

The Christian Community

North American Newsletter

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THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

by Susan Locey

Talk given on October 27, 2006 at the Trustee Delegates' Conference in Toronto

When we speak or think about The Christian Community, there are always both exoteric and esoteric realities. The Christian Community exists in the spiritual world and also on the earth. The transforming of earthly substances that takes place through, for instance, the sacraments, takes place through the interweaving or coinciding of spiritual impulses with what the earth and mankind offer.

When the focus of the transformation seems so small, as in a little host of bread, we nevertheless could picture that it is connected to something much greater in the spiritual. These opportunities for coinciding, and the congregations that make this interweaving possible, could be imagined as upside-down "spiritual icebergs" where only the tip is visible, but is connected to a much greater "super-merged" reality.

We are often frustrated by the earthly reality of The Christian Community. We want there to be more in this world; we want to be part of a growth process. But the growth process that works in our movement is primarily an etheric reality, whose growth cannot be imagined by projecting a chart of growth from what we can see. The plant kingdom offers us very different images – and proof! – of the growth guided by etheric forces. What we see constantly undergoes leaps of metamorphosis, changes of form. If we were only to look at the root of a plant, we would have no idea of what the plant is growing towards becoming. Plants go through a rhythmic growing process of contraction and expansion, in and out, expanding in blossoming, then drawing together to form seeds. When we wrestle with the realities of our congregations, we must be careful how we judge: we may be seeing a "seed stage." However small the seeds may be, they are justified as a significant stage in the development of the plant. The seed stage is an opportunity to contain strength, to become inwardly powerful, to carry the potential of new growth across the long winter.



When congregations are founded, they have often been carried with the vitality – and one-sidedness – of pioneer souls. If we could look with the eyes of angels, we would recognise that souls incarnate and come together in constellations, like stars that cross the sky together. The pioneers are the founders; a new impulse needs a powerful, generous, dedicated gesture. The next generation may feel unworthy of the pioneers, yet these are souls who have recognised something that resonates with an experience they had before birth. Theirs is a task to do a different kind of forming. Daniel Berrigan once wrote: “There are situations when you can’t ask about success, because that question will get you down. If you make succeeding your primary concern, you have already capitulated to the system.” Plants show a different form of “success”-- development in the etheric realm.

The Christian Community is building something for generations to come; in North America it is something different from in central Europe. Rudolf Steiner spoke of the significance of North America for Europe. From the ninth to the twelfth centuries, initiates were sent from Scandinavia to North America to observe what happens to the human constitution when affected by the forces here. The magnetic centre of the earth is located here, in Canada. These forces come up from below the ground. Their effect is not only on the physical and etheric bodies, but on the whole being, on all that the adversary can influence in the human being. These initiates were to study the influence of the double on the human being, on illness and mental illness: all this was much clearer here. Thus we are working against great resistance, against very great powers. The hierarchies can see what we are working against, and the little we are able to accomplish is a great effort that “yields” relatively little in the visible due to the powerful hindering of the adversaries.

When we become frustrated, we become confused. This is one of the successes of the adversary in modern times-- to stir up confusion and doubt. Moments of peace and clarity work against this. Dorothy Soelle, a modern theologian, describes liturgy as “a remembering that promises a future.” The healing medicine we receive from the altar is that in the *present*, in the clarity and creating of peace of the sacramental deed, we have the *future*.

What we have in The Christian Community is amazingly challenging for modern souls. We may want to find ways to make it easier for people, but that may not be possible. Thoughts themselves are beings. These beings cannot live and develop in our inner life if we strip them of parts of their being. Taken with profound respect, reverence even when we do not fully understand them, they can live in us; they are part of the future into which we are going: “Thus thinks in us...” This gives to our souls an existence after death that will bring them into a future connection with those thought-beings. The adversary works to confuse us with dead or demonic thoughts about what we really are as human beings. So our culture fills us with suggestions that we are what we eat, what we wear, what our family tree is, our race, and our capacity for pleasure.

The Christian Community offers us a way to carry the question: “What is a human being? Especially, what am I?” The question is a living

experience-- no answers, but a living question, carried by: "Christ in you." We may ask, where in me? What does this mean? It is wonderful to have no answer, for answers are judgments. The great question inspired by the words "Christ in me" lives without a verb: is? Was? Will be? May be? It is difficult to say, "I am a Christian" or even to say, "I am striving to become a Christian." But it is even more difficult to think it. What does that mean? What did it mean? How does it continue to grow? For us now, morality is known only in the moment, not in what has been or in the inspired commandments. That was all preparation for the present moment of a moral deed.

