

Folio One

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* *meant to be sung*

True to Its Nature ¹

*That crumpled piece of paper –
... How jagged it appears :
Born in complexity
Complicated chemistry,
Inorganic industry
It refuses ...
To stay crushed!*

*Cast aside, rejected,
It opens up again
To assert its inward-nature
... Of the pine tree it was before:
To again stand tall,
To unfold itself towards the sun
... To drink the light!
To rise to life!*

¹ This was my first ever poem composed as a 16 year old student in Year 11, Christian Brothers' College, Warwick

Christ Our Lord Has Come² *

*Christ our Lord, has come
The king of lowliness,
Glory be to God on high
And peace on earth to men.
Pouring forth His being
Into the hearts of men,
We now receive Christ's fullness,
As new-born sons of God.*

Refrain *O! Christ our Lord, Christ our Lord,
Christ our Lord is come!
O what peace and joyfulness
Have come through Mary's Son!
O! Christ our Lord, Christ our Lord,
Christ our Lord is come!
Obeying now the Father's will ...
Our hearts and lives He's won!*

*Budding forth as man
The fruit of Mary's womb,
Christ spreads forth His love divine
Upon the tree of life.
Just as we live and grow,
Through Christ, in Mary's womb,
We hope to die and rise in Christ,
Born glorious from the tomb!*

Refrain

² Composed in Warwick in 1961 as an 18 year old just before I left home for the Juniorate at Strathfield

* Meant to be sung. Tune: *Jingle Bells*

³*As Head, Christ came to birth,
From the altar of the cross;
The Church's birth into the world
Came forth from Christ's own side.
Christ first to Mary gave,
His flesh and blood divine
So now in Mary we all strive
To join with Christ our Head.*

Refrain

*To do, to teach, to die ...
To reveal His Father's love,
Christ came forth as King divine
As Saviour, Priest and Lord!
We learn to love in Christ
— The Father's Word of Praise —
While in the Spirit of Them both,
We love with His own love!*

³ Stanzas 3 and 4 were added in 1969 when the author was 25

Companionship with You ⁴

*Dear Jesus,
Give me an appetite
For companionship with You
And your Blessed Mother.
Let me hunger for You
– To eat and drink Your Divine Body and Blood!
Let them flower into sanctity,
Within me ... every day.*

⁴ Composed as a 20 year old in 1964 in the Novitiate at Minto

Imitating You in Every Way⁵

*Jesus, I want to hero-worship You –
Imitate You in every way,
Love as you love,
Pray as You pray,
Follow Your lead regardless,
Relate and speak like You,
Act as You act.*

*Yes, Jesus, You are my hero!
I want to be in Your Presence always –
Either in Your sacramental Presence
Or Your Presence in the lives of others.
Help me yearn for You,
When, by sin or mediocrity,
I selfishly turn my back on You,
Or even crucify You!*

⁵ Written at Minto Novitiate, Sydney 1964

Cherish Me When I Suffer⁶

*Dear Mother Mary,
Keep me in close contact with Jesus
... Even as He gives His cross
To those who love.
Mary, because You are a mirror of Jesus
In your own suffering,
Cherish me when I suffer.
Let me never drink of the waters of the world;
But, in your care of me,
Nurture my vocation.*

⁶ Written in Mulgoa Second Novitiate 1965

A Single Human Cell ⁷

Realize afresh

That God became flesh:

You, my dearest Jesus

Humbling Yourself

To the confines

Of a single

Human

Cell

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⁷ Written at Mulgoa Second Novitiate 1965

A Celibate's Love⁸

*Just as
Christ bodies God for us,
And we reach out to touch, to embrace
The God we love
... So the vowed celibate
Embodies a sensitive, tender love,
That is not exclusive,
But includes all
... Bodying God to All*

*Thus by universalizing it,
Vowed celibacy enhances one's sexuality.
Both are at the service of our personality
Not vice versa;
Otherwise, the person becomes
A victim of part of himself.*

⁸ Written at Mulgoa Second Novitiate 1965

The Father Lives His Life in Us⁹

*When the Father shares His Life,
He remains the owner of it;
We share it with Him:
He lives it in us,
We live it in Him
... In His Beloved Son!*

⁹ Written at Mulgoa Second Novitiate 1965

Grace Builds on Nature¹⁰

*Grace builds on nature –
Not to cure, but to enhance,
Not to remake, but to uplift,
... To grace our nature,
To enlighten our humanity
With the Light of divinity.*

¹⁰ Written at Mulgoa Second Novitiate 1965

The Beauty of Becoming ¹¹

*God loves growth;
God loves time;
God loves the beauty of becoming.
Not for us to short-circuit
This process of becoming:
God's face is revealed
In growth's evolution!
God's is the empowering!
God's, the glory!*

¹¹ Written in Second Novitiate 1965

The Earthly Soil of My Life ¹²

*Father,
May Yours and Jesus' Spirit of Love
Be 'The Praise of Your Glory' ¹³
Within me.*

*Jesus,
May Your beloved Mother lead me
To let Your Presence blossom
In the earthly soil
Of my life.*

*Spirit,
Move our hearts so that, together,
We may thirst for that love
Which unites us perfectly,
The love of a Blessed Son.*

¹² Written at Strathfield Sydney in teacher training 1966

¹³ This wonderful phrase comes from my reading of a book on Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity (Philipon), now Blessed Elizabeth. Eph 1:14

In Heartbeat Closeness¹⁴

*The Christian's desire ought to be
To experience God's love
Now
Within the present moment,
To rest in humility and simplicity
... Resting on Jesus' breast
– In the intimacy of Holy Communion –
In simple affection,
In heartbeat closeness
To the source of all vitality and love.*

