

Chains of earthly slavery

The Christian Community

# Perspectives

September—November 2021

# Contents

<b>Michaelmas</b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Peter van Breda</i>	
<b>Chains of earthly slavery</b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Roger Druitt</i>	
<b>Loosening chains</b>	<b>7</b>
<i>Cynthia Hindes</i>	
<b>Of the forging of chains</b>	<b>13</b>
<i>Louise Madsen</i>	
<b>Finding Christ as the middle in times of crisis</b>	<b>17</b>
<i>Tom Ravetz</i>	
<b>Why must I die, even though Christ has overcome death?</b>	<b>23</b>
<i>Johannes Beurle</i>	
<b>The Movement for Christian Renewal</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>Notes from a talk by Vike von Behr</i>	
<b>Letter</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Book reviews</b>	<b>30</b>

*cover picture:*

*Clown, 1912, Georges Rouault, 1871–1958*

*Deadlines:*

December 2021–February 2022 issue: 27 September 2021

March–May 2022 issue: 10 Jan 2022

*Perspectives* is published quarterly by The Christian Community, a registered UK charity. It appears at the beginning of December, March, June & September.

## **Editor:**

Tom Ravetz  
11 Upper Close, Forest Row, RH18 5DS

## **Editorial Team:**

Peter Howe, Deborah Ravetz  
Kevin Street

## **Subscriptions & Advertisements:**

Gabriele Kuhn, Tel: +44(1383)821204  
subs@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

**All correspondence:** Perspectives,  
21 Napier Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5AZ  
editor@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

**Lay-Up:** Christoph Hänni

## **Subscriptions:**

tinyurl.com/yakwhjgl

UK £15

Europe £18

**Rest of World: £22**  
(not USA, NZ & Australia)

Please send cheque, payable to  
*Perspectives*, to Subscription  
Manager (address above), or send  
for more information.

Subscribe with PayPal on our website:  
tinyurl.com/y9qqc9ru

**E-Subscriptions are available for  
£15 per year. You will be sent a link  
to download the new issue as soon  
as it is produced. See**  
tinyurl.com/y9qqc9ru

**USA:** US\$26

c/o The Christian Community,  
906 Divisadero Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115

**(Cheques payable to: The Christian  
Community San Francisco)**

**Australia:** Enquire for price at:  
Matthew Bond  
C/- 319 Auburn Road  
Hawthorn East, Victoria 3123

**New Zealand:** Enquire for price at:  
Elizabeth Heybrook, 293 Winterslow  
Rd. Staveley RD1, Ashburton 7771  
Phone: 03-3030780

## **Advertisements:**

Send ads five weeks prior to  
publication to the Editor at the  
above address.

Quarter page £45,

Half page £75, Full page £140

ISSN: 0967 5485

# Perspectives

Volume 91 No. 4  
September–November 2021

Slavery has been much in the news recently. The passionate protests unleashed by the death of George Floyd last year seemed to release a dammed-up reservoir of feeling about our world. Whatever we may think of the forms that protest took, we surely must rejoice that sections of society whose experience has been hidden, ignored and denied have found their voice. One discovery that I made as I started to research the phenomenon of slavery is that it is by no means limited to any particular nation or race, nor to any particular historical period. Just as much as human beings have striven to create societies whose members can thrive, they have enslaved other groups. And even if those slaves were—are—kept far out of sight, this makes no difference to the fact that the economic system rests on the exploitation of others. This came out very clearly for me in the anguished debates that took place in Boston, when it became clear that the fledgling colony, founded by Puritans to be an image of a better world, would not survive without servicing the plantation economy that rested on slavery. (cp [tinyurl.com/PVSSlavery](https://tinyurl.com/PVSSlavery))

I imagine that many readers of *Perspectives* do not have first-hand experiences of slavery. For this reason, we easily think of slavery as a metaphor for every kind of entrapment. It can seem as if our western, first-world societies have exchanged outer conditions of near-slavery for a voluntary enslavement. This being so, it is important to recognise that slavery is an inner state,

one which I can change through inner transformation, even if those outer forces that seem to have me in their grip do not change. The articles in this issue, which is based on the stirring promise from our Michaelmas Epistle, that Michael seeks to release us from chains of earthly slavery, may help us to find that inner place of freedom.

As much as it is important to discover again and again our agency in the face of even the severest repression, it is important to recognise the power of systemic wrong. Here, the study of slavery and the ideologies that sustain it can be helpful for us when we encounter more subtle chains. Frederick Douglass was a slave who escaped the American South and became an author and orator in the cause of emancipation. He steadfastly refused to debate the rights and wrongs of slavery, because he saw it as beyond debate what Kant had stated years before: no human being has the right to make another into the instrument of his will—the ‘means’; the only way to be together is to recognise the unique and sovereign will of the other, so that they become our ‘end’ or purpose.

As much as the Michaelmas Epistle addresses us in our inner situation, we can also hear it echoing in the struggle to overcome every kind of domination system. In the end, freedom which rests on enslaving others is itself a kind of enslavement. Reading accounts of the life of slave-owners in the American South, it is striking how visceral their terror of rebellion was. A quotation by Douglass shows how inner and outer enslavement are intertwined:

*No man can put a chain about the ankle of his fellow man without at last finding the other end fastened about his own neck.*

Frederick Douglass,  
speech at Civil Rights Mass Meeting, Washington, DC, 22 October 1883

TOM RAVETZ

# Michaelmas

Peter van Breda

At Michaelmas, we celebrate what could be called the reverse of Easter. The festival of cosmic transformation, which took place for the whole of humanity, for the earth and for the angelic world, now becomes a challenge to make the mystery of Golgotha our own. In the northern hemisphere, nature is dying away and retreating into itself for the next few months. We can feel the melancholy and the death processes working in us.

Facing death is never easy, especially in autumn which has incredible beauty and solemnity. If we follow nature's inevitable path, we too will die. But we are not destined to be nature beings. A central aspect of Michaelmas is that we learn to accept and work with the dying forces present in our inner soul. We cannot avoid this threshold: it is part of all our lives. We cross a threshold in the autumnal, Michaelmas mood and we are challenged not to succumb completely to the forces of death, but instead to look to Michael for help. Michael directs our inner gaze to the place of resurrection where Christ is to be found.

At Easter, there is every year anew a triumph over death. Now at Michaelmas, we are asked how far we consciously incorporate the resurrecting power of Christ into our lives. The archangel Michael, the countenance of Christ, appears in all his brilliance on the horizon of our souls. He beckons to us to follow him. I will lead you, he calls, to the place from which we will see the reality of the Easter deed, which is the meaning of the earth. 'Come with me,' he indicates, pointing to the threshold that we will have to cross if we resolve to follow him.

For a moment he holds the adversary powers in check at his feet so that we may proceed. The dragon and the legions of adversary forces that wish to draw us down into materialism and the darkness of a world devoid of spirit cannot be ignored. We are challenged with the help of Michael to confront these malicious forces. It is good to recall that Michael does not conquer the dragon

*Peter van  
Breda is  
priest of The  
Christian  
Community in  
London.*



through killing him and dispensing with him. Instead, he puts the satanic forces in their place, at his feet. The sword which he brandishes is a spiritual instrument. Michael in all his radiance needs no outer weapon to triumph over these very real forces of evil. He needs only to appear and the dragon slumps in submission at his feet.

Now for a moment Michael looks at us, he does not command us, but looks straight at us with a taciturn, earnest gaze as he beckons: 'I can if you so will lead you over this threshold into the world of resurrection; to the very place where this act of resurrection is constantly happening.' It is up to each one of us to respond to Michael's call. We do so seeking clarity of thought and warmth of heart, with a definite intention that we too will put the dragon and all other evil forces at our feet. But more than that, Michael, who works constantly for the aims and goals of Christ hopes that we will become co-healers and transformers of these forces of evil. Michael lifts us out of the dark dungeons of this world, he inclines our heart-filled spirit thinking to evolve and in so doing become christened human beings: Michaelites. We can resolve in freedom to serve the higher mysteries.

The forces of evil are not diminishing; we need both steadfastness and courage along with a growing ability to develop a heart-filled thinking, a sense of conscience and responsibility for the future of our earth and of humankind.

Michael, the countenance of the Christ, stands before us. He awakens in us the eternal picture of Man given to us by Christ.



*Clown  
at a  
Table,  
Georges  
Rouault*

# Chains of earthly slavery

(a phrase from the Michaelmas Epistle)

**Roger Druitt**

Put in chains—a heavy image, with iron sounds and endless struggles with wrong.

A hook holds but is released by a counter-movement; a chain's links are permanent, a dependence on one's bond.

Slavery—we cry out against it and seek its end; but then bind ourselves to something we want, for good or bad. Is not a large part of life freeing our souls from chains laid upon us by ourselves? Or bringing an element of freedom into something that threatens to bind us? There are true loves that can become chains, even welcome ones, but they still require inner freedom to keep them fresh, healthy and alive.

*Earthly* slavery implies that even the best things of our earthly life can become bondage if our soul connects to them in the wrong way, including to our body. How can this be managed? Surely by first identifying our jailer, acknowledging that when we are bound, it is only in part the world that restricts us: the rest is *ourselves*. Through lack of skill or strength, lack of knowledge or discernment—or simply lack of vision and will, we restrain ourselves from doing the deeds that we know to be good.

Acknowledging this is the hard part. It means that we need to require of *ourselves* self-knowledge and responsibility for our actions, also our thoughts. Are they really *ours*? Are they free from the influence of the general?—for to be free means to be able to choose freely which aims to follow.

It seems we need spirit vision, spirit *light* to meet this challenge. That is where we sometimes glimpse, in the depths of our striving, a flash within our struggling mind, as though the swinging of a blade caught the light of heaven for a moment and gave us certainty. It might be all we need to realise that we are not alone. Our best aims have to some degree found a resonance with a

*Roger Druitt  
is a priest  
emeritus  
living in  
Hereford.*

greater power than ours, a power that can help us, if applied in hope and faith—and untiring perseverance—towards giving free birth to what our soul wants to create out of its uniqueness and give back to this our dear Earth.

Earthly slavery, once identified by honestly examining our failures, falls away as we gradually navigate through these waters. Guilt is transformed into the courage and will to work. The perception of Michael is not of a picture in a frame. It comes from a direction we least anticipate, from that part of us that remains in the care of heaven and yet is accessible to our human heart, as it loves the world not for what it can receive from it but what it can give. It is our very own creativity, doing what we love.



*The Wounded Clown (Le Clown blessé II), 1939, Georges Rouault*



# Loosening chains

Cynthia Hindes

During this past year and a half, many of us have felt ourselves uncomfortably bound, chained to home, constrained in our movements and relationships. Perhaps we have been ill. Perhaps we have had to work from home while schooling children and running a household. Perhaps our encounters with others have been limited to phone or screen visits. It has certainly been a time of external constraint. And perhaps still is.

