



**Image of the day -  
Installation of Archdeacon and Dean in Armagh**

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Archdeacon Elizabeth Cairns and Dean Shane Forster were finally installed to their respective positions in St Patrick's Cathedral Armagh, on Sunday afternoon.

## Reports

### Protestants 'frustrated' at Covid ban on singing in church

**It is a truism rarely acknowledged that whereas Catholics don't sing, Protestants can hardly be stopped when it comes to worship.**

At least, that was until public health restrictions put a halt to congregational hymns.

While Protestants in Northern Ireland can sing during worship – as long as masks are used and people adopt “reduced level of loudness” – it remains prohibited in the Republic.

Updated HSE guidance on religious services this week says: “Members of the congregation should avoid singing, shouting, chanting and raising of voices, as this may increase the risk of airborne transmission of the virus; if possible, encourage the use of microphones or similar equipment to minimise voice volume.” Patsy McGarry in The Irish Times. More at -

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/protestants-frustrated-at-covid-ban-on-singing-in-church-1.4669730> ]

## **Enniskillen bagpipers to help Queen celebrate Platinum Jubilee next year**

**The Royal Pageantmaster spearheading the Queen's Platinum Jubilee beacon celebrations has said one hundred Enniskillen bagpipers are set to take part in one of the biggest local events to mark the occasion next June.**

Bruno Peek, who organised beacon events for the Queen's 90th birthday, as well as her diamond and golden jubilees, said the organisation of the historic occasion has only just begun in Northern Ireland but a significant number of people in Fermanagh have expressed their interest.

Pipers taking part are set to play a special tune called Diu Regnare, composed as a tribute to The Queen for the occasion as the sun sets at 9.09pm on June 2, shortly before two beacons are lit at Enniskillen Castle and St Macartin's Cathedral at 9.15pm.

There is a long and unbroken tradition nationally of celebrating royal events with the lighting of beacons and 70 are due to be lit in Northern Ireland to celebrate as many years of the Queen's reign. 70 beacons will also be lit across each county in Great Britain. "We want pipers to play the tune at any location of their choice on that date. We want to encourage people to take part with the hope of lighting 70 beacons, one for each year of the Queen's reign," said Mr Peek.

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“Enniskillen has always been brilliant at supporting these events. In Northern Ireland we have a beacon at Knockagh Monument in Co Antrim, Co Down will have Hillsborough Castle, we also have one at Caledon Castle in Co Tyrone. We have one going up on Slieve Donard which is being taken up to the top of Slieve Donard by the ex-servicemen’s charity Walking with the Wounded,” he said.

[[] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/enniskillen-bagpipers-to-help-queen-celebrate-platinum-jubilee-next-year-40835254.html> ]

## **Women in leadership roles in Catholic diocese is a ‘priority’ – Archbishop**

**The pastoral plan for the diocese of Cashel & Emly also calls for greater inclusivity of members of the LGBT+ community**

The inclusion of women in leadership roles will be a priority for the Catholic diocese of Cashel & Emly as it builds a more inclusive church for the future, according to its new diocesan pastoral plan.

This Sunday, Archbishop Kieran O’Reilly will launch the pastoral plan, which was developed after a four-year listening process and a consultation with 2,500 people.

The plan, which is titled ‘Seeds of Hope’, is being seen as a blueprint for transitioning the diocese to a new era of inclusivity.



Archdeacon Elizabeth Cairns and Dean Shane Forster with the Archbishop of Armagh and members of the Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral Armagh, on Sunday afternoon.

Speaking ahead of the official unveiling of the pastoral plan, Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly described it as “a pathway into the future that the church together, laity and priests, will be on over the coming years”.

He said the launching of the Seeds of Hope coincides with the beginning of the journey towards a National Synod of the Church in Ireland and placed the archdiocese of Cashel & Emyl in “an excellent position to participate fully in the Synodal process.”

One of the key issues facing the church in the years ahead is leadership. Acknowledging the work done by many priests in the past, the pastoral plan states, “the church is changing now, and the priest-led church of the past will need to

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embrace a partnership approach with people into the future”. This would require a “deeper trust” in lay people.

