



# Broken and Crushed

For the tradition I received from the Lord and also handed on to you is that on the night he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread, and after he had given thanks, he broke it, and he said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." And in the same way with the cup after supper, saying, "This is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you eat this bread, then, and drink this cup, you are proclaiming the Lord's death until he comes..."  
(Corinthians 11:23-27)

Anyone who is familiar with wheat and grapes knows that the story of bread and wine is indeed a story of life and death. How wise of Jesus to use such already sacred signs to continue his presence among us.

We have been asked to break the bread and share the cup in his name. Each time we do this we proclaim his death and rising until he comes again.

Are not our lives a little like the wheat and grapes?

Doesn't a similar kind of religious experience take place in us: the dying and rising, being broken and crushed, shared together, poured out for one another?

Surely, as in that broken bread and that shared cup. It is the same Christ we are trying to recognise in the brokenness of our lives. The story of our Eucharist is, indeed, a mystery we have hardly begun to tap.

Bread too  
like us  
has its birth  
in violence.

The seed that fell  
into the ground,  
died, and came forth as wheat  
is now ground into new form  
and flour is sifted  
and changed into loaves  
for rising.

We break this bread  
with reverence  
and give it to each other  
for eating  
just as another person  
once broke those loaves  
with us  
and asked us not to forget.  
We haven't!

If there is any command  
we have been  
religiously obedient to  
it is this command of  
not forgetting.  
Do this in my memory!  
Do it again and again!  
Jesus, we have ...  
We have broken bread  
with tears in our eyes  
and we've broken it  
when our hearts felt nothing,  
but we have broken it  
just as you asked us to do.  
We are still trying  
to understand  
what it means.  
But we haven't forgotten.

And the wine?  
It too is born out of pain.  
After days of ripening,  
the grapes are crushed  
and squeezed  
into unfamiliar form waiting in barrels and vats  
and finally, bottles  
to be accepted  
loved  
believed in.

And this wine also  
we drink carefully  
with more reverence  
than usual.

It is in honour of  
that same person  
the One who asked us  
not to forget.

And we haven't!  
O God, if there's anything  
we've been faithful to,  
it's this  
not forgetting request.  
In big churches  
in small crowds  
with friends  
with strangers  
we meet  
we break the bread  
we share the cup.  
And something happens  
not only to the bread  
and wine  
but to us!

It is especially  
to remind each other  
not to forget  
that we meet.

It is especially  
to celebrate the life  
that comes out of so much death.  
Bread, born out of brokenness!  
Wine, born out of being crushed!

We are still  
trying to understand  
what it means.  
We are still trying  
to recognize you, Lord  
in the breaking and  
the sharing.  
But we haven't forgotten!

