

Baptism

by [Jill Bergkamp](#) in the [December 23, 2015](#) issue

A pane breaks into water as we enter death
and burial to imitate Christ. Faith is measured

this way, by one's willingness to submit
to what one cannot comprehend. We rise up

as new creatures, but in what sense have we
shifted? In those seconds under water's

smooth door, do our bodies lap over
this world's edge to the next? Do the angels

who see us rejoice
to bear witness before we rise up, closing

the door between us? Our lives' balance
on the wing of what we give up, yet desire.

A bird imitates, but is said to have no
perception. Yet some believe it was a bird

who plunged the primordial sea,
bringing mud to the surface to form the earth

we're made from; their wings opening in the shape
of a cross, our fondest dreams of flight.