

Another Magdalene ¹

*In the very early morn,
On the feast day of Mary Magdalene, ²
Abba awoke me, to invite me
“To pray AWAKE, the faith of all those in the world
Whose faith, sadly, is inactive or faltering.”
Confident in this moment of His bountiful loving power,
I bowed my head and my heart ... to His desire.
Seemingly as a response,
Abba further invited me
“To be a role-model of FORGIVENESS
... Re-born faith’s first fruit,
And the touch stone of its authenticity.”*

*I trembled
At the prospect of Abba’s glorious love
Lighting up so many hearts ...
And gently asked to have my “yes”,
Joined to the “Yes” of His Word,
Resonating in the Ascended Christ
– Forever stirring dormant spirits
To a re-vitalized faith !*

*As I lay there, I came to see WHY, many years earlier, ³
Abba had invited me to be
“An apostle of forgiveness”.
THEN, I had thought of this, as an outreaching personal effort ;
NOW, I know that Abba always realizes His forgiveness, both DIRECTLY
... But often THROUGH US,
Even using someone as transparently unworthy as myself.
Moved by the Spirit,
I felt a deep, deep need for this forgiveness ...*

1 Poem 520. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. July 2003.

2 At 3A.M. , July 22, 2003. 3 During the National Tertianship, 1980.

A Resonance of Christ ¹

*How glorious ! How wondrous !
Are Abba's tender invitations to us !
... To us,
His frequently distracted and regardless Children.
As Abba's Word
RESONATES in our world,
The Spirit urges us to listen WITH OUR HEARTS
... Even through our heartbeats
Are often arrhythmic to Jesus' .*

*As our spirits are empowered by the Spirit into a "yes",
The Word VIBRATES the cords of our very being
... Transforming, healing, enabling it
To resonate IN HARMONY with His
... Lovers' hearts resonating as one,
So that we become a Resonance of Christ
... Abba's Voice ALIVE in our world !*

¹ Poem 521. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. July 2003.

Affirmed As Equal ¹

*As God in Christ's human reality, is divine,
So God in Christ's divine reality, is human.
God in Christ is equally at home
With His humanity, as with His divinity.
God in Christ eternally takes His divinity into account
In His contemplation of His humanity, in Himself.
The Incarnation reveals historically,
Who God is Eternally !
Jesus Ascended is the Covenant, the Fellowship, the Church ...
In which God and humanity meet and commune.*

*Jesus, as true God, is man's faithful partner ;
Jesus, as true man, is God's faithful partner.
Christ constitutes, in His own Person
God's dignity within us,
And our dignity within God.
We are not only highly affirmed by God,
But, in Christ, affirmed as an Equal !
For this to be so, the Affirmation needs happen WITHIN God :
God affirms God as human, in Christ !
God loves God as human, in Christ !
Thus our humanity is Eternalized through God's uplifting love
—Through Abba's drawing us to Himself in Jesus Ascended.*

Yet God does more than lovingly affirm us :

In the Spirit –

He GIVES HIMSELF as the Pledge of His affirmation ;

He GIVES HIMSELF as the Reality being affirmed.

The Holy Spirit IS this Affirmation, this Pledge, this Reality

... Breathed forth between Abba and Jesus Ascended

–Centering the Relationship between Abba and Christ Jesus,

–Centering God's own Fellowship !

Eucharistic Surrender ¹

*O Spirit of goodness, Spirit of holiness,
Sanctify my heart
For today's Eucharistic Sacrifice.
Draw me into the very heart of human goodness,
Within Jesus' own heart,
Into a humanity so transcendently selfless
That it RE-CENTERS the Relationship
Between His Abba-God and Himself.*

Herein, Jesus sacrifices His' UNIQUENESS' in the Relationship FOR US !

- “So that, in Him, WE might become the goodness of God !” ²*
- “So that”, in Jesus' own words “the love with which Abba loves me,*

*MAY BE IN THEM,
So that I MAY BE IN THEM.” ³*

*What are the repercussion of this,
For Jesus' historical sacrifice on Calvary ?
Jesus there, does not sense God's love !
–Feeling, both deprived of Abba's friendship,
And, most crushingly, 'Fatherless'.*

He finally dies, FROM THIS SENSED LACK OF FATHERLY LOVE !

–So that WE may regain this lost love of ours ...

*Thus, O Spirit of Eucharist,
Settle all our desires, deeply, deeply
Within Jesus' Paschal surrender, for us,
Of His depthless relationship with Abba.
Enable us to offer His sacrifice, with His loving abandonment :
Submissive in spirit, with Him,
Empty of self and sin, like Him,
Holy and pure of heart,
Lamb-like for others,
Inclusive of all,
Full of love, full of thanks
– All for Your Glory, Abba !
Holy ! Holy ! Holy !*

1 Poem 523. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. August 2003.

2 2Cor 5:21 3 Jn 17:26

Prayer : Intimacy with God ¹

Prayer has to do ...
Neither with God-as-Abba, in Himself,
Not with us, in ourselves,
But with 'God-who-meets-man',
And with 'man-who-meets-God'
That is, with Christ !
Through Christ, we are invited
Into that RELATIONSHIP
Where in God-meets-God !

This prayer has to do
With the Breathing forth of two REALITIES
– "Beloved" and "Abba"
... That are, as one, in the Spirit !

Within this divine intimacy of prayer,
Within this Communing of the Divine Persons,
The Spirit is the Communing !
The Spirit is the Relationship !
The Spirit is the Enrapture ! ²
The Spirit is the Kiss ! ³

Thus, there is nothing to justify OUR setting any limits
To the intimacy of God towards us :
It is God who gives !
It is God who is the Gift !

It is God, only, who gives ALL !

It is only God who gives God !

Also, there is nothing to justify OUR setting ANY limits

... To our intimacy in response to God :

It is God, in Christ, who receives !

It is God, only, who receives ALL !

It is only God who receives God !

Our intimacy is not in MOVING TOWARDS God,

Is not getting CLOSER to God .

Our intimacy is in RECEIVING God :

IN the Person of Christ

–In Jesus Ascended,

Who receives Abba into His arms,

WITH the Grace, the Receptivity God gives

–This Grace, this Receptivity, being the Spirit !

1 Poem 524, Year 5 of Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Aug. 2003.

2 See poem 499.

3 See Poem 417.

Don't Stop Loving ¹

*Jesus knows and does God's will
In the midst of others' sin
Even ... in His "becoming sin for us": ²
That is, Jesus does God's will
Even as God's 'enemy'!
Voluntarily separated from God WITHIN HIS PERSON,
He dies because of it!
Abba's Beloved, in being thus separated from God,
Still does God's bidding
... 'Not to stop loving'...
Even while caught between
Being the Son of God
And a son-of-sin!
Thus, the God-filled Son of God
Fulfils God's will as a 'godless' man!

Because of this radical internal personal conflict,
Jesus exists, on the Cross,
At the extreme point of personal distancing
From His lovable, and most loving Abba.
Thus IN Christ, God's 'otherness' to Himself
Is INFINITE ... in regard to His sin-deluged self!
And infinitely painful!
But He who utters the Word of Eternal Surrender
– "Abba, into Your hands, I entrust my spirit" – ³*

Is also ... because of His divine-human simultaneity ...

Infinitely Other in an infinitely DELIGHTFUL way.

Indeed, Christ's "Abba ..."

–Within the Divine rhythm of time –

Causes the infinite distancing, His infinite 'otherness'

To become infinite closeness, infinite intimacy !

God is who He is, and what He does, in HIS WORD !

Thus God suffers, and endures His own negation, IN CHRIST.

When Christ dies, His separation from God involves God :

God DIES, for us,

In an utterly complete dying !

In an utterly complete outpouring of human life !