The plan recommends training for both priests and lay people so that they move towards this new model of co-responsibility. This will mean greater involvement in decision-making by lay people.

[[] <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/women-in-leadership-roles-in-catholic-diocese-is-a-priority-archbishop-40834061.html> ]

## **Cautious Church of England welcome for Johnson’s social-care plan**

**THE Government’s plan to fund improved health and social care has been broadly welcomed within the Church of England.**

Anti-poverty campaigners have said, however, that it will “add insult to injury” to younger, poorer families, who will suffer disproportionately from the increase, Rebecca Paveley reports in The Church Times.

A 1.25-per-cent increase in National Insurance contributions across the UK was announced by the Prime Minister on Tuesday, to be levied on employers and employees from April 2022. It will initially be used to fund reductions in NHS waiting lists, Boris Johnson argued.

Health and social-care systems are devolved to the four separate political administrations of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Mr Johnson said that, while the new

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funding package was “to support those systems across the whole of the UK, the Government’s plan for health and adult social care identifies specific measures for England only.”

Over time, Mr Johnson said, a greater proportion of the £12 billion a year raised will go towards social care. This would allow a new cap on total care costs to be introduced. The plan is that, from 2023, no individual would pay more than £86,000 towards their care. From that year, the increase will appear on payslips as a health-and-social-care levy.

Tax on share dividends will also increase by 1.25 per cent; and, from 2023, pensioners still in work will also have to pay the rise, although there are just one million of those in England out of 12 million people of pension age.

The Bishop of Manchester, Dr David Walker, said: “Today’s announcement is very welcome, not least after 18 months in which social-care staff and residents have borne the brunt of the pandemic. I pray that this will be the first step towards a social-care system that will allow our most frail sisters and brothers to live in dignity and with an acceptable quality of life.

“Arguments may well continue about how such work should be paid for; for my own part, I am happy to see my taxes spent on the weakest in our society in this way.”

The Church of England’s medical-ethics adviser, the Revd Dr Brendan McCarthy, welcomed the cap on care costs that an individual will pay, and the increased funding for a problem which, he said, had been long in the making.

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But he raised a concern that the funding for social care would not be in place for three years, as the initial money raised will go towards the NHS backlog. “We are acutely aware that systemic problems within our social-care system, made even more manifest by the pandemic, need to be addressed with real urgency,” he said.

“Over the past decade, we have seen eligibility criteria for individuals receiving care rise, effectively leaving very many people with care needs without necessary assistance. The social-care workforce is understaffed, underpaid, and under-appreciated. Care homes are operating under enormous pressure, and many residents pay excessive amounts for their care — in effect, subsidising the system.

“Inadequate social-care provision contributes to extra pressures on the NHS; this will undermine the additional funding for the NHS proposed by the Prime Minister.”

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York set up a commission earlier this year to reimagine care in the UK (News, 20 April). Dr McCarthy said: “We encourage the Government to act with similar scope and energy.”

In an interview on Radio 4’s Today programme on Thursday, Archbishop Welby described the Government’s social-care plans as “a beginning”.

He continued: “The question is not just how you pay for it: it’s about people, not money. Is this going to work? Is it going to mean that, overall, those in need of care are cared for really well and those of future generations find



themselves going into a system that will look after them when they're older? . . .

“If we, as it were, privilege the wealthy older against the poorest younger, that will not work. That’s not a people-centred policy. The policy needs to be centred on people, and needs to care for the poorest, as well as ensuring that we have an embedded system that will work and is acceptable to all.

“The test is not just in terms of money: the test is in terms of effectiveness. If it pushes more young people into poverty and means they can’t get their own house and things like that . . . that is going to be a really serious problem, and that is wrong. It needs to be done fairly between the generations. That’s part of intergenerational reconciliation. . .

“It sounds to me as though there’s a willingness to engage, but the detail is going to take a lot of working out, and we’re not there yet.”

The tax increase breaks a Conservative manifesto pledge; but Mr Johnson told MPs that no one had foreseen the global pandemic.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) estimates that two million families on low incomes will pay, on average, an extra £100 a year owing to the increase. Families in receipt of Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit are also facing a cut in October, when the £20 uplift — put in place during the Covid pandemic — ends.

