

Folio Four

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Mary's 'Yes' ¹

*On Mary's 'Yes',
— As her word seeks to merge with God's Word —
Abba draws Mary into His Glory Cloud of intimacy;
He draws her to Himself in a Wedding Embrace;
Mary surrenders to His spousal Kiss.
In this Embrace, in this Kiss,
The Spirit takes possession of her,
Overshadowing her, ²
Settling within her
... As the Glory Cloud of Love, the Spirit of the New Creation.*

*As Mystery's Breath of Life
Fills her womb
— As Light Eternal and human ovum unite —
Eternity enters time!
The Creator becomes creature!
God becomes man!
And Mary, humble Mary, becomes the living tabernacle
Of Abba's Beloved Son!*

*Any time, any one of us,
Is Christ
To any person,
Or to any family or community,
We too will join with Mary's 'Yes',
Be swept up into Abba's Embrace,
Be filled with the Glory Cloud of Love,
And vitalized
With the Spirit of the New Creation
— To bring Abba's Beloved to birth
In the lives of others.*

¹ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

² Lk 1:35

As Weak, among the Weak³

*When we, like Thomas,
Enter into Jesus' woundedness
– In ourselves or in others –
We will, like Thomas,
Proclaim the Crucified Presence
DIVINELY ALIVE in our wounds and world
... Transforming lives!*

*Jesus' Crucified Presence
Reveals God's weakness to the world:
Love moves God
To leave Himself behind!
To join us as we are!
Jesus chose not to be the Strong One
– But the weak one ... to save the weak.*

*It is when we are in a hole of a place
That we discover Jesus there with us
... As weak, among the weak.
But, unlike us,
Jesus' experience of weakness
Was TO TRUST
... To trust when trust brought no answers ...
And seemed to fail;
... To trust, when, brought to the point of death,
The Weak One's response
Was to keep on trusting THROUGH death
... and BEYOND death!*

³ Written at the National Tertiarity, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

Thus, our own 'rescuing' of the weak
– *The liar, the abandoned, the luster, the dejected* –
Is, essentially, to be with them
... As weak, among the weak:
Our weaknesses, perhaps different,
Our strengthening, mutual and personal.
This sharing of our weaknesses
Calls them to TRUST ... with us,
To trust TOGETHER,
To trust, in trust,
In Jesus' own trusting
– In Abba!

Just Like Jesus ⁴

*When,
Moved with compassion,
Jesus stretched out His hand
And EMBRACED the leper', ⁵
Jesus and the leper embraced each other's destiny
... Not wholly, but significantly.
The leper is restored to the community,
And mixes 'freely ... telling the story EVERYWHERE'; ⁶
For His part,
Jesus could no longer go openly into ANY TOWN,
But had to stay outside in places where NOBODY LIVED' ⁷
... The prescribed lot of a leper!*

*In imitation of Jesus,
We too must become those
We want to heal;
We can only truly, deeply heal others
By substituting ourselves
'Taking their illnesses and diseases' upon ourselves. ⁸
We need to become
The lonely, the rejected, the unloved,
The non-coping, the bullied, the oppressed;
And even
... If their spirits are OPEN to change ...
The oppressor, the bully, the exploiter,
The abuser, the slandered, and yes – the crucifier!*

*To soften this bleak prospect for us,
Mark reminds us ...
'Even so,' for Jesus the 'leper',
'People from all around, would come to Him'. ⁹*

⁴ Written at the National Tertiaship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

⁵ Mk 1:41

⁶ Mk 1:45

⁷ Mk 1:45

⁸ Mt 8:17

Zaccheus, Come Down¹⁰

*'Zacchaeus, make haste, come down!'*¹¹
... If, like Jesus,
We call each person by their given name,
We enter into that person's inner-reality,
Into the uniqueness of that person before God,
Into the marvel of God's special love for the person!

When our own name is called BY GOD,
We sense 'it's time to change'.
Our guilt pours out like Zacchaeus
– Because we know 'SOMEONE truly loves us!'
Our mask falls, we become excited,
Our horizons shift!
The Love that poured in, now pours out
– We want to love others!