Yet, this emptying invites

An Eternal Infilling of Life

– The INTRAPERSONAL LIFE

Of the Ascended Jesus' humanity

Within the Divine Circle of Love !

This death-of-God-for-us fulfils Abba's command,

"Don't stop loving'.

Jesus CONTINUES TO LOVE through death,

And does so now, SACRAMENTALLY.

Because His Love Eternally triumphs ...

Communing, for us, happens now, and to come !

Contrarivise, His death, having EXHAUSTED God's condemnation,

Does the same for us, now and to come –

"I do not condemn you ; go and sin no more." ⁴

Yet, within the Mystery of Freedom,

*This Eternal assurance does not keep free-willed man
From wilfully, holding onto his own condemnation !*

*Yet, transcending ALL,
Is Jesus' Paschal Triumph, and Celebration of Life
—So that in all who are gifted with this Divine Life,
—In all His Saints —
Abba is exalted
In His Beloved
In the Spirit !*

1 Poem 525. Year 5 of Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Aug. 2003.

2 Cf 2Cor 5: 21.

3 Lk 23:46.

4 Jn 8:11.

Our Co-humanity with Christ ¹

Our humanity with Christ Ascended

Both shares in His earthly, physical being,

And also in His heavenly, glorified Person.

Thus our co-humanity is, IN Him, CO-EXTENSIVE

Both with the world – and with heaven !

Our co-humanity with Christ shares in

Christ's divine-human simultaneity,

And calls us to be as much AT HOME –

With receiving the Eternal pulse of Abba's love,

As with muscles, meals and the marketplace !

Our co-humanity with Christ is A KINSHIP

A brothering, a sistering, a communing !

Thus our prayer ... pre-eminently in Eucharist ...

Needs to arise out of this COMMUNING,

Out of our kinship as brothers and sisters

Of the one Christ – brother to all.

Our co-humanity with Christ has, as its only focus for prayer,

Jesus' own, and our own, Father.

Through this family focus, we resonate

With each and all of our kin :

Wondrously we are ALL channels

Of Jesus' Life to each other ...

His glorified blood coursing

Through all our arteries !

1 Poem 526, Year 5 of Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Aug. 2003.

The Relationship ¹

*In the beginning
Was The Relationship –
The Three Personed Communing
Received from, and gifted to,
Each Other, in love.*

*The Relationship gives birth to faithfulness –
To The Communing's COVENANT with us,
Embodied in Christ – as the Church
... A faithfulness-that-does-justice !*

*This justice is at the heart –
Of who Christ IS
Of who Christians ARE
Of love itself.*

*The Church is the earthly hologram of The Relationship.
Thus the Church needs, like Christ,
To sacrifice itself for the life of the world
– To proclaim Love
– To do Love
– To be Love
... Sacrificial Love.*

1 Poem 527, Year 5 of Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Aug. 2003.

Our Spirit, Good and Bad ¹

*As we become God's channel ...
Not only all That-is-of-God
Passes through us to others
... Blessing, enhancing, divinizing
Our channelling spirit ...
But all that-is-of-us ,
Of our spirit, good and bad.*

*The good passes from us
With transparent purity,
Blessing the other,
Promoting life ;
The bad has the capacity
To cloud, to disorientate,
To disorder ... even to corrupt
—The other's spirit,
Planting there, the seeds of death.*

*O Spirit of our spirits !
O Light of our consciousness!
Illuminate our spirits,
Purify our hearts.
Let only the good
Pass from us to others,
So that, like Jesus
We may "do all things well". ²*

1 Poem 528, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Aug. 2003.

2. Mk 7:37.

“But one Word ...” ¹

*Nobody
Can truly hear the Word
“Jesus”,
And, afterwards,
Breathe anything but
“Abba” ...
With their life !*

*We give glory to You,
Lovable, dearest Abba
– Transparent Goodness enclouded in Mystery –
For surrendering
Your whole loving reality
To Jesus ...
Who in You, O Spirit of Surrender,
Breathes forth
But one Word ...
“Abba !”*

1 Poem 529, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

Drawn into Divine Intimacy ¹

*While we are blest
In the humanity we co-possess with Jesus,
It is only through His Resurrection
That Jesus draws us
Into the divinization of our humanity,
And into an experience of intimacy,
Immeasurably beyond
What is humanly possible !
This experience of Divine Intimacy
Is a sheer gift
To our humanity.*

¹ Poem 530, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

“God Has No Grandchildren !” ¹

God has no grandchildren !

We also have no cousins, nephews, aunts or in-laws

IN THE LORD !

We are ONLY ever brother, or sister,

IN THE LORD !

People don't become members of God's Family

... By birth, blood-ties, or kinship with other Christians :

An earthly mum IN THE LORD becomes a SISTER to her child !

A grandchild IN THE LORD is only ever a BROTHER OR SISTER

To his or her grandparents !

A nephew IN THE LORD is only every a BROTHER to his aunty or uncle !

¹ Poem 531, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

Identifying with Abba ¹

Jesus speaks of Abba in His life
... As the One who loves Him lavishly
And whom He loves so fondly :
“Abba loves me ...” and “I love Abba ...” ^{2. 3.}
Jesus loves Abba as the One in His own life
Whom He truly desires to imitate
–I “do only what I see Abba doing” ⁴
... To the surpassing extent of IDENTIFYING with Him
– “I and Abba are ONE” – ⁵
So each co-indwells the other
– “I am in Abba, and Abba is in me.” ⁶

Jesus’ faithful reflection on this most intimate of relationships
Colours His whole vision of His life –
His sense of self, His destiny, His memory and imagination,
His very speech and its evocative imagery
... Incandescing all his feelings
... Suffusing all His body language
Setting His consciousness alight,
And prompting His every choice !

It informs His whole MISSION to humanity :

– “Abba, may they be one is us,

As You are in me,

And I am in You !” ⁷

– “I want those You have given me

To be WITH ME WHERE I AM” ⁸

– “As Abba sent me

So I am sending you :

Receive the Holy Spirit.” ⁹

Ultimately, Jesus’ destiny is an eternal return to Abba, with us !

Having “created one single New Man in Himself”, ¹⁰

Jesus exclaims

– “Now Abba, it is TIME for You glorify me

With that glory I had with You,

Before every the world was” ¹¹

... As He draws this “new humanity” into the heart of God ! ¹²

1 Poem 532, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

2. Jn 10:17

3. Jn 14:31

4. Jn 5:19

5. Jn 10:30

6. Jn 14:11

7. Jn 17:21

8. Jn 17:24a

9. Jn 20:21, 22

10. J.B., Eph 2:15

11. Jn 17:5

12. Eph 2:15 N.R.S.V.

Turning the Hearts of All to Love ¹

*To be, like Jesus,
... Identified with Abba ...
Is to bear the sufferings of the 'poor' and 'lowly'
– Jesus' very own 'little ones' ;
It is to open one's heart to sinners
And to turn the hearts of all to love !*

*Such a life
–Like Jesus' –
ATTRACTS Abba's enabling Presence,
Which fortifies us
To walk Jesus' path of sacrifice.*

¹ Poem 533, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

NOTE: See allied poem – Poem 532.

A Eucharistic Offering ¹

Jesus :

Abba, I bring to You

... This sacrifice of myself,

Your Beloved,

And therein :

–Each person in Your world

... WITHIN my being ...

– Every grouping

Especially the poor, the oppressed and the powerless

(Especially the aborted, the children of the divorced,

All abused children, and all orphaned children)

–Every communion of hearts

–And all TOGETHER

... All of us, in my PERSON ...

Radiating life and love to each other.

Abba, please accept

My self-sacrifice,

And enrapture us

... Each and all ...

With the totality of Your Love.