¹⁴ Written at Strathfield Sydney in teacher training 1966

Loving Life into Those We Love¹⁵

*To be chaste as a vowed celibate,
Implies a loving acceptance of one's own sexuality,
And a willingness to nurture its growth
– So as to love life
Into those
We are CALLED to love virginally;
And yes! To love them with warmth and affection,
Such that our touch
Is not a taking
... But a giving one.*

¹⁵ Written at Strathfield Sydney in teacher training 1966

Wedding Us to Community¹⁶

*The Spirit longs
To wed us to community:
We need to allow the Spirit
To form us
Into the living tissue of community
– Both to welcome the attentiveness of others,
And to draw others to our hearts.*

¹⁶ Written at Burwood community during first pastoral ministry there 1967

The Father's Self Image, Come Alive¹⁷

God the Father's self imagery
... Of His wondrous goodness, knowledge and love ...
Is so perfect, it is vibrant with life itself:
Alive with life
In the very person of a Beloved Son!
Indeed, the Eternal Son is the perfect image,
The full expression of the Father's glory,
'The exact representation of the Father's being'¹⁸
... Hiddenly here, on earth,
But revealed, in full glory, eternally.

Jesus is the human face of the Father in the world
– 'Whoever sees me, sees the Father';¹⁹
He is the full expression of His Father's love in the world,
So that, when we meet Jesus, we meet the Father loving us.
For us,
Jesus is the Way to the Father,
The complete Truth about the Father,
And the life of the Father
– Offered to us and 'given for you'.²⁰
Indeed, Jesus is the full reality of the Father
Alive in the world!
... Father and Son differing only in personality.

¹⁷ Written at St Brendan's boarding College Yeppoon, 1971

¹⁸ Heb 1: 3

¹⁹ Jn 14: 9

²⁰ Lk 22:19

The Mutual Love of the Father and Son ²¹

*The Father and the Son love each other
Utterly and completely
– Their love for each other is so perfect,
It is vibrant with life:
Alive with life
In the very Person of the Living Love
Breathed forth between Father and Son
... Truly, the Spirit of Love.*

*As the personalized Mutual Love between Them
The Spirit is the Father's and the Son's
Source of unity.
Indeed, the Spirit is the Expression
Of all that They are together
... CENTERING who They are together.*

*The Spirit is ...
Their Joy!
Their Peace!
Their Beauty!
Their Glory!*

*Thus when the Spirit of Love dwells IN US,
We are at the Centre of God's Love.
We are loved by both Father and Son
With a love so perfect
We come alive in Their Love
– Given Life, as adopted sons and daughters,
Through Their Mutual Love
... The Spirit!*

²¹ Written at St Brendan's boarding College, Yeppoon 1971

With Jesus in Mind²²

*The Spirit of Love indwells us,
Only if we reproduce the image
Of being Jesus in our lives
... Only if we love as Jesus loves.
Loving thus, fits our human nature,
Because, we are made,
'In the image and likeness of God';²³
And, as Jesus is God's perfect image and likeness,
It is clear that we were made WITH JESUS IN MIND
... Created with Jesus as the template,
... Patterned on His perfect humanity.
And the more we are like Jesus
The more His Father is attracted to us
And lavishes love upon us.*

²² Written at St Brendan's boarding College, Yeppoon 1971

²³ Gen 1:26

The People of the Spirit²⁴

*When the Spirit of Love is given to us
Love, as a Person,
Is breathed forth into our person.
And, since this Loving Spirit
Is also the Spirit of Unity
Not only are we united, in love,
To the Father and Jesus,
But to all people
Within whom the Spirit dwells
We thus become one people
... The Spirit's people
– One in identity, one in heart, one in vision.*

²⁴ Written at St Brendan's boarding College, Yeppoon 1971

Being Jesus²⁵

*Being a committed Catholic,
Means BEING JESUS in our world:
... Loving as Jesus loves
... Opposing all that's un-Godlike,
Firstly in ourselves and then in others.
We strive, like Jesus,
'To hate sin, but love the sinner'
... Always avoiding hating ourselves or others
... Favouring what enhances, what is life-giving.*

*Our focus, always, is the God of Jesus
Who loves life into us and into others.
Being Jesus ...
We pray to become channels of the Father's love
– Of the divine love which enables all growth
To flourish in our lives :
... Healing the wounds with which we wound ourselves,
... Dousing the embers of enmity,
... And fanning to a flame, dreams of reconciliation
- All to the Praise of the Father's Glory!*

²⁵ Written at St Brendan's boarding College, Yeppoon 1971

The Forgiveness of Sin²⁶

*The Church wisely teaches
‘The Holy Spirit is the forgiveness of sin’.²⁷
Indeed, welcoming the Spirit’s presence into our lives
Sees sin vanish – as does night with the advent of day.
Still, while the Spirit NEVER withdraws His wondrous Presence,
Through sin, we snub God’s Presence,
Sustaining the pretence that the ever-present God is absent!
... As we, effectively, close in on ourselves.*

*We are all sinners,
And the Father of love
... Like the father of the prodigal son ...
‘Runs, throws his arms around us and kisses us tenderly’.²⁸
To avoid sin, we must pattern our life on Christ,
Of whom the Scriptures declare
‘God is a LOVER OF LIFE’.²⁹*

*Thus, to identify with Christ,
We need to become 100% lovers of life
... Loving the Father, in Christ,
With ALL
Of our heart, our understanding, and our strength,
... And loving others,
Equally
– 100%*

²⁶ Written at St Brendan’s boarding College, Yeppoon 1971

²⁷ Eastertide Mass Prayer, from Eph 1:7

²⁸ Lk 15:21

²⁹ Wis 11:26 (JB)

