

The Smallest Cries ¹

*Fear not, nor flee loneliness:
The echoes of the smallest cries
Within our heart,
Rouse the responsive Spirit
To invite us
To lay our head on the Lord's breast.*

¹ Rome Tertianship, 1991

The Womb of Silence²

Growth always needs

The womb of silence,

For silence is needed

To be receptive

To God's Mystery ...

Wherein the Spirit of Life

–To form Christ within –

Graces us with a silent space

To receive God's enabling WORD!

² Rome Tertianship, 1991

Awaiting Our Invitation³

*The Father of All Tenderness
Cannot resist sending the Paraclete,
– ‘The one who answers the call or cry’ –
Into the depths of our sinfulness.
Here ... the Spirit ... God’s Breath, bated ...
Awaits our invitation –
To heal our deep hurts
... Causing good to flow forth from them,
... Freeing us to love again.*

³ Rome Tertianship, 1991

Gently, Humbly, Meekly ⁴

*To be formed gently,
By Jesus, the Washer of Feet,
Into a servant-leader,
After His own heart
– Is to humbly accept daily,
The cross of our weaknesses ...
And meekly to ask forgiveness
Of those we've trespassed upon.*

⁴ Rome Tertianship, 1991

Hands, Heart and Happiness ⁵

*Abba's love deeply moves me
To join others in their openness
To humanity's true destiny:
Together ... vulnerably ... to be
The hands,
The heart,
The very happiness,
Of His Beloved
– Earth's Son of graciousness –
In this world
He so cherishes.*

⁵ Rome Tertianship, 1991

Immersed in the Spirit for Us ⁶

*The public affirmation
Of Abba Yahweh's love for Jesus
– Experienced so PERSONALLY since His childhood –
And its dramatic proclamation
Over the sunlit waters of the Jordan,
Filled His Son's heart to bursting
– Bursting with love
... A love that MIRRORED that of Abba Yahweh Himself!*

*Jesus was deeply, deeply moved,
And profoundly bowed
In open-hearted adoration,
As Abba's Spirit of Anointing
– Signed as a dove –
Settled upon Him.
Jesus sensed that the Spirit hovered
As a second 'DOVE', over life's outpouring
Over the waters of a Second Creation
– A RE-birthing of humanity, perhaps?*

*This wondrously Creative Spirit
Suffused Jesus' own radically open spirit
With the Gift of Divine Communing,
Initiating Him, explicitly,
Into that Inner Fellowship, that FELT Presence,
Which companioned Jesus
All the way to Calvary.*

⁶ Rome Tertianship, 1991

*Jesus' experience,
Of being so IMMERSED in Divine Love,
Also focussed
The sunlight of His Father's love for US
– Onto His own sense of human belonging
– Of 30 years of joyfully identifying
As a son of earth ... 'a son of adam';⁷
Of 30 years of open-hearted love for us, His kin,
... Thrilling to the loving interplay of emotions
With Mary, with Joseph, and with people just like us!*

*Indelibly woven into His identifying with us, also,
Was a growing sadness and anger
... Both coupled with an ever-strengthening COMPASSION :
As His heart was moved by our pain and low self-esteem,
And as His spirit took on our sufferings.*

*Abba's all-empowering sense of EQUALITY
Galvanized His sensitive Son's heart
To feel especially at home
With the lowly, and the 'heavily burdened';
With the sick and the lame, with the blind, the deaf and the dumb;
With all the side-lined victims of self-righteousness;
And very deeply and simply,
With sinners, of all types.
Jesus' passionate sense of belonging to ALL these
– His 'poor' –
Bred in Him a FEARLESSNESS, wedded to His compassion,
... Not only to heal the wounds of His brothers and sisters,
But to focus on the CAUSES of their misery.
For him, the ultimate remedy to such stark inequalities,
Was to uplift their DIGNITY
... By inviting all INTO His own FELLOWSHIP⁸
With His Abba-God!*

⁷ 'adam' is Hebrew for earth

⁸ Se Note Poem 94

*Thus, the key, VISIBLE gift
Of Jesus' Immersion in the Spirit,
Was a clearly focussed vision
Of His IDENTITY WITH THE POOR,
— His own impoverished people.
Accompanying this was the CONVICTION of being especially
SENT BY ABBA TO THEM,
To invite them into a change of heart,
So as to become 'poor in spirit', with Him,⁹
And thus become, like Him, the beloved of Abba
... Drawn into a kinship of love.*

*As Jesus emerged from the Jordan,
Fired with the intensity of being named
Abba's 'Chosen One',¹⁰
His empowering Immersion in the Spirit
Was transformed into an Inner-Peace ...
Which, settling within His heart,
Entered His consciousness, as an Abiding Presence,
CENTERING His spirit,
And filling Him
With awe, with courage, with a visionary wisdom,
And with the deepest gratitude.*

⁹ Mt 5:3

¹⁰ Jn 1: 34

Fear of Life – Buried! ¹¹

*While our fear of death
Died on the Cross,
Our fear of life
– The fear of living fully –
Died there too ...
And was buried,
With Jesus
... Never to rise!*

*In its stead,
IN CHRIST
– Who, eternally promises
'I have come that you may have life
And have it TO THE FULL' – ¹²
Our lives sing with the fullness of life
In Him ...
As we come ALIVE TO GOD
– The Father of ALL life!*

¹¹ Rome Tertianship, 1991

¹² Jn 10: 10

Christ Enpeopled Himself: We Are Enpeopled ¹³

Preamble

In the Scripture 2 Cor 5: 8, when St Paul asserts

We would rather be away from the body,

And AT HOME WITH the Lord',

The phrase 'AT HOME WITH' translates the Greek 'ENDEMOUNTES'

– Which, more exactly, translates as

Being 'with-one's-own-people' ... with the Lord

– Or, literally, translates as

Being 'ENPEOPLED' ... with or in the Lord.

The sense of 'ENDEMOUNTES' becomes very clear, in the verb's

First person singular 'ENDEMEO'

... Where 'demos', the noun form of 'DEMEO', means 'the people'.

Thus, in 2 Cor 5:8, Paul's prayer becomes

We would rather ... 'BE ENPEOPLED in the Lord';

And for Christ, the Lord, in the active mood, this would be, 'Christ ENPEOPLES Himself'.

A derived, related word in modern English, is 'ENDEMIC'

– Something, such as a disease that spreads, through a whole people,

That is, a disease that 'enpeoples itself'

Or is 'enpeopled'.

Poem

To 'be enpeopled'

Is a particularly inclusive and dynamic experience.

*We have beautiful English words
For being FATHERED, for being MOTHERED,
And less frequently, for being BROTHERED
... But none, for being FAMILIED,
Being COMMUNITIED, or being ENPEOPLED.*

'ENDEMEMO' is a biblical word for explaining ¹⁴

How Christ became present to us

– Literally, He 'ENPEOPLED Himself'.

Conversely, we His people 'ARE ENPEOPLED' as Him ...

Such that we have become His Body

– 'Members of each other' within Him, as Him. ¹⁵

In 'enpeopling Himself', the Risen Jesus becomes US,

Becomes a people He uplifts:

He becomes, and elevates, -

Our yearnings to love,

Our thirst for freedom,

Our commitment to equality,

Our outpouring of compassion,

And our longing to live life fully!

Even before He was RAISED, Jesus knew that His DESTINY

Of 'being enpeopled', challenged Him, at all times –

To be a superlatively good person,

Unfailingly humble and inclusive,

Unyieldingly courageous,

And incomparably loving!

At His Baptism, Jesus becomes 'enpeopled' with our weaknesses;

At Gethsemane, He 'becomes sin for us', explicitly! ¹⁶

¹⁴ Jn 10: 10

¹⁵ The key term in 2 Cor 5: 8. See Preamble

*On His journey into death, for us,
Jesus chose to share His cross-beam with the Negro, Simon,
All the way to Calvary:*

A symbol of inclusiveness, meant for EACH of us.

