

A Hearth in the Vast Loneliness

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To be detached from our possessions is to be free from our possessions—to possess them, if necessary, yet not to be possessed by them. In many ways it is easy enough to be detached from our material possessions. In meditation, we have to learn a more demanding detachment. We must learn a detachment not only from our thoughts, feelings, desires, but even from our self-consciousness. This not only seems to our modern minds to be an impossibility, but it even seems to be a scandal that anybody should seriously propose this. But this is exactly the truth. [. . .] To meditate is to lose yourself, to become absorbed in God, to be utterly lost in the generous immensity that we call God.

After meditation: “Sanctus” from *Mass for the Day of St. Thomas Didymus* by Denise Levertov in COLLECTED POEMS (New York: New Directions, 2013), pp. 674-75.

Sanctus

Powers and principalities—all the gods,
angels and demigods, eloquent animals, oracles,
storms of blessing and wrath—

all that Imagination
has wrought, has rendered,
striving, in throes of epiphany—

naming, forming—to give
to the Vast Loneliness
a hearth, a locus—

send forth their song toward
the harboring silence, uttering
the ecstasy of their names, the multiform
name of the Other, the known
Unknown, unknowable:

sanctus, hosana, sanctus.

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