

Grace and the TSA

by [Connie Zumpf](#) in the [August 30, 2017](#) issue

We the travelling horde funnel into a serpentine
of supplicants, step forth one by one toward the ritual
scrutiny of identity. *Who are we, really, each of us?*

We drop our collective gaze, divest ourselves
of worldly worth, watches, shoes, dust of the earth,
the three ounces that can't contain the distillation

of our sins, all offered into bins. I look to the woman
in TSA array, note her name. Her countenance
is both stern and saintly.

I step into the glass confessional, hold out my arms,
stand splayed like an arrested star.

Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.

The X-ray beams through. Now we both know
everything about me, every silent heresy, blemish,
doubt, and jealousy, even my wicked browser history.

She sees me in entirety, yet sends me
to rejoin the crowd, now blessed and sanctified.

Gloria Patri, et filio, et spiritui sancto—

We lift our eyes, commence our final ascents.
We the travelling penitents, redeemed,
for now, by Grace.