

EASTER 2020



Easter Reader

An Invitation

Consider gathering some people you care about, at home, online, or both.

Consider sharing these readings with them, and inviting them to share a meal.

Consider going around the virtual or physical room, sharing readings, stories, or reflections that feel meaningful to each person.

Consider this a *levain*, a starter: readings, questions, and an invitation to spark your own creativity.



Easter


Ordinarily, this is the time of year for opening windows.

This year, spring has come as usual, but many windows remain closed against contagion. Others, though, have been opened — to sing across the street, to salute those working to keep us healthy, to connect with people we care about beyond the walls of our homes and the borders we cannot, for the moment, physically cross.

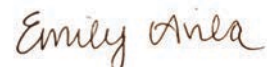
This year, too, we are all aware of how little a window any of us may actually have, and how many windows have suddenly shut.

This is also a time of year when many people celebrate renewal and rebirth, and the resiliency of life after a hard winter. That's a great story in any idiom, and we hope these texts will help you and yours share some shards of life and laughter.

Be well, and we look forward to a time when we can all open our windows and doors and hearts to a world transformed.



Colin Steele
Ludlow, Vermont



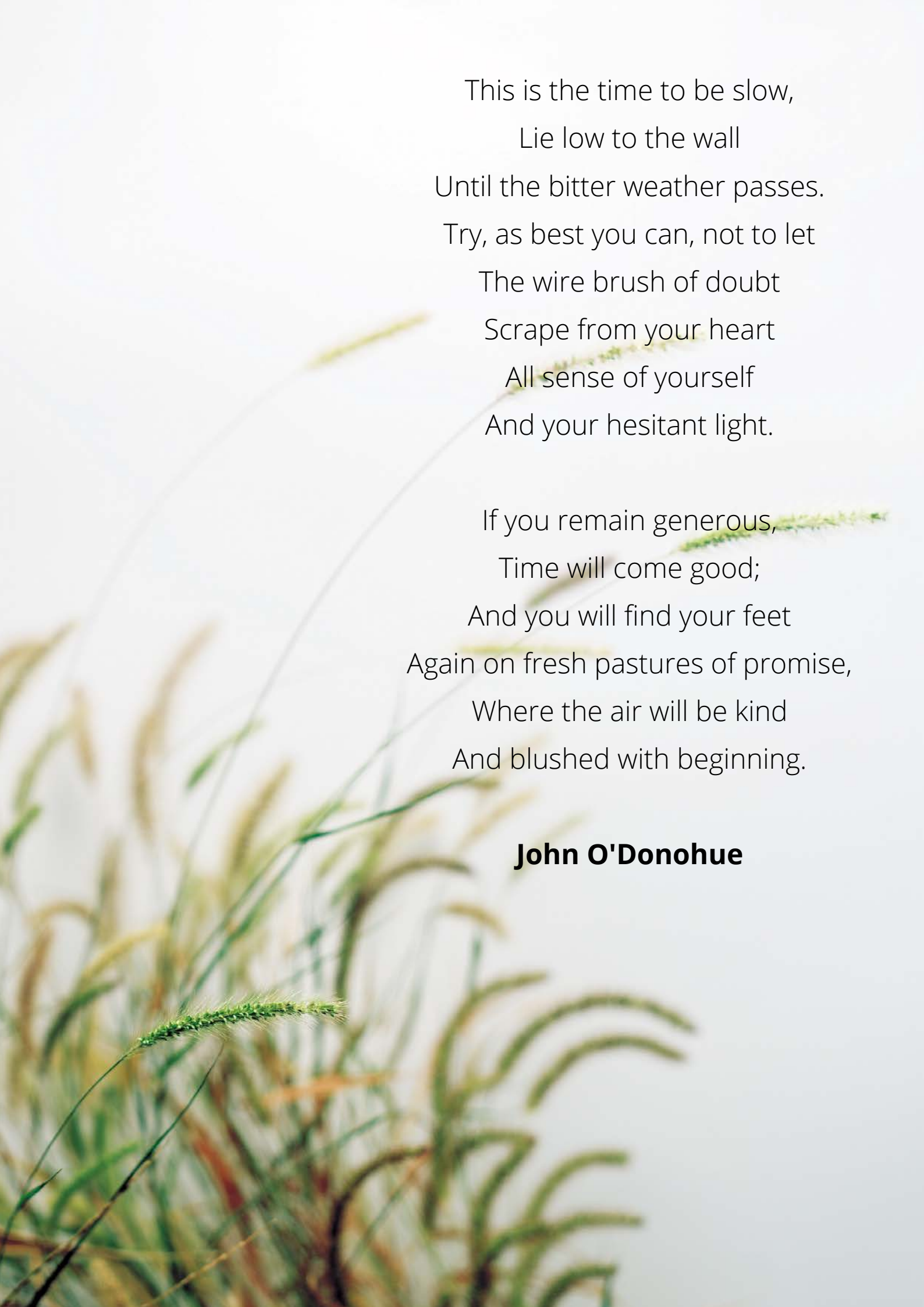
Emily Ávila
Lisbon, Portugal

This Easter Reader was produced by Emily Ávila and Colin Steele after a design by Seth Godin, Alex Peck, et al. Please share widely and interpolate liberally, but don't change it or charge for it.