In The Christian Community, the epistle for Michaelmas says that the archangel Michael keeps under his feet the powers that would fetter the human spirit. This epistle calls those spiritual fetters ‘chains of earthly slavery’. Fetters are shackles for feet (in contrast to manacles, which are for hands). Fetters restrict movement; fetters ultimately restrict the mobility of the whole body. The adversaries of humankind seek to fetter our spirits with chains, forged one link at a time. Michael ‘fetters’ those adversary powers themselves under his own feet.

The adversaries are spiritual powers whose intention is to hinder humankind’s development. They attempt to capture the human spirit, restrict its mobility and breadth of movement, inhibit its creativity. These spiritual beings seek to enslave our spirits. As Paul says:

*Our struggle is not to fight against powers of flesh and blood, but against spirit beings mighty in the stream of time, against spirit beings powerful in the moulding of earth substance, against cosmic powers whose darkness rules the present time, against beings who, in the spiritual worlds, are themselves the powers of evil.* (Ephesians 6:12)<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, the human spirit, the I or Self or Ego, is primarily an activity rather than a thing, a verb rather than a noun. Intimately connected with our conscious awareness, our spirits operate as our ability to pay attention and to direct our attention. They act to generate wakefulness and focus or broaden our attention, our awareness.

Cynthia Hindes  
is a priest of  
The Christian  
Community  
in Los Angeles.

The adversaries of our humanity want to capture and own what the human spirit does. The adversaries want to bind and possess our spirit's power of *paying attention*. They want us to focus it solely on earthly material matters. The material is important, as far as it goes. But it is not all that there is.

At the same time, the enemies of our humanity want us to help them create the chains of our earthly slavery. Indeed, they need our cooperation in our own enslavement because the capacities they wish to enslave are ours from the outset. They rejoice when our attention, our focus, is limited to what is only earthly and temporal. They are delighted when we are grabbed by headlines and advertisements, preoccupied with virtual entertainment, fettered to the bad news in earthly life. They frown when we notice and are grateful for the beauty of the created, living world. They are distressed in those moments when we focus on the non-material, when we pay attention to and focus on the 'good news,' on praying and meditating, when we are curious and loving. But above all, they are gleeful when their very existence escapes our notice. They prompt from below and behind, hiding in the background. In capturing our attention for their purposes, the adversaries are fed, enlarged.

The apostle Paul advises us to:

*put on the power of God as one puts on full armor that you may resist the well-aimed attacks of the adversary ... that you may be able to stand your ground on the day when evil unfolds its greatest strength and victoriously withstand it.* (Ephesians 6:10 and 6:13)

I would suggest that we need daily practice, training in putting on the armor of God and the use of it since the battle against the adversaries is often a daily one, sometimes even moment by moment.

Our spirits also perform a second function, intimately tied to the first—our spirits not only pay attention; they *make choices*. They swim in a sea of consciousness and decide to strike out in one direction or another. Our attention informs and leads to our decisions—what if anything shall I do about what I notice? The adversaries of our humanity also want to capture this second capacity of the Self, its capacity to freely make independent decisions. Even my *inattention* informs my decisions. Increasingly, algorithms are infecting, narrowing, and even determining my choices. If I allow the adversaries to constantly distract

my attention or limit it to a narrow earthly focus, my freedom suffers; my inner mobility, resilience, creativity, and ultimately my karma suffer. The adversaries delight in binding us to material substances and activities that are addictive because such substances bind my attention to the substance and its acquisition—the next drink, the next fix, just another frame on Facebook, another click, on things both real and virtual.

Adversarial beings are behind addictions and compulsions, both large and small. Compulsions are another form of earthly spiritual slavery. Satisfying an impulse, an ‘itch,’ can become something habitual. Link by link, we forge our chains. Whatever I find to satisfy that itch, to quiet that anxiety or relieve that boredom, whether it be a drug or drink, excessive work, or constantly checking my phone, binds me in a weaker or stronger chain of earthly slavery. Whenever I persist in thinking along old habitual lines of thought I am not open to a new way of thinking. It is a chain of habit which dulls or bypasses our spirit’s decision-making capacity. The adversaries are grabbing my attention or taking advantage of my inattention by obscuring my moment-to-moment decision-making.

How do I not allow the adversaries to take over? The first step in overcoming this form of earthly slavery is to *pay attention* to the moment when the impulse arises. When I feel the urge to, say, check my phone, I can pause for a moment and ask myself what I hope the outcome will be of ‘scratching that itch.’

Then do I decide *not* to engage in it? Paradoxically, no. Instead, I decide to *consciously* engage in that behavior while maintaining my awareness, directing my consciousness to notice whether the desired outcome is really delivered. Does constantly checking my phone really connect me with people important in my life? Every time? Is there an opportunity I am missing when I’m on my phone? Is following the impulse merely forging another link in the chains of earthly slavery? Is it leading me to where I ultimately do not wish to go? Noting the truth is important here. As Paul says, ‘Stand firm, then, girded with the truth, like a warrior firmly girded’ (Ephesians 6:14). Even if only for the moment.

With enough attention over time, we will begin to notice how the adversaries are capturing our attention and subverting our decision-mak-

ing capacity. We will notice how they are making us into automatons. And when we recognise that they are failing to deliver on their promises to better our lives or make us feel better, we can gradually over time begin to free ourselves from their slavery. We can begin to notice which activities actually do make our lives truly better. It takes the earnest attentiveness of a sentry. It takes the willingness to use the archangel Michael's golden sword of the light of conscious attention to break the chains of unconscious habit and overcome earthly bondage to compulsions. It takes the strength and endurance of filing away at those chains of addiction and habit by noticing and then deciding to postpone, just for a moment, satisfying the impulse. When I can remind myself that the habit doesn't really deliver what it promises, or costs more than it delivers, then gradually, the habitual impulse dies off.

The poet Antonio Machado says:

*Beyond living and dreaming there is something more important:  
waking up.*<sup>2</sup>

Awakening to my own capacity to pay attention and to make decisions is the first step in loosening and severing the chains of earthly slavery with which the adversaries would fetter the spirit. Again Paul:

*And the Spirit, [the true Self] which has become living in you, you shall grasp as one grasps a sharp sword. The sword of the Spirit is the working of the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17) ... Put on the breastplate of the higher life which fulfills our human destiny (Ephesians 6:14) ... In all your deeds, continually hold to your hearts' vision of Christ's presence with which you can quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. (Ephesians 6:16)*

The nature of the Word of God is hinted at in His name: I AM. This is the secret name of the spirit of every human being—'I notice. I decide. I act.

We can further strengthen our spirit's two functions of paying attention and making decisions by practising the basic psychological exercises given by Rudolf Steiner.<sup>3</sup> The adversaries work hard to undermine our attempts to do these exercises! And to continue to do them! Yet, these exercises are necessary training in our battle to avoid or overcome being captured by the enemy.

One exercise is a concentration exercise that allows me to summon and strengthen my ability to focus and maintain my attention. A second helps

me make a decision and then carry it through. The third, fourth and fifth help me to calm myself, to find the positive amidst difficulties, and to act with openness and trust in the benevolence of higher spiritual beings.

Additionally, another way of strengthening our spirit is to choose to review our day and, again, to *notice* in retrospect what happened.

All of our attempts to strengthen our spiritual selves will affect not only ourselves. They affect everyone and everything around us. This is because that upon which we focus our attention receives something of our spirit's radiant energy. The *quality* of our attention can attach specific energies to that to which we are attending. Is our attention warm or cold? Loving or hateful? Angry? Grateful? Fear-filled? Joyous?

And inversely, that to which I decide to pay attention can affect the quality of my own awareness. And so, a bit of soul hygiene may be called for. Too much of a bad thing (like doomscrolling through the news) can influence whether I can radiate light or darkness, fear or joy. It can sour or elevate what we radiate to others. 'Take into your thoughts the certainty of the coming world-healing, that it protect you like a helmet' (Ephesians 6:17). Not only will our certainty of world-healing protect the Self. It will protect others.

*May this armor cover you in all your supplications and prayers.  
May your inmost heart light up in spirit in your prayers. To this  
end, direct your spirit-strength in all your efforts of soul and in  
your intercession for all who would know Christ's healing power.  
Feel yourself united in prayer with all other bearers of the Spirit*  
(Ephesians 6:18)

And along with others, donning our spiritual armor will help protect all of creation. For:

*All around us, creation waits with great longing that the sons of  
God shall begin to shine forth in humankind ... And therefore,  
everything in it is full of longing for the future ... When the sphere  
of the Spirit grows bright, unfreedom will be replaced by the free-  
dom which is intended for all God's offspring. We know that the  
whole of creation suffers and sighs in the pangs of a new birth until  
the present day.* (Romans 8:19–22)

All creation suffers from humankind's lack of gratitude, our rapaciousness, our inability to see that there are beneficent spiritual beings



working ceaselessly to nourish and maintain the living created world. All of creation suffers from our inattention and the limiting of our decision-making capacities to only earthly, material considerations, our willing enslavement. God's creation needs our strong and active spirits, clothed in the brightness of God's armour.

The archangel Michael keeps under his feet the powers that would fetter the human spirit. That is where those adversarial powers belong—underfoot, where we can stand on them as necessary grounding. They belong underfoot like the moon under the feet of the woman clothed with the sun in Revelation 12. The adversaries' place is underfoot so that we are above them where they cannot capture and overtake our spirits, our attention, and decisions. Michael keeps them underfoot so that we can take into our thinking the certainty of Christ's healing deed.

And instead of the immobility of fetters, may our strengthened spirits (to paraphrase Paul in Ephesians 6:15) allow peace to stream through us down to our feet so that on our path we spread peace as the message that comes from the realms of the angels.

