

Anthroposophical Society in New Hampshire
Christmas Newsletter
2023



Our Dear Lady of Einsiedeln
One hour S/E of Zürich, 15th century, 4 ft. painted wood.

From: The Sufferings of the Nathan Soul; Anthroposophic Christology on the Eve of World War I, Peter Selg, Steiner Books

On June 1, 1914, Rudolf Steiner spoke in Basel for the last time before the outbreak of World War I, and for the last time ever in all his lectures and writings, about the Nathan soul and its relationship with the Mystery of Golgotha. This internal lecture, given only for members of the Anthroposophical Society, concluded a series of profound Christological reflections begun on September 30, 1913, at the laying of the foundation stone for the St. John's building (later the Goetheanum) in nearby Dornach and culminating—four weeks before the assassination at Sarajevo (that was the spark that ignited the war)—in the motif of "selflessness", whose importance for the future Rudolf Steiner stressed with great and, indeed, unmistakable emphasis.

Here is the lecture, reproduced in full below. It has also been printed as a pamphlet entitled, *The Pre-Earthly Deeds of Christ*.

THE FOUR SACRIFICES OF CHRIST
GA 152 Lecture by Rudolf Steiner given
1 June 1914, Basel

In our present civilization we need, above all, a new knowledge of Christ. This new Christ knowledge is to be gained increasingly through the effects upon us of the science of the spirit. Much, however, that today bears the official seal of Christianity is antagonistic to this new knowledge. It must come to be realized that a school of unselfishness is needed in our present culture. A renewing of responsibility, a deepening of man's moral life, can come only through a training in unselfishness, and under the conditions of the present age only those can go through this school who have won for themselves an understanding of real, all-pervading selflessness.

We can search through the entire evolution of the world without finding a deeper understanding of selflessness than that offered by Christ's appearance upon earth. To know Christ is to go through the school of unselfishness, and to become acquainted with all those incentives to human development that fall gently into our souls, warming and animating every unselfish inclination within us, arousing it from passive to active soul life.

Under the influence of materialism the natural unselfishness of mankind was lost to an extent that will be fully realized only in the distant future. But by contemplating the Mystery of Golgotha, by permeating our knowledge of it with all our feeling, we may acquire again, with our whole soul-being, an education in selflessness. We may say that what Christ did for earthly evolution was included in the fundamental impulse of selflessness, and what He may become for the conscious development of the human soul is the school of unselfishness. We shall best realize this if we consider the Mystery of Golgotha in its most inclusive connection.

This mystery, as we know it, took place once in the physical evolution of the earth. The Being whom we acknowledge as the Christ clothed Himself once in a human body, in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. But this act was preceded by three preparatory steps. Three times earlier something of a similar nature occurred, not as yet on earth but in the spiritual world, and we have in a sense, three Mysteries of Golgotha that had not yet been fulfilled upon the physical plane. Only the fourth took place in the physical realm, as related in the Gospels

and in the Pauline Epistles. This greatest of earthly events was prepared for by three supramundane acts, one taking place in the old Lemurian period and two in the Atlantean. Although these three preparatory events occurred in the supramundane sphere, their power descended to the earth; we shall try to understand the effect of these forces upon human evolution.

In relation to our moral life, our understanding of the world, and in relation to all the activities of our consciousness soul, we must first become selfless. This is a duty of our present culture to the future. Mankind must become more and more selfless; therein lies the future of right living, and of all the deeds of love possible to earthly humanity. Our conscious life is and must be on its way to unselfishness. In a certain connection, essential unselfishness already exists in us, and it would be the greatest misfortune for earthly man if certain sections of his being were as self-seeking as he still is in his moral, intellectual and emotional life. If the same degree of selfishness could take over our senses, it would be a great misfortune because our senses now work in our bodies in a truly unselfish manner.

We have eyes in our body; through these eyes we see, but only because they are selfless and we do not feel them. We see things through them, but the eyes themselves are apart from our perception; it is the same with the other senses. Let us assume that our eyes were self-seeking. What would happen to men? We should approach the color blue, for example, and because our eyes would use up the color immediately within themselves instead of letting it pass through, we should feel a sort of suction in the eyes. If our eyes were as selfish as we are in our moral, intellectual and emotional life, and they wished to experience the effect of red in themselves, we should feel a sharp stab. If our eyes were self-seeking, all our impressions would give us sucking or stabbing pains. We should be painfully conscious that we have eyes. Today, however, humanity is aware of color and light without having to think of the seeing process. The eye is selflessly extinguished during perception. It is the same with the other senses.

