

JOURNAL



URANTIA.

A News Journal for Readers of The Urantia Book

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IUA Conference 2002 Opening

Dourdan, France, August 2002

FRANÇOIS LE ROHELLEC, FRANCE

Dear Friends and Readers,
Welcome to France!

It is with immense joy — not to mention a feeling of contented liberation to be able to finally share what we have been preparing for you over these long months — that francophone association, the AFLLU and the entire organizational team welcomes you to this third international conference of the IUA, the second to take place outside of the United States.

Other than some formal events which will constitute its framework, its guiding spirit, such a conference of readers of *The Urantia Book* remains without a doubt and above all an occasion for meetings, for contacts between personalities of all walks of life and from numerous different cultures.

We are, in effect, more than 200 individuals brought together in this room, from more than 20 countries and about 15 different languages.

A relaxed social setting; long, informal periods to take advantage of the recreational facilities; the magnificent forested park adjacent to us; and the nearby medieval village of Dourdan; and even still one of the most beautiful “French” gardens with its 17th century chateau — all of these will give ample opportunity for a joyous international menagerie.

A majority of you are also members or representatives of the 12 current national associations, their number having sensibly risen over the course of the past six years since the founding of the IUA in 1993 — certainly a sign that the teachings that were transmitted to us now have a firm, mature base in many regions of our planet.

That is why, with this gathering and the approach of the 50th anniversary of the first publication of *The Urantia Book* first printed in 1955, the organizational team wished to give time to take stock of the life of this fraternity that is so young on the divine scale.

Also, as you will discover throughout this conference, without ever claiming to be comprehensive, we have invited each of the current associations and other groups in the process of getting organized to make a presentation about their story, their goals, the way they live the teachings, and their projects.

Neither have we forgotten the central theme of this meeting which is: **Living the ascension plan in terrestrial human experience.**

The following commandment — “Be perfect as I am perfect” or still “Let us make man in our image” is the primordial proposition at the core of this startling plan to elevate mortal nature to the threshold of divine perfection via progressive ascension, patient education, slow spiritualization and progressive attainment.

Having promulgated the universal mandate, "Be you perfect, even as I am perfect," the Father intrusted the execution of this tremendous undertaking to the Eternal Son; and the Eternal Son shares the fostering of this supernal enterprise with his divine co-ordinate, the Infinite Spirit. [86:1]

The very instant the Eternal Son accepted his Father's plan of perfection attainment for the creatures of the universes, the moment the ascension project became a Father-Son plan, that instant the Infinite Spirit became the conjoint administrator of the Father and the Son for the execution of their united and eternal purpose. [93:7]

Like a hymn to the threefold cooperation of the paradise plan of ascension, and to coalesce our study, each of the three days of the conference will be successively dedicated as follows: the plan of the Father today, then that of the Son on Monday, and finally that of the Spirit on Tuesday.

During the different sessions and reflections, we will be led to rediscover and come to better understand these priceless gifts and attentive aides bestowed on the mortal races and upon all creatures of ascendant potential:

- The gift of Personality opens our access to divine parenthood,
- The gift of the Thought Adjuster makes each of us a veritable Child of God,
- The Cosmic Mind as source of physical, moral and spiritual insight,
- The Ministering Spirits, faithful and devoted trip companions,

- The spirit of mercy, the daughter of love, every vigilant justice,
- The bestowal of the Spirit of Justice, faithful conjoint to our soul.

The entire organization of high spirits, angelic hosts, and midway fellows is enthusiastically devoted to the furtherance of the Paradise plan for the progressive ascension and perfection attainment of evolutionary mortals.
[867:3]

Also, we won't lack, during our small group and other informal gatherings, time to share our experiences, as well as our detours, tribulations and humble battles in our quest for individual perfection from the moment when our souls began to be drawn toward truth like a lover irresistibly toward the Father.

So, briefly, this is neither more nor less than the fundamentals of the plan of divine ascension in the human adventure of knowledge – a sincere discussion of true faith in living experiences.

A French author once said “The world is a stage of love, an apprenticeship in conviviality,” a subtly simple image that summarizes in a few words the main route to follow – as we remember it from Jesus in his call to love one another – but also the essential educative character of our ascension career, the immovable base of the plan of Paradise ascension.

Thus conscious of being of the same nature, to be led to the same destinies of divine perfection, to be each inhabited by the same gift of the spirit, we can now verify and renew in the course of the next few days the vivifying experience of spiritual fraternity.

Have a happy joyful conference, everyone.

On Personality

SEPPO KANERVA, HELSINKI, FINLAND

Personality is one of the unsolved mysteries of the universes [70:3] (194:2, 1225:2). Thus, should we be able to solve this “mystery of the universes” in a discourse of twenty some minutes, we would be witnessing a miracle of not only earth shaking but rather universe shaking proportions. Don't be afraid! Nothing of that magnitude is going to happen. What you, instead, are to hear is the understanding of one perplexed individual who has studied the subject and prayed, in the manner of *de profundis exclamo a te, Domine*, that superhuman wisdom would guide his mind when he is trying to comprehend the subject and share his understanding with you.

1. A Short and Very Personal Definition of Personality

Before any analysis of personality may be attempted, I need to explain what I understand ‘personality’ to be. Personality is that quality or aspect of a human or superhuman being which ensures that **you will always be you** (194:4). True to the laws of evolution, everything else in you is bound to undergo innumerable changes, bound to grow or wither, progress or retrogress, but your personality remains the

same, unchanged (9:1, 1225:9, 1434:5; 1572:7). You will always, in all eternity, be you. (9:1, 143:5, 194:4, 1225:1, 1225:8, 1235:2, 1572:7)

For us to understand the revelatory teachings about personality, it is helpful if we make a distinction between that which **is** personality and those who **have** personality. The word itself has at least these two meanings in the revelation. Yet it remains a fact that oftentimes it is utterly difficult, if not impossible, to determine in which sense the word is used.

Personality is neither body, mind, nor spirit; neither is it the soul (9:1). Personality is a value (70:4). Personality is a quality (70:4). Personality is not an entity — it has no identity; it is rather a quality endowment or aspect. To be a personality means that one is connected to the Father's personality circuit. And a created entity either is personal or not; unlike the soul, personality is not a gradual acquirement or achievement (70:4, 334:7).

2. A Short and Very Personal Understanding of What it Means

Stop and ponder what it means for you that you will, throughout all eternity, always be you; that you will always feel that this here is me. The Universal Fa-

ther is the only source and bestower of personality (70:4, 77:6, 89:3), and since his gifts are imperishable, eternal, we may infer that personality is a guarantee, if you so will, of your eternal existence. Personality is a potentially eternal endowment (1226:5). Personality is a unique and select gift that our Universal Father, in his unfathomable love, gives each of us. Our Father loves you, he loves you immeasurably. He loves you so much that it is his will that he becomes you, your personality; it is his will to fuse with you, to become—under the guise of the prepersonal Mystery Monitor, another lovingly given gift—an inseparable part of you, to become one with you. This is the Father's will. You only need to do his will.

But the Father is no intruder, he does not force himself upon you; he does not force you to accept his love. He always respects your will. If you choose not to be eternal, if you choose not to be you, if you choose not to let the Father become an inseparable part of you, if you choose to refuse the Father's love, your will shall be done. Your will is absolute as concerns this choice. And each of us will have an opportunity to make that one crucial choice, and each of us has to make it in our exercising our free will, our freedom of choice—one more free gift given by the Father (614:7, 615:0).

3. A Short and Very Personal Understanding of What One Gets along with One's Personality

Contact and relationship with God the Father.

Personality is bestowed by the Father (8:5) upon an individual some time between his birth and the bestowal of his Mystery Monitor (Thought Changer); personality thus is a gift from the Universal Father, who himself is the original personality (8:4, 9:1, 62:2, 77:6, 89:3; 236:4, 367:4). Personality is a circuit through which the Father and a personal entity are in direct contact with each other (445:4); a personality reacts to the Father's personality circuit (62:2, 131:4, 195:6). The Father's personality circuit likewise functions as the conduit of a creature's worship of God (65:4; 195:5—6). Personality is capable of almost unlimited coordination with Deity (8:2, 195:6). The very realness, reality, of personality is proportional to its relationships with divinity (613:6). Personality may dedicate the free will to the doing of the Father's will, and this constitutes the choicest, the only and unique gift that a mortal can give to God (22:5, 1225:10).

Features and attributes that come with personality. Personality can be described as being the **unifier** of all physical, mindal and spiritual components of a per-

sonal entity or an individuality, be that human or celestial; finite, absonite or absolute (9:1; 136:3, 194:2; 640:1).

Each personality is **unique**; there are no duplicates, no two personalities are alike (194:3, 1129:8, 1225:12). Whereas each personality is unlike the others, personality as a phenomenon, thus, must be subject to endless diversification (8:2).

The prominent character of personality is that it **changes not** (9:1, 1226:3). *Personality is changeless in the presence of change* [1225:9]. You will always be you. Yet everyone of us observes changes in oneself and in others. Our body changes, mind changes, opinions change, attitudes change, character changes, understanding grows, responsiveness to spirit leadings undergoes a change, and the very precondition of the existence of the soul is that it grows. But amidst all these changes, all this growth, personality remains changeless. Personality, which itself does not change, thus has that remarkable trait that it can **coexist with unlimited change** yet for ever retain its sameness (1434:5; 1235:2). *Human life is an endless change of the factors of life unified by the stability of the unchanging personality* [1235:2].

Personality is what survives, with its seat of identity in the soul. Personality has **potential eternity** (1226:5). But should any free-will creature choose not to survive, the respective imperishable personality is in that case absorbed into the oversoul of creation, becoming a part of the Supreme (37:2, 1283:4).

Only a personality is **self-conscious** (194:5). Only a personality is intellectually aware of his actuality, and a concomitant feature of self-consciousness is the ability to recognise that there is not only me but that there are other personalities as well. This means that a personality has a personal, individual experience with the cosmos and its realities; a personality is able to see his place and identity in the vast realm of cosmic personalities (194:6). The self-consciousness of human personality is characterised by relatively free will (194:7).

