

Let me steward well, Lord Christ,
this gift of homesickness—this grieving for a
childhood gone, this ache for distant family,
lost fellowship, past laughter, shared lives, and
the sense that I was somewhere I belonged.

It is a good, good thing to have a home.

But now that I have gone from it, let me steward
well, O God, this homesick gift, as I know my
wish for what has been is not some solitary
ache, but is woven with a deeper longing
for what will one day be.

This yearning to return to what I knew is,
even more than that, a yearning for a place
my eyes have yet to see.

So let me steward this sacred yearning well.
Homesickness is indeed a holy thing,
like the slow burning of an immortal beacon,
set ablaze to bid us onward.

The shape of that ache for another time
and place is the imprint of eternity
within our souls.

So let those sorrows do their work in me,
O God. Let them stir such yearnings as would
fix my journey forward toward that place for
which I've always pined.

O my soul, have there not always been signs?
O my soul, were we not born with hearts on
fire? Before we were old enough even to know
why songs and waves and starlight so stirred
us, had we not already tiptoed to the edge of
that vast sadness, bright and good, and felt
ourselves somehow stricken with a sickness
unto life? Hardly had we ventured from our
yards, when we felt ourselves so strangely far

A LITURGY FOR AN

Inconsolable Homesickness

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from something—and somewhere that we
despaired of ever reaching—that we turned to
hide the welling of our eyes.

We knew it, even then, as the opening of a
wound this world cannot repair—
the first birthing of that weight
every soul must wake up to alone,
because it is the burden
of that wild and
lonely space that only
God in his eternity can fill.

And as we wait, this sacred, homesick sorrow
works in us to cultivate a faith
that knows one day, he will.

That is the holy work of homesickness:
to teach our hearts how lonely
they have always been for God.

So let these sighs and tears, Lord Christ, prepare
me for that better gladness that will be mine.
Let all your children learn to grieve well in this
life, knowing we are not just being homesick;
we are letting sorrow carve
the spaces in our souls,
that joy will one day fill.
O Holy Spirit, bless our grief, and
seal our hearts until that day.

Amen.

HE HAS MADE EVERYTHING
BEAUTIFUL IN ITS TIME.
ALSO, HE HAS PUT
ETERNITY INTO MAN'S
HEART, YET SO THAT HE
CANNOT FIND OUT WHAT
GOD HAS DONE FROM THE
BEGINNING TO THE END.
ECCLESIASTES 3:11