

Harold Macdonald's Muse



The Pleasure of Children

The room is lit
by the pleasure of children.

The peaceful child takes
persistent love like
candy, acts of affection
like bon-bons.
A carload of compliments equals
a nanosecond of self-
worth

and praise,
the oxygen of the soul's breath,
is sucked in and in and in,
firing up, repeating and repeating, the sense of well being,,
of high regard and then
burned off at
room temperature.

And love is that choice
of domestic language wherein all words
are spoken, tasted
and instantly consumed.

There is never too much affection.
The capacity
to receive is without
limit, absorbs
the whole multitude of little ways love
is continually expressed
in the home
of happy children.

Children of Terror

Fearful is a child's violent death.
Adults comprehend the loss,
see the beginning's end
too soon arrived;
finality crushing innocence,
hope destroyed, a future robbed;
the first taste of goodness in the mouth

retched entirely.

The heart is fully filled with sorrow -
more; despair -
by the limp body, bloodied
in conflict,
flung on the rubble,
or by the maimed
boy or girl, hopping towards
the soccer ball
oblivious of tragedy, too busy
trying the one-legged kick
to score.

We know not the mercy of a God
who may suffer more than we;
is said
to reach out loving arms.
Only that the horror remains
with us; no
remedy except in us,
the bystanders,
the type A actors
who think we're good at getting things
done.

Palestinian Check Point

If I were Palestinian I'd be
dead by now,
shot at a check-point, (my mouth
starts working before my brain,
and prudence is not
my gift.)

Bullies are the betes noirs of my life
since childhood;
so detestable I've punched out
thugs, tossed
safety to the fates, been
lucky; saved
by those unwilling to see blood
nor witness
the exposure of unprincipled power,
by which they, themselves,
quietly prosper.

When the fiend is lured
from its cave,
the hyena stops its laugh
and rips the wounded
prey; when
the bully shows his rage,
inner violence consumes
coherence,
obliterates the mind,
sucks up the soupcon of prudence
one may possess,
the veneer of justice
burns away.
Then we see who and what and where,
and that the enemy
thus exposed,
can be had.

The Bowflex Revolution

Bowflex is the revolution everyone
has yearned for
the giver of rippling abs, the swelling
biceps, (the tan comes by other means):
a rev too far for me, although I walk
and walk with aching hips
and legs, (short of blood)
pressing on behind
the romping dog
but never working off the love handles,
the sagging belly.

They don't mention the Peak Freans,
or ice cream and those long, empty,
afternoons!
The freezer calls
my name;
"Harold
Harold, I am all that's left;
your last excess". Not by
alcoholism, not obesity, not
gluttony and
certainly not lust, (with most of my
equipment lost in surgery) -
death

by ice cream! How humiliating is
old age.

George Can't Wait

Those Iranians will have to hurry
to please George
Bush.
For all their boasts, they're
still ten years
from making an atomic bomb
and George
can't wait; his term is
soon expiring . He
needs a nuclear threat right now,
for war and
invasion and regime
change and
control of all that
oil.

Rough Justice
Justice is the art of carving
with an axe.
Everyone
loves a real artist, watches
to see how well the line is drawn,
to see
the magic of recognition
of character,
emerge on the page
or in the block of wood or stone.
A whack of the hammer
on the chisel, stone
bits flying
and look! There's the likeness
and more
than a likeness - a new,
identical thing! But
don't put your foot near the woodsman
who's axe wanders.
The wood splits apart from the punishment
of near misses.
But the bloody thing is finally
cut, isn't it?

A Bitter End

To be obsessed with failure
is a bad finale, the vacuous mind-set
of senility.
Guilt can only breed regret
and regret gives way to the soggy tinder
of frustration,
too wet with tears
to spark the forge of time; to bend
back the hours, melt the rigid arrow
mercilessly pointing
forward.

Who observes what we are meant
to be?
Who knows one's being
made perfect?
The flawless one,
the unlonely life, the life
fulfilled?

We know instead, only what
we have become.
Honesty relieves us of our vanities,
embraces folly - ours and theirs.
Then grace includes us in
the limping company of broken travelers,
chatting up the journey
and leaves perfection to the
ninety nine.

God's Coming To Us

That Jesus was raised is a wonder two-fold;
an unlikely happening a story not told?
A once-in-a-death-time, his marvellous breath's
an improbable life in an earth full of death?

The mystery before us is not that one's raised,
but that Jesus, none other, breaks open the grave;
for God who was with Him, remained to "finis"
one with his teachings and one on his tree.

The God who is Source of all things that be
broke into creation so persons could see
an oasis of life in our grim desert scene

a spring flowing up making everything green.

Jesus the sacrifice, prophet, and friend
Is God's coming through, to us without end
No probability, no act of chance
God's love is intention, no happenstance.

Bookends

God's bookends brace the stories of my life
Firmly hold from first to last, from left and right.
My chapters do not lean - they stand upright
tho' tales are less of love and more of strife,
revealing passions heedlessly let loose
or thoughts half-cooked or good intentions failed
or deeds begun and then on sloth impaled
or challenges avoided by a truce
But there they stand in order! Faulty books
which God indexes be they good or not
to read and laugh and weep more than God ought;
for God, Beholder, through love's prism looks.
 God has my story in the Home above.
 You'll find it the Library of love.

Accidental Design

The loud commencement of the universe,
(Except no air was there to transport sound)
Impressive cosmic bang! It still resounds!
Eons later here we are and none the worse.
As if conditions, at the start of time,
Determined that we'd later come to pass;
and love, the melee of creation would surpass
And shape it by intelligent design.
But who's to say this was the only try?
That other universes came to pass unknown
Some mindlessly; on rocky soil were sown
and ours but accidental symmetry?
 No steps to heaven appear among the stars and holes
 No path through universal chaos for the trembling souls.

You Are The Question - Your Way is Turmoil

God, our Begetter, You, the Self have shown
Through trusted people, through our heart's desire;
With love's conundrums, lit the brain on fire
You tease, a taste, a shadow we have known.
The rest is yet to learn, beyond infinity

Your universe is violence, law and chance:
O mighty galaxies in fearful dance
did God who made the spring make thee?
You are not the answer but the question first,
Among us seekers after stable good.
You do not act just as we think You should
Your radiance comes in unconnected bursts
 You must enjoy the quest for better things
 You are the constant turmoil which love brings.

