

Folio Twenty-Six

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**meant to be sung*

Brothering ¹

To brother is to be like Jesus.

To brother is to be a sacrament of Jesus, our brother ; to brother Jesus to the world.

To brother is to cherish together the love of our Father.

To brother is to freely give away as brother, what we have received as son.

To brother is to invite others to share this love and so experience family.

To brother is to nurture each person as brother or sister.

To brother is to invite our brothers and sisters to heal family divisions.

To brother is to be with each, in their struggle for identity within the family.

To brother is to ensure that family consciousness shapes family structures, not vice versa.

To brother is to allow tenderness to empower our familial hopes and responsibilities.

To brother is to love each brother and sister with intimacy and warmth.

To brother is to welcome vulnerability as family gift.

To brother is to embrace and make whole, brothers and sisters whose lives are hurting or broken.

To brother is, ultimately, to relate to our brother and sister, each as friend.

¹ Poem 500. Year 4 Prayer Ministry, Woolloowin Community, Brisbane. Nov 2002.

Brothering was first published in OUR LIFE, late 2002. 'anonymously' by the author.

Longing ¹

*Because God never stops offering life,
This life must needs be
The Gift of the Godself
... For us, a wondrous Companionship Presence !
Therefore, our LONGING for God
Is God's Presence
... Experienced AS absence.*

1 Poem 501. Year 4, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. December 2002.

NOTE: Peter Anderson's transfer to New Guinea saw the close of the old Woolloowin house. I transferred locally

to Clayfield Community. – Author.

Centering Our Love ¹

Divine Love is an ever-moving stream
Deluging our spirits :
Ours it is ... to LET it flood our being.
Channelling it FULLY to others
– Keeping nothing for ourselves
And when the Spirit prompts us ...
Channelling it, especially,
To our 'lost ones'
To our enemies
–Seemingly, undeservingly ... just like us !

1 Poem 502. Year 4, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. December 2002.

NOTE : This poem is a reflection on an article, Notes on the Prayer Centering by Thomas Keating.

Back to Your Arms ¹

*Jesus, I hear Your Voice,
Calling me back home :
It guides me through life's maze ...
Past all the dead-end streets ...
Back to Your welcoming arms !*

*Lifted to Your shoulder,
Able to gaze into other's loved-filled eyes,
I view my world, as Your world.
With Your vision, with Your compassion ...
Your healing becomes my healing,
Your relating, my relating,
Your Life, my Life.*

God Transcends All ¹

Christ's desire that we ...

"Be in this world, but not of it" ²

Urges us to meet God

In ourself

In the other

In relationships

– Knowing that God TRANSCENDS all three

... But not knowing what that truly means.

1 Poem 504. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. January 2003.

2 Theological saying, based on Scripture (see John chapter 13-17).

Being Empty for God ¹

Faith

Is being empty – for God

Hungering – for God

Thirsting – for God

Yearning – for God

With our longing ... arising from

Our be-longing ... to God.

Drawing Together – Lovingly ¹

*Our own past, good or bad,
Is not to be confused
With the nostalgia or irrelevance.
We need to let go of our past,
Even as we honour it, and utilize it
As the building blocks of our future.*

*... For God's Eternity, radiates OUT OF
Every moment, of every day, in every person,
Drawing together lovingly, their past and future,
Into THIS present moment :
Ours, is to let this happen.*

One Master Only ¹

*Jesus was proclaimed in the hearts and mouths
Of His post-Pentecostal disciples
As ... “Lord !”, “Deliverer !”, and “Son of God !”
All these titles, in time, came to clash
With the self-proclaimed identical titles of the Emperor
–Notably, the degenerate Caligula.
What to do ?*

*They remembered Jesus’ directive –
“You cannot have two masters.” ²
The chose Jesus.
And the orientation of their lives became –
Ever more radical
Ever more centered
Ever more communal
... Ultimately, ever more Christlike.*

¹ Poem 507. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. February 2003.

² Lk 16:13.

