

Fragments of an Easter Gospel

Fish swim deep
Eight hundred eighty fathoms deep
So Melville thought.

Five times those fathoms down
We know -- and more

We ply the waves, the depths,
the calm, the squall
gathering strength, growing gills
learning ways to water-breathe
(as in another womb)
the tastes of sea,
the use of fins and tail for exploration—
the shimmer of nameless beauty

Over and over again
Hooked by Christ, we surface
Ah! but to behold new mysteries:
Fish fries by Lake Tiberius
153 large fish in a great net
Fish on the right but not on the left
Grilled fish taken, eaten by Jesus
--by the apostles
--the same fish consumed by all

When next
you taste grilled fish—
remember this:
Jesus ate fish once
And said "Come and eat"
Even now
He eats
with you –
with us –
with all the world

Robin Stratton ocd
26 April 2009

Elizabeth speaks

All spring I watched my belly rising
Week by week I pondered words I'd said:
"blessed is she who has believed."
Mary proclaimed magnificat and
Zachary kept silent watch
And anchored us in hope
--a hope I'd barely felt till something
(still I know not what)
overshadowed him in prayer.

As solstice tipped the earth toward winter
My water broke like living springs and when the child came forth at dawn
"a son" she said and laid him on my breast.

His warmth evoked another day
some forty years ago when we were young
and gave ourselves into each others' care
promising a lifetime or maybe two
recklessly exchanging signs
finding our voice
making our way in and out of love
discovering what was and wasn't true.

I rise from revery
Remembering the dearness of his voice
Revealed more fully in the silences
Of nine long months
I look into his eyes and wonder
"Does he know my thoughts?"
He rises like dawn
And shines on me
And we are one like bread and wine consumed.

(for Frannie and Jim's 40th anniversary)

Robin Stratton OCD

Epiphany
(for Owen)

Crowned
with Cornsilk
Clutching
a scepter
of daisies
bestowing
blessings
with kisses
and healing
with touch
Small hands
outstretched
to the woman
in a hospital bed