

Icons

- Scott Cairns



s windows go, these ancient
gilded figures both receive
our rapt attention and announce

a subtle reciprocity.

We look to them to apprehend
a glimpse of life enduring

out of time; and likewise find
our own experience attended
by a tranquil gaze that turns

increasingly affectionate,
indulgent, kind. The stuff of them
— the paint, the wood, the lucent

golden nimbi — also speaks
in favor of how good
all *stuff* remains despite our long

held habits of abuse, disinterest,
glib dichotomies dividing
meager views of *body* and its

anima. On his knees, the pilgrim
leans into another mode
of being, leans into the stillness

at the urgent source of life.

On his knees, the pilgrim meets
the painted gaze, and finds his own

sight answering a question
now just coming into view.