PSALM AFTER THE HOLOCAUST
(December 2013)

How can anyone make a joyful noise
Praising the mysterious power that
Guides the universe, depth calling unto
Depth, when so much fear pervades our time?

The first word can only be
Silence
   Profound and unutterable—
   Dark as the unbelievable pain

The second word is resilience
   A capacity to slowly unravel
   This bundle of deadly violence
   Spun tightly from bones and sinews

   Of the countless twisted dead—
   Bundle spun fiercely by humans
   Mouthing shameless lies
   Expressing their hatred of God

   Let us call it self-hatred
   A common task laid by life upon
   All people to grow and never stop
   Growing in their capacity for self-owning

   Self-owning people in pain do not
   blame the other for their disappointment and the Rage that leads
   inexorably to war--Only generosity and empathy can repair
     Our broken world and yet save us from the
     New holocaust which each side—
     Unconsciously, perhaps, expects from the other—
     Instead may truth-telling yield its healing trumpet sound
LYING FALLOW
(December 2009)

Sometimes when too many forces collide
Forming the ripples of a whirlpool
Threatening and exhausting
It is best to let the pained earth lie fallow

Not in neglect, but to allow a dive-back
From the surface empty and desolate
To a deeper aliveness where the earth refreshes itself
Through myriad healer-worms continuing to turn the field
Which the farmer had plowed and left it for fallow
Instead this is the most vital and essential
Phase of nature’s care for agrarian rhythms
That draw up depths of damp dark prolific
Soil teeming with life, warping it into a
Torrent of trillions of cells single and in bodies
Filled with a mighty longing
For survival, for meaning, and for joy

Likewise the human world of striving and action
Turns empty and barren when uprooted
From the damp fertile vortex where the Holy Ghost
With heaving artistry forms the tendrils of a new earth

From which freshened visions of work and
Service, among people near and far can spring up