

## THE STABILIZING VIRTUE

When feelings seem disintegrated and low,  
this essential virtue of all spirituality,  
this fountainhead of emotional highs,  
galvanizes the heart's drooping courage,  
stills its simmering cauldron's messy sputters.

It calmly and faithfully expects the best,  
snatching moments to smell nearby roses  
or catch another life-empowering dream.

By extending those expectations personally,  
it gathers up delightful gems in people  
to weave networking bonds of community.

Even when the unknown begs revolution,  
it guards its priority of care and compassion;  
even when shouting mobs stir social havoc,  
this virtue keeps lending the listening ear.

It welcomes the journey's ups-and-downs,  
courageously anticipating that worry's twins—  
both real threats and danger's mere despair—  
will serve as guides on freedom's painful path.

This virtue plants, waters, and prunes hope,  
trusting sacred formulas for real transformation,  
affirming our "yes" to healthy heart-gardening,  
our "no" to bitter pollution from invasive weeds,  
until we reap the fruits of transient earthly toil  
and marvel at the bounty of eternity's harvest.

O World, where the virtue of Love grows cold,  
let her again inflame your heart and tongue  
to sing her myriad songs of manifold blessings!  
Her appreciation of your devoted embrace  
will make you grateful for heeding her voice,  
as she contents your soul with divine tranquility.

— *David L. Hatton 1/6/2019 (Epiphany Sunday)*