

Church had avoided and under which it had suffered torture and martyrdom. From then on the corrupting influences of the world would operate, fully and unrestrained, upon the Church. At the same time the numbers of Christians had vastly increased. As the area of Christianity expanded so it became harder to preserve the exalted and saintly standards of the early Church of the catacombs. To the warlike tribes of the North and the West, to the Gauls, the Vandals and the Goths, fighting and the shedding of blood was their being. For these races the appeal of Christianity was slight enough without the added incompatibility of a prohibition upon the carrying of arms and the resort to war.

Life-line by Ronald Torbet

Complacent afloat the perilous seas of blood
The dreaming paschal swimmer struck
And blindly, lightly, held
The proffered life-line for his forty crisis days
(This is the day created for our joy) ;
And found on waking that he held
This hand of flesh
With all its past and future hours engraved
Firm in his own for ever,
For heart's greater, sweeter danger
In the higher waking dream,
Securer now afloat more perilous seas of Blood.