We form part of an organism, a living being. We are in the situation of the builders of the great cathedrals of the Middle Ages, who worked devotedly but would likely never see the finished cathedral, never see how their part fit into the whole. We are the stonemasons who are building The Christian Community, which is coming towards us out of the future. It is not all here yet; it grows like a great plant, in stages, and we are in the midst of it, selected by our own destiny to be part of this, to be builders. We do this in give and take with the beings of the spiritual world, who give to us because we give them our willingness to receive. ♦

Susan Locey is a priest working in the congregation in Toronto.



THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

Gisela Wielki

Burley Channer from Ann Arbor MI, has a connection to the Philippines. In the fall of 2002, he told Dale Diaz, a thirty-five-year-old Filipino, who was on business in the Chicago area, to contact me. Dale and I almost missed each other; it all happened within a few hours, before his further travels took him to New York. He had become acquainted with Anthroposophy in his early twenties through Nicanor Perlas, who has put his life in the service of Rudolf Steiner's ideas for the sake of societal change in his country and far beyond, through whom many Filipinos learned about Rudolf Steiner. He had heard about The Christian Community and wanted to know more. Dale had never experienced the service, so I suggested that he attend the Act of Consecration while in New York. He did so the following Sunday and that is where it all began.

Dale called to confirm that he would like me to make a stop in the Philippines on my trip east to Japan and Australia in February 2003 and to give a couple of lectures and to talk with people there who might be interested in The Christian Community.

So one afternoon in someone's garden in Quezon City, part of

Metro Manila, a small group of about ten or twelve people met. From a distance a rooster could be heard, and no matter where you are in the Philippines, from early in the morning till evening the wake-up call of the rooster can always be heard. This group of individuals committed themselves to exploring the possibility of The Christian Community coming to the Philippines. They decided to meet every Sunday for a short lay service, to read the Gospel, to study the text, to hear the Creed and to speak the Lord's Prayer together. Only a few had ever actually experienced the Act of Consecration on a visit elsewhere.

A year later Rev. Julian Sleight from South Africa was invited to give some lectures. The Sunday gatherings continued regularly. In 2004 a visit by a member of the Circle of Seven and Rev. Hartmut Borries from Australia was arranged. It was then that the leadership of The Christian Community made the decision to begin celebrating the Act of Consecration of Man in the Philippines. As a result, three priests (Australia, Europe, USA) are now taking turns, each visiting once in the course of the year.

The first visit was during the Easter season 2005 and included the Confirmation of three children. I have just returned from my third visit.

The Philippines is one of the poorest countries in the world. Some of our friends are well off; some belong to the almost non-existing middle class. Their interest and love for Anthroposophy and The Christian Community lends financial support to all the many different endeavors. Just recently a member donated his house in Makati, part of Metro Manila, to the Anthroposophical Society for the work of ISIP, Institute for Steiner's Ideas in Practice. When Michaela Gloeckler MD, from Dornach comes to teach about anthroposophical medicine, some forty doctors attend. The talks I gave were held at ISIP and at every event there were new faces. This was also true for the Act of Consecration and the religious story time for the children before their service. During my two weeks this past January, twelve children attended the Sunday service, with younger siblings waiting in the wings. The Act of Consecration was attended on the two Saturdays and Sundays by between eighteen to thirty people, some very young. Women were strongly represented. The service takes place in the house of someone who has made her former small movement studio available for this. A number of people always ask for Consultations during the week.

People come great distances in a country where it is always hot and humid. Manila is the second most polluted city in the world. Some friends come of course in cars, but many take the colorful, often self-built and self-maintained Jeepneys, small twelve-seat buses, that often carry more than two dozen. Some come by tricycle taxis and many just walk long distances.

Everywhere in the landscape the coconut palm looks like the "star on the stick where it stands" (Oberufer Shepherds Play); on top of tall, regal trunks, the leaves radiate out like stars, like suns. The Filipinos are a friendly people, a people of the heart. One hears next to no complaining about the hardships or adversities of life. And as in the fairytale of the Bremen Town Musicians, the rooster continually calls

to wakefulness. In the popular cockfights, the one who takes the bets, sometimes hundreds in one cockfight, remembers them all in his head, and he is called Kristo. It is a darker image for this otherwise so sunny and religious people.

In the cities the language is English, the language of the “educated”; but when it comes to speaking from the heart, everyone, including the helpers, maids and the people in the country speak Tagalog or one of the many dialects.

In a country as Catholic as the Philippines and with family ties as tight as they are, it is a challenge to give birth to and to safeguard one’s own individuality. It is difficult to rise above living a life of deception, because church control, connected with the government, does not allow divorce; nor can one easily take responsibility for oneself. It is difficult to dare to ask questions and find answers outside of the circles of authority.

