

Folio Thirty-Seven

Folio Thirty-Seven

Poems 720-739

- 720 [Eye to Eye](#)
- 721 [To be Inclusive](#)
- 722 [Sur-rendering Self](#)
- 723 [Love Enables Love](#)
- 724 [Our Gift to You](#)
- 725 [The Best in Monasticism](#)
- 726 [Entering into Christ's Heart](#)
- 727 [Wholly His](#)
- 728 [Together, We Become Yours](#)
- 729 [God's Approval](#)
- 730 [Sharing Christ's Communal Identity](#)
- 731 [Our Companionship Presence](#)
- 732 [As Jaded As Jeremiah](#)
- 733 [Heart Speaks to Heart](#)
- 734 [God's Virgin, Bride and Mother](#)
- 735 [The Mystery of Mary's "Fiat"](#)
- 736 [The Unfolding of "Here I Am"](#)
- 737 [Immersed in the Life of Abba's People](#)
- 738 [Deluged by Abba's Love](#)
- 739 [Embodying His People's Yearnings](#)

Eye to Eye ¹

The TREASURE “buried in the field” ²

*... For the contemplative Christian,
Is not some activity or prayer ... to be uncovered,
To be put at the service of love ;
No – it is being empowered by Love itself!*

While Love draws Christ’s contemplative followers

To act when IT’S TIME,

To pray when IT’S TIME,

Contrarivise, Love empowers the contemplative’s very PERSON

*–To give themselves, to surrender themselves to Love !
... At the time of Love’s choosing !*

*Thus, to truly ‘treasure’ love,
Is to continue to sacrifice oneself,
To risk looking our sister or brother in the eye,
Eye to eye
... With Christ’s simplicity,
And, like Him, to be of service to THEIR deeper needs !*

*Gazing with Christ’s gaze, thus,
Both exposes us to His Cross, but also to share His Glory,
That is, to behold His Father’s Face ...
As Abba lovingly gazes upon His Ascending Beloved
–The apple of HIS eye !
This is the deepest ‘treasure’ one can hope for !*

1 Poem 720, Week 3, Easter to Pentecost Retreat, Clayfield, Brisbane, May 2006.

2 Mt 13:44.

To Be Inclusive ¹

The very essence of God's love
... Of Three Persons being One Love ...
Is to be inclusive,
So that there is –
No going to God
Alone !
No revelation to our spirits,
Without communion !
No evangelisation,
Without fellowship !
No experience of Divine Love,
Without being TOGETHER !

Sur-rendering Self ¹

THEME : “Father, may they be one is us as You are in me, and I am in you” Jn 17:21.

The Father gives Himself, so completely
... Sacrifices His Self, so totally
... Gives with such utter freedom
That His Word – His Son – is totally OTHER :
Totally free in His own Person ...
Totally INDEPENDENT of the Father ...
And thus, fully able to CHOOSE to be
Totally DEPENDENT on the Father !

While the Father’s Gift of Himself
– As Gift GIVEN –
Is the surrender of SELF
In the Spirit of Them both ...
The Son’s RECEPTION of the Father’s Self
–As Gift RECEIVED –
Is en-Spirited in the Spirit of Them both !

WITHIN GOD, ALL THAT IS RECEIVED IS GIVEN –
So the Son gives His Self totally to the Father :
Totally cutting His Self off, from His own Person
Sur-rendering His Self ...
To the Father.

While this surrender of the Son's Self
–Freely and solely offered to the Father –
Is the Gift GIVEN
In the Spirit of Them both ...
As Gift RECEIVED by the Father,
It is en-Spirited in the Spirit of Them both !
O what a wondrously mutual TRI-UNION !

Thus, in the GIVING
The Father and the Son, each gives His total SELF
In the Spirit ;
And, in the RECEIVING
Each receives the Other
In the Spirit.
O what a TRI-UNION !
O what a Spirit of Love
Who unites us to this Fellowship of God !

Love Enables Love ¹

*God's gracious Love
Begets the gift of faith ;
Our faith creates hope,
And enables love ;
Thus Love enables love in us.*

*And this love draws forth more love
... Enabling love
In others !*

Our Gift to You ¹

(This is the prayer of ANY two Divine Persons to the Third :)

*Our reception
Of-who-You-are-in-Us
Is our giving,
Our mutual gift,
To You.*

The Best in Monasticism ¹

Abba, Most Holy,

Reproduce in us

All that is best in monasticism

... To surrender to Your Transcendence,

... And to celebrate Your Fellowship.

Entering into Christ's Heart ¹

THEME: *"Christ has risen, and shines upon us
Whom he has redeemed by His blood." Easter Liturgy.*

*The Easter Christ dawns WITHIN our hearts
... Colouring our spirits with a rainbow of emotions,
... Quickening our hearts with the intensifying warmth of His Presence !
As our yearning hearts SETTLE within His Embrace,
This glow of spirits, in deep communion,
Suffuses into the radiance of a deeper Fellowship
... As rivers of peace, sweep us, within Him
Into Love's Enrapture.*

*Yes our Easter 'Goel' claims us AS HIS OWN
... With still wounded hands, gently leading each of us,
Tenderly gathering us together, shepherding us.
We enter, as it were, through His side's gaping wound
... Into a heart – pierced, open and inviting ,
... Into a heart, opening more deeply
Into ABBA'S Heart of Love,
... Into Love's Abyss ...*

*Drawn within Christ's heart, we feel
... Revitalized by its crimson lifeblood !
... Transformed into His likeness, with others
– A universe of hearts become His !*

And, drawn, deeper still, within Abba's Heart ...

As Love's Eternal Gaze rests upon Christ's Face,

Our eyes meet Love's

... And sensing Love's delight,

We, with Christ, BREATHE FORTH OUR JOY :

'O Love ! O Love of all loves !'

Wholly His ¹

THEME : “Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.” Jn 15:4.

The Christian life we live is not OURS

But Christ’s !

It is an exhilarating opportunity for us to live out

Christ’s own poverty – and plenitude !

Because Jesus’ human nature had no other personhood

Than that of the Eternal Word,

Jesus Himself lived out a supreme form of poverty,

And of a hidden, unsensed plenitude !