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The deputy director of evidence and impact at the JRF, Peter Matejic, said: “This extra cost adds insult to injury for these families who are facing a historic £1040 cut to their annual incomes when Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit are reduced in less than a month, on 6 October. If it presses ahead, this Government will be responsible for the single biggest overnight cut to social security ever.

“With inflation rising, the cost of living going up, and an energy price-rise coming in October, many struggling families are wondering how on earth they will be expected to make ends meet from next month.”

The Institute for Fiscal Studies said that the increase would raise the tax burden to its highest-ever sustained level.

From next April, those earning £24,100 a year will pay an additional £180 in National Insurance, and a higher-rate taxpayer on £67,100 will pay an additional £715. As income increases, however, the percentage share of National Insurance falls, as it is charged at just two per cent on salaries over £50,000. This means that the increase will have a proportionately smaller impact on the highest earners.

Members of the social-care sector have argued that the plans announced are inadequate to tackle the size and immediacy of the problem. The chief executive of the UK Home Care Association, Dr Jane Townson, said: “This is nowhere near enough. It will not address current issues, and some measures may create new risks.”

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Mike Padgham, who chairs the Independent Care Group, said that it was a “huge opportunity missed for radical, once-in-a-generation reform of the social-care system”. It would not address the staffing crisis, which was “sending the sector into meltdown on a daily basis, as care providers struggle to cover shifts”.

Courtesy The Church Times

## News briefs



### **First Confirmation Service in Cork, Cloyne and Ross since 2019**

On Friday, 10th September, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Dr Paul Colton, confirmed ten young people from

[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

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Kilgarriffe Union. It was the first Confirmation Service in the Diocese since 2019. The Rev. Kingsley Sutton, Rector of Kilgariffe Union, said: When we started Confirmation preparation, most of our candidates were in sixth class in primary school. They are now in second year in secondary school! We're delighted to have got there on our third attempt at holding a Confirmation Service. Many thanks to Bishop Paul (Colton), and congratulations to each one who was finally confirmed." Bishop Colton said: "The pandemic has disrupted our community life and, in particular, our opportunity to worship together in person. It was simply wonderful to start these weeks of catching up on Confirmations in Clonakilty and also to be with people from the Diocese whom I had not seen for too long."

## **Republic of Ireland's population rises above 5 million for the first time since the Great Famine**

The population of the Republic of Ireland has risen above 5 million for the first time since the Great Famine, new figures show. There are now over 5 million people living in the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland, for the first time since 1851, the Central Statistics Office has revealed. The Great Hunger of 1845 - 1852 saw one million people in Ireland die from starvation and exposure, with one million more emigrating-- many to the United States, where they established one of the strongest Irish communities in the world, with about 32 million Americans believed to be of Irish descent. Ireland's population was devastated by the famine, and has never regained the numbers seen in the early 1800's, where 8.5 million people called the island home; the last Census put the island's population, north and south, at around 6.8 million people.

## Launch of Methodist Church Ministries Team

The Methodist Church in Ireland invite you to check out this Video to learn more about the team's responsibilities and its journey so far - [vimeo.com/595219553](https://vimeo.com/595219553)

## Perspective

### 'The Cry of the Earth, the Cry of the Poor'

### Archbishop Dermot Farrell introduces his pastoral letter on the climate crisis

**“Faith and science are not opponents; in a truly Christian view, faith and reason—Fides et ratio—go hand in hand” – Archbishop Farrell**

We are living on the edge of huge historical change. Our common home, indeed our only home—this planet—is under threat. Our lifestyles and the economies which support them are contributing significantly to climate change, and to the crisis it is causing: the many wildfires raging in these days, the melting of the polar caps, the rise of sea levels, the loss of biodiversity, and the depletion of the soil on which life depends. The future of life on this earth, which God created and which “he saw was good” (Genesis 1:21, 25), hangs in the balance. Humans are unequivocally driving global warming. It is beyond doubt that climate change is being caused by what we have done—