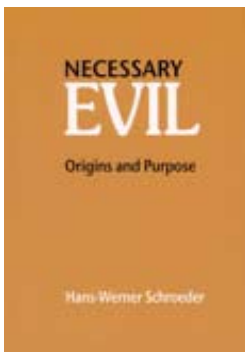
All Filipino children know from stories and picture books about *bavanihan*. It is an old custom from a time when houses in the villages stood on bamboo stilts; whenever someone in the village moved, everyone gathered to pick up the house by its stilts to carry it to the new. The world would be a better place if this old custom could become an exemplary picture for working together, not just as a family, a village, a tribe, or a people, but as a picture for humanity as a whole.

One can only hope that this fledgling initiative of The Christian Community will grow; that in time two or three Filipinos will step forward to train for priesthood. For whoever does so, it will be a great challenge, with their own hardships and little money, under true pioneering conditions. ♦

Gisela Wielki is a priest, residing in Chicago, and one of the leaders of the Chicago Seminary.

BOOK REVIEW

NECESSARY EVIL: ORIGINS AND PURPOSE, by Hans-Werner Schroeder. Floris Books. 2005. Translated by James Hindes. PP. 204. \$40. Reviewed by Sergeant Bettina Proctor



In 2003 Vice-President Dick Cheney said in response to questions about his administration’s dealings with North Korea: “We do not negotiate with evil, we defeat it.” This approach is already an improvement over a general trend towards relativism in a culture loath to identify evil and to call a spade a spade; however this quote highlights the lack of understanding of evil and of its purpose and nature in the twenty-first century. Luckily Hans-Werner Schroeder’s book, *Necessary Evil*, provides a most welcome and necessary resource

for those of us who would take Cheney's advice to heart, including those of us struggling with this very real phenomenon of the reality of evil in our own lives. Who has not seen something on the news these days that can be called evil?

Schroeder's book begins by explaining the duality of evil, an important fundamental distinction which helps us to understand how evil manifests in its attempts to sway humanity off the true path toward one extreme or another; toward either the cold, sclerotic, Ahrimanic extreme or the illusory, escapist, Luciferic one. The good is a middle course between the extremes. Of further importance is the origin of evil, as Beings who were once close to God stayed behind and sacrificed their development for the sake of our evolution, an evolution only possible, paradoxically, through our encounter with evil.

The book delves into all our possible questions about evil, from the meaning of criminal behavior and destinies, to how God could allow suffering. Schroeder has the unique ability to anticipate our next question, just as he is outlining some seemingly hopeless aspect of evil and how it manifests.

As a young person who was recently employed in the age-old tradition of defending one's country against evil, I found this book helped to reassert and clarify that the true struggle against evil occurs in the spiritual realm. However, our very real and earthly questions still need answers, and this book provides guidelines and direction for those who wonder about the very practical aspects of "fighting and defeating evil." ♦

Necessary Evil, by H.W. Schroeder, is available at congregational book tables, or through Steinerbooks.com or other online bookstores. ♦



A conference on "The Magnetic Attraction of Evil" took place in Toronto last November 1-3, 2006. Rev. Erk Ludwig, priest of The Christian Community in New York, was the featured speaker. The following is a report by Regine Kurek of Arscura, who led the artistic workshop in this conference:

THE MAGNETIC ATTRACTION OF EVIL

Goethe, in his *Theory of Color* said about our mistaken notion of the source of color: "the view is that darkness by itself does not exist, it is just the absence of light". Even to this day, most of us do not recognize that color is born as a boundary phenomena between light and darkness; it is therefore a quality arising out of an interaction between two opposing activities.

Light and darkness meet and can engage in two ways: in one instance, light is active, illuminating the darkness ("*overcoming the dark*", according to Goethe) and the cool colors arise as blue, indigo and violet. On the other hand, darkness can be overshadowing the light ("*overcoming the light*") and can lead to the warm colors, red,

orange, yellow. Both ends of these two spectra can meet and thereby create green and magenta respectively. This experiment can easily be demonstrated with a glass prism and makes visible to the observer how color lives "in between"...the poles, yet draws on both.

What might this have to do with a seminar on "understanding evil?" Well, for starters, Rev. Ludwig called it a "trick" of the adversarial (evil) forces in today's world, to be "invisible," that is, not to be seen or recognized as such. Citing many examples from both our own recent history in the 20th century, as well as from contemporary events, we can easily see the truth in this. In our own time, truth has become so illusive; and how strange, how sad, that "*even a growing interest in spirituality seems to have very little bearing on our science and materialism*" (Ludwig).

