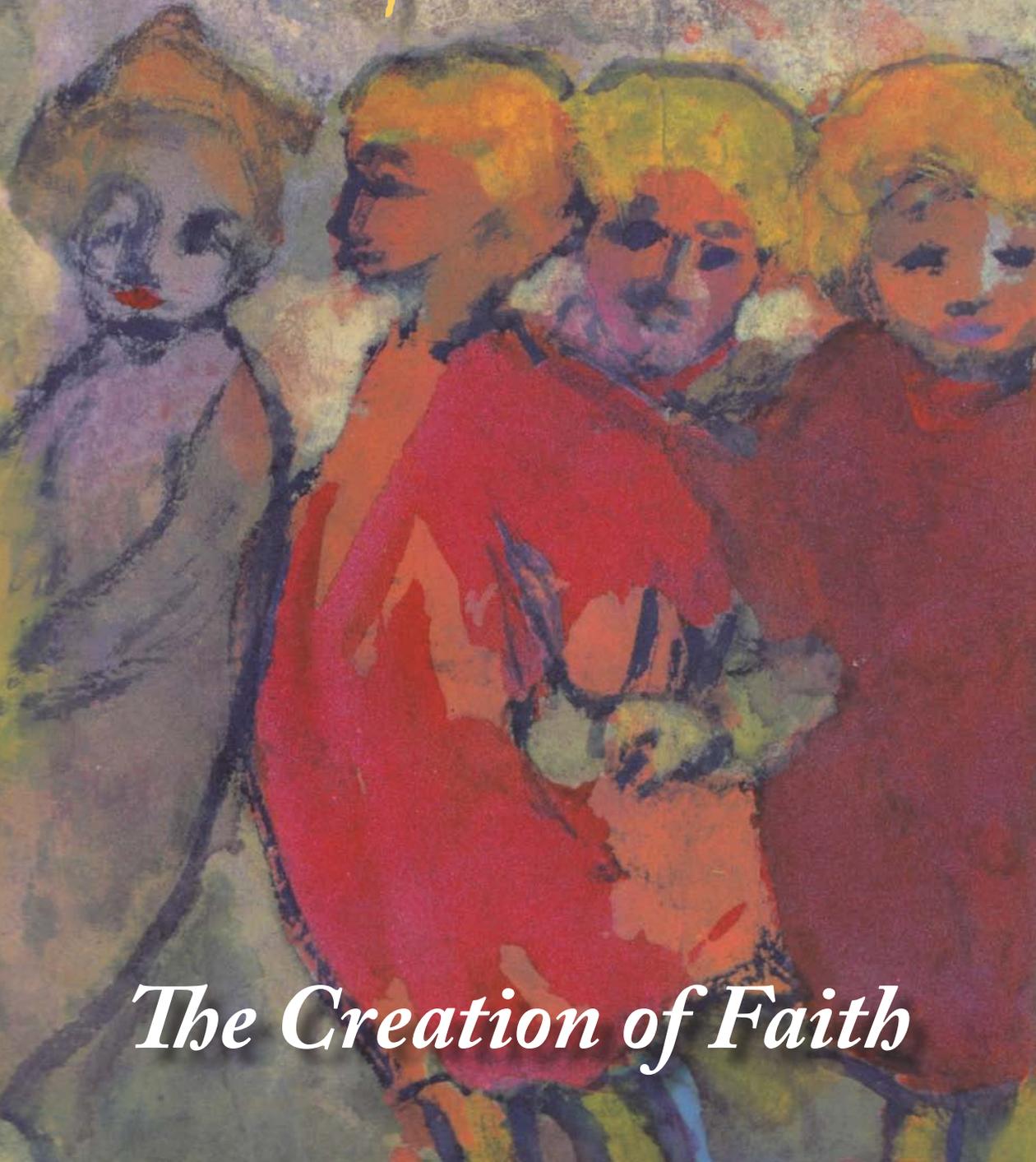


The Christian Community

Perspectives

March—May 2011



The Creation of Faith

Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| The creation of faith | 2 |
| <i>Martin Samson</i> | |
| Faith, doubt and certainty | 7 |
| <i>Michael Jones</i> | |
| Faith and knowledge in Christianity | 12 |
| <i>Neville Adams</i> | |
| Faith beyond the church | 17 |
| <i>Richard Masters</i> | |
| Australian floods and the rain dances | 19 |
| <i>Martin Samson</i> | |
| Experiencing salvation III | 21 |
| <i>Tom Ravetz</i> | |

Cover pictures

front: *March of Children* by Emil Nolde

back: *Overcoming* by Daniel C. Bryan

Deadlines:

June–August 2011 issue: 4th April 2011
September–November 2011 issue: 5th July 2011

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

Editors:

Peter Howe, Deborah Ravetz,
Tom Ravetz, Kevin Street

Subscriptions & Advertisements:

Kevin Street Tel: 01384 443 268

All correspondence: *Perspectives*,
22 Baylie Street, Stourbridge DY8 1AZ
Tel: 01384 377 190

Fax: (UK only) 0871 242 9000

email:

editor@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

subs@perspectives-magazine.co.uk

Lay-Up: Christoph Hänni

Subscriptions:

UK £14

Europe & Rest of World: £16

Please send cheque, payable to

Perspectives, to Subscription

Manager (address above), or send

for more information.

USA: US\$26

c/o The Christian Community,
906 Divisadero Street

San Francisco, CA 94115

(Cheques payable to: The Christian
Community San Francisco)

Canada: CAN\$28

c/o Roger Coutts Umstead,
1508 Goyeau St.

Windsor ON, N8X 3L4, Canada

encoreanthrobooks@sympatico.ca

(Cheques to: Roger Coutts Umstead)

Australia: Enquire for price at:

Julie Sedgmen, Harmony

2/17 Beresford Street, Willow Vale

NSW 2575, Tel. 02 4872 1847

New Zealand: Enquire for price at:

Gerald Richardson

62A Redvers Drive, Belmont

Lower Hutt, tel: 04 565 3836

Advertisements:

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

Quarter page £40,

Half page £70, Full page £130

ISSN: 0967 5485

Printed by:

Neil A Robertson Printers, Forfar

Perspectives

Volume 81 No. 2
March–May 2011

Often, believing is seen as a weaker kind of knowing—as giving assent to truths that cannot be verified scientifically. This idea of what faith is, is a product of the modern world; in earlier times, faith meant something far wider. We can see this evolution in the words ‘faith’ and ‘belief’ themselves: ‘faith’ originally meant ‘trust’, as we still see in our word ‘faithful’. ‘Believe’ is connected with the German word ‘Liebe’—in English, ‘love’. Originally it meant to hold something dear.

In its deepest sense, faith is to do with what we hold most dear: our deepest values and our real concerns. It gives direction to our deeds. It connects us with something beyond the horizon of ourselves.

Today, when faith is so widely discredited, there is a challenge to recover a concept of faith that embraces all the dimensions of our humanity: purposeful deeds, devoted feelings and striving to understand.

TOM RAVETZ

The creation of faith

Martin Samson

What is faith? Is it possible to have a simple answer to this question in our times? We can often hear people say: I believe in what I can understand. The scientific age has changed our concept of belief and allows our philosophies to be guided by what is reasonable alone. Our cosmology includes an infinite spatial dimension based on physics and light mechanics. Our religious experience can be subjected to critical questioning to the point where it fades into non-existence; or it may be tolerated as a purely personal matter that has no bearing on reality. Those who still hold to other dimensions than the physically provable are left with faith in the dim memories of religious teachings. Scientific knowledge and faith stand side by side, one demanding the results of the attainable world of observation, the other calling us to extend our knowledge to religious experience and not leave the understanding of things in our spirituality to traditions and dogmas that ask us to believe without a need to understand.

If we investigate faith in a theological dictionary we can come to understand that faith has always been a part of being human. Faith is a relationship between an idea and our action. The inner causes of our ethical and moral life derive from a set of teachings or ideals in which we place a living hope and through which we derive a loving devotion towards the world. It could be said that we hold an idea in our minds en-sheathed with warmth in our feeling, which in turn sinks as an animating fire into our will. The idea becomes the flame within my action. This is achieved through love, and it creates a being in our soul. When we fall in love with someone, the idea of them and our soul connection to them burns in our being and forges us into a vessel for action towards them. In faith, we love an idea and it enkindles a fire in us so that a life in this idea or being can be expressed in the world.

*Martin Samson
is a priest of
The Christian
Community in
Adelaide.*

This description is not based only on physically observable phenomena. In the past there was a philosophy which was a scientific understanding, an all inclusive knowledge that threw light on all the various areas of reality that human beings experienced. Science actually means 'to have knowledge' and Rudolf Steiner expands this concept in his book *A Theory of Knowledge* to mean 'pertaining to lawfulness' and in this sense philosophy was our

form of comprehending many different types and fields of lawfulness in the world, not only the physical mechanical laws.