*In extending His invitation, Jesus shows us ...
That pain, hurt, weakness, and the burden of sinfulness
Is to be SHARED!*

*Jesus invites us to share our crosses ...
With another, with the community, with the people of God
– And be, like Him, ENPEOPLED.*

*Thus affirmed, we can, like Peter,
Turn, and ‘strengthen our brothers’¹⁷
... By carrying THEIR crosses, suffering for THEM.*

*To share their joys is easy,
To share their sorrows, harder,
But to share their weaknesses and sins ...
Christ shows the WAY, as humanity’s sin-bearer
– ENPEOPLING HIMSELF, with sinners,
Bearing their burdens, from WITHIN.*

*In doing so, Jesus ENPEOPLED us, that we might ENPEOPLE others:
To do so for creatures who, theoretically, might be of an inferior nature
Would be heroic, noble;*

But to do so, for EQUALS, is to be DIVINELY human.

For this is what Jesus IS

*– Profoundly human, with a divine capacity for compassion
... Through inserting, into His Sacrifice, a love that is also DIVINE.*

Because His Divine Love is sourced in DIVINE EQUALITY,

Christ ENPEOPLES us, within His Risen Person,

So we face the world, as US and I

... Which is how God IS,

Three Persons EQUALLY

Together One.

¹⁶ Rom 12: 5, Eph 4: 25

¹⁷ Lk 22: 32

A Divinely Human Happiness ¹⁸

*Happiness is the consciousness
Of our holistic growth as persons.
Such consciousness comes alive in the human being
In whom there is balance
— A balance between body, heart, mind, and spirit.*

*In Jesus the man, there was and is ...
A perfectly integrated humanity:
Heartened by others, He moved to hearten them;
In truly living through His body
Jesus bodied His heart, mind, and spirit
To His brothers and sisters,
As total gift.*

*Jesus brought a wonderful, harmonious balance
To all He was as a person,
Wisely integrating —
Speaking, with silence,
Activity with rest,
Receiving with giving,
Responsiveness with creativity,
Self-expression with selflessness,
Poverty of spirit with self-sacrifice.*

*While His consciousness of being an integrated person
Made Jesus, deeply happy ...
Immeasurably enhancing and wondrously suffusing all this,
Was His profound, graced experience
Of COMMUNING continuously with His Abba-God.
Indeed, Jesus truly exults, as a human being,
In this mutually celebrated relationship:
‘The Father loves the Son,
And has placed all things in His hands’; ¹⁹*

¹⁸ Rome Tertianship, 1991

¹⁹ Jn 3: 35

*Yes, 'I live because of the Father',²⁰
For 'You Father, are in me, and I in you'!²¹*

*This growing sense of IDENTITY with Abba,
In their mutual relationship, CENTERS Jesus' whole humanity,
Moving Him to be radiantly happy ...
Father, GLORIFY your Son
So that the Son may GLORIFY you'!²²*

*Thus, in Jesus' ASCENDING, to 'the love of His life',
Abba pours out Their Spirit
... Whom Jesus gives, 'without measure,' ...²³
Into our lives
Moving us towards that 'completed growth',²⁴
Found only within Himself.*

*His Spirit not only empowers us
Towards PERSONAL balance and integration,
But gathers us, TOGETHER,
Into a dynamic unity
— Based on His own CENTERING relationship with His Father:
'So that they may be one
AS WE ARE ONE!²⁵
I in them, and you in me
... So that the world may experience ...
That you have loved them
As YOU HAVE LOVED ME!'²⁶*

*This relationship is the template
For Church unity,
And for personal integration,
— The key to human happiness.*

²⁰ Jn 6: 57

²¹ Jn 17: 21

²² Jn 17: 2

²³ Jn 3: 34

²⁴ Eph 4 :13

²⁵ Jn 17: 22

²⁶ Jn 17 23

*Truly,
Divine loving empowers human loving!
Divine happiness transforms human happiness
... So that all can exult
In a divinely human happiness!
What a wondrous destiny!*

*Unhappily,
Sin disturbs this integration within each,
And disrupts the unity between us,
Setting our faculties ...
Setting personalities ...
At odds with each other
— Each 'going his own way'.²⁷*

*Happily,
The Spirit's foundational gift is holiness,
That is, WHOLENESS
... Integration and balance within each,
And unity and harmony between all.
And, because the Spirit indwells each of our spirits,
Re-vitalizing each,
Each person's being, made whole again,
Begins to RESONATE ...
In harmony with the Spirit,
... Becoming a cherished tune,
In Jesus Ascended's
Song of Love
To Abba!*

*More wondrously still,
This Spirit
Who draws Abba and Jesus
Together
In the Divine Symphony ...
Draws the spirit of all
— Together as one —
In Jesus Ascended
... Exhilarating in an Eternal Festival of Joy!*

With the Spirit, Contemplating the Word ²⁸

To be drawn
... Into contemplating the thinking of God
In the Sacred Writings
... Into celebrating the heart movements
Of the One who reveals all – IN LOVE,
Is to respond to God's Wondrously Special Word TO US
With our Word of Wonder TO GOD!
In doing so, we are profoundly graced, and profoundly grateful.

This primary grace of contemplation leads us –
To explore each Scripture character or event
As it were, from the 'outside'
... Sensately
... Contextually
Calling to mind,
That EACH relates always to God
And that each of these Divine 'facets' has relevance
To ever more deeply CHRISTIANIZING my relating to others.

Through this initial Spirit-led, Scriptural 'experience',
We are further drawn
To explore selected characters or events
From the 'inside'
... Empathetically
... Relationally.
We are drawn
To emotionally-spiritually IDENTIFY with each:
And then through the Spirit's urging,
To intuitively identify
With each of the Scripture's outcomes, as described.

*This graced Spirit-process
Opens our hearts,
Readies our spirits,
– To journey toward yet another sunset, within the Godscape of our lives,
– Or to gently prepare for another Divine sunrise in the unfolding of our lives.*

*For this to unfold,
The Spirit now LIGHTENS our way still further,
Gracing us with a deeper, more personalized focus,
As the Spirit draws us
To emotionally, personally IDENTIFY with JESUS
And WITH HIS RESPONSE ...
To these characters, to this event.
We are led to identify with Him,
Our brother
– As the Wondrous Word
Of God's Reality, for us –
So that, what is true and enabling for Jesus,
Becomes – naturally – OURS, to hold and to cherish!*

*Our graced sensitivity to the Spirit,
Now leads us, IN CHRIST, right within ourselves
To our Spirit's deepest movements
... Unsettling us
... Enthusing us
... Stilling us
So that, here, IN CHRIST,
... Where His Spirit encompasses us
... Where His Spirit embraces us
... Where His Spirit enables us
WE COMMUNE as His brothers and sisters
Sharing, perhaps,
... A wondrous insight
... A new feeling
... Or a call to change.*

*It is IN THIS COMMUNING,
That the Spirit
Focuses our hearts on Abba
– Causing us to be ABSORBED
Into His loving, rapturous Presence
... Our gaze meeting His,
... Our hearts welcoming, celebrating Each Other.*

*Again, we are enveloped as His Beloved,
As His Favourite!
The One in whom He delights!
For His part,
Abba is eager to deluge us
In torrents of Love ...
Flooding forth, unrestrainedly
From His Father's heart!
Gentling us,
Into that Peace
That knows no boundaries ...
Such is the grace of contemplating Scripture:
Of being Spirit-led ...
To both absorb God's Word of Intimacy to us,
And to voice our Word of Wonder to Abba!*