Thus, for us to live IN Christ, AS Christ,

To possess the mind of Christ,

To feel with the heart of Christ –

Is, in reality, to allow Christ’s personality

TO ACT AS OURS :

To so co-penetrate and suffuse ours

As to be WHOLLY HIS !

Through our CHOSEN impoverishment of self, in Christ,

We are wholly prepared IN the Spirit,

To receive the Gift of Christ Himself

A Gift of Plenitude

... Also available IN the Spirit,

To give to others’ emptying hearts !

Together, We Become Yours ¹

Abba,

As Your faith-enspirited people

... It is only TOGETHER,

That we can fully recognize

The breadth, and the length, and the depth

Of Your Gift : –

... Listening with trusting ears,

TOGETHER we deeply absorb Your Truth,

As our love enfleshes the Word, in receptive lives.

... Thirsting with open hearts,

TOGETHER we drink in Your Goodness,

Showing forth Your Beloved to our world.

... Yearning with wonder-filled eyes,

TOGETHER our lives are beautified by Your Gaze,

Reflected in the Christ-like faces, of all in Him.

So it is that Your Love envelopes us,

Not as individuals, but TOGETHER ...

Gathering us into Your Community

– A Community that can choose to TRANSCEND itself

By giving itself, like You, in love !

God's Approval ¹

THEME: *"God has approved what you have done,
And Love will bless you eternally."* Cf Acts 10:34,5

*God's approving us ...
Is our Abba-God beholding us
As His Beloved !*

*God's Spirit – within this Eternal Moment –
Removes the VEIL OF TIME-SPACE for us,
Opening us to rejoice in this limitless Fellowship of God,
Who, in Gazing upon us, AS the Beloved,
Enables us to behold
The Face of Love !
... To be en-Spirited !*

*Within this Moment ...
Our thinking becomes that of Christ,
Our consciousness,
That of Christ's all-encompassing, divinely-simple consciousness,
Our memory, imagining, and reflecting – suffused by His !
Our mind becomes that of the Beloved !*

*Our loving too ... deluges forth AS CHRIST'S
Brimming Abba's heart to the full !
This Moment, too,
Encompasses Christ's handing over of His Kingdom of Love to Abba
The Moment of Eternal Mutuality !
For us, IN HIM, it is the ASCENSION, and the ACCEPTANCE of HUMANITY !*

Sharing Christ's Communal Identity ¹

THEME: *“We become WORTHY of possessing Him,
When we abandon ourselves completely to Him.” (St Teresa of Calcutta)*

*To be called to pray IN the Paschal Spirit,
Or IN that Spirit, to show love to any brothers or sisters,
Is to surrender ... to Abba who raised Jesus out of death !
And to share ... Christ's communal identity and destiny !*

*Sharing in Calvary's saving action, in any way,
Is to give the Paschal Christ, a Presence in our world
– A UNIQUE, TOGETHERING, IN-GATHERING PRESENCE –
Whereby His very Person, becomes a COMMUNAL IDENTITY
... One, in whom, many can be gifted a share,
And, through faithfulness, gifted with His COMMUNAL DESTINY.*

*In offering our suffering to the Paschal Christ, FOR OTHERS,
Our brother Jesus channels His regenerative healing
To our wounded humanity, here and now, through EACH OTHER !
This humbling grace of Jesus, draws people to a life of selflessness,
Drawing them TOGETHER within His own Ascended Person
–A universalized, utterly-open humanity,
Eternally en-Spirited, to gift the Spirit
To all gathered within Him !*

To be drawn into this Divinely precious space
–Within Jesus Ascended, radiantly alive with the Spirit for us –
Is to have holocausted one's very SELF,
To be radically OPENED TO ASSUME CHRIST'S IDENTITY!
His is a wondrous COMMUNAL identity,
Wherein our brother God and humanity can commune
... Being Fathered into Life, in Christ, by our Abba-God!
... And wholly en-Spirited, by the Spirit of Fellowship!

In Eucharist we NOW, not only share in Christ's communal identity,
But also, yet still hiddenly, in His COMMUNAL DESTINY.
We are with Him, ASCENDING to Abba's welcoming Embrace,
Inclusive of all gathered in His Person!

Within our Ascending Jesus, sharing HIS self-surpassing love,
We, I, surrender all whom we carry in our hearts, to Abba
– So that, IN Christ, Abba's Spirit
Can en-Spirit all gathered here,
Into a wondrous TOGETHERNESS!
Thus, this enables all to share in Christ's own destiny
– His Eternal Fellowship IN and WITH God!

Our Companionship Presence ¹

*In our wanderlust years,
Our heart's ear heard mostly echoes of the self :
... Our self-regarding ambitions pre-occupying our time
... Our key achievements, highlighting our selves
– With the result that our hearts began to glory
In self-absorbed, transient successes.*

*As we became convinced that these successes
Flowed from OUR hands,
Ironically our hearts slowly DEFLATED
... Content with self-assessment, comfortable with compromise,
... And, with harder selfish choices, disguised by us
As 'assertive' or 'mutually gratifying'.*

*So, as time piled one self-deception upon the next,
Our heart's estrangement deepened ...
Feeding on a diet of self-indulgence
... Which dulled, and began to deaden and obscure
Our heart's true inner values.*

*In time our heart faltered, edging into doubt ...
"Is it all worthwhile?"
Then, as we dissipated our energies
On even more directionless projects ...
Our heart FRACTURED and OPENED
– As we lost our sense of our CENTRE !*

WITHIN,

Regret and remorse flooded our spirit :

Our betrayal of ourselves, and of others

Left us broken-hearted.

Ironically, but very, humanly,

This time of 'being-broken-open', and of woundedness,

Of facing our self-centeredness and irresponsibility,

Became a time of re-orientation, regeneration and renewal :

A time to be receptive, to listen to our INNER HEART,

A time to be attuned to its rhythms and direction.

This homecoming to one's inner heart

Is a time for decision-making

A time to turn from self, to focus truly on others.

It is nonetheless long, bewildering, and painful,

And, seemingly, a solo experience.

Yet, mysteriously,

To faithfully follow the map of the human heart,

Is to BE LED,

To BE ACCOMPANIED,

And, even, to BE CARRIED ...

