

Mighty MESSENGER

"...A CLASS OF PERFECTED MORTALS WHO HAVE BEEN REBELLION TESTED OR OTHERWISE EQUALLY PROVED AS TO THEIR PERSONAL LOYALTY."

NEWS & OPINIONS FOR READERS OF THE URANTIA BOOK ☿ SPRING 2001

The Urantia Book Enters the Public Domain

The closely watched federal civil case of *Michael Foundation v. Urantia Foundation* ended on June 20th in Oklahoma City, the jury deciding in favor of Michael Foundation. This historic decision declares *The Urantia Book* to be in the public domain, effectively ending Urantia Foundation's domination over the text of the fifth epochal revelation. The jury of eight brought in its decision at approximately 2:30 PM after concluding deliberations that had started on the previous day. Harry McMullan III, a longtime reader of *The Urantia Book* from Oklahoma City, is President of Michael Foundation.

The Oklahoma City trial, which began on June 12th, was the latest installment in a chain of events beginning in the summer of 1999 with the publication of Michael Foundation's *Jesus—A New Revelation*, comprising papers 121-196 (Part IV minus its first paper) of *The*

Urantia Book. Urantia Foundation initially sued Michael Foundation for copyright violation in Arizona, where the judge's ruling that the copyright was invalid in the case of *Urantia Foundation v. Maaherra* had been reversed on appeal. This time, the Foundation's complaint was dismissed on grounds of improper venue—the Foundation failed to provide adequate rationale for filing the suit in Arizona where neither the defendant nor the plaintiff live or do business—and Mr. McMullan counter-sued the Foundation in Oklahoma City, challenging its copyright in *The Urantia Book* and its trademarks. The trademark issues never reached the jury, having been summarily disposed of by Judge West in favor of the Foundation prior to the trial. Urantia Foundation may appeal the jury's findings that led to the copyright decision.

The trial's outcome is bound to affect an agreement between Urantia Foundation and *The Urantia Book* Fellowship signed on March 18 in Chicago. That agreement, reached after many hours of professionally mediated legal negotiations, was designed to address Urantia Foundation allegations of copyright and trademark infringements by the Fellowship on the Fellowship's web site. One of the agreement's provisions is that, should the law no longer protect the trademarks or the copyright, the Fellowship will be in no worse position than if it had not entered into the agreement. It seems then that, while aspects of the agreement dealing with trademarks still hold, it may be necessary to give further thought to those that address copyright issues in light of the Michael Foundation case.

SUMMER SESSION ENTHUSIASM FOR "INVIGORATING FAITH" GROWING

The inspiring theme of "Invigorating Faith" is drawing Urantia Book readers from near and far to Santa Cruz, California, this August 9, 10, 11 and 12. The Summer Session is being held on the picturesque campus of the University of California at Santa Cruz, which is situated high on a hill overlooking the entire Monterey Bay. Lee Smith, of the co-sponsoring Education Committee and Golden Gate Society, states "Experientially, what could be more important than faith?" Once our decision is made to find the Father Infinite, faith is perhaps the fundamental issue that continually faces each of us as we journey forth in our mortal life—and persists in some aspect through our whole Paradise-ascension career.

"The work of the Thought Adjuster constitutes the explanation of the translation of man's primitive and evolutionary sense of duty into that higher and more certain faith in the eternal realities of revelation. There must be perfection hunger in man's heart to insure capacity for comprehending the faith paths to supreme attainment. ... Childlike trust secures man's entrance into the kingdom of heavenly ascent, but progress is wholly dependent on the vigorous exercise of the robust and confident faith of the full-grown man." (p.1118:4)

The three-day session will delve into the realms of faith in relation to: (1) healing and cultivating our relationship with God through living faith; (2) growing in faith through service; and (3) realizing

and celebrating our faith as a prelude to destiny.

Although this is a short Summer Study Session, it will be packed with opportunity for learning, growing, socializing and worshiping together. The Santa Cruz/Monterey Bay environment is designated a national marine sanctuary and offers many scenic attractions for those who want to explore the area before or after the summer session. For additional information check out *The Urantia Book* Fellowship's web site at www.urantiabook.org. There is also a registration form at this site for printing out, mailing or faxing to the Fellowship's office at: 529 Wrightwood Avenue; Chicago, Illinois, 60614. Fax: 773-327-6159 or call at 773-327-0424.

