

GRETCHEN FLETCHER

**MEMENTO MYSTERIUM:  
A LITANY FOR LOST REVERENCE**

For the *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei*  
sung by young boys  
For antiphonal notes  
reverberating off marble floors  
and rising to balconies  
I mourn

For hosts of angels dancing on pins  
and that other Host on the silver paten  
with its accompanying chalice  
For the belief that it is  
what it doesn't appear to be  
I mourn

For prayers that soar dome-ward  
through dust motes in sun streaks  
stained the colors of the windows' glass  
For incense rising from silver censers  
to carry those prayers heavenward  
I mourn

For faith upheld by flying buttresses  
For awe in the presence of mystery  
lying behind a dossal curtain  
For smoke from snuffed candles  
joining the scent of lilies  
I mourn

For droning litanies recited by rote  
For dogma accepted without question  
For devotion proclaimed without thought  
For sworn allegiance now betrayed  
I mourn