

LEADER: There is so much lost in this world, O Lord,
so much that aches and groans and shivers
for want of redemption, so much that
seems dislocated, upended, desecrated,
unhinged—even in our own hearts.

PEOPLE: **Even in our own hearts
we bear the mark of all that is broken.**
What is best in this world has been bashed
and battered and trodden down.
What was meant to be the substance has
become the brittle shell, haunted by the
ghosts of a glory so long crumbled that only
its rubble is remembered now.

**Is it any wonder we should weep sometimes,
without knowing why?** It might be anything.
And then again, it might be everything.

For we feel this.

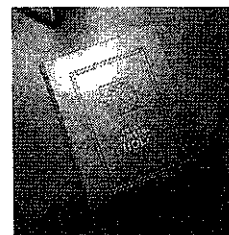
**We who are your children feel
this empty space where some lost thing
should have rested in its perfection,**
and we pine for those nameless glories,
and we pine for all the wasted stories in our world,
and we pine for these present wounds.
We pine for our children and for their children too,
knowing each will have to prove how this universal pain is also
personal. We pine for all children born into these days of desolation—
whose regal robes were torn to tatters before they were
even swaddled in them.

**O Lord, how can we not weep,
when waking each day in this vale of tears?**
How can we not feel those pangs,
when we, wounded by others,
so soon learn to wound as well,
and in the end wound even ourselves?
We grieve what we cannot heal and
we grieve our half-belief,

A LITURGY FOR
THOSE WHO

Weep Without Knowing Why

FROM THE BOOK
EVERY MOMENT HOLY
COPYRIGHT © 2017
DOUGLAS MCKELVEY



having made uneasy peace with disillusion,
aligning ourselves with a self-protective lie
that would have us kill our best hopes
just to keep our disappointments half-confined.

**We feel ourselves wounded by what is wretched,
foul, and fell,
but we are sometimes wounded by the beauty as well,
for when it whispers,
it whispers of the world
that might have been our birthright,
now banished,
now withdrawn,
as unreachable to our wounded hearts
as ancient seas receding down
some endless dark.**

We weep, O Lord,
for those things that,
though nameless, are still lost.
**We weep for the cost of our rebellions,
for the mocking and hollowing of holy things,
for the inward curve of our souls,
for the evidences of death outworked in
every field and tree and blade of grass,
crept up in every creature, alert in every
longing, infecting all fabrics of life.**

We weep for the leers our daughters will endure,
as if to be made in reflection of your beauty
were a fault for which they must pay.
We weep for our sons,
sabotaged by profiteers who seek to warp their dreams
before they even come of age.

We weep for all the twisted alchemies of our times
that would turn what might have been gold
into crowns of cheap tin
and then toss them into refuse bins
as if love could ever be

FOR THE CREATION WAITS
WITH EAGER LONGING
FOR THE REVEALING
OF THE SONS OF GOD.
FOR THE CREATION WAS
SUBJECTED TO FUTILITY,
NOT WILLINGLY, BUT
BECAUSE OF HIM WHO
SUBJECTED IT, IN HOPE
THAT THE CREATION
ITSELF WILL BE SET FREE
FROM ITS BONDAGE
TO CORRUPTION AND
OBTAIN THE FREEDOM
OF THE GLORY OF THE
CHILDREN OF GOD.
FOR WE KNOW THAT
THE WHOLE CREATION
HAS BEEN GROANING
TOGETHER IN THE PAINS
OF CHILDBIRTH UNTIL
NOW. AND NOT ONLY
THE CREATION, BUT WE
OURSELVES, WHO HAVE
THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE
SPIRIT, GROAN INWARDLY
AS WE WAIT EAGERLY FOR
ADOPTION AS SONS. THE
REDEMPTION OF OUR
BODIES.

ROMANS 8:19-23

a castoff thing one might simply be done with.
We weep for the wretched expressions of all things
that were first built of goodness and glory
but are now their own shadow twins.

**We have wept so often.
And we will weep again.**

And yet, there is somewhere in our tears
a hope still kept.

We feel it in this darkness,
like a tiny flame,
when we are told

Jesus also wept.

You wept.

So moved by the pain of this crushed creation,
you, O Lord, heaved with the grief of it,
drinking the anguish like water
and sweating it out of your skin like blood.

**Is it possible that you—in your sadness
over Lazarus, in your grieving for
Jerusalem, in your sorrow in the garden—
is it possible that you have sanctified
our weeping too?**

For the grief of God is no small thing,
and the weeping of God is not without effect.
The tears of Jesus preceded
a resurrection of the dead.

**O Spirit of God,
is it then possible
that our tears might also be
a kind of intercession?**

That we, your children, in our groaning

with the sadness of creation, could
be joining in some burdened work
of coming restoration? Is it possible
that when we weep and don't know why,
it is because the curse has ranged
so far, so wide? That we weep at that
which breaks your heart, because it
has also broken ours—sometimes so deeply
that we cannot explain our weeping,
even to ourselves?

**If that is true,
then let such weeping be received, O Lord,
as an intercession newly forged of holy sorrow.**

Then let our tears anoint these broken things,
and let our grief be as their consecration—
a preparation for their promised
redemption, our sorrow sealing them
for that day when you will take
the ache of all creation,
and turn it inside-out,
like the shedding of
an old gardener's glove.

**ALL: O Lord, if it please you,
when your children weep
and don't know why,
yet use our tears
to baptize what you love.**

Amen.