

Folio Thirteen

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Family Conscious ¹

*Jesus, You have been given to me
As MY OWN BROTHER.
Put Your arm around my shoulder,
And tell me of Abba's love for You.
Whisper to me ...
All He means to You.
Let us rejoice TOGETHER
In His tender care for You – and me!
Show me how Abba's love
Is so family conscious ...
Gathering brothers and sisters to You,
– Together as one
Yet still fathering each,
Specially, personally, tenderly.*

¹ Rome Tertianship, Nov 1991

Breathe Your Spirit Through Us ²

*Jesus,
Draw us into Your love for Abba,
Draw us into His tender embrace.
With Your eyes ...
Let us gaze on Abba's Face;
With Your feelings ...
Let us caress Him;
In Your Spirit ...
Let us become one with Him!
Breathe Your Spirit through our being
That we become ALIVE with His Love!*

Abba's Adopted Kin: My Kin ³

*Abba, draw us all together,
ALIVE IN EACH OTHER,
Within Your Spirit!*

*Draw me to You
In these others
... Your adopted kin
And thus, my kin!
Love wholeness of life
Into us all!*

*Let me offer Eucharist
In them, in Christ, to You ...
Let me be reconciled
In them, in Christ, to You ...
Reconciled for being
Less-than-a-brother,
Less than Jesus,
To them.*

*Abba, through them
– Abide lovingly
Within my heart.*

With His Childlike Spirit ⁴

*Grant me the grace, loving Abba,
Simply to be happy, in Your Presence
... With that childlike spirit
That Jesus so rejoiced in!*

*Love IMITATES :
So let me linger here ...
Content, like Jesus, to be in Your Presence.
Let me be ever eager
For the joy and peace of the Kingdom
—To envelop
All who are pure of heart,
All who are poor in spirit,
As brothers and sisters IN Jesus.*

Brimming Over ⁵

*Jesus, when I am with the poor,
Their poverty hurts me;
Their wordless pleas for the INFILLING
Of Your goodness,
Tug at my heart.*

*To be a channel to the poor,
My own heart needs to be poor!
Yet, still, I fill my heart
With fake riches :
My heart is neither poor, nor rich
– But pre-occupied!*

*Yes! Only if our hearts are impoverished of self,
Can the divine treasury
Of the outpouring of Your goodness,
Surge freely into others' lives ...
'Til, brimming over,
They too overflow,
Enriching others,
Enhancing relationships ...*

*Thus, the truly poor in spirit
Draw to themselves
Your 'pearl of great price' ⁶
– The kinship
Of all humble hearts
Who know their need of God –
Becoming 'members of each other', ⁷
In You, their Ascended brother,
Who, far beyond Moses,
Is 'the humblest man on earth.' ⁸*

⁵ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

⁶ Mt 13: 46

⁷ Rom 12: 5

⁸ Nm 12: 3

Given, without Measure ⁹

*With boundless graciousness
With gifts ... numerous, multifaceted, ever-deepening ...
You nurture, enhance, and dignify us, Jesus.*

*Your crowning gift
... One You share most intimately with Abba ...
Is Your Spirit-Fire
– Setting OUR spirits ablaze,
Fashioning families of love,
To light up a world of gloom,
– Firing humble hearts
With the fervour of Pentecost!*

*Thus inflamed,
We pour forth streams of light
... Not our own ...
Setting others aflame!
This cascading of light,
... From one to the other ...
Is unrestrained, 'given without measure': ¹⁰
The richer in the giving ... the richer in receiving
... The poorer in the keeping!*

*Jesus let Your radiant Spirit
... Of transcendent warmth and luminescence ...
Pass, freely, THROUGH US
– Firing hope into life, loving life into all!
Let His fiery passage
TRANSFORM us into You, Jesus
... The most radiant bearer of humanity ...
– Standing open-hearted before Abba,
A child-man in spirit,
So simple, welcoming, receptive
Of Abba's Love ...
As to set our hearts on fire!*

⁹ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

¹⁰ Jn 3: 34 (NRSV)

Jesus: Humanity, Fully Alive ¹¹

Jesus,
Let us become a real home for Your life :
Fill us with YOUR humanity
– That human life You lived ‘to the full’; ¹²
Let us explore its full possibilities
IN YOU
O ‘Lover of life’! ¹³
Let us be as humanly alive AS YOU ARE
... Because, for You,
‘Abba’s Glory is humanity, fully alive’. ¹⁴

O! What a loss
– That humankind had to wait
... Generation after generation ...
To live out the promise
Of our own nature!