Because wounded hearts do not invent their own maps

Or devise their own way forward ...

... The way is mapped out by the Wounded One.
For, in our homecoming,
There is a SENSE –
Of one's hand being HELD,
Of the BREATH of a wind in our stilled world,
Of a VOICE carried on the breeze ... beckoning,
Of the GRACE OF JOY filling hearts with promise,
Of an emerging INNER PEACE that unifies,
Of a hope-buoying LIGHT in the midst of our darkness,
And of a settling sense of a COMPANIONING PRESENCE
... Whether on the sunlit terraces of life
... In dappled, mystifying forest shadows
... Or within the sightlessness of a mountain's cloud.

And more deeply ... within all this,
Within our fears, within our suffering,
There is the mysterious sense of SOMEONE
Whose heart has already feared, already suffered,
And endured ALL – for us ... for us all,
Who is HERE ... in the NOW ... for those whose hearts are OPEN.

*Little by little we sense that our hearts
Are being rebuilt
On the ruins of the old
– Transforming all that was good in our past.
There is an emerging sense, a graced awareness,
Of BEING DRAWN –
Out of turmoil, into the heart's STILLNESS
Out of contending voices, into harmony's SILENCE
Out of exerting control, into peaceful WAITING
Out of indifference, into a spirited ATTENTIVENESS
Out of merely coping, into an engaged JOY
Out of restlessness, into a receptive PEACE.*

*To our delight,
We find that the Companioning Presence
Of our pilgrimage into our inner-heart
... Seemingly always available to welcome us HOME ...
Has the face of the Crucified, Risen One
– The One we have SET OUR HEARTS ON ... unknowingly !*

*Paradoxically,
His own Paschal Journey becomes OURS !
In coming to love Him, we come to love ourselves.
He, the glory of humanity, becomes our ideal, our destiny :
He becomes our passage to Life, our homecoming joy !
In His renewed humanity, we can COMMUNE with God !*

1 Poem 731, Six Day Retreat, Yamba, late June, 2006, Day 1.

(Yamba is a holiday, retirement town, at the mouth of the Clarence River, NSW)

NOTE: Sr. Yvonne Parker S.G.S. was again, the facilitator, and my spiritual director.

As Jaded As Jeremiah ¹

(Author :)

Your Beloved's PASSION, my Abba-God, fires my passion !

So, deep in Your Depths

... Where Your Transformative Spirit moves ...

Free me, to bare my spirit's core,

To abandon all to You – as Your Beloved did.

The more tenderly You draw me to Your Heart,

The broader You spread my compassion ;

The deeper You enable my love,

The more You expand my heart to encompass all !

Coveted by You, in the womb,

Covenanted, through life, as Your kin,

Encompassed by Your Enrapturing Spirit of Love ...

I am overwhelmed by You, my God,

And galvanized – to challenge Your People ...

To open their hearts to You !

In deepest truth

I am humbled, stunned ...

By Your empowering intimacy

... And feel impelled

To take Your People to my heart !

*Called to Gospel celibacy,
I am set aside for ALL Your People,
And, freed and favoured ... within Your friendship,
I am "given up" Paschally, like Jesus,
More radically, FOR them !*

*Yes, in paying this Paschal price ...
Increasingly, stress and strife characterize my life
– In the long, drawn-out process,
Of separating Your wheat, in me,
From my very own darnel !*

*At times, my heart is thrown into turmoil
By Your demands ...
Stunned by being derided
For Your cause ...
And worn out, by being shunned
In Your service ...*

*Yes, part of me wants to rebel
Against such a taskmaster – as You !
In such escapist interludes,
It's easy to lament that You ever enticed me, Abba
You know I've even prayed to You, Lord –
"Is this how You want it to be ?
... If so, have pity on me,
Relieve me of Your burdens
–Just make me a prophet, FREE OF CARE !"*

*However, with my spirit drained and depleted,
I am still faced with the STARKLY OBVIOUS :
Your power is inexhaustible !
Your wisdom depthless !
I am enchanted, still, by Your Vision,
Seduced by Your passion for life !
Most of all, the allure of Your Intimacy seizes me !
Your Love, Your Spirit
Is unquenchable !
Your call to surrender all
Is irresistible !
My heart cannot hold out !*

*You, O Abba, murmur ... “If you surrender ALL
Abandon your very spirit, to ME –
My people will surrender THEIRS to Me !
I have taken you by the hand
... Ever since You have carried My People in your heart
... Since that time, in mid-adulthood,
When I chose TO ENPEOPLE YOUR SPIRIT,
WITH THE SPIRITS of My People !”²*

*“So now within your heart-space, I want you
To pray for those who can't pray, and for those who won't pray ;
To commune with them, with heartfelt brotherliness.
Fully ! And wholly UNRESERVEDLY !
No looking aside. No lingering indulgences.”*

What can I say to You,

O Wondrous, Wondrous Abba ?

Mute as clay ...

Docile as clay ...

Receptive as clay ...

Mould me in Jesus' image,

O Potter God !

Transform me !

Vitalize me !

Radiate my spirit !

Resurrect my heart !

Draw me to Yourself, IN HIM,

O Paschal Father !

Thus en-Spirited, to embrace Your People UNRESERVEDLY ...

I now feel, within my spirit's depths,

The sadness of a sad God,

Saddened by ALL SINS

Against Fellowship

And against longings

To live life in God's COMPANY !

My heart reels : comes the realisation

That I NEED to suffer alienation

If I am to help rescue, for You,

An alienated people !

Alone ? Never !

Only with the remnant goodness, surfacing in ALL such people !

Only with Your RESURGENT Paschal Spirit !

*O Abba-God, Empowering One,
Fire US with the Spirit
Of Your Beloved's ASCENDANT HUMANITY
–To rouse Your People's apathy,
–To release their spirits' INHIBITIONS,
–To let their spirits SOAR !*

*Thus, in resurrecting Your People's hopes,
And in re-charging them with en-thusiam,³
Make room for such transformation IN OUR HEARTS !
And so that all hearts STAY TRUE TO YOU,
Carve out a heart-space, for faithfulness, within US !
Equally, that THEY may experience the effects of Your grace NOW,
Infuse US with Your Spirit ! Suffuse US with delight !
So that ALL ... the faithful, the indifferent, the alienated
Can delight in Your Loveliness, and in Your Fellowship !*

1 Poem 732, Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 2.

2 See NOTE for Poem 168, Tertianship course, Rome, 1991.

3 From the Greek, 'en-thusiasm' is literally, (enjoying) 'God within'.

Heart Speaks to Heart ¹

(CHRISTIANS TOGETHER :)

Although there are many voices ... God's People

– Once AS Israel, now AS Christ –

Pray with our praying heart.