¹ Poem 534, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

NOTE: My Sunday Missal prayer.

To Be Anointed ¹

*The essence of being ANNOINTED
Is to be one with Jesus, standing in the Jordan
Anointed with the Spirit of Abba –
Consecrated for mission,
And sanctified for the poor and lowly.
To be the focus of Abba's Anointing
Is to be fully enveloped by the Spirit of Surrender
And wholly embraced AS Abba's Beloved !*

*To be thus anointed or en-Spirited,
Is to pledge to Abba, with Jesus :
'You are the One who fills up my senses ;
I breathe in the fragrance of Your Spirit ;
I delight in Your intoxicating Nearness,
... In Your cascading joy, so intense and intimate.*

*I am deluged by Your love,
Encompassed by Your goodness !
With eagerness I move to those to whom You send me :
That they may be one with US
... One in Your Love !
Together in Our Joy !*

1 Poem 535, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane, Sep. 2003.

Love, As You Are Loved ¹

“ _____ ”

*I fathered you, in love,
I redeemed you, in my Beloved Son,
I transformed you, in the Spirit of Grace,
... Drawing you wholly into the Family of Love
... Giving you countless loving brothers and sisters.*

*Your identity, 'to love as you are loved',
Is yours to claim and choose
As your destiny.
Yes ! The full revelation of living as My Beloved,
Is becoming one within Our Circle of Love
– Alive in the Spirit in the Divine Dance of Love !
...Abba.*

¹ Poem 536, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 1.

Sr. Yvonne Parker was the author's spiritual director.

The Two Shall Become One Body ¹

O Paschal Jesus !

Your Easter Body is mine :

Visible – in the Body of Your beloved Church !

In Your Eucharistic Body, broken in sacrifice !

In the Body of the Word, received and given !

Your Glorified Blood flows as mine ...

Flows out of others into mine,

Flows into others, as mine.

O Wondrous Mystery !

When You breathe, I breathe,

Your Breath, my life-breath !

When Your heart moves, mine moves

Your compassion, mine !

When Your surrender in death, I give all,

Your giving empties me of self !

You I receive, You I give ...

You the Giver, You the Receiver !

When You pray on the Cross, I pray,

Your “Abba !” and mine, but one !

When You love, I love

Your Love, mine

Your Father, mine !

When You sing, my deep being come alive !

Aflame with yearning

Eternal.

Love's Child ¹

*My family name is Ron,
My Community name is Tom,
My heart's name's
"Love's Child"
... Whispered in love,
In fondest love.*

*It's the name I'm called
To coax me out of fear,
To settle my anxiety,
To still my anger ;
It's Abba's family call
... To enter His peace.*

*It's the name I'm called,
From the heart of Forgiveness
... Softly called, so softly,
Lest, to the darkness
I heedlessly retreat
... Into anonymity.*

*It's the name I'm called
When, to the Light I run !
Throwing myself, heart-first,
Into His arms
... Heart to Heart
... Enraptured ! ²*

*It's the name I'm called in glory,
A name spoken – yet not heard by others,
Heard within my heart only
Lending uniqueness
To my cry of “Abba !”
... Yet one with all, in Jesus Ascended.*

1 Poem 538, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 2.

2 See Note, Poem 499.

Womb of Love ¹

Jesus' womb-life began :
... *With El Shaddai's over-shadowing of His Mother, Mary,*
– His wondrous FATHERING IN TIME –
Within her womb of love ;
... *With the Spirit of Life planting the seed of the Eternal*
Within the seed of earth,
Within her heart of faith ;
... *With Mary's OPENING – of her spirit, her will and her womb,*
To receive the Beloved of the Most Holy
As the Beloved of humankind !

Jesus' life within the womb
Was utterly dependent on Mary, His Mother :
In every possible way
His life was SOURCED in hers ;
His sense of trust grew and flourished
Within her deep reverencing of His budding human life ;
And His emergent sense of gentleness
Was sourced in her pervasive regard for His well-being
... *Revealed in the deep tenderness of her touch.*

Jesus's sense of relating to others
Began, and blossomed, within the MUTUALITY
... Flowing from Mary's responsiveness to all His needs
And of His attentiveness to her heart of care.
His sense of being lovable and loved,
Arose from His oceanic sense
Of being wonderfully enveloped,
As she bathed Him in her loving-kindness.
Most tellingly, Jesus's sense of a loving, nurturing God
Flowed forth lavishly from her own experience
Of being Abba's CHOSEN BRIDE.

Moreover, Jesus' sense of hope – of yearning for goodness –
Was grounded in the constancy and faithfulness of Mary's love.

It grew in harmony with her belief
That the Promises of the Lord were being fulfilled, ²
And that "nothing is impossible to God"! ³
His sense of JUSTICE arose in the womb
Even BEFORE He sensed the merest hint of injustice :
His tentative learning to respond to life's inequities,
Was rooted in the way she treated Him
... Treating Him AS HER HUMAN EQUAL
... Regardful of all His needs, especially His discomforts
... And moving beyond that, by suffusing all her care with kindness.

Jesus' sense of moderation in all things

– Save for LOVE and FREEDOM –

*Grew out of Mary's beautifully attuned sense
Of unconditional love for Him and His freedom
... Guided by a deep thoughtfulness and wisdom.*

Very significantly, Jesus' emotional life

Was sourced directly in hers :

From the fountain of Her WISDOM

– Guiding and focusing all her own feelings –

All of His emergent feelings and responses

Were intuitively COPIED ... 'like mother, like son'.

Also, within the womb,

Jesus shared in the SEQUENCES of her emotions,

And instinctively learnt to imitate these PATTERNS.

Jesus' sense of equanimity illustrates this

... Because He did not have to CONTEND emotionally with His Mother

... Nor be compliant, or withdraw into Himself :

None of these became necessary,

To have His needs met.

He was neither demanding, nor unassertive, because of Mary's calmness.

As she just gave of herself, in a simple way,

So did Jesus.

*From her, He learnt how to treasure
Both silence and rejoicing-in-life,
And how to wed them into a harmony.*

Indeed, the RHYTHM with which Mary attended His needs

Was beautifully BALANCED :

He felt neither intruded upon by noisiness,

Nor jostled roughly within her womb ;

But regularly, was both buoyed – as Mary enjoyed life,

And becalmed or stilled – with the peace

That issues from her prayerful, gracious heart.

Thus, Jesus intuitively learnt, what it SENSED like ...

To respond to a crises,

To grow with pain,

To welcome joy and exhilaration

–By sensing Mary's bodily responses to these feelings.

Indeed by experiencing the emotional sequences she chose to follow,

Jesus was able to co-experience the twinned deeper realities

Of the SIMPLICITY and PEACEFULNESS

Of His Mother

... As they settled within His own spirit.

*Even Jesus' later adult life of service to others,
Had its seed in His instinctive sense
Of Mary's constant, selfless attentiveness to Himself in her womb.*

His sense of freedom, as well, began here

—As a hologram of hers :

As Abba opened her ever-expanding heart to receive His Son,

Jesus sensed how delightfully FREE she was

... Especially in the lightness of her touch and of her voice.

Being so sensitive to not pressure Him physically or verbally,

Mary's wondrous gentleness and feather-soft responsiveness

To Jesus' subtle change of feelings,

OPENED HIM to the world of sensitivity.

Mary's ever persuasive encouragement LET Jesus feel FREE.

His sense of facing the world thus mirrored hers :

Her ever-affirmed union with Yabweh

The Father of their Child,

BECAME HIS ...

By the osmosis of her loving commitment.

Indeed, Jesus' SENSE OF UNION with her

Instilled the deepest desire and implicit longing

For the same union with Yabweh.

The flow of His feelings for this adorable and sustaining Presence

Replicated those of His Mother ...

