White Faced Glossy Ibis

Behind the clay chenier that runs along  
The northern edge of East Bay in Chambers County.

The wetland glistens in the October sun,  
Blue water filled with green and greener grasses  
Populated by wading birds of all description -  
The pink roseate, the white ibis,  
The yellow footed snowy and the delicate tri-color -  
But the star today is the thin dark ibis  
With the lovely scimitar beak,  
Probing soft mud for delicacies of the soil,  
Seeking gifts of the natural wonder  
That is a functioning wetland.

There are those who believe that the Earth  
Is the manifestation of God –  
A part of the Christian Trinity –  
The breath of what we irreverent  
Young Baptists called the Holy Ghost,  
The essence of God pervading creation,  
And there are those who simply consider  
The Earth as a church –  
A place where they come  
To find spiritual food for mind and soul,  
Nutrition to fuel the life spirit within us all,  
Life epitomized by the wavering V  
Of black, curve-beaked water birds floating on air  
Above the green grass growing  
Just beyond the chenier.

And in these hours of darkness
Living apart from each other,
Evading the virus, trying to survive,
I remember the day of the glossy ibis
And recall my visit to Earth Church
On the north shore of East Bay,
A sacred place – a rock -
A place where my higher power resides,
A place I hold onto with all I have.