Rev. Ludwig named two great deceivers in our everyday life: the first, "*concepts without reality*". These point to our materialistic science, without images, that lead to a hardening in regards to our understanding of matter. The second, "*reality without concepts*"; we find this in many religious and new age experiences, where dissolution takes place, far distant from an understanding of spirit. By looking at both phenomena, we realized that evil has two faces: that of the extreme intellectual, which leads to Ahriman's materialism and of the extreme illusionist, leading to Lucifer's spiritualism.

If we now look back at our color theory and work with this idea, we very quickly become aware that for anything to emerge in front of our eyes, we need both poles; we need to bring them into an interaction and yet to succumb to neither the one nor the other. Any color is both lighter than dark and darker than light... truly "in between".

In the artistic process during this seminar, participants worked on black paper, using Conte sticks. We began by taking white and allowing gently for the light to arise in the darkness by stroking in diagonal short strokes, thereby achieving a shimmering luminosity. For some people it shone from the center out, for others it radiated from the periphery in. This gradual increase of shining light against resistant darkness created a kind of picture space. Very soon we were all engaged in a tremendous creative battle with these forces of polarity out of which a world of beauty and balance gradually arose, but also tension and drama.

We took a pause here to let the pictures speak...then we began to work into the pictures with color, first with yellow into the light, then with blue into the darkness. The battlefield of the creation drama changed. The moment color arose, feelings and emotions shifted into the subtleties of inner soul drama, the creative tension between the polarities no less engaging. First to linger in the heavenly purity of the yellow and blue, now soon enough the plunge into the earthly green, where earth beneath our feet provides sure ground, but only for a moment. It would have been peaceful and harmonious to have stayed in the triad of yellow, green and blue; but also, something was missing. LIFE was missing, but oh boy, as red and orange comes along! Into the storms and the elements! How to tame the force, when "all hell breaks loose"? Ah, violet, pink and magenta, what joyful relief! Such was the

journey, ever seeking ground, ever taking flight until at last the image is born. When to stop? When to go further? Who's to tell?

In this simple drawing process all of us could very easily experience how to stand in the place between two forces seeking creative balance, finding a third place for a moment in the green, gentle balance, grounding place. But we can't stop here, red beckons. In our lecture we heard: "*through Lucifer comes egotism and as a result the desire for selfhood is born.*" The hunger for this is immediately experienced by the arrival of the deepening of the selfless yellow into the passionate red. This in turn is echoed by a deepening blue into and towards the darkness of indigo and violet, and we hear: "*Ahriman wants to maintain thoughts and freeze them, make them absolute, fixed.*" By now in our color journey we love our shapes and forms that arise and become pretty attached to them. Can we surrender once more? Can we give away or transform what arises and go further...until more and new colors arise out of the transformed light and darkness? Can we let the picture come into its own form, slowly and gradually in a birth process that allows time and attention to detail in color and form?

"Transcending its legitimate realm, Lucifer has the intention to detach our feeling life from the physical and spiritualize our feelings to use them for this world only. He wants especially the feelings we call love." Between this "falling in love" one moment and "hating it" the next moment, our artwork grows and develops in a constant striving for this third place in creative activity.

"Love that is selfless is protected." This we heard and this is it! Can we love this art process as a personal, but not too personal process? Can we "serve" the task selflessly, but yet be fully engaged, give our best, as if the world were depending on it? (The angels are watching, they wait for our doings.) Can we finally let the picture reveal itself...in beauty? And...beautiful pictures did arise. ♦

Arscura is a school for the exploration and development of art in the healing and social fields, founded in 1989 in Toronto, Canada by Regine Kurek, who holds a fine arts degree and a Diploma in Anthroposophical Art Therapy and Biography Counseling. She has developed a unique artistic-therapeutic path based on J.W. Goethe and Rudolf Steiner's color studies, as well as biography work. Arscura has its home in the beautiful new Christian Community church in Toronto and offers a three-year training course in both, artistic therapy and biography. For information e-mail info@arscura.com, www.arscura.com. ♦

ORIENTATION COURSE ON THE VOCATION OF THE PRIESTHOOD

March 16 – 18, 2007
in Spring Valley, N.Y.

sponsored by the Seminary of The Christian Community
Contact info@seminary-chicago.org or www.seminary-chicago.org.
Tel. 773 472 7041. ♦

A WEEK FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE SEMINARY

Life: Work Place or Playground?

