

Song Of The Vineyard (Katrina)

There are two versions of this Eucharist both adapted to reflect what was in the news at the time – so we invite you to do the same and root the song of the vineyard in your own time and place. This version was written the week Hurricane Katrina devastated the community and city of New Orleans, the tabloids had been debating in Islam phobic manner whether Turkey should be allowed to join the EU and reports from Sudan's feeding camps were desperate. What does God make of seeing God's vineyard in tatters? How can God sing the song of the vineyard when humanity has made such a pig's ear of it? But God does sing a lamenting song of the vineyard, even in the midst of so much suffering bread is broken and wine is shared- a celebration and testimony to the wonderful stories of humanity reaching out in generosity and creativity and a sign of the vineyard blossoming with new life.

How can I sing a song of my vineyard
the earth lies tattered and in ruins?
War rages, not once but in country after country
bombs rip apart idyllic holiday destinations
Floods destroy the old Latin Quarter
home to musical memories and artistic flare
Politicians meet to keep at arms length
the country that bridges east and west, Muslim and Christian
Reports from feeding camps in Africa become a forgotten memory
but hunger and disease rage unabated.

How can I sing a song of my vineyard
the vines lie in tatters, ripped from the earth?
I have given my vineyard the best of everything
tended it with sun and rain
but it's fruits are small and withered, disease is rife
I looked for good fruits
but you have produced a poor harvest
the produce you should have enjoyed
lies rotting in the ground
How can I sing a song of my vineyard?

But I will sing a song of my vineyard
the earth is more resilient and beauty radiates!
My tangled tomato plants grow robustly skywards
and the small green fruits are swelling with promise
Sudan's people take the long road south
returning to their ancestral homelands to build their children's future
A film festival is held in a small theatre in war torn Baghdad
awards are presented accompanied with bouquets of flowers
And families open their homes and make up spare beds
for the survivors of hurricane Katrina's devastation.

But I will sing a song of my vineyard
a song of my beloved who gently tends the vine!
Who feeds and waters and lifts the shoots out of the dust
splicing the vine together with words of encouragement
My beloved, who on the night the vines became gnarled and twisted
ensnaring him and betraying him, fearful of a beautiful garden
Took bread, the labour of the harvest
and broke it for the vineyard, dust to dust ashes to ashes
Took wine, the fruit of the vine

and poured out his blood to enrich the soil.

[Share bread]

This is my body, broken for you

[Share wine]

This is my blood poured out for the life of the world

And what became of the song of my vineyard
the song of my beloved now buried in the ground?
My beloved's love could not die, could not lie hidden
it springs from the ground, pushing up through the soil
Life pulses through the vineyard, flowers blossom
bees hum and birds sing in celebration
Ruined vines are once again tended with patience
broken trusses lovingly spliced back onto the vine
The fecundity of the vineyard embraces the brokenness
and the grapes are sweet and ripe and ready for the harvest.

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