International Conference 2002

The *Urantia Book* Fellowship is pleased to announce that International Conference 2002 (IC02) will be held in Estes Park, Colorado, from Sunday, June 30 to Friday, July 5, 2002. The Fellowship's International Conferences are the largest and most comprehensive *Urantia Book* conferences held anywhere in the world. This gathering is expected to bring together well over a thousand students of *The Urantia Book* and their

families for a 6-day experience of study, fellowship, worship, celebration, recreation and entertainment.

All readers of *The Urantia Book* and their families (including nonreaders) are warmly invited to attend. A full range of programs and activities are available for all age groups and interests.

Estes Park, the site of the conference, boasts some of the most beautiful scenery in

the United States. Set among the Colorado Rocky Mountains, immediately adjacent to Rocky Mountain National Park, the conference facility has over a thousand acres of pristine Colorado woodlands. It is a perfect location for a family vacation.

Further detailed information about IC02 will appear soon in Fellowship publications and on the Fellowship's website: www.urantia-book.org.

First National Conference in México

Some 75 readers and children attended the First National Conference in México, April 10 through 13, at the Monasterio Benedictino Nuestra Señora de Los Angeles in Ahuatepec, Morelos. Sponsored by Grupo Guetza, an independent readership group in México, the conference included active workers from Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil and Chile, who were able to meet with Mexican workers to coordinate translation projects and to plan for future conferences.

Children in the 11- to 14-year group provided short presentations about their favorite *Urantia Book* topics. The whole group voted on the best presentations and the winners (two tied) received scholarships to IC02, thanks to contributions by Dolores Nice and several other readers. A

time of good fellowship and enjoyable study was had by all.

All of Latin America (México in particular) is undergoing a rapid growth of readership, study groups and independent regional reader organizations. A number of scholarships provided by various Fellowship Societies and members helped individuals from México attend who otherwise would not have been able to do so. Facilitating such participation is particularly important during the present period of early growth, because it enables young activists to make contact with each other and to participate in the growing network of revelation workers, which is beginning to encompass all of Latin America.

The website of Grupo Guetza may be found at <http://www.guetza.org>.

Florida Conference

Lake Griffin was the nature setting for a faith odyssey at the Memorial Day weekend conference put on by the Florida Students of *The Urantia Book*. President Bill Beasley and his wife, Sharon, set the tone for a spiritually uplifting and fun-filled experience. The speakers were Gard Jamison, Al Lockett and Stevie Shaefer, who shared their personal experiences with faith, belief and faith, and fear and faith.

Games, exercise, entertainment, workshops and worship created a well balanced and joyous experience, and produced a greater understanding of the need to come together and serve the God

within each other.

"Belief has attained a level of faith when it motivates life and shapes the mode of living. The acceptance of a teaching as true is not faith; that is mere belief. Neither is certainty nor conviction faith. A state of mind attains to faith levels only when it actually dominates the mode of living. Faith is a living attribute of genuine personal religious experience. One believes truth, admires beauty, and reverences goodness, but does not worship them; such an attitude of saving faith is centered on God alone, who is all of these personified and infinitely more." P. 1114

Website News Notes

Internet Domain Name Change

In order to comply with an agreement recently reached with Urantia Foundation, the Fellowship must surrender the domain name "librourantia.org" to Urantia Foundation by the end of the year. Because of this, all Spanish language web services provided by the Fellowship are being moved to the domain "elibro.org." Some 1,500 Spanish-speaking individuals currently make use of the Fellowship's Spanish web services every 24 hours.

Website Usage Continuing to Grow

As of mid-May, the Fellowship website had served over 1,000,000 web pages since January 1, 2001, half of which were in Spanish. Traffic through the website is currently at a level of 2800 individuals every 24 hours. Services are currently being upgraded to enable the provision of good service to increasing numbers of individuals. What's most popular? At the top of the list in both Spanish and English are the papers of Part IV.

