

# The Burning Babe

by Blessed Robert Southwell, S.J.

As I in hoary winter's night stood shivering in the snow,  
Surprised I was with sudden heat which made my heart to glow;

And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire was near,  
A pretty Babe all burning bright did in the air appear;

Who, scorched with excessive heat, such floods of tears did shed,  
As though His floods should quench His flames,  
which with His tears were fed:

“Alas!” quoth He, “but newly born in fiery heats I fry,  
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel My fire but I!”

“My faultless breast the furnace is; the fuel, wounding thorns;  
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke; the ashes, shame and scorns;

The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows the coals,  
The metal in the furnace wrought are men's defiled souls:

For which, as now on fire I am to work them to their good,  
So will I melt into a bath, to wash them in My Blood.”

With this He vanished out of sight and swiftly shrunk away,  
And straight I called unto mind that it was Christmas Day.