The Human Vocation

A week in Chicago for young people eighteen and older

May 27 - June 1, 2007

Cost: \$100

What am I to do with my life? The world is so full of possibilities for work and for play. Do talents matter? Is work to be my life? Is life to be my work? How can I make a difference in the world? What does it mean: "All work can be divine service?" Can altars be built not only in a church but also outside, in a field, a classroom, on a stage, in an office, in a lab? Artistic activities and play, as well as a city excursion, will complement contributions and conversations with presenters from different walks of life. Come see the seminary from the inside; meet the students.

At the Seminary of The Christian Community, 2014 West Sunnyside Ave., P.O. Box 25603 Chicago, IL 60625. Contact info@seminary-chicago.org, or www.seminary-chicago.org. Tel. 773 472 7041.



A WEEK FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AT THE SEMINARY

August 24 - 30th, 2007

For more information call Gisela Wielki 773-472-7041

or Richard Dancey 773-506-0963.

Or email info@seminary-chicago.org

Also check www.seminary-chicago.org.



OPEN COURSES AT THE SEMINARY

These weeklong courses at our seminary in Chicago are mini conferences with great content, artistic activity and sacramental experience. Here is a summary, but detailed information is available at the seminary website at www.chicago-seminary.org/OpenCourses

March 12 -16, **The Jesus Mysteries**, Rev. Gwendolyn Fischer

April 2 - 6, Holy Week, **The Death and Resurrection of Prayer**, Rev. Richard Dancey

April 30 - May 4, **Christ and the Earth**, Rev. Daniel Hafner

May 7 - 11, **Stone - Copper- Bronze - Iron - In the Light of the Evolution of Humanity**, Rolf Hummel, Emeritus Professor of Physics at the University of Florida, Gainesville.



TOWARD GENUINE TUNING

This will be a conference about tuning, pitch and a new, unequal temperament. For musicians, eurythmists, and any friends and devotees of the divine being, Musica. Friday, May 11 to Sunday, May 13, 2007 at The Christian Community, 15 Margetts Road, Monsey, NY. \$60. For further information and a flyer, contact Laura Langford-Schnur, 845 469 2227, LangfordSchnur@frontiernet.net, or Daniel Hafner, 610 293 6484, DHafner1964@hotmail.com. ♦

CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMPS

For over 30 years The Christian Community has been sponsoring children's sleep-away camps in North America. Camp is a place where children ages 8-13 years can unplug from electronic media and experience nature, sleep in tents, hike, swim, canoe, learn handcrafts, play games, listen to storytellers, perform plays and skits, attend the Sunday Service for Children, make lifetime friendships, and sing, sing, sing! Children are awakened each morning with singing and end the day under the stars by the campfire. The day's journey includes stories, singing, games, swimming, basketball, boating, hiking, and nourishing family-style meals. Reverence for nature, for the spirit working all around us and for one another is cultivated.

Space is limited; inquire early.

Celebrating its 34th season on the east coast, the summer camp will take place August 2-18, 2007 at Glen Spey, NY. The camp is nestled in the woods near the Delaware River and has its own spectacular lake. This camp is open to boys and girls ages 8-13. Contact Carol Kelly, 66 Ackertown Rd., Monsey, NY, 10952, 845-426-3144 or caroltkelly@juno.com.

The Christian Community Camp in the Midwest, located where the Black River flows into the Mississippi, just north of Lacrosse, WI, is also for children from ages 8-13. It runs from 6 to 19 August. For more information contact Oliver Steinrueck at steinrueck@juno.com or at 773-368-8558.

In the West, Camp Tamarack in the High Sierras east of Fresno CA runs from 24 June to 11 July. Contact Sanford Miller at 916-548-4224 or sanfordmiller@sbcglobal.net. ♦

YOUTH CONFERENCE

A **Youth Conference for Teenagers** will take place August 20 – 25, 2007, at Camp Glen Spey, New York. For further information, contact Rev. Erk Ludwig at (212) 877-3577 or erkludwig@earthlink.net. ♦

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CAMP

The eighteenth annual International Youth Camp of The Christian Community for 16-24 year olds will be creating a community August 6-20 in Cataluña, Spain. At the camp there will be workshops, a four-day hike and campfire every evening with a particular theme. The common language is English. €335. For more information go to the website www.iycamp.com. ♦

IN THE MIDDLE – AN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE

July 28 – August 3, 2007,
at the Goetheanum in Dornach,
Switzerland.

A project planned and prepared in collaboration between The Christian Community and the Youth Section at the Goetheanum.

“In the Middle” is a conference for young people from all over the world.

It is an opportunity for an open exchange about what it means, to be in the middle - in the middle of the world we live in, in the middle of our time, in the middle of life. When does it happen, this moment in which many people are together in the middle of an activity, a play or a creation. When does it happen, that moment in which I am in action — doing and surrounded by my doing?