The flow of our prayer

Mirrors both the desert meanderings of Israel's seduction by Yahweh,

And now our seduction and conquest, IN CHRIST, by Abba !

Such prayer is a lover's interchange, marked on our part, by ...

Fidelity or fickleness, fondness or fear,

Friendship or frustration, feast or famine !

Often, counterpointing our heartfelt prayer ...

Father us ! Guide us ! Nourish us ! Protect us !

Is Abba's insisting to us, that –

To be tested, to be re-oriented, to be challenged,

To be asked to change, and to be called to surrender

... Is EQUALLY prayer !

Our Love-God's enticing us to PARTNER Him in love,

All occurs within Christ's spacious HEART !

It is here, that Abba's and our hearts meet !

Here, in Jesus' Paschal Heart,

Is played out Abba's seduction of humanity ;

Here, HEART SPEAKS TO HEART ! ²

Here hearts, DIVINE and HUMAN, blend as one !

Here, ultimately, the Paschal Covenant of Love is solemnized !

Here, in Jesus Ascended, the hearts of earth and heaven

Are wed !

*Thus now, in prayer, especially in Eucharist,
To 'CALL TO HEART' our Lover-God Abba, is
... To be re-Covenanted with Him,
... To be re-identified with the People He loves !
It is to enter into a twinning of hearts between Abba and His People,
WITHIN the wondrous HEART of His Beloved !*

*If, as is sometimes the case,
We enter into this prayer, with Jacob's consciousness
As "one who struggles with God", ³
We'll emerge with the consciousness of Jesus,
Whose "meek and lowly heart" gentles all He encounters. ⁴*

*Within this prayer of wedded hearts
Our passions engage, minds converse, and spirits commune !
Indeed, our very cells, as it were, align themselves with Christ's,
Whose Risen blood courses through our spirit's arteries
—Because our UPLIFTED natural humanity shares
In Christ's ENABLING, GLORIFIED, yet hidden "new humanity"! ⁵*

*Again, as Abba's HEART speaks to ours
—Whispering our mutual love —
Christ's Paschal Spirit of Union, even more deeply,
Weds our spirits ... and twins our hearts !*

*In such wedded prayer, that best of all fathers, Abba
— As once He did for Jesus, His MOST ADORABLE Child —
Collects our tears, steadies our stumblings,
Brightens our smiles, and shepherds our futures.*

Yes ! Abba is the Loving One :
... Who freely allows our hearts, to re-shape others' hearts ;
... Who, in prayer, takes our hand,
Strolls with us, through His gardens
Through Gethsemane, to Paradise ; ⁶
... Who puts His arm about our shoulder
And draws us to His warmth,
To the centre of His care ;
... Who presses His cheek against ours
– Our leprous faces, pitted by sin –
And en-raptures us
With fondest love.

In times of romance, within this marriage,
Creation can mirror for us, Abba's Face of Love
Who gazes with delight, upon His world
With His eyes coming to rest, upon US,
His Beloved's earth brothers and sisters.
At such times, Love's Spirit moves us
To heartfelt awe, and deep gratefulness
As we behold in each other,
Wondrous images of His CREATIVE kindness.

*Thus, in ALL of this,
Jesus Ascended becomes our Psalmody, our Prayer,
–The Covenant between Abba and us, the Meeting Place of Hearts.
He breathes His Spirit of Prayer either into us, or to Abba
... For, truly, only God can commune with God !
And Abba, in joyfully receiving our prayer,
Embraces us within the heart of His Son
... Where, HEART SPEAKS TO HEART !*

*O Abba, within Jesus' wondrous heart-space,
Tenderly soothe our pain with Your touch ;
Flow through every wound of ours – as You did Jesus',
Reviving us with Your luminous Easter healing !
Breathe the Breath of Your Loveliness
Through our every cell ...
So we sing out our whole REALITY to You
... Echoing Your Beloved's own heart-song
As He gives voice
To the yearnings and longings of us, His kin.*

1 Poem 733, Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 3.

2 Phrase of Bl. Henry Cardinal Newman.

3 Cf Gen 32:29 4 Mt 11:28 5 Eph 2:15 N.R.S.V. 6 'Paradisum' is Greek for 'garden of delights'.

God's Virgin, Bride, and Mother ¹

(PART 1 of a TRILOGY)

"God-seeking hearts will rejoice" sings the Psalmist ; ²

Mary's was such a heart.

As a younger girl, she was conscious

Not only of her life being a GIFT FROM YAHWEH

But also of herself being a GIFT TO YAHWEH ... ³

As she was PRESENTED to 'El Qadosh, God the Holy', ⁴

In His own Jerusalem Temple. ⁵

This sense of Giftedness –

Of being within the Circle of Yabweh's 'hesed', or loving-kindness,

Of serving God's people, in God's home

... Surely grew and blossomed within Mary's consciousness.

Out of it emerged a self-sacrificing response

To Yabweh's most intimate invitation

–To solemnly vow her virginity,

The whole of her life, the totality of her future

To Yabweh ALONE ! ⁶

Then, as a young adolescent
... Sensitive to Yabweh's claim on her virginal heart ...
Mary's self-consciousness of wholly belonging to Yabweh
Has the deep support of her loving parents, Joachim and Anne.
Knowing her years of Temple service
Had, by custom, to end by age thirteen, ⁷
They did not know want to see her profoundly cherished VOW
Circumscribed in any way, much less nullified.
So ... with Anne's urging,
"Joachim searched among his Davidian clansmen for a husband
—Who would guard his daughter's virginity". ⁸
It seemed an impossible task.

