



Tidings

FROM ASSOCIATIONS AROUND URANTIA

URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL | [HTTP://WWW.URANTIA-UAI.ORG](http://www.uran-tia-uai.org)

Nº 9 ■ FEBRUARY 2006



"Maui Orchids" Pastel painting by Sheila Schneider

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| <i>Gaétan Charland</i> | 2 | President's message |
| <i>Sue Tennant</i> | 3 | Breaking the cycle |
| <i>Susana Palaia</i> | 4 | How we got in touch with <i>The Urantia book</i> |
| <i>Olga López</i> | 5 | Placing a book in Barcelona |
| <i>Gaétan Charland</i> | 6 | Study group at Ste Sophie |
| <i>Chris Ragetly</i> | 7 | A study group in southern France |
| <i>Baker Jordan</i> | 8 | Creation Evolution Bestowal |
| <i>Mark Kurtz</i> | 9 | UAI anonymous challenge update |
| <i>Tonia Baney</i> | 9 | Aloha from Maui |
| <i>The Urantia Book</i> | 10 | All about love (<i>passages from the book</i>) |
| <i>David Glass</i> | 11 | When spirit takes steps (<i>poem</i>) |

President's Message

Dear friends of UAI,

AS WE MOVE AWAY FROM the holiday season and go back to our regular daily routine, members of the International Service Board and the Representative Council are catching up with the work at hand. No one could imagine the work and money needed to acquire autonomy and pursue our goals. At the

Responsibility is the sister of Liberty; one cannot exist without the other.

end of December, the RC was still debating on the budget issue and because of undue delay the allotted period of time given by the By-Laws to adopt the budget was exceeded. For that reason, an ad-hoc committee is being put in place to oversee the budget and a decision should soon be reached.

The budget is always something very delicate to manage and because the RC is composed of members from many different cultures, their views and understanding in such matters may be very different. There are also the technicalities of such an exercise that might intimidate a few as not all members are fully knowledgeable with accounting practices so they might rely fully on the expertise of others. One recurring problem we have with the budget is that there is no fixed and regular income for UAI, yet we have basic, regular expenses that must be paid if UAI is to continue.

In trying to move ahead, we are faced with tremendous challenges, one of which is to finance the activities that relate to basic expenses and projected goals and objectives. Many times during the year, Mark Kurtz, the CFO of UAI, has called on members through the means of fund raising letters to raise these monies. The amount contributed is not always sufficient and we are left without means to finance special projects or help readers in poor countries.

We would like to mail the UAI Journal to members worldwide or send Tidings in hard copies to people without internet. We would love to send books to all those hungry souls in need. We would also like to print study

aids material to help study group participants. We would like to enhance the communication means by which we could improve our efficiency. For all of those wishes, money is needed. We have yet to agree on a method that would finance the basic activities of UAI. The

By-Laws provide for such a method, but the willingness of the majority of governing boards has not yet seriously addressed this issue.

Autonomy is more than sitting in a wagon and enjoying the ride, it is taking responsibility for what we stand for and finding positive ways to contribute to our timeless achievement and reason for existence. In the months ahead, we will be publishing articles on ways and solutions that certain local or national associations have found and adopted to be self sufficient and help UAI stay afloat. I believe that if each association assumes its share of responsibility, we will succeed by freeing UAI of recurring and yearly financial struggles.

Responsibility is the sister of Liberty; one cannot exist without the other. ■



TIDINGS

From associations around Urantia

Tidings is a monthly publication of Urantia Association International, whose mission is to foster study of *The Urantia Book* and to disseminate its teachings. UAI supports Urantia Foundation.

The *Urantia Book* online:
<http://www.urantia.org/papers/index.html>

You may submit articles about *The Urantia Book*, news about your association, stories, photos and poems to the editor. All articles are subject to revision. **Submissions limited to 2-3 pages (about 1400-2100 words).** A one-page article is about 700 words with a photo or graphic image.