How Do We Compare? ²⁹

*It is our brother Jesus,
The one wholly transformative human being in our history,
The 'New Man', ³⁰ the 'New Creation', ³¹
... Eternally being raised up into Abba's embrace ...
Who becomes our brother-judge.
The Ascended Jesus becomes the touchstone, the criterion, the measure
Of OUR re-generated humanity:
Do we love like Jesus?
Are we AS responsive a son or daughter to Abba?*

*For Jesus Ascended,
Judgement is revealed AS HIS OPEN RADIANT PRESENCE amongst us.
For us, judgement is in encountering Jesus as He is
In His humble, loving, brotherly simplicity.
We sense how our struggling humanity
COMPARES
To His open, beautifully compassionate humanity.*

*The Jesus we meet,
Is Jesus Crucified, and now Glorified:
The Jesus Abba seats on the judgement seat of Fellowship,
– Jesus, the 'foot-washer', crowned with thorns,
And cloaked in the purple robe of Servant-Leadership,
Is now Face to Face with Abba
In the Circle of Love.*

*No questions, no statements, from Jesus the Judge.
The only questions arise within US :
Are we poor in spirit, like Him ?
Do we love those opposed to us?
Are we always responsive to others, AS equals ?
Are we faithful, trusting sons or daughters
Of our loving Abba ?*

²⁹ Rome Tertianship, 1991

³⁰ Eph 2: 15

³¹ 2 Cor 5: 17

Eyes of Love³²

*Just as we are responsible for what we eat,
So we are responsible for what we SEE.
It is easy to become 'a visual victim',
That is, a victim of the vast array of visual stimuli
 Flooding our brains,
 Assaulting our eyes,
 Crowding our memory banks,
 Invading our imagination,
 And firing our body chemistry!*

*We are also responsible for HOW we see –
Whether functionally, dismissively, engagingly,
 Or even, captivatingly
... Allowing what we see, to captivate us,
 Taking us captive!
And while asceticism of the eyes is necessary,
A Christian ought always look on the world,
 Lovingly
 ... With the heart of Abba
 ... With the simple gaze of Jesus,
 With His eyes of love
 ... And with the gentleness
 Of the Spirit of Love,
Who 'will guide us into all truth'.³³*

³² Rome Tertianship, 1991

³³ Jn 16: 13

Excluding Fatalism ³⁴

*Fatalism is a true opposite of FAITH :
This attitude of predestined helplessness
Is deeply UN-FREE,
And is, simply, precluded by people of faith
– Who, IN CHRIST,
Confidently believe,
In the countless possibilities of the human situation
... Personified, for them,
In their Incarnate God's boundless capacity
To respond to His brothers and sisters,
When asked.*

Other – Yet Brother! ³⁵

*The awesome OTHERNESS of God
Utterly overwhelms my spirit
With a sense of Infinite Difference!*

*But, it is this same God
Who lovingly chooses
To be Father to me!
To be Brother to me!
To be Companion Spirit to me!
... Tenderly drawing me
Into an enveloping Eternal Fellowship
Of depthless Intimacy!*

I 36

Enwombed³⁷

Scene – The Annunciation Basilica, Nazareth

*We arrived in Nazareth
To lodge in the Franciscan Casa Nova hospice,
With my room overlooking
The new Annunciation Basilica.
That night, I gazed out over its silvery dome,
Gleaming under a full moon.
I was just a hundred metres or so,
From the spot where Mary received the Invitation
– In our name –
To enable God's Son to enflesh Himself
Amongst us ...
Ever so silently,
Ever so gently.*

*Next day, summoned to consciousness just before dawn,
By the haunting chant of a Muezzin, atop the local minaret,
I decided to visit the Basilica, pre-breakfast.
Within, was a huge, multi-storeyed space
Enwombing
... Below the cutaway floor ...
The remnants of an early Christian Church
... Itself, enwombing
An ancient grotto.*

³⁶ The notation in the title indicates this is the FIRST of a SEPTET of Holy Land poems

³⁷ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem and the following six were inspired by and written on our Roman Tertianship Group's ten day pilgrimage (28 members in total) to the Holy Land, 16 to 25 October, 1991. It was life-focussing for me – enfleshing elements of Jesus' life within my spirit. The major foci were Jerusalem and Galilee. These Holy Land Poems reflect aspects of my diary for this trip. I have arranged the poems into a distinctive SEPTET – and in the CHRONOLOGICAL order of Jesus' life, and not in the order they arose on the tour. The following scene descriptions are not *titles*, but emphasize the *locus* for each poem. This poem celebrates the Annunciation in Nazareth.

*My eyes, and heart, were DRAWN
To a special space
Fronting the cave's entrance
– A space, immediately below the Basilica's lantern dome,
Towering a full forty metres above.
HERE
The Annunciation took place!
HERE
God became human!
Here, Mary gave our consent
To the Mystery of Love, to envelop us all
... To ENWOMB US, in Jesus, with tenderness,
As a glister within Mary.*

*I gave myself
To this Eternal Mystery,
Of God becoming flesh and blood ... wed to a human spirit,
Atomized
Into a cellular human presence
– En-Spiriting a Divine Person
Who yearns
To walk, hand in hand,
Heart to heart,
With us.
I knelt,
And kissed the spot,
And breathed the Trinity Song
... Jesus, in my life I see,
You are God who walks with me' ... ³⁸*

*At Eucharist ... here ... that same evening,
The enwombed Jesus
Whispered to me,
That I 'whisper' to Him continually ...
In the midst of all my activities,
Within all my dreams and imaginings,*

And from the very heart of all my hurts.

*He asked me to NOT be afraid,
To say 'YES'
To ALL His Spirit's promptings.
He asked me to gaze
On the utter poverty of a God
Who lived this simple molecular existence,
Totally dependent ...
On Mary, His creature,
And on the earthly environs
He had fashioned as His HOME!
At the Consecration, I dedicated myself, in Jesus, to Abba
– As 'an adopted orphan child'
... Who dearly needs His fathering, as well as Mary's mothering.*

II ³⁹

Born of This Earth ⁴⁰

Scene – Birth Cave, Bethlehem

*Adam, our first human,
Has a name meaning 'of the earth';
'Human' itself, resonates powerfully with this
... Being derived from 'humus', meaning 'soil'.*

*Jesus, the Second Adam,
HERE ... at Bethlehem
Is born within the very embrace of the earth,
Within a partly subterranean cave
... Identifying with our earthy humanity,
Grounding His whole being in our reality!*

*Bethlehem's Nativity Grotto
Was an uplifting place of grace for me:
HERE
I knelt,
A few feet from the spot
Where God became a baby, 'born for us'
... A God-baby everyone feels free to approach,
... To cradle within one's arms,
To kiss and cuddle,
... His cheeks warming ours!*

*Here
I lit a candle,
A tongue of light ... for a truly ADORABLE baby!
A flame of hope, a flame of offering
Aflame with love!
This candle I brought back to Australia
Until it burnt itself out, a symbolic holocaust
... To this man of earth.*

³⁹ This notation indicates the SECOND of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁴⁰ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated in the Nativity Grotto, Bethlehem

III⁴¹

The Spirit of the Lord Seizes Me!⁴²

Scene: The Synagogue, Nazareth

Within Nazareth's Jesus-era Synagogue

*Jesus Himself STOOD,
Summoned His courage,
And PROCLAIMED –*

*'The Spirit of the Lord has seized me!
He has sent me to bring ...
Prisoners freedom ...'*⁴³

*For me, here in Israel,
In this Synagogue,
I heard AGAIN*

*My very own MINISTRY CALL
'To bring prisoners freedom'
– From years before,*

*In an Aussie monastery garden –*⁴⁴
ECHO IN MY HEART!