People of faith have always carved out paths of action based on and inspired by their faith. It is inherent in faith that it seeks action. In ancient times the faith that inspired action may have been a set of laws like the Ten Commandments, or the experience of the deity in a place, through which the spiritual world was felt to reveal itself. Today we could say that atheists place their faith in reason and the physically provable alone, because what guides their behaviour and gives them their sense of ethics comes from this philosophical framework. This simple definition of faith helps us to see that faith is something that we do and not something that we assent to in a weaker kind of knowing.

While some people today place their hopes and faith in material philosophies others still strive for an ever deeper understanding of a super-sensible world. That is why in the past, theology was described as faith seeking understanding. In our times this definition may be as timely as ever. Our scientific world view has reduced the number of dimensions and fields of reality that our soul may understand. We can experience this limitation as a challenge to take on an active path of re-connecting to levels of comprehension beyond those accepted by a reductionist world view. This means an act of faith is in fact no less real than what is physically observable. Prayers, meditation and ritual are all ways of entering into religious experience of other dimensions, and coming to understand them nourishes our faith. We can work constantly on broadening our philosophies and cosmology out of religious experience that has found reasonable understanding. In this sense we are all theologians, seeking through pondering, dialogue and study to integrate our experiences into a framework that guides our activity in the world. In fact until our understanding of these things actually changes our deeds, we might say that we do not have faith.

Bearing all this in mind, we can refine our idea of faith. Faith seeks understanding; it has its being in action. It seeks manifestation of the idea through creative action.

The idea that faith might be created through understanding and action, rather than being something we 'have', opens us to see that our faith is a deeply personal activity, rather than being a state of belief in some indescribable, transcendent spiritual world that is inaccessible to our understanding. In fact it is quite the opposite. So what ideas do we place our faith in today?

In the Act of Consecration of Man, the so-called 'words of institution', those words which recall the sharing of bread and wine during the Last Supper, have a unique formulation. The tradition form of these words in the Bible and Christian liturgy is: 'do this in memory of me'. This is often heard as Christ telling us to hold the meal of bread and wine to commemorate his deed for humanity and the earth. We are given an event through which we can keep our relationship to Christ's death and resurrection alive within our mind and this strengthens the faith we have for our lives and destinies. Under our faithful reconnecting to this knowledge we form and grow our moral destiny. In The Act of Consecration we hear how the process of re-membering actually takes place. The words of Christ resound when he says that the new faith and confession are bestowed in the body and blood of the cross. Then comes the new form of the words hitherto understood as commemoration: take this into your thinking. The Act of Consecration makes possible that we perceive the event of Golgotha in ritual form, which means a spiritual reality is made visible to sense experience through vestment and liturgical action. We may then incorporate this mystery into the life of our thoughts; then it may begin to 'think in us'.

A central mystery of faith is given to us in these words. We are assisted in our process of understanding an event that is incomprehensible. Through the sacrament we come to witness, in ritual form, the reality of what Christ did for humanity and the earth; to undergo a process of comprehension and to integrate it into a part of our being that enlightens our life.

Each time we stand before the altar in the sacrament we are given the opportunity to address our 'memory' of the mystery of Golgotha anew. Even though we may not have an individual personal memory of the actual event, the sacrament strengthens our experience of the idea and being that fires our life with the light of Christ and it becomes an active thinking agent within us. Christian faith is then action created through understanding the Mystery of Golgotha. The Christ event becomes the reference point for our Christian action. Christ gives us an event, not a teaching or philosophy, that creates our faith. When we seek to understand this event, we are moving towards a whole new framework of understanding the world. Our faith seeks understanding of an action through which our philosophy, cosmology and religion gain a personal insight or wisdom beyond the attainable world of physical observation alone. In fact, they grow out of a world of personal experience and observation and we can experience that a guiding light is being created within our understanding as we actively enlarge our understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. This in turn illumines and

strengthens our deeds in the world. Again faith is found in understanding and manifested in action.

There is also a creation of faith in which faith itself creates something. In the Gnostic text *On the Origin of the World* the author challenges us to ask what existed prior to the primordial chaos. What we call the darkness of the waters comes from a shadow which came from a being who existed since the beginning. The chaos or brooding waters of Genesis are a product of this being. Pistis, Faith, structures the infinite immortal beings and then her will, intentions, desires and truths emanate a light called Sophia, Wisdom, which is the life of the eternal realm. We perceive the eternal from the outside and it is to us as shadow and darkness. The shadow perceives and feels that there is something greater than itself and desires it and so becomes pregnant of its own accord and allows Pistis-Sophia to create within it. The task of creating the material world comes through a being that Pistis draws forth from the waters, whose name is Yaldoboath, and she then withdraws to her world of light.

Faith is the desire, the will of the ideas, and the light of understanding through which creation seeks manifestation. The intentions, desires, truth and wisdom illuminate the Logos, creative Word. We come to see that the light behind creation is the light of Wisdom and the essential eternal being of Faith herself. Through history this feminine light has been lost and shrouded in the darkness of our consciousness. The Prologue of the Gospel of St. John could in this light be heard in this way:

In the very beginning the ideas of creation coming from Pistis Sophia is the light of human beings, manifesting through the life of the Word or Logos, and we, together with creation, still need to comprehend it.

This may seem a challenging variation of the Prologue, but do we have to continue to see the Logos as both the life and the light? Of course life has a certain light to it and light has a certain life to it, but it is also possible that behind the creation of life the light intentions are held in the cosmos and that this light in some traditions has been a feminine being. In Aboriginal philosophy the divine ground of the world is feminine; might it not enlarge our comprehension of ultimate reality to consider that the ideas of creation are born out of Faith and Wisdom?

Through the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ became the manifestation of the light of Faith in the world of life. The resurrection is an event in the world that is part of the Creation of Faith; an event through which we can find our own living understanding and loving will to Faith's intentions and desires for creation. To have faith in Christ leads us to act through

an understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. This is the manifestation of Wisdom and Faith in our world. Our deeds are the fulfilment of Faith's creative intentions. Christian faith can become the indwelling of the creative intentions of Pistis-Sophia in our soul and in the world.

These ideas came alive for me in the experience of the Act of Consecration of Man during Christmas this year through the themes of light throughout the service. This was most intense when hearing about the light of the Father God's power which shines clearly for humanity to behold, and leads us to unfold our love for that which is unseen. Who or what is the light of the Father's clear shining power? As it says in the prayer, it is the song of the hierarchies, which humanity now joins in clear insight, so that the divine may become manifest and healing can take place through the sounding of creation; the Cosmic Thought (Pistis Sophia) of the Spirit world working through the Cosmic Word (Logos) into creation. We could say that through human wrought wisdom, the Divine finds its fulfilment. This idea can be the basis for a philosophy, a cosmology and religious activity that create faith ever anew in the power of God's Light in all things. In this way we can answer the question of what is faith in a very contemporary way by saying: we do what we understand.

Further reading

The Nag Hammadi Library; The definitive translation of the Gnostic scriptures complete in one volume, General Editor James M. Robinson, HarperCollins Publishers: San Francisco, 1990.
Violet MacDermot, *The Fall of Sophia*, Lindisfarne Books: Great Barrington MA, 2001.

Overcoming

*Rising above our crosses,
Striving to be free;
The light is ever steadfast,
Let love abide in me.*

Daniel C. Bryan

This poem belongs to our back cover picture.

Faith, doubt and certainty

Michael Jones

Owing to the acquisitive nature of religions, some of the most important religious words, such as faith, have been subjected to a kind of torture of analysis, especially, it has to be said, in the Christian denominations. Each one would like to distinguish its own meaning of faith from the others, colouring it in a certain direction. Alongside these specialist definitions, all valuable in their way, the word faith has its more general usage in life and literature. Since Nietzsche put into words what some of us must have thought with his aperçu: 'A casual stroll through the lunatic asylum shows that faith does not prove anything', we have become somewhat ambivalent about blind faith.

The Hindu tradition helps us to widen our understanding of faith in that it sees faith as an orientation of the soul rather than an allegiance to a particular set of beliefs. This means that faith is the whole support of the soul and can be seen in how the soul expresses itself. From this point of view the whole world is made up of faith. In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna tells Arjuna 'Man is made of faith: as his faith is so is he' (17.3). Krishna teaches that there are three kinds of faith, which each have their own form of offering or worship. Tamasic, or dark faith, is the faith in Elemental beings and the ghosts of the dead practiced by those who seek self gratification. Rajasic, or fiery faith, serves the Yakshas and Rakshasas, powerful celestial powers who guard wealth and success in life in general. These are magical demonic beings who are active in all outer life. The third faith is Sattwic, practiced by those who serve the Devas, and who seek always to be united with God in light. This third form of faith is very rarely found in a pure form. In Christianity we might see it expressed in the primal prayer of the gospel 'Not my will, but Thine be done'.

