

SONNET FOR MY MOTHER, EMELINE (D. SEPTEMBER 22, 1988)

Sr. Lucille Claire Thibodeau, p.m., Ph.D.*

There's nothing now that could or would I see,
For all your work of growth and pain of years,
Aiming my eyes toward wide eternity,
But bone and ash below my feet, through tears.
How can I praise, when your strong voice is mute,
How, when your own are dust, set hands to lute?
Did your soul fly before your body fell,
Hoping to follow, at call of trumpet voice,
Headlong into time's dark and silent well
From whose sere depths no creature can rejoice?
Oh how can body rise,
So perpendicular to Paradise?
My questions shatter in cold unknowing,
Shards of breath this chill September morning.

* **Sr. LUCILLE C. THIBODEAU, p.m., Ph.D.**, is Professor of English at Rivier College and teaches undergraduate courses in writing and literature as well as the Junior Honors Seminar. An alumna of Rivier, she holds the Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Harvard University. Her field is lyric poetry in English, French, and Latin. A member of a number of professional organizations, she has published in several journals and has presented widely at national and international congresses. She has received numerous honors and awards, including the Walz Prize at Harvard. A past president of Rivier, Sr. Lucille is a Fellow of the American Council on Education (ACE), served as a mentor in the ACE Fellows Program, and along with several former presidents and chancellors from around the country has been invited to be a leadership team facilitator for ACE.