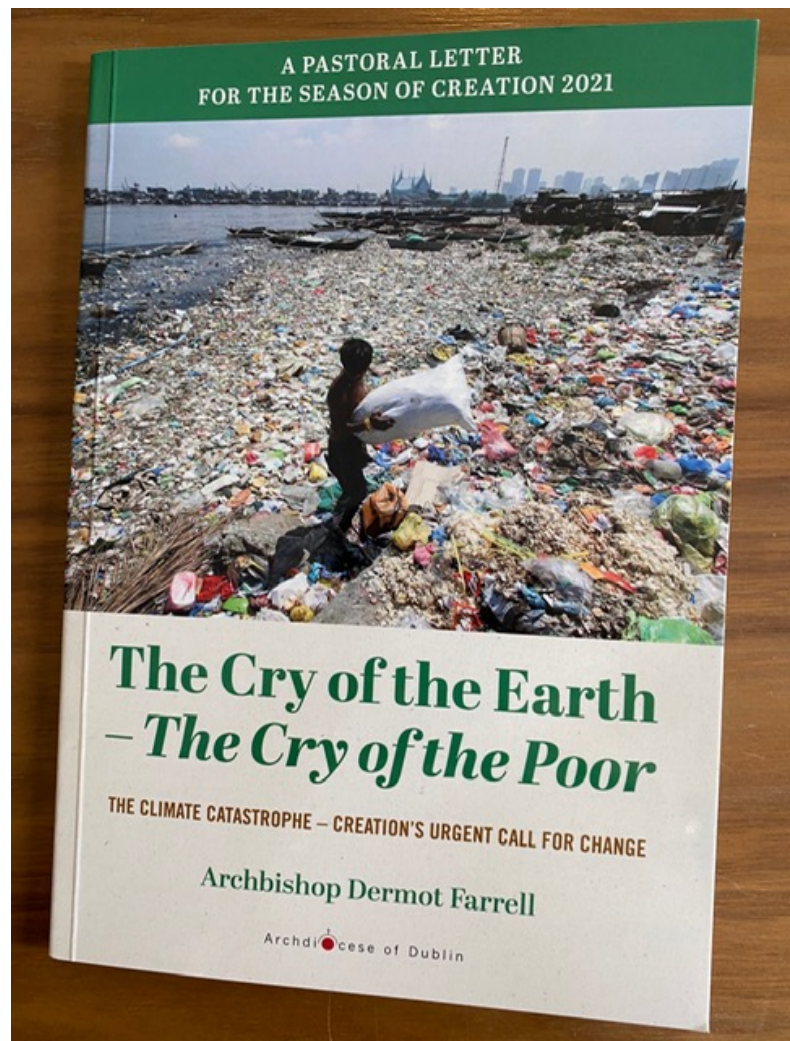
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and continue to do—  
in upsetting nature's  
equilibrium and  
balance.

Over the past  
eighteen months, the  
Covid-19 pandemic  
has brought home to  
us—in frightening and  
tragic ways—the  
fragility of our lives,  
and how fleeting are  
many of the networks  
on which we have  
come to depend. Our  
planet and its social  
organisation are as  
fragile as they are