The Christian Community has a confession of Faith given in a Creed but the personal element of 'I believe' (Credo) is not to be found in it. It is rather differentiated divine will that we try to make our own. This Creed is read after the Gospel has been proclaimed in the Act of Consecration of Man. As a particular Gospel reading gives a part of the drama, so the Creed summarizes the whole.

The twelve sentences of the Creed can be seen as an expression of a great circle, the Temple of the universe. Like the alchemical

*Michael Jones
is a priest of
The Christian
Community in
Edinburgh.*

snake with its tail in its mouth, they begin and end in eternity. This Creed has been translated into several languages, but it is itself translated out of the language of the spiritual worlds. Its words have no life until life is breathed into them by human consciousness. Listening to the Creed, we try to come to awareness of the truths of which it speaks, and through this to come to know the circle of Beings that form the invisible living Temple of the universe, whose centre is in God. Insofar as we enter into communion with the Temple, we come into the light that lives in the darkness; the light that draws the darkness towards it; a light that reaches out into every part of life. It is not easy to behold the light in much of what happens around us in the world because we see things from our earthly point of view, not from the heavenly. The mind of the Father God can grasp the earthly and the heavenly together as one because His relationship to time is different from ours. Our consciousness is still largely temporal and as such dominated by the present. The Creed is a path to eternal life; to the Temple of the universal church.

The church can be seen to exist in several different spheres that interpenetrate each other. We experience it in the chapel where the altar is erected and where the offering is made. It has an important material foundation in all that is used and dedicated to the service, such as the altar, vestments and cup, but it does not take on life until something actually happens. Of course there is an echo that we can sense between times, but it is dependent on the activity taking place. Part, then, of the church is to be found around the altar of the congregation, and of course in the visible and invisible members of this circle. The potential of community arises as an ideal form in the descent of a Being of Soul in whom the worshipers around the altar can live in perfect freedom. Here they can come together not as members of a family or country or society but as human beings seeking consecration. They have been led to the altar by many different paths in varying degrees of awareness, and may leave again at any moment and not return.

A second sphere is needed by the local altar. This is the religious community of the members who are united in faith by a common creed that is becoming conscious in them. They are essentially given by the Spirit, who leads each one of them towards a certain recognition and spiritual commitment. Without members there can be no congregation. They form a deeper level of consciousness and they may be more or less active in the third circle which is the invisible universal church. This part of the church is both central and peripheral and heals all narrowness in religious community. It is the bride of the bridegroom. The Creed is the path to this

universal church that does not appear on earth. The particular emphasis of The Christian Community within this universal church is the central position it gives to the celebration of the sacraments in its life, rather than to the Creed. The sacraments are not only for the members, as can be observed at every Baptism and every Act of Consecration, where the 'we' reaches out into the world. However, because The Christian Community can know it is not the universal church its sacramental life is also different from any church that considers itself to be the true church. The magical security of the sacraments that confer grace without human participation and commitment can no longer be inferred. For freedom to live and breathe among us there must be a level of choice and awareness that is more demanding than simply taking on the traditional church of one's parents or nation. It belongs to the awareness of the members that the sacraments are not simply a form of magic that helps this or that process in human development and as such should not be withheld from anyone, but rather a sign of what may or may not come into being through both human and divine involvement.

If the first age of the church was the age of the first of the disciples, our present age stands under the being of the last who betrayed Jesus with a kiss. We long for the closeness and spiritual maturity of John, but it is Judas who represents our real situation. Our awareness is earthbound to a degree that makes it hard for us to relate to the strivings of the hermit and the martyr, but we can sympathize with the betrayer in a way that no other Christian age could. Like ours, his awareness is bound up with real earthly concerns and longs for change and reform. Judas, like the other disciples, is not named in the Creed; but we feel his presence in the sentence that begins 'The Christ Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate the death on the cross,' because of the important role he played in Jesus' arrest and execution. Indeed the presence of Judas at the Last Supper contains one of the deepest mysteries of the sacramental drama that is relived each time in The Act of Consecration. Our understanding and participation in the faith of Judas depends on how we relate to the motivation behind his part in the crucifixion and resurrection.

The end of John 6 gives us an insight into the real motives of Judas. Those who have received the bread wanted to make Jesus into an earthly King, because they did not distinguish between the earthly realm and his Kingdom which is not of this world. They ultimately worshipped the 'will to power' of Nietzsche, which sees the highest in earthly success. In the terms of the Bhagavad Gita they worshipped the Yakshas and Rakshasas.

In the Gospel of John Judas is called a devil because he will betray Jesus to the authorities.

Only Matthew describes how Judas returns the thirty pieces of silver to the Temple and confesses 'I have betrayed innocent blood'. He then hangs himself. Although he has made the step of recognition he is still imprisoned by what he has done; yet his suicide reveals how far the reversal of his mind must have taken place.

Judas was filled with a compelling urge to force Jesus to reveal his power at all costs. He wanted him to reveal himself as the Messiah in such a way that His power could not be refuted by anyone. He did not betray him because he hated him but to protect him and mankind. After betraying Jesus with a kiss, Judas recognized Jesus as the 'innocent blood' whose kingdom was not that of earthly rulership, but at the same time felt unworthy to be part of the heavenly kingdom. In this final scene we recognize the rightful place of Judas among the twelve.

On the path of Judas, the decisive question is that of trust in the spirit. We can put this question of trust to ourselves in such way that the life of Judas can be our guide to the experiences we then reach.

Each of the twelve statements of faith contained in the Creed can work ever deeper into our being as they meet the opposition of Tamasic and Rajasic faith in our souls. For example, if we take the first sentence of the Creed into our souls we can find the first question arising in us, 'is there actually such an almighty divine Being of God?' We may find that we deny it, because he neither prevents all the suffering that exists in the world nor puts our own life or the world's in order. Part of us shares in the same incomplete attitude which motivated Judas; and we are forced to awareness that God cannot be coerced into any activity of grace by any earthly means, including the sacraments. So long as we have not even made a beginning to overcome this deeply rooted part of ourselves, the power of Christ through which we receive communion will strengthen us only in our previous earthly aims: we shall be driven into the isolation of the night. For Communion we must practice a readiness to transform this attitude to confidence in the spirit as pure spirit. If we really took in the first statement of the creed we would actually perceive and touch the earth in a completely different way.

Contact with Christ with a mind directed exclusively upon the earthly as with the kiss of Judas leads to an entrapment of the earthly part of the Christ-being. The true I AM can only be found when we look through the pictures of Christ to the spiritual. Then we can finally wake up in our earthly experiences and learn to feel the true light; there at first we may come to

know the terrible guilt before all that we have caused to come about. What Judas had to experience, right into physical death, can grow into an inner experience for us. We come to understand the part that death plays in our lives. The experiences of Judas are our guides and can call us awake to the true life in us. The concern of Judas today is that mankind escapes from the destiny that was his, and does not fall into the same trap. A church that does not claim to be the universal church on earth but recognizes the working of the Holy Spirit wherever it is at work would clearly answer to some of that concern, and in that sense The Christian Community is the church of Judas today.

We often see doubt as the opposite of faith, but we might rather say that it is certainty that is the opposite of faith, in so far as certainty is a closed system. It is part of the tragic destiny of Nietzsche that he who took 'a casual stroll through the lunatic asylum' would eventually himself become a patient in a similar institution after the collapse of his mind. His own philosophy could no longer sustain his consciousness.

The question remains, if Christ is not the King of this world, then who is the head of the church with its three spheres reaching from the material through the human and into the divine? Is all that is done in the name of Christ Christian? We know enough about ourselves today to be able to say that there are essential areas where we are our own masters, even if they are perhaps areas not of great significance from an earthly point of view. These are precisely those areas where our own freedom is concerned, and where we can become aware of what we are doing. When Paul wrote of the 'not I but Christ in me' he did not mean that Christ ruled him in the fashion of an earthly king or even spiritual King, but rather that the 'me' freely allowed for the working of Christ in his soul, through an active attempt to become conscious of him. Rather than the emphasis placed on faith in Christ (Romans 3:22, Galatians 2:16 etc) which has its origin in Luther's Bible, we seek to find the faith of Christ, as it is correctly translated in the Authorized (King James) Bible and occasionally elsewhere. Faith then becomes an act of decision that is open-ended and generous in its fulfilling.