There will be sharing groups, morning lectures, workshops and free initiative time. The lectures and workshops at the conference will be related to the themes: Art, Science and Religion and what these fields represent in our lives. What can be shaped from the encounter of different cultures, backgrounds, and ideas about these themes? Which are the common questions living inside of us, when we meet that point in between physical and spiritual needs?

So, say the preparers, where are you going to be in the next summer? We'll be In the Middle...

Please feel free to contact us by e-mail, phone, fax or normal post. Phone: (+41) 61 706 43 91; Fax: (+41) 61 706 43 92; Switzerland E-mail: webmaster@youthconference.org. Youth Section, Dorneckstrasse 1, CH-4143 Dornach, Switzerland. ♦



WHAT WE NEED IS HERE

Report from the Young Adults Conference 2006

By Dave Luborski

From Wednesday, December 27 to Saturday, December 30, 2006, about thirty young people met at The Christian Community in Spring Valley, NY. The theme of the conference was taken from a poem by Wendell Berry:

*"...And we pray not for a new earth or heaven,
but to be quiet in heart,
and in eye clear.
What we need is here."*

Each day began with the Act of Consecration of Man and ended with the close of day. After breakfast, Carol Kelly led us singing William Blake's "The Lamb". Since it was a very modern composition, it required some adjustment to listen to, but if one was open to it, it became a new kind of harmony that opened up a door to other worlds. It was also necessary to concentrate on one's own part amidst the different voices.

Listening was a central part of the conference. Tad Montgomery gave a presentation on emotional literacy and conflict resolution, in which he addressed the importance of really listening to the other.

Julia Polter led us in an exercise of careful observation. We looked at what it means not only to see something, but also to envision it when we are not seeing it and come to an inner experience of it.

We look toward the future, and we want to carry the Christ Spirit with us. When we go into the world, it can be that we are still searching for something outside of us, somewhere else. This act of seeing and listening to what is looking to be expressed in the other, even in our enemies, especially in our enemies, is what we need. And it is within us; it is here. ♦

ANOTHER VIEW

By Seth Jordan

Recently, around thirty-five young people gathered in Spring Valley NY, for a winter conference entitled "What We Need is Here." After three grueling days of collaborative spiritual-scientific research into the matter we discovered that that statement was, in fact, true.

No, it's never that easy, is it? I wish it was. No, there were no white smocks nor cookie-cutter answers here. Instead, a bunch of people got together to have another go at the problems. Which

problems we were going to tackle we weren't quite sure, but luckily in this day and age there always seems to be enough to go around. Thank God our time is now...

As a group we are still working out our method. This year Carol Kelly chose the theme seemingly on a whim, because there was a deadline and no angels with trumpets were readily materializing. (Carol's note: There *were* angels; who do you think gave me the conference title?) The contributors came forward with what gifts they could give - so many disparate things. Among these we heard a folk song, we worked with clay, we learned a conflict-resolution technique called "The Clearing", and we were led through an exercise where, with meticulous patience, we dismembered a rose - from leaf to petal to stamen (it is a strange and beautiful world we are a part of).

To the outside observer I'm sure the whole shebang would have looked ridiculously disjointed. But, as always, one thing flowed into the next with its own absolute logic. Themes and essential thoughts began to emerge and were woven together by something alive. By our coming together, a life was created. The lifeblood which circulated throughout was carried in the conversations between us.

People found they had an actual interest in each other (granted we were with like-minded peers and not at a Republican Convention, but I think it was still a step towards "approaching the Christ through thinking.") And even though, impatient as youth can be, we weren't able to figure it all out and fix it as we would have liked - we did make headway. We took just a few steps with friends. The road keeps getting longer and for long spells fades entirely from view. These gatherings are light and strength for the tasks that are only just approaching. ♦

EXPLORING THE SACRED IN ART: FINDING A MODERN, MEDITATIVE, ARTISTIC PATH

A summer course for RENEWAL in New Hampshire June 24 – June 29, with Laura Summer

"Art is in my opinion the only revolutionary energy. In other words, the situation can only be changed through human creativity." Joseph Beuys

"The spirit casts its shadow into space and that is beauty. The shadow becomes a living being through the artist's creative spirit." Rudolf Steiner

For thousands of years art has been the manifestation of spiritual reality. From cave painting and hieroglyphics to icon painting and abstract expressionism, artists have found media, form, and process appropriate for their time.

What is a modern artistic approach? How can we work creatively with the spiritual world today?

