

Nature and Self-Sacrifice

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self-devotion on the part of the wheat there is hope for the world.

When Jesus Christ knelt in Gethsamene did He who had spoken the secret of the life of the wheat feel there in the still life of the garden where self-sacrifice was written on every listening leaf the sympathy of their life with the passion of His soul? And while the disciples slept, and by their dullness forbade Him the help of human sympathy, did He gain any comfort from the silent life around Him? Sidney Lanier with true poetic insight in his Ballad of the Trees has expressed this sympathy:

Into the woods my Master went, clean
 forspent, forspent,
Forspent with grief and shame,
Into the woods my Master came, forspent
 with grief and shame.
But the Olive trees were not blind to Him,
The little grey leaves were kind to Him,
The thorn tree had a mind to Him,
As into the woods He came.

Out of the woods my Master went, and He
 was well content,
Content with grief and shame,
Out of the woods my Master went, content
 with grief and shame.
When death and shame would woo Him last,
From under the trees they drew Him last,
'Twas on a tree they slew Him last,
When out of the woods He came.

We have joined to-day in that beautiful service of the Church which we call the Sacrament. (Holding up a piece of bread from the Sacramental plate.) This bread once was