In our senses unselfishness reigns, but they would never have reached this unselfishness if Lucifer, even in the old Lemurian age, had been left to his own devices. The spirit who said, as related in the Bible, "Your eyes shall be opened," made it necessary to transfer man to a sphere of earthly life in which his eyes, if they had developed as they would have done under Lucifer's influence, would have become self-seeking. With every impression — and it would have been the same with the other senses — man would have cried out, "Oh, it stabs me here!" He would not have perceived red in his environment. Or he would have said, "Oh, something sucks in my eyes!" He would not have been aware of the color blue, but would have simply felt the suction. This danger to humanity was averted in the Lemurian age by a Being Who later, through the Mystery of Golgotha, incarnated in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. In this earlier age, however, He ensouled Himself — I cannot say incarnated — in one of the archangels.

While the earth was working through the Lemurian age, a Being living in spiritual heights became manifest — one might say, as a sort of prophecy of John's baptism — in an archangel who offered up his soul powers, and was thus permeated by the Christ. Through this means a force was released that acted within human evolution upon earth. Its effect was a quieting and harmonizing of our senses so that today we can use them and find them selfless. If we, understanding this, have become grateful to the world order, we shall say, looking back to these ancient times, that what makes it possible for us as sensory beings to enjoy without pain all the splendor of surrounding nature is Christ's first sacrifice. By ensouling Himself in an archangel He brought forth the power to avert the danger of the selfish senses in man. That was the first step leading to the Mystery of Golgotha.

The human being will gradually learn to develop this deep, significant and religious feeling when he is confronted with the beauty of nature, when he looks up at the starry heavens and at all that the sun illumines in the animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms. He will learn to say, "That I am so placed in the world that I can look at it around me, my senses being instruments for the perception of its splendor rather than sources of pain, I owe to Christ's first sacrifice in preparation for the Mystery of Golgotha." In perspective we see before us a time in which all observation and enjoyment of nature will be permeated by Christ; when men, refreshing themselves in an invigorating springtime, in the warmth of summer, or in any of the other delights of nature, will say to themselves, "In taking up all this beauty into ourselves, we must realize that it is not ourselves, but Christ within our senses Who enables us to experience it."

In the first period of the Atlantean evolution selfishness tried — this time through Lucifer and Ahriman — to take possession of another part of the human organism; that is, the vital organs. With this in mind, let us consider what is intrinsic in our life-organism. What is its essential nature? You need only think what it is like when injured by organic disease. Then man begins to suffer from the self-seeking of heart, lungs, stomach or other organs, and the time comes when man knows that he has a heart or stomach, knows it by direct experience, because he has a pain. To be ill means that an organ has become selfish and is leading its own independent life within us. In ordinary normal conditions this is not the case. Then the single organs live selflessly within us. Our everyday constitution holds us up securely in the physical world only when we do not feel that we have stomach, lungs, etc., but have them without feeling them, when they do not demand our attention but remain unselfish servants of the body.

On some other occasion and at some other time we shall consider the reason why illness results from the selfishness of our organs. Today we will confine our discussion to normal conditions. Had it depended upon Lucifer and Ahriman, quite a different state would have existed as early as the Atlantean period. Every single human organ would have been self-seeking, and the results most extraordinary. Assume, for example, that the human being looked at a fruit or something else in the outer world that can be eaten, or that stands in some sort of relation to his vital organs. Someday these relations of the outer world with our organs will be the subject of genuine scientific study. If the other sciences allow themselves to be aligned with spiritual science, it will be known that when a human being gathers cherries from a tree and eats them, something enters with the cherries that is related to a particular organ; other fruits are related to other organs. Everything that enters the human organism is in some way related to it. If Lucifer and Ahriman could have carried out their designs during the Atlantean period, then, when we picked cherries, for example, the related organ would have felt an inordinate greed. The human being would have felt, not the self-seeking organ only, but all the other organs also, striving against it with equal selfishness! Let us take a different case. Suppose something harmful were present, for while certain things in the world are related to humanity in a beneficial way, others affect it injuriously. Suppose someone were to approach a poisonous plant, or anything else harmful to this or that organ; he would then recognize that he was confronting something that gave a burnt out feeling to one of his organs.

