

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

MOVEMENT FOR RELIGIOUS RENEWAL

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MICHAELMAS 2002



The Archangel Michael with lance and scales standing near the cross.
Drawing after a fresco in the St. Walburg church in Zutphen/Holland.

THE ARMOR OF PEACE

The season of Michael the Archangel is clothed in images of the warrior. For the peace-loving soul, the military images can be difficult to connect with. But the warrior archetype is necessary simply because of the way the cosmos is constructed.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Chapter 6, often read from the altar during this season, stresses that unfortunately the spiritual world is inhabited not only by light-filled angels. The spiritual world is also inhabited by negative demonic forces, 'spirit beings mighty in the stream of time ... spirit beings powerful in the molding of earth's substance ... cosmic powers whose darkness rules the present time ... beings who, in the spiritual worlds, are themselves the powers of evil.' They are cosmically mighty. And we are by comparison, puny. We are mere humans, angels in training.

We are called upon to tap into the warrior archetype within, by uniting with Michael, the golden warrior for the good. We are to arm ourselves for a battle swirling around us on a spiritual level, against those mighty spiritual beings who are evil. But it is not our task to defeat them. Our battle is a defensive one, a battle for our own inner survival and inner uprightness. Our task is only to withstand their attacks, to stand firm, to stand our ground against them.

Paul uses the imagery of armor for showing us how we will survive. This armor is something we are actually creating all our lives. And now especially it is time to clothe ourselves in it – the armor of

A firm grasp on the truth
Of an awareness of the realities of the spiritual world
Of an unshakeable trust in God's wisdom and guidance
Of a certainty in knowledge of Christ's healing power, even in the event of soul/spiritual injury.

We are only required to simply remain upright against fear. We are only being asked to quench the

flaming arrows of hatred within us. We are simply being encouraged to deflect all the spiritual attacks, paradoxically to arm ourselves so that we can still spread a peace over the earth that we draw down from the positive angelic forces.

We fight the spirit adversaries with Christ's Spirit-Word, which we hear him speaking to us, echoing from the cross:

*'I am life ... I am truth ... I am the way ...
No one will get into the Father's Kingdom
except through me.'*

Our task on the spiritual battlefield is to defend our Selves; to remain loyal to the good. We are to keep watch, to remain awake. Christ is at our side. Together we pray to the Father, for it is the Father's task to 'deliver us from the evil'. With Michael, who stood watch under the cross, we put on the armor of Christ, so that we too, can stand at peace with the world.

Cynthia Hindes
Los Angeles

THE INCENSE

When I was a child it occurred to me that two of the most amazing substances in the world were bubbles and smoke. It dawned on me that though we could make these substances, they would almost immediately dissipate beyond even our strongest efforts to condense them back into physical form.

In The Act of Consecration of Man, smoke, in the form of rising incense, expands into the room and then into the whole realm of life forces that surrounds the earth. The last of three censings carries our words in song, the earliest and arguably most enhanced form of earthly word.

Incense is a combination of frankincense (note the word 'incense' within this word), juniper berry and myrrh. Myrrh and juniper are both healing, cleansing substances, but myrrh has a bitter tinge, irritating us a bit and waking our thought life. The priest lights the incense by placing it on a piece of

lighted charcoal. Turning to the altar, the gentle swing of the censer first addresses the juice and the bread, enfolding them in the sacred forces that live within the smoke. Briefly, then, the censer is handed back to the server and the priest raises his/her hands in the same physical gesture the smoke is making by rising upward. The gesture of raised hands represents our own inner gesture, our wish, our hope, our conscious effort to raise up our lives. The second censuring, after the lifting of the hands, follows the first so closely they might at first appear as one.

The third censuring, carried by the singing voices of the whole community, encompasses the whole altar. It moves across the front, down each side and across the back in front of the flowers and candles. The movement of the incense is visible in the candle light. In the uprising of the smoke, we carry our own efforts upward, hardly realizing the magnitude of what we are seeking.