Even if a human being is subject to and conditioned by the basic energies; his physical, biologic, constitution and the electro-chemical control mechanism thereof (195:2), no personality, however, is predestined to act in a certain manner or to make predetermined decisions. Personal beings are never automatons, programmed to act in a given manner. This is due to the fact that the Father-bestowed personality comes with the attribute of **free will**, freedom of choice (71:3, 194:5—6, 614:8, 615:3, 753:2, 1230:5, 1301:4). Personality is never manifested without the human will (1230:5). Freedom of choice and free will must be un-

derstood to mean a genuine pondering of the pros and cons of any envisaged act and action, not merely an individual's wanting something or reacting to physiological stimuli. Human choices are nonetheless influenced by his physical constitution, biological inheritance, biological urges, animal-origin traits, etc. and the numerous spiritual agencies that are there, and are designed to help us in our spiritual growth, do their best in their unnoticed and discreet efforts to persuade us to choose wisely. Thus the human free will is only relatively free. Yet there is one question and one issue where the human will is absolute:

It remains for man himself to will the creation or to inhibit the creation of this surviving and eternal self [the soul] which is his for the choosing. No other being, force, creator, or agency in all the wide universe of universes can interfere to any degree with the absolute sovereignty of the mortal free will, as it operates within the realms of choice, regarding the eternal destiny of the personality of the choosing mortal [71:3].

Because free will means a potential and actual separation between the human will and the divine will, free will is consequently the source and origin of evil and sin (615:3). That is why there are many who would wish that God had not endowed us humans with even the relatively free will that we now enjoy, but that he would rather have decided to force us to do his will. Had he acted so it would be an absolute guarantee against all evil. Ideas like these are not uncommon, yet they run counter to the will of the Father. It is his will that human and all other personalities would, out of their free will, desire to be Godlike and endeavour to do his will. God refuses to compel man to think or act against the choices of man's free will (753:2). If man is to be genuinely free, he inevitably needs to enjoy the liberty of doing evil and shunning the will of the Father. Under these circumstances, an evolving personality must per force also have the option of becoming self-confusing, self-disrupting and self-destroying. *The possibility of cosmic self-destruction cannot be avoided if the evolving personality is to be truly free in the exercise of finite will [1301:4].* It is God's will that humans participate personally and out of their free will in the long evolutionary struggle, first in order to constantly improve their conditions, step by step to march forward, and finally to attain the eras of light and life (614:8). Yet we need to recall that *[m]aterial mind is the arena in which human personalities live, are self-conscious, make decisions, choose God or forsake him, eternalize or destroy themselves [1216:4].* Personality itself is not an entity, it has no identity; person-

ality is not the component part of the human selfhood which makes decisions; that component is the mind. But mind is one of the components which the personality unifies. In the universe there is also mind that is devoid of free will, mind that cannot make a free choice. Consequently, mind becomes endowed with the prerogative of free will only if personality is bestowed upon it.

Whenever a human personality is making decisions involving moral considerations, or making spiritual choices, striving for truth and for a grasp of universe meanings; whenever he is pondering whether to act in a manner that would reflect unselfish love, whether to serve his fellow men, whether to be loyal to the group that he is part of, whether to co-operate with others, whether to do the will of the Father, whether to worship him, whether to pursue divine values; in all these instances the personality is exercising his relatively free will (194:7—195:1). Many of these instances can be described as situations calling for a moral choice: a choice between good and evil; or an ethical choice between selfish or unselfish conduct that will affect other personalities.

Personality, thus, is characterised by **morality**; that awareness which means that when one has to make a choice and ponder the pros and cons of one's envisioned act, one makes a conscious choice between good and evil, and takes into account the effect that the act will have on other personalities—be they human, cosmic or divine—and thus disregards or is unmindful of one's own pleasure or interest. A child, devoid of personality, can act only on the premises of what is in his interest and what gives him pleasure.

Thought Changer cannot enter and indwell the mind of a child until the child has made his first moral decision, has made a choice between good and evil. Since morality only comes with personality, it is safe to conclude that a child has to be a personal being at the time of the arrival of the Thought Changer. It is advisable to note that the capacity to make a choice and use one's free will, does not necessarily involve a moral choice or decision. Yet free will is a prominent attribute of personality. We may hence conclude that a child has become endowed with personality and is a personal being as soon as the first act of will is registered in him.

Another feature which is not evident in a young child is **consciousness of causation**, realisation that everything that happens has a cause, that every action has a reason, and that this event or action again may be

or become the cause of another effect. This capacity to recognise causation is an inherent feature of humans; it only needs to come forth along with the growth of the child. But it is not so with regard to reactive behaviour to causation. A human becomes forthwith reactive to the recognition of causation only with the bestowal of personality upon him (195:2). Thus, only a person can make **conscious use of causation**, of the fact that an act has an effect—sometimes the desired effect, occasionally an unexpected effect. It then is a learning process to see what effect follows each act.

The recognition of causation and the use thereof is first limited to physical causation, the causation of the domains of matter and energy. One soon learns that physical causes have consistently the same physical effects. But a human does very soon realise also the fact that his own conduct is the cause of certain effects.

A child starts very soon testing his limits and his powers, he learns the ways to get his will done, he behaves as if the entire universe existed only for his sake and in order to entertain his every wish and whim. Along with much trial and error, and as a consequence of many disappointments and disillusionments this individual begins to recognise that it is in his own interests to behave in a way that takes other people into account, in a way that is mindful of other people's rights and desires, in a way that seeks to accommodate and reconcile his will with the will of others. He recognises the existence of good and evil and finally reasons that he has an obligation of moral conduct.

But a personality has the capacity of going further. Personality is a God-given gift, and it comes with the quality of consciousness about the Gift Giver. This is one manifestation of causation. A personality sooner or later begins to adjust his conduct in accordance with his awareness of the existence of his Father, with the fact that the Father is the reason of his existence, and of the existence of his fellow humans, who consequently are his brothers. He begins to determine his conduct in accordance with that which he conceives of as being the Father's will. He realises that to love the Father is the least he can do. He realises that to lovingly serve his fellow men is the least he can do (195:2—5).

There is another aspect in the relationship between personality and causation, and that is **relative freedom from the fetters of causation** (71:3). *The bestowal of creature personality confers relative liberation from slavish response to antecedent causation ... There is kinship of divine spontaneity in all personality* [71:4]. This means that personal beings can make use of their free will and to a certain

extent be free from the fetters of absolute dependence on antecedent causation. Only a personal being can, in some measure, harness causation to serve his interests, instead of his being dependent on it. A personal being need not act and behave the way causation would predetermine his acts or behaviour. Liberty from antecedent causation means for example that a human personality is able, to a certain extent, to defy, alter and ennoble his biological and other material urges and needs. He can resist his animalistic urges to seek only his own good, and be altruistic instead.

Liberation from the fetters of causation enables a personality to be creative (70:5). A personality **creates** not only material things, art, or institutions, organisations, systems, rules and laws, or philosophies, science, religion, etc. but also **himself**. A personal being to a large extent determines who and what he is and will be (71:1), whether he will, in due time, be a glorified and perfected finaliter, or one who is characterised as if he had never existed.

All of the above may help us in shedding some light on, yet not giving a fully exhaustive and definite answer to, the frequently asked question: At what age is personality bestowed?; does a newly born baby possess personality? maybe even an embryo or foetus has personality? Does abortion equal with killing a human personality? We know that, unlike in the case of the arrival of the Mystery Monitor, the exact time of the bestowal of personality is not revealed; but we may infer that it must happen before the arrival of the Mystery Monitor. But how much before? An analysis of the characteristics and qualities of personality and the fact that there must be mind (and the concomitant and enabling brain mechanism) available before personality can be bestowed, may provide a solution of the problem. We stand instructed that capacity for human personality is potential in the mind endowment of the human being (71:1). But an experiential personality *is not observable as an active and functional reality until after the material life vehicle of the mortal creature has been touched by the liberating divinity of the Universal Father* [71:1].

This touch of the liberating divinity of the Father is mentioned only in this one short phrase of the revelation. I venture to conjecture that the "touch" means activation of the mind potential for personality, the actual bestowal of personality. It is also revealed to us that there are two types of recorders: 1. The Census Directors keep a record on all will creatures. They register the existence of a will creature at the moment when the first act of will is performed (267:5—6, 413:7), and that Salsatia, the Nebadon Census Direc-

tor, works in close association with the personality recorders. 2. The Archangelic personality record keepers, who *busy themselves with keeping straight the record of each mortal of time from the moment of birth up through the universe career until such an individual ... leaves Salvington* [409:4]. Census Directors thus make an entry in their records at the moment of the first act of will of a human, but personality recorders are said to make an entry in their registers at the moment of the birth of an individual. Since will is an inalienable character of personality, personality cannot have been bestowed until the first act of will is observed and registered. The first act of will, I would assume, does happen quite soon—possibly a few years—after birth, but not at birth, much less before birth. That the personality record keepers are said to keep their record “from the moment of birth”, might be an approximation only. Considering that their records cover the entire local universe career of a human, the revelators may have viewed it as accurate enough if they, in this context, refer to the moment of birth as the moment of registration; or it can also be that the record keepers assume the newly born one day to be endowed with personality, so they start keeping the respective records from the moment of birth, even if the baby is not yet a personality.

If we turn our attention to the attributes of personality enumerated above—consciousness of oneself, exercise of free will, morality, and consciousness of causation—it is hardly possible to determine that a very young individual would manifest or give an expression to any of them. It then is safe to conclude that personality is still absent at that early age.

Another, not frequently, but rather infrequently asked question is: Since personality, mind, free will, the inherited factors of selfhood like the body and the intellect, etc., are all divine gifts, is it that the divine gifts are of so poor a quality that they enable and allow an individual to commit errors, mistakes, evil acts, sin and iniquity; empower him to exercise poor judgment, make unwise choices and decisions, and even to destroy himself? If a man makes himself guilty of all of that, isn't it because of the faulty and defective gifts that were given to him? This question was answered, in part, in the discussion above. It is true that the divine gifts are not perfect, because it is God's will that we are perfecting, not perfect, beings. Why this is God's will would be a theme for another discourse. Suffice it at this point only to say that it is an incomprehensibly supernal privilege to be allowed to be imperfect, to be a perfecting being and strive and struggle so to achieve divinity and perfection. We are instructed that God has provided his children with all the spiritual help and as-

sistance that we need in our forward struggle and that we only need to accept the assistance—it is all freely available. We are further taught about the immeasurable mercy and justice of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. They know exactly who we are and where we come from, they do not expect anything excessive from us; they know that our gifts are imperfect. We are never judged because of our imperfection.

4. The Ultimate Purpose of Personality

Personality is striving towards an ever fuller **control of itself and its constantly changing environment** (1229:2).