*Hoping that this clarion call,
This GRACE-FOR-OTHERS,
Would continue to resonate
In the lives of these prisoners
Whom I was then teaching,
... I felt moved
To SING in response,
Very, very quietly ...*

*'You sent me, to give the Good News – to US POOR!
Tell prisoners, 'Now, WE are prisoners, NO MORE!'
Tell blind people 'Now, WE can see!'*

*And set the downtrodden free: 'We're free!'*⁴⁵

⁴¹ This notation indicates the THIRD of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁴² Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated in the Nazareth Synagogue

⁴³ Lk 4: 17-18

⁴⁴ See explanation Poem 99

⁴⁵ My re-writing of a popular hymn - full text in my Walk Book.

IV⁴⁶

Our Fountain of Fellowship⁴⁷

Scene: The Cenacle, Jerusalem

My Paschal Pilgrimage, all within Jerusalem,

Began in the Cenacle

... Humanity's Supper Room ...

Where God, not only sat down and ate with us,

But INCREDIBLY! WONDROUSLY!

Gave HIMSELF to be our FOOD!

Ironically this room of Christian fellowship, now a declared Moslem 'Mosque',

Is, seemingly, deliberately, unadorned and unused,

Truly, humanity's loss ...

Nevertheless, its very spartan sparseness

Frees one's imagination

To refurbish it, to honour and embellish it

– With the profound REVERENCE it itself calls forth.

We need to enshrine it, in our hearts

– Threenise, as the place of the Last Supper

And, as the birthplace of three Sacraments

... Eucharist

...Priesthood

... and Reconciliation

– And the 'upper room' of Easter evening.⁴⁸

Eucharist alone

– The enabling 'Memorial of His Wonders'⁴⁹

Encapsulating the entire Paschal Mystery –

Deserves the most awe-filled devotion,

From the transformed hearts of faith

Who are NOURISHED by it.

⁴⁶ This notation indicates the FOURTH of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁴⁷ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated in the Cenacle, Jerusalem

⁴⁸ Jn 20: 19

⁴⁹ Mass, 16th Sunday of the Year

*Yet, the Cenacle has still more claim
On the Christian's fervour ...
Indeed, on our very FAITH:
HERE, TOO,
The marvel of Pentecost
Began the Era of the Spirit!
HERE, TOO,
Was Christianity's fountain of Fellowship ...
Where, with hearts assembled in harmony,
The Spirit of Jesus Ascended
... Pouring forth 'grace upon grace' ...⁵⁰
Gathered together the Church for the first time!*

*HERE, TOO,
In this most sacred of rooms,
Mary nurtured the assembly, as Mother,
While Peter and the Apostles
'Presided in charity'
Over a Community which met together
In 'continual prayer'.⁵¹*

*My spirit was overwhelmed
By being at this confluence point of humanity's renewal
... At being at the very epicentre of Christianity!
Celebrating Eucharist
Is the best of ways ... to hold in trust ...
This treasury of wonders!
... And we actually did so, together,
In the beautiful Franciscan 'Chapel of the Last Supper',
Adjoining the 'Islamic' Cenacle.*

*Later, I was graced to return, alone,
To this Holy of Holies,
On our very last morning in Jerusalem
... To let the Spirit of the Cenacle
Permeate my spirit,
To let this fountain of Fellowship
Connect me to all, IN Christ.*

⁵⁰ Jn 1: 16

⁵¹ Acts 1: 14

V 52

At the Crossroads of Our Hearts ⁵³

Scene: Calvary, Holy Sepulchre Church, Jerusalem

*Calvary stands
At the crossroads of our hearts:
We enter the shadow of the Cross, as individuals
– Because our heart's evil, ISOLATES;
We leave, COMPANIONED :
... Brothered by God, in Christ,
... Familied by the Father of All,
... En-Spirited with Life!
We enter, self-focussed;
We leave, with lives 'given up' for others! ⁵⁴
We enter, hearts seeking forgiveness;
We leave, offering forgiveness
To God-seeking hearts!*

*To Calvary's Mount,
– Symbolically, at noon, on Friday –
I brought all the best desires, of all those in my life
To be surrendered to Jesus Crucified.
With my hand touching the raw rock under Calvary's altar,
I re-pledged my VOWS ⁵⁵
... With Jesus, to Abba.*

⁵² This notation indicates the FIFTH of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁵³ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated at Calvary in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

⁵⁴ Lk 22: 19

⁵⁵ Vows of Gospel Poverty, Chastity and Obedience

*I then earnestly asked Jesus
For the FOUR GRACES of my Tertianship*

- The grace of vocation ... that Jesus DAILY CALL ME to follow Him*
- The grace of time ... that EACH OCCASION become a source of blessing*
- The grace of place ... that EACH LOCATON become a source of blessing*
- The grace of memory ... that re-calling the graces of time and place*
Would move my heart to prayer.

*At the foot of the Cross,
I opened my heart to the special grace
That Jesus' humanity
Become a powerful CENTERING reality for me.*

*On my last day, I returned to Calvary's Mount,
Sitting next to an Arab Christian lady
... Whose mother and brother had just DIED.
It was THROUGH HER SORROW, HER SPIRIT,
That I offered the Eucharist.
Calvary truly transfigures
Our human suffering.*

VI⁵⁶

Raised from the Earth⁵⁷

Scene: Christ's tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

*Is it not a loss that the site of Jesus' Resurrection
... Within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre ...
Specifically, Jesus' actual burial chamber,
Is so MARBLED OVER, and OVERHUNG with lamps,
That the immediacy, the very earthiness,
Of being BURIED,
Is almost wholly obscured?*

*Ultimately, the reality of Jesus Risen
Is that He was lovingly RAISED UP by Abba
Not as a heavenly man,
But AS A MAN OF EARTH!
Indeed, His glorified body
Bears, ETERNALLY,
Five raw gaping flesh wounds
– Five humble witnesses
Of His identification with our earthiness,
And with our EARTH BOUND pain and suffering.*

*At the START of His life, following His birth in Bethlehem,
Jesus emerged from an earthen, subterranean cave
As a man of earth, sharing OUR EARTHLY IDENTITY.
At the END of His life, following His re-birth, as 'the NEW MAN',⁵⁸
The Risen Jesus bends low,
To emerge from His tomb's earthen embrace
– Sharing HIS HEAVENLY IDENTITY with us!*

⁵⁶ This notation indicates the SIXTH of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁵⁷ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated at the tomb in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem

⁵⁸ Eph 2: 15 (JB)

*Thus, to become members of this Second Adam,
We also bend low,
And we especially need to, IN SPIRIT –
To be humble
... To be as lowly as the 'humus', the soil of earth.*

*To thus identify with Jesus' 'NEW HUMANITY', ⁵⁹
Is to be REGENERATED
– To be drawn forth out of disjointedness and death,
And to be RE-PERSONED, in Jesus Risen,
... Opened to all reality,
With Jesus' divinely human openness!
It is to become the NEW MAN
– A man of earth
With the vision of the Son of God!
– A man of time
Empowered as the Beloved of Eternity!*

⁵⁹ Eph 2: 15 (NRSV)

VII⁶⁰

The Ascension: The Climax of the Paschal Mystery⁶¹

Scene: Mount of Olives, Jerusalem

*The site of the Ascension,
A woe-begone little hut,
Stands, isolated at the centre
Of a forlorn circular enclosure
Yet still with a commanding view, overlooking Jerusalem.
Does all this perhaps reflect
How we presently value the Ascension
... As an afterthought to the Resurrection?*

*It is true that the hut's Islamic Arab guardians,
Own the site, and offer a minimal memorial
– But, how faint, are our protestations ...
How feeble, our efforts at re-negotiation ?
The entire cramped space within the hut
– Enough, perhaps, for a dozen standing adults –
Is 'centred' on a flat rock,
The natural top of the Mount of Olives' ridgeline!
Two shallow, natural depressions, set into the rock,
Could represent Christ's footprints.
In the mind's eye,
The numerous, milling disciples of 2000 years ago
Contrast, starkly, with today's confined 'dozen' ...*