What we call the beginning
is often the end
And to make an end
is to make a beginning.
The end
is where we start from.

T.S. Eliot



This is the time to be slow,
Lie low to the wall
Until the bitter weather passes.
Try, as best you can, not to let
The wire brush of doubt
Scrape from your heart
All sense of yourself
And your hesitant light.

If you remain generous,
Time will come good;
And you will find your feet
Again on fresh pastures of promise,
Where the air will be kind
And blushed with beginning.

John O'Donohue

We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For

You have been telling people that this is the
Eleventh Hour, now you must go back and tell
the people that
this is the Hour.

And there are things to be considered...

Where are you living?

What are you doing?

What are your relationships?

Are you in right relation?

Where is your water?

Know your garden.

It is time to speak your truth.

Create your community.

Be good to each other.

And do not look outside yourself for your leader.

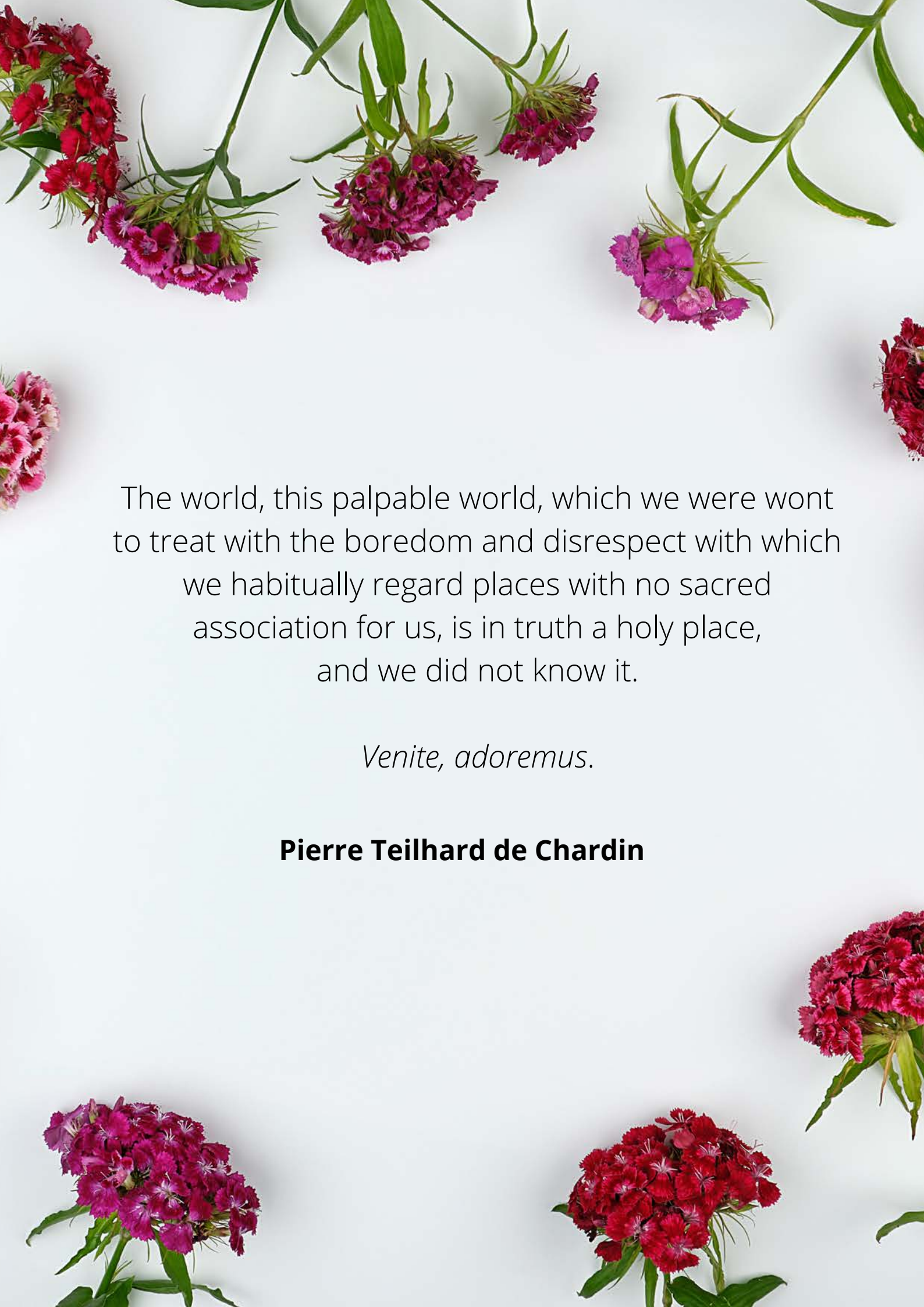
Then he clasped his hands together, smiled, and said, "This could be a good time! There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are being torn apart and will suffer greatly. Know the river has its destination. The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water.

