

The Roads You Took

By Cecily Jones, SL

For Luke, in memory, August 24, 2006

When we drove 49 to Bardstown
 that last journey with you
 I leaned into the dips and switches,
 the turns and tunneled trees
 on that meander of a road,
 more an essence of the land
 than a path hewn through it
 as if the bends and rounds,
 the swooping curves had settled in
 the way the people did
 among the hollows and the knobs.

Those winding stretches became first leg
 when we gave you to the world.
 And the roads you took led everywhere!

Striding across St. Peter's Square to your tribune seat
... a special epiphany of hope for the church
 Stumbling, tear-gassed, on a Saigon street
... our fear was not for us, but for the students
 Standing with the Mothers of the Disappeared in Salvador
... always smiles . . . but always resolute determination



Cecily Jones, SL, a Sister of Loretto who was a close associate of Mary Luke Tobin, is currently writing the biography of her friend. Her poem commemorates the trip to Louisville with Sr. Luke's body, which she had donated to science.

Cecily Jones, SL

And with courageous Irishwomen seeking peace
. . . for the Christian, darkness is never total

Dachau, Paris, Bangkok, La Paz,
 the road to California vineyards
 and to a desert in Nevada,
 the highway to Amache,
 Atlanta's solemn funeral march.
 Causeways, air lanes, the autobahn,
 the streets of DC, New York
 and Colfax of a thousand marches.

Then home for a while until that final journey.

We passed yards brilliant with zinnias,
 kudzu smothering the hedges and the posts,
 the regal mullein stalks
 and brightblue stars of blooming chicory.

Was your spirit on the other side
 already quick among the galaxies you'd scanned,
 exploring yet another road?

I leaned into the rounds and bends
 oddly comforted by the August fields
 of corn and soy, the curve through Holy Cross
 and the stark distilleries stacked
 like dingy boxes on the hill.

While we companioned you,
 seeking solace on that so familiar path,
 had you embraced that splendid sphere of Light
 your heart seemed ever searching?

From 49, curling coiled route
 to little farms, secluded creeks,
 the meager highway from your home,
 the roads you took!

September 19, 2006