

Still Small Voice by Ally Markotich

Listen!

Do you hear?

A crisp year freshly birthed is calling!

Giggling, this newborn bubbles, “Laugh with me!”

Wide awake, this spry start gazes, “Open your eyes.”

Hungry, this infant year hums, “Feed me health.”

Crying, this bold life wails, “Wrap me close and sway.”

Sleepy, this tranquil babe rustles, “Rest with me.”

Growth beckons! Transformation rings!

How do I care for this tenacious youngling full of surprise and hardship?

My mind wants to write a list of resolutions; my skin wants to slip into comfort,
but it's the still, small voice who speaks calm, slow:

Begin with tending to self.
This is essential! You cannot give what you do not have.

For this reason, you must take time to learn, to pray, to fill your soul —
in nature, in silence, in art: whatever life-giving practices nurture.

Returning to practice gives you needed energy for the day.
Don't let soul care slip away allowing to-do lists and busyness overpower.

Limit the overindulgence — of sweets, wine, external noise, bad news, social media —
these are numbing agents to a thriving life.

Instead, drink water, exercise, eat healthy, be present with people, seek quiet, be generous, look for the helpers,
give thanks — this is the lit road in a dark forest.

Give yourself permission to say “yes” to what exhilarates;
walking through fear strengthens your spirit, enlivens your passion.

In the same way, allow yourself to say “no” to the lukewarm;
setting boundaries saves energy for your unique path in the world.

Be gentle with others. They have a God light, same as you.
Be gentle with yourself. Emotions are welcome. You are as human as anyone else.

There is no need to fear. You are not alone.
Remember yesterday, how you brought all your pain, lack and unforgiving thoughts to Christ?

How he took it all, held, nurtured and blessed it? Then,
He handed it back to you as gift and said, “Now, take and share.”

Maybe this unblemished year echoes the Christ,
craving you to trust a simple truth:

Failure is the gateway to growth,
vulnerability is the key to transformation.

Share it uninhibited and watch it bloom.