Dumping Saul

It didn't take God long to dump King Saul
when David, Jesse's son, came into view;
bright eyes, and ruddy cheeks and God just knew
that this young man would be God's all in all,
What if Bathsheba's husband paid the price ?
Prim, boring, man could well have played the game
become the father of King David's shame
enjoyed his leave, enjoyed his gorgeous wife.
He did not know you could not love too much.
But David - love came spilling out of him
for Johnathan, and Absalom o'r brimmed
and love for God; and all that Javweh touched.
 Excessive love, a blend of tears, affection
 Is just the recipe for God's confection.

Cosmic Lottery

Did we notice that near miss while we were squabbling?
That asteroid which sailed by closer than the moon?
Another ice age in the offing, a termination all too soon!
Skittish providence, our future bobbling.!

We may be the chosen ones; we may survive.
Creation's lottery might not wipe us out
and historians will laud our story and will shout
it to the stars; no one to hear, for no one else alive

Or in the fashion of a likely consequence
of other bangs as big as ours or more
our universe may perish in some cosmic war
forcing God to try more adequate defence.

No doubt some universe will find the art
to give the life force better chance to rise;

to overcome destruction from the skies
and conquer human hatred in the heart

Then the kingdom will have finally come to pass
and nevermore the deluge from creation come
and they will think they were the only ones
unaware of those who lived and tried but did not last.

Apologies To Leonard Cohen

(Sung in tones of gravel)

I don't know when I finally learned the truth
decades passed I sang fictitious songs
I was alumnus of the school of wrongs
and couldn't get it right, right from my youth

No one knows you better than yourself
no one knows your hopes unless you tell
no power in heaven or in the depths of hell
can say you should be rotting on the shelf

Only you can know for sure your worth
how true your love, how strongly you desire
or hot within yourself the raging fire
and how your dreams can struggle to give birth

Friends Dying

My long time friends, Howard Buchner, former dean of divinity at Trinity College Toronto and David Woeller former general secretary of General Synod have been blows subliminal surfacing only several days later.

FRIENDS DYING

Apples falling from the tree -
who's next? It's me, it's me, it's me!
What God wills, will be, will be.
Have another cup of tea.

Head Down

The grains are ripening now
the wheat turns gold,
rape and flax have lost their bloom
heavy with their produce
bend with seed.

How still ! All in silence hope
to go unnoticed
the blue/black front of lightening
flattens fields with hail
close at hand.

The ditches have been mowed
yet shrubs survive
nesting birds are on their second batch
hiding motionless, as if
not there.

My dog, no sense of what's to come,
plunders unaware
seeking nests, he stirs things up,
head down, he chases
into the fields..

only the tail above the tall grain
betrays his place.
Or ears flying he leaps in view
Too intent to hear (or to obey)
"Where is the dog?"

or with the crop, the field, the air, the earth,
to recognize
that everything is not
just now, the same. So
preoccupied is he.

Making Peace

Call it attrition, call it slaughter,
call it the million names
in the vast cemeteries
on acres of crosses
or on the walls of monuments in France
the endless names engraved.

Call it an old sorrow in every family, the
faded yellow photo of an unremembered man
who "fell" we say,
where there is no rising.

and only then,
when energies are spent,

when everything is smashed to rubble,
then think of peace.

Peace is the state of nations
after all has gone,
ex nihilo,

a nothingness not easily achieved.

May 1917

Assume there is a greater good that's holding sway
but do not ask for details lest you learn
an ugly truth, it's really not your turn;
the French in 1917 have lost the day,

have botched the second battle of Arras
and need your life to cover their defeat
divert the enemy while they themselves retreat
so you are sacrificed, alas, alas!

Now up and over to your certain death you go!
You didn't even make it up before
you are asleep for evermore
and for greater good you never felt the blow

Too insignificant your death to be remembered;
not until a million more are mindlessly dismembered.

God's Silence

We die as if God neither cared nor knew
The little one, so horribly dismembered calls
The mother's anguished scream is heard, that's all
While justice hides its face, and pledges go untrue.

Who can know behind the silent wall
So filled with sorrow, God no longer speaks?
Or is it not in heaven that one seeks
But here on earth the answer to it all?

God's silence is the prelude to God's ire
We, the perpetrators; look and see!
The murderers are us, the human family
God waits for change. How long? Beware of fire!

If, at times, we hate with all consuming strength

Imagine the revenge of God, at length.

Wheat Fields Near the Robinson Spur Cemetery

Ripened now, the wheat stands in the golden field
Brittle in the blistering, August sun
Even now the harvest has begun
The end upon us; comes the time of yield.

It was too swift the summer-time of growth
The beginning time, of hoping for success
Of fearing worst, anticipating best
A time to dally, play, a time for sloth

And now, though produce is an hundred fold
Abundant wheat to make abundant bread
Abundant good whereby the poor are fed
Yet short the life, too quick the story told.

So soon it's over cold winds freezing blow
And, silent, we lie under winter's snow.

The Last Act

Late it is, for the curtain now to rise
the script so smudged, the royalties long paid
the path meandering from light to shade
yet now I see wherein His Presence lies.

Now is the invitation! All at once the voice!
My hand in His, His Presence is for me
He is the One Who acts, we inward see
The loving One who gives the saving choice

The sacrifice, the going to the cross -
He leads me gently on that holy way.
We walk together now, this very day
and bit by bit, no longer count the cost.

You see it is, at last, the real start
As if, before, I never had a heart.

The Rave

When they hear of love they choke with laughter
Preferring something tangible and real
Something one could touch and feel
Someone not around the morning after

Or when they see the quiet simple things
They scarcely interrupt their frantic pace
Being spun by envy's super-large embrace
Seeking, what the jack-pot never brings

The raving clamour of the day and night
Drowns out the still small voice, the what, the why, the who
the precious thing that only we can do
the candle to be lit, the inextinguishable light

Now, as then, God speaks through inward fire
A voice as quiet, compelling, as a lovely choir.

We're Getting Wet

We can see the end; the second flood's in sight
the rising seas, the sea side cities drowned
Oceans cover what was once dry ground
but we are inland, we will be alright

(we say), although without facilities
Our grain cannot be shipped, alarum alarum
and piles up on every prairie farm
And commerce halts no longer an ability

Venice sinks below the waves, and Rome and Spain
Vancouver buildings -fishy habitats
Melbourne, Perth no longer on the maps
The Pope on Mount Olympus asks "Again?"

Says Cantuar, "It cannot come to that!"
But builds a condo on Mount Ararat.

When the Party's Over

The Church in Africa is taking charge
in Canada, no less, dictating thought;
what thing is biblical and what is not
(the Church in Africa is very large)

And Muslims, they are multiplying apace
And Mexicans and Aboriginals
In spite of AIDs they crowd the school halls
And everywhere we look, they're in our face

Chinese and the Sino-Asians on the rim

Have learned our skills by dint of working hard
They hoist us by our own petard
Ours a tiny tune and theirs a mighty hymn

And they will listen not to what we say
But make us pay, and pay and pay and pay.

