

Vespers Reflection
Rev. Timothy Ensworth
April 9, 2025

Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my cry!

*Let your ears be attentive to my plea,
my plea for mercy.*

I wait for the Lord with all my soul.

I hope for the fulfillment of God's word.

*For in the Lord is love unfailing
and great is the Lord's power to set us free!*

(from Psalm 130)

an exquisite longing

into the familiar flow of an ordinary day
there breaks a brief instant
of exquisite longing

not for another world, but for this world
for what it could be, what it should be
what it can be — a longing

for synchronicity
for synchronous affinity, for multilateral humility
for unrelenting comity

for eyes attentive
to subtle tonalities of stone and leaf
and human skin

for ears attuned
to the glorious cacophonies of wind and wave, of bird song
and human speech

for hands offered
palms open, intimating the offer
of a human heart

for mouths enouncing words
not to cajole or outdo or intimidate, revile or ridicule or fulminate
but to reveal, disclose, elucidate, to heal, delight, appreciate

an unquenchable thirst for life itself and
for the glory of sharing it, one with an other
one with every other

into the familiar flow of an ordinary day
there breaks the breathtaking luminescence
of an exquisite longing

Longing and lament are sisters, and both are children of hope. Lament is a cry of anguish, a cry of frustration, a cry even of anger. Lament is not an act of resignation, but an act of protest, a defiant declaration that the world is not as it should be, that life in this world is not as it should be.

But that protest already holds within it the seeds of hope, because in calling out the evils of the world as it is, lament presumes a clear picture, a clear enough picture, of the world as it should be, and lament believes that such a world is not only possible, but necessary.

Furthermore, lament is not addressed to the air: "Woe is me!" Lament is addressed to God: "Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my cry!" Lament demands that God listen. Lament demands that God pay attention. Lament demands that God intervene on behalf of suffering people and a broken world.

And lament would not ask, would not insist, would not cry out so boldly and fervently, if it did not believe that God can listen, that God can pay heed, that God can save.

Like lament, longing is painfully aware of the chasm between the world as it is and the world as it should be. While lament fearlessly turns its face toward the injustice of the world as it is, longing is bent toward the world as it should be, as it could be, and, seeing with the eyes of faith, as it will be.

Longing aches for that world, is ever restless until it comes. Longing has tasted enough of glory to be satisfied with nothing less.

Longing's reach is far and wide, embracing family members and neighbors and strangers on the far side of the earth. Longing yearns for beauty, for wholeness, for harmony among nations, between peoples, between people and the planet that is our home, for creation in its entirety.

Longing is global, universal, all-encompassing, but, at the same time, longing is personal: the burning desire to be made whole ourselves, to be made new, to be shaped

and molded, re-shaped and re-molded, in the hands of the One who shaped and molded all of creation, in the hands of the potter.

the potter

I am of the ground
lumpy and misshapen
not yet beautiful
but in the eye of your imagining.