

The still pilgrim hears a diagnosis

by [Angela Alaimo O'Donnell](#) in the [November 8, 2016](#) issue

*"Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a nervous system disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. No one knows its cause. Onset typically begins between the ages of 20 and 40. Some people lose the ability to write, speak, or walk."*  
—U.S. National Library of Medicine

Another blessing. Another gray rain.  
All day yesterday it fell and fell.  
The sky never changed. It stayed the same.  
White grim gray. It was hard to tell  
what was cloud and what was light,  
what was water, what was sun.  
Day slunk slowly into night.  
And once again it's begun.  
I drove my car to the hospital.  
The narrow halls were white grim gray.  
The doctor acted cheerful  
despite the words she had to say.  
I sat beside my grown young son  
and hoped for blessing. There was none.