*For me, nevertheless,
The wondrous splendour
That is the Ascension,
Still shone through!
From this spot,
Jesus Risen, radiant with Abba's Glory for us,
Leads all of us,
With all of creation,
To the bosom of God, His Father
– Now wondrously become
'Our' God!
'Our' Father!*⁶²

⁶⁰ This notation indicates the SEVENTH of a SEPTET of Holy Land Poems

⁶¹ Holy Land Pilgrimage, October 1991. This poem is situated on the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem

*Unlike that windowless hut's 'closedness',
Jesus' Spirit of the Ascension
OPENS US
– Within the divinely-human OPENESS of Christ –
To the loving boundlessness of God, our Father!*

*The Ascension
Is the LOCUS
Of our very encounter with Divine Fellowship
... Inviting us
Into Abba's and Jesus Ascended's
Eternal Embrace!
In human terms, it is Jesus Ascended's very PERSON
That is the LOCUS
... Of every prayer,
And of ALL communing –
Of the Divine within the human,
And of the human within the Divine!*

*Indeed, the Ascension is the climax
Of the Paschal Mystery
– Of Jesus' culminating surrender to Abba, of His Person,
And of Abba's ultimate drawing of Jesus to Himself.
In everyday terms,
Every EUCHARIST
Culminates in this Ascensional Embrace
... Initiating, or intensifying,
Human Fellowship with the Divine!*

*Unsurprisingly,
This hidden Reality of the Ascension
Is only revealed through the Spirit,
To those with hearts of faith.*

Jesus' Dialogue with Me ⁶³

Jesus: *Tom, I would like you to be*
An apostle of forgiveness
Especially to those
Who are blighted by a fixated love. ⁶⁴

Suffer with them,
Show them my love;
Touch them with compassion.
Gentle them into true love
... Into a forgiving love,
... Into a deeply receptive love,
Into a love, of course,
That overflows to others, in Me.
Incorporate your suffering for these others
– Suffering which is ‘still wanting
For My body, which is the Church’ – ⁶⁵
Constantly, within the Eucharist.

Tom: *Jesus, shouldn't I have my own love*
First strengthened
... Through experiencing Your love
Work its strengthening in me?

Jesus: *Of course, Tom ...*
I will come to console, purify and empower you
In these coming months:
Leave yourself open to My love,
And to My timing.

⁶³ Rome Tertianship, 1991. Following our return from the Holy Land to Rome and the Tertianship and on the advice of my Spiritual Director (Fr Bill Hogan CSC) to discern Jesus' DESIRES for my future, I wrote this dialogue/poem after two days of prayer.

⁶⁴ In my ministry to prisoners, I had already been a presence to such guys and would continue to be so

⁶⁵ Col 1: 24

Brother Forgiven⁶⁶

*Jesus CALLS me –
To companion Him
To brother Him:
Being identified, for me, most poignantly,
As PRISONERS
... Young men, for the greater part ...
Held captive
... By their fears,
By their loneliness,
And by their pervasive lack of self-worth.
Most are part victim, part offender
– Like each of us ALL
... Though they, perhaps, in more dramatic ways.*

*Jesus GIFTS me –
To be brother to them
A brother, together in weakness,
A brother, together in failure,
A brother, together in sin,
But a brother FORGIVEN!*

*Jesus SENDS me
– Brother forgiven –
To these, my own,
With the gift, newly received,
And now, newly given
– FORGIVENESS –
ENABLING ME ...
To carry their crosses,
To share burdens on the WAY.
In so doing, it happens,
That I draw upon THEIR strength*

To carry mine!

*Thus, through wounds exposed, mutually
– Wounds Jesus has made His OWN –*

We are DRAWN

*By the Spirit of Calvary,
Into the Body of Christ.*

HERE,

Both are healed, tenderly,

By a loving Father,

IN the Spirit of Jesus,

Who makes all whole:

... 'By His wounds, we are all healed'.⁶⁷

Through the Sign of the Cross ⁶⁸

*All my blessings
Come through the sign of the Cross.
Christ empowers me most in my weakness.
His deep and tender love for me
Radiates through my whole world
... From out of my weakness ...
Drawing my life together, in simplicity.*

*Jesus chooses, as Lamb of God,
To enter into the core of my sinfulness.
It is from the heart of my darkness
That His healing light saves me:
The Lord of Easter Glory
Turns what needs the sunlight of love
Into a radiant image, of His own wondrous Light!
O Mystery of Eternal Love
... 'Becoming sin, that I might become son'! ⁶⁹*

⁶⁸ Rome Tertianship, Oct 1991

⁶⁹ Anon

Abba's Desire ⁷⁰

Abba
Desires to give Himself to us eternally ...
He wants to surrender Himself
To the person He has created ...
Abba yearns to be invited
– From infinitely within –
Into OUR human heart:
Needed only – the words
'Our Father ...'
Abba loves
To shine
FORTH
In
Us
In, and as, His Beloved Child, Jesus.

My God Within ⁷¹

My God WITHIN

Makes love to me ...

Gentle parting with my self needs be ...

Gently, gently to LET SLIP –

Choice of timing

Choice of occasion

Choice of words

Words themselves

Thought itself

Choice itself

Contemplation itself

The experience itself

Even the gifts given ...

Love given

Joy given

Peace given

...Only OPEN to receive

The SAME to give ...

O God, You meet me

– Not I, You

... I only OPEN

To You WITHIN ...

To Nurture Self Worth ⁷²

To NURTURE SELF WORTH –

Accept YOURSELF :

*Value your strengths
For who you are,
Value your weaknesses
For who you can be,
Honour your past
Both strengths and weaknesses
... Teachers, both.*

Accept OTHERS :

*Let them love you,
So, feeling loved,
The more loving you can be ...
Because we become ourselves
Through others.*

Accept GOD :

*Accept God and God's love, for free,
Thus, the more human we'll be;
And being freed by love,
We'll sense our core identity
... To belong to God,
God's children be!*

Avoid two double standards :

*First, to profess to love the other,
As he is, with his weaknesses
... While not loving myself
BECAUSE on my weaknesses!
Second, to profess to love myself,
As I am, with my weaknesses
... While not loving the other
BECAUSE of his weaknesses!*

*Both double standards subtly establish a limit
Beyond which acceptance is not offered:
The more subtle – the more emphatic the denial of limits.
For its part ...
Acceptance is always simple.*

Love, Our Teacher⁷³

God is love:

His love we need ...

To pray, to commune:

Only those who love,

Can teach us either.

Yes, only friends can make my heart

A praying and loving heart ...

So, love not to SERVE people only,

But to love them INTO LIFE!