However, aided by the Hebrew custom of memorizing whole genealogies,
His search was graced with a unique candidate, Joseph, the Natzorean. #
Recently widowed by the death of his young wife 'Mary' ⁹
... And being the young father of four sons, and two daughters ¹⁰
— "Isn't this Mary's son, the brother of JAMES, JOSEPH, JUDAS and SIMON ?
And aren't his SISTERS here with us"? (Mk 6:3) —
Joseph graciously consented, under the Torah, to wed Mary,
But also to honour and reverence her vow of consecrated celibacy
... So treasured by herself, and by her loving parents.

Mary was utterly grateful to Joseph, her 'Goel'
— Her Torah-sanctioned 'defender', 'champion', and, 'marital redeemer'!
Mary, in a truly selfless way, also saw this proposed 'special' marriage,
As a marvellous opportunity to be of significant help, 'in loco parentis',
To Joseph, in nurturing and rearing his "still small children" ¹¹
... Even though James, the eldest, was then about nine.

*Following Joseph's open-hearted consent,
Mary journeyed north, probably chaperoned by Joachim, her Dad,
To stay with still OTHER relatives in Nazareth
... As an intended sign of her Betrothal to Joseph,
And to prepare socially and emotionally for their special Wedding.*

*In this time of waiting ...
Mary felt that the God of her VIRGINAL HEART
–To whom ALONE she had consecrated herself–
Was so wonderfully protective of their SPOUSAL BOND
... As her Divine Bridegroom ...
That He had devised for her this truly special marriage
–Within which her virginal vow could now bloom,
And within which she could live, for her Diving Spouse ALONE!*

*Then ... one morning ... Mary's whole world changed!
... Her horizons irreversibly widened!
... The challenge to her faith, immeasurably deepened!*

*Encompassed by the awesomeness
Of Gabriel's initial appearance, and his greeting her as "favoured one",¹²*

*There came THOSE WORDS –
"And now, you will CONCEIVE in your womb
And BEAR A SON ..."*

*This Divine invitation-command
Had a stunning effect on Mary's equanimity :
Puzzlement and consternation*

Followed ...

What of Yahweh's and her SPOUSAL BOND,

So recently and beautifully affirmed ?

Mary ached with all her being,

To be utterly responsive to Yahweh's Dream for her :

... For THIS

Now to include child-bearing ,

Left her in stunned astonishment ...

Her only question was "How" ? ¹³

Then with Gabriel's ultimate assurance

That "the Holy Spirit ... the power of the Most High

Will OVERSHADOW you" ... ¹⁴

And that "Nothing will be impossible with God", ¹⁵

Mary's utter faith

In her NOW 'Abba-Spouse'

Overflowed !

It radiated forth from her

In the most profound SURRENDER of her spirit ;

It moved her

TO BOW HER HEAD

In adoration

To Abba her Spouse, to her Beloved Son WITHIN, and to the Spirit of Conception

– To her Loving God –

... For all humanity, and FOR herself !

With ultimate simplicity,

Mary, agreed to become the means

Of "the Son of the Most High's" entry ¹⁶

Into LIFE-AS-A-HUMAN-BEING

–Into being one of us !

This Spirit of Conception, this Spirit of Mystery

Encompassed Mary's spirit

– As it was enfolded within Abba's Love –

Waiting upon the very moment

When the bloom of her faith FULLY opened,

To receive ...

“The Dawning from on high, breaking upon her”.¹⁷

With Mary's “Let Your Word be done to me”¹⁸

A Glory

... More glorious than the glory

Of a universe of galaxies

Spinning in splendour ...

Came to rest,

Like feather down,

Within her heart,

Within her womb,

Within Isra-el,

Within humanity itself.

In that moment,

Yahweh's Virgin

Becomes

Abba's Bride !

And His Beloved's Mother !

1 Poem 734, Part 1 of a Trilogy (Poem 734 – Poem 736);

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2 2006, Day 4.

2 Ps 68. (Grail). 3 B Pixner O.S.B. With Jesus in Jerusalem p19.

4 The Church since ancient times has Eucharistically celebrated The Presentation of Mary in the Temple – now, on Nov 21.

5 Pixner p16, 19 6 IBID p20 7 IBID p21 8 IBID p21

9 Catholic Dictionary. 10 Pixner p21 11 IBID p21 12 to 18: All N.R.S.V.

12 Lk 1:30 13 Lk1:34 14 Lk 1:35 15 Lk 1:37 16 Lk 1:32 17 Cf Lk 1:78 18 Cf Lk 1:38.

Not only Joseph, but Jesus also could call Himself, a NATZOREAN. It is the name of the Davidic Clan who, in about 100BC, formed the hamlet of Nazareth, and settled this area, on their return from Babylon (as with other clans to elsewhere in Galilee). The name, from the Hebrew NEI^ZER, means “the shoot of a root”, as in the Messianic Is 11:1 – “A shoot will arise from the stump of Jesse’, and, revealingly, from Rev 22:16b, “I (Jesus) am the root and offspring of David”. This exegesis seems more telling and plausible than the surmised connection to Jesus being a NAZIRITE (Jg 13:5,7). Matthew’s prophetic word, “He shall be called a Natzorean” (2:23) now has real impact and depth. The Natzoreans had Essene sympathies (B.PIXNER).

The Mystery of Mary's 'Fiat' ¹

(Part 2 of a TRILOGY)

Mary's 'fiat' was both her WEDDING VOW to God,

And the consent enabling her to MOTHER GOD!

In that Moment,

Abba and Mary are ETERNALLY WEDDED IN LOVE

– A Mystery sensed by Mary,

Yet a Mystery ETERNALLY unfolding

Within Mary's understanding ,

As her CAPACITY to understand

Ever deepens and expands.

To the extent

That it MIRRORS our "willing" humanity's 'fiat',

A similar graced unfolding

Will be gifted to us.

This Eternal unfolding within Mary

Is her poverty

... A reflection of the poverty of her Son,

Relinquishing His consciousness of His Divinity

... To companion us,

... To save us.

Within herself, Mary senses
“All things coming together in Love”²
In the Eternal Kiss of her Spouse, Abba
... A Spirit-Kiss exhilarating her spirit !
Her whole being is suffused with Abba’s luminous loveliness

And, following conception,
Peace Eternal
Makes a home in her,
Imparting to her faith,
A unique sense of ‘ God Within’...