*May the Angel of Awakening stir your heart  
To come alive to the eternal within you,  
To all the invitations that quietly surround you...*

*May the Angel of Compassion open your eyes  
to the unseen suffering around you...*

*May the Angel of Encouragement confirm you  
In worth and self-respect,  
That you may live with the dignity  
That presides in your soul.*

JOHN O'DONOHUE  
from *To Bless the Space Between Us*

- 1 All biblical quotes are from *The New Testament*, a rendering, by Jon Madsen.
- 2 *The Winged Energy of Delight*, translations by Robert Bly.
- 3 Rudolf Steiner, in *Occult Science, An Outline*. For a treatment in English see *Six Steps in Self-Development: The 'Supplementary Exercises'*. Translated by Matthew Barton. Online resource: <https://leadtogether.org/six-basic-exercises-esoteric-development-rudolf-steiner/>

# Of the forging of chains

Louise Madsen

*Again the spectre raised a cry and shook its chain and wrung its shadowy hands. "You are fettered," said Scrooge, trembling. "Tell me why!"*

*"I wear the chain I forged in life," replied the ghost. "I made it link by link and yard by yard; I girded it on of my own free will, and of my own free will I wore it. Is its pattern strange to you?"*

*Scrooge trembled more and more.*

*"Or would you know," pursued the ghost, "the weight and length of the strong coil you bear yourself? It was full as heavy and long as this seven Christmas Eves ago. You have laboured on it since. It is a ponderous chain!"*

*And Jacob Marley's ghost continues:*

*"My spirit never walked beyond our counting-house—mark me!—in life my spirit never roved beyond the narrow limits of our money-changing hole; and weary journeys lie before me!"*

Charles Dickens: *A Christmas Carol*

These well-known lines from *A Christmas Carol* have much to tell us. In the Black Country, in the heart of the UK, home to big chain-making industries of the Industrial Age, images abound of yards and furlongs of iron chain, some light with small links, others—big, heavy cable chains for anchoring ships. Useful and necessary as we may know they were and are, they evoke images of a more unpleasant nature. We cannot help but feel the negative connotation of the word 'chain': chains restrain and impede, hold fast and restrict. We think of being chained—as it might be, to our computer, or our desk; of being fastened down, of being restricted by circumstances, of being in thrall to another person. Some of these states may have their place. Indeed, they may be necessary for the sake of practical life; however, they bring a loss of freedom that all too easily and unnoticed slips into our lives. It is particularly when we are unaware of their presence that they begin, ever so subtly and deviously, to enslave us.

*Louise Madsen  
is a priest  
emeritus living  
in Stourbridge.*

However, before we feel ourselves to be the victims of outer circumstances that bind us, let us look again at what Marley's ghost has to say to Scrooge: 'I wear the chain I forged in life; I made it link by link and yard by yard.' Yes, he made his very own chain. And, to boot, he girded it on of his 'own free will' and of his own free will he wore it. He had chosen the way in which he wanted to live and now, seen from the perspective of life after death, he wishes to warn Scrooge that the chains they made for themselves lead to an exceedingly dreary, dismal and gloomy kind of 'non-existence', in which they are bound to the earth, forever dragging that self-made chain after them on their restless wanderings. He created his own enslavement by the way he led his narrow, small-minded, heartless life.

This imagery has the ring of truth to it. What about the way that so many of our thoughts are shaped? Broadly speaking, people think of human life as stretching only between birth, or maybe conception, and death. Life is thought to begin and end with our bodily existence; but such thought-patterns confine and restrict life itself exclusively to its physical manifestation. Such thinking chains life to earthly matter; it treats life itself as a product of material substance, rather than as the power which, out of its own nature, is the source of all life on earth. By allowing our thoughts to stretch beyond the self-imposed confines of so much contemporary thinking, we can experience a freedom that is truly liberating. We may feel the healing that such a (re)connecting with the invisible world brings with it.

Can the pandemic be looked at in a similar way? It would seem that the eyes of the world are to a large extent focused on the virus itself: it is seen as the origin and cause of our predicament. Clearly, treating any infection and its symptoms has to be the most immediate and urgent requirement. But it has also been shown just how much the severity of the illness and its ability to spread are affected by the prior state of health, living conditions and the immediate environment of those affected. As these factors play such an influential role we are well advised not only to take note but also to take measures to mitigate their damaging effects. By doing that our sights are no longer fixated on the one particular item, the virus; rather they become expanded to embrace wider spheres of influence. And if we now embrace the thought of the virus being not the source but a symptom or an agent? That does not

diminish the havoc it causes, but it allows us to have other thoughts about it. It frees us from being bound to one fixed idea.

Marley and Scrooge were focused on their small world of financial dealings, which they took to an extreme. Of course, we cannot compare their attitude with that of the selfless, dedicated and tireless work of those workers immediately engaged in the public health crisis; nevertheless, we might see a parallel in the narrowness of view that afflicted them, and can afflict us if we become too fixated on the immediate material cause of our problems. Scrooge says to the spectre that Jacob was always a good man of business, to which the ghost replies,

*Business! ... Mankind was my business. The common welfare was my business: charity, mercy, forbearance, and benevolence, were, all, my business. The dealings of my trade but a drop of water in the comprehensive ocean of my business!*

Jacob Marley's spirit has learnt and very much taken to heart a hard lesson.

An interesting exercise is to check our various notions and ideas for any possible self-limiting features inherent in them: can the topic I am currently occupied with be thought of or imagined in a wider context, and if so, am I setting it into a greater whole for any benefit that may derive to me, or am I genuinely wanting to do it for the sake of others and/or the environment and so bring about a fuller, sustainable healing for all concerned?

We are ourselves very often the makers of the chains that bind our souls to the earth; we are the cause of our own misery. The source of our discontent is to be found within us, it is the product of our own choices, made in freedom.

The good news is that if our chains truly are of our own making, then it lies in our power to do something about them. Dark forces induce us to create them, but there are light-filled forces (totally independent of any earthly bondage) that would help us to discover the power in ourselves to withstand, and indeed, overcome their workings within us. In the epistle read at Michaelmas in the Act of Consecration, we hear of the archangel who treads the powers of the adversary under his feet, feet which are free of the weight of earth.

Dickens has Marley's ghost bring his message to Scrooge on Christmas Eve, after yet another insufferable day in the counting house. Scrooge is promised three visitations by three spirits: the spirit of the past, of the

present and of the future. All three take place after midnight during the first Holy Night. As he is led by the spirits through the scenes of his life, his soul changes and the chain around it falls away. When, on Christmas morning, he awakens to find that he is still alive and, what's more, it is well and truly Christmas Day, he emerges wonderfully—a new man. He is born anew. For him the spirits have placed his threadbare existence into the framework of his whole life and he has witnessed for himself how those turnings he chose to take have led him into his present condition. This insight has enabled him to shed his 'chains of earthly slavery'. This all takes place under the sway of the One who was born in that night:

*"At this time of the rolling year", the spectre said, "I suffer most. Why did I walk through the crowds of fellow-beings with my eyes turned down, and never raise them to that blessed Star which led the Wise Men to a poor abode?"*

To the last of the spirits Scrooge says,

*"Assure me that I may yet change these shadows you have shown me, by an altered life...I will live in the past, the present, and the future. The spirits of all three shall strive within me. I will not shut out the lessons that they teach."*

Dickens has Scrooge cast off the 'chains of slavery' in the holy night of Christmas Eve. Yet every night in which we enter in sleep into higher realms is a holy night. What we have done in the day is offered up and in the morning we may arise with refreshed intention and purpose.

*Slavery I cannot bear  
I am always me  
Would I submit to anything?  
No, I would rather break.  
  
Come the harshness of fate  
Or the power of man  
Here, this is me and this is how I stay  
And so I persist to the last of my strength.  
  
Therefore I am always only just one thing  
I am always me  
When I climb, I climb high  
If I fall, I fall totally, all the way.*

Ingeborg Bachmann (1926–1973)



# Finding Christ as the middle in times of crisis

Tom Ravetz

*In your middle is he whom you do not yet know (Jn 1:26) and that is because you are rational creatures (logikoi). For it can be shown that in the middle of the whole body is the organ of leadership (hegemonikon), which ... is located in the heart.*

Origen, Commentary on John, Book 6, 38

This beautiful contemplation by the Greek Church Father Origen is based on his theology of the Logos. We humans have a germinal word within us, the *spermatikos logos*, inheritance of our creation by the Creative Word. This is the core of our inner organ of leadership, our *hegemonikon*. For the ancient Greeks, the heart was the centre of the human being, seat of our passions and our will. Here, in our middle, the germinal word waits to be brought to life by us. This is how we rise above the level of the animals; this is how we bring the Logos down into a world of concrete experience. The incarnation of the World-Word in Jesus paves the way for us and serves as inspiration to find our way into the precious middle. Christ's life is both a model and a source of strength, inspiring us to direct ourselves from our thinking heart.

The more usual translation of the passage from the Gospel gives another perspective: '...amongst you there is one whom you do not yet know.' The one who is the power of our middle also lives in our midst, mediator of our togetherness. He is there, 'where two or three are gathered in my name.'

Such thoughts can provide us with a powerful tool for assessing our experiences. Do they strengthen us in our middle and in our togetherness? Or do they pull us out of our centre and

*Tom Ravetz  
is a priest of  
The Christian  
Community, editor  
of Perspectives  
and linker in Great  
Britain and Ireland.*

lead us into extremes and polarities, both inwardly and among each other? It would be a mistake to think that we should necessarily strive to avoid everything upsetting. The purpose of life is not to remain as untouched by the world as possible so that we can stay centred. Rather, we find the middle by losing it again and again. We are always on our way into it and out of it. The incarnation of Christ into the middle of a human being and into the community of those who feel him in their midst gives us courage and creates the possibility to seek the path into the middle ever again.

Right at the beginning of the Corona crisis, I noticed that the health crisis itself, the governmental measures it prompted and the strong reactions of others to these phenomena threatened to draw me out of my middle in various ways. First, I noticed a tendency within myself to pretend to myself—and others—that I was in possession of very clear knowledge about areas such as medicine and epidemiology in which I have very little expertise. I have since realised that this attitude arises in me when I feel insecure or threatened. It was a great relief when I confessed to myself how limited my knowledge is. I resolved to live openly with my questions.

Then I realised that I had unconsciously got drawn into an activity that I had decided some time ago not to do. After 2016, with the Brexit campaign and the presidential election in the USA, I had resolved to stay informed about world events without watching news on the TV or YouTube. In the spring of 2020, video clips were being sent to me from many sides, supposedly explaining or debunking the health crisis. On TV, I could watch politicians making statements that made me feel a level of discomfort similar to what I had experienced in 2016. I wanted to engage with the messages that came from friends because I could tell that they mattered to them. I knew well that I was not in a position to judge them scientifically. Because they were not written texts that I could have engaged with critically, I felt in danger of being swayed by suggestive arguments and presentation. So I experienced a challenge: how could I find a relationship to this flood of information and opinion without losing my own middle?

This led me to reflect again on the fact that the beginning of the path of schooling is the mastery of thinking. Origen's words about allowing

the Logos to take root in us make this all the more real. I sensed a task beyond assessing the factual claims of the video clips: I wanted to understand their effect on me. It was Aristotle who described three means of persuasion: the ethos or character of the speaker; the pathos or emotion of the audience; and the logos, which in this context means the argument. One can achieve great success in persuasion by showing the audience how one has suffered for the truth one is presenting. Moreover, it creates a sense of community when one shows how one shares common concerns and sentiments. What one then brings as a rational statement falls on fertile ground. In contrast, if you start with the logos—the dry argument—the listeners or viewers are ‘cold’ and don’t resonate with your message.