Deadline: By the 15th of every month

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COVER: "Maui Orchids" pastel painting by Sheila Schneider, Greater Lake Michigan Urantia Association. You may submit images for possible use on the cover to admin@urantia-uai.org.

Tidings archives:
<http://urantia-uai.org/tidings/index.htm>

—Gaétan Charland
President, UAI

Breaking the Cycle

BY SUE TENNANT
Ontario, Canada



Literacy will forever empower a child's life.
Children attending FreeSchools in Thailand.

MARK BLOOMFIELD, URANTIA FOUNDATION'S long time field representative, has added something wonderful to the world. Besides placing 8500 Urantia Books in libraries, he's helped invent an opportunity that could help give 90 million girls and 25 million boys who are currently excluded from primary schools around the world, the chance to learn to read and write.

The concept is remarkably simple. Where illiteracy is rampant, Mark persuades existing schools to partner

This is the most cost-effective, non-invasive literacy program in all of Asia, and ... can be replicated anywhere in the world.

with him to offer the impoverished children of the area a free education. Mark is now based in Thailand as the volunteer field representative of The FreeSchools World Literacy Charity (FreeSchools). This new

charity was founded in Canada to support Mark's work and the teamwork has already proven successful. Incorporated for just 6 months, FreeSchools supports 19 schools in India and 14 in Thailand with more opening every month.

Mark searches remote areas for schools that can be used during normal closing hours, thereby eliminating costly infrastructure. He gets the school or education department to hire experienced female teachers and

the charity pays them a fair wage. Sometimes qualified teachers are hard to find and training is needed which he also organizes. An "essentials only" curriculum that meet the needs of children living in poverty is offered and includes reading, writing, arithmetic, civics, crafts, health and hygiene and income-producing skills.

The partnering school encourages parents in the area, who have no money for even modest school fees, to improve their future by sending one of their children to a FreeSchool. The concept provides that each day their child imparts what he or she has learned that day to his/her brothers and sisters and even parents, thereby multiplying the benefits. Girls are given priority.

The United Nations reports that 46 countries are failing to get as many girls into schools as boys. Education opportunities for girls are much fewer due to deeply-rooted cultural and religious norms, as well as the constraints that poverty, discrimination, safety and HIV/AIDS inflict. Asia is home to half the human race with about one billion people illiterate. Illiteracy works a particular hardship on women and children. Often girls are married as young as age ten or they are sold into prostitution, slave labor or sometimes murdered.

International economists agree that the single best investment a developing country can make is in girls' education. Female literacy is linked to delayed marriage, fewer and healthier children, improved economic prospects, better parenting and more democratic civic participation. In broad terms, education is the best long term tool that can reduce violence, terror, disease and inequality.

FreeSchools has already found tremendous support in the Urantia community. Urantians understand the need to empower women and the pre-requisite of literacy to progress. Scholarships change lives and Urantians of even modest means, can help. The cost per child for teacher training and salaries, learning materials, a nutritious daily lunch and a set of clothes for the children averages just \$15 a year – that's just over 4 cents a day. 4 cents/day for a year's education may seem unbelievable but it's true. \$125 monthly supports a whole school of 100 children. This is the most cost-effective, non-invasive literacy program in all of Asia, and one Mark says can be replicated anywhere in the world.

It works for many reasons, mostly to do with the extraordinary person that Mark is. A compassionate humanitarian, Mark organized and personally funded

How we got in touch with The Urantia Book

SUSANA PALAIA
Secretary
Associação Urantia do Brasil



Susana and Sabino
of Brazil

IT WAS SABINO, who 20 years ago, much before he met me, first found *The Urantia Book* in English at a friend's house here in São Paulo, and even not speaking English he knew that this book was of a great

Ever since we continued with the study group, now with the Portuguese text; it is our life guide, and we are always looking forward to the next Tuesday.

value for humanity and he positioned himself as a guardian of *The Urantia Book*.

