

Two Poems by Gerard Manley Hopkins, S. J. (1844-1889)

For the 2019 GP/PLS Reunion Seminar, we will discuss two poems by the great Jesuit poet Gerard Hopkins, with an eye to the challenges raised in theologian Sallie McFague's "A Manifesto for North American Middle-Class Christians," from *Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*, ed. Kathleen Dean Moore and Michael P. Nelson (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2010), 243-49.

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod? 4
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod. 8

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs — 12
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Inversnaid

This darksome burn^o, horseback brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop^o and in comb^o the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home. 4

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-fróth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, féll-frówning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning. 8

Degged^o with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes^o that the brook treads through,
Wiry heathpacks, flitches^o of fern,
And the beadbonny ash that sits over the burn. 12

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet. 16

Hopkins frequently coins terms, which are often explicable from context. Here, though, are glosses of Scottish dialect terms in "Inversnaid" that may be unfamiliar. *burn*: a stream; *comb*: water rippling; *degged*: sprinkled; *braes*: hills; *flitches*: patches. Hopkins coined *coop* as used in this poem to mean an "enclosed hollow."