednesday and following quickly the first Friday in Lent we make our resolutions and remind ourselves how we too can share in the Lord's suffering in this new liturgical season. I welcome the new season with great aspiration to persevere over the next 6 weeks, to give something of myself, to turn away from comfort and seek greater ways to show the Lord that I love Him.

Undoubtedly, I will fail in many ways. TS Elliot reminds us that even though our human nature longs for the perfection of holiness we will often fall short in this life.

Our consolation is our theme for this week, “Nothing in all of creation can ever separate us from the love of God.” (Romans 8:39). The sacrifice of Jesus and Mary in these weeks reminds us so deeply of this truth.

So, can we sit, in stillness and quiet our hearts to listen to His voice? Here the Lord will make know to us the things of this world that prevent us from receiving His love more fully. There we find true joy and hope in His unconditional pursuit of us, leading us more deeply into His mystery.

~ Anne Maree Quinn

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