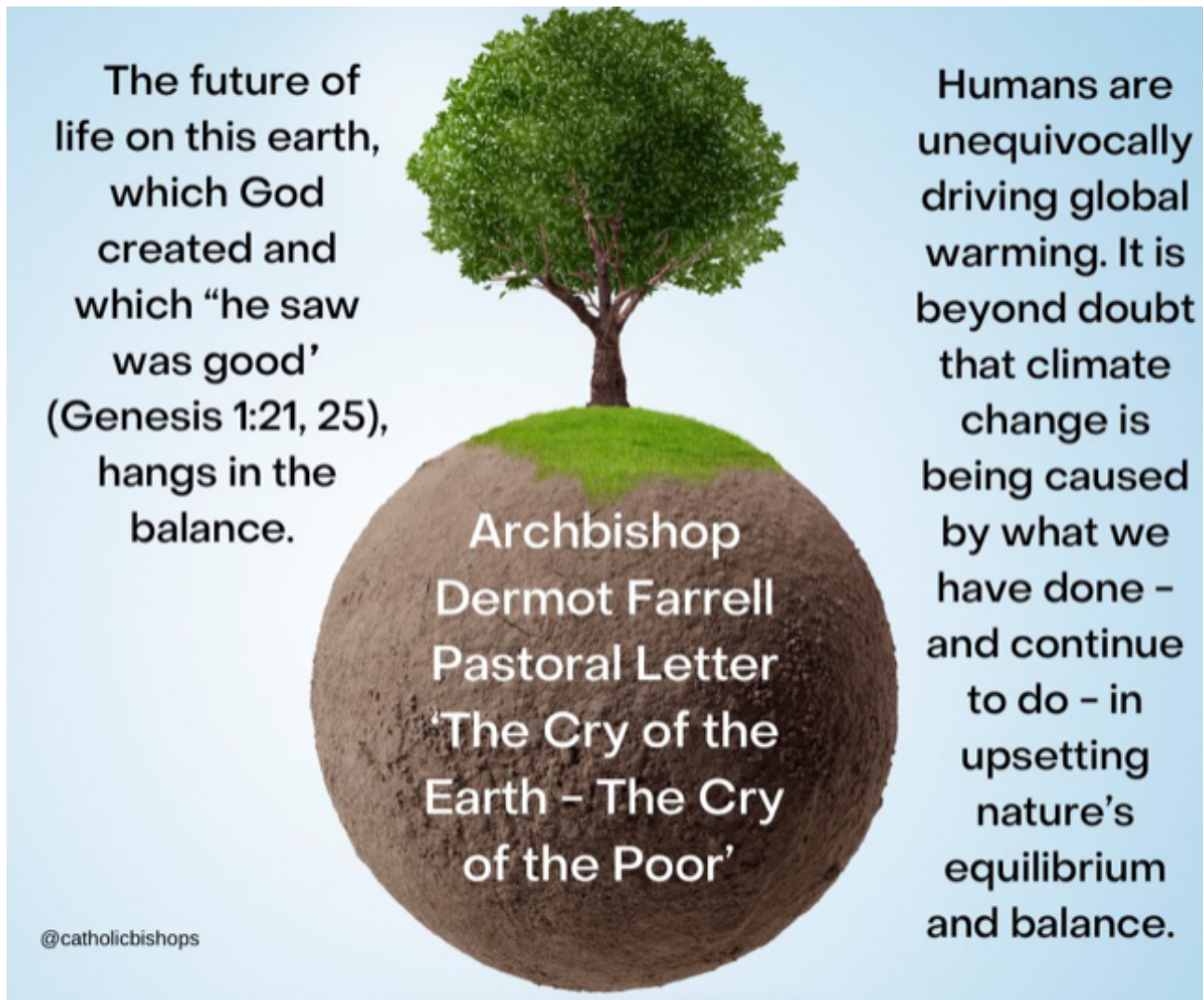
complex. What we need to realise is that, over the coming  
decades, the issues currently arising from climate change  
will impact far more on us than those from the coronavirus  
pandemic. Indeed, the havoc of the pandemic will pale  
when compared to that of climate change.

This pastoral letter, which I have titled, *The Cry of the Earth,  
the Cry of the Poor*, approaches the climate catastrophe  
from the perspective of faith. That is not to say, it excludes  
the insights and contribution of the natural sciences. On the  
contrary, healthy faith takes on board what God says  
through creation (see *Dei Verbum* §3). Faith and science  
are not opponents; in a truly Christian view, faith and reason  
—*fides et ratio*—go hand in hand. God reveals himself



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through the world. That is the heart of our Catholic faith. Scientists have issued a “code red” not just for the environment, but for humanity itself. God now calls us, individually and collectively, to work for the good of the planet and the good of all. Let us not fool ourselves: there can be no enduring response to the cry of the earth without responding to the need for justice and dignity.



This pastoral is an extended engagement with the vast and complex reality of climate. A long document, it seeks to dialogue with the varied views and voices, both religious and cultural, which seek to cast light on the crisis. All too often ‘religion’ appears as if it is no more than an intellectual failure of nerve. However, true religion is not a flight from

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the world: faith that is alive provides a framework for people to make decisions and take action. As a Church, and as a society, we need to reflect with greater depth, urgency, and seriousness about what we must do. This extensive pastoral is in the service of that deeper reflection. If not for your own sake, then for the sake of your children, and for the world's children, consider dedicating some time to the issues raised in its pages.