During long years he was expecting the translation to a language he could understand and finally in 1992 a friend came from the USA with the

Spanish version that is rather easier for us Brazilians to understand.

At that time we had a group that was gathering every week for meditation and to study transcendental subjects so we introduced the reading of *The Urantia Book* in Spanish. Luiz Dolabella also participated of that group and simultaneously asked a friend to bring two original English books one for him and one for me and decided to translate it to Portuguese.

In 1998 when I retired from my secretarial career Luiz invited me to work with him as a revisor of the Portuguese translation.

Ever since we continued with the study group, now with the Portuguese text; it is our life guide, and we are always looking forward to the next Tuesday.

Occasionally we also participate of another group in the surroundings of São Paulo that meets every fortnight on Saturdays. □

—Sabino and Susana

Breaking the cycle

continued from previous page

eye camps in India's poorest rural areas during the 90's bringing in the best surgeons to cure a few hundred people on a weekend blinded by cataracts. He also worked as the undertaker for Mother Teresa in Calcutta and saw first hand the plight of unwanted girl babies deposited each night on the doorstep with backs broken or starved to death. The 6 million little girls killed annually in South Asia is a fact Mark cannot turn his back on. He is motivated to change that by empowering girls with literacy. His courage, integrity and boundless love for humanity are only matched by his shrewd frugality and ability to help others help themselves. Mark has made

a 20 year commitment to FreeSchools in Asia and during this time he also plans to continue his Urantia Book seeding.

FreeSchools also works because 100% of the funds raised go directly to the field. The administration is all voluntary. Government and non-governmental programs cannot compare with the efficiency of FreeSchools. The norm of charitable and development aid is that 70% of monies raised support an administrative and bureaucratic structure that is rarely able to service the forgotten rural areas of developing countries. These are the areas that Mark targets.

The mission of FreeSchools is to break the cycle of ignorance and poverty through free education. We welcome your inquiries, participation, suggestions and support. The children, Mark and the FreeSchools Board thank you and appreciate anything you can do. Email Sue Tennant at sue@ubretreats.ca or call toll free in North America 1-800-546-5601 or 1-519-922-1126. Look for our website after March 1 at www.freeschoolsworld.com. Send contributions by credit card or cheque:

FreeSchools World Literacy, Silver Springs, RR#4 Flesherton, Ontario CANADA N0C 1E0. □

Placing a book in Barcelona

BY OLGA LÓPEZ
Asociación Urantia de España

YOU PROBABLY REMEMBER the announcement of our project for placing *The Urantia Book* (TUB) in public libraries of Spain, called “One reader, one book”. As many other readers in my country, I tried to place one copy in the public library nearest me. This library belongs to a wide network of public libraries located in the province of Barcelona. Barcelona, the city, is the second largest city in Spain, with about 1.7 million population and a metropolitan area of about 3 million people.

So I went to the library with my recently bought copy and gave it to the person in charge. She told me that they had to send the book to the person in charge of General Catalogue, who would decide if the book contents fit with this catalogue. I found that very reasonable and acceptable, so I agreed and left the copy there and waited for an answer. This answer came one month after, and was really surprising for me. They told me that they didn't accept the book because “this book didn't speak about any known religion nor defend one religion above the rest, so its contents didn't fit with our criteria about what can be included in our libraries”.

This means that I cannot place any copy of TUB in any public library in Barcelona and its surroundings. This means that anyone who lives in

If your copy wasn't accepted in your public library...don't worry about that! Look for another library in another city from another area where this copy will be well received.



Olga in front of library in Barcelona

Barcelona or near there and is interested in learning more about TUB should buy a copy or borrow it. With so many people living here, you can easily notice the importance of this rejection.