The goal of evolutionary universes is the subjugation of energy-matter by mind, the co-ordination of mind with spirit, and all of this by virtue of the creative and unifying presence of personality. Thus, in relation to personality, do physical systems become subordinate; mind systems, co-ordinate; and spirit systems, directive [1275:1].

Personality thus is characterised by an inherent quality which is sometimes called “the evolution of dominance,” meaning progress towards a dominance by the spirit, and this is accomplished through free-will response to the leadings and teachings imparted by the Thought Adjuster. The purpose of the entire cosmic evolution is to achieve spirit dominance and control of matter through the mediation of personal mind (1274:5; 1275:1). In this evolution, personality is designed to act as the unifier of mind and spirit in the control of energy and matter.

The total evolution of the entire grand universe is a matter of the personality unification of the energy-controlling mind with the spirit-co-ordinated intellect and will be revealed in the full appearance of the almighty power of the Supreme [1274:5].

All of that concerns also human personality, which is to make progress towards spirit control of the mind, and to rise above and control energy and matter through the spirit-led mind (1229:2).

And that is what we try to accomplish every day, here and now, and for ever more.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: My writing of this essay was in many ways facilitated by two previous studies: 1) *Personality, Identity, Self, and Selfhood*, an article by Jean Royer, 2001; and 2) *Sielu — Ajatuksensuuntaajan ja persoonallisuuden yhteistyön tulos*, a discourse given by Matti Tossavainen in December 2001, published in *Heijaste* 2/2002, 31 May 2002.

A Spinner's 'Dream-time' Story

RITA SCHAAD, AUSTRALIA

The indigenous people of Australia have expressed the 'Dreaming' – the Creation mythology - in stories that have been passed down for thousands of years, and in the intriguing 'dot-paintings' similar to the ones we have done over the last few days. A Dreamtime story tells of how the land, people, animals, moon and stars came about and why things are the way they are.

In the last 200 years, pioneering Australians from across the globe have brought their own cultures into this ancient land. They had to find their own way to express the impact this sometimes harsh and alien environment had made on them. One of the materials that has given inspiration to such expression is wool. It has been produced and exported from this far corner of the world and has been a worthy contribution to the economic growth of both our countries – Australia and New Zealand.

Wool – the hair from the sheep's back!

No wonder then, that spinners at the wheel and weavers at the loom dream their own dreams and seem to find meaning in what they do and value in what they perceive. Their analogies interpret their own version/vision of how and why the heavens work as they do.

So, here it goes: imagine a pioneering mother telling this story to her children.

. . . Once upon a time there was a Divine Minister, Mother of a Universe. She had just tidied her Nebadonian Homestead in the sky, set all the stars in motion and organised time and space. She was not only a good housekeeper, she was also a renowned weaver. She turned her attention to her Mind which looked at this time very raw and tangled. A great chaos actually. Usually she was a very practical and systematic organiser, but frankly she didn't know where to start that morning. This fluff – this stuff was Wool. Wool from the sheep in the outback of the Universe.

Michael, the Station Master, had proudly brought it in the night before; it was the first shearing crop of a new season.

The task was immense. She nearly despaired, because it was more than she had ever imagined. She washed it, dried it in the sun, which is the source and

light of all life, and combed it. What to do now? Playing with the fine soft hair, she started twisting them between her fingers and made a thread. That gave her an idea.

If she could make a long, a very long thread . . . she started dreaming . . . and saw in her dream how the thread wove itself into a most beautiful pattern, it seemed to be alive with colour and forms so unique yet ever changing – it was indeed a living thing and spread over all Time and covered all Space.

She woke and exclaimed with wonder, 'how supremely beautiful!' – and she started the work straight away.

The Divine Minister was also a very wise Mother. She called to all her daughters, who were outside playing and singing, to help her with the spinning of the wool. She had many daughters, each one so pretty and clever, full of laughter and gifted with a very special skill. They picked up the spindles and started singing a song of praise and joy, and the thread they were spinning was of the finest and strongest kind. Each time a spindle was full, the Divine Minister wound it on her shuttle and kept on weaving the great 'Supreme,' as they all came to call it, creating the most wondrous patterns with brilliant colours and crafty textures according to the magnificent design she saw in her dream.

Her Husband, the Master of the Homestead of Nebadon and the shepherd of all the Land in his outback Universe, kept bringing in more fleece, and the daughters kept carding and spinning more wool and the Mother of the Universe kept weaving and creating the most unique and beautiful Supreme anyone had ever seen. But because Time is never ending and Space has no borders the blanket did never get finished.

And that is why the children of the earth still help the Divine Minister and her daughters to this very day by spinning all the wool there is, and they have found, that with practise, they sometimes can produce a piece of yarn that is nearly as fine and strong as those of the daughters of the universe.

And one day in the distant future, with loyalty and diligence, we will help the Divine Mother complete the truly beautiful and good SUPREME.

The Adjuster

M. MOUSSA N'DIAYE, FOUNDATION REPRESENTATIVE IN SENEGAL

As *The Urantia Book* tells us, the Thought Adjuster is the purest, most mysterious divine entity of all those gifts accorded to the created. It is pure spirit and pure energy, Absolute in its Nature and Universal in function. The fact that it has been bestowed upon mankind which, among the intelligent and willed creatures is the most humble of all, constitutes, as *The Urantia Book* says, the Mystery of Mysteries. It is more a fact of privilege than honor that mankind should be worthy and capable to assume this. From this point and onward into the Eternal Future, this gift of God should reveal unto mankind the inexhaustible absoluteness of God. In the following speech, we will try to clarify and to contribute summarily to the understanding of the manner by which mankind should assume and become worthy of having received this Adjuster and to cooperate with it in order to grow closer to God and to share with Him existence in the Eternal lives.

Consideration of Some of the Aspects of Individual Human Life

Via basic and objective observation, the human self is comprised of an electrochemical organ organized into energy systems and of a consciousness that also depends on seven auxiliaries to ensure its intellectual, moral, social and spiritual behavior. This same human self is also made up of a personality endowed with self-awareness, with different abilities, and, notably with free will. If we stick strictly to an observation of these realities of the human being, we are brought to ask ourselves what is the meaning of this collection? One reply could very well be that all of those aforementioned elements of human individuality allow man to live. One then hastens to ask: what is this life? We could shift our response here: this life should be both human and superhuman.

Without spending too much time on the history of human evolution, we can call to mind certain accuracies – mankind as such was not so much “arrived at” but rather created. From the hand of the Life Carriers,

he set out on a career of civilization in order to discover the ideals of life and then to live them in order to see them blossom. In this long process of the humanization and socialization of mankind, education held a unique place. In both bygone days and in our time, it served to awaken human thought to those higher levels of life’s morality and to form within us the courage to assume such morality in our familial, social and spiritual behavior. This means that the human self is constantly adjusting itself to scientific, philosophic and spiritual understandings of life. This work of education, adjustment and unification of man to higher ideals is a long and slow task, but nonetheless necessary for the moral and spiritual perfection of the human individual. Our current social institutions – the family, school, professional and artistic training – endeavor to modify or conform an individual’s personality so that they are socially and familiarly useful and aware. Our theologies and religious institutions try as well, for better or worse, to modify or conform the moral and social consciousness of mankind to religious and spiritual values. Man submits, from the time of his birth, to a gigantic educative effort, to the modification of his body to the biological reality of his being, of his consciousness to the reality of knowledge and of his personality to the fundamentals of moral value. It is clear and right that humanity will never cease to promote this educative effort that is with every passing moment opening up new horizons and presenting new goals to attain. It is unthinkable today that a part of humanity or even a normal individual could not be a part of this massive, gigantic effort to educate the human individual. We are saddened by all of the social failings about us: sickness, poverty, war, moral and social conflicts that retard humanity in its effort to elevate those ideals that guide and control the effectiveness of our own education. We are all the more troubled by those who choose to behave anti-socially and self-destructively and who unfortunately seem to be gaining ground among a good portion of the planetary population. We still wish that our leaders and heads of state would themselves be led and controlled by such ideals as would lead humanity toward a better end,

such ideals which still must linger painfully and sadly in the back alleys of civilization.

We can therefore attest that the education or adjustment of human individuality to the subjective and underlying realities of existence requires important efforts to adapt, change and progress. Each adaptation necessitates profound courage and substantial effort in order to transform what was into new, more elevated meanings that will bring about a better life. A mysterious impulse is always pushing mankind to seek out a greater beauty in life and to adjust himself to an ideal that is always growing within him. The education and adjustment of mankind to life's meaningful realities is a difficult, often painful ordeal, but nonetheless necessary and obligatory. However, we do not doubt that humanity is currently staggering more than it is advancing at a healthy, joyous pace towards the higher spheres and life's true beauty.

Coming back to *The Urantia Book* and looking at humanity during its more primitive ages when mankind was more animal than human, we see that a long series of biological, moral and spiritual transformations should have engaged humanity in a career where it should have adjusted itself to the following different profiles and statuses:

Post-Planetary Prince Man who should understand family life, social evolution and governmental organization;

Post-Adamic Man who should be educated – previous attainments having been improved upon – in social service, planetary fraternity and the quest for God;

Post Magisterial Son Man who, after having raised up the previous two stages, leads mankind to a consciousness of cosmic realities and adjusts his moral being to the ideals of divine nature;

Post-Bestowal Son Man, relying on all that preceded, leads mankind to a consciousness of Sonship with God, to the Sovereignty of the Universal Father and the Sovereignty of Human-Divine Fraternity;

Post-Son Instructor Man, in achieving a synthesis of all that preceded, integrates mankind into the circuits of Light and Divine Life, into unification with his Adjuster.

The Adjuster

This unique gift of God to mankind immediately accords him, upon its reception, a cosmic, heavenly, final and absolute citizenship. With a man of good will,

it enters into an effort to perfect that man that only the Infinite Divine can measure. Certain men do not immediately nor clearly understand the significance and importance of the Love of the Universal Father, but they should be ready to sell everything if that becomes necessary in order to acquire the rare pearl of the Sublime Beauty of this Love. He should resolve without prevarication to discover and live the import of the grandeur of Divine Grace that has provided him with a Divine Thought Adjuster. This spark of the Father within us, which is of the same complete, entire nature as the Father, left the worlds of the Source of all Reality in order to come to live among men at the limit of the realm of intelligent life and to bring him into that glorious place that Was, Is and will always Be. Its work of adjustment of the human self to the peak of Supreme Reality is, for the adjuster, an example of love without precedent for a creature and for an adventure of remarkable service. Mankind is invited to play an active part in his own spiritual creation with an equivalent responsibility as his Adjuster. It is written in *The Urantia Book* that the Will of the Universal Father, that is to say that of the Adjuster, and the will of mortal man must unify into a single will that man himself must manage. Who would have thought that this could be true!!!