One possible next step for communities and parishes might be to consider signing the 'Healthy Planet—Healthy People' petition. Endorsed by the Holy See, this petition, aimed at the UN Climate Conference (Cop 26), advocates for an agreement that limits warming to 1.5 degrees, while protecting and supporting those most affected by the climate crisis. The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor go hand in hand. For the Holy See the 'Healthy Planet—Healthy People' petition is a key advocacy action for this year's Season of Creation. Communities, people in parishes and dioceses, as well as religious congregations, are encouraged to sign the petition by going to [ [www.healthyplanetandpeople.org](http://www.healthyplanetandpeople.org). ]

Another step might be to engage with the Laudato Sì Prize, an initiative of the Archdiocese of Dublin to incentivise imaginative and bold responses in the face of the climate catastrophe, and the vision for which is laid out in the pastoral.

It is important to be clear: there is a cost in addressing the climate crisis. As well as financial cost, we will have to embrace lifestyle change. It requires many perspective shifts—political, social, economic and ecclesial. The



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challenge is to discover how we can live more sustainably, more responsibly, and more humanly in our common home. Christ came not only to call us to a new way of living, but He came to empower us to live in that new way. Christ has not left us; our Lord has not abandoned us, for—in the words of Pope Francis:

Christ has united himself definitively to our earth, and his love constantly impels us to find new ways forward. (LS §245)

May Christ's faith and courage, give us the hope and strength to embrace what we now have to do, in the face of what has become humanity's defining challenge.

A copy of the pastoral letter may be downloaded at -  
[[ <https://dublindiocese.ie/archbishop-dermot-farrell-publishes-pastoral-letter-on-the-climate-crisis/> ]

## Poem for today

### August

### by Algernon Charles Swinburne

There were four apples on the bough,  
Half gold half red, that one might know  
The blood was ripe inside the core;  
The colour of the leaves was more  
Like stems of yellow corn that grow  
Through all the gold June meadow's floor.

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The warm smell of the fruit was good  
To feed on, and the split green wood,  
With all its bearded lips and stains  
Of mosses in the cloven veins,  
Most pleasant, if one lay or stood  
In sunshine or in happy rains.

There were fourteen apples on the tree,  
Red stained through gold, that all might see  
The sun went warm from core to rind;  
The green leaves made the summer blind  
In that soft place they kept for me  
With golden apples shut behind.

The leaves caught gold across the sun,  
And where the bluest air begun,  
Thirsted for song to help the heat;  
As I to feel my lady's feet  
Draw close before the day were done;  
Both lips grew dry with dreams of it.

In the mute August afternoon  
They trembled to some undertune  
Of music in the silver air;  
Great pleasure was it to be there  
Till green turned duskier and the moon  
Coloured the corn-sheaves like gold hair.

That August time it was delight  
To watch the red moons wane to white  
'Twixt grey seamed stems of apple-trees;  
A sense of heavy harmonies  
Grew on the growth of patient night,

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More sweet than shapen music is.

But some three hours before the moon  
The air, still eager from the noon,  
Flagged after heat, not wholly dead;  
Against the stem I leant my head;  
The colour soothed me like a tune,  
Green leaves all round the gold and red.

I lay there till the warm smell grew  
More sharp, when flecks of yellow dew  
Between the round ripe leaves had blurred  
The rind with stain and wet; I heard  
A wind that blew and breathed and blew,  
Too weak to alter its one word.

The wet leaves next the gentle fruit  
Felt smoother, and the brown tree-root  
Felt the mould warmer: I too felt  
(As water feels the slow gold melt  
Right through it when the day burns mute)  
The peace of time wherein love dwelt.

There were four apples on the tree,  
Gold stained on red that all might see  
The sweet blood filled them to the core:  
The colour of her hair is more  
Like stems of fair faint gold, that be  
Mown from the harvest's middle floor.



## Speaking to the Soul & Pointers for prayer

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