Death in Afghanistan

Night past. Mid-morning in Afghanistan
already hot. Airborne, home the coffins turn
in dust you died and unto dust thou dost return
Too soon, before your children knew the m

The ceremonies, tears, the reveille
The leader's rhetoric, clapper of a broken bell
The solemn tones, and thread-bare trappings cannot tell
Why death should come so very far away

You have no allies there, no family, friends
No common bonds, no story intertwined
A god-forsaken place - as any you can find
Why such a desert place to meet your end?

Between the why and what too great the leap
No spark can jump, no shred of sense to speak.

The Somme

Empathy is now the drug of brains,
It drowns the spark of thought with pails of tears
Clothes itself in horrors decked with fears
Is suffering's colleague, connoisseur of pains

Once more the men are climbing up the sodden wall
Rifles in their hands, into the stinging air,
Expressionless they drop, for only death is there
The sergeant blows his whistle, time for us to rise and fall.

They stumble every time the jerky film is run
men in spite of brains are soon to be extinct
their minds anaesthetized, they stare without a blink,
fodder for the gun, we feel them perish, every one.

Now prevail, in rows and rows of whitened crosses -
order from their nothingness, and deathly peace from losses.

All Hallow's Eve

Under the porch light, witches three
chalk cheeks, but blacked
around the eyes
(supposed to look like death, but not exact)
hold out their bags; each cries
"Drop in your stuff
you owe us, see?"
We think: "Agree! Agree!"

Then two cool guys, age fifteen anyway,
in tux-like suits and angled hats
carrying pillow cases; "drop in your stuff you rats"
(they are about to draw their gats),
they seem to say, "you owe us see".
"How great you look" say we
they break the spell and smile away.

Then more come – we owe them all!

A friendly evening it has been; no snow, no frost,
these young wild things of night - a lark!
the walking dead enjoyed the dark
their little stroll from house to house
this hallowed eve.
The spooks they half believe
no frightened children lost,

Indeed, they are surrounded
by a cloud of witnesses; whose silent deeds
shape the dispositions, plant the seeds
and stealthy streams of strength flow in-
love poured and hungrily received
and learning's enterprise for decades shared.
The little person grows, is cared
for; and surrounding hope prevents the likely fall
fussing over all.
On this a person's life is founded.

What Spirit gives the giving? Makes
the taking?
Reveals to us the ghosts
Of goodness, from the time of our most
blessed start

conveyed from a much older heart?

This Spirit makes the moments twist and turn
we waken to a hidden love and learn.
It opens memory's inner door
to show a room of loveliness
where the giver was a trusted guest
those many years before.

Kristallnacht, Noveber 1938

We use the murder of our diplomat, von Rath
As pretext to begin annihilation
Of Jews: whose filthy lives contaminate the nation.
We cleanse the race with incandescent wrath.

We organize spontaneous killings, fire.
In public view, we trample down the meek
and world opinion turns the other cheek
and clears the way to do what we desire.

Systematically we ship them off to death
Confiscating property, their money, works of art
Rage occupies the throne, inflames the heart
The super-race, inspired by anger, takes its breath.

The cross of God, of Christ, stands in the wings
Yet we seek living fire in other things.

Holocaust Inside Out

Finally, I'm getting bored with griefs of holocaust
and Shindler's List; inwardly I have moved on.
Compassion, drained elsewhere, is done and gone.
The modern Jew armed to the teeth, is making up the cost,

has learned the arts of thuggery and death.
Preemptive strikes - the tactic meets the test
(rather like oppressor, the oppressed).
But God is not expendable, the prophet saith.

Justice takes a holiday in Gaza
No freedom in the homes of Palestine
On missiles blowing up, the children dine
Learn not peace but suicidal Intifada

Jesus may have died in holocaust in World War Two,

But now is He a Muslim murdered by a Jew?

Remembrance Day 2006

England, God and good and war and me
Fell off the wall together, I was ten
Forever omelet, gelled and cooked right then
And nothing could unscramble that identity.

(World War One, a prelude to my view of things)
So when the cannons blast on a Remembrance Day
They celebrate, in spite of winter's gloom and grey,
The song of good, of life; which, in me, God sings

And it has served me well. I daily raise my voice
To give lament or offer praise
These many years and many days
And act upon the opportunities for choice

And. the while, the mixture has held strong -
history struggling hard and working out
muddling through, for that's what it's about.
No need to stray, from where I yet I belong

England, God and me and war and good
Each lit the others; bright and strong we stood.

No Lack of Vision

Who am I to know the holy God?
My lips should burn with incandescent coals
with molten rage for raped and ravaged souls.
I, too, am shaken, feel the stinging rod

Surrounded by the Church's faithful witness
to older visions which ignited and transformed
'though the wind of God is faint where once it stormed
we preach the gospel, pray, and sins confess.

Yet one can feel the scorch of anger, art of rage
allow oneself to be possessed entire
and hold the brightest light, the hottest fire
seek to open prisons, to unlock the cage

Horrors multiply upon our screens
As evil as humanity or God have ever seen.

A Babe is Born in Kandahar

A babe is born in Kandahar
In the tent a midwife brings her know-how
Done! The sweating mother on her elbows now
takes the child; overhead the brilliant star.

A babe is born in the province of Darfur
Soon may perish by machete
No living being is deemed to petty
For sacrifice; no family too poor.

A babe is born again in Palestine
But fear pervades the place of birth
No angels here no shepherds' mirth
So easily sudden death can cross the line.

Each birth's a breaking open of a future hope
A hidden power, a possibility to finally cope.

God's Little Place

Jesus Lord and babe, world shaker
Muckle meek, barn-born, our Maker,
God among us, heaven's loss
and Mary, our Theotokos.*

Infinite ,Your tiny form;
Midst lowing animals you're born.
God is fit for humble birth
by worldly measure, nothing worth

Keep us on the lowly way
simplicity in all we say
so we may enter Jesus' place
and, kneeling, see God face to face.

Options

The choices now are always very few
nor as great as retrospect demands;
just say that conquest does not claim the land -
a possibility no conqueror ever knew.

Then the choice was trading pans and pots
and rifles to replace the arrow and the bow
and, bye the bye, eliminate the buffalo
and end the natives' independent lot.

And schools for skills and learning English speech
may now seem less than generous and wise
but then they were a hopeful enterprise
a choice, a do-able, a thing to teach.