But O! What a gain
That it was GOD
Who showed us HOW!

And wonders multiplied!
– That it was You, Jesus
Who IS
The transformative TEMPLATE
In whom WE do so!
And the Eucharist of Love
Who enables us to do so!
– Uplifting our humanity
To Your DIVINE IDENTITY!

¹¹ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

¹² Cf. Jn 10:10

¹³ Wis 11: 26

¹⁴ Cf. St Irenaeus, 2nd C

Eternalizing Our Life ¹⁵

*Thank You, Abba,
For the Mystery of Life shared :
Thank You, thank You
For Your Son as Gift – our brother!
Thank You
For taking our human life up into Yours!
For ETERNALIZING our life!
– The Promise Realized
For all who love
As Your Son loves!
Thank You, Abba.*

*And the wonder FOR US,
Within Your arms,
Is that WE OURSELVES become
‘A spring of water
BURSTING FORTH to eternal life.’ ¹⁶
This launches us past the limits
Of our death-seeded humanity
... Into human life’s most fecund fulfilment,
Humanity’s immortal destiny
– ETERNAL LIFE
With You!*

¹⁵ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

¹⁶ Jn 4:14 (JB Fr)

Let Me Be No Less ¹⁷

*Thank You, Jesus,
For loving me just as Abba loves You.
In You, I have a real companion, a brother
– ‘A person who welcomes sinners and eats with them.’* ¹⁸

*Let me be no less to my friends and family,
And to others I serve
– ‘A person who welcomes sinners and eats with them.’*

*And when I, maligned by sin and failure, become isolated,
Let each be no less to me
– ‘A person who welcomes sinners and eats with them.’*

Jesus where You lead, we follow ...

¹⁷ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

¹⁸ Lk 15: 2

Your Gifts: Our Choices ¹⁹

Jesus, show me in the humblest possible way –

How love is the highest expression of obedience

... ‘This is my commandment,

Love one another as I have loved you.’ ²⁰

How obedience is the highest expression of freedom ...

The freedom within friendship

– ‘If you do what I command you,

I shall no longer call you servants

... I will call you friends.’ ²¹

How love itself generates this freedom,

‘Where the Spirit of Love is,

There is freedom.’ ²²

How, beyond all three – love, obedience, freedom –

Lies the Mystery

That ALL are Your gifts,

Yet – remain OUR CHOICES!

¹⁹ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

²⁰ Jn 15: 10

²¹ Jn 15: 14-15

²² 2 Cor 3: 17

A Homecoming Grace ²³

*Abba, of all the graces in serving others,
That my heart yearns for,
Let this be the first :
'To forgive as I have been forgiven.'
It is ONLY
By loving each other in forgiveness
– Just as ...
'The Father ran to the boy,
Clasped him in his arms,
And kissed him tenderly' – ²⁴
That Your PEACE
... Of which forgiveness is the seed ...
Will descend upon our hearts,
Drawing us together in love.*

*Through Jesus' Passover, Abba, You teach us
That forgiveness is also a HOMECOMING GRACE,
Bringing us home –
To our own hearts,
To others' hearts,
And home, with Jesus,
To YOUR waiting heart!*

*Your Spirit, Abba,
Strews the path of our lives
With a PRODIGAL trail of forgiveness,
To draw us home to Your heart
– Because forgiveness is a true pledge,
A forerunner,
A foretaste,
Of the Banquet of Welcome
In Your Family Home.*