Matching Fund for IC02 International Scholarships

The Fellowship has received a generous donation in the amount of \$10,000 for use as a matching fund to generate scholarships for international students of the book to attend IC02 in Estes Park, Colorado. This contribution will be available to match scholarship funds received through the end of the current calendar year. Please send all contributions to the Fellowship office earmarked for the IC02 International Scholarship fund.

Fellowship Reaches Agreement with Urantia Foundation

At 2:30 AM on March 18, following sixteen and a half hours of mediated negotiations in the offices of a Chicago law firm, Urantia Foundation and *The Urantia Book* Fellowship signed a handwritten memorandum of understanding (MOU) designed to resolve differences between the two organizations regarding copyright and trademark issues. The Chicago negotiation session was preceded by a string of communications between the Foundation and the Fellowship over many months, beginning with a Foundation complaint about alleged copyright and trademark violations on the Fellowship's web site. The MOU constitutes a listing of the terms of the agreement. It was agreed that the document, while immediately binding on both sides, required refinement of language and that both sides will continue to work on this refinement until they achieve the final "memorialization" of the agreement. It was also agreed that the two sides would issue a joint public statement about the agreement. Efforts at accomplishing these latter two steps have not yet succeeded, despite a perception on the part of the Fellowship's team that all remaining differences regarding both documents have been resolved.

The Foundation's demands that were on the table prior to the March 17 meeting were essentially the following: 1) The Fellowship should remove all translations of *The Urantia Book*, completed Foundation translations as well as partial or "unauthorized" translations, from its website; 2) Regarding the English text of *The Urantia Book*, the Fellowship must either display an HTML version of the Foundation's text or remove all of the pop-up texts and footnotes from its own version; 3) The Fellowship should stop using its Internet address www.urantiabook.org; 4) The Fellowship should transfer any domain names it had registered which include the words "Urantian" or "Urantia" to the Foundation; 5) The Fellowship should transfer all Real Names that it owns containing the word "Urantia" in any form or combination to Urantia Foundation; 6) The Fellowship should stop using *The Urantia Book* Fellowship as its organizational name.

The essential terms of agreement under the MOU (with some paraphrasing to enhance clarity) are as follows:

1. The Fellowship has a nonexclusive, royalty free license to display on its web site the official English text of *The Urantia Book*. It is required to display a copyright notice in conjunction with this text.

The Fellowship can continue to display its version of the English text, including the paper-section-paragraph reference system, commentary, footnotes and annotations. But the Fellowship's version of the text, termed in this agreement "the study aid text," can only be accessed through a link button provided on the official text page.

2. The Fellowship has a license to link to UF translations of *The Urantia Book* on UF web site and have these translations framed by Fellowship's web page. In line with this provision, the Fellowship will have to remove the UF translations off its own site, but only after the UF is able to provide the translation text to visitors at a download speed equivalent to that currently provided by the Fellowship.

3. The Fellowship shall not provide direct links to "unauthorized" translations. But with regard to languages in which the UF has no published translation, the Fellowship is free to reprint articles that include up to 1,500 words of unauthorized translation if for every translated word there are at least two original words by the writer.

4. The Fellowship shall have a right to continue to use: a) "*The Urantia Book* Fellowship" as its organizational name; b) metatags incorporating any of Urantia Foundation's trademarked words; c) www.urantiabook.org; and d) www.libro-urantia.org (until the latter is transferred to UF).

5. The term of the agreement is perpetual.

6. The parties agree to use mediation and arbitration, if necessary, to resolve disputes arising out of, or relating to, this agreement.

7. The parties agree to give each other reasonable notice and opportunity to cure; i.e., a 60-day standstill to negotiate and resolve differences.

8. The parties mutually agree not to disparage each other.

9. The real names, "*The Urantia Book*" and "LibroUrantia," will be shared through a portal with common links to UF, the Fellowship, IUA and an additional affiliate of the Fellowship to be named later.

10. Should the law no longer protect the trademarks or copyright, then the Fellowship will be in no worse position than if it had not entered into this agreement.