Prayer's Seven Illusions, Seven Affirmations ¹

- *To believe I can INITIATE prayer ...*
That I can PUT myself in God's Presence ...
Is an illusion.

O Abba, You are beyond all our knowing,
Beyond even our hoping :
Your grace enables ALL we do.
Truly, in the beginning IS the Word
—Your Word to us
... To enable our Word to You :
“Without me, You can do nothing.” ²

- *To believe, in prayer, that 'OURS' is the desire,*
While God's is the response ...
Is an illusion.

O Abba, You not only fill us with desire for You,
But through Your Spirit, prompt and accompany ...
Our every yearning
... The hungering of our very being for You !
Through Your Spirit,
You even sensitize our expectant hearts, to listen,
And enable our openness to You,
Who, of course, alone responds to all such graced desire !

• To believe that it is I, as an individual alone,

Who am praying to God ...

Is an illusion.

O Abba, though Jesus has assured us that

“No one can come to the Father except through me,”³

We continue to be astonished

That only, in Jesus Ascended, can we commune with You

Within Your FELLOWSHIP of Love

—As Equals, Eternally !

This dazzling INTIMACY of MANY-IN-CHRIST,

Speaking to God ...

Is replicated by Your Spirit of Communing,

Who, even substitutes FOR US, in Christ,

So that, “when WE cannot choose words in order to pray ...

Your Spirit Himself expresses OUR plea

... In a way that can never be put into words”⁴

... So that You Abba,

“Who knows everything in our hearts,

Knows perfectly well what He means !”⁵

Thus Abba, both Jesus Ascended and the Spirit

—Each in Their own way —

Are OUR prayer to You :

We simply never pray

... As individual ALONE !

- *To believe that my prayer is INTRINSICALLY WORTH SOMETHING*

To God ...

Is an illusion.

O Abba, all of us are no more than dust or ashes ;

You “alone are good !” ⁶

–To you alone be the glory ! ⁷

And as Your Spirit, through St Paul reminds us –

“The human race has NOTHING to boast about to God,

If anyone wants to boast, let him boast about the Lord !” ⁸

Thus, Abba while alone we always remain that “unprofitable servant,

Who has done what it was one’s duty to do,” ⁹

IN CHRIST, our praying is that of God’s Beloved, Himself !

- *To act as if prayer can happen, without faith*

–To believe that MY EFFORTS can move God :

This is an illusion.

Abba, “I do believe ; help my unbelief !” ¹⁰

Draw me to experience

How “No one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ !” or any prayer,

Unless “He is under the INFLUENCE of the Holy Spirit.” ¹¹

Draw me also Abba, NOT to trust in my own efforts,

But to imitate Jesus in His humility ...

“Jesus did not count equality a thing to be grasped,

But EMPTIED HIMSELF,” ¹²

And prayed “Into Your hands, I entrust my Spirit.” ¹³

•

Either ... To believe that I NEED particular aids

–Such as special music, times, settings, ritual or even emotions –

In order to pray ...

Or ... To believe that special people

–Such as inspirers, preachers, singers, spiritual directors –

Can ensure a fruitful prayer experience, or deepen my prayer ...

ARE BOTH ILLUSIONS.

Abba, remind us always that Your conversing with us,

Is the most empowering and significant reality in prayer.

Your Spirit reminds us

“Do not worry”... ‘the atmospheric’ you seek or contrive

Do not condition Your Father’s tenderness :

“Your Father KNOWS what you need.” ¹⁴

Indeed, Abba, prayer is always 100% Your gift to us ...

–Transform our praying, Abba,

So that Job’s heartfelt prayer can become ours ...

“The Lord gives, the Lord takes away ;

Blessed be the name of the Lord !” ¹⁵

•

Finally ... to believe that we can KNOW

That our prayer for ourselves, or others,

Has been answered ...

Is an illusion.

