

THE ARENA

ANZURA

Volume 6 No 2

The Australian and New Zealand
URANTIA Association

Winter 1999

THE MIND ARENA OF CHOICE

"Mind is your ship, the Adjuster is your pilot, the human will is captain." (page 1217)

Editor's notebook

The Urantia Papers could be spread to half the planet's population in the space of an afternoon. The world wide web, woven so rapidly throughout Urantia's noosphere, makes this possible. At the same time, Urantia Foundation continues its excellent work on many first-rate translations. So where do our tiny, fragile efforts fit into this vast operation? How do we common-or-garden-variety readers contribute? As sincere laborers, ready and willing to help, I'm sure we all occasionally wonder how are our efforts appear to the various celestials on watch. It is difficult to assess our "self" – to see ourselves as we are seen.

The following small piece may help provide perspective, and arouse the feeling of working (playing) with the Master. This image, of our pathetic but sincere best effort being turned into something surprising, is worth keeping in mind as we struggle on this amazing blue-green world. Twinkle friends, twinkle twinkle on!

* * *

"Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE." When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing." Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

And so it is with Michael and we his children on Urantia. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly

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noteworthy. We try our best, but the results are rarely graceful. But with the hand of the Master assisting, our life's work truly can be beautiful. Next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully. You can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "Don't quit. Keep playing."

Feel the Master's loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are there helping you turn your feeble attempts into true masterpieces. And remember that He doesn't call the equipped, *He equips the called*. He will always be near, loving us and guiding us to achieve surprising things."

*Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as others see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.*

Robert Burns

National Study Day

Verner Verass

The saying “a family that prays together stays together” has significance in the unfolding of the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*. So readers in this country gather to turn attention collectively to move us “... from isolation to a sense of belonging”. Such was the topic of study to lift us above the mundane of everyday existence.

Twelve of us gathered in Wollongong – new readers and old, first generation and second generation readers. This mix provided fertile ground for the natural questioning which arises when new information is presented to an enquiring mind.

Our study began with the questions addressed to readers: “are we making progress in living?”, “are we effective in spreading the teachings of the book?”, “what are the most important areas we should turn our attention to?”, “what can I, what can we as a team, be able to achieve?”.

These questions provided lively debate; stories of personal experience tempered with a sense of responsibility and the need to be true to inner leadings. Once the treasures have been appreciated there is a natural tendency to want to share these with others.

So from here we moved on to read the pages indicated in the Study Day letter Rita sent to Study Day hosts two weeks earlier. Starting at the source – “The Divine plan of progress”, we revisited the evolutionary plan as conceived by the Paradise Trinity, the method of ascension from creature to perfected spirit personality through bonafide experience. The pattern for space time perfection, an adventure in which we all play a vital part. How the Father gives of himself, personality and the Thought Adjuster, how the Son bestows himself and reveals the Father, and how the Infinite Spirit puts into operation universal mercy ministry.

What does this tell us? That we are part of a grand plan, that each of us is special, that each of us is loved, that we each have a part to play. Freely we have received, freely should we give. An entrepreneur, a successful businessman, once said to me “The hand that gives, gathers”, he lived by this principle, it was the key to his success. I was impressed how this man, through wisdom and experience with people had achieved material wealth as well as spiritual growth. And he’s never heard of *The URANTIA Book*.

We went on, the next reference considered was the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel as instructed by Jesus to his disciples that they should carry on the work of the kingdom regardless of the consequences. How do we in these times relate to this statement?

Some felt we should be more active in promoting the teachings of *The URANTIA Book* while others felt an evangelistic approach would be counter productive. Most of us have learnt from history and experience and manage

to mix wisdom with our zeal in conversation with family friends and neighbors yet are willing to stand and be counted as faith sons and daughters of God.

We are told the purpose of all education is to foster and further the development of a majestic and well balanced personality. That there is a need for the teaching of moral discipline in place of so much self-gratification and upon such a foundation religion may contribute its spiritual incentive to the enlargement and enrichment of mortal life.

Therefore the challenge for anyone wishing to be of service, is to demonstrate by living – how integral the Teachings of Jesus are to them – as they interact with people.

From the grouping of like minded individuals whole movements grow. We readers are one such grouping and a growing realization of many readers is that there is a lot of personal growth to traverse before we can be welded into an effective instrument of God. We respect the supremacy of God in each other’s lives yet struggle with the notion of seeing the supremacy of that direction when we gather as a group. Perhaps we are waiting for a leader, a sign, a bunch of flowers, a box of chocolates, a miracle. Why wait? We’ve got the ultimate operating manual, lets go!

Said Jesus “by their fruits you shall know them”. This general statement is the gauge by which we can measure the effectiveness of ourselves and others.

THE ARENA

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The Arena is a quarterly publication dedicated to the promotion of goodwill and understanding among readers of The URANTIA Book.

Editorial contributions are welcome.

Subscription rates:

Australia/New Zealand — \$A10 per year.

Other countries — \$A15 per year.

Please remit in Australian currency, cheques made payable to ANZURA.

Interpretations and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of The Arena or URANTIA Foundation. All quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from The URANTIA Book Ó 1955 and used by permission.

Our conversation drifted from one viewpoint to another and as happens when we gather, side issues though interesting talking points, tended to shift the focus from the main topic.

We stopped for that vital tea break and toilet stop, then dived right back into the crystal ball phase of the study – what evolutionary advances need to be made in the near and distant future. Do we have a role to play to advance Australia fair? How can we assist in the quest for the realization of the social achievement of the brotherhood of man?

We reflected on our present problem where the weak and the wicked lie in wait to take unfair advantage of those who are chiefly actuated by devotion to the service of truth, beauty and goodness. "Idealists in each generation must not permit themselves to be exterminated by the baser orders of humanity".

This initiated lively debate on genetics, social engineering, race problems and of course the conflict in Kosovo. The paper, *Life on a Neighbouring Planet*, was also mentioned, which contributed to the realization that mostly, we are just naughty little vegimites with a lot of growing up to do.

While we strive to realize a common purpose for the people of this world we are reminded there is a Planetary Government – an administration which is comprised of seraphim, midwayers and pivotal mortals who are in tune with destiny, working to achieve the goals of planetary progress – health, homelife, racial harmony, world trade, world language, world government.

And so we come to the greatest level to effect divine purpose – Prayer.

What can we as individuals do? What can we as united readers do to improve life? Pray sincerely for the extension of the kingdom of heaven and be willing to do what we can. Prayer, though resorted to in times of trouble ought to be cultivated as a dialogue even when things are going well. In this way we become true instruments of God. Willing workers, not duty-bound slaves; liberated faith sons and daughters of Universe citizenship.

Thanks to Rita for compiling this topic of study – it greatly benefited us all to meet and lift each other to spiritual heights.

In friendship, Verner Verass

“Every interaction we have with another personality either strengthens the presence of the kingdom or tears at the fabric of supremacy, depending on how we enter into the exchange. This is where we, as individuals, are continuously, inexorably altering the course of cosmic evolution, every time we engage in an interaction with another person. Truly, the acts are ours, the consequences, God’s.”

