An Autumn Prayer

Leader: Blessed are you, autumn,
You draw us away from summer’s hot breath.

All: As your air becomes frosty and cool
You lead us to inner reflection.

Leader: Blessed are you, autumn, feast of thanksgiving,

All: You change our hearts into fountains of gratitude
As we receive your gracious gifts.

Leader: Blessed are you, autumn,
Season of surrender.

All: You teach us the wisdom of letting go
As you draw us into new ways of living.
O Antiphons for Autumn

**Side 1:** O SEASON FULL OF REMEMBERING...
Come! Come with your golden shawl!
Come scattering the beauty of well-aged leaves.
Strengthen us for changing our old patterns.
Give us memories that sustain our dreams.

All: O Come!

**Side 2:** O COOLING BREATH OF AUTUMN...
Come! Come with your natural paradox!
Show us our fullness and our emptiness.
Breathe into us a spirit of gracious acceptance.
Tame our desire to have summer stay forever.

All: O Come!

**Side 1:** O SEEDS SPRUNG LOOSE FROM DYING PLANTS...
Come! Come teach us to be generative!
Carry us to places where we can take root.
Encourage the seed of our love to fall freely.
Gift us with the grace of surrender.

All: O Come!

**Side 2:** O HARVESTER OF WISDOM...
Come! Come fill us with the waters of wisdom!
Show us the beauty of aging with grace.
Prepare us for the long dark nights.
Gather from our lives all that has potential.

All: O Come!

**Side 1:** O GLEANER OF GARDENS AND FIELDS...
Come! Come gather what is most precious in us!
Urge us to embrace our cornucopia of goodness.
Stir up gratitude and a sense of wonder.
Move us to give freely of our abundant harvest.

All: O Come!
Side 2: O RUSTLING LEAVES FALLING FROM THE TREES...
Come! Come live inside our aching goodbyes!
Teach us the truth of life’s impermanence.
Empty us of all that does not bless others.
Draw us into the waiting soil of wintertime.

All: O Come!

Side 1: O RISING HARVEST MOON...
Come! Come dance your beauty into our world!
Carve a path of light between night shadows.
Soften our transitions with your moonbeams.
Shine on all weary travelers of the heart.

All: O Come!

Side 2: O FIRST WHITE FINGERS OF DEADENING FROST...
Come! Come with your touch of mortality!
Carry us into the heart of deepest truth.
Befriend that which needs to die in us.
Teach us to be ready for the great “letting go.”

All: O Come! Amen! Amen!

Song: For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth, over and around us lies.
Lord of all, to you we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale and tree and flow’r, sun and moon and stars of light.
Lord of all...
For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth and friends above; for all gentle thoughts and mild.
Lord of all...
Reading
Autumn is the season of letting go, of surrender. The mood of autumn is the ebb and flow of life. Autumn stands as an epiphany to the truth that all things are passing and even in the passing there is beauty. Autumn holds out platters of death and life. As the bright colors of fall fade away, and the leaves make their final descent, rich brown and charcoal colors take center stage. This is the decaying season, but the rotting ritual that surrounds us has another face. Compost and mulch are food for the soil. There is life in the dying. Moments of death are full of life and our fear of the unknown sometime hides that life. All this dying is a prophecy of life to come. Everything is dying—TO LIVE.

“O Antiphons” and “Reading” are from *The Circle of Life: The Heart’s Journey Through the Seasons*, Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr.

Question for Reflection
Reflect on any recent changes in your life. What is God inviting you to let go of, to surrender? To what new life is God drawing you?

Sharing

Closing Prayer
Maker of the seasons, thank you for all that autumn teaches me. Change my focus so that I see not only what I am leaving behind, but also the harvest and plenitude that my life holds. May my heart grow free and my life more peaceful as I resonate with, and respond to, the many graces this season offers me. Amen

Leader: May God give us voice to proclaim God’s love and goodness.

All: Amen.

Leader: May gratitude fill our hearts.

All: Amen.

Leader: May God bless and protect us all.

All: Amen.