We apologise for the confusion caused by an editing error in the list of Gospel Readings published in the previous issue. The dates after Easter should carry on in sequence through May.

Faith and knowledge in Christianity

Neville Adams

There are two pillars upon which Christianity stands. Paul names them: Faith and Knowledge, *pistis* and *gnosis*. The discussion as to which of the two is the more important is ongoing.

In the letter of St. Paul to the Romans—highly influential in the development of Christianity—we find the word *pistis* thirty-five times while the word *gnosis* is mentioned only three times. The development of Christianity is founded largely on faith, believing or trusting, or having confidence in something, as it could also be translated.

So one finds in many churches the opinion that, in order to be a Christian, one must only believe. But what or whom does one believe or, how does one find this belief?

As St. Augustine put it ‘If the Church did not exist I could not believe!’ The existence of the Church down the ages gave people their faith, their belief.

The authority of the church was challenged in the Reformation and was replaced by the authority of the Bible. What is contained in the Bible had to be believed. However, even this authority has to be interpreted. The interpreter becomes the authority—source of many problems.

But what is faith or belief or trust? How did and how does it come about?

We know that we cannot unthinkingly trust or believe what we are told by another person. We need to develop trust in that person in order to believe what he or she says. This can be either spontaneous or it can develop

over time. We might then say that such a person is trustworthy. But how is this when we are asked to believe in God, or in Christ?

If we turn to the New Testament we find some interesting descriptions of faith.

When Jesus walked upon this earth he healed many people. For these healings faith was an important factor. We can read the story of how a father asks him to heal his child. Jesus says that if he can believe it will happen. The father’s reply is, ‘I believe, help thou my unbelief!’ (Mark 9:17) How common is that feeling for many of us today. We believe, we want to believe and at

Neville Adams is a retired priest of The Christian Community and is now living in Germany.

the same time there is a nagging doubt at the back of our minds. We are citizens of this world and also of a spiritual world and both draw us towards themselves. Sometimes the earthly world predominates, and then again we catch a glimpse of the spiritual reality—we believe.

Thomas Didimos, the Twin, sometimes called the doubter, was not so much a doubter as one who wanted the certainty about the Resurrection. Was the Risen One merely a ghost, a soul-manifestation or was he really arisen in a bodily form? So he needed to 'see for himself'. When the Risen One appears a week later and tells Thomas to put finger and hand into the wounds replies (without having done so?), 'My Lord and my God!' This was of course a Jewish blasphemy. Jesus' words then are 'You believe because you have seen; blessed are those who have not seen yet believe.'

Here we have a development in the faith, from faith in Jesus as healer to faith, belief in the reality and deep meaning of the Resurrection—the basis of the Christian religion.

How did this faith develop and spread?

In the Acts of the Apostles we read about the beginnings of what was to become the Church. On the day of Pentecost (fifty days after Easter), Peter holds a sermon before a crowd of people. His words are so powerful in their working that the people present are converted, about 3000 in number. This power works on in all the twelve. They had all experienced the Resurrection and were able to convince others of its truth through their words. The words of their witnessing are so powerful that many people are baptised and become Christians.

The people who became Christians did so out of freedom. No-one can be forced to believe. So what happened? There was the awakening of another type of sense organ, an inner perception of the truth—a quantum leap into another form of perception. We all have this organ even if it is weakened; a sense for the truth. As Paul described it in the letter to the Galatians (5:6): '... faith operating through love.'

In the first chapter of his Letter to the Romans, Paul speaks of the apostles' task of bringing forth or wakening faith in all the nations. A second stage is that this faith is announced in all the world. A third aspect is that the believers mutually strengthen each other's faith. We can see these three stages as being important for us today.

Faith may come to us through grace but it does not automatically remain or stay as strong as it was at the beginning. If it is not nurtured and cared for it can fade and even die. So how then does one strengthen one's faith?

Strange as it may sound, there is a parallel in our relationship with money. We learn that we should not hoard our money. Wealth does not automatically make us happy. But being a spendthrift is also not the answer. Money needs to be in circulation, it must be shared. And so it is too with our faith. If we keep it to ourselves; it atrophies. We need to share our faith with others. This is not an easy thought. How we may resent the people who knock at our doors wanting to share their faith with us. This is not what is meant by sharing our faith. We must rather be awake to the moments when we encounter someone who asks us—perhaps indirectly—about our faith or who is in true need—a beggar in the spirit. Then we can share with them what has helped us in times of need.

There are other ways in which our faith is strengthened. We come to the third aspect described by Paul: The mutual strengthening of the faith among believers. There are many ways in which Christians can meet to share with one another in conversation and in prayer. The first words of Act of Consecration of Man are, Let us... It is an activity which is carried by all of those present. The priest is the mouth-piece of the congregation which celebrates this service together with him or her. It is celebrated with all true Christians, as well as with those who have died.

Help thou my unbelief! is the cry for help from the father of the child taken by a dumb spirit. How can our unbelief be helped? Deepening our understanding can help us to strengthen and deepen our faith. Jesus says to his disciples that he will send the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. The Holy Spirit working within us strengthens our faith when we gain understanding.

In the Old Testament story of the creation, Adam and Eve are placed in a garden in which stands the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The fruit of this tree is forbidden to them. Perhaps it is just this 'prohibition' which makes the tree particularly interesting for them and leads to the 'fall of mankind'. The thirst for knowledge has accompanied the human race since then. The church frowned upon this striving and sought to hold all knowledge within the church. People were kept in ignorance of anything that was not preached from the pulpit. Later when science began, those who put forward new ideas were called heretics and some were even burned at the stake.

Knowledge (gnosis) was frowned upon and called a heresy. No doubt many of the thoughts put forward were indeed mistaken as we shall see, but often the baby was thrown out with the bath-water.

The Greek word, gnosis, calls to mind the Gnostics, which was the name given to many of the early Christian sects. In fact there were Gnostics in

the Jewish, heathen and Hellenistic cultures before Christ—they were the intellectuals, people who were thinkers and seekers after knowledge.

As The Christian Community is sometimes called a Neo-Gnostic religion it is perhaps important to look at what the Gnostics believed. The world view of the Gnostics was dualistic: God and the evil world were completely separate from one another and so it was impossible that the Son of God could take on a human (therefore evil) body. This led to the teaching called Docetism—that Christ only seemed to incarnate and to die on the cross. The Creed of The Christian Community explicitly affirms the reality of the Incarnation of the Christ, as well as His death on the Cross. It is true that within our teachings we do strive to come to a deeper understanding of the Deed of Christ, of his Death and Resurrection. But this in itself cannot make us Gnostics in the negative way in which the term is generally used.

Knowledge, on its own, does not, as the Gnostics also believed, lead to Redemption. As Paul wrote in the first letter to the Corinthians (8:1) 'Knowledge bloats, but love builds up!' From this one can see that we cannot seek a one-sided relationship to our religion. Neither faith nor knowledge on its own can suffice.

We remember the man who cried out, 'I believe, help thou my unbelief.' The disciples also ask Jesus how they can strengthen their faith. For them, faith grew through the experiences they share with him on earth; for us this can come about through a deepened knowledge of the life of Christ.

There are many ways in which we can approach this task—more than can be covered in this article. We will mention two of them and look more deeply at one in particular.

One source of knowledge of Christ is the Gospels. The four Gospels have been a source of strength in the lives of many people down through the centuries.

However many people today find it difficult to gain an insight into the New Testament. There are so many different translations and interpretations that it is often almost impossible to know what are meant by certain passages. The fact that The Christian Community was founded through the help of Rudolf Steiner means that we can, if we choose, draw on his lectures on the Gospels as a resource. These are for us not a new dogma—something which must be believed—but they can help us to find a deeper meaning in the words of the Gospels. An inner voice, the sense of truth, within us can often lead us further in this regard.

Another possibility—one which comes closer in a way to the experience of the disciples—is to attend the Act of Consecration of Man. In this new

form of the Mass we can find a strong connection to the Mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection. In one of its most intimate moments it speaks of how what happens there is to enable us to 'walk with Christ.' Through years of attending this Act, the feeling can grow in us that we go through it in the company of the One whom it celebrates.

We hear that the body of Christ bears the 'new confession' and that the blood which flowed from the Cross carried the 'new faith.' We confess that Christ did die on the Cross, in contrast to the Gnostic belief. But what then is the 'new' faith? One aspect is the change from Judaism to Christianity. But we can also see another aspect in that the ancient Persian religion had always looked up to the sun and saw there the god Ahura Mazdao. Now we do not seek God in the heavens because he has taken on human form in the body of Jesus.

In the Communion we take into our own bodies the Bread and the Wine, bearers of the spiritual substance of his Body and Blood. We take into ourselves the substance of the new confession and the new faith.