The work of the Adjuster in the scope of human consciousness is done in complete accord with human free will. God does not oblige mankind to resemble him. He graciously solicits, but he is never pushy. The Adjuster never criticizes mankind, never torments him, never rejects him. Despite our mental shortcomings, our animal arrogance and human vanities, the Adjuster patiently and unceasingly waits for mankind to become conscious of the contrast between our mortal, imperfect and limited beings and the redeeming, eternal grace of God. The Adjuster continually suggests new perspectives on an eternal life as opposed to a mortal one; a life in eternity as opposed to one handicapped by temporality; a perfect life as opposed to this one which is troubled by our capricious, fallible will.

Within the confines of human consciousness, the Adjuster develops, in the most subtle, discrete and intuitive manner, a taste for things perfect and eternal, for the harmony and beauty of things stable and superior. It seeks to maintain within man a drive to believe, from his childhood and all through adolescence. It constantly pushes him along in a quest for a better sense of well-being and in to a vocation with honor-

able intentions. In all the recurring situations that we may find ourselves, it never stops suggesting to us a superior route of the most moral choice. It unceasingly evokes within human consciousness the pursuit of excellence and road to perfection. In the end, it tries to make Faith self-evident, a living Faith within a human personality.

And we just hit upon the central term – Faith – Faith by which the work of the Adjuster expresses its entire importance and clarifies all its objectives. It is by this same reality of Faith that the human being allows the Adjuster to show him the sublime grandeur of this Divine Love that is characteristic of the Mystery of Mysteries. Operating via networks of Faith, the Adjuster releases man from his material imprisonment, from the shadows of biological existence and launches him toward the Light of the Spirit, introducing the Son of God by way of a spiritual renaissance.

The Adjuster's work continues with new efforts here and there amid the vast field of knowing God via Faith. Human thought is limited by its own creation, it is content to only see facts while their far away causes and sources often escape us. It can only grasp what its intellect can conceive while depending all too often on the limitations of our senses and poorly performing observational devices. Such knowledge is often based on too limited a range of understanding and conclusions that are always open to question. For some, being a scientist means knowing how to say “no” where “yes” has already been said. New theories always dismantle the previous ones. In these situations of ambiguity and mental contradiction, man seeks and wants to find the Truth that could guarantee certainty to his conscious mind and could stabilize his being via an unequivocal relationship with the very fundamentals of Reality. The Thought Adjuster brings to this tormented, unfulfilled seeker the Truth of all Reality. It is important that mankind knows that God, the Master of Knowledge, wants to provide him with all that knowledge if he is a sincere and steady seeker.

The result and effect of the Truth in human consciousness provoke in us the need for moral knowledge - knowledge of values that will never perish, never atrophy, that will shine forever without weakening, that will pulse forever and never fade. Such a person has already understood that the emotions and affections of this mortal existence are merely ephemeral and cannot survive. The yearning for a superior quality of life is received from the Adjuster, who graciously installs love of God and Love for Mankind. Then immedi-

ately follows an immense explosion of joy within one's being, and ecstasy and happiness without precedent. The seeker perceives the real presence of God and understands what are called Fruits of the Spirit. This work of Adjustment to Supreme Values within human consciousness releases within him a desire to penetrate Cosmic Reality and to discover God at the center a creation of which he himself is a part. He would like to conquer the Universe and turn the Earth into Heaven. His will actually attains Universal dimension.

This cosmic consciousness that his adjuster brings forth in him gives him a greater and greater hunger for Eternity and stimulates him to live the Divine Perfection that is growing ever more rapidly within the depths of his being. All his will senses a feeling of unity with Deity and the desire to live as God and for God becomes his Golden Rule. He becomes keenly aware of being integrated into Divine Infinity and no longer has any doubt that he will continuously exist and live his destiny within that Divine Infinity.

The work of the Adjuster that begins within human consciousness with the emergence of living faith progressively transforms itself into feeling a likeness with God and gradually becomes a will to serve, that is to say to accomplish the Will of God on Earth and in Heaven. This life of service is more and more common and accepted by mankind as normal, natural behavior. It is becoming more and more unthinkable to live otherwise or to be outside of this Divine Reality. Time and Eternity seem to be dissolving wherever he happens to be and the spectacle of the Divinity becomes the only thing worthy of living for. He perceives the nearness of the Divine and little effort is required for him to enter into an intimate moment with the Deity and to share it spontaneously, light-heartedly and unconditionally. This man understands that the work that his Adjuster has undertaken in his consciousness is truly priceless and that it merits giving his entire being to God. What he discovers after he effectuates this gift of his self is even more stunning since he realizes that God is sharing his Eternal Glory with him.

The adjustment or unification of the individual human with Divine Reality is an act of Grace and Love that sets off kindness, joy and harmony that surpass all human imagination, especially when it is reinforced by the Wisdom of the Local Universe. Mankind will always be reinforced by the Wisdom of the Local Universe. Mankind will be forever awed by the grandeur of the devotion that frees him from the impulses and baser instincts of animals, from the gravity and density

of the material world. Only a true God could undertake and succeed at this titanic work within the consciousness of a practically oblivious creature. The work of the Adjuster, even though it is a part of God himself bestowed upon man, even though he is honoring the human being, even though he consoles us and reassures us that eternity awaits, even though he is appealing and joyful, remains a mystery and always leaves mankind at a loss to grasp such expressions of the news of Divine Love.

This work of human thought adjustment to the Supreme Realities of God is carried out by the Adjuster with a complete respect for human free will. Adjusters do not terrorize. They do not harass. They love humankind tenderly, perfectly and patiently.

In conclusion, we can say:

The mission of the Thought Adjusters to the human races is to represent, to be, the Universal Father to the mortal creatures of time and space; that is the fundamental work of the divine gifts. Their mission is also that of elevating the mortal minds and of translating the immortal souls of men up to the divine heights and spiritual levels of Paradise perfection. And in the experience of thus transforming the human nature of the temporal creature into the divine nature of the eternal finaliter, the Adjusters bring into existence a unique type of being, a being consisting in the eternal union of the perfect Adjuster and the perfected creature which it would be impossible to duplicate by any other universe technique. [1185:1]

The Mystery Monitors are not thought helpers; they are thought adjusters. They labor with the material mind for the purpose of constructing, by adjustment and spiritualization, a new mind for the new worlds and the new name of your future career. [1191:6]

Living the Ascension Plan in Terrestrial Human Experience: The Plan of the Spirit

NEIL FRANCEY, BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

With your spiritual eyes anointed,
you would see the heavens open
and behold the angels of God
ascending and descending.
And many of us, while functioning in the govern-
ment of the Father
and the universes of the Sons,
are assigned to the service of the human races.
We have ministered on Urantia
since the earliest times of human intelligence.
We inform heaven about this remote part
of the universe.
We are the angels of heaven.
In the words of Jesus, we are ministering spirits.
(1841:3)

In recent days we have learnt of the brilliant plans of the Father and of the Son. Now we shall see the correlation of these plans with the plan of the Infi-

nite Spirit, The Plan of Mercy Ministry – *the ministry of divine love and endless mercy to all intelligent creation* [94:4]. *The Adjuster is the presence of the Father; the Spirit of Truth, the presence of the Sons* [1244:4]. These divine endowments are coordinated on the levels of human spiritual experience by the Ministering Spirits, who apply the love of the Father and the mercy of the Son, in their ministry to you and to me. They do this on behalf of the Infinite Spirit. The three plans are in fact unified as one plan.

Initially, God the Father created the Infinite Spirit in order to be free from the bonds of centralized perfection. In turn, the Infinite Spirit liberates God through three grand divisions, one of which is the Ministering Spirits of Time. These Ministering Spirits are:

- The supernaphim, the angelic hosts of the central universe;
- The seconaphim, the ministering spirits of the superuniverses; and
- The seraphim, hosts of the local universes.

Primary supernaphim, children of the Infinite spirit, are perfect beings. They are servants to the Deities on the Central Isle of Paradise. Yet they ever attend us, from this origin world of Urantia, until we are finally mustered into the Mortal Corps of the Finality.

Primary seconophim act as living mirrors to the Ancients of Days who are positioned midway between the inhabited worlds and Paradise - between man and God. Thus, the Ancient of Days *can instantly look both ways, hear both ways, and know both ways* [308:0]. The seconophim interpret the mind of the Infinite Spirit to the Ancients of Days. They are the personal representatives of the Third Source and Center.

These seconophim can also reflect the minds of the Creator Sons. For example, if the Ancients of Days wants to know Michael's attitude about a certain matter *they need only call for the Chief of Nebadon Voices, who, upon request, will present the Michael seconaphim of record; and right then and there the Ancients of Days will perceive the voice of the Master Son of Nebadon* [308:5].

The Father's will for the administrative affairs of Urantia is thereby perfectly known.

Secondary seconaphim are equally reflective as their primary fellows. They serve the associates of the Ancients of Days, and are known to us by beautiful names such as:

the Voices of Wisdom,
the Souls of Philosophy,
the Hearts of Counsel,
the Joys of Existence, and
the Satisfactions of Service.

Tertiary seconaphim are *everlasting guideposts...at the crossroads of time, there to guide the feet of anxious pilgrims in moments of great perplexity and spiritual uncertainty* [318:1].

We are certainly blessed. The ministrations of these spirits comfort us in our long journey inwards through space.

The seraphim and their assistants, the cherubim and sanobim are the Ministering Spirits in a Local Universe. They are the offspring of the Universe Mother Spirit.

And what is the main purpose for their creation? The seraphim and their assistants, along with the midways, perfectly bridge the gap between the material and spiritual worlds, between mortal man and spirit beings (425:1).

At the time of the writing of the Urantia Papers there were just over five hundred million pairs of seraphim. That is over one billion individual angels. And

there are about the same number of cherubim (1250:2). We are truly blessed with assistance from above.

On the spiritual level, seraphim are coordinators. On the intellectual level they are interpreters of mind. And on the physical level they manipulate terrestrial environment through the Master Physical Controllers and the midway creatures (1244:6).

They are referred to as "angels" and are largely concerned with the operation of the plans of mortal survival. Seraphim also assist the superhuman government of a planet, especially worlds like Urantia which have been isolated by rebellion. The angels, assisted again by the midways, function here as supermaterial ministers and execute the mandates of the resident governor general (1250:3).