Cascading forth adoringly from her heart and lips,

In the oft-repeated "Abba ..."

*It was His Mother's loved-filled prayfulness
That was the seed-bed
For His later instinctively INTUITIVE preaching :
"Unless you become like little children
You shall not gain entry to the kingdom of heaven." ⁴
Jesus' experience
Of this kingdom of love, within the womb,
And within the embrace of His family,
Already flooded His heart
With the fondest reverence for an unseen Abba !*

*A budding sense of His own personal presence
Was also mediated by Mary within the womb.
Mary's – and His – visit to Elizabeth
Elicited "shouts" and "leaps of joy" ⁵
From Elizabeth and John !*

*Jesus, surely, had some incipient sense of causing change.
John, who was 'baptized' by Jesus' presence in the womb,
Himself was perceptibly changed, 'leaping for joy'!
What then, stirred in Jesus
Both then, and as His Mother, minutes later
– Moved by the Spirit, to an exhilarated outpouring of love –
Proclaimed the Magnificat ?
Was He not affected by her love-song to her adorable Abba ?*

Indeed, Jesus' very sense of Mystery

... Of the wonder of His Self

... Of the wonder of Abba's Love

Was sourced in the womb.

Mary's and thus Jesus', whole being RESONATED with joy

... As Abba "put Jesus together in His mother's womb"... ⁶

—Because her sense of wonder,

And her profound reverence of tone and touch,

Was clearly communicated to Him !

Jesus' sense of Yahweh's fatherly presence

Also flowed from Mary :

Because, like Yahweh, Mary knew her Son

"Through and through",

And "watched all His bones take shape". ⁷

As Father, Yahweh companioned Mary as Mother :

They were wedded to each other

By their joy in their Son !

Like Yahweh, Mary rejoiced in the Mystery of her pregnancy

And, it was through her,

As Jesus was "knitted together in the womb", ⁸

That Abba's Beloved came to sense

The wonder of Yahweh in Himself !

He felt this in the deep specialness

With which Yahweh nursed and fondled Him

—WITH the arms and hands of Mary ;

And with the wondrous love

With which Abba kissed Him,

—WITH the lips of Mary !

Thus, as Jesus grew
“In wisdom, age and grace before God and men”,⁹
He became increasingly THANKFUL for Mary :
Truly, in the womb-time of His life
She had been, for Him,
The maternal Face of Yahweh !

1 Poem 539, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 3.

2 Cf Lk 1:45

3 Lk 1:37

4 Mt 18:3

5 Lk 1:42, 44

6 Cf Ps 139:13

7 Ps 139:15

8 Ps 139b

9 Lk 2:52 N.A.B.

The Smell of Hay ¹

*Joseph and Mary were one day out from Nazareth;
The breaking of their familiar home and village routine
Was replaced by the excitement of heading to Bethlehem's census.
As the pregnant Mary swayed atop the donkey,
– Whose occasional snorts startled Jesus –
The rhythm of her soft humming soothed Him.
Later, as the evening coolness of a Jordan Valley breeze
Contended with a weak wintry sun,
... All these changes caused Jesus
To turn in the womb.
Mary adjusted her position,
And her gently stroking again soothed Him ;
As well, her lullabye and the swaying
Lulled Him into the desired sleepiness.
Meal time brought the hubbub around the campfire,
And the noisy shouts of tent-life
... To Jesus's wombed ears,
And increased His sense of change.*

*A few such days swayed by,
Until a cascade of new sounds
Caused Mary to hold Jesus with both hands
... Lingered there longer than usual :
Jangling, jostling 'Jeru-salem'
Seemed, to her rural ears, far from being a city of peace !
Pressing Jesus close,
She increased her singing and humming
So that, in time, the strength of the city's torrent of sound, receded
... And her lilting tones again stilled her baby.*

*But again, more change ; this time – at night :
The lowing of cattle, in Bethlehem's 'house-cave',
The higher-pitched bleatings of sheep
The busy staccato of goats ...
All joined the now familiar donkey snorts.
Then finally, came SILENCE
... Rhythmically textured
With the animals' heavy breathing.
But then, breaking this rhythm,
Came the pregnant mother's quickening breathing,
Which, quite soon, quickened intensively !*

Jesus had not sensed THIS before – ever :
She seemed to be MOVING Him !
He joined in her excitement !
Their twinned expectation grew in intensity.
She pressed Him, even pressured Him
OUTWARDS !
And then, a surge of RELEASE !
He was somewhere NEW !

As Jesus gulped in the breath of earth,
The sudden coolness gave Him VOICE :
A cry of release wedded to a cry of surprise !

But then, NEWER STILL –
Something BEAUTIFUL entered Him,
OPENED Him , DREW Him,
DELIGHTED Him , CLAIMED Him,
UNITED with Him ...
LIGHT !

In that very moment, He felt Himself
TOUCHED ... by the touch of enveloping arms
LIKE the womb – but NEW !
Mary's EMBRACE
Gave the sense of being TWO,
But still ONE again !
He no longer floated in the womb,
But, cradled in her arms,
Was BATHED IN LIGHT !
Then, as if for the first time, He heard HER VOICE
– UNMUFFLED, WELCOMING, INTIMATE, LOVING !
In that precious moment,
Earth opened its heart to God, and spoke to a child !
As a voice of earth ...
Was it also the ECHO of His heavenly Father's heart of love ?

Filled with the peace of love,
Jesus struggled to keep His eyes open
... To look again, in wonder, at her face,
Or at the luminous light,
... To listen again to her caressing whispers ;
Softly, His eyelids closed in sleep ...

Some hours later, light again woke Him
... As dawn flushed Bethlehem's wintry sky,
And colour leapt alive off the cave walls, and the animals within.

But – SHE was not there !

His heart raced ...

But, as quickly, He heard HER VOICE ...

He felt, again HER TOUCH ...

He became calm again,

And drank in the LIGHT.

He reached OUT, to touch it :

It was everywhere !

EVERYWHERE !

BATHING HIM !

... As caressing as HER eyes, and as HER voice ...

ONE with Him ...

But then, after being nurtured at her breast,

Something NEWER still !

Something entered Him

... At His face ...

He SMELT.

He smelt HAY,

EARTHY hay

... The hay He held fast in His little fist,

The hay supporting Him, like the walls of her womb.

As time passed ...

He felt ONE with the hay, ONE with the earth.

*Then her hands reached down,
And again raised Him to her breast,
To her softness,
To kiss Him.
Again, He felt as ONE ...
The LIGHT BATHED them both.
It coloured the hay, coloured her cheeks, coloured her eyes.*

*But then, with increasing light, came NOVEL sounds
... Not just of Joseph and the dawn-roused animals
But of other voices ... many voices.
Firstly, the subdued voices of some shepherds,
Who entered REVERENTLY ...
Knelt on the hay, and bowed their heads.
Then, held in Joseph's arms, Jesus's head turned,
... Eyes widening at the neighing of horses outside !*

*Then came the arrival of voices at the small door of the cave.
And, in a hushed silence
—Amidst glints of metal, the spice of incense, colourful garments —
Three men bowed low to enter.
They too, seemingly awestruck,
Bowed their heads for a considerable time,
Before each placed a present
At Joseph's feet, who stood there
—Descendant of King David as he was —
With his Son, Jesus, in his arms.
The visitors then knelt AMONG the shepherds.*

Jesus naturally responded to all this movement and change :

He reached out for His Mother

... And nestled, at home, in her softness.

Then seemingly came the climax :

A soaring but MOST harmonious sound of music

– Flooding through the small door –

Filled the cave

–And all their hearts !

First, Mary and Jesus, helped by Joseph

... Then all the others ...

Moved outdoors to the music's source.

