

*Anna Damas, SSpS*

## Opening Prayer

There is a famine in Bethlehem, the City of Bread has no more bread for its people.

Together with her husband and sons, Naomi becomes an economic migrant and goes to live a better life in Moab. Not her choice, but a necessity of survival.

The landscape of her life is changing.

Disaster strikes once again: her husband and both her sons die. And she makes her choice to go home. Home to Bethlehem that has bread again. Home to her God who is with her people in Judah.

Both her daughters-in-law, Oprah and Ruth, accompany her on the road from Moab to Judah. The landscape is changing, and they reach the boarder, the point of decision.

“Go home where you belong”, Naomi urges her daughters-in-law, “Go home to a better life under the protection of your gods.”

And Oprah listens. She makes the intelligent choice for her future. She returns to her roots and affirms her identity inherited from her culture of origin.

And Ruth listens too. She hears her heart making a different choice than Oprah's: Ruth's home is with her mother-in-law. Her home is found in relationship with Naomi, and with Naomi's God.

Ruth's inner landscape is changing; her identity grows into something new: a new people, a new God, an unknown future.



### TRASNA

The pilgrims paused on the ancient stones  
In the mountain gap.

Behind them stretched the roadway  
they had travelled.  
Ahead, mist hid the track.

Unspoken the question hovered:  
Why go on? Is life not short enough?  
Why seek to pierce its mystery?  
Why venture further on strange paths,  
risking all'

Surely that is a gamble for fools - or lovers.  
Why not return quietly to the known road?

Why be a pilgrim still?  
A voice they knew called to them, saying:

This is Trasna, the crossing place.  
Choose! Go back if you must,

You will find your way easily by  
yesterday's fires,  
there may be life in the embers yet.

If that is not your deep desire,  
Stand still. Lay down your load.

Take your life firmly in your two hands,  
(Gently... you are trusted with something  
precious)

While you search your heart's yearnings:  
What am I seeking? What is my quest?

When your star rises deep within,  
Trust yourself to its leading.

You will have the light for first steps.  
This is Trasna, the crossing place.

Choose!  
This is Trasna, the crossing place.