Is now assimilation, again the norm
the only shelter from the human storm?

The Seasons – A Winter Hymn

Fall of snow makes all things new
perfect for a month or two;
underneath, decay and mold,
put on temporary hold.

Spring, the wheel will turn again
summer sun and autumn rain
then the winter tolls the bell,
nature's endless carousel.

Only Christ can change the heart,
love provide another start.
Only Spirit breaks the wheel
only Jesus' hands can heal

Then the new year will be new
counted righteous, through and through
fear and violence, truly past
trust and grace and love, at last!

God our winter, at the crèche
God our spring when life is fresh
God our summer, God our growth
end and consummation, both.

to the tune: Song 13 Orlando Gibbons – 180, Common Praise

Down North

It is no joke, the cold we feel on winter days,
and lack of anything worthwhile to do;
emptiness is all there is to view
the opposite extreme TV displays.

Lack of purpose, idleness creates;
in unrelenting boredom we are lost,

dark as night inside, the heart as cold as frost
cheerless anger burns, oneself one hates.

Laughter canned, the up-beat hosts, the cult of smiles
vomit from the tube. A ceaseless, alien noise
contaminates our frozen void with its false voice
gaudy fantasies resound across the ice for miles.

Everywhere is either emptiness or sham
and each condemns the one I really am.

I Hear The Sound of Jesus' Name

I hear the sound of Jesus' name
sweet music to the heart
I called the living Lord, he came
and did not stand apart.
A melody of life and light
that sings in sorrowing minds
and in his song all power and might
most gentle and most kind.

I hear the sound of Jesus' name
like water pure; it soothes
our wounds, and makes them clean again
His name is our good news.
Refreshment for the pilgrims' thirst
comes streaming from above.
Before we knew he knew us first
the Elixir of love.

I hear the sound of Jesus' name
The Lord is at the door
with bread we need to win the game
with life for evermore.
The bread of heaven is nourishment
where're his name is known
sufficient food for those He sent
for those He calls his own.

I hear the sound of that dear name
at once my load is light,
his love removes my sense of shame
his dawn dispels my night.
To all who hunger for a life
who sit in darkness still

his name will bring an end to strife
the kingdom of God's will

To Kingsfold

Praise to the Holy Trinity

God, of things both seen and unseen
Maker, calling us into being.
Voice of love and good supreme
Giving birth to all that is.

Word incarnate, human mother,
God of God, the very Other.
And for us, the perfect brother;
Word informing all that is.

Spirit; Three in One, unbroken:
God is Speaker, God is Spoken
Love, creation has awoken
love delighting all that is.

Praise the Giver, Source of all things!
Praise the truth the Word is bringing!
Praise the song the Spirit's singing
in the mouths of all that is.

Love, However

Pride, of human hope, deceiver
boasting dreams that cannot be;
separates the unbeliever
from the human family.
Love, however, knows its brothers
looks to God for hope fulfilled,
humbly joining hands with others
does the work that God has willed.

Envy, foe of gifted others
pits all virtues 'gainst the self;
teaches how to hate one's brothers
undermine their good with stealth.
Love, however, of one's neighbours
celebrates their every worth,
praises all creative labours
as God's purpose comes to birth

Greed, the discontented attitude
unrestricted lust for more;
with no longitude nor latitude
thief and cheat that fosters war.
Love, however, seeks abundance
in the very heart of God
daily bread is quite sufficient
leaving most to share abroad.

Planet earth is unprotected
exploitation strips it bare.
Envy, greed as one expected,
pride - together foul the air.
Love, however, brings the changes
God intends the world to see;
seas and fields and mountain ranges
as creation's meant to be.

To Ebenezer, Common Praise 369

So Great My Grief

So great my grief that all is tears;
Being itself is overflowing,
infinitely deep with sorrow. Fears
prompt the brooding Spirit,
going
back and forth in agitation,
glistening;
wishing not to know its knowing
wishing not to hear its listening.
If only righteousness were where it stopped,
Not leading on to goodness, then to love!
For penalties and rigour I could opt.
Or goodness: I could have raised Myself above
the mess
and not be blamed.
But what is perfect goodness if not love?
To be less than love then God is shamed.
Perfect Me! Affection fits me like a glove.
And hence the tears, the endless grief;
For what I see breaks heaven's heart -
A future that's beyond belief;
where human kind distains to play its part
will not respond in freedom to attain the good
nor with love redeem

nor love return as I desire they should
nor serve, nor help, nor be, but seem.
And yet they think I can protect them from themselves
As father; and for them to pay the cost.
And love becomes a toy with other toys upon the shelves
While they ignore my tears at Holocaust.
Will I give them space, another chance?
Suspend my sorrow, produce dry land, once more?
Begin again creation's dance
in hope's they reach, this time, the other shore?
Together, will we go the lovers way
and find the good beyond all good?
Pretend to set aside foreknowledge for a day;
And stumble on another tree, another cross of wood?

Fields of Vimy

Even now, the plow
turns up the buttons, buckles
badges of the war,
in blood rich fields
near Vimy, tilling
not so deep
as to disturb
the sleeping ones;
these fields of France
their final place of
rest.
Beside you
traces of the enemy,
a bed mate now;
the DNA would tell. You
may have shot him
in the moment of your death.
Or were you blown away together
by a shell from either side?
Together now for ever
in the foreign fields
of France,
a German gene beside
a chromosome from
Canada. Not even
God can tell.
Your mingled blood
is now a poppy's
blush.

You were a great success
collectively you took
the ridge. Observe the
splendid monument!
Hear the praise,
the incantation to the greatness
of your land and your
achievement! Are your
corpuscles a little brighter,
his dulled by dirges
of defeat? It
was not enough. Another
war was needed to
at last exhaust, deplete
the manhood of our nations
and Canada, now burnishing
its arms, came once again
gave up it's dead. Catharsis
bled the way to peace for many
years. We grieve. Our
sorrow turns more easily
to thanks and thanks
to glory, glory introduces
pride and pride is friends
with war.
You are not alone. We
sorrow too. And soon enough
you will be joined by others
just as young
as you.

The General Synod 2007

In the crescendo of the world's beseeching,
the deafening cries of children hurt and hungry,
the agony of tortured, wounded, angry -
See our confusion, in both deed and preaching

We are blinded by abundant certainties
They cancel each the other, leaving only dark;
the opposites, for compromise, too stark.
Derision, enmity our occupational disease.

Turn from the greater needs of human kind
for a moment, show your holy face
and we, as one, acknowledging your grace

may come to unity and peace of mind

At an impasse, more we cannot go.
Strike with your grace, a healing blow.