There, as the first arc of the sun cut the horizon

–Yet in a still star-spangled sky –

The exultant sound of massed voices

Burst forth over their heads !

From below, came gasps of astonishment and sheer joy !

From above, from Abba's choir of love

Echoes of the phrases

“Joy to be shared !”

“To be shared with the whole people !”²

Resonated deep within Jesus' infant spirit

... His eyes opening in wonder, reflecting the stars

Fading now, before the Glory of the new born sun !

The group lingered, 'til the singing too faded.

Then Mary turned , and led them back

Into the warmth of the cave.

After being nurtured from her breast,

Jesus snuggled into her closeness ...

One with her breathing,

One with the joy of that singing,

One with the smell of hay,

One with our earth ...

As his eyes closed in sleep ...

GOD ASLEEP IN OUR MIDST!

1 Poem 540, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 4.

2 Lk 2:10

Two Pigeons in Exchange ¹

*Joseph's arms didn't yield, like Mary's :
Jesus sensed their solidity and strength.
Joseph's heart beat just one tunic thickness away,
Pulsing straight into Jesus' ear
—Reassuring Him with its power.*

*It was Jesus' first experience
Of life outside of the stable
... Eight days on since His birth,
And, well before their journey from Bethlehem to Jerusalem's Temple.
Mary's white woolly blanket
— The lanoline still discernible in its fibres —
Shielded His face from the glare.
Jesus' nostrils already used to stable smells,
Opened a little to take in this new world :
Wet-earth smells from newly sprouting wheat-fields,
And the sharp smell of minty farm weeds;
And from a nearby copse, some cypress and juniper tree scents.*

*Held outdoors, Jesus' Circumcision Ceremony
Began with Joseph intoning a centuries-old psalm
... With his prayer shawl draped over his head.
The strength and resonance of Joseph's sonorous chanting
Caused Jesus to twist and look up ...
Its masculine power and depth deeply re-assured Him.
Jesus was then lifted up into the air,
On the wood-worker's thick forearms
Offered as the family's first-born,
To Yahweh, the God of all life.
Jesus didn't cry, but reached His little arm towards the sun ...*

*Jesus was now passed
To one of Joseph's Bethlehem kinsmen ... also shawled.
He smelt of the blacksmith shed.
Joseph then opened a carved juniper case,
Inherited from his Davidic male forebears,
And took from it – a little bronze knife,
A whet-stone and a small, shallow, clay bowl.
Mary stood by with another bowl
Holding little tufts of wool,
And a couple of narrow, woollen bandages
... All, many times washed – to be absorbent.*

*The circumcision itself proceeded without fuss.
Through it, adult teeth clenched a couple of time ...
Joseph flinching a little, but remained silent,
And while Mary's lips, tight closed, drained of colour,
Her gaze and breathing were steady.
The hallowed, traditional techniques served Joseph well
Except, that the first droplets of Jesus' blood
Dropped, not into the bowl, but onto the black soil,
Spotting it with crimson
... As it was to do, years later, on Calvary.
Their first-born whimpered ...
Then cried, then whimpered again.
Mary longed to step forward to comfort Him,
But respect for Joseph kept her still
... Made easier by her surpassing confidence in him.
For it was he, not Mary, who applied the bandage
—Smearred with a little honey, to help healing.*

*Back in Joseph's arms ... from his kinsman's,
Jesus was once again lifted up to the sun in the east,
As His Name was PROCLAIMED for the first time
— Just as Abba's Gabriel had directed —
"Jesus ! Son of David ! Son of Joseph !"
Mary herself told Jesus these details
When He was seven years old
—So He could hold His name's meaning to His heart
... Especially the mantle of "deliverer",
That had begun with Israel's hero, Joshua !*

*But for NOW, back inside the stable,
Mary breast-fed, with new joy and pride,
This newest member of their People, ISRA-EL,
And pondered how before, and at His birth,
Jesus too was a wanderer, a sojourner
... Like Abraham, like Isaac, and like Joseph
Who, himself, became Isra-el !*

*Four weeks later, the family of three excitedly made their way
Into nearby Jerusalem – to Yabweh's Temple !
For Jesus, Jerusalem felt like a mother, writ large ...
Its weaving, cluttered laneways, often over-built,
Intimately enveloping their family.
The sound and touch and smell
Of passersby, pilgrims, stall-owners
Encompassed the three, AS THEIR OWN.
Jesus liked these people, and felt at home.
Yet, as all the different food aromas, and waves of accents,
Flowed over Him,
He somehow sensed ... more change !*

*Joseph – quite counter to male traditionalism –
Took Jesus from Mary as they began to ascend
The broad, steep sweep of stairs below the People’s Gate
Of Yahweh’s Temple.
Their necks craned as they reached the Temple’s Gentiles’ Court.
For Jesus, it was like entering another world :
Joseph and Mary’s excitement which He has sensed on the stairs,
Almost overwhelmed Him, vicariously, as they reached the Gate’s arches !
Its cedar was still so freshly worked by Herod’s craftsmen,
That Joseph knew it instinctively,
From its beautiful resin scent.
In moving across the Gentiles’ Court, a wall of sound hit them –
The competing calls and shouts of money-changes and souvenir sellers ;
Animals bellowing, bleating, braying, cooing and squawking ;
And the pilgrims’ chatter and the Temple guards’ gruff directions.
This flood of sensations was just too much for Jesus,
And he began to wimper.
Mary took Him from Joseph, and rocked Him gently
... Singing to Him, His favoured tunes.*

*Quickly they moved to a quieter area of the very spacious Gentiles' Court.
The scale and the majesty of the surrounding Solomon's Portico struck home.*

*Jesus quietened ... so Mary bared His face :
The glinting granite pillars towered above Him ;
As He was faced inwards, the gleaming white marble and dazzling gold,
Atop the buildings of the inner courts,
Were all awash in magnificent sunlight.
All this fixed itself, within Jesus' infant subconscious,
As a primal, seminal image of Yahweh's Presence.
Again, He reached out, this time to 'touch' the Holy of Holies
... The radiant gold of its roof, seemingly within His grasp !*

*They moved into the Women's Court ;
Here they met Anna, a discerning elderly lady
Who each day, prayerfully served Yahweh,
By attending to people, especially country folk,
Who felt overawed by Yahweh's Home.
Putting them all at ease,
She explained how Joseph alone needed to proceed, with Jesus,
Into the next, male-only, courtyard
– The Court of Israel.*

*Mary handed Jesus to Anna to be nursed.
Jesus' presence subtly stilled HER quick breathing :
The Spirit opened her heart, and she sensed Jesus's future.
Daughter of Abraham as she was, the focus was on Yahweh.*

*Soon, Joseph moved off with Jesus,
While Anna stayed with Mary, leading her to the Court of Israel boundary
... Where they could see across to its opposite boundary with the Priests' Court.
Here, Anna held both Mary's hands within her own,
Inviting her to pray the psalms for Jesus' Dedication,
And those for her own At-one-ment.*

*Jesus felt confident with Joseph ;
As they moved towards the Priests' Court boundary
He smelt the wonderfully distinctive spiced aroma of incense.
Being held shoulder high, He looked into Joseph's face,
And imitated the awe and joy on Joseph's eyes and mouth !
Then, as billows of incense, burning cedar chips, and majoran fumes
– All from the Altar of Sacrifice –
Swept over them, Jesus felt the first light touch of Mystery :
His eyelids gently closed within this Cloud,
... While Joseph bowed his head, pulling his shawl over his face.
As the Cloud passed, Joseph pulled back his shawl
And moved forward, in a queue,
So as to talk to one of the Temple priests ;
Jesus' eyes opened, to gaze at the smoke billows
Now spiralling high above the dominating Altar of Sacrifice
Which centred the area of The Holy,
– Which, itself, formed a fore-court
To the wondrous gold-topped Holy of Holies – which easily held Jesus' gaze !*