Curiously, in this library you can find books about astrology, alternative therapies, paranormal phenomena, New-Age and similar. Even *Caballo de Troya*, the saga written by JJ Benitez based on *The Urantia Book!*

After that answer, I made some reflections. Are people really ready for TUB? I think that there are some people ready, but many people are not. I am aware that many people can see this book as something strange and dangerously revolutionary. They see TUB dangerous because it doesn't speak about any religion in particular. They can't understand religion as a personal experience between God and the individual. Many people (at least in my country) think that a “believer” is a person who follows some religious doctrine, be Christian or Muslim or Buddhist. They can't accept that you can believe in God without following any known religion. If this is your case,

then you probably are a follower of some strange cult, so you are even more dangerous. Another possible explanation is that many people don't believe in God and don't follow any religion at all. When you don't understand religious experiences it's very likely that you will reject them. Ignorance causes distrust.

Fortunately, other Spaniard readers from other cities had no problems and did place their copies. It depends on several factors as the criteria of each library network and, basically, on the person who is in charge.

As you can see, the path is full of obstacles and we will probably face many problems like these in the future. But we must be patient and always have a “plan B” in case “plan A” fails. If your copy wasn't accepted in your public library...don't worry about that! Look for another library in another city from another area where this copy will be well received. The important thing is to keep going, step by step, book by book, spreading the fifth revelation in any way you can.

Hugs. ☐



Québec, Canada

Study group at Ste Sophie

BY GAÉTAN CHARLAND
L'Association Urantia du Québec

WE HAVE BEEN HAVING a study group for the last seven years with nearly the same people that we started with. We are at this time seven readers that meet every Tuesday night at seven o'clock. We have not yet completed a full reading of *The Urantia Book* as we many times take

... I can only marvel at the wisdom of the Revelators when they gave us the recommendation to foster thousand of those groups.

opportunities to study special topics of interest that were useful to our needs of growth and understanding.

It is amazing for me to witness how our study group has changed and improved throughout the years, how it has become a place where we feel secure in sharing our deepest spiritual feelings, ideas and longing; how it has helped everyone understand better how to share our beliefs and knowledge with our family, friends and the community around us. It is slowly evolving into a classroom where everyone is willingly learning

how to teach the many truths contained in the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. It has become a place of discovery for the soul that is slowly growing inside of us.

In our desire to explore new ways to improve our grasp of spiritual realities, we have tried different ways of reading and studying. At this time we are using our study group twice a week to prepare ourselves for the next quarterly workshop conference that we have in our association. Those workshops last a whole day and attract as many as fifty persons. It is organized around a theme and the one we are now preparing ourselves for is about Faith. Each person in the study group, except one, is responsible for making a fifteen-minute presentation and facilitating a workshop based on his/her presentation.

The exercise is meant to improve our understanding of spiritual concepts and find simple ways to teach others what we have learned. During our study

group session, one person is responsible for researching and providing most of the text necessary for our work; we then proceed to study all the text and share our understanding of their meanings. Each one of us is called to help each other acquire a larger grasp and understanding of the material we are studying and use to build our presentation upon. In reality, we are working as a team.

We are now in the final stage of writing down each presentation so this week each of us is ready to make our presentation in front of our small group. After each presentation, the group is invited to share and comment on any new understanding in order to help the presenter acquire a deeper grasp of the material presented. This exercise is a major step in perfecting our skills as presenter and teacher. Everyone in the group agreed that these exercises have helped them acquire a stronger faith and a better understanding of cosmic realities.

Next week, we will be practicing again until we are fully comfortable with our understanding of the texts we used as the foundation for our workshop and presentation. When I reflect on the value and necessity of study groups as a means to learn and to teach, I can only marvel at the wisdom of the Revelators when they gave us the recommendation to foster thousand of those groups. With the experience I have gained in having regular study groups for many years, I can truly appreciate their recommendation and have acquired unwavering belief in the power of study groups to transform the individual and society.