I came to realise that some of the video presentations that my friends were sending me looked like documentaries but in fact belonged to the genre of persuasive argument or propaganda. Not wanting to be captured by their pathos and ethos, I had no compunction about quickly scanning the films until they stated their argument. This often led to further questions: many things were put forward as fact that had become questionable for me in the meantime. I very often experienced a tower of arguments based on an unexplained basic thesis. In conversations with my friends, I tried to discover what had been so persuasive for them. Sometimes, through open questions, I could understand the different experiences that had led to their feeling convinced. Even if we disagreed afterwards, I felt that we had been enriched by our conversation. We had managed to leave space for the one whose realm is our middle.

What filled my email inbox often came from the world that can be dismissed as ‘conspiracy theory’. This is a controversial term: it is often used by those in power to dismiss legitimate critical questions. We know very well that there have been conspiracies in the past, and that governments do not always tell us what is really going on. But I observed that this very fact led to a pendulum swing: my sceptical friends became uncritical of any alternative presentation. Over time, the term conspiracy theory became unsatisfactory to me for another reason. The more I tried to engage with certain videos, the more the conviction grew in me that I was not dealing with open-ended theories that were being subjected to new questioning, but with fully-formed conclusions.

Once again, I discovered a desire to describe not the content but the form of the argument. Philosophers have described three common biases of which we need to be aware, when constructing an argument. Best known is confirmation bias: the tendency only to take seriously evidence that supports a theory we already believe to be true. Proportionality bias assumes that an event with large or serious consequences must have a single cause. Intentionality bias assumes that events with serious consequences must necessarily have been consciously planned. In relation to the interpretations of the Corona crisis, one can find all three types of bias.

I am aware that I am in danger of losing some of my readers with these thoughts. What do such philosophical ideas have to do with Christ, the one who dwells in our middle? My explorations of rhetoric and reasoning did not feel abstract to me. I was deeply distressed when I noticed how my access to some friends was blocked and how even the simplest question could spark a fierce argument. I also noticed how I kept being tempted to declare one view or another to be mine, so that the questioning would finally come to an end. I was startled when I heard about someone in my village going along the shelves in the health food shop, licking jars and bags to demonstrate his conviction that the virus was nothing but a fraud. I noticed how polarising thinking turns into strong emotions, which then lead to unloving impulses of will. The task of finding the open middle, the thinking heart, within myself came to feel more and more important. Understanding what was trying to draw me out of the middle felt like a matter of life and death.

At the beginning of the crisis, many people wondered whether the strict measures taken by many governments were dark foretastes of the enslavement of humanity. Some of the measures that have been enacted since only add to these fears. It behoves us as citizens to always be awake. One lesson from history is that states are usually loath to give up whatever new powers they take on, even for the best of reasons. It is important too to question the nature and extent of the public health measures, based as they are on a view of medicine that is very limited. Now more than ever it is important to make the case for a more holistic picture of health and healing.

However, I noticed that some people's reactions went beyond such healthy questioning when a friend told me how the first lockdown had almost unhinged him. The fact that the state had decreed who he was allowed to meet and where he was allowed to go, triggered an anarchistic rage in him such as he had not experienced since his student days. As I tried to feel into my friend's soul, I remembered noticing years ago that my own image of the state was full of contradictions. This had become clear to me—as so often happens—through someone else's behaviour. A neighbour, talking about a demonstration in London, had expressed his opinion about the police actions. I was a little surprised when this otherwise quite level-headed man told me that the police were nothing other than the agents of the fascist state. Some time afterwards he suffered a break-in at his house. Nothing was stolen, but a window was broken. We met again shortly afterwards. Now he was full of praises for the police officers who had come to see the crime scene. They had been so friendly and helpful and had assured him that they were in the process of catching the youths who had probably committed this crime. Looking into my own soul, I could find both attitudes. I realised that I did not have a concept of the state that took account of all the different opinions I held about it.

When the state began to play such a decisive role at the beginning of the health crisis, I resolved to try to understand more about the nature of the state, in the hope of coming to my own free insights. Are the anarchists right when they say that the state exists only to suppress human individuality? Or is the state the neutral background that makes a free society possible, as liberals believe? In my research, I read quite a bit about Thomas Hobbes, who is considered by many to be the father of modern political theory. Hobbes had lived through the turmoil of the British Civil War. He saw in the state the only protection from the 'war of all against all'. Without the state, people would have to suffer

*continuell feare, and danger of violent death; And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.*

(*Leviathan*, Book I, Chapter 10)

Although he saw in the state our only hope of being lifted out of this misery, Hobbes entitled his book on the state *Leviathan*. *Leviathan* is



the sea monster of Hebrew scripture, the creature of chaos that always threatens to swamp the beautiful order or cosmos.

This ambiguity seems to me to have to do with the fact that the state is a human creation that contains within itself the whole spectrum of human possibilities, both positive and negative. The tendencies that have been reinforced in the Corona crisis have been present for a long time: a system that wants to reduce the individual human being to a data point; a way of thinking that seeks to make everything a commodity. These tendencies will override all else when citizens accept everything passively. Then the state can become a tool of inhuman powers—Leviathan indeed! But these are not the only tendencies that have become apparent in the crisis. Truly humanitarian impulses can be seen in the reports from the frontline of medical help. In the UK at least, the crisis has contributed to a renewed appreciation by the state of the irreplaceable value of human encounters, for example in the classroom. If we wish to see the state and its agents as either simply good or simply evil, we have to ignore the phenomena that speak against that picture. Among other things, this then leads to the strange situations reported by doctors and nurses who take the bus home from their shift and have to experience being shouted at and even spat on because they are agents of the evil state.

Such an example shows how the polarisation of humanity excludes love. We cannot demand that anyone love. We can only start with ourselves. Cultivating our middle as an open space of gentle enquiry enables us to develop loving interest for others. This has nothing to do with the sentimental love that denies differences between us; rather, we can meet each other courageously, bearing our differences and complementing each other.



*Two Clowns  
at the Circus,  
Georges Rouault*

# Why must I die, even though Christ has overcome death?

The desire for life and the grace of dying

Johannes Beurle

On our deathbed, this is no philosophical question—it is an existential one. Why is it so rarely raised earlier? There are two sides to it: the question of our mortality, and the question of the significance of Christ. Our dying and the mystery of Golgotha: do they have anything to do with each other, does Christ's deed have a concrete effect upon my life and my death, or does Christianity turn out, after all, to be merely a myth?

At the beginning of last year, the world was overtaken by an enormous crisis. With great speed a new and potentially deadly virus spread out. Only one thing flourished with even greater speed than the virus: the fear of it. The moment death enters the scene, our hearts are paralysed with mortal fear. We often cease living, merely in order to avoid death. But perhaps our fear of dying is only a distorted image of our longing for eternal life. A great deal of research goes into the question: how can ageing be halted? How can death be delayed for as long as possible? Behind these endeavours one senses the hope that perhaps, one day, it will even be possible to develop a kind of vaccine against death.

In Christianity, too, hope for eternal life plays a role. One might even claim that it was invented there; or perhaps one should say: re-discovered. And yet we too, as good Christians, will one day stand on the threshold of death. And, if not before, then here we ask ourselves that question which we have perhaps so far avoided: why must I die, even though Christ has overcome death? Do the things I believe in still hold good now? Or is it all just a theory?

## Why must we die?

The reason why everything around us must come to an end is that we human beings live in the earthly world. And everything earthly is transi-

tory—not eternal. And so it follows quite reasonably that we also are not eternal. It is only to a very limited extent that the fear of death that has pervaded all mankind during the last few months has anything to do with the corona virus. The empty supermarket shelves showed this particularly clearly. This fear is caused by a different disease, a much more deadly illness, over against which the statistics about corona virus seem positively harmless. It is no new virus; rather, it is the most ancient sickness there is: the sickness of sin. Its symptoms are egotism, fear and materialism. It was through the sickness of sin that death came into the world. We are all suffering from it, we will all, one day, die of it (mortality rate: 100%).

### **How can God permit this?**

Is the death penalty for a transgression against a divine commandment not too severe? We may tend to charge God with having angrily issued a harsh punishment, but we overlook the way in which events took place. If we just read a little further in the story of the Fall, we find that God makes it clear that human beings must leave the Garden of Eden, lest they should also eat of the tree of life, and live forever. From now on, access to the tree of life is barred by a cherub. (Gen. 3, 22ff.) Human beings have tasted of the tree of knowledge, but not only that: it was the serpent who tempted them to do it and who drove the sting of self-seeking into the heart of the human being. In that state, human beings must under no circumstances taste eternal life.

### **What, then, is worth saving for ever?**

Now, eternity is, of course, one of those things! I still well remember many a moment of bliss in my childhood. The weekly bathtime was one of them. If I had had my wish, I would have wanted to stay in that warm bath for ever. It was simply too pleasurable for it ever to end. Alas, mother still always turned up with the towel, and the dream was shattered. As parents, we often have the task of teaching our children that we are living in a finite world. At the same time, this finiteness is also a comfort. If a child has been hurt, we can say to him or her, 'That will pass.' Today, I am glad that my mother took on the role of death in my bath-time experiences. If I were still sitting there today, I would surely be pretty unhappy. At that time I just did not yet know exactly

what my real aims were; I was too caught up in the enjoyment of the pleasurable sensation of the moment. The bath did not do the world any good—only me. Thus our consciousness and our own priorities shift. Until our own morality is fully developed, finiteness bears invaluable comfort within it. Everything passes, errors can be balanced out.

### **The grace and mercy of Death**

In the wider world, Death has taken on this task. He is the hidden door that leads back into heaven. Earthly life really does sometimes resemble a blissful bath time—too pleasant to come to an end—and yet, not all self-seeking has thus far been overcome. How terrible it would be to become entrenched in this state for ever, for the Fall to become fixed for all eternity. For in addition to the self-seeking of Lucifer, the earth-seeking of Ahriman lives in us. Our greatest wish—that we might one day overcome the Fall and be united with the divine world—we do not experience as a longing for the spiritual world; rather, a profound fear of death lives in us, a fear of the spiritual world. This thirst for existence is there to spur us on to achieve something here on earth. But are we here just in order to make ourselves comfortable and stay here for ever? We have a task here on the earth. As an aim it sleeps behind the portal of death. We are to ascend and bring the spirit to the earth. As long as we are not yet able to do that, we may be thankful that the spiritual world ever and again raises us up into the heights—even if it means our having to pass through the portal of death.