*O Abba, while it is quite possible that You do respond
To our prayers for ourselves and others
In a timely and obvious way ...
Remind us always that we cannot KNOW or PRESUME
That our prayer is, or will be
ANSWERED in this, or any other way ...
“My ways are not your ways !”¹⁶
And more deeply, Abba, reminds us
That it is ONLY Your Spirit ...
Who “reaches the depths of everything”¹⁷
—Especially Your depths, Abba,
“For Your depths can ONLY BE KNOWN by Your Spirit !”¹⁸*

1 Poem 508. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. March 2003.

2. Jn 15:5. 3. Jn 14:6. 4. Rom 8: 26. 5. Rom 8:27. 6. Lk 18:19 7. Cf Ps 62:6, 7.

8.1Cor 1:29, 31. 9. Lk 17:10. 10. Mk 9:24 11.1Cor 12:3. 12. Phil 2:6, 7.

13. Lk 23:46. 14. Mt 6:8. 15. Job 1:21 16. Is 55:8. 17.1Cor 2:10. 18. Cf 1Cor 2:11.

Blow Away Evil's Ashes ¹

Abba,
I thank You for unmasking
The true face
Of my hubris, envy, and hypocrisy
And especially,
Underneath this evil cluster,
Exposing the vulnerability and fears
That entice me
To project these ego-drives onto OTHERS
... Under the guise of: 'REALISTIC' character assessments !

Abba,
Breathe the cleansing Breath of Your Spirit
Within my heart
–Intensifying the consuming fire
Of Your forgiveness ...
Burning out the deepest roots of this sinful cluster
With the fuel of Your love !

Especially grant me the grace
To search out
Any evil re-growth,
And gently ...
Blow away its ashes
... Without regret.

To Love, To Live, To Breathe ¹ *

To love You, Abba

To love You, Abba

To love You, Abba –

To love You ...

To live You, Jesus

To live You, Jesus

To live You, Jesus –

To live You ...

To breathe You, Spirit

To breathe You, Spirit

To breathe You, Spirit

To breathe You ...

Bow down before You

Love and adore You

Your Name is wonderful !

Yahweh ! Our God !

1 Poem 510. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. March 2003.

*Written to be sung. Tune: "Your Name Is Wonderful".

Verses 1, 2, 3, are by the author. Verse 4, from the original short song.

Readied ¹

Education's focus

Is to create a space

Within the heart

Wherein –

Goodness is the fundamental value cherished,

Truth is what sets those being educated, free,

And love, that God-like energy, is what draws people together.

Yes, education's basic goal is goodness :

The enhanced self-worth of ALL involved

... Primarily expressed through life-giving relationships,

In which we come to KNOW and VALUE

Ourselves, others, and the WAYS WE CONNECT.

The whole educative process is one

Where truth is LOVED into hearts and minds

Readied by teacher role-models, to be open to life.

The communal goal is –

To trust the old while exploring the new,

To be creative of change while honouring the past

To espouse the challenge of free choice

While respecting the rhythms of human nature.

With Christ's Risen Vision ¹

For Thomas, in Jesus' absence
... On the Sunday following the Resurrection ...
SEEING was nothing more
Than encountering the evidence before one's eyes ;
Yet for Thomas in Jesus' Presence,
SEEING BECOMES BELIEVING
... Based on a leap of faith,
... Bolstered by the CERTAINTY, that is faith's gift !

For John, a witness to Jesus' discarded garments
... In the tomb, on Easter morning ...
BELIEVING IS SEEING
–Seeing BEYOND appearances, BEYOND the visual evidence,
Seeing with CHRIST'S RISEN VISION ...
Discerning WHAT IS REAL – WHAT IS OF GOD
And thus, IN CHRIST – what is authentically human !

Transparent with God's Love ¹

*For those with faith,
The world is utterly transparent
With God's love.
The Spirit's faithful ones
Become living transparencies
Within the Risen Jesus,
Within Abba
—Witnesses all, to Love.*

Being With ... ¹

*Only by BEING WITH –
The materially destitute,
The emotionally stricken,
The spiritually impoverished
... Can we redeem them,
For, in being with
“The least of Jesus’ brethren”, ²
We are in His Redeeming Presence.*

1 Poem 514. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. May 2003

2 Cf Mt 25:40.

At Home in Mystery ¹

God me

I do not belong to myself

... Indeed, I am, mostly, a stranger to myself.