If we *keep* coming to the service, we realize that while we at first work to lift up our own life, to enrich and enlighten it, the work which the service asks of us is ever so much larger than each of our selves – larger than the self of our own community of Christians. We then understand the gesture of the raised arms not so much as a reaching, but as a gesture of being willing to receive, to actively follow the guidance we find in this hour. Our task is broadened beyond ourselves and our community to the work of Christ for the whole earth, His living Being.

Margaret Shipman,
Los Angeles

SATURDAY MORNING CHURCH

You may remember the article in the last newsletter about the couple who had asked themselves: What would we have wanted to have done if we died tomorrow? and then decided it was attending the Act of Consecration of Man on a regular basis. Two years later Paul King became ill with cancer. He has died on February 4, 2002. At his funeral -which was attended by children and teachers of the school where

Ruth-Mary, his wife, was a music teacher and Paul kept the instruments in good working order - the following words by Rudolf Steiner were given to everyone, which I would like to share with you.

We know what moved you in spirit;
We are feeling what warmed your heart;
We are striving for what impelled your will.

The impulse of your spirit,
The warmth of your heart,
The urgency of your will
Stand before our souls.

And remembrance takes shape before us;
of how you have thought with us
what we deemed the worthiest thought content;
of how you felt with us
what we deemed the purest love of our hearts;
of how you strove with us
for what we deemed mankind's truest aims.

And remembrance is joined by vision of spirit;
how you are received
by the beings of light-filled heights
to work actively in spirit;
to behold the results of your deeds;
to speak the language of eternal life.

Weave in your active life in spirit,
behold the results of your deeds,
let penetrate into the language of eternal life
the radiance
which can penetrate our hearts,
and which rays back to you
so that in future times
we can live a spirit life
united with you.

From the book: *The Up-Rising in Dying*, Adonis Press, Ghent, NY . These verses have been taken from words spoken at the funeral of Georga Wiese, and not (as erroneously mentioned in this book) at Sophie Stinde's service

Franziska Hesse,
Sacrament

James Langbecker

March 14, 1934 – July 26, 2002



From ancient times until today, lighthouses have warned seafarers of dangerous and rocky coasts. Usually, they stand as lonely sentinels on rocky promontories with deep and secure foundations, upright, and burning fiercely up above. Their light is a solace, a comfort, and an orientation to those at sea. They are able to withstand the battering of storms and keep their light burning with single-minded devotion.

James Langbecker was born in Canada on March 14, 1934 — a dark time in human history. He was the third oldest in the large family of an American Lutheran minister who moved the family back to Oregon when James was two. His childhood during the Depression was marked by frequent moves. Despite that, he did well in school and was given a scholarship to study architecture at the University of Idaho through Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, which included ship time summers. Additionally he needed to work to supplement his stipend, and ultimately exhausted himself after two years, giving up his commission and his studies. He became a salesman in Montana and married Ruby.

Just before he was to be drafted into the Army, he joined the Air Force and again due to high test scores was sent to Cornell University for intensive

language school where he studied Czech. While there he met a German student who told him of Anthroposophy. He went to the Cornell Library and found three of the basic books of Rudolf Steiner and “devoured” them. Now he wanted only to go to Germany, learn German and study Anthroposophy.

He was sent to Germany where among other things, he taught himself to fly and apparently with friends, built an airplane. He studied German assiduously. When he was 22 and 23 years of age, two boys were born to them, who were eventually baptized in The Christian Community in Munich. Although he did not immediately find a relationship to the Act of Consecration of Man, he was convinced that if one could work in the religious sphere, it would have to be in a Movement that was informed by anthroposophical ideas.

He returned to the U.S. and was stationed in Colorado. After leaving the Air Force, he became involved with and later owned two health food stores in Colorado Springs, which developed into a business that spanned three states. He took up architecture again and got a job as a building supervisor in Los Alamos, New Mexico. He told the interviewer that although he didn’t have any experience, “I will learn so fast, that you will never know, what I didn’t know.” He was given the job and completed it successfully. After eight years his marriage came to an end.