God Communing Within Us ⁷⁴

*The Father made us for Himself,
And gave us an orientation to Himself
Which is the essence of our nature.
Adam's and our disowning of this orientation
Called forth from the Father
An overwhelmingly loving response.
His gift to us of Jesus,
Both as the template and the enabler
Of our transformed and elevated humanity,
Not only restored our orientation
But PERSONIFIED and DIVINIZED it
– Drawing us,
... In the very Person of Jesus Ascended ...
Into the heart of the Trinity!*

*The Life for which the human heart was created,
– Now, RE-CREATED, IN CHRIST –
Is wondrously, BEING LIVED WITHIN IT!
Abba, Jesus Ascended, and Their Paschal Spirit
Live Their Life of Love
Within us!
There are NO boundaries beyond which
They will NOT share with us.
They draw us into Their ETERNAL COMMUNING!
They love Their Life
INTO US!
With God's Gift, we have become AS GOD!
DRAWN, BY LOVE ...
TO LOVE ...
FOR LOVE ...*

Jesus, the Powerless One ⁷⁵

*Jesus of Nazareth was a powerless man,
A needy, dependent person:
Needing the support of the Twelve,
Heeding suggestions, changing His mind,
Needing the companionship of women,
Looking to the affirmation all friendship gives,
Seeking others, when feeling weak or alone.*

*But Jesus was also powerless – by CHOICE :
Identifying with the poor and lowly,
Identifying with sinful humanity,
Submitting to religious and civil authorities,
And, ultimately, not resisting –
Either His voluntary identity as a despised criminal,
Or His entry into a completely powerless death.*

*Yes, in His life, unto death
Jesus accepted surpassingly :
The utter dependency of His own humanity
On His Abba-Yahweh,
Emptying Himself of even the slightest aspiration
To self-power,
Allowing the boundless power of Abba-Yahweh
To transcend His whole being
To the last shimmer of light within His spirit,
And to the last tracery of what is human
... Totally surrendering all
In trust.*

*Yet, wondrously, it is through
His very powerlessness
– In life and in death –
That Jesus EMPOWERS others
... And all creation.*

Crucified for Love⁷⁶

*Religious Life VOWS unlock the potential for love
Planted by God in our personalities,
... Allowing us
To unlock the love potential in others.
These Gospel Vows are three special ENERGIES
For loving DEEPLY
... Allowing us
To integrate our lives with others, deeply,
Therein, becoming able to truly Christianize them.*

*Religious Life vows are a call to SACRIFICIAL love
– To enter into Jesus' broken, victim condition
... There to be transformed –
Into the cross-carrying lover,
One with 'the suffering servant,'
A loving, uncomplaining brother.
This call to sacrifice,
This entry into vowed vulnerability,
Is, ultimately,
To be crucified for love.*

Human like Christ⁷⁷

*Nothing human is alien to God:
In His utter surrender to His Son
Abba pours His whole being, eternally,
Into our humanity ...
No pain, but He is there,
No sensation, a stranger to Him,
No expressiveness that lacks His sensitivity,
No activity, He does not love into being.
He loves what we love –
When our heart rejoices
The rejoicing is His, and ours.
He fathers us into life, loving life into us,
Delighting fully in our humanity!*

*Sin alone lacks His presence;
Sin is choosing to close out God;
Sin is experiencing Abba's absence ...
Though absent He is not.
Sin is negating our humanity ...
Being less human, less like Christ,
Who so values our humanity
That He entered into sin,
Becoming sin,
Dying of it,
De-humanized ...
But only, so Abba could regenerate
Our humanity anew ...
Elevating it, glorifying it,
Drawing it within the Divine Fellowship!*

*Thus, our vocation, here, is to be truly human ...
To enter into full communion with all, in Christ,
So we can become more fully human –
As we are Eucharist to each other,
Be Word of God to each other,
And, being ‘members of each other’,⁷⁸
Serve Christ in each other.*

*Moreover, we become more fully human
The more we own our choices ...
Because we focus energy by our choices ...
Defining ourselves, identifying ourselves,
And above all, valuing and enhancing others:
Are our choices now,
Worthy of our future, in Christ?*

*Our desire for human wholeness
Prompts us to create possibilities
For each person, for every group,
To achieve fullness of human life.
The quality of life in each,
Is enriched, or diminished,
By that of every other.*

*Working for justice is an organic part
Of our communal growth, maturity and fulfilment.
Every step to expand human freedom,
Human dignity and rights, education, and health
Enlarges us all, dignifies us all.
Inequality, ignorance and dominance
– If deliberately imposed –
Diminish the humanity of us all,
Crucifying the Body of Christ.*

*To humanize – and thus Christianize – our history
We must actively enter into it.
By valuing each other's past,
By empathizing with each other's present ...
We can humanize our future together!
By co-ordinating resources, co-opting intelligence
And co-visioning goodwill and togetherness,
We empower our humanity to fulfilment, in Christ,
Christ ... its source, its growth, its glory!*

*The inhumanities people visit upon each other
Ought energize our humanity to respond,
As would Christ, our brother –
To let the Word raise the questions to be asked,
To become Eucharist, broken for our brothers and sisters,
To be transformed together, in Jesus' Paschal Spirit ...
To be drawn together in communion,
To celebrate our humanity – old and new – together ...
Victims and offenders becoming one Humanity to Christ,
Becoming Lamb of God to any 'lion',
Inviting these gentled lions into our sheepfold,
So as to love one another, as Jesus loves us,
To be human like Christ.*

The Free, Fast Gift of Forgiveness ⁷⁹

*We receive ourselves, as gift, from others – the Other.
Deep self-worth and identity arrive with forgiveness:
Our awareness of the depth of our sinfulness
Comes painfully alive
In the love of others – of the Other
... From a graced awareness
Whose seed is sourced, in God Within.*

*To face our sinfulness, apart from God,
Is always destructive: never renewing.
But, shame and confusion ARE part of its journey
... Which, without God,
Surely end in grief and, ultimately, in death
... The death of a dream, a relationship, or a life.
Yet, the free, fast gift of forgiveness
Replaces all with God's warm, enlivening Presence.*

*Still, forgiveness for limited man, is conversion by degrees:
We do not easily surrender
All of our heart, all at once.
We do not even see most of our shadows ...
And so, subconsciously,
We hesitate, we qualify, we waver.
Yet our loving God,
Who designed us,
'Does not break the crushed reed
Nor quench the wavering flame.'⁸⁰*

*The surpassing love of others, of the Other, DRAWS US,
Time after time, into the Paschal journey:
We enter
Heads bowed and humbled,
With Christ, into death:
Easter forgiveness, its victory over sin,
Turns life into wonder, thanks and praise!...
'Bring to mind all that the Lord has done for you'.⁸¹*

⁷⁹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

⁸⁰ Is 42: 3, Mt 12: 20

⁸¹ Psalm 105: 5

*Forgiveness, in its re-orientation of our spirit,
Always invites our active engagement.
If passive, we 'show little love' for Jesus' sacrifice; ⁸²
Indeed, not to depth our humiliation, our self de-humanization,
Is, to underestimate sin's addictiveness, and potency for chaos,
– To take God's death for nothing,
– To devalue God's glorifying in our humanity,
– To make light of God's Eternal Love!
The simple need is to empty our hearts of wilfulness,
To deeply, deeply TRUST in Abba's limitless love,
And gently, tenderly,
Allow ourselves to be lifted into Life
By Love.*

The Spirit of Eucharist ⁸³

*For the disciple of Jesus,
To receive His Spirit,
Is to receive –*

A new zest for life

A new empowerment

A new confidence

A new sense of accompaniment!

A new direction in life,

A new courage,

A new sense of purpose,

In Jesus' affirming presence,

They experience –

Being companioned,

Being brothered,

Being gathered

Together in harmony,

To CELEBRATE

Their constant renewal through His Presence

... Most especially in Eucharist!

This is PERSONIFIED

In the Spirit of Eucharist,

Who INTEGRATES

Their ongoing renewal in Jesus' brothering presence

Within the CORE life-realities

Of

SERVICE, SUFFERING, and SACRIFICE.

The Well's Depths ⁸⁴

A contemplation on 'the water in the WELL' of Jn 5 ...

*To look at a dim reflection of myself
On the mirrored surface, of this divinely deep pool,
Is to glimpse the truth of my own deep being.
It is to experience myself, in my origins,
In the EMBRACE, of the depths of God:*

– Of Abba,

*Who, lovingly and boundlessly,
Fathers me into Life;*

– Of Jesus Ascended,

*Who brothers me with deep peace,
And with the most heartfelt affection;*

– Of Loyce,

Their Spirit ...