But how does such a subordinate angelic personality, created but a little above the universe level of humanity, do such difficult and complex things? [1244:7]. The Chief of Seraphim stationed on Urantia admits that she really does not know, but conjectures that this phenomenal ministry is facilitated by the unrevealed working of the Supreme Being, the actualizing Deity of the evolving universes of time and space.

It is indeed a most remarkable plan. God has devised a vast scheme of survival through spiritual progression. We are all taking part in this plan.

What exactly do seraphim do?

They lead us into paths of new and progressive experiences. We are told this *rarely means attaining a life of ease* [1245:3]. It sounds like it is possible but it is rare. I've yet to meet that person who says it has been easy.

They manipulate the mortal environment so that we have a greater realization of the presence of our indwelling Adjuster (1245:4).

With the assistance of the midway creatures, they can *make actual contact with mankind, but such occurrences are very unusual* [1246:4].

We receive the undivided assistance of these personal guardians of destiny *to finish the third circle, traverse the second, and attain the first* [1242:3]. What do they do? They stimulate our minds so we can make decisions that get us from one circle to the next. How do they do this? They work through our *social, ethical, and moral environment* [1245:1].

Finally the seraphim unify their vast ministries of the Infinite Spirit on mansonia, correlating the influence of the Conjoint Actor with the spirit presences of the Father and the Son.

How can we best work with the Ministering Spirits? **(We do need each other.)**

1. Understand how alike we are to these spirit beings;
2. Give recognition to their presence and serendipitous ways;
3. Endeavor to reciprocate the warm affection they feel for us;
4. Allow your higher intellectual powers to overcome *the thoughtless panic of dread and anxiety* [1243:2].

What can better cooperation achieve? (*We need to work together*)

1. The successful custody of the Urantia Papers;
2. Greater responsiveness to the leadings of the Thought Adjuster;
3. A more fulfilling life by 'staying on track' with the preferred ascension career;
4. The emergence of the Supreme Being and the era of Light and Life.

Guardian Angels

Guardian angels are seraphim devoted to the ministry to individual mortals. They are only assigned as guardian seraphim when appointed to a human soul who has realized one or more of three achievements:

*has made a supreme decision to become Godlike,
has entered the third circle, or
has been mustered into one of the reserve corps of destiny.*
[1242:4]

I would like to mention a story about Jesus to illustrate their ministering role. Remember when he ascended the mountain for the final showdown with Lucifer? A remarkable incident took place. He asked his Father to send back the guardian seraphim to "be with Tiglath." He wanted to deal with this last mortal struggle alone. *He went into the great test with only his indwelling Adjuster to guide and sustain him* [1493:1]. And it is revealed that *when the trying ordeal was finished, the detached guardian seraphim returned to Jesus' side and ministered to him* [1494:1].

Ministered to him. The seraphim was able to console Jesus at this most distressing time. What a remarkable coordination of spirit energies! If seraphim can deal with that mission, I'm sure they can brilliantly attend to us in our earthly battles.

Cherubim and Sanobim

The Ministering Spirits of the Local Universes embrace the seraphim and their assistants, the cherubim. Mortal ascenders have our initial contact with these offspring of the Universe Mother Spirit.

Cherubim and sanobim are very near the morontia level of existence, and they are most efficient in *the*

physical, morontial, and spiritual domains [422:6]. As required they work in liaison with the midway creatures.

Advanced *cherubim and sanobim are re-embraced by the Universe Mother Spirit and emerge as full-fledged seraphim* [423:6]. Henceforth, the role of seraphim, with all of its Paradise possibilities, is open to such reborn cherubim and sanobim. These angels can be assigned as guardians of destiny to mortal beings.

We now see how the many orders of spirit beings interrelate within their hierarchy, and how they interact with the mortals of time and space. Their organization works — there is order and logic. We are to go and do likewise. It is indeed quite a plan.

Midwayers

The midway creatures, the permanent citizens of Urantia, are functionally grouped with the ministering spirits, but are not really of the angelic order.

At the last adjudication, the midwayers numbered 10,992. They are known as the United Midwayers of Urantia (864:2).

Midwayers are indispensable to the seraphim in their role as personal guardians to mortals and compensate that gap between the material and spiritual affairs of Urantia.

The service role of the United Midwayers of Urantia

- They assist with quick and reliable personal communication.
- They guard and patrol the invisible spirit realm of the planet on behalf of the supernatural beings.
- They are essential in contact liaisons between the spiritual and the material levels.
- The more spiritual act as assistants to the various orders of seraphim.

The primary midwayers usually minister to the spiritual forces resident on the planet. Secondary midwayers are nearer man than angel and are therefore very understanding in their contact with human beings. They exist just outside the range of mortal vision and *have certain definite powers over the things of time and space* [865:4].

The 1,111 loyal secondary midwayers are engaged in important missions on earth. *Their chief work today is that of unperceived personal-liaison associates of those men and women who constitute the planetary reserve corps of destiny.* [865:6]

Actions taken by midwayers

The midwayers in association with certain spirit personalities have been involved in great moments in history:

Sufficient numbers demonstrated loyalty during the defaults of the Planetary Prince and Adam and Eve. They are a rebellion-tested corps: Loyal cherubim and seraphim and three faithful midwayers assumed custody of the tree of life at the time of the rebellion; midwayers assisted when Jesus turned the water into wine at Cana and at the death and resurrection of Jesus; they were instrumental in the co-ordination of personalities and circumstances on Urantia which finally convinced the planetary supervisors to initiate the Urantia Papers.

Summary

Now that we have spoken about each of the Ministering Spirits attached to the Infinite Spirit, the eternal god of action, let us see how they inter-relate through the Father and the Son.

The God presence of the indwelling Adjuster,
the encircuited action of the Holy Spirit,
and the Son-consciousness of the Spirit of Truth,
correlate into a unity of spiritual ministry
to a mortal personality,
through the ministering personality of the
guardian seraphim.

These celestial influences integrate
in the evolving presence of the Supreme Being.
(1245:6)

And in the personal experience of an individual
mortal
these diverse levels are unified
and made meaningful
by the *mysterious operations of the divine Thought Adjuster* [425:1].

We live with spirit beings. One day we shall all celebrate the era of Light and Life. For now we are beginning to see how divinity pervades time and space. The plans of eternity are being revealed to us. Through these means, God is potentially present on the headquarters of the super and local universes. He is also potentially present in our hearts and in our minds. He truly does walk every moment and every mile with us.

Closing comments

In closing, I would like to ask you: What do you think your guardian angel would like to say to you? I think they would seek better cooperation for spiritual progression. On Urantia, a message transmitted by a

guardian angel for her human associate, might be introduced as follows:

Please make record of this my personal message.

- Much of my difficulty is due to the unending conflict between your two natures:
- the ideals of a superior people crossed by the instincts of an inferior race,
- the view of a far-seeing Monitor counteracted by the nearsightedness of a creature of time,
- the plans of an ascending being modified by the desires of a material nature,
- the urge of angels opposed by the emotions of an animal,
- the joys of living ever threatened by the sorrows of death.
- Such a life on such a planet! (1224:0)

Such a life on such a planet! – Little did that angel realize her immortal words would one day make a great screen saver.

Then might follow a beautifully touching and appealing petition of appreciation.

I first served as an observer on the lowest of the evolutionary worlds. Then I began my advanced studies on the architectural worlds in the Nebadon system. When fully prepared I was commissioned as a Ministering Spirit of Time to serve with you on this planet Urantia (421:2).

I now guard you; I do not seek directly to influence you. You must chart your own course, but I then *act to make the best possible use of the course you have chosen* [1246:3].

This has been achieved quite independently of your direct appeals and your prayers; I execute the mandates of my superiors (1246:2).

I now transmit to you my sincere appreciation for our association.

You will be assisting me to rise from these lowly origins to the heights of glory, one day to serve the incarnated Paradise Sons (441:5).

Through you, I am having experiences that compensate for the greater divinity of the ministering spirits of the central and superuniverses.

Thank you for your sincere co-operation,
 your cheerful endurance of our tasks,
 your faithfulness in carrying out the program
 arranged for us,
 for patiently going through the trials of your
 Thought Adjuster's selection.

Remember, as we strive for divine perfection, that
 the guardian angels, together with all the faithful minis-
 tering spirits of time, are always and forever your true

friends and unfailing helpers all the way to Havona,
 even on Paradise (441:5).

Let us trust that we are meeting the approval of
 the chiefs of our kind. Step by step you and I are
 passing on to judgment. May we await with pleasure
 and without apprehension, the roll call of destiny
 (1214:0).

The plans for *the revelation of God to the world, in and
 through Jesus, shall not fail* [2097:1].

The Quality of Mercy

LEE ARMSTRONG, NORTH CAROLINA, USA

“The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
 Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
 It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.”

William Shakespeare so described mercy in
 Titus Andronicus. The beautiful lyrical qual-
 ity of these words and the truth reflected
 ring four centuries after they were first written.

*“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes
 me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still
 waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of
 righteousness. Yes, even though I walk through the valley
 of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for God is
 with me. Surely goodness and **mercy** shall follow me all
 the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the
 Lord forever.”* [1445:1]

This 23rd Psalm is well known to us. You may also
 recall that Anna wrote the beautiful poem that Simeon
 sang when Jesus was presented at the temple. It in-
 cluded these lines:

*“Rejoice in the tender mercy of our God
 because the dayspring from on high has now visited us
 To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow
 of death”*[1353:4]

As we begin our day of study on “mercy,” let's look
 at what mercy is, its reach and limits, and take a mo-
 ment to look at a few human applications.

Mercy Defined

There are multiple places in *The Urantia Book* that
 define and characterize mercy.

*Mercy is simply justice tempered by that wisdom which
 grows out of perfection of knowledge and the full recogni-
 tion of the natural weaknesses and environmental handi-
 caps of finite creatures.* [38:1]

*Mercy is not a contravention of justice but rather an un-
 derstanding interpretation of the demands of supreme
 justice as it is fairly applied to the subordinate spiritual
 beings and the material creatures of the evolving uni-
 verses.* [38:5]

From this, I understand that mercy is first and fore-
 most a fair application of a just decision. I also read,
*Justice is the collective thought of righteousness; mercy is its per-
 sonal expression* [115:2]. *Mercy characterizes God's attitude of
 love for the individual* [137:4]. Mercy is not only fair, but it
 is personal and individual. Jesus said, *“Civil government is
 founded on justice even as true religion is founded on
 mercy”* [1462:1].