By his early thirties he had shown what would be two strong motifs: his forward-looking brilliance of intellect, and his competence in earthly and material realms. He married his second wife Jean whom he introduced to Anthroposophy and who encouraged him to pursue his interest in both Anthroposophy and The Christian Community. They went to Germany together. He studied at the Priest Seminary and was ordained in Munich, June 26, 1966, at the age of 32, two days after the birthday of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was born at the solstice, the time when the light is brightest and the shadows most intense. John the Baptist was intimately connected with the prophet Elijah, someone who could call down fire from the heavens, who himself ascended

at his death in a fiery chariot. After his beheading, the Baptist, who prepared the people for Christ's coming, inspired another John, John the Evangelist who accompanied Christ on the cross and wrote his gospel, with its great themes of the Word, Light, Life, and Love. James formed a strong spiritual connection to John's Gospel. Translating and retranslating, he worked and recast renderings of John's Gospel in English. One could say that John inspired his priesthood. James' brilliance now turned solidly toward the spirit, toward the future.

After his ordination, he was sent to Shalesbrook, a new seminary in Forest Row in southern England and worked there for almost five years. He then returned to the U.S., to Colorado in June 1971 where he began a project at Woodland Valley Ranch in Woodland Park above Colorado Springs. This was to be a retreat and conference center for The Christian Community with property lots for a kind of living community. It was a dream inspired by the future, and something of the nature of the prophet shone through as James, the lone voice, shedding brilliant earthly and spiritual light, inspired a circle who supported this project. But he worked outside of the scope of what The Christian Community as a region could be fiscally responsible for, and so he worked alone. Unfortunately larger market forces and a real estate downturn conspired to make this dream ultimately unattainable.

His second wife Jean died following an operation of complications connected with her diabetes. He married Ann Mahle and eventually was father to three girls.

He was busy developing the 55 acre project when in 1983 he was urgently called to the Los Angeles community. He is remembered both in Los Angeles and in Colorado for his inspiring and brilliant lectures on spiritual matters, his discerning listening capacity as a pastor, and the quality of his celebration of the Act of Consecration of Man. The Los Angeles community grew solidly under his leadership.

But he was still trying to manage the Woodland Valley Ranch development from a distance, and by age 54 he began to suffer from chronic fatigue syn-

drome. The seriousness of his condition was not adequately acknowledged by the leadership, and in 1989 he left the Los Angeles community under somewhat unclear financial circumstances. He moved his family to Santa Rosa, and because he was both heavily encumbered financially, and no longer involved in congregational work, he was furloughed by The Christian Community leadership.

Continuing to try to support himself through real estate, he traded Woodland Valley Ranch for the Hartsook Inn in Northern California in 1991. This was a particularly demanding time for James as well as very a difficult time for the family: property in disrepair, storm damage, unscrupulous managers, etc. Ultimately, through various complications, bankruptcy filings, and failed new buyers, James was forced to take over ownership again and finally concluded a sale that resulted in the repayment of all the monies loaned to him, with interest.

This then cleared the way for him to be reinstated within the priest circle, but now as a retired priest. During the last 6 years he held an inspiring study group on St. John's Gospel in Santa Rosa. He worked during the past three years celebrating and preaching in both Santa Rosa and San Francisco. One of his final projects on behalf of The Christian Community was the production of the Introductory Brochure, a reach toward the future on another level.

He began to feel ill in January of this year. A chronic stomach problem was variously and inconclusively diagnosed. What was thought to be gall bladder related was only finally conclusively diagnosed as pancreatic cancer in early June. With inner certainty and clear resolve, James turned towards his approaching death. In an extraordinary way he opened himself to the wider community and what had been so difficult in life, the social weaving, was increasingly achieved and revealed.

The struggle of his final illness was at the same time a healing. Many old relationships were repaired. His daughters grew close in caring for him. His oldest son visited. Colleagues called and wrote. He received the Last Anointing on July 14 in the presence of the congregation. Twelve days later, after what was described as a true labor, involving a final fe-

ver, the work of a highly activated self, he succeeded in crossing the threshold consciously, already aware of who awaited him beyond. He died on Friday, July 26, 2002, on the next to last day of St. Johnstide, the season in which he was ordained.

