



*Sister Yvette*, © 1998, by Alan Pogue

### **Sister Yvette —**

arms stretched wide, gathers Iraqi children,  
boys on one side, girls on the other.  
Her slim body like a white crucifix at the apex  
of communion animates the simple altar of  
a church in Baghdad.

Arms spread wide, Sister Yvette holds back a host  
of children while overhead war planes whine  
and thunder, sirens scream, and Empire hovers  
like the Anti-Christ.

Sister Yvette, arms spread wide holds back,  
for an instant, the tide of war, while beneath  
her feet, deep in folds that bleed like the womb  
of life, oil blinds us to alternatives.

Iraqi children, for a moment,  
are safe, confessed, pure as light.

Sister Yvette, arms spread wide stands like a white  
wood cross, holds back, for an instant, the horror  
of bombs falling from the sky, one small woman  
listening to the children, listening to the children.

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