*Rising, soaring, free within,
Integrating all I am, and all WE are together!*

To brighten my dim reflection, Christ, humanity's shining light,

Needs to shine, more transparently, WITHIN me!

When this happens, Abba catches sight of His Beloved,

Joying in the wonder of His love!

Out of Their encounter,

Arises an INVITATION to me

... Not only to drink of its depths,

But to PLUNGE,

Heart first,

Into the depths of God ...

Jesus ⁸⁵

*Jesus, so loving, so lovable
I embody You as brother,
So as to love You, in the other.*

*Beloved Jesus, when I drink water,
I'm quenched by You, our Living Water!
Beloved Jesus, when I eat bread,
I hunger for You, our Bread of Life!
Beloved Jesus, when I drink wine,
I can taste Your own blood, poured out for us ...
Loving Jesus, when I search for a way out of confusion,
I find it in You, our Truth.
Loving Jesus, when I sorrow for a person who's victimized,
I feel for You, our Lamb of God, on Calvary.
Lovable Jesus, when I long for inspiration,
I'm surprised by You, Light to our world!
Lovable Jesus, when I ache for friendship and community,
I discover it in You, the Vine, life for us branches!
Lovable Jesus, when I long for excitement in life,
I rejoice in You, Source of Life! Vitality itself!*

*O Jesus, Beloved and Lover –
When I stray in life, You're at my side, a compassionate shepherd.
When I'm captivated by the beautiful, I delight in You, life's Ecstasy!
When I apologize, I'm raised up in You, cheek to cheek with Abba ...
When I suffer for others, I'm nailed with You, O Crucified Love!
When we love, with Your love, we become the loving family
Of Your loving Father!*

Lives Wedded ⁸⁶

*Jesus Ascended so yearns to share
Who He's become for us,
He instinctively leads us
On every occasion to His Father
... To Their Embrace in the Spirit,
So that each successive invitation
Draws us, AS FAMILY,
To accept Abba's love,
In an ever deepening experience.*

*As blooms opening to the sun,
We become exquisitely conscious
From Jesus' personal tenderness and care ...
Of our own glaring selfishness,
Of our sin's need to be nailed with Him,
... So that we are raised up and empowered
– Wounds made whole, lives wedded,
As sons in the Son, daughters of Abba!*

*Eager to share Abba's Ascensional Embrace,
... With those receptive to Love's Gift ...
Jesus Ascended overwhelms us,
With a brother's exhilaration,
As His Spirit creates in us:
... Hearts bursting with wonder,
... Voices stilled, in awe,
... Lives opened in thankfulness.*

Eternally Called ⁸⁷

*Our first call,
Our first 'Come follow me' echoing within,
Our first invitation to share God's Eternity,
Is my call from nothingness into existence!
It is the fashioning of my 'I'
... The loving fashioning of my parents' contributions
Into God's own Image!
But ...
So surpassing is the love of Abba's creative heart,
That His love OVERFLOWS
– To fashioning a dwelling place
For the Eternal Persons Themselves,
In the heart of our spirit!*

*This dwelling place is subliminal to our consciousness
– Beyond any dream we'd ever have!
This Presence becomes real through faith,
... Also God's OWN gift!
Entry is only with, and in, the crucified Jesus of Glory
... Be that known or unknown.
Within our spirit,
Christ's Calvary Spirit is creative ...
Both of the healing of our sinfulness,
And of our very desire to seek union with God ...*

*Our homecoming to the Eternal Presence within,
Is a Calvary journey
Into the heart of our own spirit.
HERE, human fulfilment needs be
What it was in Jesus
– Total surrender of any human possibilities to Abba.
It is complete openness to, and complete mutuality with,
Our Creator's desire for us.
Love, eternally offered,
Embraces us in Jesus, with Fatherly tenderness
Breathing forth, in the joy and peace of the Ascension,
Their Eternal Spirit.*

*This journeying to the God of our spirit,
Is not taken consciously or unconsciously:
It is BEYOND all human capability or effort
– Active or passive.*

*It is PURE gift,
ALWAYS.*

*Any 'sense' of it, is dependent only
On God's Eternal Graciousness.*

*It can never be EXPRESSED
Other than through metaphor:
Retaining sunshine in our hands
Would be a far easier human achievement!*

*Simply, we are asked to constantly call to mind,
This most wondrous of all gifts
– That God, within our hearts,
Who called us into being,
Calls us NOW, into ...
Eternal Intimacy, Fellowship and Family Life!*

Finger to the Button ⁸⁸

Human nature is deeply ORIENTED TO GOOD

– Eternally so;

And, in extremis,

It is not so much evil or revenge

That would be the real impetus

To press the nuclear button

... But the far more ambivalent force

– Fear.

Only the human heart, seized by FEAR,

Would guide our finger to the button.

Evil or revenge only gain root

From fear of suspected others

Or, worse,

From fear of faceless others.

Trust removes fear:

Trust first begets courage to FACE fear,

Then begets compassion to heal wounds;

This mutuality gives birth to peace-seeking hearts

... Who walk the road to harmony,

And, with deeper trust,

Both value and love

Those they once feared!

Overwhelmed! ⁸⁹

*There's no human reason
For the boundlessness,
For the unconditionality,
Of God's love for us;
It makes no human sense.*

*We can't stop God's love,
We can't change its character,
We certainly can't earn this love
– Even with our most loving behaviour.*

*The incomparability of God's Mysterious Love,
Its depthless goodness, and utter beauty ...
Overwhelm us! Conquer us!
Transform us! Divinize us!
Our only response is wonder ...
With the deepest thankfulness ...*

Discipline: Disciple-ing Ourselves to Jesus ⁹⁰

*Abba is eternally horrified
At the pain and death of Jesus
– By the ultimate snuffing out of Life!
– By the death of His own Beloved:
... ‘The Beautiful Living Expression’
Of His own love,
DEAD!
Indeed, IN Christ,
ALL our hurts, isolation, disconnection,
The death of any life,
Is abhorrent to Abba!*

*God hates all such,
Eternally,
Desiring its total removal.
The pain inflicted on us, by nature,
Results, partially, from the disjointedness
Of our communal lives.
The pain originating from people,
Does so, more profoundly, and more often.
So, to these varying extents,
We ARE RESPONSIBLE.
For OUR contributions
To this accumulative matrix of disjointedness.*

*However,
Just being hard on yourself, and supposedly ‘in God’s name’
... Making others suffer ‘for God’s sake’,
Or, even worse, liking pain itself,
Is abhorrent
To the God who fathers us
With the tenderest compassion and affection.
What GOD wants
Is a disciple’s love,
And the discipline that is only ever an expression
Of the love of a DISCIPLE of Jesus.*

*Indeed, discipline is only ever healthy, and thus, holy,
If one 'disciplines oneself' to the Beloved
... Himself, the one loving Disciple of Abba!
To thus discipline oneself for Christ
– Even as suffering reveals its unwelcome face –
Is to 'do-the-disciple-thing':
To sacrifice oneself in the manner of Jesus.
Thus, being-a-disciple, and discipline,
Are twin faces of the one love.*

*Thus, we discipline ourselves
Only in the Presence of the love who cautions us –
'Do not let your hearts be troubled',⁹¹
'Do not look gloomy',⁹²
For it is He who reassures us
'My yoke is EASY, and my burden LIGHT',⁹³
While challenging us –
'Learn from me'⁹⁴
And 'Take up your cross and follow me.'⁹⁵
Clearly, Jesus is saying,
If suffering comes, and pain happens,
Accept it as a disciple's OPPORTUNITY
– For redemptive discipline
... To supply what is 'lacking'⁹⁶
In The Disciple's suffering,
'On behalf of His Body'.*

