

Children on Either Side

In the beginning, holy water and words
Declare entry into the family.
Wailing infant doused in cleansing water,
God's image in a clenched face.

Little believer in Sunday school play
Shouts the gospel word to the delight
Of the elders, viewing the minted product.
Rejoice: We are evil. God is good.

Alone, we search for those like us,
Seeking reflections of ourselves,
Selecting images most flattering.
Pleasing us, making the connection.
Shadow of ugliness taking form
Cannot be the beauty that we are.
There is a flaw in the mirror.

Old men sit curved in the sun,
Fragile bodies, doze,
Easing tangled, palsied minds
With flashes of memory,
Forgetting our pain
Of lost childhood that
Pushed us into manhood.
We, suffering maturity, beat wings.