

Treasure Hunt Eucharist

I'm guessing this was written for a service during Advent when the shops are busy trying to convince us that we cannot live without the latest designer gadget. But the treasure of Christmas is written into the flesh of a baby, into our flesh and blood.

I've made my wish list
all the things I want most in the world
all the things I really don't want to be without
and it's not even Christmas yet!

And so we head for the shopping mall
with countless other shoppers
music thumping
bright lights flickering
displays changed on an almost daily basis
to echo clever advertising campaigns
between our favourite TV shows
or looking down at us from the bill board hoardings
we pass on the daily commute into town
and so we are drawn to the temple of the shopping mall
to worship the mannequins in their catwalk glamour
to play in the sleek and style of the apple store
to imagine in the ideal home of the furnishing department
to have fun in the treasure trove of the toy department
to be entertained in the multi – screened cinema
to hang around with our friends
to buy the longed for item
to window shop for yet more items
to add to our ever growing wish lists

And so we go to work
or eak out our pension or benefits
or save up our pocket money
or rack up bills on credit or store cards
in order to buy the newly released product
to satisfy our latest desire
to tick one more thing
off our never ending wish list
and while we are busy
worshipping our golden calf
and attending to its incessant demands
many walk buy with nothing
needing a home
needing a welcome
needing basic medical care
needing food to eat
and clothes to wear

No wonder in your anger
you smash the very tablets of stone
on which you wrote your laws

your guidelines for how we should live together
so everyone has enough
and no one has too much
so everyone is part of a caring community
and no one is left out in the cold

And so you wrote your law
and your love
into the body of a baby
you wrote your treasure map
into the human body
flesh of our flesh
bone of our bone
and as the baby grew in wisdom and maturity
he was found teaching the priests and scribes
in the religious temple
he was found challenging the laws
of the legalistic Pharisees
he was found adding up the true cost
of the accounts of tax collectors and money changers
he was found questioning the cures of healers
and showing the healing power of human community

And when still our attention
was drawn to the golden calf
and the worshipping
of our never ending lists of desires
you once again wrote your law
wrote your love
in the body of a man
who on the night before he laid down his life
took simple, plain ordinary bread
not ciabbata
or French bread
or malted grain
or sesame seed and honey
but simple, plain ordinary bread
bread of the poor
bread of the hungry
and broke it
and shared it with those who would follow him
saying,
This is my body,
broken for you
do this in memory of me.

And when still our attention
was drawn to the golden calf
and the worshipping
of our never ending lists of desires
you once again wrote your law
wrote your love

in the body of a man
who on the night before he laid down his life
took rough and ready wine
not an expensive vintage red
served in crystal glasses
with canapés
and light entertainment
but rough and ready wine
wine of the dispossessed
wine of the disenfranchised
and poured it
and shared it with those who would follow him
saying,
This is my blood,
poured out for you
do this in celebration of me.

[share bread and wine]

Treasure seeking God
you wrote your law
onto the body of a baby
you wrote your love
into the body of a man
who stretched out his arms
to embrace humanity
and showed us the treasure
rising from an empty tomb

Treasure seeking God
you have written your law
into our bodies
you have written your love
into our hearts
help us not to go chasing treasure
which is not ours
at the modern day shrines
of the golden calf

Treasure seeking God
you have written your law
into our bodies
you have written your love
into our hearts
help us to recognise the treasure
that is hidden within us
the treasure which is most precious when it is shared
for the treasure is the Kingdom of God.

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