My human condition surely, is poverty of being :

With a nature that's OPEN-ENDED ... a being, incomplete ...

Indeed, the imprint of my beginnings

Has left me with trceries

... "Reins of kindness" , "leading strings of love"... ²

Impressed on my spirit,

A lingering SENSE –

Of being valued divinely,

Of a numinous identity,

Of an orientation within,

Of a homeing instinct !

But, this Spiritual compass-bearing

Can be easily, and even tragically,

Disorientated,

Confused,

Or misled,

... And our innate allegiance, seduced.

*As we encounter, at the heart of our being,
This Mystery of our origins,
And, thus, the Mystery of our fulfilment ...
An ambivalent seductive presence insinuates itself
Within the fringes of this Mystery
Our lives become subject to the struggle
Between these contending attractions !*

*Our attraction to the ephemeral presence, has no resolution
– Spiralling into an ever-tightening knot
Of addictive energies.*

*When this happens, Mystery's forgiveness envelopes our being
... Bathing our wounded spirits with healing,
Releasing addictions' energies for loving fellowship !*

*We are perennially surprised to discover
That every genuine stirring of such fellowship
Resonates with our homeing instinct
–Drawing us to be Godlike ... Christlike,*

*Firstly, to an emptying of self
... Becoming poor in spirit, open, and vulnerable ;
And then to become an open-hearted, welcoming presence
... Open to the Spirit's Infilling !
... Drawn into the Divine Circle of Love !
... A conduit for Christ's Presence to others !*

Our deep thankfulness ...

For such numinous experiences, within Mystery's Embrace,
Of Mystery drawing us unto Itself
... Ought be our constant response.

But our hearts are fickle, our resolve, fragile
... And we subtly begin, again, to congratulate ourselves
For this grace of Divine Intimacy !

Or, we even imagine, it is a privileged experience for us alone !
We shy away from desiring to encounter
This sense of Mystery within others
—The experience THEY share with Mystery—
Preferring to focus on our own LIMITED experience.

We thus fail to learn the lesson
Of true POVERTY OF ENCOUNTER :

That we need TO ENTER POOR, into the Mystery of the other
... if we are to sense in them, that SAME Mystery
As centres out being,
... If we are to be drawn into this Mystery, within them,
... If we are to come to know them, FROM WITHIN Mystery !

Only then
—Can we discover that we receive ourselves
As a GIFT FROM OTHERS !

Only then can we GIVE OURSELVES AS A GIFT in response,
And this remains open
To the Embrace of Mystery !

Only then do we discover that our home, is not IN the Embrace
But, as with the Trinity, IN THE CYCLE OF GIVING !

*Thus our graced prayer ought to be –
To ABIDE IN THIS CYCLE OF LOVE,
Never looking for resolution or closure
To Love's Mystery,
But, TO ABIDE IN THE FLOW OF GIVING,
In the ENRAPTURE OF GIVING !*

1 Poem 515. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. May 2003.

2 Hos 11:4.

Support ¹

Preamble : In Hebrew, the words 'truth' and 'amen' are derived from the SAME root word, meaning 'to SUPPORT' – as in 'The pillars support the roof of the Temple' or 'The eagle supports its nestlings on its wings' or 'Amen to that !'.

To believe in the truth of Jesus

Is to be true to Jesus,

To be faithful to Jesus.

It is to answer 'Amen' to Him – with our lives.

To support all that He is for us,

To faithfully imitate Him.

To have faith is to "have the mind of Christ", ²

So that 'the thoughts of our heart' ³

Are faithful to His

–So that our lives, witness to,

And support, what we express in words.