The festival seasons after Easter, Whitsun, St. Johnstide, Michaelmas, all represent mankind's future stages. They represent our strivings toward the "not yet". The arc of James Langbecker's life, particularly as a priest, beginning and ending in St. Johnstide, shows perhaps how those individuals who are inspired by something from the future often stand alone, perhaps not fully successful in their attempts.

The next epoch for humanity will be the age of true brotherly love, true community. James' devotion to spiritual work was intense. His life certainly foreshadowed on many levels the building of true community. He was a fiercely devoted family man. His love of language, of the Word informed all his work. His devotion to the study of Anthroposophy was a source of strength and of spiritual food to others. He was a brilliant lecturer and the quality and loftiness of his thinking inspired many. He was a remarkably intuitive shepherd to those who knew him as pastor. His power of listening was a beacon for many destinies seeking orientation. He would always let people arrive at the necessary perception without telling them. He was devoted to creating spaces for community work. He had hoped to create a larger regional conference home for The Christian Community, a chapel to house worship, surrounded by homes for a living community. He cared for things of the earth, so that they could be elevated through spiritual purposes.

Although his life's work was something that could not fully bear fruit in the present, that was partially due to the fact that we are all simply not there yet. We are yet in the age of gaining awareness of ourselves and into others. Like a lighthouse, James Langbecker's spiritual light cast its brilliance into the darkness of our lives and times. But like a lighthouse his light did not necessarily illuminate the lighthouse itself. Through the example of his life we can notice that our greatest strengths can also be our weaknesses. And that these interplay with the

strengths and weaknesses of others to form the community of the present. But nevertheless that is where Christ can work even now.

Through his spiritual and his work on John's gospel, James, like John the Baptist, points like a beacon to the Christ. And we can be inspired with gratitude for where James tried to lead us, even though the time was not yet ripe. For even shadows have their origin in great lights. And in this case, James Langbecker's light points to the light of Christ's love, a light that beckons to us from the future.

Sanford Miller and Cynthia Hides
Sacramento and Los Angeles

JAMES LANGBECKER **'The Land' Years 1972-1984**

They *were* the very best of times. They were the beginnings of journeys in the spirit. They were inroads to the Christ mysteries. They were years of pivotal destiny.

It is not my intention to write a biography of dates and events but of a man who gave me a purpose and pause to think about the purpose.

My memory first recalls James captivating new found friends with his legendary metaphors on the eastern slope of the Sandia Mountains in New Mexico. He celebrated The Act of Consecration of Man in the enchanting home of the Emmetts'. The dignity and power of it has remained with me ever since that introduction to esoteric Christianity.

August 1972 marked the beginning of annual summer gatherings at Woodland Valley Ranch, also known as The Land. The Land was located fifteen miles west of Colorado Springs at 8,500 feet in cedar, aspen en lodgepole pine forest with a stream at the back end of the property. Any time of the year it was a respite from the city and a joy as well as a comfort to be there.

There were friends who cleared trees, stripped bark, built fences, an outhouse, two tiny homes and finally the lovely chapel and community building.

There were those that cooked and gardened, cleaned and raked. Others told stories to children and organized hikes and cross country skiing. There were campfires, singing, dancing, eurythmy, sculpture, painting and just dreaming. I do not wish to diminish the arduous work of these men, women and children by omitting their names or gifts to the effort. If I never thanked them then I do so now and with all my heart. I know James does too.

Francis and Elizabeth Edmunds, Kurt Falk, Ann Stockton, Willi Sucher, LFC Mees, Rene and Merlyn Querido, Hagen Biesantz, Maulsby Kimball, Ilse Baravalle Kimball, Georgio Spadaro, Adam Bittleston, Alicia Tree Santacroce, Van James! Most of these remarkable people came in the summer for three incredible weeks and offered lovingly what they had cultivated in their lives out of the spirit and the Christ. The rest of us received what they brought and hopefully have continued to give it back to the world.

Friends came from Europe and all of North America. Some pitched tents, even tipis, others bunked in with friends or stayed in local motels. Some stayed. Some left, but the connections were woven forever though most of the presenters are on the other side of the threshold now.