The Memory of That Moment
Is anchored in her deepest spirit :
Her wombed God being its anchor !
She who is to cause God to grow humanly, treasures in her heart

That “Yes”
Wherein –
Heaven makes love to earth !
Eternity enters time !
The Infinite One becomes a human cell !
The All Powerful One becomes uniquely helpless !
Wherein – in a uniquely personal way
... For Mary herself ...

The Creator is sheltered by me – His creature !
The Eternal One chooses me – as His Bride !
The Immortal One is born of me – His lowly Mother !

And, most especially,
GOD MAKES LOVE – TO ME !

The Memory of That Moment

... Of that "little while" ³

When her "fiat" opened a window into Eternity ...

Was of the Three living Their Life of Love within :

–Of the Moment, when her Yahweh-Spouse of earlier years,

Now exults as "Abba"... in both being her Divine Bridegroom,

And in the Glory of Fathering a human Son with her !

– Of the Moment, when her Beloved Son's farewelling of His Divine Consciousness,

BECOMES His welcome to His humanity, in the beautiful words,

"God, here I am, I come to do Your will" ⁴

... In consciousness terms 'LOSING' a Divine Father,

And 'GAINING' a human Mother

... Such that, His Mother's ever growing consciousness of His Divinity,

Enwombs His non-consciousness of IT !

– Of the Moment, when the Creative Spirit of Conception enables Abba's Love for Mary,

To ENFRUIT itself as the Gift of His Son's Divinity,

Within the ready soil of our humanity.

Yet ... whatever the intensity of Mary's Memory,

It, again, fades ...

Mary slowly realizes, in prayerful contemplation ...
The Immensity ! The Depthless Intimacy ! The Wonder !
Of Abba's relationship to her
–As GOD ! Bridegroom ! And Co-parent !
How unbelievably humble
Mary continued to become ...
Yet, Mary's continuing thanks to Abba
Is but a reflection
Of Abba's Eternal boundless gratitude to Mary
... For her "Fiat".

1 Poem 735, Part 2 of a Trilogy (Poem 734 – Poem 736);

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 4.

2 Cf Rom 8:28 3 Jn 16:16 4 Heb 10:7.

The Unfolding of 'Here I Am' ¹

(Part 3 of a TRIOLGY)

Mary,

In her ...

"HERE I AM: Your handmaid, O Adonai

– LET YOUR WORD BE DONE TO ME"... ²

Was NOT to know, THEN :

... Of her Co-parent Abba's own fond words

To Their Beloved Child,

Beginning His human life in THAT Moment –

"YOU ARE MY SON !

TODAY I HAVE BECOME YOUR FATHER !" ³

... Nor, of Abba's beautifully simple introduction,

"THIS IS YOUR MOTHER" ⁴

... Nor, of her Beloved Child's response to Abba,

"HERE I AM. I COME TO DO YOUR WILL". ⁵

How could she know,

That, in THAT Moment,

Her marvellously OPEN SPIRIT

Was being TWINNED

To her Son's,

In the initial

"HERE I AM ..."

Of them both

... One in body One is spirit ?

Yet,
A little over three decades later
– On Calvary
At the foot of His Cross, her Cross, our cross –
Mary was to hear
Both their pledges,
FULLY realized
In a move profoundly Mysterious way!
It is in THAT “HOUR”, as John puts it ⁶
–Indeed, on the cusp of Jesus’ life, and His entry into death for us –
That Jesus re-pledges His “Here I am”...
In His “Abba, into Your hands, I entrust my spirit”, ⁷
As faithfully, Mary re-pledges her own “Here I am”,
As she joins her Beloved Son
In CO-SACRIFICING HIS LIFE TO ABBA.

For Mary, too, it meant death
... A death to her old way of mothering Jesus
–As NOW, established anew as Mother, by Jesus Himself, as our Mother ⁸
... Mary accepted, in the most co-sacrificial way,
The millions of us who were to claim her as Mother!
These are the same millions
Who were to be ADOPTED and CLAIMED by Jesus
– In His “altogether NEW PERSON” – ⁹
As Abba drew His, and our, ASCENDANT HUMANITY
To Himself!

Thus, on the other face of that same "HOUR" – on Easter dawn,

Abba with Mary

– Once sad parents together, on Calvary –

Are now exultant with parental joy !

Easter's Mary deeply resonates with Abba's repeated words ...

"You are My Son !

Today, I have become Your Father !" ¹⁰

Mary gives birth with Abba,

To the Son of Joy

In whom the Promise, made to her by Gabriel at Nazareth, ¹¹

Is now BEING

Fully, Gloriously, and Eternally realized !

Wondrously, the one Son, enwombed within her love,

Has now become MANY !

... Children of a delighting Father and joyous Mother !

... Myriad brothers and sisters of their Ascended Son !

... His galaxy of kin !

More wondrously still,

Abba and Mary together delight with their Risen and Ascended Son

– As the NEW CREATION of ABBA'S LOVE !

– As the RADIANT HEART of our NEW HUMANITY !

– As the PERSONAL SOURCE of the PASCHAL SPIRIT !

– As the GLORIOUS FOCUS for a REGENERATED UNIVERSE !

– As the now HUMAN SON of a DIVINE FELLOWSHIP !

– As the BELOVED FOOT-WASHER of the poor and lowly !

– And as the PASCHAL BODY AND BLOOD,

Nourishing "the poor in spirit" ! ¹²

*This latter especially delights Mary
... For, as one "poor in spirit"
She had once nourished Jesus' infant body,
Now she, in turn, is nourished
By the BODY and BLOOD of HER CHILD !*

*Finally, in the quiet of His Paschal Peace, Mary ponders how ...
As once, she had prompted His "Here I am",
In HIS RECEIVING flesh, of her,
FROM our world ...
NOW, she rejoices with His Paschal "Here I am",
– In His self-sacrifice, and glorification –
In HIS GIVING His Paschal Flesh,
FOR our world !*

1 Poem 736, Part 3 of a Trilogy (Poem 734 to Poem 736).

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 4.