There is still another aspect which we can consider. The Act of Consecration instructs us to take what has been spoken into our thinking. This is a new possibility within the Church. Earlier forms of the Mass certainly do not call on us to think about that which we have heard. We should only believe. But there is a further development of this. The New Confession and the New Faith are to live in our thoughts, not only in our feelings or emotions. A third step is that Christ's 'suffering and death', his Resurrection and his Revelation in all future times are to think within us. This can remind us of the way in which the ancient Greeks spoke of 'IT thinks in me'. Not, as we say, 'I think'. That which Rudolf Steiner called the 'Mystery of Golgotha' can be taken up into our thinking and will then become alive, as it were, within our own thinking. It becomes the new Gospel speaking within us; our experience and Christ's experience grow ever closer together.

This truly modern Act of Consecration of Man would lead us to a higher stage of knowledge and understanding of the Mystery of Christ's Life, Death and Resurrection so that through this we may strengthen and deepen our faith.

This understanding can also lead to a deepening of our love for the Christ who gave Himself for the redemption of fallen mankind.

Faith beyond the church

Richard Masters

Thinking about Faith brought a revelation which even a few weeks ago would have seemed impossible to me a lapsed Catholic (Strict Catholic upbringing, Catholic public school, altar boy, etc.) who from University until four years ago had never set foot inside a church barring the occasional visit for a wedding or christening which, at that time, were for me simple social functions. Being of an analytical bent my first quest was to look for a starting point and what popped into my mind was the well-worn, almost mantra-like phrase, Faith, Hope & Charity. What was the connection? Which was the most important? What was the commonality?

The basic commonality is that the underlying element of each is the concept of 'good'. But that is the only commonality. Hope and charity in terms of cause and effect could not be more different. Hope is purely internal, personal and passive B even when the hope is for benefit for others. Charity is wholly outgoing and active, whether it be a penny to a beggar or a country's massive contribution to underdeveloped nations.

When I analysed 'Faith' in the same terms it started me on a long journey that resulted in the startling conclusion that Faith reduces the other two to mere bagatelles in that Faith, rather than being a mere construct of Man, actually proves the very existence of God. This was a long and difficult journey because I had to have as my starting point the incontrovertible fact that Faith has seems to have been the catalyst and 'excuse' for most of mankind's depredations, wars and genocides in recorded history and still continues to day, as any glance at any newspaper will confirm. How could something whose fundamental underpinning is 'Good' be so abused?

My belief is that God gave us, as opposed to all other living things, free will as our greatest gift but, of course, that great gift is also God's greatest test. Human life would be truly pointless if all one had to do was to be born, live and the die and be wafted automatically B even with a delay B into heaven. God's test, in order to sort out the wheat from the chaff, is to make all of Mankind equal at the start and, using the gift of free will either gain entrance or bar oneself. That choice is individual.

The great divisive force in mankind and one that tends to suborn the individual's free will is tribalism, which results inevitably in the classic Us and Them scenario. All of the dif-

*Richard Masters
is a member of
the Forest Row
congregation.*

ferent faiths of the world seem to share a tendency of believing that their brand of faith is the only true faith and, worse, that any faith other than their own is both false and inferior. Since man is also a social tribal being it has become all too easy to join with the herd when leaders appear who lead the mass into chaos by means of the powerful cohesive power of Faith. That is understandable but since faith is thus abused it does not follow that faith is bad. How can this misuse/abuse of faith be rectified? My belief is that this will be a long journey towards a simple resolution. The resolution is that all Faiths should come to recognise that there is one single God however personified by each religion.

My hope is that over time there will develop an all-encompassing religion to which the whole of mankind can subscribe as a single unified tribe. Just think of the good that will result from the diversion of all the lives and resources that have been expended in the name of faith. And then I thought deeper. Why is it that there are so many Faiths and manifestations of Faith extant from pre-historic times through biblical times and continuing until today? Why specifically were there multiple Faiths in ancient times when globally there was no human interaction twixt continents? And why were all faiths, however codified and structured, aimed at the basic concepts of 'Good' and, even more importantly, the promise of the afterlife?

For me, all mankind is as one. I do not differentiate between races or religions. I do not believe that my brand of Christian faith is the only true one. I am incapable of such arrogance. So, apart from the gifts of life and free will I believe that the third great gift from God is Faith. Faith is not what we choose to believe or disbelieve. Faith is not something indoctrinated. Faith, when blind, is an abomination. When the world accepts faith for what it is, an intrinsic gift from God, we will be a long way forward to Nirvana.

Australian Floods and the Rain Dances

Martin Samson

This last year has seen an interesting swing in the rainfall patterns in Australia. Vast areas of land have now been under water several times through the year. The eastern half of the continent has received enormous volumes of water into a much depleted water system. Years without rain and a growing demand for water from irrigators and cities have taken so much from the river and underground basins. Not only the empty underground water reserves, but falling river levels have impacted on very sensitive ecosystems known as the wetlands. The eastern water system comprises mainly two basins. The first and most obvious one is the Murray Darling river basin which catches its water of the western inland side of the Great Dividing Range that runs the full north-south length of the eastern sea board. Most of the south-eastern corner of the continent is fed by this river system. It can truly be said to be the food bowl of Australia. The question hanging over this river is whether it can hold out against the demands of a population of over twenty million people who find it difficult to limit their needs. The other basin is the Great Artesian Basin found beneath an inland salt lake known as Lake Eyre. Most of the time this lake is a salt pan that lies several metres beneath sea level. When the monsoons and cyclones send their rain further south, the lake fills and the traditionally red centre becomes a green oasis for a while. Birds and fish return and after a short while the water drains into the great artesian basin beneath and the hot

red centre returns. At present this basin is only a fraction over half full, even after the first floods of last year.

One of the riddles for meteorologists is that the rains have returned a little outside of the predicted weather patterns. We were expecting the drought to continue for another few years at least. Several explanations are offered by scientists. One says that this is a cyclical change in the tropical Pacific Ocean oscillation pattern every three to seven years. One phase is known as El Niño which brings dry climate to Australia and the other phase is known as La Nina which brings the rains to us. The effects of the El Niño oscillation pattern are actually felt throughout the world and with global warming it is possible that this rhythm has shifted too. With this comes the observation or question whether the monsoon patterns are moving further south. This is also a known occurrence. For example around eight thousand years ago, the rain patterns in Africa shifted and created a wonderful Mediterranean type climate in northern Africa. The Sahara desert became a lush bowl of civilization that led to the Dogon culture, which was building cities and places of learning in the lost Timbuktu 2000 years before the rise of the Egyptian culture. Today's city of Timbuktu is but a remnant of that time. Once the patterns shifted back around 4000 BCE the desert returned to North Africa. Is there a similar pattern developing in Australia? Certainly many programmes about climate and science on the television are discussing this possibility.

We can focus on the tragic impact of the floods on communities and people whose lives have literally been washed away several times. Some people are cleaning up their towns and homes for the fifth or sixth time in as many months. Farmers are completely washed out as what could have been a bumper harvest now rots along with drowned animals under water, pushing food prices upwards around the country. International insurance companies are reeling in their predictions of the enormous amounts of money that will be needed to sort this crisis out.

From an environmental and indigenous point of view this could all be seen from another aspect. The aboriginal people have a spirituality that works through ritual and fire management of the environment. Their culture keeps an intricate balance between the impact of humanity on the environment and the needs of the ecosystem to remain strong and vital. A deeply connected mutuality of caring for each other is maintained. We may live on the earth and in return, we have a sacred commission to care and tend for creation. The indigenous people have watched how, over a short two hundred years, the western cultures have come and upset this balance without showing any deeper sense of caring for the environment beyond the very recent environmental re-greening of the landscape and creating more reserves of water for our consumption. Where have we taken the psychic and spiritual impact of our culture on the country into account and shown a constructive caring for her vitality? While the floods and droughts have come and gone, never have there been so many people dependent on the life of the river. So how can the river be

strengthened now to live in balance with the increasing needs of the people?

At first the Aboriginal people have said it is up to us who have caused the imbalance to take the situation into hand and do something about it, as this is the right way of things. All this results in is more political time wasting and money exchanges while the country slowly parches and withers. Many people in Australia do not even have a day to day contact with the river, because in Australia uniquely among the continents, there is no major city built on the river. People therefore do not witness the health of the river. The river is dying and the basin is falling apart.

Here in South Australia, the Murray River joins the Southern Ocean and has a number of very finely balanced water ecosystems including a very long thin water basin known as the Coorong. This is the home of the Ngarrindjeri people, who have watched their part of the river disappear into dust as the western political systems use up all the water in the east for farmers and irrigators leaving less than a bare minimum to come down to the Murray mouth.