### **What did the fact of Christ's dying mean for Death?**

We are here on the earth in order to achieve something. The new access to the tree of life does not lead back to the Garden of Eden but forward into the heavenly Jerusalem, a path from the garden into the city, from nature to culture. It is our task to transform, to ennoble the earth (Rom. 8,19ff). And not only the earth but also—and perhaps particularly so—ourselves. Death takes us back to the spiritual world, but it also interrupts our work here on the earth. How much are we able to transform ourselves in one lifetime? What if we do not manage to overcome our self-seeking

*Johannes  
Beurle is a  
priest of The  
Christian  
Community  
in Karlsruhe,  
Germany.*

and materialism? Has judgement been pronounced upon us? Does it mean that we must begin all over again? Death serves the divine world, and he serves us, although such is not his intention. He is ‘...a part of that power whose intentions are always evil, but who always does the good’, as Mephistopheles says in Goethe’s *Faust*. Death intends to tear us away from our earth-biography. He means to prevent human beings from fulfilling their task on the earth. He seemed nearly to have achieved that—until everything became different. By entering into death on Good Friday, Christ transformed death itself. In informal language we might say: if Death had known whom he was gathering in at that moment he might perhaps have let Christ live! And, just as Death did not succeed in holding Christ back from his task, so he will not succeed with us, either.

### **What does the Mystery of Golgotha mean for our dying?**

Christ overcame death, but not only for himself. At Ascension it is just not Christ’s departure from the earth that we celebrate. One might think: well, now he is in heaven again and everything is the same as before. No—he remained, and he remains with us until the end of days (Matt. 28,20). Through his ascension he united himself with the whole earth and with every human being. Now we meet Christ at the moment of our death—many reports of near-death experiences also tell of this. He is the Lord of our destiny. Thanks to him we may remain united with the consequences of our actions and may balance out our errors. But not only this: we may also be certain that what we have already gained—that in us which is already worthy to endure for ever—will remain. The essential core of our being wanders from incarnation to incarnation, until, thanks to his help, we have so transformed ourselves and the world that even our body is suffused with light. Thus, by stages, he offers us an ever greater share in the eternal life. In this, our faith is the power that goes out to meet his gift to us:

*I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.*  
(John 11, 25f)

First published in *Die Christengemeinschaft* Translation: Jon Madsen



# The Movement for Christian Renewal

## A child of the anthroposophical movement

*Notes from a talk by Vicke von Behr at the Michaelmas 2020 conference in Tuamgraney, Co. Clare*

In 1924, when the nineteenth lesson of the First Class was completed, Rudolf Steiner intended to begin the Second Class at the end of August. He indicated that its content would be a history of the mysteries and the content of the new mysteries. While visiting the Netherlands, he quoted what the Time Spirit, Michael, was teaching about the mysteries. On returning to Dornach he could not begin and instead repeated the First Class. He gave so much in August and September 1924, including the course on the Apocalypse to the priests, which contained a sketch of the Second Class with a short history of the mysteries.

Steiner describes four stages in their development: The ancient Mysteries, which related to the physical body; the semi-ancient Mysteries, before the Mystery of Golgotha, which related to the life-forces or etheric body; the semi-modern Mysteries, which used mantric worship, which included the Roman Catholic Church, and which related to the soul or astral body; and the modern Mysteries, which related in full consciousness to the human I AM. These latter include the First Class and the renewed sacraments—both come from the stream of Michael.

### **Knowledge and sacraments**

Our movement is just a hundred years old, and it has only made its

first steps. It lives in the stream of esoteric Christianity. Up to the twentieth century, both exoteric and esoteric Christianity had their own angel. In *The Mission of the Folk-Souls*, Steiner describes how the archangel of the ancient Greek culture advanced to the standing of a Time Spirit, one of the Archai. When the Roman epoch arrived, this being received a new mission as the angel of exoteric Christianity. In the Celtic folk-soul, a highly gifted angel prepared its cultural mission. Following the demise of the Irish Christian culture, this angel assumed responsibility for esoteric Christianity.

Dionysius the Areopagite, an Athenian initiate, became Christian through St Paul and was asked to lead the first esoteric school of Christianity. Rudolf Steiner describes in a lecture on the Gospel of St John, given in Hamburg, that Dionysius the Areopagite was teaching in his school what has now become Anthroposophy. After the seventh century, the school had to leave Athens and moved to Paris. At St Denis (Dionysius) on Montmartre (*Areopagos*, hill of Ares/Mars), a new Christian esoteric school was established under the guidance of the angel of the Celtic people. That esoteric stream then went on to develop into the Grail stream and later that of the Rosicrucians.

The history of exoteric Christianity is church history. Through Rudolf

Steiner's activity in the Theosophical Society, esoteric Christianity became public and knowledge was shared openly. In 1921 when a group of young people asked him for help in founding a new movement for Christian renewal, he replied: 'Yes, and only with the help of Anthroposophy.'

At the founding of the movement in September 1922, esoteric and exoteric Christianity came together. The esoteric quality of The Christian Community lives within the New Mysteries. Members are called upon not merely to receive in the old way. Now, we celebrate the sacrament together and strive for insight into what is happening: it is to be a celebration with full consciousness, working with the spiritual world. A high level of both consciousness and responsibility is asked for. More and more souls incarnated today are aware of their spiritual nature. The church is no longer to be an outer authority. In times gone by, the churches treated believers like children. Through waking up to inner responsibility and rejecting outer authority, my individual relation to Christ is built by me.

Our question is how to recognise our task in religious life! The ancient mysteries inspired the whole of cultural life through art, science and religion. Steiner described in Paris in 1924 that within all the older mysteries, everything was based on religion. For example, the Book of Leviticus gives directions on how to live from the cradle to the grave.

In the New Mysteries, which are still developing, everything is to be founded on science (of the spirit), which will inspire religious life and artistic life. Among the daughter movements of Spiritual Science are

the Waldorf schools, biodynamic agriculture, anthroposophical medicine and The Christian Community. There is a totally different situation today from the past in celebrating the sacraments. The new service begins: 'Let us fulfil...'. The Offering then includes: 'All who are here present, all who have died...'. All are invited actively to participate in the celebration.

The Latin Mass begins with the words of the priest: 'Introibo ad altare Dei...' (I go to the altar of God...) Believers are visitors and the Christ Being is experienced by visiting Holy Mass. The priest has always been the ordained instrument of the divine. In vestments, he represents the Angel of the Congregation. Without vestments he or she is a pastor, a human being among other human beings. Since the sixteenth century we have to begin to awaken our priestly qualities. Martin Luther called it the 'Priesthood of all believers'. In the Book of Revelations: 'I will make you kings and priests'. A king means to be an authority over the self. A priest is an agent of the divine.

But we are still very few. In the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham is asked to find a community of at least fifty, then forty, thirty, twenty—even ten righteous human beings to save the two cities from destruction. We can conclude from this that it is not our task to become a mass movement, but rather to deepen our esoteric life, so that the Angel of the Congregation can work into our civilisation. This is the task of our second century from 2022, to celebrate actively out of our own priestly qualities together with the priest and the angel of the congregation. In the future we will need to understand more about the spiritual world to be able to cel-

eborate in this way, to be aware of the angel of the congregation. To develop a co-celebrating with the angel of the congregation.

The server represents and speaks for the congregation. 'May he fill thy spirit,' the Spirit of the Angel of the congregation. In the Ordination, the celebrant becomes the Instrument of the Angel of the whole Christian Community. He proclaims that the spirit recognises the just-ordained souls as priests, commissioned in the spirit of Christ.

'When they stand before you, the spirit of Christ (the angel of the congregation) stands before you.' In the gospel prayer we pray that the word of the gospel might be carried by the angel to the ones who are to hear it. The priest is only representing the angel of the congregation when in vestments.

When the priest speaks the words: 'Christ in you,' the angel blesses the congregation. The congregation responds to the angel: 'And may He (Christ) fill thy (Angel) spirit.' There is a breathing and a nourishing back and forth. They feed us and we offer something back. A living relationship between Angel and Congregation. The angel of the congregation is celebrating through the priest and all co-celebrating members. And this happens in the vernacular, so that we can join in what is going on. The words are translated from angel language into human language.

Friedrich Rittelmeyer meditated the Act of Consecration before its first celebration. He often met Rudolf Steiner at night in a vision. Once he asked where the origin of the words of the Act of Consecration was to be found. Steiner replied that he had to go to a place where the German lan-

guage is taught mantrically. Steiner later confirmed that he had to go to such a place (which of course is no earthly address!) to receive the words of the sacrament. Involved were the angel of the German language and the angel of The Cristian Community. The 'translation' to German worked, because the German language has a special possibility of receiving concepts from the spiritual world. For example, *Werden* is a very special word in German. It means 'to become'; it is responsible for the passive form, *geschlagen werden*—to be struck—and also the future form, *wir werden sehen*—'we shall see.' This kind of vividness or vitality was needed for the original translation.

In the Apocalypse of St John (Ch. 8), John looks into the spiritual world and sees an altar. A priestly angel appears and an angelic server brings incense. Prayers rise with the incense. Fire on the altar rains down on the earth—fire about which we hear at the end of the Offering: the fire of love. The Act of Consecration lives in the spiritual world, that we can celebrate it on Earth.

In June 1924, in the second volume of the Karma Lectures, Rudolf Steiner describes the funeral of Edith Maryon who died at the end of May that year. Friedrich Doldinger was the celebrant and Steiner gave the eulogy. In this lecture he describes the origin of the cultus; and that a ritual is not a sacrament when a human being creates it. He gives a picture—imagine a mirror in which a picture of a being reveals itself. A sacrament is a mirror through which a spiritual reality is mirrored down into time and space. In the Act of Consecration is a mirror that gives us an imagination of what is actually a spiritual deed in the divine world.

# Letter

---

*Dear Editor,*

I read the article 'George Floyd and the fire of self-knowledge' by Jonah Evans in the summer edition of *Perspectives* with interest and found his description of the different qualities of the Holy Spirit very helpful indeed.

To quote his summarising sentence: 'we know that flames burn, bring light and warmth'. Through the Holy Spirit we may gain 'light-filled understanding', develop true empathy and awaken our conscience. Jonah Evans characterises conscience in a powerful way: 'And conscience always brings a kind of burning which we call shame, true shame.'

While I was impressed with these thoughts, I was taken aback by what he said next.

He describes his experience of watching the murder of George Floyd on YouTube. I wondered whether it can be right to watch a film of an actual murder. Jonah is clearly appalled by what he perceives when looking into Derek Chauvin's eyes: 'And as I looked into his eyes, I saw no shame. No shame.' I wondered too whether anyone can really be sure

of what Derek felt then and perhaps more importantly what he might be feeling now? Is it right to condemn Derek—or anyone else—on the basis of watching something on YouTube?