James the rancher, James the philosopher, the etymologist, the architect, the 'boss', the father, the husband and most of all the priest. He was at once gracious, charming and equally demanding and unrelenting. He gave his best and expected the same from you. Some things were better left to others and he did blunder in his reluctance to defer tasks but his will and focus were extraordinary, really extraordinary.

The lives of friends who experienced James have been altered and enriched. He was never afraid to tell a friend the truth though this could be met with shock or rejection. Upon reflection years later one realizes the wisdom of his counsel.

Most of the people I met in those years have embraced the Christ and dedicated their lives to the work of Rudolf Steiner. It was an honor to have been a part of it.

Thank you James.

During the middle of the Land Years James gave me this verse written out in his own hand. I believe he wrote it himself yet I never asked. He *gave* it to me. It opened the door to an understanding of destiny without which I would have been sorely disabled and unable to face life with courage. I, in turn, gave it back to him in these last years when he was facing a hurdle which he seemed to transform.

I choose what is
Not what is not
Just as I accept what was
And do not long for what was not
Then I can hopefully expect what will be
And not fear what will never be.

Last summer James spoke of his plans for the future. He asked us if we would join him in an effort to start a retreat center for the study of the John Gospel and similar themes.

Perhaps the next time. He has laid the intention in us and the earth.

Caron Calhoun Scanlan,
also for Dennis Scanlan
Denver, Colorado

OPENING OF 901 IN TORONTO

The word 'miracle' was heard repeatedly on the Palm Sunday weekend of March 23/24, 2002. It was the opening of the new church building of The Christian Community in Toronto. Saturday was the 'grand opening' for the larger world which included guests and politicians. Sunday was reserved for the ritual consecration of the space and first celebration of the Act of Consecration. Both days were revealing and rewarding in their own way.

It was a miracle that people and things came together as they did and when they did. That a small community could arrive at such a wonderful destination in what was largely a peaceful and joyful journey was indeed a miracle. Of course, numerous

challenges were met and other difficulties loomed but these faded into details in the face of being able to finally stand inside what was to become a sacred place.

On Palm Sunday, the chapel was consecrated. The entire space shone with radiance and goodwill as many people had to stand along the walls to witness the Lenker, Oliver Steinrueck, consecrate and celebrate the first Act of Consecration. In his sermon, the Lenker spoke of needing to ‘give up’ the space that we so laboured over and felt such attachment towards. It was no longer our ‘own’ but a dwelling of the spirit, for the spirit. At the same time, one could sense that the space was also being ‘returned’ to us to share and be witness to what lived within.

The occasion was one when many people came together for the first time in a very long time and old acquaintances were rekindled and new ones ignited. For one older couple it was an opportunity to relive an earlier life experience when they attended service every day during Holy Week. How happy they were to be able to do this in a newly consecrated space and how meaningful to the community to witness such a devotion to the Act of Consecration.

Through three consecutive weekends, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday and through to the Confirmation, our new church was filled and even overflowing with members, friends and guests. The gracious community room and foyer proved to be an ideal setting for wonderful social meeting, eating or just sitting to enjoy the sights and sounds. And what wonderful sounds - both spoken and musical - met our ears for the first time. The acoustic design and treatments had performed well, allowing the sound to speak for itself.

What an incredible blessing to have the building as a centre for community life. So many possibilities opened up for future enjoyment and use of the space. How fortunate we are to have a balance of the sacred and the social in close harmony, the one enlivening the other in a healthy way. We all look forward to a full life of inspiring spiritual activities, learning events and social gatherings.

Robert Massoud, *Toronto*



OUR NEW CHURCH

No one was more surprised at the prospect of the new church building than our own community. After decades of experiencing the sacraments in our Avenue Road location, we had come to associate the flat-ceiling, dark room with the intensity of the experience. What a difference to see the angled walls of the new church, the high, curving windows and the uplifting, multi-faceted ceiling above. Some people wondered if The Act of Consecration of Man could unfold its “atmosphere” in a large, light, soaring space.