Now let us consider not what we eat, but the air surrounding us. Every element of the atmosphere is related to our organs. If we had become what Lucifer and Ahriman intended and had been thrown upon our own resources, we should have been chased about the world by animal desires for what satisfied one organ or another, or by terrible disgust for all that was injurious. Just imagine how we could possibly develop ourselves in this world if we had such physical organs that we were tossed to and fro like a rubber ball, a plaything for every agreeable odor that we would run after, or were forced by nausea to flee from. That this did not happen, that our vital organs were

subdued and harmonized resulted from the great event in the first Atlantean epoch when, in supramundane spheres, the second step was taken toward the Mystery of Golgotha. The Christ Being ensouled Himself again in an archangel, and what was accomplished by this deed shone down into the earth's atmosphere. Then that harmonizing and balancing of the vital organs took place that rendered them selfless. In our connection with the outer world we should be continuously exposed to severe illnesses and we could not be at all healthy but for this second Christ event. We see in perspective for the future that the human being will acquire, when he is able to imbue himself with a true understanding of the spiritual world, a feeling of gratitude toward the spiritual beings upon whom humanity depends. He will say in true piety, "I realize that I am able to exist as a physical man with unselfish organs because not I alone have developed myself in the world, but Christ in me, Who has so conditioned my organs that I can be a man!" Thus we come to learn so to regard all that makes us human, fundamentally and in the most comprehensive sense, that we say, "Not I, but Christ in me." In His three preparatory steps, taken before the actual Mystery of Golgotha, Christ provided for the complete evolution of humanity.

In the last part of the Atlantean period humanity faced a third danger. Thinking, feeling and willing were threatened with disorder through the entrance of selfishness. What would have been the result of this? Well, the human being would have intended this or that, and followed this or that impulse of will, while his thinking would have impelled him in quite a different direction, and his feeling in still another. It was necessary for human evolution that thinking, feeling and willing should become unselfish members of the united soul. Under the influence of Lucifer and Ahriman they could not have done this. Thought, feeling and will, becoming independently self-seeking, would have rent asunder the harmonious working of the Christ. In consequence, toward the end of the Atlantean evolution, the third Christ event occurred. Once more the Christ Being ensouled Himself in an archangel, and the power thus generated in the spiritual world made possible the harmonization of thinking, feeling and willing. Truly, as the rays of the physical sun must act upon earth to prevent the withering of plant life, so must the Sun Spirit be reflected upon earth from supramundane spheres as I have just explained. What would have become of the human being without this third Christ event? As if by furies, he would have been seized by his unruly desires, by the activity of his will. He might have gone mad even though his self-seeking reason might have thought with scornful mockery about all that the raging will brought forth. This was averted by the third Christ event when Christ took for the third time the soul of an archangel as an outer vehicle.

Mankind has preserved some memory of how human passion and human thinking were harmonized at this period by forces that descended from supramundane worlds, but the sign of this memory is not rightly understood. St. George who conquers the dragon, or Michael who conquers the dragon, are symbols of the third Christ event, when Christ ensouled Himself in an archangel. It is the dragon, trodden under foot, that has brought thinking, feeling and willing into disorder. All who turn their gaze upon St. George or Michael with the dragon, or some similar episode, perceive, in reality, the third Christ event. The Greeks who in their wonderful mythology made copies of what happened in the spiritual world at the end of the Atlantean age, revered the Sun Spirit as the harmonizer of man's thinking, feeling and willing. "Thou Sun Spirit," so said those who knew something about it, "Thou hast ensouled Thyself in an etheric spirit form," for such is the form of those we call archangels today; "Thou has brought thinking, feeling and willing, which might otherwise rage through us in confusion, into order with Thy lyre, sounding upon it harmoniously the tones of the human soul!"

So the Sun Spirit became the guardian of the wild, stormy passions when they, as it sometimes happened, gushed forth in the fumes that rise from within the earth and break through its surface. If a human being should expose himself to them and allow only these vapors to work upon him, then thought, feeling and will would rage madly within him. The Greeks placed the Pythia over those vapors, which, in rising out of the earth, bring the passions into disorder through Lucifer and Ahriman. But Apollo shone upon the Pythia, conquered the unruly passions and she became a sibyl. For the Greeks, Apollo, the Sun Spirit, represented the Christ at the stage of His third sacrifice, and the results of Christ's deed were discerned in the attuning of men's passions under the power of the Pythia, conferred upon her by the god Apollo. In this connection Apollo was to the Greeks what is expressed in the victory of Michael or St. George over the dragon.

