

ONE BY ONE YOU CALL US HOME

1977. I wrote these words to a tune I heard on an album by 2 English singers, Maddy Prior and June Tabor, called Silly Sisters. The original song, by English folk singer-writer Cyril Tawney, is "The Grey Funnel Line" ("it's one more day on the Grey Funnel Line"). The words were inspired by the line from John 10, the Good Shepherd chapter, "and one by one he calls his own". The song was written for the baptisms of Simon Loffler and Sarah Pryzibilla. Even more than Father Welcomes this song is as apt for funerals as for baptisms. I think I'd like it at my funeral - just don't sing it too fast!

1. Like autumn leaves upon the ground
we know not where we should be bound.
The rain comes hard and night rolls in,
the sky is black and it's cold within.
And one by one you call us home.

2. Bright is the sun and pale the moon;
with winking stars they sing your tune.
The sunset comes, you paint the sky.
The darkness falls like a lullaby.
And one by one you call us home.

3. You do not sit and take your ease;
you wash our feet upon your knees,
shoulder the load that holds us down,
untie the ropes that have kept us bound.
And one by one you call us home.

4. Come walk with me, both old and young.
No other way can take you home.
Here's bread and wine to keep you strong
until we meet for the final song.
And one by one you call us home.

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