What an impact on society we would have if each one of us would participate in a Study group! □

A study group in southern France

BY CHRIS M. RAGETLY
Association Francophone des
Lecteurs du *Le Livre d'Urantia*



Groupe d'Étude d'Avignon

Front row, left to right : Eliane, Jean-Claude, Marina, Lucien, Nicole.
Back row : Johanna, Didier, Max, Jean, Chris, Michel. (5 or 6 were missing)

THE SO CALLED “GROUPE D'ÉTUDE D'AVIGNON” began in late 1976 when Henry Begemann from Holland, at the time the Urantia Foundation representative in Europe, gave me the address of Jean Royer. We were three readers, of this fabulous book, *The Urantia Book*, Jean Royer, Nicole, my wife, and I, Chris. Avignon is more or less between our homes, so we called our group from this town.

Over the years, the group grew very slowly. For some years we were only four readers. Now, the members are evenly divided on each side of the Rhône River, and we number, when in full strength,

fifteen readers. Most of us are readers since at least fifteen to twenty years. But we get new readers now and then. We gather in turn at each other's house once a month.

We all agree that *The Urantia Book* has changed our lives tremendously. This can only be perceived along a significant period of time. The time before the knowledge of the book, it was more or less perceived as spiritually vague. The time since the knowledge of the book being perceived first as a spiritual awakening, and then as the unifier for all three of our living levels (physical, mental and spiritual). Knowledge of *The Urantia Book*, intellectual knowledge, is only the first discovery; the transformation of our



living ways and actions is of course the most spectacular. Each member of the group has of course a different point of view as for his or her way of introducing the Urantia teachings in his or her life, but this is all benefices for the group as a whole. □

Creation Evolution Bestowal

BY BAKER JORDAN
Urantia Association of Florida



"Creation of Adam" Fresco by Michelangelo Buonarroti, 1510

GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS and the planets in a cosmic flash.

God, through evolution, biologically evolved mankind in a cosmic instant.

God bestows personality within us and Jesus bestows the Spirit of Truth within us and, through spiritual gravity, drives moral choices which eventuates spiritual reality within us mortals.

Moses asked God to describe Himself and God replied, "I AM THAT I AM." This makes sense if the concept of time is removed. God is because He is. The great cosmic secret

will always be how God started. He is pre-existent and post-existent at the same time. He is infinite, encompassing the whole of all from the alpha to the omega.

Freewill choices made by imperfect beings implies error and change which requires motion and motion requires time.

God created us in His Likeness and Image. In doing so He endowed us with the cosmic reality to be able to say: "We are - we have being." Once we have being we cannot cease to exist (unless we deny God.) There is no such thing as anti-being. Animals do not have the concept of being nor can they make moral choices. How many times have any of us said: "I am." This tells us just how closely we are related to our Creator. We are created as experiential creatures with the God-given right of free will; therefore, we are not made perfect. Our free will can be exercised

within the limits set in nature and in the spiritual realm. It is the proper use of free will that determines the input of credits to our spiritual bank accounts.

If God had not given us freewill, then there would be no difference between us and God. We would have been created in His Likeness and Image and perfect.

Freewill choices made by imperfect beings implies error and change which requires motion and motion requires time. Where there is perfection there is no change or motion and, therefore, no time is required.

Temporal errors are punished in time-space. Moral error is judged by the spiritual world with mercy as a key ingredient. Forgiveness among humans in temporal matters is not commonplace, whereas, spiritual mercy is included in all matters relating to moral judgment. Mercy must be made available for us to survive eternally as we learn and profit from our mistaken choices of freewill.

God created the laws of the universe and set in place the patterns of nature. A leading astrophysicist gives her students matter to do whatever they wish with it. They all arrange it in patterns. Patterns are created by mind and are universally derived from the Supermind of God. God is life and His creations are all life-based. Therefore, life was inherent

in and arose from the biologic soup. It evolved according to the laws as set by the spiritual realm. Time is viewed by mortals as relative to their lifetime spent on earth. If mortals were to understand time from an eternal viewpoint, the evolution of mankind would be a cosmic instant. God let His laws of nature perform in our material realm.

