

# Blessing the Change in Season

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## REFLECTION

*Blessed are you, autumn,  
chalice of transformation,  
you lift a cup of death to our lips  
and we taste new life.*

*Blessed are you, autumn,  
season of the heart's yearning,  
you usher us into places of mystery  
and, like the leaves, we fall trustingly  
into eternal, unseen hands.*

— An Autumn Blessing<sup>1</sup>

Autumn is a liminal space. Beautiful in its own right, it gently leads us to the darkness of winter. It is a space between life and death. As authors Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr articulate, “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.”<sup>2</sup>

For many, autumn recalls feelings of nostalgia, memories of years gone by, back-to-school blues and the glee of children jumping in leaf piles. Indeed, the season is significant for many faith traditions. Not only do Catholics commemorate All Saints Day during this time on November 1, but Hindus celebrate Diwali on November 12, a festival of lights, and those who practice Judaism celebrate Sukkot in the fall, which honors both the harvest and hospitality. There are also distinct recognitions of the change in seasons in other faith traditions.

No one is exempt from witnessing and participating in the “season of the heart’s yearning.” While we receive and experience it differently based

on our worldview, we “fall trustingly” together. We experience together the shorter days and appreciate together the golden glow of autumnal light.

Even as we perhaps dread the coming darkness of winter, our experience is softened by being held in community.

As you prepare to pray — and as we listen to this well-known scriptural passage — consider your own feelings toward the change in seasons. What do you need in this appointed time as you prepare your mind and spirit for the transition to autumn?

Let us pray.

## READING

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes. (Ecc. 3:1-8)

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens. A time to give birth, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build. A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces. A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away. A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak. A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Let us pause and reflect on the following:

- How are you experiencing the “liminal space,” the blessing of this transitional season?
- Are there personal “dyings” you are undergoing that will give way to experiences of new life?
- How do the holy days in your religious tradition lend meaning to your current season of life?

## CLOSING PRAYER

Holy One, Blessed Grace:

As we come to You in sacred space during this autumn season, we find ourselves in a darkening time of transition. We seek Your light and take inventory of the spiritual harvest over the past year.

We give You thanks for such blessings, as it also serves as a reminder of how You cared for us all along the way.

It is Your light that we need as we look to the future with hope and anticipation. With the holy days of the season drawing near, we look forward to the opportunities to celebrate You in our communities.

May this be a blessed time that draws us closer to You this season and always.

Peace be with you,  
shalom,  
as-salaam-alaikum,  
and namaste.

## NOTES

1. Joyce Rupp and Macrina Wiederkehr, *The Circle of Life: The Heart's Journey through the Seasons* (Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 2005).
2. Rupp and Wiederkehr, *The Circle of Life*.



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