²³ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

²⁴ Lk 15: 27

Seized by Your Spirit ²⁵

*Jesus, You were so whole-hearted as a man,
That Abba's Spirit enabled You
To BROTHER every person You met,
With a divinely human tenderness.
If we seek God in our humanity,
As whole-heartedly AS YOU DID,
Your Spirit will seize OUR hearts too!*

*We, too, will be moved
To brother and sister others :
... To BE the Good News
To those who are estranged ;
... To become God's BOUNTY
To those who are without ;
... And to enthuse those whose spirit are imprisoned,
Witnessing, that to love themselves through loving others,
Is to become truly FREE.*

*Unfolding in a process of graced growth,
Your Spirit of Whole-heartedness
Slowly CENTERS our person
NOT, in ourself
But, in the heart of a CHOSEN COMMUNITY
... Be that family, or a friendship group,
Or a community of the vulnerable
– So that our whole-heartedness
Encompasses the whole of the COMMUNITY.*

*Jesus, make whole our hearts
Within Yours ;
Fire us with courage to take up Your cross
... Of brothering and sistering others ...
Whole-heartedly!*

Crucified with You ²⁶

*Jesus, to love as You did,
Is to be CRUCIFIED with You.
Jesus, You gave all,
So that we can rejoice
In the FULLNESS of our humanity,
By lavishing all we are on others
... As You did.*

*Jesus, I find You waiting
In the heart of my sin
... Waiting there,
Crucified, for love,
To the Cross of our unfaithful lives!
Grace me
With the courage, patience, and dignity
To WAIT THUS, for others.*

Twinned in Spirit ²⁷

*Abba, Your choice of us
Is wholly Mysterious ...
Enabling ...
Enlivening ...*

*Place the word 'Abba'
As an intimate word of love ...
Always on my lips ...
As it is in my heart ...*

*Let my spirit murmur it ...
While I sleep, while I dream ...
Being gently responsive ...
To Your Beloved's own Spirit ...*

*Let me always sense
With a receptive consciousness ...
The drawing in, and gifting forth ...
Of Jesus' Breathing, within ...*

*And, of Jesus' choice, to be both
A brother, and a friend ...*

O! The wonder of being twinned

– In the spirit of Thomas the Twin – ²⁸

AS the twin, and friend of Jesus.

O Abba! What a Father You are

– To father such a Son!

²⁷ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

²⁸ See Jn 20: 24. The author's name in religion is Tom

Rhythms of Need ²⁹

O Only God!
God, wholly compassionate!
Forgive me ... forgive me ...
For my unfaithfulness.
Grant me the special gift
To be PATIENT
With my own rhythms of need.
Grant me the courage of the Apostles
– To accept, through Your Spirit,
A whole Easter Day of gifts :
... The Dawning of New Life!
... An Ascending to the Father
– Humanity's entrance into Divine Intimacy! –
... And the Lavishing of the Spirit upon us!

O Spirit of Easter, O Spirit of Abba,
Urge Jesus
To deepen my consciousness
Of His BROTHERING me
... Through stress, failings, and loneliness.
May the gloom of evil around me,
The ugliness of sin,
The swagger, the false display, the sheer unlovingness
Of a superficial world,
Not BLIND me
To the vision of hope and beauty,
Pouring forth
– As a stream of inner light and warmth –
From a brother's heart!

The Grace of Innocence ³⁰

Abba,
Through Mary's sinless entry into humanity, ³¹
With a heart that never knew sin,
May we, too, live and love in You
Without sin ...

Inspired by Mary's faith-filled response to Grace,
We plead for the special grace of INNOCENCE again :
... Not to LOOK FOR SIN in others,
... To DELETE memory's recall of hurt and temptation,
... To FOCUS on the good in others and in ourselves,
... And to SEE You, our God, in everyone and in everything.
With Your grace, Abba,
Each of us can walk the earth
– Again –
... With a child's consciousness
Of life's overarching goodness,
... And with a child's open trust
In Your Fatherly goodness.