The book further clarifies the process of being
 merciful:

*. . . you should even now understand that mercy is a
 quality of growth. You should realize that there is a
 great reward of personal satisfaction in being first just,
 next fair, then patient, then kind. And then, on that
 foundation, if you choose and have it in your heart, you
 can take the next step and really show mercy; but you
 cannot exhibit mercy in and of itself. These steps must be*

traversed; otherwise there can be no genuine mercy. There may be patronage, condescension, or charity – even pity – but not mercy. True mercy comes only as the beautiful climax to these preceding adjuncts to group understanding, mutual appreciation, fraternal fellowship, spiritual communion, and divine harmony. [315:1]

Ponder that for a moment. You can't just decide to be merciful. We have to be *first just, next fair, then patient, then kind*. There is a process. The last point to make as we seek to define mercy is that it is subordinate to love.

Jesus disclosed to the world a higher quality of righteousness than justice – mere technical right and wrong. Divine love does not merely forgive wrongs; it absorbs and actually destroys them. The forgiveness of love utterly transcends the forgiveness of mercy. Mercy sets the guilt of evil-doing to one side; but love destroys forever the sin and all weakness resulting therefrom. [2018:1]

Think about that! Mercy can forgive guilt, but love actually absorbs and destroys the wrong. That's incredible! As Mary Hopkins, the 19th Century educator from the United States said, "Our prayer and God's mercy are like two buckets in a well; while the one ascends the other descends."

Mercy: Its Scope and Limits

Now that we've examined what mercy actually is, let's focus on how big of a reach mercy extends and where it stops. Part One of *The Urantia Book* reveals the existence of the "Memory of Mercy" which is like a living record of our mercy bank accounts. In this discussion we learn, . . . *your individual drawing credits are always far in excess of your ability to exhaust the reserve if you are sincere of purpose and honest of heart [315:0]*. This is a comforting statement that no matter how many mistakes we make, if we are sincere, we can count on an understanding ear.

In Part Two of *The Urantia Book* in the paper "The Seraphic Hosts," we learn that there is a whole group of angels who are called "The Voice of Mercy." Here's what it says about them:

Mercy is the keynote of seraphic service and angelic ministry. It is therefore fitting that there should be a corps of angels who, in a special manner, portray mercy. These seraphim are the real mercy ministers of the local universes. They are the inspired leaders who foster the higher impulses and holier emotions of men and angels [430:1].

This tells me a couple of things. Most obviously, there is a group of angels working to uplift our thoughts and impulses. Also, it shows a way that mercy is actually manifest to us here in our local universe.

Do you recall when we were trying to define mercy a few minutes ago, and we identified the process of

being *first just, next fair, then patient, then kind*? This makes me contemplate if what we, as mortals, can try to accomplish through this process is to stimulate higher impulses and holier emotions of the women and men with whom we interact.

One of my favorite singers and songwriters from the United States is a woman who graduated from the planet a few years ago. Her name is Laura Nyro. In one of her songs, she wrote the lyric, "Nothing heals like time and love." I've often thought about the importance of the time element in healing relationships and emotional injury. Our big blue book also addresses time in relation to mercy:

Supreme justice can act instantly when not restrained by divine mercy. But the ministry of mercy to the children of time and space always provides for this time lag, this saving interval between seedtime and harvest. If the seed sowing is good, this interval provides for the testing and upbuilding of character; if the seed sowing is evil, this merciful delay provides time for repentance and rectification. This time delay in the adjudication and execution of evildoers is inherent in the mercy ministry of the seven superuniverses. The restraint of justice by mercy proves that God is love, and that such a God of love dominates the universes and in mercy controls the fate and judgment of all his creatures. [616:5]

The wisdom of the time delay is further emphasized: *Supreme justice is dominated by a Father's love; therefore will justice never destroy that which mercy can save. Time to accept salvation is vouchsafed every evildoer. [617:3]*

We can see that there is plenty of mercy in the universe if we are sincere. We'll be given enough time to foster our "higher impulses and holier emotions."

Okay, we're all humans here. What we want to know is how far will God let us push it? How much can we get away with before we have to toe the line? Mistake not! **There are limits**. Even the Divine patience recognizes the right of the individual **not** to accept salvation.

When the provisions of endless mercy and nameless patience have been exhausted in an effort to win the loyalty and devotion of the will creatures of the realms, justice and righteousness will prevail. That which mercy cannot rehabilitate justice will eventually annihilate. [241:1]

There's not much wiggle room there. In the same paper "The Seraphic Hosts" that discussed the angels called "The Voice of Mercy," there is another host of angels called "Court Advisers." They are described like this:

The seraphic court advisers serve extensively as defenders of mortals. Not that there ever exists any disposition to be unfair to the lowly creatures of the realms, but while justice demands the adjudication of every default in the climb towards divine perfection, mercy requires that every such misstep be fairly adjudged in accordance with the creature nature and the divine purpose. [428:2]

This is interesting. [J]ustice demands the adjudication of every default in the climb towards divine perfection. I wonder how many defaults I have on any given day, week, month. I'll be sorry to bother the Court Advisors, but I think I might keep them busy. Do any of you feel that way? It's possible I may have to address defaults I can't even remember... Okay. I think there may be a difference in the gravity between a "default" and an "error." I know I make numerous errors, but rarely do I consciously desire to make an error. Perhaps that will be a saving grace.

If we are to look at default, we can measure it against the all-time record holder of default, Lucifer's rebellion.

The Rebellion had ended on Jerusem. It ends on the fallen worlds as fast as divine Sons arrive. We believe that all rebels who will ever accept mercy have done so. We await the flashing broadcast that will deprive these traitors of personality existence. We anticipate the verdict of Uversa will be announced by the executionary broadcast which will effect the annihilation of these interned rebels. Then will you look for their places, but they shall not be found. "And they who know you among the worlds will be astonished at you; you have been a terror, but never shall you be any more." And thus shall all of these unworthy traitors "become as though they had not been." All await the Uversa decree. [611:6]

If any of our unseen friends are with us today, maybe they can pass along the message that whenever the Ancients of Days are ready, we are too.

There is no doubt that there are limits to mercy. Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, regarding one person said, "He reminds me of the man who murdered both his parents, and then, when sentence was about to be pronounced, pleaded for mercy on the grounds that he was an orphan."

Our *Urantia Book* continues in the paper "Problems of the Lucifer Rebellion":

There is no error greater than that species of self-deception which leads intelligent beings to crave the exercise of power over other beings for the purpose of depriving these persons of their natural liberties. The golden rule of human fairness cries out against all such fraud, unfair-

ness, selfishness, and unrighteousness. Only true and genuine liberty is compatible with the reign of love and the ministry of mercy. [614:3]

Jesus was unequivocal when referring to the Pharisees, "Woe upon all who shun justice, spurn mercy, and reject truth!" [1826:2] The book also tells us of the resurrection of the unjust [1247:6] which occurs after the roll call of mercy. For these lost souls, the Thought Adjusters do not report to the mansion worlds. In his sermon at Gerasa, the Master said:

"But herein is the danger to all who would postpone their entrance into the kingdom while they continue to pursue the pleasures of immaturity and indulge the satisfactions of selfishness: Having refused to enter the kingdom as a spiritual experience, they may subsequently seek entrance thereto when the glory of the better way becomes revealed in the age to come. And when, therefore, those who spurned the kingdom when I came in the likeness of humanity seek to find an entrance when it is revealed in the likeness of divinity, then will I say to all such selfish ones: I know not whence you are. You had your chance to prepare for this heavenly citizenship, but you refused all such proffers of mercy; you rejected all invitations to come while the door was open. Now, to you who have refused salvation, the door is shut. This door is not open to those who would enter the kingdom for selfish glory. Salvation is not for those who are unwilling to pay the price of wholehearted dedication to doing my Father's will." [1829:1]

Obviously, Jesus is speaking to those of his generation. I wonder if there is a parallel between those who know there is a better way but delay to pursue their own self-serving interests. Do you think there might be a point which we can pass in our lives when it's too late, our life's momentum, our amount of grace, has been exhausted by our refusal to adopt a better way? I wonder.

To those who are in it for selfish glory, the door will be shut. Could it be that those who want the glory of seeing their names printed on their own version of *The Urantia Book* may also have an unwanted surprise?

Now that we've examined the definition of "mercy," its reach and limits, let's consider a few human examples. William Feather, who was a North American businessman, said, "If you're naturally kind, you attract a lot of people you don't like." English playwright Douglas Jerrold said of a man who took it to extremes, "He was so benevolent, so merciful a man that, in his mistaken passion, he would have held an umbrella over a duck in a shower of rain." Do you know people like that who go to excess?

However, United States president Abraham Lincoln said in a speech in Washington D.C. in 1865, "I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice." Our book does note, *Military mercy has been slow in coming to mankind* [784:13]. I reflected on this given the events in New York City and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001. *The Urantia Book* gives this human example:

If an affectionate father of a large family chooses to show mercy to one of his children guilty of grievous wrongdoing, it may well be that the extension of mercy to this misbehaving child will work a temporary hardship upon all the other and well-behaved children. Such eventualities are inevitable; such a risk is inseparable from the reality situation of having a loving parent and of being a member of a family group. Each member of a family profits by the righteous conduct of every other member; likewise must each member suffer the immediate time-consequences of the misconduct of every other member. Families, groups, nations, races, worlds, systems, constellations, and universes are relationships of association which possess individuality; and therefore does every member of any such group, large or small, reap the benefits and suffer the consequences of the rightdoing and the wrongdoing of all other members of the group concerned. [618:6—619:0]

One of the seven facts on which Jesus said the true family is founded is **Love and mercy**. *A compassionate father is freely forgiving; fathers do not hold vengeful memories against their children. Fathers are not like judges, enemies, or creditors. Real families are built upon tolerance, patience, and forgiveness.* [1604:6]

Our human families are great character builders. We can learn a great deal from imagining the best in human behavior and how much more it must be true of the Divine. When Jesus was a 12-year-old in the temple at Jerusalem, he said to his earthly father Joseph:

"My father, it cannot be true — the father in heaven cannot so regard his erring children on earth. The heavenly Father cannot love his children less than you love me. And I well know, no matter what unwise thing I might do, you would never pour out wrath upon me nor vent anger against me. If you, my earthly father, possess such human reflections of the Divine, how much more must the heavenly Father be filled with goodness and overflowing with mercy. I refuse to believe that my Father in heaven loves me less than my father on earth." [1378:1]

Jesus was amazingly wise even when a young person. Our youngsters often have many valuable pearls of wisdom to offer; and it is our duty to nurture and encourage their growth.

