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Religion

Bianca Del Vecchio
St. John Fisher College

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BIANCA DEL VECCHIO

RELIGION

As a child, religion was simple. I knew that if I prayed every night
I would go to heaven, and that thunder was merely God bowling a strike.

I remember nights, days, mornings, crawling under my bed to pray,
Pray that one day I would be the right kind of daughter.

I learned quickly what I needed to change while I was praying. I would beg
To be less talkative, nicer, not a cry-baby. Sometimes I would even pray

To die. But not for death. I prayed to go to heaven, to be safe. And in
My mind, I believed in religion, and I believed in heaven, and I believed

That if I prayed, I would be with God. It used to be that easy. As I grew up,
I realized that religion wasn't as simple as prayer and forgiveness. Each religion

Had its own semantics; I spend a large portion of my high school years going from
Church to church, searching for that comfort I formally found in prayer.

Each church seemed to have its own rules, that there was always another group
Or belief that was wrong. I knew that my life was full of wrong –

Wrong choices, wrong friends, wrong attitude. In those churches I felt nervous,
As if my secret may come out. That these people would realize my wrong.

I was lost; each Sunday I went to another church only to realize more wrong.
I used to pray and my prayer would make God love me again. He forgave

My sins. Now I felt lost in sea of faith, each with its own condemning mindset.
After months of trying, I gave up. There was no church for me.

Religion was no longer simple and my beliefs still were. At night I pray,
Hoping that my prayer is heard.