The Millennium Initiative

*Report on Millennium Initiative Meeting
12-14 March 1999*

Worldwide growth of interest in *The URANTIA Book* is bringing increasingly diverse viewpoints into the readership. Embracing this diversity without encouraging sectarian division is one of the major challenges to growth of our movement.

Last weekend, ten concerned readers met to explore how deepened friendship, grounded in a shared dedication to the teachings, might help inspire a new vision for the evolution of our community. We came as individuals, apart from organizational affiliation, to begin our quest free from the divisive legacy of social strife.

The participants were Lyn Lear, Travis Binion, Steve Dreier, David Elders, Seppo Kanerva, Carolyn Kendall, Dan Massey, Nancy Shaffer, and Kathleen Swadling, with Marta Elders facilitating. We began with our shared desire to do the Father’s will, a willingness to listen, and a desire to better understand issues dividing our community. Through confrontation and laughter, debate and prayer, we all came to appreciate that the obstacles to improved social experience with the revelation go far beyond our current legacy of organizational strife to include differences of culture, language, nationality, temperament, personal experience, attitude, spiritual sensitivity, and psychic maturity.

This weekend we began a dialogue that must continue in further meetings. No small group can fully address current or future issues, so this dialogue must expand to include readers of varied cultures, languages, organizations, and viewpoints. Only by considering the full spectrum of possibilities will our movement successfully unify for greater planetary service. We hope this and future meetings will foster a genuine experience of mutual appreciation and goodwill among all who believe in the Urantia Revelation, “*sonship with God, brotherhood with man, and ever-ascending citizenship in the eternal universe.*” [*The URANTIA Book* page 1038:7]

We hope you agree we have nothing to lose and everything to gain by continuing and expanding this dialogue. The will to put our differences behind us and to embrace the diversity of new growth must come from all of us. Free and open discussion is the key to resolution of differences. We will establish communication mechanisms to keep you informed about this work and to facilitate your input to the process. Thank you for your expressions of encouragement, your open-mindedness, and your continuing support.

With faith in our ongoing adventure,

The Millennium Initiative

Announcing the opening of
The URANTIA Book
Internet School

The Internet School sub-committee of the Coordinating Committee is happy to announce that *The URANTIA Book* Internet School (UBIS) will open for registration on June 10, 1999, with the first course beginning on July 5.

Interested readers will find a link to the School on the URANTIA Foundation web site. They will be able to read about the purpose, philosophy, and method of operation of the School, and then click on the page that lists the courses, dates and Teacher/Facilitators.

The first semester will offer nine courses with subject material and topics from all four parts of the book. The results of the "Test Class" held last Fall indicate that the format and participation works best with a maximum of ten students per course. This Internet School is dedicated only to the Study of *The URANTIA Book*, and it is a service sponsored by URANTIA Foundation and the International Urantia Association (IUA) for the community of readers of *The URANTIA Book*.

The organizers wish to welcome your participation in this new project, both as "student readers" and "teacher/facilitators." We hope that the text on the URANTIA Foundation UBIS site will give you a good overview of the purpose, philosophy, and spirit of *The URANTIA Book* Internet School.

Note that it is important to have access to email and the World Wide Web in order to participate. Additional information regarding the UBIS is now available on the URANTIA Foundation's web site, <www.urantia.org>

Courses and schedules will be announced when the School opens on June 10, 1999.

Readers who are interested in serving as a teacher/facilitator may obtain an application form by contacting the UBIS Chairperson:

Dorothy Elder <delder03@sprynet.com>

Evangelical Urantianism

Recently on the Foundation's email discussion list, a thread about evangelical Urantianism was played out. Here is a small sample:

Lee Armstrong <armstrong@unxinc.com> wrote:

Hello Friends on the Forum,

I've recently discussed how many readers in the United States come from a Christian background. They understandably transfer many of their thoughts and feelings about the Christian religion to the study of the teachings of *The URANTIA Book*. In doing this, there can often be a Christian evangelical flavor even to the way UB readers

read together, do conferences, or fellowship. One concern is that while this can make it easier for some to feel comfortable with exploring the Urantia teachings, the style can turn others off. We're also caught with the land-mine that the largest part of *The URANTIA Book* is about Jesus. How does one pursue study of the book without adopting the doctrinal rigidity of traditional evangelical Christianity? Certainly, if we honestly want the Urantia teachings to filter into the whole planet, we want to approach the teachings in such a way that we don't turn off seekers whose backgrounds may be Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish, Shinto, etc.

I'm curious if any of you might have insights which might aid the evolution of my thought on how best to achieve the right balance.

Faternally,

Lee Armstrong

Seppo Kanerva <seppo.kanerva@kolumbus.fi> replied:

I certainly don't have a cure-all answer to your crucially important question and comment. I may only express my concerns which I have felt for a long, long time, viz. those related to the practice of our having worship and unison prayers at conferences and meetings. My observation is that they tend to be basically very Christian in character. I find it difficult to go against the mainstream and start objecting to this practice, but I see a danger there of our giving credence to the notion that the Revelation is a Christian one, and that we are just an offshoot of Christianity.

My guess is that devout Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims etc. do not know very much about Jesus. Consequently, I do not view the restatement of the Fourth Epochal Revelation in our book as an insurmountable obstacle with regard to them; those who profess these major world religions may even find it interesting and intriguing to know things about Jesus which non-UB Christians don't know. But if *The URANTIA Book* and its teachings become associated with any existing church or if it becomes a denomination of its own right such a development is bound to turn into a deterrent for the devotees of Hinduism, Shintoism, Buddhism, etc. They would be bound to view the book and the church that has taken shape around and about it as a rival religion.

Muslims do know about Jesus because Jesus figures also in the Qur'an. Jesus is an anathema for a devout Jew, though. But maybe it would also for them be an attraction to know about Jesus something that nobody else in their community knows.

One who desires to disseminate the teachings among professors of Hinduism, Buddhism, Shinto, etc. should first learn what these religionists stand for, be deeply versed in their teachings, ideas, and the weaknesses and strengths of their dogmas and doctrines.

Best to all,

Seppo

Thought Adjuster attunement

Gerald Harrison, USA

Although I certainly don't want to imply that it is impossible for someone to 'hear' their Adjuster's voice directly (since the UB clearly says it is possible), I suggest that 'hearing' **The Voice**, as such, is very rare. In my life so far, I tend to perceive possible Adjuster influence in retrospect – after I've had some time to observe the 'fruits' of decisions and actions that I made which included an inner appeal for guidance. I emphasize – I believe I have NEVER heard a voice with the uncertain possible exception of the single word *patience* (in combination with a great consoling and loving feeling) many years ago during a time of what for me was 'supreme' stress. If I have been able to respond to the mysterious inner guidance, I believe it has been in a slow growth over many years towards a more unpretentious 'childlike' self-awareness and outlook on life and others. This type of growth, along with that enhanced re-confirmation of what a friend once described as the feeling that 'mom and dad loves us' is how I describe my experience with Thought Adjuster influence.