⁹ Mk 1:45

¹⁰ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

¹¹ Lk 19:5

To Be Human Is To Be of God ¹²

We learn about humanity's nature, by looking to Jesus.

We are so like Him!

And, more amazingly, He is so like us!

What Adam was intended to be,

The Scriptures only trace in outline;

Jesus, to our joy,

Is the visibility of God's CLEAR INTENTION for us.

Abba has Jesus, in mind,

As He gives each new human being existence:

In the very creation of each human SPIRIT,

Our humanity is imprinted

With the Ascended Christ's vitalizing image!

For us now, Jesus is the yardstick:

The best of what we're capable, is modelled in Jesus;

To love humanly is to love as Jesus loved;

To truly identify with humanity,

To be fully, really human is to be as Jesus was;

We are to accept our sinful reality as He did

... Humbly, compassionately, openly.

Indeed, Jesus accepted OWNERSHIP of sin

Staying radically OPEN to its frightening outcomes

— Suffering, disjointedness and its culmination, death.

In Jesus' Calvary person, He disembodied sin —

Letting it die, in His sin-burdened, dying humanity;

Then, in His Easter, resurrected humanity,

He embodied Divine Love

And the FULLNESS OF LIFE, given Him as Son!

Thus, Christ's Divine Sonship, revealed on Easter Sunday,

Becomes the one source of a true, renewed humanity

— Wherein to be human, is to be OF GOD

... A goal eternally-on-offer, in the Easter Christ.

¹² Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

A Real Person, Like Christ ¹³

*In Christ, OBEDIENCE becomes
A deeply, creative power –
The WILLINGNESS of a creature
To be as the Creator intends
– A real person like Christ
... So, LIKE Christ, as to be IN Christ
– A person creative of love,
Freeing others to create more love.*

*In Christ, such a person
Becomes a 'timeless', 'spaceless' individual,
Whose origin and destiny
Are rebirthed, in Christ Ascended, eternally.
We become free, internally, of time's and space's restraints,
Open to, and free to add to,
All of history's graces
... The graces given to ALL people
Of the past, of the present, and of the future!
What a wondrous, en-Spirited destiny
Is ours, in Christ!*

¹³ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

Limitlessly Human ¹⁴

*O Jesus, in being raised out of death,
You burst aside the limitations, imposed by sin
– Disjointedness ... within ourselves and between ourselves,
Suffering, the despoiling of creation, and death itself!*

*Having been deprived ... through sin ... of our original birthright
– To live perpetually in God's Presence –
We now have the possibility ... IN You ...
Of having our humanity, and thus, our destiny
Essentially RECONFIGURED!*

*To be in You, raised up, is to be like You
– A NEW CREATION!
... Free to be limitlessly human, like You!
To be new human beings!
With a new identity!
With a new destiny!*

*Re-created IN You,
We are of the same blood,
The precious blood of adoption ...
Free children of the same loving Father,
Free to belong together as countless sisters and brothers,
To love, limitlessly,
To commune, Eternally ...*

¹⁴ Written at the National Tertiarity, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

Utter Love!¹⁵

O Yahweh,
 Goodness Eternal,
 Wondrous Truth,
 Utter Love!

You are –
 The awesome reality,
 The radiant wisdom,
 The silent beauty
 Of our life ...
 Its fountain!
 Its growth!
 Its glory!

You are –
 Our strength
 Our life
 Our comfort
 Our joy
 Our peace
 Our Emmanuel!
 ... Yahweh

O Abba ...
 Look on Your Beloved Son,
 On us Your children.
 Through Your Love
 I breathe forth my love ...
 Through Your Love
 I breathe forth my love ...
 Through Your Love
 I breathe forth my love ...
 O Abba!

¹⁵ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980
Can be used as a recorded night prayer

O Glory Eternal! ¹⁶

O Glory Eternal!
Abba, Father of Light
Jesus, our way, our truth, and our life,
O Loyce, our love, our joy, and our peace. ¹⁷

O Glory Eternal!
Abba, Father of Light: ¹⁸

'We, Jesus and Loyce,
Want to draw you,
Into what Abba gives to Us –
The Glory Eternal of Yabweb!
And into what We surrender –
The same Glory Eternal of Yabweb!
... It is IN Us that you too
Will be fathered, in light ...
In that splendour of Light Eternal
That, for you,
Conceals what it reveals.'

