



GLIMPSES OF GOD
by Pauline Darby, SHCJ
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In the middle of the slaughter of World War 2, reflecting on the mystery of time and human experience in his poem, *Four Quartets*, 'The Dry Salvages', T.S. Eliot writes that **Incarnation is the hint half guessed, the gift half understood.**

Forty years later a poetry collection by a Norwegian, Olav H. Hauge, included this short poem:

**Don't give me the whole truth,
don't give me the sea for my thirst,
don't give me the sky when I ask for light,
but give me a glint, a dewy wisp, a mote
as the birds bear water-drops from their bathing
and the wind a grain of salt.**

The gospel stories of resurrection are such glints, wisps, guesses, partial understandings and epiphanies. Tantalisingly, they encourage us to ponder ever more deeply the meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection within the mystery of creation and the ongoing stirring of the Spirit within our own hearts and lives. The familiar images — a voice speaking a name in the midst of grief; the call to serve during a dawn breakfast; an overcoming of fear in an upper room; table companionship in a roadside inn — invite us to recognise over and over again that our knowing and understanding is far from complete.

Much is not yet disclosed and certainly we are not in control, have not got the full measure of the Risen Christ. Yet we are assured that always he will *go before [us] into Galilee* (Mt 28:7), prompting us to *do greater things* (Jn 14:12) in our own perplexing era and demanding context.

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In a commentary on Hauge's poem, Mark Oakley, an Anglican priest and theologian, reminds us that *'God is never understood but is always present ... [and] seeks from us not cleverness but connection ... To this end, as Christians we should learn to question more, to question as a ritual, as an exploration of grace rather than as a search for certainty.'* He goes on to quote Henri Nouwen: *'My deepest vocation is to be a witness to the glimpses of God I have been allowed to catch.'*