On this whole subject of inner voices, I have taken the warning given to us in *The URANTIA Book* extremely seriously – that it is much better to err on the side of 'down-playing' an authentic Thought Adjuster communication than to make the mistake of elevating the product of our normal mortal intellect to thinking it was from our Thought Adjuster (or words to that effect).

I'm more than quite content to *never hear voices* while I try to learn how to recognize what, for me, is the much more subtle influence of feelings, urges and nudges in the direction of creative ideas for how to better implement the Golden Rule in responses to real situations in my life. I try a couple of perhaps rather simplistic methods to do this. I try very hard to imagine the literal application of the Golden Rule, i.e. what would I want others to do to me if the roles were reversed. Also, I try to imagine what Jesus would do, or advise, were He faced with the same situation. Sometimes, as a result of this 'inner searching for answers', I believe I get help in the form of *good ideas* to try that have the mark of being consistent with these two 'imaginings' while, at the same time, they are also very practical and do-able – sometimes even very simple, easy and obvious – that I had overlooked previously.

All the while, I'm hoping to grow in my awareness and confidence that a great Universal Parenthood divinely loves and cares for me and everyone else.

"The Adjuster is man's eternity possibility; man is the Adjuster's personality possibility. Your individual Adjusters work to spiritize you in the hope of eternalizing your temporal identity. The Adjusters are saturated with the beautiful and self-bestowing love of the Father of spirits. They truly and divinely love you; they are the prisoners of spirit hope confined within the minds of men. They long for the divinity attainment of your mortal minds that their loneliness may end, that they may be delivered with you from the limitations of material investiture and the habiliments of time."

The URANTIA Book, page 1182

"As the child acquires adaptative versatility for his adult activities through the social and play life of early childhood, so does the indwelling Adjuster achieve skill for the next stage of cosmic life by virtue of the preliminary mortal planning and rehearsing of those activities which have to do with the morontia career."

The URANTIA Book, page 1195

"When it is said that man has identity, it is recognized that he is in possession of a mind circuit which has been placed in subordination to the acts and choosing of the will of the human personality. But this is a material and purely temporary manifestation, just as the human embryo is a transient parasitic stage of human life. Human beings, from a cosmic perspective, are born, live, and die in a relative instant of time; they are not enduring. But mortal personality, through its own choosing, possesses the power of transferring its seat of identity from the passing material-intellect system to the higher morontia-soul system which, in association with the Thought Adjuster, is created as a new vehicle for personality manifestation.

And it is this very power of choice, the universe insignia of freewill creaturehood, that constitutes man's greatest opportunity and his supreme cosmic responsibility. Upon the integrity of the human volition depends the eternal destiny of the future finaliter; upon the sincerity of the mortal free will the divine Adjuster depends for eternal personality; upon the faithfulness of mortal choice the Universal Father depends for the realization of a new ascending son; upon the steadfastness and wisdom of decision-actions the Supreme Being depends for the actuality of experiential evolution."

The URANTIA Book, page 1232-3

Teachers and Leaders

Nancy Bigelow

The following is a note I sent to a friend a day or so after I returned from the symposium held last month in Nashville. My main reason for attending the symposium there - and the previous gathering in Chicago in early November of last year - was to get a handle on personal methodology for disseminating the FER message. I'm trained as a teacher of general science and biology and I had assumed that classical teaching methods would translate to the dissemination of the truths in *The URANTIA Book*. WRONGO!

Last November in Chicago: "Why should we develop teachers and leaders" in the Urantia movement? My response to the question asked of all: Wasn't that the primary reason for our Creator Son's seventh bestowal? Are we not to emulate the master teacher Jesus? Is it not true that the greatest teacher-pattern in all of Nebadon came to 606 in Satania in order to TEACH mankind (by example) how to effectively disseminate the Father's gospel word?!

April 29 - May 2, 1999 - Nashville: "Dear Participant, Thank you for coming to join us in this symposium. The purpose of the symposium is for each of us to take a step forward in our ability to serve others." (Quoted in notebook.) Aren't serving and teaching/leading somewhat synonymous? I do know that serving and ministering are essentially the same activity, and well-trained teachers serve and lead and minister in many capacities.

Chicago, November, 1998: "He who would be greatest among you, let him be server of all." (316.5 and 647.5) "Jesus had sincerely endeavored to lead his followers into the spiritual kingdom as a "teacher", and then as a teacher-healer, but they would not have it so." Soooooo, he "then elected to meet his believers part way and in so doing prepared openly to assume the role of the bestowal Son of God." (1749.5) Appears to me that Jesus - at that point in time - began to openly "share" his Creator truth-spirit; he began ministering in the fashion of the adjutant spirits. Is that what should define a true teacher/leader - a minister of truth who shares personal truth-spirit?

Nashville, April/May, 1999: "We are expecting a great harvest from our time together; thank you for bringing with you a story to share of your own successful experience in sharing truth, a story of a challenging situation in which you presently aspire to share truth, and a parable you have created." (From the symposium notebook.) The focus of the weekend was Paper 132, section 4 - "Personal Ministry." (1460-62) To me, personal ministry is a form of "cosmic socialization." (UB p. 647) "Cosmic socialization constitutes the highest form of personality unification." "The recognition of "true relations" implies a mind competent to discriminate between truth and error. The bestowal Spirit of Truth which invests the human minds of Urantia is unerringly responsive to truth—the

living spirit relationship of all things and all beings as they are co-ordinated in the eternal ascent Godward." What I experienced in both Chicago and Nashville were teachers in the style of the Master - teaching about cosmic socialization.

Chicago: UB page 339 - "The entire ascendant plan of mortal progression is characterized by the practice of giving out to other beings new truth and experience just as soon as acquired. You work your way through the long school of Paradise attainment by serving as teachers to those pupils just behind you in the scale of progression."

Nashville: From the notebook - "A symposium of only a few days cannot impart skills, but it can give ideas for practice. And a symposium can offer the inspiration of hearing others' stories and teamwork in facing challenges in a wonderful spirit of adventure." "Teamwork" and "spirit." UB page 911 - "In civilization much, very much, depends on an enthusiastic and effective load-pulling "spirit". And such "teamwork"—social-cooperation—is dependent on leadership." "Why develop teachers and leaders?" Well, I can guarantee I would not have had an excellent adventure-experience in both Chicago and Nashville were it not for those teachers/leaders who made the magic happen!

Chicago: "The divine plan of education provides for the intimate association of work and instruction. We teach you how best to execute the things we command you to do." (412.4) I remember reading that quote and thinking, cool...the divine plan exists complete with divine teachers who are well-qualified to instruct about the "spirit" of TRUTH with a capital "t!" At that point in time, I knew zip about the reality of "disseminating the teachings;" that's precisely why I made plans to be in Chicago and Nashville. Nancy B. - "wanna be" FER "teacher," and I need qualified teachers to teach me. UB page 43.5 - "Reality is finite on the human level, infinite and eternal on the higher and divine levels." (I remember thinking, I am definitely finite...)