O Jesus, our way, our truth, and our life:

'We, Abba and Loyce,
Want to draw you,
Into what Jesus gives to Us
— Into our very own way
Of EXPRESSING who we are!
— Into our Truth,
In SEEING who We are!
— Into our life
In BEING who we are!

¹⁶ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980. It can be used as a recorded night prayer

¹⁷ Regarding the use of the term 'Loyce', the author comments: 'This is the first use in my continuing use of the term Loyce, pronounced Loy-cee. 'Loyce' is my term for the Holy Spirit – formed from the words LOVE, JOY and PEACE ... the particularly Paschal Gifts of the Spirit. It is especially useful as a second person noun- as a familial, or familiar, form of address, and as a term of endearment and intimacy. I alternate its use with that of the Spirit etc.'

¹⁸ Please insert your Christian name here throughout

*IN Us, in Him,
You will find
Your humanity ...
Only to be invited
To surrender it!*

O Loyce, our love, our joy, and our peace:

*We, Abba and Jesus
Want to draw you
Into what Loyce gives to us
– Into Our love,
Breathed forth for each Other;
– Into Our joy,
Thrilled forth in silence;
– Into Our peace
Beautifying forth Our unity
... For Loyce IS Our Joy, IS Our Peace, IS Our Beauty
And IS Our Unity!*

... And

*When We draw you to Ourselves,
We draw you – living in all people
And they – living in you
... All crowned
By the Gift of Creation's Glory!*

Gateway to the Spirit ¹⁹

*The gateway to heaven
Is the Cross
— Jesus' humanity aflame
Within the embrace of Glory!*

*So too is the gateway
To my spirit.
From that cross, from Jesus there within,
The Easter Sun of Glory
Radiates ALL our blessings
... None, but from the heart
Of this Cross!*

*To meet Abba, the God of tenderness
There, deep in my spirit,
I need to be in Christ Risen
... Brothered and sistered by others.*

*To take up that Cross daily,
Is to enter
Into that Glory, that is the fullness of human life,
And of divine humility.
It is TO BE GATHERED by Abba
To Himself,
Within the tender embrace of the Spirit.*

*Therein,
The ceaseless Song of Love,
Created in me by the Spirit,
Is eternally sung
... Personalized as Jesus the Word ...
Our wondrous Praise of Glory to Abba! ²⁰*

¹⁹ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

²⁰ Eph 1: 14

Stars Disappearing²¹

*Like the stars disappearing gently
In the presence of the rising sun,
All our other loves
Rightly take their place
When the love of Jesus
— The source and summit of all loves —
Rises in our hearts.*

*Be slow to cast these other loves
Out of your heart:
They need their place in the sun;
Their grace, residual as it may be,
Has a place in Abba's heart,
And surely, in ours?
... Perhaps not though, the place WE suppose,
Yet truly providing a tonal fullness
To Christ's hymn of love in our lives
... Maybe a descant or a bass undertone
To its symphonic flourishing.*

*While Christ's is the only love
To galvanize our hearts,
His is such an encompassing and inclusive love,
That His wondrous Spirit
Can draw all our other loves
'To work together for our good'²²
To take their place, in God's own time
— Even decades after WE have bid them farewell —
Like planets, or asteroids, or comets
To the sun.*

²¹ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

²² Rom 8:28

Our Spirit Catches Fire! ²³

When our body, in prayer
INCORPORATES
Inspiration or a sense of communion, or especially, awe,
Then our spirit catches fire!
God's empowering is released within us
—For others.

Fired by courage to be receptive
To God's tender caresses,
We are led
... Trembling , and filled with peace ...
Little by little,
Into others' sufferings
— To dwell there, with them
In the compassionate Christ,
In deep human fellowship.

Here, all are togethered
By the Spirit's original 'personal' graces
... Now firing OUR spirits as one.