Major Sumner, Ngarrindjeri elder from the Coorong (Kurangk), said that it is time for us to bring back the rain dances. This came at the time when the government was thinking of flooding the lower Murray basin and the lakes with sea water and reversing the whole river flow and thereby changing it into a salt water lake. He thought of the Murrundi Ruwe Pangari Ringbalin or River Country Spirit Ceremony. He said, let us dance the Spirit of the River and the Country and make the rivers flow again to heal the rivers, lakes, wetlands and the Coorong. He made contact with the ten nations who live along the main water course

of the Darling and Murray rivers which stretch right up into Queensland from South Australia. They arranged that they would travel to each nation's home and together they would dance the rain dances. Starting up in Queensland, they would take ten days and travel downstream to gather together, nation by nation. By the time they reached the Coorong of his own home he envisioned ten different nations dancing at the Murray River mouth.

And so it was that at Easter time 2010 a caravan of people set off to sit on the earth along the river and sing the rain in. Some of the congregation of The Christian Community planned to go along the whole journey but ended up joining them for the last days in South Australia. Major Sumner found that some nations came to the Ringbalin or Spirit Dance but didn't know their rain dances and had to join in those of other nations. Some groups only had a handful of people. Not all the nations could travel down the river and by the time we reached the Murray mouth only four groups were there. It has awakened an interest in the nations of the Riverland to now learn their dances and songs and be far more present in the ceremony this year. It has also called to those of us of European descent,

now living on the river, to seek ways also to bring our ceremonial and spiritual help towards the growing of the river to meet the needs of her people today. With no scientific proof available we can only stand in front of this event and the returned rains and ask: did it work?

Even though there is water everywhere, except in much of Western Australia, the drought takes several years to be broken as the vitality of the earth, trees and ecosystems need to recover their health before it is truly over. However, it is an interesting imagination to follow the life of an inland sea, currently the largest it has ever been in known history, returning on a permanent basis and the greening of the red centre into a larger area that could sustain human settlement. The weather patterns changing and the cyclones moving south, supported by a return of the rain dances and the inclusion of the western peoples joining in of ritual land management may help the water in this country to stabilize. Obviously human settlement will have to adjust its style in a changed ecosystem. Whether this huge climatic and environmental change will happen or whether we will continue in a traditional oscillation between wet and dry phases, only time will tell.

Experiencing Salvation III

Tom Ravetz

*The whole earth is our hospital
Endowed by the ruined millionaire*

Quotations taken from 'East Coker' by T S Eliot

We saw in the last article how the Christmas prayers in the Act of Consecration of Man tell us to 'know this!'—to know the

reality of the incarnation, and to see in Christ the one who brings healing to humanity. What is meant by 'knowing' here is far more than intellectual assent; it is the kind of knowing that creates the reality it knows. The genius of the Hebrew language speaks of Adam 'knowing' his wife;

really knowing is an act of new creation. The Advent prayer pointed to the fact that God's becoming is bound up with our becoming; the charge 'know this!' gives a pointer to where we can start to make this real.

We are asked to recognise Christ as the 'bringer of healing'. This means that we need to recognise that we are sick. Our existence on earth has a therapeutic meaning; 'the whole earth is our hospital'. This powerful insight can lead us to ask, what is at the root of our sickness? At the root of the many different answers we might find to this question is separation. In their separation from their original unity with God, human beings develop towards self-awareness and freedom, but this comes at the expense of their original harmonious unity with themselves and the world. This development starts with the untimely act of knowledge, in eating the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; the shattering awareness of separation that makes human beings self aware, seek to cover themselves, and to hide from God. The command to 'know this!' at Christmas, to grasp the reality of healing through our power of cognition, redeems the fall of knowledge.

The very act of knowing is the means to bring about the healing that we are to know.

How can we cultivate this deepest kind of knowing ?

What happens in the Holy Nights inaugurates a process that continues into the year. This becomes clear in Epiphany, when the light of the Holy Nights becomes a warmth of heart. With growing intensity as we go through Passiontide towards Easter, the process becomes our

existential experience. There is another way we use the word to know, sometimes with an almost ironic tone; 'I know it well,' we might say of a hard climb we've done many times, or a place where we've been through a lot, perhaps good and bad. This is the kind of knowing that can grow in from Epiphany to Passiontide.

Advent brought us to an experience of the ongoing reality of Creation. Passiontide and Easter bring us to the experience of salvation—our need for it, and its reality.

Only by living through this experience again and again, by containing in ourselves the tension between our faith in the Resurrection and our awareness that we are far from living fully in its reality, can we 'know' Christ as we need to. A fulfilment of this process comes in the Easter prayer, where the 'know this!' of Christmas has changed to an injunction to speak—to speak about the reality of the Resurrection, which gives meaning to all earthly experience. The intensely personal and often harrowing experience of Passiontide is a preparation, not for becoming ever more occupied with ourselves, but for proclaiming the Resurrection; for being witnesses to the reality of new life from death.

The third Christmas Epistle gives a pointer to the nature of our sickness in its description of the two tendencies that afflict our soul: the flight to illusion and the descent into slavery to the senses. Both of these tendencies distort precisely that power in us that is addressed in the 'Know this!'; our cognitive power. But we are not supposed to think that this is all a mistake. The unitary view of creation and salvation revealed at Advent reveals that on the

his own body and blood. In a passage from his commentary on John, Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376–444) gives a graphic image of the effect of Communion:

Receive Holy Communion believing that it liberates us not only from death, but also from every illness. And this is because, when Christ dwells within us through frequent Communion, He pacifies and calms the fierce war of the flesh, ignites piety toward God, and deadens the passions.

IN JOANNIS EVANGELIUM 4:2

Communion strengthens the ‘middle’, the place where we struggle for harmony between the extremes that we encountered in the Christmas Epistle. In this way, Easter in The Christian Community brings us in a new way to the experience of the Orthodox Churches, which teach that:

‘the problem of sickness and death and Christ’s victory over death is at the centre of what we say about salvation.’ In clear distinction from the western forensic theory of substitutionary atonement [the doctrine that Christ suffers the punishment that we owe God on our behalf T.R.]... the Christian East prefers a medical analogy of salvation that understands human beings as sickly, weak creatures in need of genuine healing from the corrupting consequences of sin—not fundamentally as violators of a law who need someone to appease God’s wrath on their behalf. ‘In the East, the sin of Adam is primarily understood not as disobedience to the Law but as a willful disruption of the communion between God and man. As a result, a distortion of man’s whole being, body and soul, entered in, as man is only healthy when rightly related to God.’ ... The church ministers to

the healing of the whole person in the holy mysteries: baptism, chrismation, confession, holy matrimony, holy orders, and holy unction all seek the healing of our corrupt nature in body, soul, and spirit.

Our need for healing, and the gift of the medicine that is Christ himself, point to a need for salvation deep within human nature. Easter seems at first to be about a change that happens to the human constitution quite objectively, whatever human beings happen to think about it. The ‘medicine’ exists outside of us. Does this mean, though, that our own efforts are not needed? In reality, Easter can lead us into a deeper experience of the kind of ‘knowing’ that can help to bring about the healing that is given to us. The ‘know this!’ at Christmas was not about acknowledging a fact, but recognising a person. The experience of desolation in Passiontide and Holy Week, and the experience of healing that can come to us on Easter Sunday, prepare us to know Christ as our Comforter, the one who accompanies us and gives us strength in the travails of earthly existence. Now, our ‘knowing’ reaches a new level: it is not knowing about, or knowing all too well; now it is ‘knowing you’. When we take up the challenge of speaking about the Resurrection—‘your word go forth’—we are in reality speaking about a person.

The movement through Passiontide to Easter and Ascension confronts us powerfully with the reality of our situation in the ‘hospital’ and brings us to the encounter with our healer. It then leads us beyond our narrow concerns. The Passiontide prayer tells us that the earth has suffered with us—it is cold and forsaken by the Spirit. This echoes Paul’s words in his Letter to the Romans:

RHYTHMS OF THE WEEK

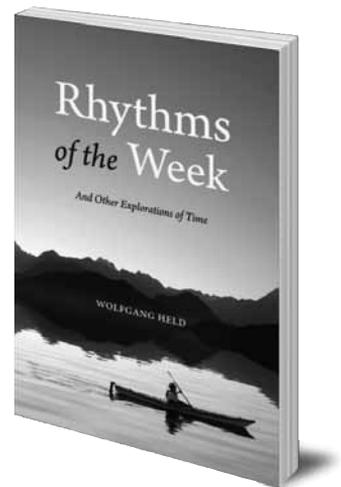
And Other Explorations of Time

WOLFGANG HELD

In this fascinating book, Wolfgang Held argues that the human soul resonates from day to day in seven differing moods. Held believes that deepening our understanding of this weekly rhythm can give us strength and inspiration for the way we live our lives.