I found the next sentence startling, as well: '...I also knew in that moment, that I could do what Derek did. Derek could be me if my karmic circumstance had been different.' I found myself pondering on this statement of Jonah's, about his discovery about himself. If I were to reach the conclusion that I *would not* have done the same, would I be in some kind of denial? I would still seek to identify with and take 'responsibility for evil in humanity' even if this question remains open for me. I feel that to leave the question open acknowledges the darkness in me. To make a statement that I would have done the same makes me feel like I am committing the murder again.

These are just some thoughts arising from Jonah's article. He certainly highlights the challenge of identifying with and taking responsibility for evil in humanity.

*Brigitte Marking*

# Book reviews

---

***The Michael Letters of  
Rudolf Steiner  
The Mission of the Archangel  
Michael***

**Charles Kovacs**

Floris Books, 2021

*Review by Anna Phillips*

*The Michael Letters of Rudolf Steiner, The Mission of the Archangel Michael*, is an elucidation of Rudolf Steiner's last words to the members

of the Anthroposophical Society, left to us in what is commonly known as *The Leading Thoughts*. Among these leading thoughts appear fourteen 'Michael letters', given between August and December 1924 towards the end of Steiner's life, concerning themselves with the mission of the archangel Michael and its direct connection to anthroposophy. These letters form the foundation of this book.

Kovacs is a master story teller. He is at home in all the world's stories, from history, mystery centres, mythologies, fairy tales and legends. In his hands these letters become part of the narrative of human development through the ages, condensing yet illuminating our purpose in just 110 pages. Kovacs captures the inner essence of this development as given to us through Steiner from Michael himself. Michael, the servant of the Sun Spirit, the Christ, works to fulfil his mission of guarding and guiding cosmic intelligence. Also known as Michaelic intelligence, this is what true Michaelites aim to connect to and for which anthroposophy is a door. Members of the Anthroposophical Society belonged previously to the supersensible school of Michael and now find themselves united again on earth. The fundamental need of those souls is to grapple with questions of universal karma: Who are we? Why are we here? What is the meaning of life? Thus the letters presuppose a familiarity with basic anthroposophical knowledge through previous study and may be obtuse to newcomers.

The Michael letters form the core of anthroposophy. Kovacs follows them in the order they were given. The first chapters outline the development of human thinking in earth evolution followed by chapters on Michael's long journey in relation to cosmic intelligence. This cosmic wisdom is freely given away to humanity and it is now up to us what happens to it. Will we give it back or squander it? It becomes clear that it is not only *what* we think but *how* we think that matters. Our thought life is the present battleground with Michael as champion and Ahriman as adversary. Ahriman (his name originating in the ancient Persian lord of darkness) seeks to bind our thoughts to the earth and enslave them so they cannot shine

and freely rise to re-enliven the cosmos and its mighty beings. Our earthbound materialistic thoughts are dead, the human I struggles to live in and through them. Yet there, at the point of deepest darkness we find the light of Christ. Symbolised in the image of the pieta, where a weeping female figure holds a dead Jesus, our thoughts have lost their living light. But Christ's resurrection from death is a reality too, a light hidden in the darkness. With courage, faith and creativity we can find it again, for this gift is eternal and ever-present. It does, however, require our questioning, searching and determination to lift the veils of illusion and darkness until we see clearly. Anthroposophy likewise aims to be a guiding light in the darkness in order that we see what we truly are and may become.

Steiner always asks us deliberately to make an effort to create imaginations from given words, be they on paper or through spoken word. Where Steiner is scientific, Kovacs tells stories. Thanks to his wonderful calm and sure way of leading us through what are fundamental and essential concepts, this effort is made a little easier for us. From clear ideas to imaginative pictures, from difficult-to-grasp spiritual facts to primeval fairy tale images, Kovacs helps us make sense of these in the context of human development and thus weaves a bridge between the known familiar and the cosmic truths hidden behind them. The tales of Snow White and the Little Tailor, the myth of Gilgamesh, and Goethe's fairy tale 'The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily' all have their place as pictorial expressions of this vast historical journey from the realm of the gods into the innermost being of humankind, from spiritual to physical reality. And there, at the turning point of time, our task calls to raise the cosmic intelligence through the eye of the

needle of human intellectual thinking, clear and objective, back to the gods. A free gift now imbued with human warmth and love.

Kovacs was also an accomplished artist and there is a section of coloured plates of his work connected to the theme which lifts and supports the quality of the book, though they were not specifically made for it.

Charles Kovacs, for many years a teacher at the Edinburgh Waldorf School, gave courses in anthroposophically related subjects. He kept meticulous notes from both his English as well as his German talks and lessons, and these are now being published posthumously from his estate. This volume, *The Michael Letters*, has a sister publication in German from 2011 which, though similar in content, nevertheless stands on its own, as each study group Kovacs worked with generated different material. It is a sound springboard and a worthy companion for Steiner's *Leading Thoughts*.

Michael is the guiding spirit of our present age and as such inspires every single human being. He is there for all humanity, not just anthroposophists. He never leaves us. Every one of us has a choice and a chance to look for the light in the darkness, to light a lamp oneself and not hide it under a bushel. Kovacs helps us do this.

## ***Before Birth and Beyond Death***

### ***Transformation of the Human Being***

**Karl König**

Floris Books, £14.99

***Reviewed by Paulamaria Blaxland-de Lange***

On the day that Karl König registered as a medical student at the university

in Vienna he wrote in his diary: 'The sea of materialism will rush in upon me, but I shall stand fast. The world and the Universe are full of God and full of angels and wonders, full of goodness and anger and full of will.'

Today, nearly one hundred years later, this sea of materialism has rushed in like a tsunami and it is pertinent that this volume is published now to make available what—like a prophetic spirit—Karl König brought to the world and which has the power to be helpful and even life-preserving in these darkened times.

Therapeutic education and social therapy show that human need is the foundation of all forms of community building and that human suffering and experience are the anvil upon which the tools necessary to build, sustain and ensoul these communities are hammered into shape and being.

König wrote his 'Christmas Story' after the death of some children in the care of Camphill, which made him ask himself whether, once they had laid aside the inadequate tools they had while on Earth—these children may not form a spiritual community finding a common task for the future.

The gates into and out of life both became profound areas of study and research, as becomes evident from the lectures and articles included in this little volume. König's discovery of Rudolf Steiner's work gave him the courage, knowledge and forms of research that he had longed for, so that he could begin to understand and enter into what lies beyond these gates.

The book is divided into three parts, with an introduction by Michael Bruhn and an Appendix.

The first part, 'About those who have died', consists of a series of lectures given in March 1958, and is divided into three chapters: the first about these



two gates, the second about bridges to those who have died, and the third about the path beyond death.

König begins by addressing the difficulty that we experience when we try to gain entrance to the realm of the dead:

*We should take this to heart and remember it, for time and again we have to take these efforts against the odds that our present age continually sets up by endeavouring to cloud, to hide, to cut off the so-called dead from those who are living here on earth. This is why last time I brought some of the ideas of Rudolf Steiner as exercises of imagination with which we can train the one tool which is given to us here on earth—the power of thought—in order to reach up to the world of the dead.*

He describes how we can use our imagination to change this thought-world from a desert into a beautiful flower garden where the dead can come and be nourished.

Further on König says:

*...in spite of everything that happens, human beings do not perish but live on as the spiritual content of this earth. In spite of everything that we have to meet today, this conviction, this certainty, this determination, this absolute 'yes' to the future of humankind, this we should inscribe into our hearts in the name of Christ...Today dear friends, is not only Palm Sunday, but also the anniversary of Rudolf Steiner's death. It is the thirty-third year after he passed into the spirit realm and left his body which he wore during his life... Let us take this with us because by so doing those who have died will be with us. They will know that not only has Christ risen as the light within their midst, but also that humankind on earth is not lost.*

Two poems follow, first a moving poem about Adalbert Stifter, who committed suicide. I remember a conversation with Rudi Lissau, who was with König in Vienna just before the war: 'the suicide city'. Lissau spoke of the difference between the Father and the Son in the way Rudolf Steiner spoke about suicide. In speaking about suicide, he spoke about the fact that one does this only ever once, because of the torment and suffering in consequence, and how—beyond murder—this is the greater sin, a sin against the Holy Spirit. However, when Rudolf Steiner was confronted with a suicide and a suffering mother, he was the most understanding, healing and helpful comforter. König writes about Adalbert's inner experiences in this latter vein:

*You saw all those  
Who stood by you,  
Given to guide and aid,  
Yet their help was hindrance  
Their love obstruction  
And their affinity the fetter  
Which rendered hopeless  
Your attempted refuge  
From the dungeon of yourself.*

And ending:

*Oh, become once more a human  
And come,  
Descend to Earth again!  
Find here  
The Word and also Mercy  
From the Christ Himself.*

*Oh, have once more the courage  
For being human  
And all that was so wrong  
Will Good become.*

The next poem is called 'Transformation' and deals with the path between

death and birth: 'the human form falls to ash/ Out of eagle-breath-wings/ To earth below.' Then come the awe-inspiring journey and the shedding, and the angel who takes 'all this' and offers it to the higher beings who gift this transformed substance on the re-entry towards life on Earth: 'arm by arm and leg by leg' towards a new body, head to limbs and limbs to head, ashes to the salt of the Earth.

Next are essays on Birth and Death, starting with the way the child experiences death, covering fairy tales and the Fall and the two main experiences that stand at the gates of birth and death: shame and fear, these primal experiences in Adam and Eve, and the relationship of these two to the blood and the nervous system. König brings extraordinary insights into how these are connected both in our bodies, in illness, in our consciousness, in the way these are expressed and experienced after birth and before death, of the restless nature of the blood as the river of forgetfulness and the resting head and nervous system, of the quick turnaround of the cells in the blood and the long lasting cells in the nerves. Both the profound meaning of the actual physical body and the imaginative description of the experiences in this article are worth reading many times over.

In Chapter 5, the moment of death within the yearly and daily rhythm is considered. First writing about the weather and illness, mortality rates and the time of year, also the illnesses of diphtheria and scarlet fever, König quotes extensively from specialists who were publishing around the time of his writing.

Then, in a personal letter, he writes: *I am deeply convinced that diseases do not cause death, but that death—if it is so determined—will attract*

*the disease that it needs in order to loosen the connection between the soul-spirit and the bodily form.*

One cannot help wondering that an understanding such as this could give questions regarding the present time a different colouring.