*Joseph held Jesus in one arm, four caged pigeons with the other
– Two for Jesus ‘redemption’, two for Mary’s ‘at-one-ment’.
For Jesus, their reassuring cooing made up for Mary’s absence.
Then, on meeting with the priest, Joseph first put down the pigeon cage ;*

*Then, holding out Jesus, solemnly proclaimed
“This son of David, I, Joseph, offer as a first-born gift
To Adonai !”*

*The young Priest flanked by two Levites bowed deeply ;
He received the baby – clad only in a simple dedication garment –
And proclaimed a Prayer of Acceptance by Yahweh.
Jesus was startled by the Priest’s trumpet-like tone,
And reached out to Joseph
But was interrupted, by being lifted and offered again,
As He was named – as if by Yahweh – “Jesus”.*

*Meanwhile, Mary and Anna had followed all this
– AS BEST they could, from across the large crowded Court of Israel –
And their hearts leapt, in thankfulness,
As they clearly witnessed Jesus being twice lifted and offered up.
Mary felt that her hoped-for ‘at-one-ment’ was happening NOW,
Deeply ... wonderfully WITHIN her :
She felt, literally, “at one” with Yahweh
... Her Divine Spouse !
Her heart overflowed with praise
... As it had done in her Magnificat !*

*At that very moment, Jesus was stretching towards Joseph
... As He spent His last moments in the priestly hands
Of a representative of the Mosaic Covenant.
But before He was handed back, the senior Levite
Stepped forward and, in a mutual bow with Joseph,
Accepted two pigeons as payment to Yahweh
For Jesus' "RANSOM".
The younger Levite then stepped forward to receive
The other two pigeons for Mary's "atonement" sacrifice.
Only then, did the Priest hand back Jesus to Joseph,
Again with mutual bowing.*

*Then, in the short while it took the Priest and the Levites
To return from sacrificing the four pigeons ...
Joseph prayed Psalm 8 in thanks,
While Jesus gurgled, like a cooing pigeon,
... Before falling to sleep in the pre-noon heat.
On their return, the Priest and Levites
Re-prayed Psalm 8 with Joseph :
"What is humanity that you should be mindful of it ?
You have made each human being little less than a god !" ²
They received Joseph's grateful money offering,
And withdrew to the sanctuary.*

*As Joseph retraced his steps
To the Women's Court, to Mary and Anna,
– Themselves still quietly praying the psalms –
Simeon, a man in his seventies
... Who had, with deepening excitement,
Watched their Dedication and Atonement service ...
Caught up with the young wood-worker
Just as he re-joined Mary and Anna.
His was a role, in the men's court, akin to Anna's.
Unusually spirited for a man of his age,
Simeon's excited presence woke Jesus.
With Mary and Joseph both sensing his holiness,
Simeon, with deep assurance in his voice,
And with eyes resting on Jesus' own smiling eyes,
Almost sang the words –
"Blest are my eyes, Lord,
To gaze on Your chosen one, the deliverer of ISRAEL,
The one anointed by the Spirit of the Promise !"*

*Jesus was then cradled on Simeon's forearms and lifted
– But only half as high as Joseph and the Priest had managed.
Very solemnly and clearly, he said
"This Child will be a light to all,
To reveal your Torah, 'Way', to all the people" ³
Jesus drank in the mid-winter's sunlight,
Before He was lowered, and handed back to Mary.*

*“Mary,” Simeon almost whispered,
“Your first-born will be rejected by His own people,
And Himself, be the cause of division
—Leading both the good and the bad to choose
... Either life with God, or without God.
Of course, this will cut right to your own heart !
But it needs be, because He is God’s Beloved.”*

*Some lambs, sacrifice-bound, bleated plaintively nearby ; ⁴
Mary and Joseph, standing stunned by Simeon’s words,
Somehow felt they were sharing in the lambs’ fate.
Jesus Himself fell asleep as He settled back
... Like a lamb Himself,
Rolled up in His woollen blanket.*

*Joseph led Mary and Jesus back to their cheap lodgings.
It was still only midday, and their meal together
Was one of the deepest thanksgiving,
Mixed with genuine puzzlement and wonder
... And the need to entrust all to Yahweh.
Jesus’ full stomach allowed Him to sense a general peacefulness,
And, again gurgling like the cooing of pigeons,
He drifted off into His afternoon sleep.*

1 Poem 541, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 5.

2 Ps 8 3 Cf Lk 2:32 4 In Hebrew, “lamb” and “servant” are the same word – “talit”.

Being Your Beloved Child ¹

Dearest Abba,
Having surrendered myself to You, in brother Jesus,
As a sacrifice to be consumed by Your Love,
I ask that You allow me, Your SPECIAL GRACE
Of FULLY being the beloved child You desire
—Sharing Your own Child’s surpassing outpouring of trust.

Dearest Abba,
As You lovingly ACCEPT all my choices, all my thinking,
All my imagery ... past, present and future,
All layers of my feelings,
All my sub-conscious, all my cellular responsiveness,
And all that is plainly physical within me
—RE-CREATE ME
Into the closest likeness of Jesus Your Child
So that I become, a “we”, not an “I”,
And relate to others, COMMUNALLY, in Him.

Dearest Abba,
For ALL that has been good in my life, I thank You ;
For ALL that has been bad, I ask a child's forgiveness ;
For the future, I ask that all our hearts change
–To reproduce, together,
The expressive heart of Your Beloved Child, Jesus.
Totally transform our lives
And ENRAPTURE them within Your Paschal embrace of Jesus
–So that, daily ASCENDING with Him,
We may experience all others WITHIN US, WITHIN HIM,
And You, IN HIM !

Dearest Abba,
Within this Enrapture, en-Spirit all within me,
With Your joyous, peaceful Spirit of childhood
So that me may be RE-CREATED, in Christ.

Dear to Jesus' Heart ¹

For Jesus,

The once wood-worker, and now wandering homeless preacher,

Three groups were especially dear to His mission :

– Being one with the ‘poor, the destitute’, the “ptochoi”,

Allowed Him to more easily know His NEED OF GOD ;

– Being one with ‘the lowly of heart’, the “tapeinoi”,

Allowed Him ... to CHOOSE the lowest place,

... To let Himself be sidelined,

... To ACCEPT being dismissed, relegated to unimportance,

Knowing GOD HIMSELF ‘would be His comfort’ ;

Moreover, to be both of the above, TOGETHER ,

Was to be one of ‘the little ones’, the “nepioi”,

... To whom the Mystery of the Kingdom

Is revealed

... And to whom it BELONGS.

Moreover, for Jesus, being ‘a little one’,

Goes hand in hand with the spiritual childhood

Which, He insisted, was required

For ENTRANCE His Abba’s Kingdom of Love.

1 Poem 543, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 6.

Reconciliation and the Ascension ¹

*For us,
Reconciliation is at the heart of that Moment
When the Ascended Jesus, in accepting the Gift
Of His Father's WHOLE LOVING REALITY,
Stands as a Witness to All Truth
– Humanity's and all Creation's –
In the Spirit.*

¹ Poem 544, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct. 2003, Day 7.

This Is My Body ¹

*In Jesus' earthly mind
He understood His body
As His enspirited SELF.
Thus, His Church
In becoming His Risen and Ascended Body
Becomes the en-Spirited self
Of Creation's New Man
— The Body of the Abba's Paschal Son
... Now radiant with Divinity.*

¹ Poem 545, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct 2003, Day 7.

Questions within Questions ¹

In periodically asking 'WHO AM I?'