Using watercolor, dark and light drawing, surface collage, block printing, and poetry we will experiment, explore and play with the process of creating. We will translate from one medium to another and see how one process can be our teacher for the next. Looking outwards at the world around us and inwards to our inner questions through the language of color, line and surface, we will experience a new artistic freedom. Participants with all levels of artistic experience are welcome. Working with this variety of artistic media is both exciting and very forgiving.

For more info: www.centerforanthroposophy.org or laurasummer@taconic.net

LAURA SUMMER is a painter in Harlemville, New York, and a member of the Taconic Berkshire Christian Community. Since 1996 she has run Bright Wing Studio. Her work appears in private collections in the United States and Europe and is on permanent display at the SEKEM community in Egypt. ♦

4TH NORTH-SOUTH CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS IN BOTUCATU, BRAZIL

THEME: THE LORD'S PRAYER – BREAD FOR THE WAY JULY 20-29, 2007

Meet and work with fellow members of The Christian Community in a different part of the world! Presentations and workshops in English, Portuguese and Spanish. To see all the details for the conference, schedule, workshops, presenters, and to register online, visit the excellent website, <http://www.bairrodemetria.com.br/viatico>.

Travel: Fly to Sao Paulo (International Airport, Guarulhos)

- Airport bus to main bus station, Barra Funda
- Bus to Botucatu, ca. 3hrs.
- Pick-up organized by conference, drive to Conference site, Demetria, ca. 15 km

Remember: US citizens need a visa for Brazil. Bring warm clothing (it will be winter there). See packing details on the website.

On costs:

- Conference fee: \$170 (includes food).
- Room in private home, including sheets and shower: \$7.20 per night
- Shared room at the school, mattress provided, shared bathroom: \$2.00 per night
- Food (Biodynamic) estimate: Breakfast, Lunch, Supper: \$15.00 per day
- See details on the website.

Contact the travel bureau below in Botucatu, who

are aware of the conference, and are prepared to help with travel arrangements, tours, or whatever is needed. Just tell them that you will be attending the conference at **Demetria: Family Travel Turismo**, www.family.com.br, or e-mail Mrs. Mirna: family@family.com.br. Tel. 0055-14-3815-2868. Fax 0055-14-3813-6632.

Sightseeing, either before or after the conference, some recommended places:

- For cultural life of Brazil, visit Sao Paulo or Rio de Janeiro.
- **Iguassu Waterfalls**: requires a plane from Sao Paulo or bus from Botucatu (16hrs.! overnight bus).
- **Parati**: historical port city from Portuguese colonial times. 600 km from Botucatu in the direction of Rio.
- **Towns in the state of Minas Gerais**: very worthwhile seeing, built during the Brazilian Gold Rush.

All of the above mentioned places are well equipped for tourists with many levels of hotels and restaurants, English spoken, money easily exchanged, etc. ▪



A NORTH AMERICAN ORDAINED

Marcus Knausenberger, ordained in March 2007, was born in Pennsylvania in 1975 and raised in The Christian Community. Marcus remembers summer children's camps fondly. He studied sculpture at university and worked for some years in web and interface design before entering our seminary in Stuttgart, Germany. Some may remember having experienced him a couple of years ago on his visit to several communities with fellow student Sarah, now his wife. We hope to welcome them and their daughter back to North America sometime this summer. ▪

NATURE AND HOLY SPIRIT

A canoe retreat for spiritual renewal in So. Maine. October 11-14, 2007, organized by The Christian Community in New England in cooperation with Two Roads Maine, a non-profit organization guiding healing retreats in natural settings. For more information contact Sarah Hyde, 207 865 0770, sarashyde@hotmail.com or Rev. Julia Polter, 781 648 1214, juliapolter@mailaka.net. ▪



WORLD NEWS

Spain

In August 2006, the very first Christian Community conference was held in Panticosa in the Pyrenees, with 120 people attending. The initiative group in Madrid is now working on the legal base for the incorporation of the first congregation. It is interesting to note that The Christian Community has come to Spain from South America, complementing a centuries old movement across the ocean in the other direction. That this movement is not only something spiritual, was recently reported in *The Guardian Weekly* (Febr. 23, 2007): half of the non-European immigrants in Spain have come from South- and Middle American countries. In 2006, the number of such Hispanic Americans has risen to 1.5 million.

Germany

In the German Christian Community newsletter, seven congregations have described their varied experiences and relations with cemeteries, after having been able to purchase part of a local cemetery for the use of members and friends in a congenial setting.

Eastern Europe

For the first time, in the autumn of 2006 an Eastern European synod was held in Prague, attended by priests working in the Czech Republic, in Slovakia, Georgia, Croatia, Poland, Rumania, Russia, Slovenia, Hungary and the Ukraine. Armen Tougu, working in Estonia and Lithuania, was not able to attend, but these countries could be indirectly represented by the Erzoberlenker Vicke von Behr, who had just returned from a visit.

