

Holy Thursday (Songs of Experience) Themes

Writer: William Blake | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Child Poverty and Society's Failure: In the poem "Holy Thursday" from *Songs of Experience* (1794), William Blake criticizes the way society treats poor children. The speaker of the poem points out that England is a rich country. But it lets many children become orphans and live in poverty. These children are sent to charity schools. They are asked to sing in church on Holy Thursday. The people in power think they are being kind, but Blake says their help is showy and selfish. They care more about looking good than truly helping. The poem says it's wrong to celebrate charity when so many children suffer. The poem asks: what kind of society lets its children suffer like this?