Nashville: It IS true that finite mortals gathering in his name, can co-create a space-time place that transcends that old bugger "finite reality." Something really personally important happened to me in both Chicago and Nashville. UB p. 8 - "All subinfinite orders and phases of personality are associate attainables and are potentially co-creational. The prepersonal, the personal, and the superpersonal are all linked together by mutual potential of co-ordinate attainment, progressive achievement, and cocreational capacity." In both cities, the prepersonal TAs, our mortal persons, and our superpersonal capacities came together in love and truth and I "felt" the fusion.

Honolulu: Back home, and back to the computer and an email note received from a sister who also attended the symposium. She summed-up what "actually happened" in both Chicago and Nashville: "Pretty damn good, huh?!" I could only respond by saying, "Any better, and I would know I was in mansonia."

My definition for a REAL teacher/leader is a person

who knows how to share his or her “spirit” of “personal truth” so that it is FULLY RECEIVED. A teacher is a “minister” of the SOT in the manner of the Master. The assumption is that spirit reality is the most REAL of all reality itself; therefore, the SOT is TRUTH (itself) and the true teacher is one who knows how to impart truth and have it fully received.

Nashville: The “stars” were there at Scarritt-Bennett, but they weren’t the country/western stars we normally associate with the capital city of Tennessee. The stars of the show were all the wonderful teachers and leaders who came from all over the world to teach us how to effectively disseminate the message of the FER. Each of the plenary speakers are teachers who hear the updated version of the SOT and know how to cause us to receive the truth. James Perry, Jane Ploetz, Preston Thomas, and Voyette Perkins-Brown; each knows how to share his or her spirit of personal truth so that it is fully received and acknowledged as truth by others. I know that I felt-experienced the TRUTH in their words.

Jeffrey Wattles, Gard Jameson, Lee Armstrong, and Steve Shinall - I know that I felt-experienced the TRUTH in their words. Every member of Southern Kindred Spirits is a teacher/leader in the truest sense of the words. Everyone who participated in ANY phase of the Chicago OR Nashville experience is a true teacher-minister of the FER message. I do know that I felt-experienced the TRUTH through their words and deeds.

Everyone who gave us music was sharing personal truth; profound knowledge of the Father’s spirit reality. GLF and Bob Solone serve the Father and mortal mankind in a way I cannot describe with words, only tears of joy. I know I definitely felt-experienced TRUTH through their music.

Imo, each of these teachers is spiritualized in the style of the Master and knows how to tap into that “spirit” and make it felt by the finite creature. For me it was as good as it gets - a personal *mano-a-mano* with the Spirit of our Creator “felt” through his sons and daughters - my brothers and sisters.

Chicago: In the summary of ideas about what constitutes a teacher/leader, the word sharing is mentioned only once (in session three.) “Sharing knowledge as a gift makes me a better person.” So true, and imo, knowing how to effectively share knowledge of the truth “as a gift” is the essence of imparting knowledge in the first place! The sons and daughters of God who are the teachers/leaders of the Urantia movement are those who know how to turn the love - from God to his children - into a personal experience of that selfsame LOVE.

Honolulu: Well, that’s what ‘actually happened’ in Chicago and Nashville. One of those “suddenlies” that go directly to the evolution-actualization of the Supreme Being. To those who were not fortunate to be in either place to “share”, you’re “covered” - trust me to tell you the TRUTH...<g>

Nancy Bigelow

but the road can be so long

i have never stood much closer with my eyes so clearly seeing, never knew for sure so strongly of the troubles i’ve been fleeing till i dreamed a dream of angels, who with voices pure did sing of the path my life has taken to the edge of everything...

for these years that i’ve been living, on this orb of spinning dust there have often been those moments when i’ve traded love for lust when my mind knew so much better, but my heart refused to fight so i gave in far too quickly, made the wrong choice, not the right

in a way it’s quite poetic, so much justice when i think of the many chances wasted on my journey to this brink and standing at this chasm, wondering when i’m going to fall i can finally see sincerely why i’ve no one left to call

for days now i’ve been running like some rat stuck in a maze – did the “please God if you help me i will surely change my ways” and God with all His humor has indeed fulfilled this task – i should have listened closely to “be careful what you ask”

still, nothing’s ever wasted if we only will just learn the hope of each tomorrow knows the tide can surely turn and the fact is i’m still living, still have breath and eyes to see – not a bad place for a person to begin on who to be

now i’m going to end this mumbling, the morning breaks the sky and there really isn’t much i find more pleasing to my eye than i’ll wander through my day and with God’s help who can know? perhaps before the nightfall i will spread a bit of glow...

as for the rest, the doubt and worry, the struggle to succeed i think i’ve finally reached my limit, bled out all i had to bleed so let them come and take it, or turn it off, or kick me out – in a million years i’ll wonder what this ever was about

it really doesn’t matter, close this note and please take care and thanks again for listening, it’s been nice to know you’re there... and if for any reason, i can be of help to you just say the word and know that i will do what i can do...

jim

An Ascetic Life, A Computer Age

Monasteries Log On to Higher Power

By Pamela Ferdinand

The Washington Post

Saturday, May 29, 1999

PETERSHAM, Mass.—Brother John Raymond, a Benedictine monk in a belted gray cassock and black boots, rises before dawn each day to join his brothers for vigils, reading and meditation. Then he logs onto his computer. What began as a mundane chore at his rural monastery more than a decade ago—keeping tabs on the mailing list—has blossomed into a second vocation. For hours at a time, Raymond answers e-mail information and prayer requests, researches religious texts and updates an Internet site (www.monksfadoration.org) that broadcasts a live picture of the monastery's chapel 24 hours a day.

To thousands of outsiders, he is known as the "Cyber Monk." "I'm just amazed at the outreach. It's phenomenal," said Raymond, 38, sitting in a cramped office surrounded by metal file cabinets and publications ranging from "Eucharistic Miracles" to a technical troubleshooting guide. "People feel they are part of the monastery even if they are far away."

The presence of religion on the Internet is nothing new. Even the Vatican has a Web site. But only recently, men and women ascetics who shun worldly preoccupations have begun to venture into cyberspace from isolated cloisters worldwide, including a Serbian Orthodox monk who sent e-mail dispatches from Kosovo.

The collision of technology and spirituality is revolutionizing the way many monasteries operate, allowing them to spread the Gospel while making a living. And it is generating discussion among scholars and theologians about the apparent contradiction in the use by those who eschew the modern world of one of its most powerful media.