There follows a remarkable article by Richard Steel about König's researches and artistic representations of Rudolf Steiner's *Calendar of the Soul*:

*It has always struck me as significant that Karl König began his intensive, life-long studies of the anthroposophical Calendar of the Soul in the year 1933, knowing or sensing—we don't really know which—that this symphony of 52 verses was the right inner work to counterbalance the forces of evil and death that were already closing in like a dark cloud over Central Europe.*

He points to his discovery of the 'cosmic reality of the architecture' and concentrates on the four crosses that bring together polar opposites across the circle of 52 verses, those that strongly bring out these two gates of Birth and Death. König receives great comfort from these when confronted by suicide. In his diary when preparing for lectures given in 1963 König writes:

*I begin during the morning to write down my thoughts about suicide in a more extensive manner. The four verses of the Calendar of the Soul are a great help with this, as they have to do with the battle between I and world. With this guideline I can work through the four main motifs that lead to suicide. That is a very helpful recognition that has come to me.*

As mentioned above, it is evident that König's soul was touched and inspired again and again by experiences and meetings with suffering and death, and the resulting serious and strong striving for the spirit. The

gates of birth and death, the figure of Judas that he mentions, and suicide are part of this.

After spending the night in Eberhard Schickler's room and holding the address at his funeral, König noted:

*The night was one of the most difficult I have ever experienced. I can feel the waves of his thoughts'*

And at the end of his life he writes:

*The curative educational attitude needs to express itself in all kinds of social work—in pastoral care, in the care for the elderly, in the rehabilitation of mentally ill and physically handicapped people, in the guidance of orphans and refugees, of suicidal and desperate individuals.*

In the last chapter before the final notes, entitled: 'Soul death—or second death,' Richard Steel continues:

*Not only the metamorphosis of the cross found artistic expression through Karl König. It was during his interment in 1940, when he was in a special way preparing the inner aspects of what was to become the Camphill movement, that he drew pictures for each verse.*

Richard then proceeds in masterly way to help us penetrate into these images.

*...it is noteworthy how this picture shows the opposite of the natural death processes that are in verse 33 for November... In August it is not the 'natural' death that we face, but a step towards the 'second death' or 'soul' death that is described in the Apocalypse of John.... Karl König reminds us of a connection between these two verses of death and the words spoken in the Children's Service, as it is the being of Christ standing at these thresholds:*

*"That leads the living into death that it may live anew; That leads what is dead into life that it may behold the Spirit."*

With this very incomplete picture of the huge content contained in this slight volume of 134 pages. It is well researched with plentiful notes, a comprehensive bibliography and index.

## ***Bridges Between Life and Death***

**Iris Paxino, translated**

**by Cynthia Hindes**

Floris Books, £12.99

***Review by Lucienne van Bergen-  
henegouwen, originally written  
for Camphill Correspondence***

*In earlier times primarily the angels were entrusted with the task of guiding the progression of the dead. Figuratively speaking, we could say that the guardian angels took the deceased with them after their physical death and led them step by step, through the etheric world, soul world and spirit world. The angel's hand guided and conducted the transition from one spiritual level to the next. This has changed, however, with the beginning of a new stage in the spiritual evolution of mankind. It is now increasingly humanity's responsibility consciously and independently to carry out the developmental steps in the life after death. The human beings must also want to walk this path. The angels continue to help the deceased, but they no longer appear as guides; instead they have become the companions and attendants of human beings.*

This quotation shows why this book is of such great value. For progress to take place in the spiritual world the deceased need our help more than ever. Numerous people cross

the threshold unprepared, others are unable to let go of earthly conditions and then there are those who are overwhelmed by an unexpected self image. We need to be the companions of the angels for the work that has to be done in the spirit world. Iris Paxino shows us when and how they need help from us.

In every chapter she builds a bridge to cross the stream of life towards the realm of the spiritual world. I experienced her descriptions of the way through the afterlife as stepping stones on which you cross the river and discover the world of the deceased. She describes very clearly the different stages which the deceased go through, based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner and her own insights and experiences. Thanks to her grandmother, Elena, her connection with death started, and was nurtured by the way she was brought up by her parents. Early in her childhood they let her experience how peaceful a person could be who has died and been laid out. She developed a deep amazement and reverence for the remarkable phenomenon of death.

From birth onwards we undergo an enormous physical transformation through our life and of course also an inner development. The outer transformation is clearly visible. The author makes the inner transformation after we have died visible and understandable. The crossing is not one-sided, but she brings us back to the earthly realm as well. Remarkably often she asks the question: what can we do here on earth to help the souls who have crossed over there? She shows us how a fruitful relationship with the departed can offer practical help. There is one chapter that takes a third of the book: 'Caught

between worlds.' There she describes all the possible difficulties we could meet in the afterlife. Almost everybody will at some point be caught. Just as any incarnated person misses a step in their development or overlooks an opportunity in a phase of their biography, so too it is possible for a deceased soul not to take some steps immediately because they remain trapped in a particular state of consciousness. It is very important to realise this and to find out how to help the ones caught there to continue their journey, by sending them light in our prayers and thoughts. At the same time we become aware of our own 'blind spots,' and can try to really see them and to bring them out of the darkness already during our lifetime here, in preparation for the life after death.

After having read this book I realised once more how much we can do for those across the threshold and what they can do for us. It has given me more openness for what you can give and receive by crossing the bridges, and reminded me how often we are surrounded by our loved ones from beyond the threshold. It has brought me an awareness of all the possibilities for what we can do for them and what we can do to prepare ourselves before we die. I feel gratitude for having been shown the opportunities to cross the bridges over and over again in the way that Iris Paxino has shared.

*Those who have remained behind on Earth have a far greater influence on the dead than the dead person has on himself or others who have also died have upon him...*

Rudolf Steiner

Iris Paxino shows this in her book.

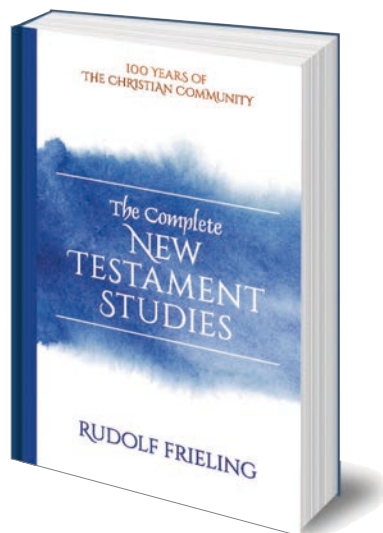
# New From Floris Books

## *A masterful analysis*

When faced with the descriptions of miracles and the teachings and parables of Christ as recorded in the New Testament, it can be difficult to know what to make of them.

Rudolf Frieling was a master of Biblical studies and this comprehensive collection of his New Testament essays draws on his deep knowledge and insight. He returns to the Greek text to shed new light on the meaning and power of the Bible.

This is a highly-regarded work that will be of value to both scholars and readers of the Bible for years to come.



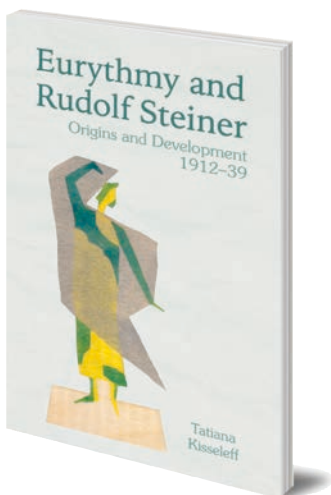
The Complete New Testament Studies

560 pages | hardback | 978-178250-735-2 | RRP: £20.00 | OFFER: £16.00

## *A remarkable journey*

In this book, available for the first time in English, pioneering eurythmist Tatiana Kisseleff describes the spiritual foundations of eurythmy as they were explored in Steiner's lectures and recounts the instruction she received from him.

This is both an eyewitness account of the origins of eurythmy and a record of a deeply personal journey of one person's efforts to master it. It is illustrated throughout with fascinating photographs and drawings.



Eurythmy and Rudolf Steiner: Origins and Development 1912-39 | 212 pages | paperback | 978-178250-738-3  
RRP: £16.99 | OFFER: £13.59

Visit [florisbooks.co.uk](https://florisbooks.co.uk) for 20% off these books & free UK postage.  
Enter offer code **PR821** at the checkout.

Sign up to our mailing list for special offers and a FREE BOOK with every order.

Offer code valid until 31/10/2021.

**SAVE  
20%**

# *Gospel Readings 2021–2022*

## **Advent**

Sunday, November 28.....Luke 21:25–36  
Sunday, December 5.....Luke 21:25–36  
Sunday, December 12.....Luke 21:25–36  
Sunday, December 19.....Luke 21:25–36

## **Christmas**

Saturday, December 25  
Midnight ..... Matthew 1:1–25  
Dawn.....Luke 2:1–20  
Morning ..... John 21:15–25

## **Epiphany**

Thursday, January 6.....Matthew 2:1–12  
Sunday, January 9.....Matthew 2:1–12  
Sunday, January 16.....Luke 2:41–52  
Sunday, January 23.....John 2:1–11  
Sunday, January 30.....Matthew 8:5–13

Sunday, February 6.....Luke 5:17–26  
Sunday, February 13.....Matt. 20:1–16  
Sunday, February 20.....Luke 8:5–18  
Sunday, February 27.....Luke 18:18–34  
Sunday, March 6.....Matthew 4:1–11  
Sunday, March 13....Matthew 17:1–13

## **Passiontide**

Sunday, March 20.....Luke 11:14–36  
Sunday, March 27.....John 6:1–15  
Sunday, April 3.....John 8:1–12

## **Holy Week**

Palm Sunday, April 10 .... Matthew 21:1–11  
Maundy Thursday, Apr. 14 ..Luke 23:13–32  
Good Friday, April 15.....John 19:1–15  
Holy Saturday, April 16.....John 19:16–42

## **Easter**

Sunday, April 17.....Mark 16:1–8  
Sunday, April 24.....John 20:19–31  
Sunday, May 1.....John 10:1–16  
Sunday, May 8.....John 15:1–27  
Sunday, May 15.....John 16:1–33  
Sunday, May 22.....John 14:1–31

## **Ascension**

Thursday, May 26 ..... John 16:24–33  
Sunday, May 29.....John 16:24–33

## **Whitsun**

Sunday, June 5.....John 14:22–31

Wednesday, June 8 .....Luke 19:1–10  
Sunday, June 12.....John 3:1–17  
Sunday, June 19.....1Cor 2:9–16

## **St. John's Tide**

Friday, June 24.....Mark 1:1–11  
Sunday, June 26.....Mark 1:1–11  
Sunday, July 3.....John 1:19–34  
Sunday, July 10.....Matthew 11:2–15  
Sunday, July 17.....Matthew 14:1–14

Sunday, July 24.....Mark 8:27–38  
Sunday, July 31 .....Matthew 7:1–14  
Sunday, August 7.....Luke 15:11–32  
Sunday, August 14.....Luke 9:1–17  
Sunday, August 21.....Luke 18:35–43  
Sunday, August 28.....Mark 7:31–37  
Sunday, September 4.....Luke 10:1–20  
Sunday, September 11 ....Luke 17:5–24  
Sunday, Sept. 18.....Matthew 6:19–34  
Sunday, September 25 ....Luke 7:11–17

## **Michaelmas**

Thursday, Sept. 29 .....Matthew 22:1–14  
Sunday, October 2.....Matthew 22:1–14  
Sunday, October 9.....Ephesians 6:10–20  
Sunday, October 16.....Revelation 12:1–12  
Sunday, October 23.....Revelation 19:11–16

Sunday, October 30...Revelation 3:1–6  
Sunday, Nov. 6.....Revelation 4:1–11  
Sunday, Nov. 13.....Revelation 21:1–14  
Sunday, Nov. 20.....Revelation 22:1–11

## **Advent**

Sunday, November 27.....Luke 21:25–36

There is a basic annual pattern for these readings within which can be local variations.



