

In the beginning was the Word...

Sometimes—just sometimes, mind—I wonder if we have gone too far. This Saturday night eucharist began life as an exploration of our methodology, an attempt, if you like, to explain how we write, how our Words emerge out of the pastoral cycle of Experience, Analysis, Reflection, Action and Celebration. But somehow poetry defies explanation, just as God defies human knowing. What began as an explanation, sprang to life as one of the silliest prayers we have ever written, and out of the silliness grew a new theological discipline: theopoesis.

And by the way, yes, you do have spinach on your teeth!

In the beginning was the Word
the Word
ὁ λογος
the Word

In the beginning was the Word
and the word was
spinach

SPINACH?

why spinach?

or pine nuts...

why pine nuts?

or chocolate
or chilli
or chocolate and chilli...

Could the word be aubergine?

or goats cheese...

or chips?

In the beginning was the Word
the Word
ὁ λογος
the Word

In the beginning was the Word
and the word was
good enough to eat
the word rolls sensually around the tongue
the word drips unctuously onto waiting lips
the word melts, exploding a thousand
tastebuds into life.

In the beginning was the Word
only Word
only word

In the beginning were only words
the words

the words
of life
the words
that are life
the words
that give life

the words
that give shape
the words
that name
the words
that dare to name
what we see
what we hear
what we taste
what we smell
what we feel

the words
that dare to name
our experience
our tasting
our celebrating
our mourning
our sensing
our relishing
our telling
of the story
of our lives

and all our lives

In the beginning was the Word
the Word
ὁ λογος

spinach

playful
spinach
delicious
spinach
strengthening
spinach
yucky
spinach
spinach beloved of Popeye
spinach and ricotta pizza
spinach encrusted teeth

In the beginning
was the word spinach
and out of the spinach
blossomed life -
and laughter
laughter
and love.

In the beginning
was the Word
and the Word
was spinach
creating
growing
weaving
dancing

In the beginning
was the Word
and the Word
shared
spinach

only in this case
it is bread

... and wine

a man gathered his friends together
took water
and a bowl

and a fluffy soft bath towel
knelt down
in the freshly swept dirt
and gently
lovingly
insistently
washed their feet

as a woman
of dubious reputation
(what do we mean
by dubious reputation?
was it that she loved life
savoured
tasted
relished life?)
knelt down
in the freshly swept dirt
and washed his feet
with the tears of her pain
the tears of his pain to come
tears of separation and loss

not just my feet
but my whole body
this is my body
this is my blood

and they shared the passover feast
the feast of the story of the past
the feast of the story of the present
the feast of the story that is yet to be

maybe they ate the spinach of bitter tears
maybe they ate the nuts and cinnamon of life
in all its fullness

for this meal
the passover meal
the last meal
tells the story of the whole of life
heaven and hell
cross and crucifixion
life and death
as Jesus lifts bread and breaks it
this is my body
broken for you

as Jesus lifts the wine
this is my blood
poured out for you

[Silence]

And in one moment
And in one Word
And in one flavour
All moments
All words
All flavours
are tasted

Words which are good enough to eat
Word which is good enough to live

In this one
beautiful
silly
delicious
ridiculous
dangerous
word
All words die

[Share bread in silence]

And in this one
beautiful
silly
delicious
ridiculous
dangerous
tongue
All tongues live

All tongues live
All tongues dance
All tongues speak
All tongues sing
All tongues taste
All tongues savour
All tongues relish

All tongues relish
The wine which is Ribena
the Ribena
which is life giving Word

[Share the cup]

In the beginning was the Word
the Word
ὁ λογος
the Word

In the beginning was the Word
and the word was
spinach

And the spinach was life

And the life was good

Amen

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