Among scores of monasteries in the United States that use the Internet, Dominican sisters in Michigan invite prayer requests for their "WebNun." Tibetan monks in New York offer online Buddhist studies and a blessing for cyberspace, and low chimes sound on the site of Coptic Orthodox monks in the California desert who are printers. Trappist monks in Kentucky pitch their abbey's 150th anniversary book after being inundated with orders for fruitcakes, cheese and bourbon fudge. A Benedictine monastery in California solicits donations for its "Adopt-a-Monk" program, while another in New Mexico is producing an interactive online liturgy in collaboration with IBM.

In addition, 15 monasteries in six states work for Electronic Scriptorium Ltd., an electronic cataloguing firm in Leesburg, Va., near Holy Cross Abbey. The company

pays up to \$12 an hour and helps small, often secluded groups support themselves with flexible work that can be performed in virtual silence around scheduled prayer times. "We have an advantage over our competition," joked the company president, Edward M. Leonard. "They are praying for us."

Many monastery members insist that pious Christian lives—dedicated to poverty, chastity and obedience—are not incompatible with the Internet. Electronic commerce and desktop publishing, for instance, build upon such ancient enterprises of monastic life as scriptoria, whereby early monks copied texts in illuminated manuscripts. Today, they are digital scribes, trading quill and ink for monitor and mouse. The computer is a tool that speeds their work and leaves more time for prayer, they said. Recreational online surfing is avoided. "There is no conflict between technology and spirituality, or between technology and simplicity," Sister Anne Mary, a 60-year-old Dominican nun, wrote in an e-mail from Our Lady of Mount Thabor Monastery in Ortonville, Mich. "All things are a reflection of God." Father Luke Dysinger, the librarian at St. Andrew's Abbey in California, agreed, expressing amazement at the amount of Christian and monastic sources available on the Web for free. Surrounded by little more than a post office and a handful of ranches at the foothills of the San Gabriel mountains north of Los Angeles, the monastery already has 14 computers and its Web site receives 10,000 hits per year, he said. "In our lives, text really is a way to God, especially the biblical text and the writings of the early church fathers," said Dysinger, who is 45. "Having it readily available to share with other people is what we've been about since the beginning."

Monastic Web sites, like any other, range from the Spartan to the splendid, and from the holy to the hilarious. Most offer a daily schedule and information about guest retreats, membership and products for sale. Others are more inventive. Internet surfers can click on "Just for fun" at the WebNun page or jump to Right to Life of Michigan. Visitors can read Holy Land news posted by the Franciscan Monastery on Quincy Street in Northeast Washington or "Meet the Friars" and view photos of Brother John "working up a 'sweat' in the refectory" and Father Brian reading the sports page.

More sophisticated—and saturated—than most, Raymond's site for the Monks of Adoration here in central Massachusetts is a fanciful multimedia collage unlike the austere monastery itself, which has only three members and one satellite dish to access Catholic television. The pages feature a witness bulletin board, pictorial tour, daily audio prayers and even cyber serial fiction: "The Adventures of Sister Hildegard."

Guests can also download video clips of Brother Craig Driscoll, 40, the "Mirth Monk" and author of "Love Yourself, so... Hate the Weight," who mocks his technological illiteracy: "The computer is down... What do we do? Give the computer Prozac?"

Manual labor such as farming was out of the question as a means of support for such a tiny group, which largely relies on donations. But computerized commerce clearly was not. On a recent weekday, a well-worn Bible at his desk, Raymond revised the latest edition of his 1997 book, "Catholics on the Internet." He also needed to sift through dozens of e-mail prayer requests to be printed out and placed in the chapel. Prayer via computer is generally welcomed, but not necessarily encouraged, by some monastic orders.

A mother of three in Canada told Raymond she prays each morning in front of the computer screen image transmitted by his Chapel Webcam. "Obviously, God knows their intentions," he said. "But it's the equivalent of going to visit someone versus talking to them on the phone. There's something lacking. The physical experience is important." The value of having cloistered monasteries on the Internet depends on their approach, and whether they make clear that online spirituality is not the same as experiencing faith off-line, said Anne Foerst, a theologian and Massachusetts Institute of Technology research scientist examining the relationship between religion and science.

On the one hand, monasteries are a positive force that "use spirituality and meditation to make the world a better place," she said. But spirituality "often contains this element of splitting yourself off from your body. The only connection between you and cyberspace is the keyboard, and that is not a full being."

Some have no choice. Monastery members cite the needs of would-be parishioners who are ill or disabled and cannot travel to church, or of those in desperate straits who feel most comfortable praying in anonymity. Equally hard to disregard, they said, are messages giving thanks for safe journeys, happy reconciliations, good weather and speedy recoveries. "Bob Updike, who fell from a tractor and broke his neck, has been healed!!" read one e-mail. "Praise God! Thank you for your prayers!!"

The Love For Children

Ron Cyr

"What he (Jesus) aimed at in his life appears to have been a superb self-respect." (page 1582)

If I was going to paraphrase this quote it would come out like: If I genuinely respect myself then I will respect my neighbor. If I respect my neighbor then my neighbor will respect me. If I do not receive the respect from my neighbor then I still have my self-respect because that's what I started with.

As I was thinking about this relationship between how we see others, how we treat others, and how we see ourselves, I got to thinking about parents and their children. Here are some ideas that might help both men and women, as they "rock the cradle".

Parents Certainly Are Misunderstood!

You thought you were happily smiling at your child from a hard stadium seat or a crowded, hot auditorium, but your child looked at your face and saw approval of her and joy in what she was doing.

You thought that you were just patting him on the back or on the head, or just ruffling his hair, but your child cherished the warm loving touch and his heart was brightened.

You thought you were letting your child help paint the house even though the paint got kind of runny and drippy in places, but your child knew that you were working together as a family and felt a sense of accomplishment as a family.

You thought you were singing silly songs or counting the cows on a long boring trip, but your child learned that it was fun being together no matter where you were.

You thought you were spending a few minutes of your time by throwing a ball in the back yard or baking some cookies, but your child, who realized that your time is precious, knew you were investing it in her.

You thought that you asked your child's opinion about something that wasn't too important, but your child thought you asked because his opinions and thoughts were important.

You thought you were being a good host by inviting your child's friends in for a cool snack on a warm summer day, but your child knew that her friends were important to you and always welcome in your home.

You thought the tears in your eyes went unnoticed when your child accomplished an important goal in his life, but your child knew that he was deeply imbedded in your heart and you sensed his accomplishment.

You thought that the refrigerator was as good a place as any for hanging all the art work and "well done" papers that came home from school, but your child felt important when she came home from school each day with something to show, and you tacked it up in her personal hall of fame.

You thought you gave your child some simple chore or job to do and told him, "Well done," with a smile when he did it, but your child learned responsibility and began to realize he could tackle even tougher things.

You thought the vacation wasn't much of a success because the fish didn't bite and the sun didn't shine, but your child still remembers everything that happened and she still laughs at all of the funny parts.

You thought you were just giving her a quick hug at a special moment or "just because," but your child carried it with her for a long time, because what you really said was, "I'm proud of you!", or "I love you!"

You thought you were just giving him a little kiss on the cheek to tell him good bye as he left for school, but your child felt warm and loved because he knew there would be another one waiting for him when he got home.