We see also the meaning of the extraordinary pronouncement of Justin Martyr, a saying which, since it emanated from him, we must regard as Christian, although many representatives of Christianity today would consider it heretical. Justin said, "Heraclites, Socrates and Plato were also Christians, the only kind of Christians possible before the actual consummation of the Mystery of Golgotha."

Theologians of today no longer realize it but in the first centuries of Christianity the Christian martyrs still knew that the old Greek sages, although they did not use the name of Christ, if asked about Apollo, would have answered out of their Mystery wisdom, "The great Sun Spirit, Who in the future will live as a man on earth, appears to us in Apollo as though ensouled in him in the form of an archangel."

Then came the fourth, the earthly mystery, that of Golgotha. The same Christ Being Who had ensouled Himself three times in archangelic form incarnated through what we call the Baptism by John in the Jordan in the body of Jesus of Nazareth.

I admit that it may seem strange when I say that this great Being was ensouled three times in an archangelic form, and then incarnated in a human being. It would seem a more orderly progression if between His ensoulment as an archangel and His human incarnation He had taken an angelic form. So it may seem to us. Yet, even though it is claimed that the statements of spiritual science are fictitious, truly it is not so. You may gather this from corroborative evidence. If you ask me how it happens that Christ did not descend from hierarchy to hierarchy and only afterward to man — if you were to ask me that, I could only answer that I do not know, for I never make theoretical combinations. The facts adduced by spiritual research are that Christ chose three times an archangelic form, leaving out the angelic form, and then made use of a human body. I leave it to future research to determine the reason, which I do not yet know, though I do know that it is true.

Then came the fourth step in the Mystery of Golgotha, and this averted another danger, that of the Luciferic and Ahrimanic influences upon the human ego or I. In the Lemurian age the sense organs would have become disordered through Lucifer; in the first Atlantean period the vital organs were threatened with disorder and disharmony, and in the late Atlantean era the soul organs, the organs that underlie thinking, feeling and willing. In the post-Atlantean period the human ego itself was endangered.

Because the ego or I at this time was to take its place as a living factor in human evolution, an effort was made to establish harmony between this ego and the powers of the cosmos lest it become their plaything. This might have happened. The ego might have so developed that it could not keep a hold upon itself, and had it been delivered to these forces, everything that came from the soul would have been overpowered by all sorts of elemental forces that arise from wind, air or water. They would have driven the human being violently in all directions.

Michelangelo painted it. In the Sibyls he showed what had threatened mankind. With wonderful skill he made them express the human types of those who felt the coming derangement of the ego, so that although all possible wisdom might come forth, human beings could neither manage nor direct it. Look at the way in which Michelangelo has painted the different degrees of derangement in egos given over to elemental beings.

Upon the other side, however, he gives us something else. In the same space he has painted the musing figures of prophecy whose aspect shows the illumination of what preserves the integrity of the ego toward the cosmos. It touches us deeply when we see in the prophets the urgency, the pressure toward the ego and, on the other side, human beings suffering disorder through the ego itself. Then, standing in this space, is the Christ, incarnate in a human body, Who had to bring into order and harmony the ego that was to come into the world. Yes, the science of the spirit will impress upon us ever more deeply that this human ego, through the fourth Christ event, the Mystery of Golgotha, can come to true unselfishness. The senses have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." The vital organs have said, "Not I, but Christ in us." In his moral and intellectual life man must learn to say, "Not I, but Christ in me." Every step into the spiritual world shows us this. I wished to explain this today in order that upon another occasion in the near future we may offer certain occult proofs of these facts in order to show that what we call spiritual science will pour itself into our moral and intellectual lives in such a way that human beings may become students of selflessness, that Christ may live within us so that we may feel Him vitally in every word that is uttered in discussions of spiritual science.