To material, evolutionary, finite creatures, a life predicated on the living of the Father's will leads directly to the attainment of spirit supremacy in the personality arena and brings such creatures one step nearer the comprehension of the Father-Infinite. Such a Father life is one predicated on truth, sensitive to beauty, and dominated by goodness. Such a God-knowing person is inwardly illuminated by worship and outwardly devoted to the wholehearted service of the universal brotherhood of all personalities, a service ministry which is filled with mercy and motivated by love, while all these life qualities are unified in the evolving personality on ever-ascending levels of cosmic wisdom, self-realization, God-finding, and Father worship. [1175:1]

What I understand is that humanly as we love God and try to live spiritually, our connection to external reality is dominated by mercy.

Man even qualifies himself for the restraining garments of mercy when he dares to love his fellow men, while he achieves the beginnings of spiritual brotherhood when he elects to mete out to them that treatment which he himself would be accorded, even that treatment which he conceives that God would accord them. [1302:7]

When it gets right down to it, it's basically the Golden Rule. Jesus pretty well sums up this living of mercy in our human experience in his "Ordination Sermon." The Master says:

"You are commissioned to save men, not to judge them. At the end of your earth life you will all expect mercy; therefore do I require of you during your mortal life that you show mercy to all of your brethren in the flesh. Make not the mistake of trying to pluck a mote out of your brother's eye when there is a beam in your own eye. Having first cast the beam out of your own eye, you can the better see to cast the mote out of your brother's eye." [1571:4]

As we near the end of the day's first look at mercy, we've seen mercy defined as *justice tempered by ... wisdom* [38:1]. We looked and saw that there's much more mercy available in our bank accounts than we can ever spend if we are sincere; but there are limits for those who spurn mercy. And we've seen some of the human examples referenced in the book.

We did not touch upon how mercy is reflected in the natures of the Eternal Son, the Creator Son, the Supreme and the ministry of the Infinite Spirit. We did not outline the historical progress of the concept of mercy nor how mercy is reflected in the religions of the world. So there is much more.

Edwin Hubbel Chapin said, "Mercy among the virtues is like the moon among the stars ... It is the light that hovers above the judgment seat."

I'd like to leave your last thought with one of the prayers from a neighboring planet:

Our Father who dwells in the secret places of the universe,

Honored be your name, revered your mercy, and respected your judgment.

Let the sun of righteousness shine upon us at noontime, While we beseech you to guide our wayward steps in the twilight.

Lead us by the hand in the ways of your own choosing And forsake us not when the path is hard and the hours are dark.

Forget us not as we so often neglect and forget you.

But be you merciful and love us as we desire to love you.

Look down upon us in kindness and forgive us in mercy As we in justice forgive those who distress and injure us. May the love, devotion and bestowal of the majestic Son Make available life everlasting with your endless mercy and love.

May the god of universes bestow upon us the full measure of his spirit;

Give us grace to yield to the leading of this spirit.

By the loving ministry of devoted seraphic hosts

May the Son guide and lead us to the end of the age.

Make us ever and increasingly like yourself

And at our end receive us into the eternal Paradise embrace.

Even so, in the name of the bestowal Son

And for the honor and glory of the Supreme Father. [1623:3—1624:0]

Amen. And thank you.

Personality: Contribution to a Cosmic Approach of the Role of Human Personality

GEORGES MICHELSON DUPONT, PARIS, FRANCE

God has prepared for each of us a perfect plan for our life, a plan which is hidden in the spiritual depths of our Thought Adjuster. When struggling with the vicissitudes of material life, we can rest assured that this plan exists, and that it is discoverable. Discovering this plan and executing it is the great challenge of this life.

The purpose of my presentation today is to help you discover God's plan for your life.

We have a body and a mind that enable us to make contact with material, intellectual, and spiritual realities. Consciousness is that lamp that casts light on matter, ideas, and ideals. Equipped with consciousness, a person can navigate in either the domain of matter or the domain of spirit. But a person could not perform properly without another indispensable reality. And this reality is personality. The personality is the guide of our consciousness. It makes decisions.

Observing its functioning in ourselves we discover that it is endowed with particular "powers" that are

characteristic of the behaviour of our "self" enabling us to exercise our will.

1. ***Because of personality, you have the power of generating new ideas.*** New ideas emerge in your mind, ideas that you have never had before. You may have this experience almost daily.

2. ***Because of personality, you have the power of judgment.*** The power to judge ideas, situations, and behaviours. But this power of judgment must be sound and truthful. Pain and sorrow follow in the path of wrong judgment as the dust follows the wind.

3. ***Because of personality, you have the power of choice.*** After a new idea has emerged in your mind and after you have evaluated it (that is, judged it), you have the power to make a choice among a number of options.

4. ***Because of personality, you have the power of decision.*** You have the power to decide about a course of action. This is an act of the free will. The discipline associated with decision-making is good

for the health. It keeps you strong and alive.

5. ***Because of personality, you have the power of execution.*** Upon having decided about the course of action, you have the power to execute your decision. You have the power to act. Action implies method, organisation, and control. Energy, mind, and spirit are united in action. And the exercising of your power of execution results in experience.

6. ***Because of personality, you have the power to love.*** This power can become the leader of the other powers. And when this happens, personality becomes truly attractive.

7. ***Because of personality, you have the power of evaluation.*** Did your action conform with your expectations? When you evaluate your actions, you actualize your potential for growth. Without honest evaluation, there is stagnation.

In conferring personality on us, God endows us with unlimited and indestructible powers. In using these powers wisely, the way a good carpenter uses his tools, we can become perfect. The choice is ours, and the way we use these tools will determine whether we grow closer to our Father or farther from him; ultimately whether we live or die.

Why does God do all this?

On page 2 in the Foreword of *The Urantia Book*, we learn that Deity functions on seven levels, three of which are relevant to the above question, “Why does God do all this?”

Creative Level—self-distributive and divinely revealed Deity.

Evolutional Level—self-expansive and creature-identified Deity.

Supreme Level—self-experiential and creature-Creator-unifying Deity.

Of all of God’s attributes, his creativity best reveals his divine personality. Indeed, only personality is creative.

Therefore, in order to satisfy his creative nature and the powers associated with such a nature, God created the universes and the creatures to live in it. He did this to let his divine love pour out. He did this so that his children could become his associates in and for eternity. He did this and does this because his divine love craves to share everything. Thus, by virtue of his divine love and by virtue of his having shared everything in eternity and infinity with his divine associates, he is, even now, sharing everything in absonity and transcendence with his absonite creatures and everything in

time and space with his finite creatures.

The Urantia Book teaches us that only a personality can love or hate another personality, that love and hate are something that can exist only between personalities. The book also teaches us that the Universal Father is the bestower of personality and its attached powers to all of his personal creatures.

God the Son is absolute personality. Transcendentals have an absonite type of personality, and the creatures of time and space are endowed with a finite type of personality.

The notion of “creation” implies an origin in time and a location in space. The finite level is the domain of creature experience. And we creatures of time and space are born mortal, unlearned, and imperfect. We start from the lowest rung on the spiritual ladder. Life on a mortal planet, such as Urantia, is a “celestial boot camp.” We have everything to learn.

The fact that we are so imperfect and have such humble origins evinces loving care from our Father, his associates, and their subordinates. In spite of all appearances to the contrary, we are not cosmic orphans struggling in the throes of material life. We are loved and cherished by the most powerful beings in the universe. The Universal Father himself loves us so much that he knows even the number of hairs on our head.

God’s functioning on the ***Creative Level*** suggests that God is self-distributing himself and seeking to “reveal himself divinely” by creating creatures. This self-distribution is made possible through the gift of personality to his creatures. Thus is God divinely revealing himself to his creatures, and through them, he is revealing himself on the absonite and finite levels.

God’s functioning on the ***Evolutional Level*** takes place on the finite level and is made possible thanks to the gift of the Thought Adjusters. These fragments of infinity, sparks of divinity, and embers of eternity (these chips off the ol’ block) indwell evolutionary creatures. They are our divine and perfect guides, our passport to eternity. Constantly they seek to reveal God to us. It is through his fragment, the Thought Adjuster, that God identifies himself to and with his creatures and shares some of his divine attributes.

God’s functioning on the ***Supreme Level*** makes it possible for God the Absolute to actualise in God the Supreme. When a man enters into partnership with God, God makes of this man more than he is and *no*

limitation can be placed upon the future possibilities of such a partnership [1299:2]. The reverse is also true because when a person enters into partnership with his Creator, he or she makes possible the emergence of the *Evolutionary Phase* of God. It is literally true that God needs man, and man needs God. It is literally true that *the fruits of the spirit are the substance of the Supreme* [1290:3]. Regarding God the Supreme, the creature participates in, and bears some of the responsibility for, the actualisation of the Supreme Being.

Thus, in order for me, God, to enter into eternal partnership with you, my beloved creature, and in order for you to be able to host me unconditionally, I confer upon you a personality with unlimited powers. So equipped, you and I go upward and inward, step by step, towards our First Source and Centre, the most inescapable of all presences, the most real of all facts, the most living of all truths, the most loving of all friends, and the most divine of all values [1127:4]. “You and I shall fuse. I shall become one with you and in you. We shall be an eternal partnership between the creature and the Creator with no barriers to the manifestation of our partnership.”

This very personality you give me, God, makes it possible for me to become a volunteer participant in your divine plan. It makes it possible for me to escape my inherent material and temporal limitations. I can become eternal and perfect, and I can enjoy truth, beauty, and goodness.

And this very power you gave me; I can exercise it any time and in any place. I have free will.

This is the reason why personality functions only in connection with spiritual decisions and growth Godward. Other decisions are called “choices” and have nothing to do with God.

Everyone has a unique personality. In his wisdom God created all individuals unlike the others. And there’s something you can do better than anyone else in the universe, and that’s to be yourself.

In creating each of us unique, at the same time God demonstrates his unlimited creative power and infinite love and escape from his infinite tautology. By giving us personality, he endowed us with the potential to love and to be loved. God enjoys pouring out his love upon his creatures. Through the creation of creatures and the gift of personality, he gives birth to a brotherhood of personalities among whom moral relations can be established.