Architecture raises for our consciousness the question of “appropriate space.” What is actually the space not only for the congregation to feel comfortable and inspired, but what kind of space would receive and echo back the presence that our service creates? It is amazing how The Act of Consecration can squeeze itself into a small room; but what sort of space would it create for itself, if it were free to mould walls and ceiling? It would take a spiritual scientist to answer that question, but the experience in our new chapel suggests The Act of Consecration of Man has the potential presence for greatness—filling the heights and depths and widths of space. We dare not think ourselves too small, especially not on account of the present small number of our members. Architecture can reveal something of the spiritual significance of our Movement for Religious Renewal.

At the time that Hinrich Wit designed our church, we considered building only half the building, postponing completion until further fund-raising could be done. This plan, while seeming to be economically sensible, was too costly in the long run; it would have cost far more to add to the building at a later time. Hence, we built the whole structure and infrastructure, and we will be fund-raising to pay off the debt for many years. We have also left the finishing (basically the floors and the Community Room ceiling) for future projects. But that has given us a “whole” building, an organism for community life.

The layout of the various rooms is inspired. The foyer is generous, bright and open to all sorts of social encounters. There are huge glass double doorways to the north, which open to the busy road and “the public.” To the south the same glass double doors, flanked by walls of windows, open to an inviting terrace, lawn and forest. The Community Room with stage opens across from the chapel. One could almost imagine the one striving to “hear” or pick up impulses from the other, as in ancient times the mystery centres were a source for enlivening the cultural and artistic development. The kitchen (helped out by a serving hall and pass-through into the Community Room), library and office round out the wing by the Community Room. Next to the chapel is of course the vestry, and across from the vestry is a small, private consultation room. The cloakroom and washrooms are in an alcove off the foyer. One other special room is the vigil room, where we are able to hold a three-day vigil for those who have died, until the time for the funeral. This is a small chapel-like space, which we also use for weekday services.

The storage and mechanical rooms support the flexible uses of our spaces (all the supplies for the children’s programs, the Advent Fair, play props, etc.). The storage space is limited, and thus continually reminds us to consider what is really useful and not to accumulate “stuff.” It is a relief to have all the rooms (except storage) on one level, no more challenging stairs! And the source of heat for winter is comfortably hidden in the floor, so there is no prob-

lem of drafts or noisy fans. There is direct access (with lockable doors) from the church into both flats of the original house.

I could end by saying the church is everything a community could want. While I think this is true, I would also have to think that the “community” is much more than we may realise! We were helped in so many ways, with the choice of property, the architectural design, the contractors and all the financing that came as a response to the decades of the work of The Christian Community here in Toronto and elsewhere! The help from the past (and the help of those on the other side of the threshold) was tangible. And the interest and joy of many individuals and congregations in other parts of the world was also a great support as we struggled with this undertaking. And last—but not least—there is some pressure or pull from the future, a call “to get going and do something” that will give orientation and hope and respite from what lies ahead.

We have been contemplating whether our church building could or should have a name. We have even considered giving each space a name (e.g., “the Lazarus Room” for the vigil room, “the Book Nook” for the bookstore area off the foyer, which did not even get mentioned above!). There is the added complication that the feeling for the word “chapel” means different things to different cultural backgrounds. If we are able to agree on a name (or names), it/they will have to express as much as the building itself does. We would want a name to express our gratitude to those who have made this church possible, as well as our hopes and ideals for bringing Christ’s life and work into our human and earthly vessels. Does this sound impossible? Perhaps, but this church has been teaching us all to re-think the judgement of what is possible. Ben Black, who worked on the church as a carpenter and is now a student at the seminary in Stuttgart, articulated a mystery that has become for many of us a motto: “I knew I was working on the church. What I didn’t know is, the church was working on me!”

Susan Locey
Toronto



ENVIRONS OF 901 IN TORONTO

If you are familiar with the Toronto area you would know that ‘God is not making any more land’. This is precisely how the Board of the Toronto congregation was feeling as it met over many sessions to size up the situation in 1997 at the existing church location. And even 10 years before that, during periods of alternating hope and/or dread, the board would ponder the options. The church was located on a busy thoroughfare in midtown in a decidedly unsuitable space in an ‘invisible’ building. The structure did not express anything of our movement or community and in almost 35 years at that location only a handful of passersby stopped to ask about what happened within its walls.