²³ Written at the National Tertianship, Marsfield, Sydney, early 1980

O Loyce, Freeing Spirit, Beloved Dreamer!²⁴

*Abba, Jesus, Loyce ...
You reach down to encompass me
From a jet aircraft's slipstream,
Sweeping earthwards out of the blue;
You draw me into Your tranquil peace,
... Mirrored in the lake's calm.
As I walk, You thrill ...
To fill my ears with birds' chortling
... A cascade of Spirit-music
Counterpointing the silence of my heart.
Then, as a crescendo to this 'family joy' of Yours,
There burst forth ripples of laughter from kookaburras:
Your joy cannot be contained!
And then, Your face is etched into a cloud formation
– Your Glory irradiating our earth
... All this, as Your Breath swirls round me,
Borne on the wings of the winds.*

O Loyce, Spirit Alive! Beloved Dreamer!

You truly love ...

To love INTO our very being –

The trees' COLOUR,

The sun's WARMING,

The breeze's COOLING,

The sky's GLORY,

The eucalypt's SPICE

... All to DELIGHT our spirits!

To fulfil Your Dream for us –

To be found IN Christ, the Beloved of Creation!

As these gifts of Your Bounty, gifts unbidden,

Flow freely from the wonder of Your Love,

We welcome, with liberated spirits,

Your special dream for each of us ...

²⁴ 'Loyce', pronounced Loy-cee, is my term for the Holy Spirit – formed from the words LOVE, JOY and PEACE ... the particularly Paschal Gifts of the Spirit

O Loyce, Freeing Spirit! Beloved Dreamer!
We truly delight in You, and treasure You,
As the one radiance of Abba and His Beloved!
So come closer, really close to us,
And diffuse Your deep peace
From the Heart of our hearts!

O Abba, loving Brother Jesus, and Loyce,
Your Glory is beyond all dreaming!
You overwhelm all Your admirers!
You are beyond our visioning,
Beyond our yearnings
Beyond our love itself
Beyond all that IS ...

And, most wonderful of all mysteries,
You RAISE US UP, Abba,
In Jesus, our Brother,
Through Loyce,
To be Yours!

To A World Beyond Beauty²⁵

*Who but You, Yahweh ... God All Mighty, God All Wise
Could Job refer to, in the Scriptures –
‘Who laid the earth’s cornerstone
While the morning stars sang in chorus?’
And ‘Has the rain a father?
Or who has begotten the drops of dew?’
NONE BUT YOU, my God!
I feel emptied of all substance, in Your presence.*

*Yet how much more inexpressibly beautiful
Are the words ...
‘The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself up for me’?²⁶
The crucifix opens us
To a world beyond beauty ...*

*O Spirit of the Jesus ‘made sin for us’,²⁷
O Spirit of the Prodigal Father,
Open our hearts to the healing love
Flowing from the Mystery of the Cross;
Draw us into that Circle of Love
IN Jesus Risen
... Where You, Jesus, and Abba
Celebrate the unity of all life,
The love that unites all.*

²⁵ Written on Retreat at Kincumber via Gosford during the National Tertianship, early 1980

²⁶ Gal 2:20

²⁷ 2 Cor 5:21

To Supper Together ²⁸

Sin separates ...

... Sin destabilizes

Sin compartmentalizes ...

... Sin destroys

Sin breeds chaos ...

*But, in You, Jesus 'there was NO sin'; ²⁹
And, even though You 'were made sin for us' ³⁰
— And lived out its consequences, FOR US, unto death —
Now, in the wonder of a regenerated humanity,
In Your very Person,
... Held within Abba's Embrace ...
You draw all lovingly TOGETHER :
You sit down,
With each ... and with all,
To supper together.*

*You give Yourself
To each ... and to all
— The same!
... Our one banquet!
... Our one hope!
... Our one entry
Into the Circle of Love
— Alive with the vitality of Eternal Communion!*

²⁸ Written on Retreat at Kincumber via Gosford during the National Tertianship early 1980

²⁹ Heb 4:15

³⁰ 2 Cor 5:21

Pools of Silence³¹

Dreamtime under the peach blossoms
... Four years old, with my sister Marce,
Rollicking on the spring lawn, gambolling 'round the garden,
Heaping dirt under the house
... You nearby, Abba.