Visit [florisbooks.co.uk](http://florisbooks.co.uk) for 20% off this book & free UK postage.

Enter offer code **PR821** at the checkout.

SAVE  
20%

Sign up to our mailing list for special offers and a FREE BOOK with every order.

Offer code valid until 31/10/2021.

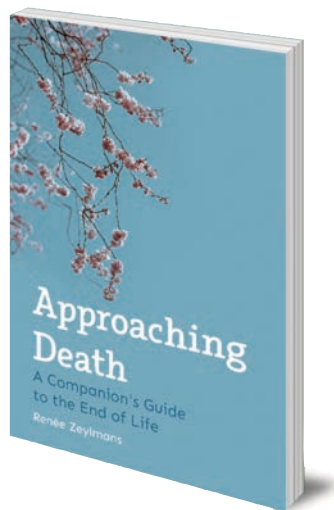
## *'Deeply touching'*

– Annie Blampied-Radojcin,  
Hospice Chaplain

This special book supports the companions of those on their dying journey by offering insights, contemplations and information, rather than methodologies or theories.

Author Renée Zeylmans spent over 30 years helping people to cope with dying and bereavement. Here, she encourages the reader to view the dying journey as reciprocal, asking not only 'how can I travel with the dying', and 'what can I give them', but 'what can they give me?'

Approaching Death | 160 pages | paperback  
978-178250-603-4 | RRP: £14.99 | OFFER: £11.99



Dear Friends,

At Floris Books we constantly strive to publish books you want to read.

So we'd like to take this opportunity to ask for your advice:

- What fascinating books would you love to see translated into English?
- What works or essays should we rediscover?
- Have you written a manuscript that we should read?

We're also interested in hearing about books and authors writing on:

- religion and spirituality
- all aspects of anthroposophy
- biodynamics

Please get in touch by email (details below) to share your recommendations with us.  
We look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

The Floris Books Team

Email: [floris@florisbooks.co.uk](mailto:floris@florisbooks.co.uk)



# Temple Lodge Club

a quiet oasis in the middle of London



**Temple Lodge** is a Georgian listed building in the centre of Hammersmith and was once home to artist Sir Frank Brangwyn. The house is now a guest house welcoming visitors to London from the four corners of the globe. The large studio he built for his work has been refashioned into a space for worship by *The Christian Community* in London. The mezzanine floor has been kept for its historical associations and has been home to *The Gate* vegetarian restaurant for the last 30 years.

Many visitors have described the peace and tranquillity they experience upon entering the house as an oasis amidst the turmoil they leave outside. An experience of the garden can be gained from most windows, and this will be enhanced as a redesigning and replanting of the garden takes place.

The work in the garden follows work to build three new double-bedded garden suites, each with its own en-suite facilities. Guests now have access to and through the garden on their way to the dining room. A hearty and substantial vegetarian/vegan breakfast provides just what is needed for the new day ahead.

Upon becoming members of the **Temple Lodge Club** (£2.00 annual membership) visitors seeking accommodation may share in all the facilities the house has to offer. There is the Reading Corner with newspapers and the Library for reading, relaxing or quiet conversation, the well-used Conference Room with seating for twelve around the table and the unique Lantern Room taking its name from the large octagonal skylight which provides an exceptional, comfortable and adaptable space for many and varied meetings.

All prices include breakfast:

*from £59 per night single room,*

*from £93 per night twin room,*

*from £108 per night double room*

To make a booking:

Tel. 0044 (0) 20 8748 83388

email: [booking@templelodgeclub.com](mailto:booking@templelodgeclub.com)

Or please refer to our website:

[www.templelodgeclub.com](http://www.templelodgeclub.com)

for full and up to date prices and offers.

For any further information or to make a booking, contact:

Temple Lodge Club  
51 Queen Caroline Street  
Hammersmith  
London W6 9QL

Tel: 020 8748 8388

e-mail:

[info@templelodgeclub.com](mailto:info@templelodgeclub.com)

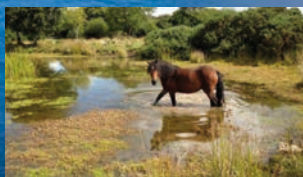
[www.templelodgeclub.com](http://www.templelodgeclub.com)



# Guest Rooms

at

The Christian Community  
23 Chapel Street  
Buckfastleigh TQ11 0AQ



There are four small guest rooms, three single and one double room. Three of the guest rooms have a wash basin; toilets and shower are separate. There is a kitchen for self-catering needs. Local shops and pubs/restaurants are within a couple of minutes walking distance.

Unfortunately we do not have disabled access and there are steps and stairs inside and outside the building. We ask for your consideration regarding the other guests and our events taking place in the house.

Suggested contribution £25 per person per night, one night £30.

Weekly rates available, also pick-ups and drop off for Two Moors Way.

For further information and bookings:

Rev Sabine Haus

01364 64 42 72

Email: [sabine.christian2003@gmail.com](mailto:sabine.christian2003@gmail.com)

## Centres of The Christian Community

### AUSTRALIA

**Adelaide** (08) 8339 6466  
3 Anzac Ridge Road (P.O.B 216)  
Bridgewater, S.A. 5155

**Canberra** (02) 6295 3752  
Civic Square P.O. Box 651,  
ACT 2608

**Melbourne** (03) 9029 2769/7812  
319 Auburn Road, Hawthorn East,  
Victoria 3123

**Sydney** (02) 9810 6690  
PO Box 965, Rozelle, NSW 2039

### CANADA

**Toronto** (905) 709 4544 901  
Rutherford Road,  
Maple, ON L6A 1S2

**Vancouver** (604) 415-0600  
5050 Hastings Street,  
Burnaby, BC V5B 1P6

### NAMIBIA

**Windhoek** +264 (61) 225791  
Uhland Street 3, (Box 11359)  
Windhoek

### NEW ZEALAND

**Auckland** (09) 525 2305  
10 Rawhiti Road, Onehunga  
**Hawkes Bay** (06) 878 4463  
617 Heretaunga Street East,  
Hastings

### SOUTH AFRICA

**Campbell Village**  
(021) 572 5922  
PO Box 1451 Dassenberg 7350

**Cape Town** (021) 762 0793  
39 Timour Hall Road, 7800  
Plumstead

**Johannesburg** (011) 789 3083

46 Dover Street,  
Randburg 2194  
(Box 1065, Ferndale 2160)

**KwaZulu Natal** (031) 768 1665  
148 Kangelani Way, Assagay  
Box 1093, Hillcrest 3650

### UNITED KINGDOM

**Aberdeen**  
8 Spademill Road,  
Aberdeen AB15 4XW

**Bottom** (01287) 661 312  
Danby, Whitby, N. Yorkshire, YO21  
2NJ

**Bristol** c/o Meyer: (0117) 9502  
512  
20 St. John's Road, Clifton,  
Bristol, BS8 2EX

**Buckfastleigh** (01364) 644 272  
23 Chapel Street, Buckfastleigh,  
Devon, TQ11 0AQ

**Canterbury** (01227) 765068  
57, Wincheap or 730882  
Canterbury, CT1 3RX

**Edinburgh** (0131) 229 4514  
21 Napier Road,  
Edinburgh, EH10 5AZ

**Forest Row** (01342) 323 205  
Hartfield Road, Forest Row,  
E. Sussex, RH18 5DZ

**Holywood** (028) 9042 4254  
3 Stewarts Place, Holywood,  
Co. Down, BT18 9DX

**Ilkeston** 07716229409  
Malin House, St. Mary Street,  
Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8AF

**Kings Langley** (01923) 269523

**London** (020) 8748 8388  
51 Queen Caroline Street, London  
W6 9QL

**Malton/York** (01653) 694 391  
The Croft, Highfield Road,  
Old Malton,  
N. Yorkshire YO17 9DB

**Mourne Grange** (028) 4176 0110  
Newry Road, Kilkeel, Newry,  
Co. Down, BT34 4EX

**Stourbridge** (01384) 377 190  
22 Baylie Street,  
Stourbridge

**W. Midlands DY8 1AZ**  
**Stroud** (01453) 762926  
73 Cairnsroad, Stroud,  
Glos. GL5 4HB

### IRELAND

**East Clare** +353 (061) 640967  
Dewsborough  
Tuamgraney  
Co. Clare

### UNITED STATES

**Boston** (617) 277 6266  
366 Washington Street, Brookline,  
MA 02445

**Chicago** (773) 989 9558  
2135 West Wilson  
Chicago, IL 60625

**Denver** (303) 758 7553  
2180 South Madison Street,  
Denver, CO 80210

**Detroit** (248) 546 3611

1320 Camden at Wanda,  
Ferndale, MI 48220

**Los Angeles** (818) 762 2251  
11030 La Maida Street,  
North Hollywood, CA 91601

**New York** (212) 874 5395  
309 West 74<sup>th</sup> Street,  
New York, NY 10023

**Philadelphia** (610) 647 6869  
212 Old Lancaster Road,  
Devon, PA 19333

**Sacramento** (916) 548 4224  
10030 Fair Oaks Blvd.  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

**San Francisco** (415) 928 1715  
906 Divisadero Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115

**Spring Valley** (845) 426 3144  
15 Margetts Road  
Monsey, NY 10952

**Taconic-Berkshire Region**  
christiancommunityhillsdale.com  
10 Green River Lane,  
Hillsdale, NJ 12529

**Washington, D.C. Baltimore Area, also Chapel Hill, NC**  
(301) 935-2727

The Parish House  
4221 Metzgerott Road  
College Park, MD 20740

### OTHER CENTRES IN:

Germany, Switzerland, Austria,  
Czech Republic, Netherlands,  
Belgium, France, Denmark,  
Norway, Sweden, Finland, Estonia,  
Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Japan

September–November 2021