

For Oisín on His First Communion Day

Pádraig J. Daly

May you have joy always;
And, although it will bring you pain,
Hold steadfast your softness of heart.

Keep your perkiness,
Your soul's candour.

Do not be anxious about things that will pass
Or set store on always being right:
Laugh when you fail.

Despite the fog cold knowledge throws
And all the heartless gods that guile the mind,
May your soul be thrilled by Jesus.

Know how love surrounds you always
As it does today:
Dance in its light.

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I wonder what you'd have made of seven swans,
Legs tough as ostriches',
Ploughing forward this evening
Against the full pull of Liffey ebbtide,
Their white prows moving smoothly through the water,
Their silent heads treasuring deliquescent knowledge.

You would have stopped, I know, to still a bursting heart.
Words would have come, runes, ciphers,
That sent them lifting, flapping, surging into sky.

Pádraig J. Daly was born in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford. He is an Augustinian friar, working in the Dublin Liberties. He has published eleven collections of poetry and several volumes of translations from Irish and Italian. Translations of his poetry have been made into most European languages and collections have appeared in Italian and Romanian.

These two poems are taken from his latest volume, *A Small Psalter*, obtainable from Scotus Press. A review of the book may be found on page 36. To obtain a copy visit <http://www.scotuspress.com/daly.htm>