A schoolboy at Mass, in College green
... You a precious Guest.
Pepperina trees and sandstone, school yards and sunshine;
Kicked leaves strewn on the way to Church Novenas;³²
... Bottle-collecting down weed-lined lanes
... You by my side.

Sunning in a handball court, in 'class'
— Warming in Your Presence
... You, the Sun.
Crisping my way to Mass, across frosted lawns;
Famous-Fiving in a cuddly bed.
Curious, eager, on a holiday rail-motor,
Tunnelling into Your Mother's valley of green ...³³
Your Face reflected in the gum-leafed creeks;
Melons swelling 'mong the thistles, on a plowed hillside of wheat
... You in all growth.

Teenager gardening in Your sun ... the crushed scents rising;
Radishes tangy, pushing life, earthy;
Tomatoes spicy, crimson globes among the green.
Pedalling down forested hills, through tree-encased tunnels
... You in the wind,
On my face,
In the sun.

³¹ Written at Xavier College, Indooroopilly, Brisbane, Apr-Jun 1980. This is an impressionistic, biographical poem, covering my life through images and a sense of God's Presence from 1948 (as a 4 year old) to 1975 (as a 31 year old). The last stanza covers the subsequent period until this year 1980 in a brief summary. Poem 50 is the natural successor and companion poem to this one although it also opens up a vision for the decades to come

³² The Novenas, in the stately St Mary's Church, Warwick were for Our Lady of Perpetual Help

³³ At Maryvale (Mary's Vale) at the foot of the Great Divide, where my cousin's farm was located

*Then cycling into groves of gum: sliding into pools of silence
... You wrapped in silence
... You within the stilled bushscape;
Riding the clouds, into mist-shrouded mountain-tops
... You in the mist, in the clouds, in the Mystery.
Bush and caves explored, vistas at one's feet!
... You as a friend.*

*Delighting in water, tracking creeks, pool after pool,
Sliding down earthen banks of Deucher's Creek, ³⁴
Frolicking in creek pools, otter-like ... bomb diving
... You in our fun!
Cadets ... reveilles, tent-lines and mist-draped ranges;
Rifle range drills, World War II films, 'Last Posts' at night
... You in our camaraderie. ³⁵*

*Strathfield – tiled arches, cool shadows, sunlit handball courts, ³⁶
Kaleidoscope images of date palms, red bricked paths,
Agapanthus, towers, a vaulted ceiling of blue and gold.
... You, wisping through this sun-misted splendour!
... You, soft dwelling in the treed shadows' silence.
Echoing Gregorian, enfolds history's vistas
... You, bright calling in bells ringing, choirs chanting
... You IN the singing! You the song! You the singer!*

*Saturday night Society: sixties teens all dressed in suits! ³⁷
Spirits joying: families on lawns, bright green under sunshine!
Bolero's' measured crescendo: our pens poise, over letters home.
Soccer, League, and Latin! 'Longstop' and full-stops!
... You in our youthfulness!*

*Mulgoa – dappled shadows on a sun-gold driveway; ³⁸
Trinity thrilling in a heart at midnight!
Fuchsias and bunyas, pipeline and Nepean Gorge.
Sandstone chasms echo the call to the heart:*

³⁴ A creek, just outside of Warwick, flowing from the Granite Belt

³⁵ The main references here are to the yearly cadet camps at Harristown, Toowoomba

³⁶ Strathfield Sydney, for the author in the 1960's, was the centre for the Christian Brothers' training houses (for NSW, Qld and NZ). The particular references here are to his time in the Juniorate Secondary College (1962-1963)

³⁷ 'Society' in the Juniorate was the weekly gathering for the 120 boys for debating and entertainment. The author was its president for 1963

³⁸ Mulgoa, via Penrith, Sydney was the site of the author's second year Novitiate. It was located near the Nepean River at the foot of the Blue Mountains. A life-visioning year