Events in Oklahoma City, subsequent to the signing of this MOU, raise questions regarding some of the agreement's

provisions in light of item 10 above. The Foundation and the Fellowship will need to continue their dialogue in order to achieve clarity with regard to their respective positions. Although complete and final resolution of all differences between the two organizations has not yet been achieved, all concerned can take comfort in the fact that we managed to avert a confrontation in court and that we provided for non-litigious mechanisms for resolving future disputes. Both teams and their attorneys should be commended for their hard work and persistence.

NYC Outreach

After moving to New York City in 1986, I had the good fortune to find a few study groups with a wellspring of dedicated, experienced readers of *The Urantia Book*. About three years later this community of readers became chartered as a society. Shortly thereafter we learned of an opportunity to participate in a new age expo with a booth for *The Urantia Book*. The Jesusonian Foundation provided a beautifully designed booth, books, handouts, some training and encouragement.

We met many isolated readers who never realized there was a community they could be part of. Many other exhibitors and regular attendees began to see us as a well grounded "reality check" in the midst of many fringe new age groups. We had our share of tense interactions with conservative Christians, and many incredibly fulfilling conversations with people who were either receptive to the teachings or at least willing to consider there was something of great value. We also spoke with people who just weren't ready. One of my most memorable exchanges was when a man hurriedly walked by, took a look at us, and said, "OK, I've got 60 seconds. What is this thing?"

We began to give workshops at expos, attempting to give a broad introduction to the book. We began and have been developing our presentation skills and various materials. A few years ago we added a slide show with 30 slides done in question and answer format. Later that year, through a unique series of events, this slide show made it into the hands of Norm Ingram, who took it on his tour of Africa. As an extension to these workshops and expos we had a few follow-up presentations for people interested in knowing more.

(Continued on page 4)

NYC Outreach (Continued from page 3)

After forming an ad hoc outreach committee, we decided to begin a classified advertising campaign, placing small ads in various local publications. Currently, we've decided to focus our print ads in health food venues which offer great visibility to people looking for spiritual and health related alternatives. We've appeared three times on a local cable access show called Light Quest, and published our own website for new and prospective readers. The slide show was refined and developed into a multimedia presentation, which we have on our site. For 3-4 years we've engaged in outreach to the gay & lesbian community. Last fall we put on a topical presentation for the New York interfaith community called "Universal Religion." We mailed a flyer to over 300 interfaith clergy, which was in itself a positive step towards increasing recognition of the book within a focus group we need to reach.

There are many more ideas we feel can be fruitful and are developing. There's no shortage of creativity. We recognize the need for continued outreach to connect with the burgeoning population whose spiritual hunger is attracting them to all manner of new age/alternative thought. There is a myriad of opportunities awaiting us.

Les Jamieson, VP
Urantia Society of Greater New York
www.urantia-nyc.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 14-16, 2001 "Adjuster Attunement" presented by Adventures in Spiritual Living, Aldersgate Retreat House, Pacific Palisades, CA. Contact Victoria Clark: vicgarten@yahoo.com.

October 26-28, 2001 5th Annual Lone Star Roundup Conference, Camp Buckner TX. Theme is "The Infinite Spirit—From Conjoint Actor to Seraphic Ministry." For information, contact Bob Buselli: bbuselli@flash.net or (214) 890-7963.

November 2-4, 2001 Golden Gate Circle Fall Retreat, St. Dorothy's Rest, Camp Meeker, CA (Sonoma County). Theme is "The Universal Father." For further information, contact Delores Nice: dlnice@worldnet.att.net or (650) 369-6803.

What's in a Word?

VICISSITUDE—the quality or state of being changeable. Syn.: 1) CHANGE; 2) DIFFICULTY.

Under the first synonym, vicissitude implies a change great enough to constitute a reversal of what has been. Under the second, it applies to a difficulty or hardship incident to life or a career or a course of action and usually beyond one's control.

We are again confronted with change in the Urantia movement. Will we respond to this vicissitude with grace and dignity?

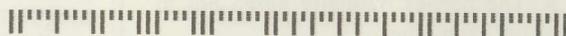
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