Somehow we knew the time for decision and action was nearing. Everyone felt the pressure as available (let alone suitable and beautiful) land was becoming ever scarcer north of the city where the Toronto Waldorf School was located. Beginning in the 1980s the school became the gravitational centre of the 5-mile radius where the majority of local area members now live.

Like so many things that seem to arise by inspiration, we could not have chosen a more auspicious time as the ‘perfect’ site became available. It would have been so unlikely at any other time but at that precise point. The man who sold us the property was definitely in no mood or position to have to sell except at the time when we knocked on his door on the chance and hope that maybe he

wanted to sell. It turned out that he could be ‘talked’ into it and it took the better part of 2 years to finally close the deal.

The site is truly beautiful, nestled between two ravines formed by the fork of the West Don river. It shares the little ‘island’ with one other smaller property and a small parcel of brushland owned by the farming family that originally owned a huge tract, on part of which the school and Hesperus (a fellowship community) sit. It is interesting to note that all three anthroposophic institutions share a common land heritage. The land is on the barest tip of the Oak Ridges Moraine, a highly significant water aquifer that supplies the greater Toronto area with its water. Currently, the moraine is at the center of an enormous battle between developers and environmentalists. It is also important to note that the land is situated on a significant geological point where the substructure changes from granite to limestone.

We are neighbours with the Toronto Waldorf School and Hesperus. Barely a few hundred feet separate us yet we are invisible to them. We border on the opposite sides of a very wide and heavily wooded ravine. So close yet so far. The site housed a one-room schoolhouse dating back to 1860 which was decommissioned in 1960 and auctioned by the town. It was purchased by a former student who tore down the school and built a family home using some of the virgin timber. Today you can see examples of 24-inch wide and 2-inch thick rough pine cladding the downstairs rooms. The house is now the manse capable of housing two families and the church adjoins on the remaining portion of the one-acre site.

The perimeter is heavily wooded with enormous maples which dwarf the church structure, large as it is. Unfortunately many trees have reached their maturity or been damaged by a road enlargement 10 years earlier and ever increasing traffic.

Yet, despite the growth and development around us, one still gets the sense of a very special space where it is still possible to commune with an element of nature that is rare in a urban/suburban environment. We hope the closeness to nature which

was all too alien in the former location will help to bring us closer to the service and enliven our experience of community. Fertile ground on which to re-found our community for the century ahead.

Robert Massoud,
Toronto

‘South American Ordinations’ in Stuttgart, Germany

More than a year ago, in Buenos Aires and Lima, we began to make plans to attend this year’s February ordinations in Stuttgart, Germany. This was because one of the seventeen candidates was Telma Dave, a forty-eight year old Argentinean woman who for two years had been our community helper in Buenos Aires and therefore very well known (and loved) among us. And another candidate was Veronica Zamalloa, a twenty-eight year old woman from Peru, the first from this country to be ordained.

Eventually we traveled with 12 persons from Argentina, 3 from Peru and one from Colombia. The latest economical problems in our countries (not to speak of other problems ...) had brought our number back to less than half of those who originally had wanted to go – and who would have been able to do so, even half a year earlier. Taking advantage of the fact that when flying from South America to Germany a stop-over in Madrid does not cost more, first from February 15 through 18 we had a conference in Madrid around the themes ‘To Become a Priest’ and ‘The Sacrament of Ordination’. Our budding congregation in Madrid, which is an affiliated congregation of both Lima and Buenos Aires, had prepared everything beautifully. Not only that, but the poor brothers from South America were lodged with members and friends, had their meals paid for, and so on. It became an intensive, lively conference (at which also, on Sunday, a girl from the Basque country was baptized): not only with introductions and conversations on the theme, led by Paul (Pablo) Corman and myself, but also with seeing and doing

exercises in the realm of modern art. The last day, Monday, we spent in the magnificent Museum of Modern Art, ‘Reina Sofia’, where we even had a room at our disposal, so that we could discuss in peace and quiet what we had seen, before once more going to look at things.