The kind of personality I bestow upon you, my creature, is contactable, and I am the inescapable link. Our personalities enter into communion to create your soul. If you would receive nothing from my relationship with you, and if, in return, I would receive nothing from you, then why should we enter into relation?

By bestowing personalities and Thought Adjusters, among other means, God escapes his infinity and enters in time and space. Man’s personality is conscious of God—its Creator and Source—and when man decides to go into partnership with God, he makes it possible for God to manifest himself in time and space. And this very personality comes from the Father, and manifests itself in many different ways and places.

To you, my beloved child, I have conferred a personality with unlimited powers. But, for now and in your planetary circumstances, it must function in accordance with the time and space level of realities. For you, dear one, I have organized an evolutionary creation. I cannot give you all my love at this time because you would not be able to receive it. I am in you. Be patient, and as you grow, I shall give you more and more. Before becoming a university student, one must complete grammar school, middle school, and high school. And you, my child, have to grow by evolution, which requires time since you cannot understand all at once. Trust me. Have faith in me. As a good Father I already organised everything from here on to the systems, constellations, local universe headquarters, and even to Havona and Paradise--if only you agree to follow me. Everywhere fraternal and loving creatures are waiting for you and are willing to help you, but you must choose to come to me.

And long, long after you attain Paradise, when the finite adventure has come to an end, you will be part of the ultimate adventure of revealing God. And when the potentials of the ultimate adventure have been exhausted, I shall wait for you in the Absolute.

You are endowed with a personality whose “dimensions” are capable of functioning on the time and space level, as well as on the level of transcended time and space and even at the absolute level.

During the time and eternity adventure, you will be my companion and I shall be yours. We shall be partners and you will enjoy all of my creation. All I created is for you, my son, and all you have to do is to exercise your freewill and decide to come to me. I need you, and you need me.

The powers of personality are immense. God keeps his promises. By using the powers of personality, man can become one with God. By misusing these powers, we distance ourselves from God and can literally walk away from, and out of, reality.

Mind is your ship, the Adjuster is your pilot, the human will is captain. The master of the mortal vessel should have the wisdom to trust the divine pilot to guide the ascending soul into the morontia harbors of eternal survival. Only by selfishness, slothfulness, and sinfulness can the will of man reject the guidance of such a loving pilot and eventually wreck the mortal career upon the evil shoals of rejected mercy and upon the rocks of embraced sin. With your consent, this faithful pilot will safely carry you across the barriers of time and the handicaps of space to the very source of the divine mind and on beyond, even to the Paradise Father of Adjusters. [1217:4]

International Urantia Association Council of National Presidents and Vice-Presidents

Biennial Meeting at Dourdan, France, 7 August 2002

Chairman's Opening Remarks

SEPPO KANERVA, HELSINKI, FINLAND

IUA is an organisation whose activities for the most part take place at the local and national level. That is where IUA is at its best. In the words of the Rules of the CNP, the purpose of the CNP is to serve, integrate and coordinate the functions of IUA constituencies worldwide. CNP, thus, is not to be involved in the local or national activities of the IUA.

IUA is an important organisation having a clear-cut mission and *raison d'être*. Urantia Foundation's *Declaration of Trust* puts the trustees under an obligation to ensure that, apart from the Foundation itself, there is a reader organisation for the dissemination of the revealed teachings. Why is it that this obligation is there?

One of the core objectives of the revelation is that, as part of the world's evolution, it is to accomplish the

spiritual regeneration of mankind. The purpose of the revelation is that of imparting the necessary knowledge, inspiration, and courage for this regeneration to happen. This spiritual regeneration will be the only true and lasting way to achieve a social, moral, economic and political transformation of the world (2082:9) and the only way to lasting world peace. Even if its objective is spiritual, the revelation is not meant to establish a new institutionalised religion, nor is the spiritual regeneration of mankind to be effected through yet another church. The spiritual regeneration of the world is unfolding through a personal religion, through a personal and trusting relationship with God, through the realisation that God is our Father, and that we are sons and daughters of this same Father, that we are brothers and sisters. The spiritual, and thereupon the social, moral, economic and political

transformation of the world will happen and is happening through people, through the activities of people, people who are serving within the existing and future human institutions, people who are spirit-born, who have a personal religion and a living and trusting relationship with God. A living personal religion generates the desire to serve one's fellow men. To transform the world is to serve.

IUA cannot and will not become the organisation that would rule the world and be the instrument of its transformation. So where does the IUA fit in this picture?

The revealed teachings are a treasure chest which has been made available for anyone to take freely from. If a world transformer is to be informed about the superhuman plans and have an understanding of the purpose of our existence, he needs to study the revelation, the more the better. IUA has been, and will increasingly be, the organisation that encourages all forms of study of *The Urantia Book*, fosters formation of study groups, maintains various electronic fora and issues printed materials, which are intended to help readers and believers to gain a deeper comprehension and understanding of the revelation and to be inspired by the sharing of knowledge, understanding and experiences with other readers. In the same purpose, IUA organises local, regional, national and international conferences, seminars, discussions, etc. All these activities not only increase a better understanding of the revelation but also constitute fora

where teachers and leaders are developed. These activities are great opportunities for serving one's fellow readers and for practising teamwork. IUA encourages spirit-born readers to become actively involved in all types of social, economic and political institutions and organisations, and there with their spiritual fragrance and with their knowledge derived from this revelation to apply and put into action their knowledge. Yet they need to remember that this revelation is part of the general evolution of mankind, and that evolution is slow, even if extremely effective. IUA also encourages those who are and become involved in social activities to share their experiences, ideas and their ways of applying the revelation in the reorganisation of the world with others for their inspiration, and encouragement and for their giving feedback. IUA likewise encourages religionists who have embraced the revelation to work together with those other religionists whose religious beliefs are different from ours. IUA encourages readers to seek and explore ever new ways of giving expression to their spiritual sentiments and translating their spirituality into acts, activities, and services to mankind.

In short, IUA is to be viewed as a teamwork undertaking which constitutes a forum for those religionists who study and are inspired by the revelatory teachings and who wish to cooperate with all other religionists so to achieve the spiritual regeneration as well as the social, moral, economic and political reorganisation of the world.

Mission Accomplished at Dourdan: New Editor for the IUA Journal

The countryside southeast of Paris was postcard pretty with rolling fields interspersed by leafy green forests. A giant floral topiary frog welcomed global readers of *The Urantia Book* to the fairytale village of Dourdan, with ancient stone maisons leaning unto crooked, narrow streets. The Villagium Le Normont, a modern resort adjacent to Dourdan, served as a comfortable and charming setting for the 2002 IUA conference, hosted by

members of the Association Francophone de Lecteurs du Livre d'Urantia (AFFLU).

For a short time, this resort was a magnet for some of the world's most experienced, dedicated *Urantia Book* readers and loyal Urantia Foundation supporters. IUA members from almost every continent, as well as a number of non-member observers, participated in the uplifting workshops, inspiring plenary addresses and marvelous musical presentations that we have

come to expect at every Urantia Association conference.

In this pleasant setting, the urge to relax, socialize and simply be “on vacation” was strong. The meals were exquisite, usually accompanied by three types of wine with lunch and dinner. Naturally, the companionship was first rate and nothing if not cosmopolitan, and the conversations were top-notch even if my own French was not.

The members of the Council of National Presidents had organizational business to attend to on the last day of the conference. This decision-making body will not be gathered together again until the next international conference is held in Chicago, two years hence.

I had an assignment as well and I could not give way to my impulse to play until I had the “hard part” of it completed. While in Chicago for the USUA business meeting last May, I was tapped to help oversee the formation of a new IUA Journal team. Carrie Prentice, who has served as the IUA Journal Editor for the past four and half years, is retiring from her editorship to study for an advanced degree.

I accepted this assignment knowing full well that it would require the efforts of several very talented individuals to attempt to achieve the quality that Carrie has almost singlehandedly maintained in each Journal issue since serving as Editor.

The conference attendees may not have realized that they were being observed closely, but I was busy gathering little-known data about certain individuals. I was on my mission to find the next IUA Journal Editor. I hovered about, asking a number of UA colleagues noney questions, and eventually came up with a very short list of likely victims— I mean candidates! My specifications: must be an experienced reader of *The Urantia Book*; must be a dedicated IUA member; must be of another nationality than U.S.; must have excellent written language skills; must have editorial /publishing experience; must have a great sense of humor and a “can do” attitude; must be willing to work diligently for no money. This list of specs narrowed the field down to miniscule proportions.

I decided to approach my target individual after dinner, when we would still be mellowed by fine dining, wining, topped by dessert and demitasse. I sensed the moment was propitious, and put my intended quarry, I mean Editor!, in my sights. I began

with a riff of friendly chit-chat, then let him have it point blank. “Would you possibly consider being the next editor of the IUA Journal?” I asked. The gentleman in question was taken aback slightly for a moment, but recovered gracefully. He considered my bold proposal and my questioning look for a moment before mercifully answering “Yes.”

This merciful gentleman is Mr. Neil Francey of Brisbane, Australia. Neil is an old time reader of *The Urantia Book* who published a newsletter “606” from 1980 to 1993. This newsletter was the only link between readers in Australia and New Zealand during the eighties, and Neil’s efforts were indispensable to the formation of ANZURA. He has been described to me by friends who know him well as: “a jewel,” a “rock-solid” *Urantia Book* student, and a “regular bloke.” Mr. Francey and I will be working with an international committee of “contributing editors” from each national Urantia Association, with appointments still being considered.

Upon hearing Neil’s reply, I heaved a sigh of relief, knowing that I had found the right person for the job. IUA is embarking upon a new phase of global action, and it is my fond hope that the IUA Journal team members will help to link geographically diverse readers into a cohesive, dynamic whole, much like was experienced by the down-under readers of “606.”

With that important part of my assignment complete, I was able to enter fully into the spirit of fun and fellowship of the remaining conference, and filling another glass of wine gave a private toast to the kindred spirits, cosmically aware and cosmopolitan members of our unique and vital organization. May we too learn to *feast upon uncertainty, fatten upon disappointment, to enthuse over apparent defeat, to invigorate in the presence of difficulties . . .* [291:3] in the future with even more dedication than we have faced the unceasing challenges to the revelation in the recent past.

Each IUA member is indebted to the untiring service of Carrie Prentice for her excellent and irreplaceable work as IUA Journal Editor. Best wishes, Carrie.

Au Revoir, mes Amis,

Janet Quinn, Oregon, USA

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