God bestows personality and soul within each human. He endows us with the gift of spiritual gravity which attracts man to worship. This unseen attraction had to evolve from stone worship, fetish worship and other non-godly worship focal points to our worshipping God.

Man is led to make moral choices and to follow God's will. It is right that scientists question the make-up of the universe and its origin. It is right that the philosophers question how man came to be. It is right that religions question man's morality.

Creation, Evolution and Bestowal are complementary to one another rather than in conflict.

God is pre-existent to time and space. He created them.

God is not flexible – time and space are. God is all inclusive, and forgiving, but does not flex from perfection.

Time requires space, within which to exist. Space requires time to expand and to bend around stellar objects. □

UAI Anonymous Challenge \$5,000 Total!

IAMPLEASED TO REPORT we have generously exceeded our goal of raising \$2,500 to match our anonymous donor's challenge gift of \$2500, issued in November last year.

The total of all gifts including our challenger's is \$11,181.16!

UAI individual members and associations contributed \$8,681.16 or \$6,181.16 over our goal!

A significant portion was received a few days into January, but the donors indicated they were responding to the challenge, therefore were included.

These January donations will be accounted in our January records.

Thank you to all who accepted the challenge! We are deeply grateful for the challenge and for the kind, generous gift and inspiration from this donor.

May our work and gifts be dedicated to Michael's work and to our mandate for dissemination of *The Urantia Book*.

In appreciation,

—Mark A. Kurtz, UAI CFO
Chair, UAI Fund Raising Committee



Maui sunset

Aloha from Maui

Aloha, Mark, thank you for your wonderful service and congratulations for your success in raising this money! You have always been a great treasurer.

But we must not stop here!

There needs to be a goodly amount to continue this work.

Members, please try to pledge a dollar a day or \$400 per year to the IUA. We could support ourselves and continue this work. UAI is the only organization to organize groups around the world!

We are wildly successful due to Gaetan's wise leadership, our great executive Cathy Jones, and your continued support in time and money. We who have been around for a while know

that without your support nothing, absolutely nothing can happen! If we do not actively support the outreach activities of the only group who can get the word out to the needy spiritual seekers on this planet then I am sure there will have to be a very good reason when we leave this world as to why we could not even send a few dollars.

Jesus certainly valued even the smallest donation and I assure you, so will UAI!

We have pledged our dollars for the year. Please join us and let's make the effort to secure the work being done in our names!

With aloha and hope for our world,

—Tonia and Steve Baney
Maui, Hawaii □

Passages from *The Urantia Book*

All about Love

LOVE IS THE SECRET OF BENEFICIAL association between personalities. You cannot really know a person as the result of a single contact. You cannot appreciatively know music through mathematical deduction, even though music is a form of mathematical rhythm. The number assigned to a telephone subscriber does not in any manner identify the personality of that subscriber or signify anything concerning his character. [141:3]

The concept of truth might possibly be entertained apart from personality, the concept of beauty may exist without personality, but the concept of divine goodness is understandable only in relation

Love is the desire to do good to others.

[648:4]

to personality. Only a person can love and be loved. Even beauty and truth would be divorced from survival hope if they were not attributes of a personal God, a loving Father. [31:3]

The Father's love follows us now and throughout the endless circle of the eternal ages. As you ponder the loving nature of God, there is only one reasonable and natural personality reaction thereto: You will increasingly love your Maker; you will yield to God an affection analogous to that given by a child to an earthly parent; for, as a father, a real father, a true father, loves his children, so the Universal Father loves and forever seeks the welfare of his created sons and daughters. [40:1]



"The Lovers" Pablo Picasso, 1923

In physical life the senses tell of the existence of things; mind discovers the reality of meanings; but the spiritual experience reveals to the individual the true values of life. These high levels of human living are attained in the supreme love of God and in the unselfish love of man. If you love your fellow men, you must have discovered their values. Jesus loved men so much because he placed such a high value upon them. You can best discover values in your associates by discovering their motivation. If some one irritates you, causes feelings of resentment, you should sympathetically seek to discern his viewpoint, his reasons for such objectionable conduct. If once you understand your neighbor, you will become tolerant, and this tolerance will grow into friendship and ripen into love.