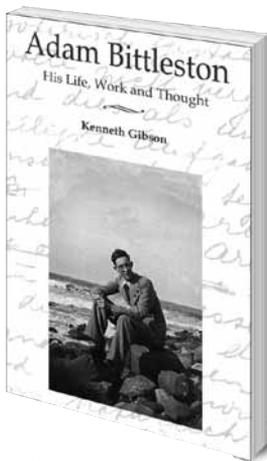
Why do we grow a little weary every four hours? How long can we concentrate for? Why does it make a difference whether we think about something in the evening or the morning? Wolfgang Held introduces us to the diverse rhythms at work in our lives. Just as we have learned to orient ourselves in space, so we can develop our potential through a conscious relationship with time.

Wolfgang Held was born in Germany in 1965. He worked for many years in the Mathematics and Astronomy section of the Goetheanum, where he now runs the publicity department. He is the editor of the *Sternkalender* (Star Calendar).



104 pages
paperback
978-086315-792-9
£7.99

Available now



288 pages
paperback
b/w photographs
978-086315-782-0
£16.99

Available now

ADAM BITTLESTON

His Life, Work and Thought

KENNETH GIBSON

This is the first biography of Adam Bittleston (1911–89) an influential writer, thinker and theologian, and priest of The Christian Community.

Bittleston was recognized as one of the foremost theologians of The Christian Community in Britain and was a much sought after spiritual counsellor. He was also very gifted with the written word. His knowledge of Shakespeare was equal to that of any academic or writer of his time. This biography contains a selection of his writings, including all of his works on Shakespeare.

Kenneth Gibson is a lecturer at the University of Derby and specialises in adult education, history of education and seventeenth-century ecclesiastical history.



**Floris
Books**

www.florisbooks.co.uk

If you have difficulty obtaining these books from your local bookshop, you can order them direct from:

BookSource, 50 Cambuslang Road, Glasgow G32 8NB, UK
Tel: 0845 370 0067 Fax: 0845 370 0068

Quote **PR0311** to receive a **10% discount** on these titles

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ROMANS 8: 18–23

We cannot do anything for the 'dying earth-existence' until we have addressed the reality of our own existence. When we have passed through this experience, our relationship to what is proclaimed in the Easter prayers changes. We 'know' what it means that the earth's breath is irradiated anew with the healing power of Christ, because we have experienced this power entering us. When we hear the command 'your word go forth', we might think not only of people whom we might tell about the experience of life from death, but of the whole of nature. And when in the Ascension prayers we hear of the great re-unification of earthly and heavenly existence, we don't have to think of this far beyond our reach; we have already started this in our 'knowing', that united our own experience of death and resurrection with that of Christ and of the whole world.

Temple Lodge Club a quiet oasis in the middle of London

Temple Lodge—a Georgian Listed Building in the middle of Hammersmith—was once the home of the artist *Sir Frank Brangwyn*. Whilst his studio has been converted into a chapel with a **vegetarian restaurant** on its former mezzanine floor, the house itself is given over to accommodating bed and breakfast visitors. They come from four corners of the world to enjoy the *quietness and tranquillity* of the house. Many have described it as a really peaceful haven, despite being a stone's throw from the centre of Hammersmith and its busy traffic interchange. The absence of a television in the house and rooms *adds to this atmosphere*.

There is a quiet secluded garden. Most rooms look out over this large and sheltered garden. Two rooms look out over the front courtyard and garden.

Upon becoming members of the **Temple Lodge Club** (£1.00 annual membership) visitors seeking Bed & Breakfast accommodation may share in all the facilities the house has to offer.

Breakfast is served in the ground floor Dining Room looking out over the quiet, secluded garden. A library provides a space for relaxation or quiet reading. All the rooms are well appointed and comfortably furnished, the two double rooms being deluxe rooms.

All prices include breakfast and are per room:

- Single room from £55 per night
- Single room with ensuite shower from £60 per night
- Shared room with ensuite shower from £70 per night
- Shared room, no shower from £66 per night
- Twin room from £77 per night
- Deluxe Double from room £89 per night
- Same, single use, from £65.50 per night

All rooms have hot and cold water.

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

Temple Lodge Club
51 Queen Caroline Street
Hammersmith
London W6 9QL
Tel: 020 8748 8388

(020 8563 2758 if unobtainable)

Fax: 020 8748 8322 (will also take messages)

e-mail: info@templelodgeclub.com

www.templelodgeclub.com

STUDIES IN THE GOSPELS

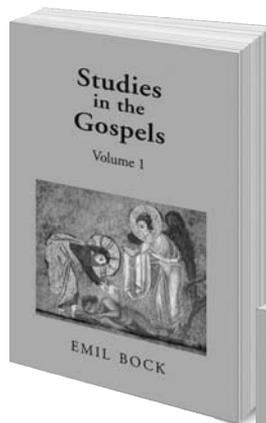
Volumes 1 & 2

EMIL BOCK

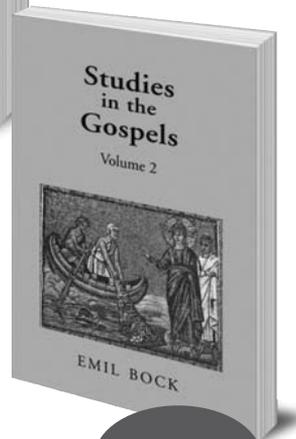
In the course of his pioneering work in The Christian Community, Emil Bock made many studies of different aspects of the Gospels. Bringing his wide knowledge of the history of that time together with his deep insights in anthroposophy, he brings a fresh view of the familiar stories of the New Testament.

Volume 1 looks particularly at the relationship of the New Testament to the Old, at St Matthew and the Sermon on the Mount, at Judas and Peter, and concluding with Simon of Cyrene and Joseph of Arimathea.

Volume 2 looks particularly at the teachings of Christ, and at the Gospel of St Luke.

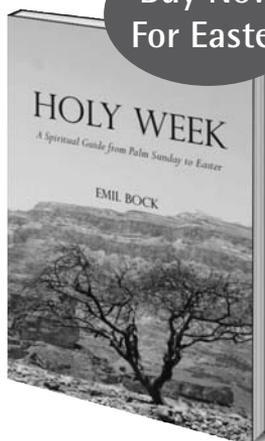


Volume 1:
336 pages
paperback
978-086315-711-0
£20.00
Available now



Volume 2:
288 pages
paperback
978-086315-791-2
£20.00
Available now

Buy Now
For Easter



96 pages
hardback
978-086315-790-5
£8.99

Available now

HOLY WEEK

A Spiritual Guide from Palm Sunday to Easter

EMIL BOCK

Easter Holy Week is a unique time in the Christian calendar, containing both dramatic lows and highs, as well as time for reflection and meditation.

This lovely little book offers readers an inspiring guide from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday. It vividly brings the events of Holy Week alive, enabling us to follow the mystery drama of the Passion.

It also provides opportunities for prayer and contemplation, with each day accompanied by the gospel reading.

Emil Bock (1895–1959) was one of the founders of The Christian Community in 1922, and led the movement from 1938 until his death in 1959.

NEW



**Floris
Books**

www.florisbooks.co.uk

If you have difficulty obtaining these books from your local bookshop, you can order them direct from:

BookSource, 50 Cambuslang Road, Glasgow G32 8NB, UK
Tel: 0845 370 0067 Fax: 0845 370 0068

Quote PR0311 to receive a 10% discount on these titles

RESEARCH YOUR OWN FIELD OF PRACTICE

Master of Education

3 years part-time, UK and Norway

Validated by Rudolf Steiner University College, Norway

www.crossfieldsinstitute.com



Ruskin Mill Educational Trust

Crossfields Institute 
Qualifications | Education | Development

The Eurythmy Association of Great Britain and Ireland presents

Cosmic Verse

by Rudolf Steiner from 1915
In celebration of his 150th anniversary

Fully staged in eurythmy with
speech chorus and music

Cosmic Measure
Planet Dance
Twelve Moods
The Song of Initiation – A Satire

EVENING PERFORMANCE CYCLE

1st May 2011 - **Michael Hall School**, Forest Row

8th May 2011 - **Camphill Rudolf Steiner Schools**, Aberdeen

15th May 2011 - **Ringwood Waldorf School**, Ringwood, Hants

22nd May 2011 - **Botton Village**, North Yorkshire

28th May 2011 - **The Barbican**, St Peter's Parish Centre, Drogheda - Ireland

3rd June 2011 - **Rudolf Steiner House**, London

12th June 2011 - **Wynstones School**, Gloucester

NB A full day's study with demonstrations, workshops and lecture

will take place in all venues except London.

www.eurythmyassociation.org.uk / www.eurythmyassociation.ie

Tel 020 7638 3202 michael.mehta@eurythmyassociation.org.uk



Guest Rooms

The Christian Community, 23 Chapel Street, Buckfastleigh TQ11 0AQ

The Christian Community in Devon is situated in Buckfastleigh, halfway between Exeter and Plymouth. It is located on the edge of Dartmoor and is 40 minutes drive from the coast and South West Coastal Path. The attractions of Cornwall, including Tintagel & the Eden Project, are within 1 to 2 hours away by car.