2 Cf Lk 1:38 3 Heb 1:5 4 Cf Jn 19:27 5 Heb 10:7 6 Cf Jn 17:1 7 Lk 23:46 8 Jn 19:27 9 Gal 6:15 (J.B.)

10 Heb 1:5 11 Lk 1:32,33 12 Mt 5:3

Immersed in the Life of Abba's People ¹

(A TRILOGY – PART 1)

*Jesus, in his early boyhood,
Fell in love with Yabweb
... As he IMITATED
The deep and loving feelings
That his Mother always showed for her 'Abba-Yabweb'.
His heart warmed
Every time he listened to her, talking to him ...
"Your God-Daddy, Jesus,
Is a Daddy so giving , so loving, and so close to you
... He's like the BREATHING IN OF YOUR BREATH,
And a Daddy so beautiful, so open, and so peaceful
... He's like the BREATHING OUT OF YOUR BREATH;
And His Breath feels like a Kiss
Full of light,
Warming you heart."*

*Jesus asked her again and again –
"Tell me again about our God-Daddy !"
Within a few years, Jesus had shortened
"God-Daddy" to "Daddy" ... that is "Abba".*

*By 12 year old, Jesus was so in love,
That he was fondly talking about "My Abba"*

*– "Surely you know I need to be
In my Abba's house?"²*

Jesus loved Abba for fathering him

*" – Like Joseph, but better –
Full of love, and really close".*

*Jesus gave his life over to Abba,
Gave himself, heart and soul*

"... No holding back".

Then, as year followed year, in the Galilean hills of his youth,

He took Abba's PEOPLE to his heart.

In the synagogue of Nazareth,

In the stirring chants and soulful cadences of Sabbath rituals,

He felt one with his Chosen People's Covenanted history

– Singing out, not only his own teenage feelings,

But his People's feelings – their pains, their heart-songs.

As he matured, he felt ever more attuned to their spirit.

At times, his young adult heart was weighed down

By the cumulative starkness of their plight

– The social inequalities, their lack of direction, their 'lostness'!

Still, Jesus felt that within himself, Abba carried the burden with him ;

And Jesus' trust in Abba swelled constantly ...

As Abba accompanied the deeper out pouring of his compassion.

*Jesus has a loving, lovable spirit
And a sensitive, responsive heart.
Because of this, he intuitively knew that SIN
Was at the heart of his People's troubles.
He so longed to share with them –
The Covenanted 'besed' ... loving-kindness, he experienced from Abba.
Moreover, Jesus's own burgeoning faith, and deep confidence in Abba
Moved his young adult heart to care for Abba's People AS HIS OWN ...
With that intimate LOVE with which Abba so tenderly wrapped Jesus' own spirit !
Indeed, Jesus felt driven, by the Spirit of the Prophets,
To COMMUNICATE that the beautiful sense of aliveness he felt in Abba,
Was surely available to each and all of Abba's Chosen People
... And more readily so, to the open-hearted and humble.*

*By his mid to late twenties,
Jesus' profound sense of IDENTIFICATION with Abba's People
Began to sadden and physically pain him :
His own responses seemed LIMITED to so few !
A powerful movement, within his spirit, TO PUBLICLY WITNESS
To Abba's fiery desire to DEEPLY CHANGE ALL HEARTS
Took hold of Jesus !
He was determined to proclaim Abba's own yearning
–To GATHER all those with changed-hearts
Into some sort of KINSHIP !
A KINSHIP of the lowly, and poor in spirit,
A KINSHIP of God-seeking hearts !*

So it was, guided by the Spirit of Prayerfulness
... The Breathing IN and Breathing OUT
Of his LIFE-WITHIN-ABBA ...
Jesus entered the Jordan's waters
–To clearly signal, through his BAPTISM, by John, his deep desire :
... To be IMMERSED in the companionship
Of the lowly and of the poor in spirit.
... To be IMMERSED in their heart-song, and heart-ache,
So that, TOGETHER, they gather all God-seeing hearts
Into KINSHIP with Abba !

1 Poem 737, Part 1 of a Trilogy (Poem 737 to Poem 739).

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 5.

2 Lk 2:49.

Deluged by Abba's Love ¹

(A TRILOGY – PART 2)

Jesus' desire to commit himself, totally, to the poor and lowly

– To IDENTIFY with Abba's exploited People –

Was to change him radically.

His plunging wholly into the heart of their condition

– Signified, in his CHOICE TO BE BAPTIZED –

Was soon to see him actually IMMERSED in their communal and personal struggles

To regain and re-assert THEIR HUMAN DIGNITY.

Thus, Jesus joined them, Abba-Yahweh's chosen ones,

In re-claiming, and thereby elevating, their humanity

– Beginning with a complete CHANGE OF HEART !

What astounded Jesus, was Abba's own striking INITIATIVE in his own BAPTISM.

Jesus was wondrously moved by its explicit and miraculous character.

He was stunned by Abba's

Delight in him

As "My ... Beloved ... Son", ²

And, equally, by Abba's affirmation,

"My favour RESTS ON YOU !" ³

This public sunburst of Abba's love

Was simply overwhelming !

Jesus felt DIVINELY POSSESSED !

His being IMMERSED in the water of the Jordan

Gave Him the sense of being utterly encompassed by Abba's Presence !

*Being proclaimed as “GOD’S BELOVED SON”,
Changed His life forever
... Transcending irrevocably, His earlier graced feelings
Of being FATHERED by Abba, His God !*

*To be thus PERSONALLY ENFOLDED BY GOD, in the sight of His People,
Obviously proclaimed Abba’s empowering approved of His COMMITMENT TO THE POOR
Clearly, – now, transforming it into Abba’s MISSION for Him !
In standing up, head bowed,
Under the sun of God’s Glory,
Jesus was overcome with love
For this Most Loving of all Fathers !*

*Moreover, Jesus keenly sensed
That these glorious affirmations
Resonated with the very heart of Isaiah’s “Suffering Servant” texts.
His Abba was clearly reminding Him
That painful adjustments always accompany “changing of hearts”
... That labour pains always precede the birth of new hearts !*

*Also, as Jesus “came up out of the water”... ⁴
The image of the emergence of Abba’s People from the Red Sea
Was given Him by the Spirit ... !
–How their PASSOVER into freedom had been marked by dislocation and confusion,
Revealing again, how a price needed to be paid for freedom of hearts !*

*Then, as the water dried on Jesus,
—In His ‘exodus’ from the Jordan —
Jesus sensed, in John’s hailing Him, as ‘the Passover Lamb,’* ⁵

That His DESTINY

Lay, perhaps, in His being SACRIFICED FOR HIS PEOPLE ?