God Arising Preexistent

Don't you see the commitment, the effort of creation,
always going places;
every day another emergence into
a future?

Wipe the sweat from the sun's
face, here's another dawn!

And celestial movement
everywhere;

the moon turns, the earth,
stars; the galaxies rush

away

and billions of light particles and smaller bits
penetrate

everything - unfelt showers
of neutrinos racing

undetected

through your innards

God knows where or why.

Nothing

in this whole universe

is still.

You have made me in your
own image. I too

emerge daily,

seek the more perfect

form. Together

we rush into kingdoms

unforeseen, the nihilo

gives birth, we

learn new

secrets,

the calculus of their hidden

orders, where

entropy is but the threshold

of a new law and

death but the name we give

to the next instance.

In you God always was, from
you God rose,
through you God
spoke first in purpose,
then in truth,
then as marvel. And the hope of
perfection - that
curse and blessing! -
was shown and given,
understood and
received.

Penetration

It's not of lesbians in love, this General Synod -
four breasts together in a warm embrace;
when women kiss each other, males yawn.
We do not retch and squirm at a plethora
of nipples.

But where the cock goes rivets our attention.
Male penetration overturns
the world, annihilates our masculinity.
For doing it and not being done to, is
the man.

It's not what is expelled that brings corruption
It's what goes in, that is the threat, for bodily it
reverses the entire male act - we like to think. Being pierced
by bits of shrapnel, evil thoughts, the lethal blade.
Being entered!

Do we really think that spirit is confined by flesh,
that personhood does not transcend its base,
that love's configured by the nature of the groin
that what one sees in flesh is what one really is?
God's genitals?

Vote then according to the bounding spirit
Which bonds in unpredicted ways with all;
That makes the sun a brother, even death a friend
That kisses lepers, strokes the wolf behind the ear
And speaks to birds

And do not vote according to the flesh, ass
clenched against an unknown thing.

Who's to know - some good may inward pass
Some gift, some enema that grace will bring
to General Synod.

Summer Pentecost

The blooms will be red this year, she decrees.
For blood spilt? For the banked up anger
always glowing? The rage quenched
by the sudden tide of tears?
Or is it the Spirit, the unintended
Pentecost of life, of vigour bursting
through?

Pentecost should have been dove
white, a cooing colour, a place of
peace. But life is blood and blood,
pain - and suffering as invisible
as wind in a Banff brochure,
is the ever present feel of
getting old.

My daughter and family
have bought a place nearby.
Now the crumbling past meets
the boistrous future! A baby in a pram,
a little girl walking down the lane
to visit her grandma in her pentecostal
garden.

Only a Synod

It is not impossible it cannot be allowed
to be impossible that we speak to
one another and speaking,
hear

'though the edges of our discourse
be light years apart and the very concept
of light years is not a shared
learning.

It is not enough that we all watch
Good Morning Canada, in French
and sees the same identical smile super
empty.

People themselves must talk together
about the things that matter, like sex
and death and suicide and holiness and
kids.

A conversation taking place
a two way – God, a dialogue! –
is the only way towards a caring,
a unity

and a peace, the only way
for growth. That is why
Canada always needs a
General Synod.

Jesus Bio

Large gaps in the Jesus story are drawing authors
to fill them, wanting to complete the bio
where the Gospels are silent - writers hate a
vacuum.

He was single, owned a house in Capurnaum
where he would entertain a rough lot of publicans and sinners
to which he would returned after a tour of
villages

healing and arguing and preaching the kingdom,
the here and now of salvation,
the people coming to him in
droves.

And before that he was a carpenter in Nazareth
building a new reality; but keeping his thoughts
entirely to himself, silent about the Father, silent about
himself.

We are not told about his 33 years before baptism
his schooling, his religious story, the development
of his ideas or when he put away his
hammer.

But then all hell broke loose; he turns the world askew
and for the joy that was set before him, endured
the cross, becoming himself the temple not built with
hands

where we may worship; its stones, his living body
its libations his most lively blood, its people still
the outcasts - they are his favourite guests, his grateful
friends

Responsible Government

The water purification plant has conked out again
and I've told the people on the reserve to boil
water on the stove. There's not enough money
see.

You can't build your brother's two-car garage
and put in a new sink for his wife's auntie Bloodtree
and hand-outs to the relatives and run a
surplus.

And if the bitches are still complaining
it's only because of their unjustified comments
during the election, injurious to the guys in power -
us.

So why should they expect favours? Let them
fix the mould in their own houses! I don't
have to report to them where the money
goes.

Why be a chief if you can't have some small
privilege, some little perks of office?
Look at the wads of dough in the hands of Mr.
Whitey.

Up Close

If I could get up real close
I could see the corpuscle struggling
to pass oxygen, I could see
the choices the poor man has before
him

and his deliberation to act for
his own best interest and I could sense
the satisfaction he might feel making
the right choice and sometimes his
despair.

If I could tolerate the limits of his life
and become used to his poverty,
then I would see the grace of God working
in circumstances, dire for me but for him
necessary

which makes his contentment and
agony all the more compelling
all the more sacred even though his painful
micro-struggle is often too hidden to
see.

Slowly Coming Apart

There had been a slight dwindling
of the congregation, stalwarts sticking
out like ribs on an emaciated body, the
peculiars who seemed to own the
place.

And while they were aging, the cathedral
sanctuary had been liturgically renewed
according to the mode of the 50's
when people were wild about the architecture of
worship.

There were enough of them still
to fund the enterprise, to make sure
it was there the next Sunday, for
the very same collection of off-the-wall
individuals.

This morning, in another church, the faithful
23 persons, sang again the boring hymns with
obsolete theology (which no one notices any more)
accompanied by a tape which I had made years
ago.

The Real Me

When I was sent to an Anglican residential school
I was torn from my family, my mother
and father (on a trip to Europe) and from
my neighbourhood, my indigenous culture: the
back alleys of Edmonton.

I lost touch instantly with Jimmy Ferguson

the first of our little gang to screw a girl and afterwards he showed us her blood all over his pants I guess he caught her at the wrong time of the month

And tearing up the asphalt sidewalks, and bullying that little kid down the street, which is the real reason I was sent away, a good thing too - and climbing the outside of buildings and down

the slanted columns of the high level bridge and seeing how far Susan Leiberman could pee standing up like a boy; and intermittent attendance at the first Presbyterian church, peaking through my fingers during the interminable prayers;

a lesson on Amos and the plumb line, straight like this cried the teacher slashing a bending line down the black board; and discussing Miss Deverel's tits in grade two, hastening my departure for school.