– To deepen the sense of my IDENTITY –

Other revealing questions arise :

... What is Abba's dream-for-me ?

... Am I the son He longs for ?

... Am I a fitting likeness of His Beloved Son,

Loving and praying for those who oppose me ?

In asking 'WHO AM I WITH?'

– To deepen the sense of my RELATIONSHIPS –

Other revealing questions arise :

... Is my relationship with Abba,

A true echo of His with me ?

... Is Abba's and my relationship, in Christ,

The template for all my other relationships ?

... Am I as equally receptive to others,

And as equally giving to them, as I am with Abba ?

In asking 'WHOSE AM I?'

– To deepen the sense of my BELONGINGNESS –

Other revealing questions arise :

... Does my belonging to Abba

Enable and sustain my surrender to others ?

... Do I give my time, gifts, and trust to them, as I do to Abba ?

... Do I give myself to them,

Giving until it transforms both of us ?

*In asking 'WHO AM I ONE WITH ?'
To deepen my need for INTIMACY –
Other revealing questions arise :
... How deeply and openly do I share with Abba,
Who shares ALL with me ?
... Is this Divine Intimacy, a template,
For my deeper sharing with others ?
... Am I open ENOUGH, to share deeply and constantly ?*

*In asking 'WHY AM I HERE ?'
– To deepen the sense of my DESTINY ? –
Other revealing questions arise :
... Is Abba, who is the sole source of my being,
The whole FOCUS of my living ?
... Do all those others, who give my life purpose and meaning,
Truly reflect Abba's dream-for-me ?
... Does my life – and thus my destiny – find its best expression
In Abba's Beloved Son, Jesus,
Who utterly EXPRESSES ALL that Abba is ?*

In asking 'How, specifically, AM I TO WALK CHRIST'S WAY?'

– To deepen my sense of MISSION –

Other revealing questions arise :

... In what particular ways of relating to God's People,

Am I to seek fulfilment-in-Abba ?

... In this regard, am I sufficiently sensitive

To the promptings of the Spirit ?

... Does what I am, and do, attract and draw others

To this Fellowship with Abba in the Spirit ?

In asking 'WHO HAS FORGIVEN, AND WHO HAVE I FORGIVEN?'

– To deepen my need for RECONCILIATION –

Other revealing questions arise :

... Am I open to the Spirit's sensitizing me to all the ways

I EXCLUDE others from 'my' journey into Fellowship ?

... Am I open to the Spirit's constant flow of promptings

To ever more INCLUDE others IN CHRIST ?

Am I open-hearted, both to seek and receive forgiveness,

And lavish, in forgiving others and myself ?

Empty of Heart ¹

Our hearts need to EMPTY
With an emptiness that is limitlessly NEEDFUL
With an emptiness that is infinitely YEARNING
With an emptiness that is boundlessly TRUSTING
... All three, as Jesus IS, for Abba.

Only You, Abba, can fill this need and yearning,
And completely reward such trustfulness
... All three with Your Most Lovable Presence
– Through the Spirit !

¹ Poem 547, Douglas Park Retreat, early Oct 2003, Day 9.

The One Reality ¹

Our Abba God

Can never be

JUST ONE MORE REALITY

Alongside others.

There can never be our Abba God, and any 'other'

... Such as, 'Abba AND I.'

Abba eternally TRANSCENDS

The 'otherness' of all 'others'

... For instance, transcending us, indwelling WITHIN us.

Thus, at the same time –

Abba both centers our very being,

And transcends all we ever are to Him,

And all we ever know of Him !

It is ONLY and WONDROUSLY,

IN Jesus Ascended

– The living expression of Abba's whole reality, made flesh –

That we can ENTER Abba's COMPANY !

Indeed, IN Jesus Ascended,

We can INDWELL Abba

As Jesus, the Divine Son, indwells Him :

–Knowing Abba,

AS WE ARE KNOWN

... In Jesus Ascended ;

–Relating to Abba

... Yet only WITHIN the RELATIONSHIP of Jesus with Abba !

How limitless is Abba's embracing of us
AS HIS OWN
... As Jesus' adopted brothers and sisters !
Ours is thus NOT an individual's relationship to Abba ;
Ours is a communal relationship to our Abba God
Only expressible IN Jesus Ascended !

1 Poem 548, Taringa Community, Brisbane, late Oct 2003.

NOTE : 'While Clayfield's house was being rebuilt, I spent 11 months at TARINGA.' AUTHOR.

Without Regard for Consequences ¹

*Abba, Your Word to me
At this time, at all times,
Is to 'love and not to count the cost'
–To be a nothing
To Your infilling Fullness
–To be a darkness
To Your transfiguring Light
–To be fuel to be consumed, in love
To radiate Your Presence.*

*Abba, seduce me as You desire ;
Trail Your Spirit, Your Perfume of Delight,
Across my eager heart
... Enticing me to let go of all, for You !*

*O Spirit of Divine Depths,
Let my will be held captive
Within Abba's Desire for me
–Held fast there,
By love's indifference to consequences.*

*Yes Abba, may Your consuming love
Crowd out all my fears
– Indeed even negate all MY hopes –
So I will be free to love others
... Without regard for consequences,
Rendering meaningless, the calculus of conditioned love !*

*Then, Abba, overwhelmed by Your love,
My heart can settle wholly,
Within the intimacy of Yours
... Totally unmindful of consequences !*

*O Abba, let the rhythm
Of Your Breathing
Draw my heart
To a rhythmic concordance with Yours :
... One together ... together one ...*

*But, You call me on
... Deeper into the Paschal Reality of love.
So, when the duress of love's night
Descends on this day of surrender
– Crucifying me at the crossroads of life –
Grace me, to offer myself, wholly and freely,
To help free those
Who also yearn to love
... Without regard for consequences.*

Revealing God ¹

Revelation means radiating the human with the Divine

–Showing forth what it means to be fully human.

For us

This unfolding of the Divine within the human –

Enables us TO BE OPENED to Abba, through faith,

Moves us to surrender ourselves to Abba,

And thus, TO BE FATHERED INTO THE LIFE

Awaiting us WITHIN the Risen Christ.

Such a life, lived IN Christ,

Allows the Spirit of Love

To unite our humanity

Wholly to the Father's Divinity,

In Jesus Ascended.

This optimizes humanity's depthless potential,

So that each human person

Can reveal the Face of God

To every other ;

And, together, we can reveal

The face of an exalted humanity

To the Divine Father,

In the Ascended humanity

Of the Divine Son.

1 Poem 550, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Nov 2003.

In Harmony with the Spirit ¹

The Spirit

*Who moves through, and in all things,
—And in an especial way in the hearts of each and every person*

Whom we pray for —

*CAN, through our en-Spirited DESIRE
Become the source of all our motivation,
The wellspring of all that is graced within us,
The spark of all our spiritual inspiration !*

Seek only

*That which is Christ-like, in the other,
And that which is “gentle and humble of heart”, in ourself, ²
To be assured that we are in harmony with this Spirit,
And ever open to His initiatives, to His promptings,
And to His Mysterious Embrace.*

It is only through and in Him,

That I can be

A praying-heart for others.

¹ Poem 551, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Nov 2003.

² J.B. Mt 11:28.

To Repent ¹

To repent

Is to see evil as it really is –

– Its effects within oneself,

And on the face of the suffering Jesus !

When we cease to philosophize and to demonize evil,

We can deal with it in DEEPLY HUMAN terms

... With Jesus' kindness and compassion .

Thus, we need to deal with it, within THAT relationship,

That He has with His Father.

Thus to repent,

Is to move, with Jesus, BEYOND the world as we like it to be,

And to change that world, from WITHIN HIS relationship with Abba !

Thus GRACED, we will re-join it as a DIFFERENT person

– As Jesus, and IN Jesus.

