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Rabindranath Tagore— Three Poems from *Gitanjali*

Rabindranath Tagore (1861 – 1941), was a polymath, poet, musician, and artist from the Indian sub-continent. Tagore's poetic songs were viewed as spiritual and mercurial; however, they remain largely unknown outside Bengal. He was a friend of W.B. Yeats, who assisted with the English translations of some of his early work, although they later became distanced. He holds the unique distinction of having composed the national anthems to two countries, India and Bangladesh.

Gitanjali or "Song offering", (1912) is the collection of "profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse" for which he is, perhaps, best remembered. In 1913 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, largely for this collection, the first non-European to be so honoured.

Yeats was very impressed by the collection and wrote the introduction to the first English edition. He wrote: 'I have carried the manuscript of these translations about with me for days, reading it in railway stations, or on the top of omnibuses and in restaurants, and I have often had to close it lest some stranger would see how much it moved me.' He describes the *Gitanjali* as [the] 'work of a supreme culture', noting that the poems 'appear as much the growth of the common soil as the grass and rushes,' coming as they do from 'a tradition where poetry and religion are the same thing.' The two poems that follow very nice examples. A deeply spiritual man, Tagore is also remembered for almost 2000 popular Bengali songs.

***Gitanjali* #9**

O fool, to try to carry yourself on your own shoulders! O beggar to come to beg at your own door!

Leave all your burdens on his hands who can bear all, and never look behind in regret.

The desire at once puts out the light from the lamp it touches with its breath. It is unholy—do not take your gifts from its unclean hands. Accept only what is offered by sacred love.

***Gitanjali* #10**

Here is your footstool and there rest your feet where live the poorest, and lowliest, and lost.

Where I try to bow to you, my obeisance cannot reach down to the depth where your feet rest among the poorest, the lowliest and lost.

Pride can never approach to where you walk in the clothes of the humble among the poorest, the lowliest and lost

My heart can never find its way to where you keep company with the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest and lost.

***Gitanjali* #11**

Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads. Whom do you worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors all shut? Open your eyes and see your God is not before you!

He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones.

He is with them in sun and in shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off your holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil!

Deliverance? Where is this deliverance to be found? Our master himself has joyfully taken upon him the bonds of creation; he is bound with us all for ever.

Come out of your meditations and leave aside your flowers and incense. What harm if your clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in the sweat of your brow.

GITANJALI

(SONG OFFERINGS)

BY

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

A COLLECTION OF PROSE TRANSLATIONS
MADE BY THE AUTHOR FROM
THE ORIGINAL BENGALI

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
W. B. YEATS

MACMILLAN AND CO. LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON
1913

Contacts: Fr Fachtina McCarthy, Administrator, Fr Patrick Claffey C.C. Fr Josip Levaković C.C. Tel 01-6600075

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Reflections of Joan Chittister

Religious Life

"Religious life is not going to go away. It will take a different form. Why am I so sure it's not going to go away? Because there are people whose personalities and gifts, and interests and soul, are simply immersed in living this kind of a spiritual lifestyle. That only makes sense. If you can live an artistic lifestyle, why can't somebody live a spiritual lifestyle? We've always, in every single great tradition, had a percentage of the population that stands in the middle of us being the beacon that calls us to realize that the spiritual life is an essential part of every life."


Being a Contemplative Today

"To be contemplative we must become converted to the consciousness that makes us one with the universe, in tune with the cosmic voice of God. We must become aware of the sacred in every element of life. We must bring beauty to birth in a poor and plastic world. We must restore the human community. We must grow in concert with the God who is within. We must be healers in a harsh society."

A Spirituality of Work

"A spirituality of work is based on a heightened sense of sacramentality, of the idea that everything that is, is holy and that our hands consecrate it to the service of God. When we grow radishes in a small container in a city apartment, we participate in creation. We sustain the globe. When we sweep the street in front of a house in the dirtiest city in the country, we bring new order to the universe. We tidy the Garden of Eden. We make God's world new again. When we repair what has been broken or paint what is old or give away what we have earned that is above and beyond our own sustenance, we stoop down and scoop up the earth and breathe into it new life again, as God did one morning in time only to watch it unfold and unfold and unfold through the ages. When we wrap garbage and recycle cans, when we clean a room and put coasters under glasses, when we care for everything we touch and touch it reverently, we become the creators of a new universe. . . . Work enables us to put our personal stamp of approval, our own watermark, the autograph of our souls on the development of the world. In fact, to do less is to do nothing at all.

Sister Joan D. Chittister, O.S.B. (b.1936) is an American Benedictine nun, theologian, author, and speaker. She has served as Benedictine prioress and Benedictine federation president, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and co-chair of the Global Peace Initiative of Women.



GROW Community Mental Health Movement
meets every **Thursday** at **6.30pm** in the **Carmelite (Whitefriar) Community Centre**, 56 Aungier Street, Dublin 2. Why not come along and learn more about positive mental health, well being, recovery and how GROW may help you achieve this. Free of charge. All welcome Contact John 086 8033 126 . GROW Promoting Positive Mental

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In Memoriam

6pm: Peter Mc Cormack (Jnr) (2nd Anniversary)

Masses on 13th/14th July 2019
6pm: Patsy and Michael Gaffney (Months Mind for Patsy Gaffney)
11am: Margie Bowe (Months Mind)

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm
Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm
Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only
-Rosary daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

Last Week's Collections
1st Collection: €1,230
2nd Collection: €1,135 (Peter's Pence)
Weekday collections: €610.

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