So you see, my indigenous self was stripped bare and I had to be recultured, reindigenized, in an English boarding school, with the yes sirs and no sirs and oh sirs and please sirs, and standing to attention and having to make proper corners for my bed

learning music, being red-robed in the choir, singing Stanford's Te Deum and being reprimanded for rendering Handel's "Where ere you Walk" while facing the Congregation, and what the hell was that piece doing in Church anyway? And trying to win on the playing fields.

Particularly there was that hovering Presence insuring I was given a life, a patch of sunlight, a place of brilliance inviting worship and joy; my constant friend, her black hair windblown, her smile for me, mischief in her eye.

Summer Catch

In afternoon the still air heats up over the lake
over the calm water eighty miles across
holding the sounds and noises of our summer.
In the distance a large cruiser slowly moves past; if I were skipper
we would be hearing the clink of ice cubes, lounging exposed
to catch the photons.

And closer in guys are pulling their kids on water skiis
with their rumbling power boats, and sea-doods roar by;
and closer still, under the same sun people are sitting
on the piers watching children splash and closer still
on the water's edge a heron has caught a silver bass,
ready for the gulp

the long neck swells, becomes graceful and slim again.
A stealthy cottager, camera in hand, missed it.
My dog and I are taking a familiar path
full of earthy smells. He doesn't know this is the place,
where he chases ski-doods racing past him out there
on the snow trail.

Hell

It's a bloody good thing there is not a hell
I mean a physical place of raging inferno
like there used to be when holy church
scared the shit out of everyone and got them
to behave.

If there were, then days like this not one breath
of air at 37 Celsius when all resistance is
sapped away when we just lie here in the house
and suffer- might call up final judgement and a load
of guilt.

As it is, hell has become a state without coordinates
neither up nor down of purely spiritual torment
no actual burning flesh nor screams, no Dante
but deep thoughts of lamentable errors of spirit,
and yawns;

blah, as a matter of fact a state of boring cont-
emplation, a grey landscape day after day,
and heaven a similar emptiness, devoid of ice-

cream cones, luscious women, sheik-y men all living
in a riot of happiness.

Liturgy of the Battle of Britain

Every act is part of a short sequence of meaning
with immediate cause and sudden consequence
which, in time, is lifted into a larger liturgy wherein
its truth emerges in words and music, tribute and grief.

Be aware: a liturgy is in the making

which utters, on behalf of the players,
unspoken thoughts; events rise into
their true dignity and power. The unopened
parachute, the spray of bullets, the plane falling -

these alone were not the battle of Britain.

But the collective effort, the sense of salvation,
of civilization at stake, the thanksgivings,
the peoples' suffering, the acts of remembrance,
the king walking through the London rubble,

these made the liturgy, the solemn celebration.

Loose Threads

The years accumulate; the senses dwindle;
each season saps the body's former strength.
We, obsessed with what will give life length,
try to thread again the bobbin, twist the spindle.

The weave once tight is getting loose and slack,
the pattern, once your glory, is confused
your plan by inconsistency abused
the shuttle falters going there and back.

The garment suffers from divine neglect;
it started well, but then it came to naught.
God's surprise, an end we never sought
our tenure finish'd! And we, so circumspect!

We depart and others start to weave
unaware how soon they, too, will leave.

Evidence

I rise and thank the day, Your always gift
reminding me of necessary Being.
Or take my life-long friend, in her I'm seeing
the joy of You which every spirit, lifts.

And others' loving efforts speak; and song
reports a beauty not entirely its own
and sorrow reaches out, is not alone
assumes a Listener to whom we belong.

Yes, it's true that grace is everywhere,
that every single thing awakes a ghost;
things visible, to spirit lift a toast;
the inner eye, perceives that You are there.

This plethora of gifts which me surround
suggest how You, the Deity, abound.

Away for the Weekend

No surge of fortune, height of good
has visited my neighbourhood
it is the time 'twixt vale and peak
when nothing happens, so to speak.

Again the universe has shrugged
grey dominates, the day is drugged.
elsewhere God may show The Hand
or write The Name upon the sand

but here the sky is still as death
no wind, no sun, no deed, no breath
except mortality will dine 'til all has died
its voracious appetite unsatisfied.

Death of a Friend

Insufficient are my thanks, so small
that even uttering them seems out of place
a pebble being compared to Everest's face;
his affection filling all in all

causing me a rare humility.
Why write a sonnet, then, when he has died?
Because some tribute ought not be denied
even 'though beyond the soul's ability.

I live because of love quite undeserved
because a person gave his heart to me
and not returned in similar degree
for different were the things I served.

Rest in peace and we, with Christ, arise
in glory, when the final day arrives.

Firm Ground

I no long want to know the other side
to penetrate the omnipresent rain
and find beyond, a greenery again
and walk with those who long ago have died

There is no strength in vain conjectures
but the weak response of not knowing;
(Better look alive where one is going!)
be guided by the present, earthly vectors.

And by Jesus' words which reassure
"This day you'll be with me in paradise";
where evil is no more, nor vice
where friendship in this life endures

Trust in God! And stand your ground!
No greater certainty than God is found.

To commemorate the birthday and life of my father, long deceased.

Help Thou My Unbelief

I have not praised You lately as I ought
But said the words and left the deed undone,
and kindly thoughts of others not begun,
and works of love or acts of mercy. Not.

'Tis empty handed, I approach your throne;
belated my remembrance of your Being,
again transformed by what I was not seeing;
I am two persons in one flesh and bone;

the one consumed by joy and trust in You
who waits in peace the coming of his death;
the other fearing every taken breath!
Remove my unbelief and leave the good and true.

Your promises, unworthy though I be,
they alone will lift and comfort me.

O Sapientia – Wisdom

Wisdom is love's way of doing everything,
The caring form of God's outgoing.
It is the secret of the Father's knowing
How God gives joy, and makes creation sing.
Wisdom knits the heart to love, the wing to flight,
Joins gloomy thoughts to hopes of life to come
And shapes the noisy universe as one,
upholds the good and true, for they are God's delight.
Wisdom is the knowledge of the other;
Knows the sacrifice to reach the hurt,
to lift the one who's prostrate in the dirt.
It is the Christ, our Lord, our Friend and Brother
 A pinch of Wisdom, sprinkled every time
 Makes the difference 'tween vinegar and wine.