On Tuesday, February 19th, we flew on to Stuttgart. And here the Sillenbuch congregation opened its doors to our group, which had grown by some South Americans living in Germany and by five Spaniards. This Stuttgart-Sillenbuch congregation is able to take on quite a bit: at the same time a group of Romanians had come to support the first Romanian, also a woman, to be ordained, thus creating a double encounter of people from Sillenbuch, of Romanians and Hispanics. In Sillenbuch we continued to work on our theme, at the same time thoroughly studying the words of the sacrament of Ordination themselves, in which the various parts of The Act of Consecration of Man are embedded. We intended and hoped that everyone would be able to follow everything during the ordination, even when held in German. And this worked beautifully for all.

At the same time in Sillenbuch we practiced our listening perception, led by Brigitte Beidek who belongs to this congregation, and who for many years has taught music at the Stuttgart priest seminary. She used the so-called ‘Bleffert instruments’, directly giving each participant one of those metal instruments forged by Manfred Bleffert in his or her hands, instruments which are pre-eminently suitable to develop listening. Our agile Hispanics were really delightful students for Mrs Beidek, she said.

After the ordinations held February 22 through 24, I was lucky to be able to stay a few more days in Stuttgart, to attend the first services, held by Telma and Veronica and by others. The ordination is something which ‘happens to one’, but first celebrations enable us to perceive how, now for the first time, the power of the sacrament works through this specific human being. And in an intimate way this is at least such a great feast as the ordination itself.

The Argentineans are eagerly looking forward to August, when Telma will be coming to Buenos

Aires, after having worked for some months in Vienna. Veronica will for a longer period be working in Erlangen, Southern Germany.

Martin de Gans,
Buenos Aires

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ORIENTATION ON THE VOCATION OF THE PRIEST

November 15-17, 2002
15 Margetts Rd, Spring Valley, NY

An open invitation to all who are interested in deepening their relationship to the aims and work of The Christian Community, and those who would like to learn about the vocation of the priest as it has found expression, in both men and women, since the founding of the Movement for Religious Renewal in 1922.

Accommodations will (we hope) be with members and friends of the Spring Valley congregation. Arrival Thursday evening, Nov. 14th. We begin Friday morning at 8:30 a.m. and end on Sunday at 1:00 p.m. Bring a New Testament and Eurythmy shoes. Cost: \$75.00.

Ask for a folder: Rev. Erk Ludwig, 309 W. 74th Street, New York, NY 10023, Phone (212) 877-3577, or Rev. Gisela Wielki, 2023 W. Pensacola Ave, Chicago, IL 60618, Phone (773) 472-7041.

ALL-AMERICAN CONFERENCE 2003

It will be the third conference of its kind. The first one took place at Kimberton, PA, in 1995, the second in Lima, Peru, in 1999. They were highly memorable events, occasions for members and friends of The Christian Community from North and South America to meet and to experience the unifying power of the sacramental stream.

We are very much looking forward to the next English-Spanish conference to be held July 25 – August 1, 2003, in the San Francisco Bay Area. The theme will be “The Way West : Through the Senses to the Spirit”. Our friends in de Bay Area have begun preparations with great enthusiasm. More detailed information will be forthcoming soon.

If you have further questions, please contact Rev. Erk Ludwig, Phone (212) 877-3577; E-mail: erk Ludwig@hotmail.com.

Please send letters and literary contributions to Arie Boogert, 20 Lake Street, Arlington, MA 02474-8526, Phone/Fax (781) 646-4644 (E-mail: arieboogert@hotmail.com). Due date for the next issue is November 15, 2002.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN NORTH AMERICA, Summer 2002

The Seminary Initiative

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Email: giselawielki@hotmail.com

PRIESTS

Richard Dancey has moved from Devon in the Philadelphia region to **Chicago**, while Daniel Hafner and Nadine Hafner have moved from Chicago to **Devon** near **Philadelphia**, to join Franziska Steinrueck.

Michael Brewer, ordained this year, has joined Peter Skaller in the **Taconic-Berkshire Region**.

Groups affiliated with Congregations have been joined by:

Southern Maine USA Contact Tade and Nancy Mahoney (207) 865-4482 (Or contact Boston)

On the Web:
www.thechristiancommunity.org