Contemplative Service for Wednesday,

November 8, 2023



*painting by Mark Rothko*

**First reading:** I Thessalonians 5:18

Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the desire of the Holy One for you.

**Music:** “**Une Barque sur l'Ocean” by Maurice Ravel, performed by Andre LaPlante**

**https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTYUyDjVCRU**

**Second reading: “Deaf Republic (14)” by Ilya Kaminsky\***

Each man has a quiet that revolves

around him as he beats his head against the earth. But I am laughing

hard and furious. I pour a glass of pepper vodka

and toast the gray wall. I say we were

never silent. We read each other’s lips and said

one word four times. And laughed four times

in loving repetition. We read each other’s lips to uncover

the poverty of laughter. Touch the asphalt with fingers to hear the cool earth of Vasenka

Deposit ears into the raindrops on a fisherman’s tobacco hair.

And whoever listens to me: being

there, and not being, lost and found

and lost again: Thank you for the feather on my tongue,

thank you for our argument that ends,

thank you for my deafness, Lord, such fire

from a match you never lit.

**Music:** “Elegie” by Niels Gade

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fp9a2YogyVw>

**Time of Silent Contemplation**

*With my mouth,' God says, 'I kiss my own chosen creation. I uniquely, lovingly, embrace every image I have made out of the earth’s clay. With a fiery spirit I transform it into a body to serve all the world.*

*Trust shows the way.*

*—Hildegard of Bingen*

**Communal Blessing**

Generous One, Finder of the Way,

Our thanks are often mottled with doubt and bruised with anxiety. We offer ourselves with clumsy gestures, but we pray that our gratitude finds its way to you even through the smog and tedium of difficult days. In faith, we remember the days of gladness and belonging. We give thanks for the whole that we cannot yet comprehend. Your wholeness is our healing and our liberation.

Amen.

**Music:** “Homesickness” by Edvard Grieg, performed by Vadim Chaimovich

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6hXoTnaFA0>

*Peace, faith, and assurance to you on this journey.*

\*Ilya Kaminsky is a USSR-born, Ukrainian-Russian-Jewish-American poet.