More Than Law – O Adonai

God is a burning Presence who appears!
Who frees the Jews, by slavery oppressed
Teaching them to live at God's behest
Following only God for forty years.
Unprecedented outpouring from above!
At Sinai, God confers the holy law;
but broken tablets show a hidden flaw
and people are suspicious of the Father's love.
But look! The Law's fulfilled by Jesus Christ
Surpassing justice through his flowing blood.
His broken body being the measure of God's good
He is the cost of law, the infinitely priced.
 More than Law, His love will justice make;
 The unjust cross, let justice not forsake.

Root of Jess – O Radix Jesse

Root of Jesse, nourished by the Father's grace
Grows up from earth to heaven, the tree of life
There hangs our Peace, the very end of strife
With tears and suffering love upon His face,
another David, Israel's second boast.
The kingdom, promised, finally comes in Him.
Kings fall before Him, Gentiles sing their hymns
To praise the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
The root is not the tree, nor first, the last;

nor is fulfillment at the very start
When God took Israel to God's very heart;
but at the end, when nails held Jesus fast.
Salvation enters history from the Jews
They, the first to hear the gracious news.

Key of Every Lock – O Clavis David

Key to every lock, open first the womb;
be born into this deathly drama of the dark,
into the chaos of our life embark.
Unlock the gates of hell, and open up the tomb.
For we are prisoned by the things we own.
We cannot move, being burdened down by wealth;
the spirit sinks, the body knows not health,
we reap the weeds which greedily were sown.
Release the bonds of promises untrue,
the vanities which foolishly we sought
to find that emptiness was all we got;
trapped by self, we lost the sight of You
Key to every good - find and turn the lock
So we, the path to happiness, make walk.

Come O Dayspring – O Oriens

Come, Light, to show us who and where we are.
Dispel surrounding gloom of darkest night
so that the face of God may come in sight
and show that God's assistance is not far.
Give us warmth to counter this cold world;
to comfort flesh shine light into the minds
of others, still by dark and cold confined,
that all may see the flag of love unfurled.
Let us stand as one together in the dawn
Facing, hoping, for the coming Sun
Preparing for the good of everyone
Now! Before the opportunity is gone!
Bright are the beams of resurrection morn!
In the living Lord we are reborn!

King of Nations – O Rex Gentium

The nations are unquiet yet they seek
a peace. Only with so many soldiers dead,
when slaughter has depleted citizens instead;
then peace may come and yet of war they speak.
Kings do not build the world with one another,
Their labours fail without a Cornerstone.

Each makes an annex only for his own
Does not respect the bound'ries of the brother.
Peace comes to nations who obey the Christ
Surrendering their future to the King of kings
Giving ground until negotiation brings
A common structure based on sacrifice.
Only then, can citizens rejoice
praise God with heart and mind and voice.

O Come Emmanuel

Come again, O God, Emmanuel,
Liberator come, now set us free.
Victory flows by grace from Calvary's tree
Through faith, beats down the very gates of Hell.
May we appropriate the power thereof
and Christ become triumphant in our lives
become the places where your goodness thrives,
be mirrors of the Lord's outrageous love.
Come, 'specially, to the millions suffering;
to children, victims of the ceaseless war,
(to die so young is not what they are for).
For this, receive our tiny offering.
Come Emmanuel show now your heavenly power
and to the world's weak, be their strong tower.

So Young - O Virgo Virginum

So young to offer God your innocence
you, human nature's solitary boast;
mother, of the Son of God, the host
you are obedience, giving no offense.
Through such a one, the Holy Spirit comes
from heaven to earth to turn things upside down;
the mighty from their seats of power are thrown,
the self of God incarnate in your womb.
The meek shall rise, and peace shall come on earth.
The lowly folk on the periphery,
they, in your arms, God's very splendour see
when the Father's only Babe, you birth.
Your life makes possible the purposes of God
You, more than other women, we applaud.

God's Goodness

Believe that God is infinitely great,
displays the very Self beyond all doubt;
shows the good in things God is about;

that God delights in all things God doth make.

- including you and me. We are God's joy!
As Irenaeus said, God's purpose thrives
When humankind is totally alive.
We are not mannequin nor doll nor toy.

But some prefer to see indebtedness;
a favourite guilt-producing ploy,
(calculated to ignore the Almighty's joy)
shortcomings, (i.e. sins), to endlessly confess

They miss the core of evidence faith shows
That God is good; that's all we need to know.

Risk

There's no proof for the existence of a God
who sets the universe's bang just so
with right conditions 16 billion years ago
and we eventually emerge! Applaud! Applaud!

A mix of law and chance, of probability and luck -
it was a risk; is still a risk at most;
one errant asteroid and we are toast.
No one told us when or how to duck

And then what have we got? A universe
which no one knows, no claim to fame
no audience, no witness, what a ruddy shame!
How many worlds collide, without a chapter, verse?

God may exist, God may have done it all
but who would know if some accident befall?

Risk 2

On the other hand there is no proof
that God did not bang off creation;
science hits a wall of explanation
the final answer, happily aloof

Faith in God comes only if you take the chance
that improbably God's Love can get it done;
sliding through the lattices of risk, a billion to one,
necessary Being doing the contingent dance.

We have seen already how if God is killed
An avalanche of Love will carry death away;
how, though we die, through God we're here to stay
God's own death is what the love of God has willed

The more God dies, the greater is Love's sway
God is contingent in a necessary way.

Come Little Jesus Child

Welcome, to the place of your own making
Strange your tastes preferring grime and grim
Where lives are snuffed on someone's careless whim
Where hearts are breaking.

To the homeless under flimsy shelter
Huddled in the city parks and streets
Soaking in the season's rain and sleet
Or in summer's swelter.

Did you think that You'd be seen and heard
That people hurrying to their goals would care
Would stop, and lift a cover, see you there
listen to your Word

We who saw your sacrifice will tell your story
How love, not power, is the gate to glory

Christmas Eve

Gusting snow flies down the half-harrowed road
not yet plowed. Hustling, they hurry slogging forward
through the hellish wind puffing hard, heated by
their hubris, the hauteur of hardship in the high cold.

Myth-bound, shaken by stuttering truths
hearts cradle hope like a spluttering fire:
somewhere barn animals stamp feet; an angelic choir
sings in the field and a babe sleeps among the brutes.

Shivering, they arrive; the play begins, no lack
of towels, dressing gowns, a veil of blue.
Children enact the story believing it is true:
this shortest day, this night of longest black.

The Silent Sounds of Christmas Day

Alleluia! The soundless shout comes across the frozen lake.

Winds rise and fade, the world holds its breath,
in stillness wakens not the babe of God, the world's guest
speechless at a birth for all creation's sake.

Silent praise is the song's soul today.
You hear it in the music's many strange directions
as jazz and gospel warp cathedral choir perfections
honouring equally the child upon the hay.