Peace, balance & harmony.

Fostering religion?

Nancy Bigelow, Hawaii

“A Creator Son of the Eternal Son and a Creative Spirit of the Infinite Spirit created your universe; and while the Father in faithfulness upholds that which they have organized, it devolves upon this Universe Son and this Universe Spirit to foster and sustain their work as well as to minister to the creatures of their own making.” (page 93)

On first reading (many moons ago) I didn't notice the admonition to first-and-always protect the integrity and value of an “original” product in order to foster quality assurance; in order that the product is copied and pro-created inviolate (hopefully) for the life of the product. On first reading I didn't see that the executive trust given to our Universe of Nebadon “parents” is exactly like the trust given in the *Declaration Of Trust* (DOT). We, as reader/believers in the Fifth Epochal Revelation (FER), have “faith” that our “Father in faithfulness” will uphold his end of the message that has been “organized” into the form of *The URANTIA Book*, but it is our primary responsibility to *foster and sustain* the creation that is the FER in book form. In fact, the words in the UB passage seem to suggest that maintaining the original product QUALITY of both Nebadon, and by inference the FER, is somewhat MORE important than dispensing or ministering the product itself. (I must admit that I personally feel an admonition to back-up the Urantia Foundation Trustees “to the hilt” in their efforts to protect the absolute integrity of *The URANTIA Book* in publishing and translations.)

Isn't it a relief to know that the Revelators themselves – by inference – put great importance on fostering their words rather than fostering a creed *about* their words? Isn't it a relief to know that we IUA members are NOT being asked to form a religion, we are being reminded – by inference – to foster “a religion, a philosophy, and a cosmology which is commensurate with man's intellectual and cultural development.”

It appears we are “hearing” the Revelators (by inference), because WE – the UF Trustees, Coordinating Committee, and the IUA members – are endeavoring “in faithfulness,” to do exactly what we have been directed to do by OUR “benefactors”. When connoted as used in the UB quote, the word “foster” means to maintain and sustain and, by inference, includes publishing and distributing an inviolate text-book containing the Fifth Epochal Revelation. By further inference, fostering means to translate that text-book into as many languages as possible without altering the inviolate nature of the message.

We are being true to the trust if we publish and distribute the message itself to the world; if we *foster and sustain* the message itself for the entire world. The mission to “minister” (the message itself) to the mortal creatures on

Urantia, appears to be subject to the level of quality of product, whether it be a universe or a book. The Revelators' words are reminding us to attend to our original product/message first, then we can think about ministering that product to the minions. If that suggested modus operandi is good enough for God the Father, it is certainly good enough for me!

This is not to suggest that I feel we should not move ahead diligently in our dissemination efforts. As executors for the celestials, we do have the ultimate responsibility for disseminating the FER (message) but we must continue to give due diligence to product quality first and foremost.

Quiet moments

John P. Jones

One's moments of quiet and apparent inactivity are perhaps as important if not more so than those times when inspiration seeks us out and raises one to the pinnacles of ecstasy and profound realisation. We see the activities of many who are inclined to get carried away by their “spiritual awaking” and we see the consequences of such events.

With respect to the question of attaining knowledge – there are many factors relative to the “nature” of knowledge. To humans, knowledge, as we recognise it has limitations both of its source and expression. Certain knowledge perceived as having a degree of antiquity has validation and is venerated to the degree of coming from “divine” origins. There are of course many variables of interpretation that are a factor in defining aspects of this way of mans' attempt at coming to terms with the “unknown”. Our journey through this reality and those to follow is a very personal one. Each one of us may use any aspect of “knowing” to come to terms with this process. Many of us understand that truth is relative no matter how it is expressed in the mind. We take all these factors and metamorphose them until they have meaning and therefore value. Some humans know that much of this takes place on a super-conscious level and accept that while we are dealing with all the survival factors relative to our physical being, the spiritual process continues. The beauty in this is that in different ways we can share all this with those who walk this path with us. In doing so we can join forces with them in a great adventure of exploration. It is perhaps the greatest challenge facing beings of creature origin. But there are great dangers in this process which we witness each and every day. The responsibility of showing to others the higher meanings and values of universe reality may be an awesome one. We need great discernment and discretion when undertaking to express ourselves. Inappropriate words, or even a poor expression of the right ones, may have the potential to offend. The challenge is great indeed for every time we attempt to use our limited forms of expression in these matters it may not come out right.

Peace Profound

What is the world waiting to hear?

a response by Ralph Bartley
ralphb@bigpond.com

I have completed a preliminary reading of the document by Jeffrey Wattles [Nov. 1998] entitled "What is the world waiting to hear? etc." I understand some of it, struggle to comprehend some (my problem!) and will need to read much more closely to absorb and decide on the reality. My initial response is that Jeffrey is a "teacher" by nature and/or profession, approaches a broad subject in a scholarly manner and may be, personally, strongly motivated toward evangelism. Nothing wrong with any of that, with reservations. His writing requires considerable digestion of the ideas presented.

However, I have some problems starting with the first two paragraphs. The first is the implication that we, "the readers", have "stewardship" of *The URANTIA Book*. Further, that we, in some way, may be responsible if the 5th Epochal Revelation eventually fades into obscurity. I do not believe that any of these three postulations are likely to be true.

It seems to me that we each need to decide for ourselves:

1. What is *The URANTIA Book*?
2. What is the purpose of *The URANTIA Book*?
3. What are the main teachings of *The URANTIA Book* for each personality, now and tomorrow?

These questions, of themselves, are huge for those of us who are "everyday" people. My initial reaction can be summarised as follows:

1. Religion is a personal matter between any given personality and God.
2. At a point in time, or gradually through various life chances, a personality becomes ready to experience, not necessarily through merit, an expansion of perception into which situation may be introduced *The URANTIA Book* or some other real experience of spiritual meaning and value.
3. *The URANTIA Book* is a book concerned with religion and which makes sense of time, space and many other realities of the finite in which we exist.

Therefore, the answer to "What is the world waiting to hear?" is, probably, nothing and, in particular, not religion! However, I firmly believe that every personality of survival value will, at some time, achieve the "expansion of perception" which will afford them the opportunity to exercise their free will to commence their personal search for God. It may or may not (in the short term probably not) end in discovery of *The URANTIA Book*. Our Paradise Father, in and through Jesus, will work in untold and numerous ways to claim His beloved children.

We should encourage the energy and enthusiasm of persons who feel the need to express their faith through evangelism. BUT there is considerable danger that, over time, such activities can degenerate into cult practices and, worse, fanaticism or duplicity. One of the problems of our study groups is that we are often viewed by outsiders as some sort of cult with all the unfortunate connotations associated with that status. For example, *The URANTIA Book* is usually classified by libraries as "New Age" rather than "Religion." (Whatever new age means!)