To repent

Is to be open ... to be receptive, WITH Jesus, to Abba's love ;

And, to be prepared for the LAVISHNESS of His love ...

We need to look to the BOUNDLESSNESS

Of the ocean, of the sky, of the universe itself ...

So as to SENSE, a little, the depthless reaches of God's heart !

Thus, we need to be prepared, both to be overwhelmed,

And to be open to the need for DEEP personal change :

"I will BETROTH you to myself ... in tenderness". ²

*The test for genuineness, following repentance,
Is loving your enemy,
Doing good to those who hate,
Blessing those who curse and repudiate you,
And praying for those who mistreat you !³*

1 Poem 552, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Nov 2003.

2 J.B. Hos 2:21 3 Gf. Lk 6:27, 28.

The Eucharist Transforms Us ¹

In Eucharist, we are TRANS-FORMED
–Transfigured, ever more deeply, at our core –
Into the PERSON of Christ Ascended
... At home in the arms of Abba !
It is this TRANS-FORM-ATION we celebrate in Eucharist !

Eucharist is when we are drawn into Christ's Passover,
Climaxing in His Ascension
–Entering, Sacramentally, and truly
... In a way that changes, that deepens, who we ARE.
Eucharist happens TO US, and IN US, within Mystery,
... Both to 're-mind' us that Christ is our Passover,
And to ENABLE US, ever more profoundly,
To be His Passover People.

As such,
Every Eucharist needs to begin
With the washing of each other's feet,
And to culminate
In the communal Enrapture of the Ascension
In the Circle of Love !

1 Poem 553, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Nov 2003.

Yahweh Enpeoples Himself ¹

*Yahweh's ever-faithful love
Is His enduring Covenant Love,
With which He ENPEOPLES Himself
In our history,
Vowing Himself
– His Pledge being His very Self –
To hold
... A people within His heart !*

*At first, this people is gathered as ISRA-EL,
And, ultimately,
In an outpouring of Divine Intimacy,
In-gathered in the Ascended humanity,
In the very PERSON,
Of His own Beloved Son,
Jesus !*

1 Poem 554, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Nov 2003.

In Praise of You, Abba ¹

*Our hearts expand in praise of You, Abba
For You hold close to Your heart,
All faithful imitators of Your Crucified Son –
Making us brothers and sisters of Your Beloved ;
And so we rejoice in You, the Father of our salvation !*

*You transform within Your embrace, every one of our fears,
And, with gentleness and forgiveness,
Heal and sooth our sinful wounds ...
Strengthening our wayward hearts,
Shaping us, ever more, to Your Beloved's likeness.*

*You are awesome, mysterious, almighty ...
Yet You caress our hearts with tenderness !
You reach out through Your Intimate Spirit,
And gather us, in love, from every place ...
WITHIN Your Beloved ... Himself WITHIN Your Embrace !*

*You are ever mindful of us,
For the Spirit of both You and Your Beloved
Abides within our hearts.
Your Spirit's enabling love is always on offer,
And, through us, on offer to all
Who live the life of Your Beloved.*

Gather Us, O Abba ¹ *

*Sing 'Our Song' at twilight
When the lights are low,
When the Spirit's Presence
Gently comes and goes :*

Note 1

*"Gather us, Your children,
Gather us, in love,
Gather us, Your Family,
In the Spirit's love.*

Note 2

*Gather us, O Abba
Gather all within,
Gather all – in Jesus,
Together in Love ...
Together in Love."*

1 Poem 556, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Dec 2003.

*Written to be sung. Tune: "A Song at Twilight".

Note 1 Verse 1 is sung, AS IF sung by Abba and Jesus together, TO US.

Note 2 Verses 2, 3 are sung BY US, in Jesus, to Abba.

Verse 1 is indebted to the original song, for some words.

The Call to Eucharist ¹ *

*Spirit – call to my heart’s
Deepest consciousness,
Draw within my own heart
All those who praise God’s Love :
– All celebrating with us
Heaven’s Liturgy
– All who yearn to do so
Now in Purgat’ry ...*

*– All present from future ages
– All present from ages past,
– All pilgriming now, on this earth ...*

Servants – both ‘first’, and ‘last’.

*– All I have sinned against
– All who lament their sin,
– All in my loving fam’ly
– All my beloved kin !*

*– All of my friends, so tender
– All I pray spec’ly for,
– All needful and troubled people,
– All of Creation’s store !*

*Draw them ALL, now, O Spirit,
Into my spirit’s depth,
That here, within our Jesus,
We glorify Abba’s Love !*

... All offered in brother Jesus'
Eucharist of thanks and praise
Holy! ² Holy! ² Holy ... Holy! ²

1 Poem 557, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Dec 2003.

*Written to be sung; Tune: "After the Ball Is Over".

Our Father, Dearest Abba ¹

*Our Father, dearest Abba,
Radiating source of life, Eternal Mystery,
Boundlessly awesome is Your Holy Presence !
May Your Kinship of Love
Encompass, embrace, and enrapture us all !
May You transform all our desires
To continually achieve this Enrapture for us –
Both here, as Your pilgrim servants,
And as Your children, at home with You.*

*Give us, this day, our daily bread,
To nurture our Kinship in the Paschal Jesus;
And forgive us, for failing to live like Jesus ...
Just as we forgive others, for not doing so ;
And let us not be seduced,
By anxiety, escapism and temptations,
But lead us – safe from all evil –
Secure within Your Love, in brother Jesus.
Amen !*

¹ Poem 558, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Dec 2003.

Note: A reflection on the 'Our Father'.

Choosing Always to Reveal ¹

*God ALWAYS chooses to REVEAL,
Never to conceal !
Indeed, Abba loves us
To the point of emptiness
... To the emptying out of His very Self !
Abba animates all our inner senses to be RECEPTIVE
To His great outpouring act of Self-Revelation,
So that we are able –
To hear His Word
To see His Face
To smell His Fragrance
To taste His Kiss
To touch His Tenderness
To feel His Love
And to surrender to His Embrace !*

*The great sadness is ...
Many of us convince ourselves
That God CONCEALS Himself from us
– But, it is our lives that block our receptiveness.
O ! How wondrously receptive we could be,
If we live our lives IN CHRIST !*

¹ Poem 559, Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Dec 2003.

Beyond Limitation ¹

*Abba, draw us together
In Christ, our Prayer
... Open to receive Your Spirit-Fire,
Who – like a camp-fire uniting all around it –
Focusses our hearts and destinies
... So that, with one vision that galvanizes ...
With one voice, rallying hope ...
Our spirits unite, to exalt Your Love !*

*May this Spirit of Inspiration empower
Our differing, even contending, personalities,
To proclaim one “Amen !” to Christ’s Paschal call to PEACE
– And to do so with LIVES, not just words !
Indeed, words shouldn’t set the boundaries of love
For those ‘given voice’ in the Spirit.*

*Abba, raise us beyond the limits our nature decrees
... To the limitless Song of the Spirit in our hearts ;
And, just as the disciples at Pentecost were fired,
As they felt Your wondrous Resurrectional Power
Seize their spirits ...
Move us beyond all sense of limitation in prayer !
Let our spirits so soar ...
That our very cells acclaim Your Goodness !*

Abba, Your Word flows forth from the place of Mystery
Where Your Heart enfolds our heart :
Only EMPTIED hearts hear Your call of love,
Because only they can resonate and amplify it CONFIDENTLY !
Only HUMBLE hearts are so RESPONSIVE
As to un-selfconsciously cooee back their love
– As “deep calls to Deep”... ²

1 Poem 560 Year 5 Prayer Ministry, Taringa Community, Brisbane, Dec 2003.

2 N.R.S.V. Ps 42:7