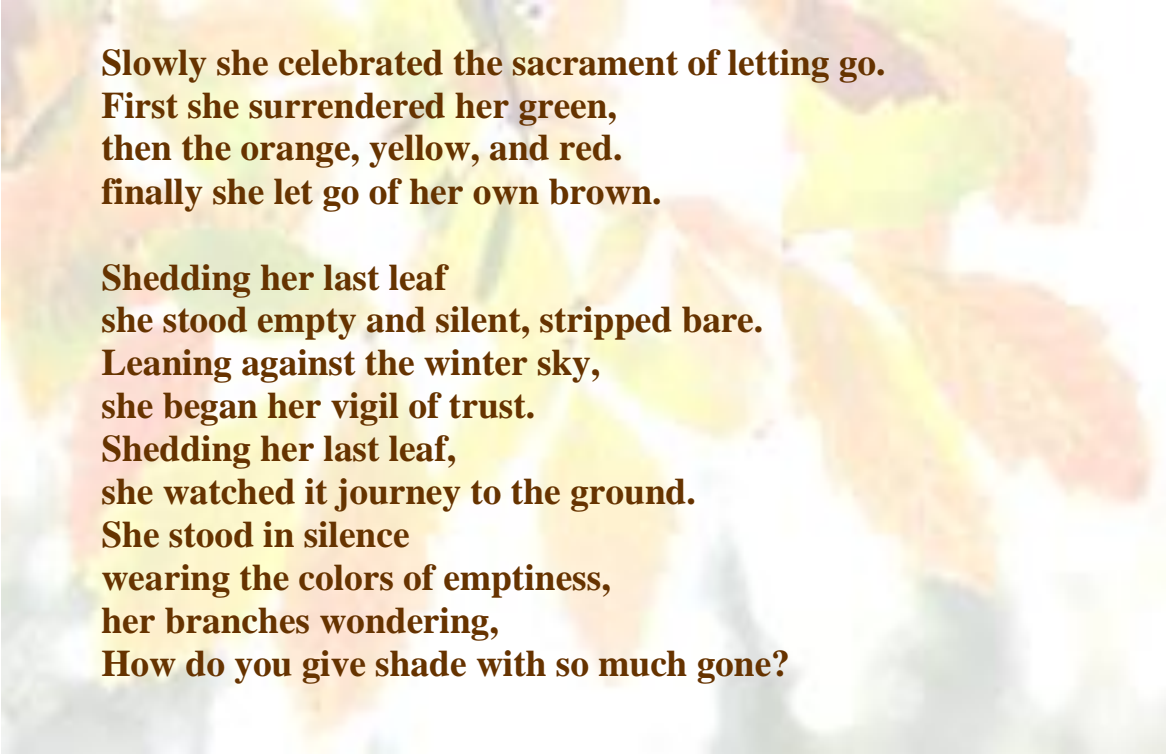


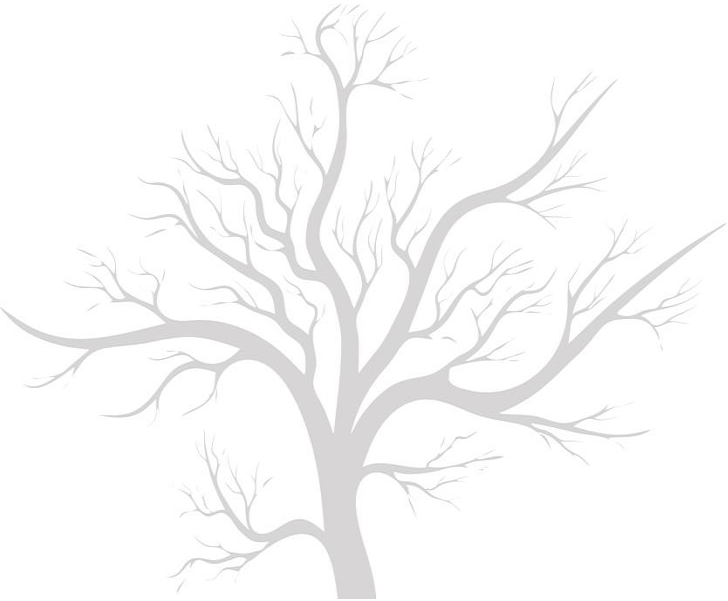
From **THE SACRAMENT OF LETTING GO**

by Macrina Wiederkehr



Slowly she celebrated the sacrament of letting go.
First she surrendered her green,
then the orange, yellow, and red.
finally she let go of her own brown.

Shedding her last leaf
she stood empty and silent, stripped bare.
Leaning against the winter sky,
she began her vigil of trust.
Shedding her last leaf,
she watched it journey to the ground.
She stood in silence
wearing the colors of emptiness,
her branches wondering,
How do you give shade with so much gone?



And then,
the sacrament of waiting began.
The sunrise and the sunset
watched with tenderness.
Clothing her with silhouettes
that kept her hope alive.
They helped her to understand
that her vulnerability,
her dependence and need,
her emptiness, her readiness to receive,
were giving her a new kind of Beauty.
Every morning and every evening
they stood in silence,
and celebrated together
the sacrament of waiting.