

IN THE QUIET OF THE GARDEN

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The First Sunday in Lent sets before the Church the wilderness and the testing of Christ. Where Adam turned from trust, Christ remains steadfast. Where fear once hid in the garden's shadows, faith stands firm beneath the desert sky.

Lent begins in honesty — naming wandering, confessing broken choosing, and longing for mercy. With all creation yearning for renewal, voices rise in hope of grace that leads from ash to glory.

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ITHE QUIET OF THE GARDEN,
 where the Holy Breath first stirred,
 earth was given into keeping,
 every creature known and heard.
 Yet the whisper of the serpent
 turned our trust to shame and fear;
 still the ash-grey dawn remembers
 how we hid when God drew near.

By the Shannon's reed-filled margins,
 where the heron stands alone,
 we confess our broken choosing,
 all the ways we stray and groan.
 Like the deer beside the woodland,
 longing for the cooling stream,
 so our souls cry out for mercy,
 held within God's healing dream.

Christ, who walked the stony desert,
 faced the tempter's subtle art;
 bread and power, pride and promise
 could not claim his faithful heart.
 In the wildness of our testing,
 when the night is cold and long,
 be our shelter and our courage,
 be our truth, our living song.

As the springtime hawthorn blossoms
white against the Lenten sky,
grace breaks open in our darkness,
hope takes root and will not die.
Through the Second Adam's giving
comes the life the first had lost;
lead us back to Eden's calling—
love restored through cross and cost.

At the Table of the Saviour,
bread and wine in silence blessed,
we are joined with saints and angels,
pilgrims seeking holy rest.
By the otter in the river,
by the curlew's evening cry,
Christ unites all earth and heaven—
love poured out, no soul denied.