



SIEBENQUELL

---

# The Prayer of a Painter

## La Prière de Paul Cézanne

---



SOURCE: WWW.KUNSTKOPIE.DE

Every place that storytellers travel, they seek new stories, sometimes in the form of pictures, sometimes in poems and sometimes in new tales. While I travelled in the Provence this summer, I came upon a lovely prayer from Henri de Regnier, that combines the tale of a beautiful landscape with the tale of a beautiful life. Here, I share it with you:

Lord of light, air, and cloud,  
You to Whom I have called so often,  
Look on the hard and weary features of my poor face,  
The mouth beneath the beard and the stubborn forehead;

Consider the eyes which have gazed on things  
With such determination to know the truth of them,  
And see these hands, gnarled and weakened  
By the painful effort of their sincerity;

And now, Lord, in Your mercy,  
Hear me and let me be, tomorrow, by Your grace,  
The faithful servant whom the master grants  
A simple tomb in a corner of the garden.

I have spent long days in honest labour,  
And I made the most of the little I received.  
No deceit ever soiled my palette,  
And my eyes never betrayed what they saw.

---

Others sought tumult and glory,  
But I only wanted the humble laurel  
Whose leaves, almost black, grow somberly  
At the doorstep of the true artist and good workman.

And this is why, Lord, having lived my life,  
To the moment of my death, in the place where I was born,  
I offer You these bright eyes in a poor face,  
And this forehead, and these hands, and this willful stare.

Accept them, and take also these round apples,  
These grapes, and these fruits which I painted as best as I was able,  
For to me their contour was the shape of the world  
And all eternal light is in them.

Henri de Régnier, "La Prière de Paul Cézanne," [\*Vestigia Flammae\*](#) (Paris: Mercure de France, 1921),

**Rosemarie Monnerjahn**

*Vallendar, October 10, 2019*