1 Poem 516. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. June 2003.

2 Phil 2:3

3 Cf Rom 10:9, 10.

Our Daily Offering ¹

*Loving, dearest Abba,
I offer everything I am, and do, today –
All my decisions, thinking, feelings, imagery and actions.*

*I desire to join my heart today
To the heart of our loving brother, Jesus,
Who gives Himself up, fully, to Your service
And to the service of all of us, His kin.*

*Fill me with Your Spirit, Abba,
So that I can live like Jesus today.
Please join all I am, and do, today
To His offering in today's Eucharist
– Becoming a Paschal heart with Him.*

*I pray IN Jesus
Who is the praying heart of our humanity
– With Mary and all the saints –
For Your Beloved's own beautiful Bride, the Church :
... Strengthen all whose faith is weak or failing
... And deepen the faith of all who look to You, as their Father.*

I pray that You especially take to Your heart today
–Each hurting, struggling person in the world,
–Every disunited family or community
–Every sidelined person, and every discriminated group
... So that all can be responsive
To the empowering, healing Spirit of Your Son.

To Be Holy ¹

To be holy is to be 'without sin', ²

To be holy is to be wholly good

As God IS

... Utterly, surpassingly good

Transcendently good

—Beyond all measures and expressions of good.

But ... our human nature is now tragically inclined to sin ;

Thus, for us to be holy NOW,

Is to allow Jesus, the Holy One, ³

To transform our hearts

Our very beings :

... To liberate us from sin,

To free us from death,

... Making us worthy, in Him,

'The Only One WORTHY' ! ⁴

He renews us,

So that Abba

Gathers us to Himself

As a "new humanity" ⁵

In Christ – His Beloved

... So we may 'Be holy

As He is holy'. ⁶

1 Poem 518. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. July 2003.

2 The Hebrew word for 'holy' is 'kadosh' which means 'exempt from evil'. ³ Mk 1:24.

4 Cf Rev 5:2, 12. ⁵ Eph 2:15 (N.R.S.V.) ⁶ Cf Jn 17:19-24, 1Pet 1:16.

Mary's Heart Almost Burst ¹

*Mary, at the foot of the Cross,
Is in the deepest empathy possible with Jesus :
His over-whelming GOODNESS floods her heart ...
All His last words resonate within the depth of her being : -*

“Woman, this is Your son ; son, this is your Mother”: Jn 19:26.

*Mary knew, in this moment,
She had to die to the wonder
Of having Jesus
As her ONLY child.
But she sensed, in another way
–Within the all-encompassing Mystery of God's Love –
That there was ONLY JESUS
To be loved, in all of them !*

“Abba, forgive them ; they know not what they do”: Lk 23:34

*Broken-hearted with grief, Mary can't but forgive
ALL her Son's brothers and sisters
Now ... her OWN beloved children.*

“Today, you will be with me in paradise !” Lk 23:43.

*With a sad hope-filled smile,
Mary took these words
As spoken to her, FOR US.
Her prayer-filled hope was that every remaining day
... For her life and ours ...
Would be OPEN to this “today” !*

#

"I thirst !": Jn 19:28.

Mary too thirsted for our deliverance

–Through the swift deliverance of her beloved Jesus.

But, most of all, she yearned

For the encompassing arms of Abba

To enfold both Jesus and us.

#

27:46.

"My God, my God, why have You deserted me ?" : Mt

Mary, too, felt the emotions

That poured out of the heart of Jesus

... Praying every spiritual pulse

Of this deep-hearted psalm of surrender ²

... With Jesus.

#

"It is accomplished !": Jn 19:30.

Mary's heart almost burst

As she glimpsed what Jesus saw –

The vision

Of Abba's adopted family

Banqueting in His Presence

–The glorious, joyous homecoming of His prodigal children

... The "closest to His heart". ³

#

*“Abba, into Your hands
I entrust my spirit ...” Lk 23:46.
Mary’s heart opened
In this same Passover moment
... Abandoning herself WITH her Son
Into Abba’s arms
... Swept up in the moment
Of Jesus’ own Spirit
–To the Love of both their lives !*

1 Poem 519. Year 5, Prayer Ministry, Clayfield Community, Brisbane. July 2003.

2 Ps 22 (N.R.S.V.) 3 Cf Jn 1:18.

JESUS’ LAST WORDS, QUOTED.