Is it not Being's echo, the necessary substratum,
this quiet whence all arises and subsides?
The hollow core in which good and truth resides
in all that's said, in every datum?

The noise obliterates when we assert, proclaim,
yet the silent sound of Being is still the same

Too Sane

Not Bedlam could invent the logic of this life
nor madness offer more than scraps of mind
nor human logic find a reason of a kind
where hate is love and peace an act of strife.

For ways and means are aimed at some success;
the habit of the brain makes all things neat
loose ends are gathered, then the thing's complete.
Our calculus does not tolerate the human mess.

We are not capable of the ultimate insanity
by which the shepherd risks the very self
clings to the freezing face of Everest on the narrow shelf
to offer help where help itself is vanity.

Today's good sense is yesterday's offense;
it's lack of taking risks that makes us dense.

Time Speed

You say at eighty life is long
time, with speed of light, is but a blink
filled the cup, done the little drink
before you learn the key, fini the song.

Thought still occupies the mind
and poems animate the heart
flesh fails to do its part

Look and who will find?

The end intrudes nor rhyme nor reason
winter's snow quite out of season.

Eternal Lake

But a breeze moves across the surface of the lake
dark water lies as far as one can see
as if to say, "I was and am and I will be
I, the fish, the duck, the dam, the drake

We live together year by year
adapted to the waning sun, the season
We see the trust, we see the treason
winds carry them away, hut we are here".

Their fatal fires light the shore, they seek a key
In Agassiz, reminder of the ancient inland sea.

Getting Ready for Winter

Batten down the hatches, all!
Get out the mothie tattered wraps
Soon life will lie in winter's lap
Gone, the summer, gone the fall.

You thought you were prepared, ah yes, perhaps:
Your ourward insulation might suffice
But inwardly the soul is stiff with ice
Month by month the frozen vampire sucks the sap.

I would be warm at any price
I'd funnel off the heat of hell
If, next spring all would be well
The devil's pact, yes very nice.

Winter Trees

Sapless, leafless, trees against the sky
are still as dead, life -drained, mere frozen wood
no breathing in and out, no drink nor food
stiff with winter no complaint nor cry.

Slyly trees put on the face of death
hide every trace of life from winter's sight
withstand the blizzards, onslaught of the winter's might
enduring half a year without a breath.

And then, when winter's spent its brutal power
the tree revives, life rises with its sap
its leaves appear with sunshine in its lap
with the birds, and grass and garden flowers.

Could I but have the cunning of the tree
and make a fool of death eternally!

Advent 2008

Not the coming of your Santa Claus
his bag stuffed high with gifts for well to do;
not the din of endless jingles jollying God knows who
not the crowds of grasping shoppers, more than ever was

But a time to pause, to push it all away
not to get, but contemplate how little we deserve
that all's a gift, our energy, our nerve
re-conceived by mercy, every single day.

Advent is about our deepest ties with the divine
and powers that shake and shape the world
death and judgement, heaven and hell - like unfurled
banners flying above all destiny and time.

Who would not from these truths wish to hide,
though Christ is God incarnate, crucified?

The Pillar Death

Huge cataclysms crash in the abyss,
stars die, compacted to a single point;
death does the universe anoint
no tepid hope avoids nor terrors miss.

Death establishes mortality
for all, for all contingent being;
for what is seen and who is seeing.
It ends our little span, our short reality.

It's shadow falls across the years
and prompts us act, lest time be past
our appointed hour too short to last
we hurry, energized by sudden fears

A firm pillar of our being is death

which starts the very moment we take breath.

The Pillar Judgement

Let thy judgement, O Lord, pour down like rain
on victim faces, oppressed, downtrodden
until with healing balm they are besodden
and drenched with peace and plenty, live again

For You are the Maker, in Your image, of us all;
depose therefore the swaggering, greedy, proud
who think themselves above the public crowd-
cause their pride to go before their fall.

Although I have, to some, brought hurt and stress
and lived an often blemished life
resorting many times to fruitless strife
let me see Your glorious righteousness

I would seek to stand before Your throne
and give You honour. You alone.

Be In Strong Hope

Be strong in hope the Lord is on his way!
Trembling knees be firm and straight!
Heads held high, your God await!
Mirages turn to pools upon that glorious day!

Limp arms take up the Spirit's healing sword!
Ee'n now the Way of Holiness appears;
done the darkness, done the timeless years!
Hope now, the Lord will keep his Word.

You are too filled with anxious things
the mind is lowly crammed
the heart is devil damned
Be still, for Lo the heavenly Spirit sings

And make a place for God, of emptiness
and build within yourself, the Baby's crèche.

Eternal Christ

Was there ever Word in history such as this
through Whom all things came to be?
Whose throne will reign eternally
Whose power is righteousness and bliss?

He is the radiance of God's own glory,
the stamp of God's identity
He is the Child of the nativity.
he the author of creation's saving story.

On the cross he purified;
the blood of God salvation got
his sacrifice beyond all thought
when for us for love he died.

No greater word, no greater voice
can guide us to a greater choice.

Manger

This night a babe is born in Bethlehem
the revellers know it not
no whiff of glory got
the doings in the barn do not interest them.

But angels ring the heavens with joyful sound
the shepherds see and hear;
the sheep, the wolves, the deer
They hear that all the earth is Kingdom bound

And Mary virgin-mother of the Lord -
in her arms the universe,
antidote for Satan's curse,
the Son of God is cradled and adored.

Such a promise! Such a gift!
Lo! He the wheat and chaff, will sift.

Turbans

The turbaned head, dark skin and black, black hair
belongs to a Canadian now Governor of Afghanistan.
Races merging everywhere; in Canada or in Japan
now no easy way to tell who's wheat and who is tare.

I'm not annoyed as old boundaries fall
I became engrossed in earlier things -
the holy liturgy and how it sings.
Mirabile dictu! Opening up the Church to all!

We are half there, not yet translating older words

into the thinking of the present time,
half out of date and half renewed; I'm
supping from a bowl, part cream and partly curds.

In Canada we have not found, as yet
how Christ would speak today and people not forget.

Journey in Space / Time

How great is your bosom O Lord! As far
as east from west. All that was
or is or will be, without loss
into your arms - every life on every star.

Thus two billion years are but as yesterday.
What miracles will come to pass!
Wonders! What events so vast!
We, forerunners, made as we are, of clay.

Long before we smite another universe
we will know how to prevail;
gravity displays its story, tells its tale,
and nature's forces we will rehearse.

We must grow in the evolving plan of God;
centuries to go. Take up your faith, your staff and rod!