One more thing, my dear friends. You know that since 1909 we have been producing our Mystery Dramas in Munich. What we presented on the stage there may be considered good or bad; that is not the present question. What was done there, however, required a certain spiritual power, a power that does not approach the human being simply because of his existence upon earth. Since we can now work in Dornach and carve our different kinds of hard wood, we need muscular strength. We cannot say that we can give this strength to ourselves consciously. It comes from our bodies, from our souls' capacity; it is not under our control. Equally, we have not under our control all that we perform in the spirit and for which we need spiritual power. That is not entirely dependent upon our natural ability, just as what we do physically is not dependent alone upon our talents but also upon the muscular strength of our bodies. We need spiritual powers that are as much outside ourselves as our muscular strength is outside our souls. I know that superficial critics may say, "You are a fool; you believe that spiritual powers come to you from without, whereas they simply rise from your own inner being." Let them think me a fool; I regard them as belonging to the clever men who cannot distinguish hunger from a piece of bread. I know how spiritual powers from without flow into human beings. The idea that hunger creates the bread that satisfies it — believed only by a crazy man — is as false as that the power of our own soul can create the forces needed for our spiritual activities. These forces must flow into us. Just as we know clearly that our hunger is within us, and that bread comes from without, does one who lives in spiritual worlds know what is within himself and what comes to him from without. Since 1909 I have felt personally, more and more, the spiritual power that came from without whenever there was occasion to develop, in stillness and calm, what was necessary for the Mystery Plays. I knew that a spiritual eye was resting upon what had been accomplished, and I relate this as a direct experience.

In the early days, when we were working at spiritual science in Germany, an acquaintance came to us who accepted with enthusiasm what we were able to give at that time. She accepted what it was possible to give out concerning human evolution, cosmic mysteries,

reincarnation and karma, not only with devotion and enthusiasm but added to them a wonderful aesthetic sense. Every experience with this person, whether of teaching or conversation, was steeped in beauty. We were few at that time. We had no need to crowd ourselves into such a room as this, and what we now say to a large audience was then discussed by three people — two others and myself. One of these, the person mentioned above, left us upon the physical plane in 1904, and entered the spiritual world. Such people go through a development after death. When we produced Schuré's reconstruction of the *Mystery of Eleusis* at our Congress in 1907, no spiritual influence was perceptible. In 1909 it began, and has come more and more frequently since then. I have accurate knowledge that it was the individuality of our friend whom, objectively and because of her originality, we all loved. Removed to the spiritual world, she acted as a guardian angel to all that we accomplished in the combining of the aesthetic and esoteric elements in our Mysteries. We felt well protected, and looked gratefully upward, realizing that what penetrated us and flowed over into our earthly activities was an expression of the watchfulness of a spiritual personality. But then when it came to conversation with this personality — one may call it conversation since there was a certain reciprocal action — she asserted that she found the way to us easier the more we were permeated with the thought of Christ in the evolution of the earth. If I were to put into earthly words what she reiterated, I should say, expressing symbolically, of course, what is quite different in the spiritual world, "I find the way to you so easily because you are finding evermore the way to make spiritual science into an expression of the living Word of Christ."

The Christ impulse will become for us the living bridge between earthly life and life in superphysical worlds. From the spiritual world Christ three times conditioned for the human being the spiritual constitution that he needed in order to live rightly. Christ intervened three times, making the human sense, life and psychic organs unselfish. It is now man's task to learn unselfishness in his moral and intellectual life through his understanding of the saying, "Not I, but Christ in me."

The world will recognize that the message of the science of the spirit is the Word of Christ. He said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." The mission of the science of the spirit in our age is to open doors to the living Christ. The dead, who know that Christ has found the passage from heaven to earthly activities, unite with the understanding of the living. If the dead, as their nearest protectors, bend to the earthly living, they will find those souls most intensive who are penetrated and spiritualized by the Christ impulse. Christ, as the great Sun Spirit, descended from superphysical worlds through the Mystery of Golgotha in order to find a dwelling in the souls of men. Spiritual science is to be the message, telling how Christ may find that dwelling in human souls. If Christ will find His abode in men's earthly souls, then the Christ power will stream back from the earth's aura into the worlds that He forsook for the salvation of mankind, and the whole cosmos will be permeated through and through by Him.