Much consideration (and control?) of such activities may be required. Jesus taught and controlled the activities of His apostles (as I understand it) but still they made many mistakes, as did Paul later and many others since, despite their best intentions. Jesus is not currently with us for personal guidance and leadership so it may be better to err on the side of caution in these matters. The motivation to actively promote the teachings of *The URANTIA Book* through evangelism, whilst commendable, may not necessarily be what is required of us in these early days. Bear in mind that even though Eve was motivated in good faith, she could still err in practice. [My understanding. I hope I've got it right!]

In summary, subject to further reading, I see many problems associated with actively promoting the teachings of *The URANTIA Book* through evangelism. It seems to me that needy personalities (of expanded perception) will discover (be led to?) *The URANTIA Book* and from there find structure (the existing readers) in discussion groups. If this is so, it appears that the mission of "everyday" readers could be to work hard to establish a sound, comprehensive structure of groups to welcome these "searchers" into our part of the family of Our Father. [I have to admit that I, personally, have many "Mea Culpa's" to say in regard to this activity... sheer laziness?]

It goes without saying that making *The URANTIA Book* readily available to all who may need it is the ABSOLUTE PRIORITY for the present. The Foundation should be highly congratulated by all of us on their single-mindedness of purpose in this area.

A SUGGESTION: It could be a good idea to include a complimentary bookmark, in each *URANTIA Book* sold, with a printed invitation to inquire, voluntarily, about discussion groups in existence in the country of sale.

Timing can be important...

*"When I die, I want to go peacefully,
in my sleep like Grandpa did,
not screaming like the
passengers in his
car."*

Recently, when a participant on the Foundation's email discussion list wrote to the group about suffering a severe depression, Charlotte responded with ...

Choices

Charlotte Wellen

Dear old friend,

I am writing this message to the entire list, though I am responding specifically to your call for help, because I think your plight is the plight of all humanity and it's a serious and important conversation which we must have with one another, developing methods to pull ourselves out of the illusion of despair.

As several other Urantia lists respondents have assured you, I, too, have encountered a depression severe enough to convince me to consider suicide. Luckily, I escaped and survived. I also have watched depression take over my dear husband and drive him to a breakdown. With a superhuman effort, he survived and recovered. I first wanted to tell you, though in the midst of depression, it is unlikely that you will believe me, you are not alone.

I am not a psychologist, nor a trained counselor. I am the Choices teacher at a non-traditional high school and I have worked for eight years with very bright, creative, at-risk high school students. We use the philosophy of psychologist Dr. William Glasser to approach problems, on a system level and on a personal level as well.

My job is to help people, both staff and students, to consider carefully what they want to accomplish in their lives and what choices they need to make to achieve their goals. For instance, if a student is acting out in classes, he or she can either choose to come to me, or will be sent to me, to carefully consider the choices they've been making and whether they are achieving their goals via these choices. If not, they prepare new choices to try.

This philosophy of thought aligns perfectly with the Urantia teachings — that we are free will creatures above all — and that God so supports this idea of free will that he is willing to tolerate evil, pain, injustice, in order to allow our free will to function. This implies that we should work to develop our wills to their highest capacities, spending time and energy to discover exactly what our wills can accomplish. I suspect that the extent of our abilities to use our wills has barely been imagined and that much is possible once we realize that we are not victims on this planet, but that we have been given the power, inside ourselves, to create our lives as we will them.

Admittedly, there are situations that we cannot control — for instance, weather, accidents, or the choices of other free will creatures. This is the first of Glasser's axioms — the only person whose behavior we can control is our own — though we spend most of our lives simply furious that others won't abide by our own desires.

The idea that the quality of our lives is largely based upon our own free will choices is a very frightening and

angering idea to us when we are in the midst of a depression. We reject the notion that we could possibly be subjecting ourselves to such pain out of a free will choice. We instead repeat phrases over and over, like self-hypnotism, "I can't help it! Stop it! I'm not worth anything! I hate my life! I can't stop this pain from happening except by leaving this planet, which is the last free will decision I am capable of making."

Glasser has a lot to say about our choice of depression. I'd suggest that you get hold of his book, *Choice Theory*, just recently published, for a thorough look at this phenomena, but in a nutshell, Glasser argues that we choose depression for a variety of excellent reasons. Here is a quote from the book, a case study in which he's referring to a young man who is choosing to depress because his wife has left him and a string of other painful situations have occurred recently. "But you are depressing for a good reason. You have just been laid off and feel rejected, even though it was not your fault. You are afraid of another rejection, of facing the fact that there may be no good jobs for you at your age and with your experience. As painful as depressing is, it's less painful at this time than looking for a job and getting rejected again and again... After reading this far, especially if you have recently depressed strongly, you may still say, 'You may be right, but it still doesn't feel as if I'm choosing all this misery.' To check out my claim that depressing is a choice, force yourself to make a different choice for a short time, for at least an hour. Do something physically hard that, under different circumstances, you can easily do and that you usually enjoy, perhaps a brisk walk or a short hard run. If you can do it with a good friend who is not overly sympathetic, so much the better. While you are walking or running, especially with a friend, you will notice you are not depressing. For a short time, you are not thinking about your unhappy relationship, and you feel much better.

"But as soon as you finish, you tend to go back to thinking about the relationship that has gone bad, and the feeling comes back. To depress, you have to keep thinking the unhappy thoughts that keep one or more of the three reasons to depress going. To stop thinking these thoughts, you have to do what I have been suggesting all through this book: change what you want or change your behavior. There is no other way..."

"By far the most uncomfortable of all the choice theory ideas to accept is that our chosen actions and thoughts may have a great deal to do with our health, that these actions and thoughts may adversely affect our physiology..."

"I can assure you that when Todd found the note [from his wife, who was leaving him] on his refrigerator, his brain chemistry instantly changed, as did his feelings, his activity, and what he had been thinking just before he saw that note. He probably wanted to do more, and if he knew choice theory he might have been able to. But, as it was, when he found the note, by choosing to depress, he was able to restrain the urge to get going and do something

active to get her back. That activity, if it included confrontation or even violence, would have made his situation much worse.

“He chose to depress for the same reason that millions of people all over the world choose to depress: an important relationship was not working the way he wanted it to work. Such people who choose to depress are not mentally ill; their brain chemistry is not abnormal. It is changed from what it is when they are happy, but that change is perfectly normal for the total behavior, depressing, they are choosing. As I stated, we all learned to depress when we were very young, and we have been using it, when needed, all our lives. **IT IS ONLY WHEN THE PAIN OF THIS CHOICE GETS SEVERE AND LONG LASTING THAT WE BEGIN TO RECOGNIZE THAT SOMETHING IS SERIOUSLY WRONG.**”

“But few of us are prepared to recognize that something is seriously wrong with our lives. It is more comfortable to blame our discomfort on a mental illness or on abnormal brain chemistry. There is not one person reading this book who is not able to depress strongly when his or her life is out of effective control.”

