

After amen

by [Linda Mills Woolsey](#) in the [May 6, 2020](#) issue

Last words—*alleluia, alleluia*—echo as we  
gather coats, bulletins, purses, hopes,  
shut away our prayers again with the names  
of the dead in jeweled glass, polished brass,  
a clatter of coins in the collection plate.  
Full moon wafer of bread, broken with  
a snap, like bone, chalice lifted and left,  
wavering candles snuffed one by one as  
the cross departs with the last pale notes  
of another requiem and we turn again—  
stumbling—to our brief, our borrowed life.