

Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas by Jan L. Richardson,
from her book: *Night Visions, Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas*,
Gospeller Press, 1998

You remind us
that it is our delight you seek,
not our suffering.
And you tell us
it is not the wounds
that give us life,
but the tending of them
in each other.

And you say
it is not the breaking
that makes us whole
but the mending of the pieces
that brings us life anew.

When we are spent
from the labor
and longing to rest
in our deliverance,
when we hunger
to stay
in the celebration
and crave a lasting sabbath,
you tell us
this is where
our work begins.

For the labor
that is never over,
give us strength;
for the healing
that is ever before us,
give us courage.

May our resting
be for renewal,
not forever;
and may we work
for nothing
save that
which makes
your people whole.