Glasser encourages us to pay attention to our choices and to become humans who understand how to choose the lives we want. This philosophy is ultimately optimistic, because it acknowledges our true power as free will beings. It negates the lies of the human brain, that we are helpless and stuck in negativity. It allows the spirit of human beings to realize that though particular situations may be out of our control, **our responses** to being in those situations is completely within our control. We can choose to depress for good reasons, as Glasser says, but we can also choose not to depress. This is done by changing our actions, which will lead to a change in our thoughts, feelings and physiology, thus freeing us from depression.

I have noticed, since beginning my study of Choice Theory, that when depression strikes, if I can keep the wherewithal to notice its oncoming, I can outflank it and choose something different to do and soon enough, the choice to depress has been successfully overcome. Usually, I can laugh at myself for choosing it and just say to myself, “Oh! So you’ve decided to choose depression. Well, then! Enjoy it! Get into it and make it a successful choice.” I often find, that just by becoming aware of its existence, it ceases to exist as a necessary choice.

It is my hope that you will find the inner strength to trust your own choices and to take an action that will help you to change your choice to depress before you make a choice to end your life. While life remains there is so much to learn and usually, great pain is the opportunity for great learning.

Please keep us posted as to your well being because we will be worrying about you, surely.

Love,

Charlotte Wellen

Who would delay the Expression?

Robert Hyry

“The great challenge that has been given to mortal man is this: Will you decide to personalize the experiential value meanings of the cosmos into your own evolving selfhood? or by rejecting survival, will you allow these secrets of Supremacy to lie dormant, awaiting the action of another creature at some other time who will in his way attempt a creature contribution to the evolution of the finite God? But that will be his contribution to the Supreme, not yours.” (page 1284)

Each of us is in the process of creating our sphere of reality. This sphere is a reflection of a unique experience and quality of being. Will you become an eternal resource, a reality of values and meanings never before exhibited in the universe for others to reflect to and on or will you allow this opportunity to escape now and be reflected in a unique being at some future point in the movement of time? Maybe the values and meanings you are attempting to achieve are too difficult for you to will into reality. Are you up for the challenge? Is your faith and will strong enough to overcome your perceived difficulties in making this real in the present and on into eternity so that each of us may welcome you into the family? Or will you delay the expression of these unique concepts and experiences in the universe? The decision is each of ours and the sooner we all move forward the sooner we will taste the adventure of the Ultimate. For we cannot begin the pursuit of the Ultimate until we have completed the Supreme and the values and meanings you are attempting to bring forth as an expressionable experience are essential to the completion of the Supreme, otherwise you would not be here. I pray for each of you that we may all move further into the Light.

In Light and Life,

Robert



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Beyond 2000

ANZURA URANTIA Book Conference

October 1–4, 1999

Our 1999 get-together will be held over the October long weekend, beginning on Friday October 1 and closing on the Monday, October 4. Booking forms and further details are included with this edition of *The Arena*.

Here we reprint some general information:

Booth Lodge

22 Grantulla Road, Kallista, 3791, Victoria

The venue for our 1999 conference is Booth Lodge, conveniently located at Kallista in the Dandenong Ranges, less than an hour's drive East of the Melbourne CBD. The forest surrounds and the mountain views will make it difficult to believe that Booth Lodge is only 45 kms from the heart of the bustling city of Melbourne. The grounds that encompass the complex are simply inspirational and present many opportunities for outdoor activities. The Lodge is adjacent to the tranquil Sherbrooke Forest, with panoramic views to Melbourne's southern suburbs, Port Phillip Bay and beyond.

The facilities at Booth Lodge create the perfect environment for a clear thinking conference.

Booth Lodge has four comfortable accommodation units, each with five bedrooms and a syndicate room designed to ensure that your stay is productive and stress-free. The 20 bedrooms all have ensuite bathrooms, reverse cycle air conditioning, king size single beds, a study desk and excellent lighting. All rooms enjoy an inspiring outlook over the tranquil gardens that surround the property. The rooms are large enough to comfortably accommodate up to 40 delegates in a twin-share configuration.



During the conference, there will be time to relax in an environment that allows reflection, socialising, and space to ponder the big picture: *how goes the birth of Urantia's fifth age? Are we helping or hindering?*

* * *

The conference area is fully equipped with the most up to date equipment, and the Centre offers a range of recreational facilities including:

- Spacious lounge with open fire*
- billiards table*
- BYO Bar*
- golf courses nearby*
- contemplation room/chapel*
- extensive garden walks*
- fern gully*
- forest walks*
- golf driving net*
- volleyball court*
- Dandenong Ranges tourist area*

Some of us older folk employ long time units, so this invigorating weekend, only three months away, will come around very quickly. So if you have any ideas with regard to the agenda, possible activities or are ready to go public with that conference seminar to change the world, please make contact with Mr Conference, 1999 –

Bob Reynolds 03 9562 0111

No matter how difficult it is to get away, or how short of time we are, I think the those of us fortunate enough to have attended the last few conferences would agree that our coming together – the gathering of even a hundred minds lit by the light of the dawn of the fifth epoch, contributes to the necessary work of widening channels for the river of truth. Integration of this fresh dose of concept into the main stream of our societies is a social task. Thus it will be effected by *groups* of individuals, enlightened to whatever degree, but all keen to help. And apart from the business at hand, this will be a really great holiday! Looking forward to seeing you all there.



Study Groups in Australia and New Zealand

If you would like your study group listed here, or if details have changed, please contact the Editor.

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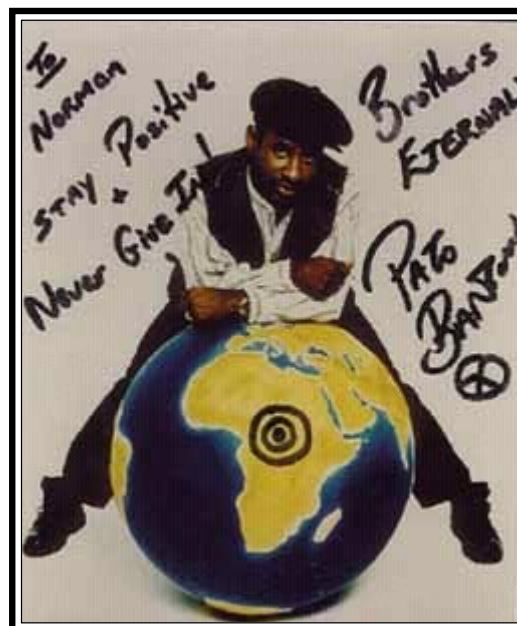
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GODS' BREATH

**We endlessly weave our webs
of gossamer untruths.
Dreaming, scheming, trying to
move each other in the finite.
Finally, as if in exasperation,
the Breath of God
blasts reality into our being.
The shredded wisps settle
guiltily about our heads.**

**Sorry. Sorry Father. We didn't mean
to offend. And the door of the
infinite creaks open another crack
to reveal a further tiny glimpse
of the possible.**

**Accepting the Love of God with faith,
and you in trust,
guides peace to our Spirit.**

E. Ralph Bartley (1993)