Ukraine

In this young country, until recently the Act of Consecration had to be held in Russian, still the language spoken by most people in the eastern part of the country. During the summer conference of 2006, the Service could be held for the first time in Ukrainian, an occasion for joy for all those now being able to pray in their own language.

Australia/New Zealand

Not only does The Christian Community in North America have a website, www.thechristiancommunity.org. Australian priests have taken the initiative for a *Journal for the Renewal of Religion and Theology*, www.renewtheology.org, as an international platform for peer-reviewed articles on the renewal of religion and theology, intended to appear once a year. First issue: December, 2006. See Tom Ravetz's article on *Re-enlivening the Dying Earth*.

Ireland

For many years now, a Christian Community congregation has existed in Holywood in Northern Ireland. In the south, services have

until recently mainly been held in Camphill communities. In December 2005, a property could be bought in Dewsborough, County Clare, to be used as a center for The Christian Community, which in the meantime has been incorporated in the Irish Republic. Last September, accompanied by Tom Ravetz, the priest regularly visiting from Stourbridge (GB), a group of students of the Hamburg Seminary came to help renovating the property and converting the living room into a chapel. The British/Irish priests' synod was held there in October. ▪

THE KNIGHTS TEMPLARS

Nadine Hafner



The Knights Templars prepared for the future. The order was founded in 1119 under the name *Pauperes Commilitones Christi Templique Salomonici* (Poor Co-soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon not "Knights", as is usually translated). From the beginning, the Templars were controversial but soon also strongly supported. As monks they took the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and lived under a rule with regular devotional services and prayer. As knights they were highly skilled in warfare, training their bodies to be ready for battle at any moment day or night, training their wills for selfless subordination and cooperation, qualities essential for warriors.

These warrior-monks were Christian initiates. Bernard of Clairvaux ("In Praise of the New Knighthood") and Rudolf Steiner (in a lecture on October 2, 1916) help us to understand this new path of initiation, which differs from the usual Christian path. This new order was to become fruitful for the world in all realms of life. Warfare in the East was not their mission, but was necessary at the time in order to protect Europe from the fetters of a certain type of thinking. Their mission was to transform and prepare Europe to become the bearer of a new spiritual impulse. New streams of life were to refresh human spirits, bringing harmony to all human communities and healing to the earth. The Knights Templars soon ruled over many domains and castles in throughout Europe and thus created a living network. Out of their initiation there streamed, for instance, new ways of agriculture, craftsmanship (Gothic architecture), finances (they were the initiators of credit system), medicine and community life, (they had their own judges independent of king or pope).

They were sensitive to the etheric configuration of places. Jerusalem was the place where the Templars found a support for their endeavors. The Holy Sepulcher was not so much revered as the place of death but of resurrection, the wellspring of the new life that overcomes death. Jerusalem was also the place where the Temple of Solomon had stood. Hiram the master builder created it out of his baptism in fire, the new initiation of the will (see the *Temple Legend*, by Rudolf Steiner). The temple is the vessel that can receive the new stream of life. The temple bearing the new streams of life is the Grail. The body

and blood of every Templar initiate was to be such a vessel. In addition every place where Templars worked or fought was deeply transformed. Through their spirit-filled enthusiasm, which lived in their every deed, wellsprings of new life were opened in the sphere of the earth.

That called forth adversary powers. King Philip IV of France intended a machine state under his dictatorship, a legal system controlling all levels of human existence. In a national coup, all Knights Templars were taken prisoner in the early morning of Friday October 13, 1307, seven hundred years ago. According to rules of black magic with which King Philip was acquainted, the Knights were tortured and their order abolished by a puppet pope in 1312. The last Grandmaster of the Order of the Temple died on the stake as a heretic March 18, 1314.

But the streams of Christian life initiated by the Templars are eternal and not subject to death. The Templar initiation of the will is central today, where we encounter adversary powers in this deepest realm of human existence. More than ever do we need these impulses to free human spirits, to create an art of living together that is worthy of human beings, and to heal the earth. ♦

Nadine Hafner is a priest of The Christian Community working in Devon, PA.

A KNIGHTS TEMPLAR CONFERENCE, sponsored jointly by The Christian Community, and the Anthroposophical Society, will take place in Camphill Soltane, in Glenmoore, PA, October 12-14, 2007 in honor of the 700th anniversary of their imprisonment, and to help their impulses manifest themselves in modern times. Details and a flyer will be available by the end of summer. Contact (610) 687 8206 or nadinehafner@hotmail.com