In the mind's eye conjure up a picture of one of your primitive ancestors of cave-dwelling times--a short, misshapen, filthy, snarling hulk of a man standing, legs spread, club upraised, breathing hate and animosity as he looks fiercely just ahead. Such a picture hardly depicts the divine dignity of man. But allow us to enlarge the picture. In front of this animated human crouches a saber-toothed tiger. Behind him, a woman and two children. Immediately you recognize that such a picture stands for the beginnings of much that is fine and noble in the human race, but the man is the same in both pictures.

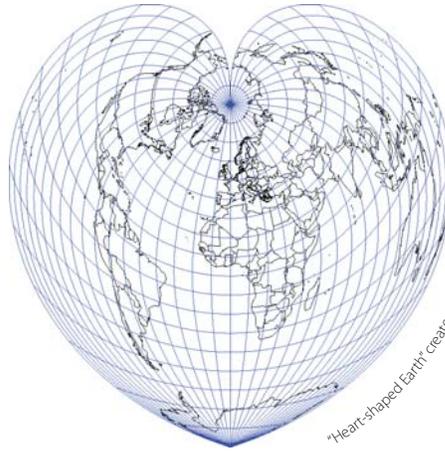
Only in the second sketch you are favored with a widened horizon. You therein discern the motivation of this evolving mortal. His attitude becomes praiseworthy because you understand him. If you could only fathom the motives of your associates, how much better you would understand them. If you could only know your fellows, you would eventually fall in love with them.

You cannot truly love your fellows by a mere act of the will. Love is only born of thoroughgoing understanding of your neighbor's motives and sentiments. It is not so important to love all men today as it is that each day you

learn to love one more human being. If each day or each week you achieve an understanding of one more of your fellows, and if this is the limit of your ability, then you are certainly socializing and truly spiritualizing your personality. Love is infectious, and when human devotion is intelligent and wise, love is more catching than hate. But only genuine and unselfish love is truly contagious. If each mortal could only become a focus of dynamic affection, this benign virus of love would soon pervade the sentimental emotion-stream of humanity to such an extent that all civilization would be encompassed by love, and that would be the realization of the brotherhood of man. [P.1098:1 – 1098:3]

As far as I am conversant with the affairs of a universe, I regard the love and devotion of a Thought Adjuster as the most truly divine affection in all creation. The love of the Sons in their ministry to the races is superb, but the devotion of an Adjuster to the individual is touchingly sublime, divinely Fatherlike. The Paradise Father has apparently reserved this form of personal contact with his individual creatures as an exclusive Creator prerogative. And there is nothing in all the universe of universes exactly comparable to the marvelous ministry of these impersonal entities that so fascinatingly indwell the children of the evolutionary planets. [1203:2] ◻

When Spirit takes steps



Heart-shaped Earth created by Antal Guszlev

When Spirit takes its steps toward Global Love,
 It finds in every single man the same
 True LOVE bestowed from pristine realms above
 Which knows its every child by his own name.
 In truth, since all the world are spirit-kin,
 They shall themselves in everyone detect
 That Spirit which exists in all earth's men
 Which here has come to comfort, calm, protect,
 And help us all to better understand
 That earth, this lovely planet, is the first
 Of many far-flung universal lands
 That each of us shall visit. Every thirst
 For love and light shall, like a dream come true,
 Find matchless Beauty, Truth, and Goodness, too.

—*David Glass*
 Lone Star UAI