*Life's deep mysteries discussed on sunlight walks;
Philosophy and poetry ... football and handball;
Wallacia's dream valley: leaf fall and shadows;
'Beads' at night – brothers together, in the chapel's darkness.
... You in all life!*

*Strathfield returned to – handball and football, ³⁹
Enclosed gardens, treatises written, cast as Wolsey! ⁴⁰
The appeal of architecture, the call of history, diplomas dispensed
... You in our enthusiasm.
Then 'on the Mission': To Burwood Primary, tutored by doyens; ⁴¹
Cricket umpiring 'bloopers', and Speech Night gymnastics display. ⁴²
... You in our teaching.
And then to Queensland – years of travel, of teaching, of testing! ⁴³
Bushwalking, car-tripping, bike-riding ... and friendship;
Teamwork, visioning, companionship, aloneness ... searching for You
... You IN the searching.
Then years of chasing intimacy, solace-seeking;
Years of discovery, pride-in-achievement, expertise,
Tensions, regrets, the call of within-ness, life-changes.
... You in the Cross
You in my joy
You in my weakness
—Sharing. ⁴⁴*

³⁹ The author's return to Strathfield was for his Teacher Training Year (1966)

⁴⁰ As Cardinal Wolsey in the graduation drama, 'A Man for All Seasons'

⁴¹ The author's first pastoral posting was at Christian Brothers' College and Community at Burwood, Sydney. He was one of 5 teachers in the Primary ... two of whom – whose advice he sought – had taught for over 50 years each!

⁴² 'Speech Night', for most of the 20th century in CB Colleges, combined a significant concert with academic awards etc

⁴³ Posted to Qld in 1968, to Mount Ia. Subsequent transfers, all within Qld, to 1980, the period of this poem, were: Yeppoon Boarding College via Rockhampton (1971-72), Gregory Terrace College, inner-city Brisbane (1973-75), Mackay (1978), Ipswich (1979), National Tertiaship Course (early 1980)

⁴⁴ This last stanza covers the period 1976-79, briefly

Open-Hearted Offer and Acceptance⁴⁵

*Jesus, in His own PERSON,
Constitutes both the open-hearted offer
Of God's over-flowing love to humankind,
And of our open-hearted acceptance
— Both, celebrated in Him,
Our Paschal Eucharist!*

⁴⁵ Written at Xavier College, Indooroopilly, Brisbane, Apr-Jun 1980

In the Graciousness of Gift⁴⁶

*Jesus is in this world, by Gift;
He remains forever in this world, as Gift
... Wounded still, yet Glorious.
Here, and now, He extends His hand
— To each and all,
Within time and space,
Through grace and sacrament.*

*He who lives in the graciousness of Gift
Wholly respects
The movements of our free will:
He invites, He coaxes, He seduces us
— To TWIN our free will with His!*

*Fondly, He yearns to satisfy our human thirst
... To bathe in the beautiful love
That is His — as Gift — from Abba.*

⁴⁶ Written at Aquinas College community, Southport, 1982

Seven Faces of the Spirit ⁴⁷

O Spirit ...

Who is gentle breeze ... caress us, inspire us

Who is strong wind ... move us, empower us

Who is fire ... enflame us, encourage us

Who is water ... revive us, enliven us

Who is light ... enlighten us, give us vision

Who is paraclete ... plead for us, pray with us

Who is dove ... be our paschal joy, our paschal peace.

⁴⁷ Written at Aquinas College community, Southport, 1982

The Intimate One⁴⁸

*Because God used His very own Self
– His Radiant Word: His Beloved Son –
As an enabling IMAGE in creating humankind,
Humankind's very nature seeks fulfilment and completion
BEYOND itself
... In the original template of its being ...
In Christ our God!*

*Thus humankind seeks completion, essentially, in a RELATIONSHIP
– Not with some intimidating Eternal Other,
But with the Intimate One
... Who yearns to draw us within the Godself,
To become one within,
In the likeness of the Beloved Son!*

⁴⁸ Written at Aquinas College community, Southport, 1982