We can work up gradually to such a deep understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha as this by completely imbuing ourselves with spiritual science. If we thus consider this and, in addition, think of it as a school of unselfishness for the intellectual and moral life of future humanity, we shall realize the necessity of the spiritually scientific proclamation of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then we shall know the meaning of the spiritually scientific impulses that are striving to enter our present life. Then that Christ impulse will penetrate humanity that all men can, indeed, accept, for Christ did not appear to one nation only but, being the great Sun Spirit, He belongs to the whole earth and can enter all human souls, regardless of nation and religion. May many gradually find the way to such an understanding of the

Christ impulse and of the Mystery of Golgotha! Then, perhaps, that will appear the most Christian that today is stamped as unchristian and heretical.

If we strive, not for a mere intellectual understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha, but for the ability to grasp it with our whole souls, we then need the science of the spirit and, as members of our spiritual stream, we shall belong to those souls who are permitted to know and understand the necessities of mankind now and in the immediate future.

This Christmas marks the 100th anniversary of the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society and the creation of the School for Spiritual Science. In honor of this occasion, we re-print here some of the opening remarks by Rudolf Steiner for this auspicious moment. This is followed by the full text of the Foundation Stone Meditation given to the members present.

Attached separately is a chart of the daily rhythms extracted from the full meditation and suggested for daily practice.

We will hold a gathering on Friday, December 29th at 7:30pm in the Garden Room, Groh Farm, to commemorate and celebrate this spiritual deed and gift to humanity. We will have Eurythmy and will work with the Foundation Stone Meditation itself. Please join us!

THE CHRISTMAS CONFERENCE

GA 260

Part II. The Proceedings of the Conference

III. Rudolf Steiner's Opening Lecture and Reading of the Statutes

We begin our Christmas Conference for the founding of the Anthroposophical Society in a new form with a view of a stark contrast. We have had to invite you, dear friends, to pay a visit to a heap of ruins. As you climbed up the Goetheanum hill here in Dornach your eyes fell on our place of work, but what you saw were the ruins of the Goetheanum which perished a year ago. In the truest sense of the word this sight is a symbol that speaks profoundly to our hearts, a symbol not only of the external manifestation of our work and endeavour on anthroposophical ground both here and in the world, but also of many symptoms manifesting in the world as a whole.

..... What can we do, dear friends, but link the causes of these heaps of rubble with world events which are currently running their course? The picture we see at first seems grim. It can surely be said that the flames which our physical eyes saw a year ago on New Year's Eve blazed heavenwards before the eyes of our soul. And in spirit we see that in fact these flames glow over much of what we have been building up during the last twenty years.

This, at first, is the picture with which our souls are faced. But it has to be said that nothing else at present can so clearly show us the truth of the ancient oriental view that the external world is maya and illusion. We shall, dear friends, establish a mood of soul appropriate

for this our Christmas Foundation Conference if we can bring to life in our hearts the sense that the heap of ruins with which we are faced is maya and illusion, and that much of what immediately surrounds us here is maya and illusion.

Let us take our start from the immediate situation here. We have had to invite you to take your places in this wooden shed.²⁶ It is a temporary structure we have hurriedly put up over the last two days after it became clear how very many of our friends were expected to arrive. Temporary wooden partitions had to be put up next door. I have no hesitation in saying that the outer shelter for our gathering resembles nothing more than a shack erected amongst the ruins, a poor, a terribly poor shack of a home. Our initial introduction to these circumstances showed us yesterday that our friends felt the cold dreadfully in this shed, which is the best we can offer. But dear friends, let us count this frost, too, among the many other things which may be regarded as maya and illusion in what has come to meet you here. The more we can find our way into a mood which feels the external circumstances surrounding us to be maya and illusion, the more shall we develop that mood of active doing which we shall need here over the next few days, a mood which may not be negative in any way, a mood which must be positive in every detail. Now, a year after the moment when the flames of fire blazed skywards out of the dome of our Goetheanum, now everything which has been built up in the spiritual realm in the twenty years of the Anthroposophical Movement may appear before our hearts and before the eyes of our soul not as devouring flames but as creative flames. For everywhere out of the spiritual content of the Anthroposophical Movement warmth comes to give us courage, warmth which can be capable of bringing to life countless seeds for the spiritual life of the future which lie hidden here in the very soil of Dornach and all that belongs to it. Countless seeds for the future can begin to unfold their ripeness through this warmth which can surround us here, so that one day they may stand before the world as fully matured fruits as a result of what we want to do for them.