There are 4 small guest rooms at the top of the building. Three of the guest rooms have a wash basin; toilets and shower are separate. There is a kitchen for self-catering needs.

Unfortunately we do not have disabled access and there are steps and stairs inside and outside the building.

Suggested contributions
£12-£15 per person per night.

Further information and reservations:
Gordon Woolard: 01364 644241
or the church: 01364 644272



NEWTON DEE COMMUNITY

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

A long-term or short-term career change or break

- A sabbatical
- A gap year
- Something different
- An opportunity to meet special people
- A very different experience of life
- A possibility to lead a holistic and inspirational life
- The chance to live in and create a home with adults at risk
- Work on the land, in craft workshops, homemaking, administration, producing plays, music, celebrating the Christian festivals, training opportunities

If any of this appeals to you as a short-term opportunity or a long term commitment and you would like to discuss your aspirations and our opportunities - please contact

Vibeke Sunddal - Sunddal@onetel.com

Further information about Newton Dee Camp Hill Community is available at newtondee.org.uk

Newton Dee is a Camp Hill Community living and working with adults at risk.

Centres of The Christian Community

AUSTRALIA

Adelaide (08) 8339 6466
3 Anzac Ridge Road (P.O.B 216) Bridgewater, S.A. 5155
Canberra (02) 6295 3752
Civic Square P.O. Box 651, ACT 2608

Melbourne (03) 9804 0190
319 Auburn Road, Hawthorn 3122
Sydney (02) 9810 6690
PO Box 965, Rozelle NSW 2039

CANADA

Toronto (905) 709 4544
901 Rutherford Road, Maple, ON L6A 1S2
Vancouver (604) 988 4038
5050 East Hastings Street, Burnaby, BC V5B 1P6

NAMIBIA

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

NEW ZEALAND

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

SOUTH AFRICA

Camp Hill Village
(021) 572 5922
PO Box 1451 Dassenberg 7350
Cape Town (021) 762 0793
39 Timour Hall Road, 7800 Plumstead

Johannesburg (011) 789 3083
46 Dover Street, Randburg 2194
(Box 1065, Ferndale 2160)
KwaZulu Natal (031) 768 1665
148 Kangelani Way, Assagay 3610

UNITED KINGDOM

Aberdeen (01224) 208 109
8 Spademill Road, Aberdeen AB15 4XW
Botton (01287) 661 312
Danby, Whitby, N. Yorkshire, YO21 2NJ

Bristol (0117) 973 3760
20 St. John's Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 2EX

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

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

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

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

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

Ilkeston (0115) 932 8341
Malin House, St. Mary Street, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 8AF

Kings Langley (01442) 216768
or (07949) 324349
The Priory, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 9HH

N. London (020) 8563 2758
34 Glenilla Road, London, NW3 4AN

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

Malton/York (01653) 694 391
The Croft, Highfield Road, Old Malton,

N. Yorkshire YO17 9DB
Mourne Grange (028) 4176 0110
Newry Road, Kilkeel, Newry, Co. Down, BT34 4EX

Oaklands Park (01594) 516 658
Newnham, Glos. GL14 1EF

Stourbridge (01384) 377 190
22 Baylie Street, Stourbridge

W. Midlands DY8 1AZ
Stroud
(01453) 752 105 or 757 587

73 Cainscross Road, Stroud, Glos. GL5 4HB

IRELAND

East Clare
Dewsbororough Tuamgraney Co. Clare

UNITED STATES

Boston (781) 648-1214
366 Washington Street, Brookline, MA 02445

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

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

Detroit (248) 546 3611
1320 Camden at Wanda, Ferndale, MI 48220

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

New York (212) 874 5395
309 West 74th Street, New York, NY 10023

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

Sacramento (916) 362 4330
3506 Eisenhower Drive, Sacramento, CA 95826

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

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

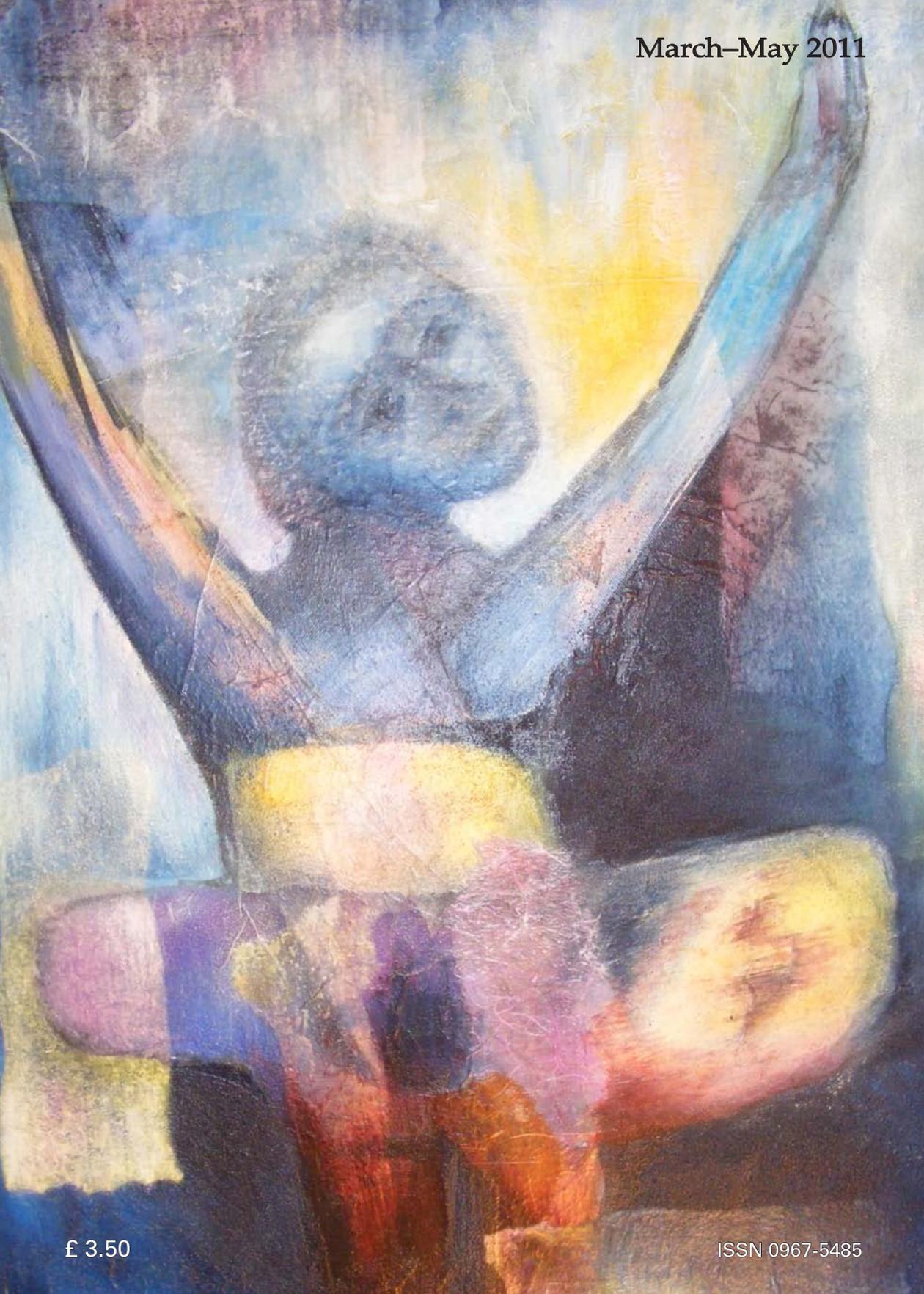
Taconic-Berkshire Region

(413) 274-6932
10 Green River Lane, Hillsdale, NY 12529

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

The Parish House
4221 Metzert Road
College Park, MD 20740

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

An abstract painting featuring a complex composition of colors and textures. The palette includes deep blues, bright yellows, purples, pinks, and earthy browns. The brushwork is visible and expressive, with some areas appearing more saturated and others more blended. The overall effect is one of dynamic energy and emotional depth.

March–May 2011

£ 3.50

ISSN 0967-5485