⁹¹ Jn 14: 27

⁹² Mt 6:16

⁹³ Mt 11: 30

⁹⁴ Mt 11: 29

⁹⁵ Mt 16: 34

⁹⁶ Col 1: 24

What Could Be More Natural? ⁹⁷

*The 'miraculous' is all part of life, not beyond it.
What makes people attend to the 'miraculous' ⁹⁸
Is the element of the unexpected, of wonder.
The religious person spontaneously sees
In utterly natural events,
The hand of the God of surprises and of wonder!
He wonders, anew, at God's infinitely creative Presence!*

*For the Evangelists, everything about God
Is a marvel and a revelation.
Jesus' changing water to wine, causes them to wonder
At God's providential care WITHIN the order of nature
... And not as something beyond nature's supposed limits.
For them, God eternally acts WITHIN nature,
And their miracle stories are NOT evidence
Of God 'breaking into' our world
– For God has never been absent from this world.
Rather, the wonders Jesus works,
Are revelatory SIGNS of His Presence!*

*Jesus' own guidance is our model here:
He asks us not to wonder, IMPERSONALLY,
But to wonder at God's Presence within life
– Cautioning those who look for 'signs and wonders' only: ⁹⁹
Place God first, in life, and everything else will follow
... NATURALLY.
For Jesus, only sin, and death-for-humans
Are outside of what is truly natural.
Indeed, sin disorders the nature of life itself.*

*For Jesus, in His childlike simplicity and trust,
The FRUITS of disordered nature
– Disease, fear, suffering, disabilities, unfaithfulness, death –
Give way to Abba's love ...
A love Jesus offers good naturedly, to ALL .*

⁹⁷ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

⁹⁸ The word 'miracle' comes from the Latin 'to wonder'

⁹⁹ Mt 13: 22 NAB

*Bathed in Abba's love,
A wounded untrusting, human race
Is being restored to health and wholeness
– What could be more NATURAL?*

*Slowly some begin to share Jesus' childlike reasoning :
Jesus believes that He works wonders
Because He is a trustful human being in Abba's Presence,
And that any other – all others – who trust in Abba's Presence,
Could work such wonders.
And Jesus presumes, quite NATURALLY,
That His disciples would work wonders
'Greater than' His own. . . .*

*Thus, we disciples need to accept
This belief of Jesus,
And that there are not two worlds
– One miraculous, and one ordinary –
But ONE LOVE-FILLED world:
His Abba-God is forever present at the heart of it,
Offering WHOLENESS to us
... And unending opportunities to marvel at His wonders!
Even our Abba-God's every inner whisper to us
Is to be wondered at, marvelled at!*

*However, the wonder surpassing all others
Is the entry of the Risen and Ascended Jesus
Into our world, within our lives.
Abba, who draws the Paschal Jesus to Himself
Draws ALL of nature, to wholeness,
In His Beloved, history's new-born offspring
– The ultimate expression of our nature,
And of that wider nature,
Co-extensive with ours – and His!*

*In this New Age of Jesus Ascended,
Sin and death themselves
Are stripped of their power over us
– The power to de-humanize, and to de-naturalize our lives.
Freeing us, Abba draws us, in Jesus Ascended, to Himself:*

Thus ENPEOPLED, Jesus, the 'new MAN', ¹⁰⁰
of humanity's new era,

Visibly walked among us, again, ¹⁰¹

In His, our, regenerated nature

*– Initiating here, as well, the re-configuring
Of wider nature to His own Person.*

In Him, we become 'a new creation', ¹⁰²

Re-natured in our humanity,

Through the Divinity of Jesus

– Both natures in Him, forming 'one seamless garment' ¹⁰³

... The garment, also, of OUR adoption!

In Jesus Ascended, all our relationships ...

To God, to people, and to wider nature,

Are TRANSFORMED!

To be drawn into Christ,

Is to participate in Jesus' divinized humanity

– Gifted, like Jesus, with 'the Spirit without reserve'. ¹⁰⁴

Faith alone enables this.

Lack of faith restricts us, blocking the Gift!

Only those deeply disciplined to Jesus

Can fulfil their nature's full potential

... By sharing in Jesus' RE-NATURED identity and destiny.

This new identity and destiny emboldens us to believe

That what is natural for Jesus, as the perfected human being,

Is, now, also natural for us, at home in Him.

And, wondrously,

What is natural for Jesus, as the Ascended Son of God,

Becomes natural for us!

... To share in God's own Fellowship! ¹⁰⁵

And more wondrously still ...

As the Ascended Jesus' giving us His Spirit

Is natural to Him, now, as a human being,

So it becomes natural for us,

– That loving community of disciples IN HIM –

To give His Spirit to others!

¹⁰⁰ For 'enpeopled' see note on Poem 168

¹⁰¹ The 'walked' refers to the time after the (theological) Ascension on Easter Sunday, Jn 20:17, but before the public Ascension forty days on

¹⁰² 2 Cor 5: 17

¹⁰³ Jn 19: 23

¹⁰⁴ Jn 3: 34

¹⁰⁵ See note on Poem 94

Humanity's True Creative Spaces ¹⁰⁶

*To truly educate
Is to create a space –
Where truth is evident,
Goodness obvious,
And love, experienced.
One of education's goals
Is altruism
... Consciously serving others' needs first,
Thus enhancing their self-worth.
This results
When truth is LOVED INTO ready hearts
– Hearts,
Which are humanity's TRUE creative spaces.*

The Kinship of God ¹⁰⁷

*For Jesus,
The kinship of God
Is the experience
Of living out
– Under Abba’s gaze –
What it means
To be TRULY human
... To be the fully human offspring
Of a Divine Father.*

*As such,
Jesus lights up for us
The way of authentic human living,
In the grace of ‘here’ and ‘now’.
Thus, He becomes for us,
The revelatory Light
Of our humanity,
And the nutritious Bread
For all our relationships!*

*For us,
Our CO-EXPERIENCING
Jesus’ kinship with God
Is living
... As a community of adoptees,
... Gathered as a family,
... En-Spirited
IN Christ
– The fully human sons and daughters
Of a Divine Father.*

Holding a People in His Heart ¹⁰⁸

Abba's love for us abides ... endures
... For it is everlasting.
This ever-faithful love is, essentially,
Abba's COVENANTED love
– The love by which He contracts Himself
To hold a people in His heart
ETERNALLY
– Embracing us AS His Son!

God's Glory¹⁰⁹

*God's Glory IS the Holy Spirit,
Radiating Abba's Empowering Presence
In Christ.*

*The Spirit's glorification of Jesus' humanity,
In Jesus Ascended,
Enables us to become
Wondrously human
— DIVINELY human
... To the Glory of God!*

Fired by Grace ¹¹⁰

*Human goodness
When fired by grace,
Always has us embracing life
... Not shrinking from it.
It elevates our minds to discern
The more DIVINELY human ...
Way-to-relate,
So that our transformed hearts
Always give birth
To love!*

Original Grace ¹¹¹

*Grace is more original than sin:
Thus our FOCUS
In contemplating our humanity
Ought to be on ORIGINAL GRACE first,
And then only,
In the light of this grace
– To thank God for Christ's victory
Over original sin.*

¹¹¹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

His to Give¹¹²

*O what a sweet sacrifice – to surrender ALL to Christ!
The gifts of my sexuality and affection are now HIS.
The wholesomeness I sense, is HIS to give.
Touch, now, becomes my special gift –
A sacrament ... of His Spirit,
Making whole,
Uniting.*

A Basic Choice ¹¹³

*Directing one's life
Godward
Is
A life-orienting
Humanizing choice,
Integrating one's life.*

*The sin that is ...
Death to the Spirit within,
Is
A life dis-orienting
De-humanizing choice,
Disintegrating one's life.*