And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate. At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt. The time of the lone wolf is over.

Gather yourselves! Banish the word "struggle" from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration. We are the ones we've been waiting for.

Hopi Elders' Prophecy, June 8, 2000



The image features several carnations in shades of pink and red, scattered around the text. Some are in the top left, some in the top right, and some in the bottom left and bottom right. The flowers have green stems and leaves. The text is centered in the middle of the page.

The world, this palpable world, which we were wont
to treat with the boredom and disrespect with which
we habitually regard places with no sacred
association for us, is in truth a holy place,
and we did not know it.

Venite, adoremus.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Life is not meant to be forever measured and meted
as winter compels us to do. Most of the time it can
and should be spent in a riot of generosity as we, like
spring itself, throw caution to the winds.

Parker Palmer



May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly
where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities
that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received.

And pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul
the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.

St. Teresa of Ávila



Whatever may be the tensions and the stresses of a particular day, there is always lurking close at hand the trailing beauty of forgotten joy or unremembered peace.



Howard Thurman

Be Still in Haste

How quietly I
begin again


from this moment
looking at the
clock, I start over

so much time has
passed, and is equaled
by whatever
split-second is present

from this
moment this moment
is the first

Wendell Berry



A bouquet of dark purple tulips with green stems and leaves. The tulips are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others still in bud. The stems are long and green, with some leaves visible at the bottom.

There is a saying in Tibetan,
"Tragedy should be utilized as a
source of strength." No matter
what sort of difficulties, how
painful experience is, if we lose
our hope, that's our real disaster.

His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama



We think that the point is to pass the test or overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again. It's just like that. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy.

Pema Chödrön

Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement ...
[G]et up in the morning and look at the world in a way
that takes nothing for granted. Everything is
phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life
casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed.



Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel

Song of the Builders

On a summer morning
I sat down
on a hillside
to think about God —

a worthy pastime.
Near me, I saw
a single cricket;
it was moving the grains of the hillside

this way and that way.
How great was its energy,
how humble its effort.
Let us hope

it will always be like this,
each of us going on
in our inexplicable ways
building the universe.



Mary Oliver

[G]race can be the experience of a second wind,
when even though what you want is clarity and
resolution, what you get is stamina and poignancy
and the strength to hang on.

Anne Lamott



We're here for a little window. And to use that time
to catch and share shards of light and laughter and
grace seems to me the great story.

Brian Doyle



My mission in life is not merely to survive,
but to thrive; and to do so with
some passion, some compassion,
some humor, and some style.

Maya Angelou



All will be well and all will
be well and all manner of
things shall be well.

Julian of Norwich



Could There be a Badger Jesus?

You want to hear a resurrection story? I'll tell you
A resurrection story. I saw a squirrel get squished
In the street. This was on Ash Street, near where a
Family named Penance lives. Things like this rivet
Me. Religions don't live in churches. Religions are
Not about religion, in the end; they're vocabularies.
This squirrel got hammered. I mean, a car ran right
Over it, and the car sped down the hill, and I recall
Thinking that some dog would soon be delighted to
Be rolling ecstatically in squirrel oil, but then, even
As I watched, the animal resumed its original shape
And staggered off into the laurel thicket, inarguably
Alive and mobile, if somewhat rattled and unkempt.
Jesus and Lazarus must have known that feeling, of
Being sore in every joint, and utterly totally fixated
On a shower and coffee and a sandwich. Or walnuts,
Depending, I suppose, on species. Our current form
Is a nebulous idea, is what I am trying to say. Could
It be that resurrections are normal and the one we're
Always going on about in the Christian mythologies
Is only One a long time ago, when there are millions
Per day? Could there be an insect Jesus and a badger
Jesus and a salmon Jesus? Could there be impossible
Zillions of Jesuses? Isn't that really the whole point?



Brian Doyle

And suddenly you know:
It's time to start
something new and
trust the magic of beginnings.

Meister Eckhart



Some Additional Questions to Consider

What is dying for you right now?

What is waiting to be (re)born in you?

What transformation are you being invited into?

Where are you finding joy and grace?

What made you laugh the hardest in the past month?

Who or what is pulling you through?

Who or what are you pulling through?



Thanks

I was reminded of the Four Immutable Laws of the Spirit: Whoever is present are the right people. Whenever it begins is the right time. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened. And when it's over, it's over.

— Anne Lamott

Thanks to Seth Godin and the others who assembled the Thanksgiving Reader, from whom we borrowed this idea.

Thanks to Krista Tippett and the amazing team at *On Being*, who brought us together in the first place.

Thanks to all the authors and artists, quoted here and not, whose work has brought us grace or made us grin.

Thanks to everyone working to keep life going during this time. The ability to create and share a project like this, a meal, or a video call is no small miracle.

And thanks to you for sharing this experience with us.

I walked out so full of hope I'm sure I spilled some by the door.

— Brian Doyle