Now more than ever before we may call to mind that a spiritual movement such as that encompassed by the name of Anthroposophy, with which we have endowed it, is not born out of any earthly or arbitrary consideration. At the very beginning of our Conference I therefore want to start by reminding you that it was in the last third of the nineteenth century that on the one hand the waves of materialism were rising while out of the other side of the world a great revelation struck down into these waves, a revelation of the spirit which those whose mind and soul are in a receptive state can receive from the powers of spiritual life. A revelation of the spirit was opened up for mankind. Not from any arbitrary earthly consideration, but in obedience to a call resounding from the spiritual world; not from any arbitrary earthly consideration, but through a vision of the sublime pictures given out of the spiritual world as a modern revelation for the spiritual life of mankind, from this flowed the impulse for the Anthroposophical Movement.²⁷ This Anthroposophical Movement is not an act of service to the earth. This Anthroposophical Movement in its totality and in all its details is a service to the divine beings, a service to God. We create the right mood for it when we see it in all its wholeness as a service to God. As a service to God let us take it into our hearts at the beginning of our Conference. Let us inscribe deeply within our hearts the knowledge that this Anthroposophical Movement desires to link the soul of every individual devoted to it with the primeval sources of all that is human in the spiritual world, that this Anthroposophical Movement desires to lead the human being to that final enlightenment — that enlightenment which meanwhile in human earthly evolution is the last which gives satisfaction to man — which can clothe the newly beginning revelation in the words: Yes, this am I as a human being, as a God-willed human being on the earth, as a God-willed human being in the universe.

We shall take our starting point today from something we would so gladly have seen as our starting point years ago in 1913.²⁸ This is where we take up the thread, my dear friends, inscribing into our souls the foremost principle of the Anthroposophical Movement, which is to find its home in the Anthroposophical Society, namely, that everything in it is willed by the spirit, that this Movement desires to be a fulfilment of what the signs of the times speak in a shining script to the hearts of human beings.

The Anthroposophical Society will only endure if within ourselves we make of the Anthroposophical Movement the profoundest concern of our hearts. If we fail, the Society will not endure. The most important deed to be accomplished during the coming days must be accomplished within all your hearts, my dear friends. Whatever we say and hear will only become a starting point for the cause of Anthroposophy in the right way if our heart's blood is capable of beating for it. My friends, for this reason we have brought you all together here: to call forth a harmony of hearts in a truly anthroposophical sense. And we allow ourselves to hope that this is an appeal which can be rightly understood.

My dear friends, call to mind the manner in which the Anthroposophical Movement came into being. In many and varied ways there worked in it what was to be a revelation of the spirit for the approaching twentieth century. In contrast to so much that is negative, it is surely permissible to point emphatically here to the positive side: to the way in which the many and varied forms of spiritual life, which flowed in one way or another into the inner circles of outer society, genuinely entered into the hearts of our dear anthroposophical friends. Thus at a certain point we were able to advance far enough to show in the Mystery Dramas how intimate affairs of the human heart and soul are linked to the grand sweep of historical events in human evolution. I do believe that during those four or five years — a time much loved and dear to our hearts — when the Mystery Dramas were performed in Munich,²⁹ a good deal of all that is involved in this link between the individual human soul and the divine working of the cosmos in the realms of soul and spirit did indeed make its way through the souls of our friends.

Then came something of which the horrific consequences are known to every one of you: the event we call the World War. During those difficult times, all efforts had to be concentrated on conducting the affairs of Anthroposophy in a way which would bring it unscathed through all the difficulties and obstacles which were necessarily the consequence of that World War.

.....Today, however, I want to dwell mainly on all that is positive. I want to tell you that if this gathering runs its course in the right way, if this gathering really reaches an awareness of how something spiritual and esoteric must be the foundation for all our work and existence, then those spiritual seeds which are everywhere present will be enabled to germinate through being warmed by your mood and your enthusiasm. Today we want to generate a mood which can accept in full earnestness that external things are maya and illusion but that out of this maya and illusion there germinates to our great joy — not a joy for our weakness but a joy for our strength and for the will we now want to unfold — something that can live invisibly among us, something that can live in innumerable seeds invisibly among us. Prepare your souls, dear friends, so that they may receive these seeds; for your souls are the true ground and soil in which these seeds of the spirit may germinate, unfold and develop. They are the truth. They shine forth as though with the shining of the sun, bathing in light all the seeming ruins encountered by our external eyes. Today, of all days, let us allow the profoundest call of Anthroposophy, indeed of everything spiritual, to shine into our souls: Outwardly all is maya and illusion; inwardly there unfolds the fullness of truth, the fullness of divine and spiritual life. Anthroposophy shall bring into life all that is recognized as truth within it.

