### **"More Beautiful than the Honey Locust Tree are the Words of the Lord" by Mary Oliver**

*1.*

*In the household of God, I have stumbled in recitation,*

*and in my mind I have wandered.*

*I have interrupted worship with discussion.*

*Once I extinguished the Gospel candle after all the others.*

*But never held the cup to my mouth lagging in gratitude.*

*2.*

*The Lord forgives many things,*

*so I have heard..*

*3.*

*The deer came into the field.*

*I saw her peaceful face and heard the shuffle of her breath.*

*She was sweetened by merriment and not afraid,*

*but bold to say*

*whose field she was crossing: spoke the tap of her foot:*

*It is God's and mine."*

*But only that she was born into the poem that God made, and*

*called the world.*

*6.*

*It's close to hopeless,*

*for what I want to say the red-bird*

*has said already, and better, in a thousand trees.*

*The white bear, lifting one enormous paw, has said it better.*

*You cannot cross one hummock or furrow but it is*

*His holy ground.*

*7.*

*I had such a longing for virtue, for company.*

*I wanted Christ to be as close as the cross I wear.*

*I wanted to read and serve, to touch the altar linen.*

*Instead I went back to the woods where not a single tree*

*turns its face away.*

*Instead I prayed, oh Lord, let me be something*

*useful and unpretentious.*

*Even the chimney swift sings.*

*Even the cobblestones have a task to do, and do it well.*

*Lord, let me be a flower, even a tare; or a sparrow.*

*Or the smallest bright stone in a ring worn by someone*

*brave and kind, whose name I will never know.*

*Lord, when I sleep I feel you near.*

*When I wake, and you are already wiping the stars away,*

*I rise quickly, hoping to be like your wild child*

*the rose, the honey-maker the honey-vine:*

*a bird shouting its joy as it floats*

*through the gift you have given us: another day.*