As Jesus stood on the river bank, facing the Jordan,

— Awe’d by the shaft of sunlight ⁶

Brightly illuminating the area where He now stood —

His heart was near bursting with the deepest thankfulness.

As His gaze lingered on the scintillating surfaces lit by the sunshaft,

He now contemplated with the deepest love,

The Presence of the Spirit-Dove, hovering over His head ⁷

... Perhaps signalling, quietly, the inception

Of the era of a New Creation ?

Jesus’ mind now filled with the light of the new realization

That the Spirit-Dove was Abba’s OWN Spirit :

... A Spirit engendering the fondest filial love !

... A Spirit engendering COMMUNION between Abba and Himself !

... A Spirit both of awe and heart-warming intimacy !

Truly He felt this Spirit now welling up WITHIN HIS VERY BEING,

Was at once — the Spirit of Israel’s Passover into freedom, and His very own !

Yet, also, this Spirit of the Suffering Servant ... THEN and NOW ...

Was calling Him to sacrifice Himself for His wayward people.

*But, above all, this Spirit
Suffusing His whole being,
Was the Spirit of Sonship
... The Spirit who, from that Wondrous Moment onwards,
Allowed Him to focus the intensity
Of His Divinely-human love,
On Abba,
... And, to relate to all humanity, WITHIN THAT EXPERIENCE.*

1 Poem 738, Part 2 of a Trilogy (Poem 737 to Poem 739).

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 5.

2 Mt 3:17 3 IBID 4 Mt 3:16 5 Cf Jn 1:29 6 Mk 1:10 & Lk 3:21 7 Jn 1:32

Embodying His People's Yearnings ¹

(A TRILOGY – PART 3).

*Following Abba's wondrously loving affirmation
Of the baptized Jesus, as His "Beloved Son",
And as "the Chosen One" to carry out His Fatherly Dream ²
To uplift His wayward People ...
And following the Spirit of Divine Unity
Settling upon Jesus' humble presence ...
This same Spirit, most paradoxically,
Does not lead Jesus into the welcoming presence of a hopeful people,
But "draws Jesus into the wilderness,
there to be tempted by a satanic presence"! ³*

*Here, Abba deeply accompanies His Beloved
In His human resolve
– As the exemplar of Abba's GOOD NEWS to His People –
To focus ...
Not on His own personal needs,
But on the PLIGHT of Abba's People ;
Not on His own power, or Sonship prerogatives,
But on EMPOWERING His People
To a CHANGE OF HEART ;
Not on an enticing alliance with the focus of evil
... To gain a world-wide following of adoring fans ...
But to centre all on Abba's choices for His mission.*

Emerging from the desert ... His mission aflame in His heart ...
Jesus determined, like the Suffering Servant, to FULLY IDENTIFY –
With the lowly, with the pure in heart, with the poor in spirit,
With the gentle, with those mourning, with those persecuted for right,
And with all God-seeking hearts .
The Spirit energized Him, increasingly –
... To give public voice to the muffled cries and stifled pleas of His People,
... To thirst, with their thirst, for Abba's empowerment,
... To angrily appeal to those who multiply the load, to un-burden His People,
... But above all, to dance the dance of Abba's forgiveness and healing !

This choice-of-identification CHANGED Jesus.
As Jesus more and more CARRIED His People's hopes and anxiety,
He felt Himself being re-formed ...
Becoming hope for them !
Becoming com-passion for them !
Becoming a praying heart for them !

In so doing, Jesus endeared Himself to them,
Because the humblest of them ...
Sensed He was the one, "closest to Abba's heart".⁴
Those, with open spirits,
Could see that Abba was the CENTRE of Jesus's life :
He so IDENTIFIED with Abba,
That He was able to say
"Whoever comes to me comes to the Father"⁵
... "Abba and I are one".⁶

*Alive with Abba's Spirit,
Jesus became deeply able –
To love those hostile to Him and to His People,
To do good to those who hated and maligned them,
To pray for those who harassed and laid traps for them,
To bless those who mistreated any of His little ones, or Himself ⁷
... Even forgiving those who directly attacked Him.*

*It was but a short step for Jesus
To SUBSTITUTE Himself for anyone targeted in these ways
... By any, with evil in their hearts
That is, by any or all of us
– So that ... all might turn to Abba,
To the God who changes hearts !
To the God, so EXCESSIVE in His love,
That He keeps on loving, no matter what !*

*Thus Jesus wanted, within Himself !
To truly EMBODY His people's hopes,
To EMBODY their whole reality –
The misery and magnificence of their lives !
Above all, to EMBODY FORGIVENESS for them
... Abba' forgiveness.*

He wanted to be their conduit,

FROM Abba, and TO Abba

– To be the LIFE-FORCE

Flowing from Abba, animating His People !

In effect, Jesus yearned to become

Both the EMBODIMENT and LIFE BLOOD

Of His People's relationship to Abba ...

Simply, to BE their EUCHARIST to Abba !

To be such a person

–To thwart the world's evil intent of maintaining its captive grip on His People–

Jesus KNEW

His very PERSON had to become a holocaust, in their stead :

His BODY needed to be broken for them,

His BLOOD needed to be totally spent for them

–So that, together, THEY IN Him, could become

A freed, uplifted People

Swept up by the Spirit of Adoption

Into the HEART OF ABBA !

Come Lord Jesus, live in us !

Live the Life of Abba's Beloved, in us !

In the Spirit of Passover

... BE Abba's love for us !

... BE our love for Abba !

1 Poem 739, Part 3 of a trilogy (Poem 737 to Poem 739).

Six Day Retreat, Yamba, June 2006, Day 5.

2 Jn 1:34 3 Mk 1 :12,13 4 Jn 1:18 5 Cf Jn 14:6,7 6 Jn 10:30 7 Cf Lk 6:27,28