Where do we bring into life the teaching of maya and of the light of truth? Let us bring it into life above all during this our Christmas Conference. Let us during this our Christmas Conference make the shining forth of the universal light — as it shone before the shepherds, who bore within them only the simplicity of their hearts, and before the kingly magi, who bore within them the wisdom of all the universe — let us make this flaming Christmas light, this universal light of Christmas into a symbol for what is to come to pass through our own hearts and souls!

THE FOUNDATION STONE MEDITATION & RHYTHMS

GA 260

1 January 1924, Dornach

Translated by Ernst Katz (1996)

Part One

Human soul!

You live in the limbs;

Through the world of space they bear you

Into seas of spirit-being:

Practice *spirit-recalling*

In depths of soul,

Where in the wielding

World-creator-being

Your own "I"

Comes into being

Within the "I of God;"

And you will truly live

In human cosmic being.

For there reigns the Father-spirit of the heights

In cosmic depths creating existence

Ye Spirits of Strength,

Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones,

Let from the heights ring forth
What in the depths finds its echo;
This speaks thus:
From the divine mankind takes being.

Thus hear it the elementary spirits
In the East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

Part Two

Human soul!
You live in the beat of heart and lungs;
Through the rhythm of time it leads you
Into the feeling of your own soul-being:
Practice *Spirit-meditating*
In equanimity of soul,
Where by the surging
Deeds of world-becoming
Your own "I"
Is united
With the "I of the cosmos"
And you will truly feel
In human weaving of souls.

For there reigns the will of Christ all around us
In cosmic rhythms bestowing grace onto souls.
Ye Spirits of Light,
Kyriotetes, Dynamis, Exusiai,
Let from the East be enkindled
What through the West takes on form;
This speaks thus:
In Christ death becomes life.

Thus hear it the elementary spirits
in the East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

Part Three

Human soul!
You live in the resting head;
From eternal grounds it discloses
The thoughts of the cosmos to you:
Practice Spirit-envisioning
In stillness of thought,
Where by the eternal aims of gods
Light of cosmic being
To your own "I"
Is granted
For your free willing;
And you will truly think
In human spirit grounds.

For there reign the cosmic thoughts of the Spirit
In cosmic being light imploring.
Ye Spirits of Soul,
Archai, Archangeloi, Angeloi,
Let from the depths be entreated
What in the heights will be answered;
This speaks thus:
In the Spirit's cosmic thoughts the soul awakens.

Thus hear it the elementary spirits
in the East, West, North, South:
May human beings hear it!

Part Four

At the turning point of time
Came the cosmic spirit light
Into the earthly stream of being.
Night darkness
Had reached its power's end;
Light, bright as day,
Rayed forth in human souls;
Light
That gives warmth
To simple hearts of shepherds;
Light
That enlightens
The wise heads of kings;
Light divine,
Christ-Sun,
Give warmth
To our hearts;
Enlighten
Our heads,
That good may become
What from our hearts
We are founding,
What from our heads
We shall guide
With our purposeful willing.

December Events

High Mowing Nativity: Friday, December 9th at 5pm
Saturday, December 10th 3pm (younger children welcome)
Saturday, December 10th 7pm

Sunday, December 17th, 4pm, in the Garden Room, Groh Farm

Reading of the Nativity story from the Luke and the Matthew Gospels, accompanied by the lighting of candles in front of doll displays depicting each scene. There will be no discussion or explanation, just the Gospel readings and a quiet mood. Families are welcome and encouraged to come. A small treat for the children will follow the readings.

An RSVP to groh.alice@gmail.com would be appreciated.

Friday, December 29th, 7:30pm in the Garden Room, Groh Farm

A celebration of the 100th year anniversary of the re-founding of the Anthroposophical Society, the establishment of the School for Spiritual Science and the giving of the Foundation Stone Meditation. We will do some Eurythmy and will work with the Foundation Stone Meditation itself. All welcome!



Fra Angelico Nativity