³⁰ Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

³¹ This poem is a response to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (8 Dec)

A Poor Man's Gift ³²

Abba,
I trust in You
... 'Let it happen to me as You have said.' ³³
I accept
That You need to send me
As an apostle of forgiveness
... *To all those who hope for Life.*

Jesus, bear WITH me,
The sufferings this entails,
Accompanying me
Along the road You've trod.
As a poor man,
You gave what You could
... *Forgiveness.*

Let this be my poor man's gift, as well, Jesus,
A forgiveness that touches others' deepest spirit
... *So that they may uncover*
In the field of their hearts,
That 'hidden treasure' ³⁴
... *Simply being able to call, WITH You,*
Upon the God of Love
'Abba! Father!' ³⁵
Thus, WITH You, Jesus
... *The simple, sinless poor man of Nazareth ...*
We share in Your gift of forgiveness
That so TRANSFORMS our world!

³² Rome Tertianship, Dec 1991

³³ Lk 1: 38

³⁴ Mt 13: 44

³⁵ Rom 8:15

Each Lost Loved Child ³⁶

*Abba,
Through forgiveness,
You hold us safe in the heart of Your Son,
Whose Spirit of Freedom, in time,
Disarms all the hard-hearted of their power!
Through forgiveness we are made whole
... Drawn together ...
As You respond, eternally, to Christ's prayer,
'May they all be one!' ³⁷*

*Abba, You yearn for us to spread
The Good News,
Whose very heart is forgiveness.
You yearn for us
Always to be a welcoming heart
For each lost, loved child
... Born of You, the God of Forgiveness.*

³⁶ Year 9, Prison Ministry, Wacol and Borallon, Gregory Terrace Community Mar 1992

³⁷ Jn 17: 21

Equals ³⁸

*The remarkable central truth
Of this world
Is that it is held together
By the very few people
Who love ...
Who love reality into the truth
That all people are indeed equal.
Yet,
At the very heart of that love
Is the deep anger
That inequality continues ...
For anger's only true purpose
Is to remove injustice
– Thus freeing people to love
As EQUALS.*

³⁸ Year 9, Prison Ministry, Wacol and Borallon, Gregory Terrace Community Apr 1992
Written in the light of prison ministry, this poem was the *basis* of all the Anger Management Courses I taught.

Our Equality ³⁹

Our equality

Is sourced in our RELATIONAL origins, as people :

– *As HOMO SAPIENS, ALL chromosomally belong to one primal female ;*

– *As HUMAN BEINGS, ALL are children of Adam and Eve*

Whose human, spiritual souls

Were the first of God's PERSONALIZED CREATIONS.

This is the reality for each of their descendants in succession

... In the MOMENT of each one's conception ...

As ALL are wondrously sealed with God's Own Image

As EQUAL

In human dignity, in human identity, and in human destiny.

– *As DIVINE ADOPTEES, ALL are invited*

... In an Eternal Offer, personified in Jesus Ascended ...

To be elevated IN HIM

To the divine dignity, the divine identity, and the divine destiny

Of the Divine Child

... Divinely fathered by the God of Love.

Their Spirit of Adoption

Enables and ensures

That ALL human beings are potential members

Of the Divine Fellowship,

Wherein

The Divine Equality between Abba, Jesus Ascended and the Spirit

Is the ultimate Eternal Source

For our own equality.

Sourced humanly, and sourced divinely,

This EQUALITY

Guarantees

That we are brothers and sisters, SIMPLY,

... With NO OTHER relationship between us, necessary.

Humanly ... a Prime Minister, white and male,

And a mentally handicapped four-year-old Negro girl,

Are EQUAL

... In dignity, identity, and destiny.

³⁹ Year 9, Prison Ministry, Wacol and Borallon, Gregory Terrace Community Apr 1992
See Note on Poem 259

*Divinely, IN CHRIST, no one
Is a grandparent, uncle, or cousin to another.
All are brothers and sisters to Christ.
Both a newly baptized girl, and a saintly Pope,
– She a sister to him, and he a brother to her –
Are all en-Spirited equally
By Love.*

*More wondrously, all human beings, found IN Christ
DRAWN into the very heart
Of Divine Communing,
Experience equality in its ULTIMATE source
The equality between ... Abba, Jesus Ascended, and the Spirit!*

