

# The Yoga of the Sacraments

by

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# Contents

Introduction  
Chapter One: Apostolic Succession: The River of Life  
Chapter Two: Baptism  
Chapter Three: Confirmation  
Chapter Four: Mass and Communion  
Chapter Five: Confession and Absolution  
Chapter Six: Anointing of the Sick  
Chapter Seven: Extreme Unction  
Chapter Eight: Blessing of Holy Water  
Chapter Nine: Blessing of Objects  
Chapter Ten: Blessing of a House  
Chapter Eleven: Consecration of Holy Oils  
Chapter Twelve: Holy Orders  
Chapter Thirteen: The Inner Sacrament

# Introduction

What is yoga (“union”)? It is union with God. For Christians it is union with God through Jesus Christ who said: “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

## Original Christianity

Writing in the beginning of the third century, Origen was the most renowned Christian writer of the early church, often declared to be the greatest teacher since the original twelve apostles. He wrote over a thousand books and essays which were widely read, and was considered by many of the early Church Fathers to be a saint. Pope Saint Damasus I in the fourth century decreed that those who aspired to the priesthood must study all of Origen’s works in preparation.

Origen begins his book *On the First Principles (De Principiis)* with the statement that despite the proliferation of doctrines and wranglings over them, the holy Apostles taught in a straightforward and unphilosophical manner only a handful of teachings, and that anything else was personal opinion which held no authority. Further he urged that only those apostolic teachings should be considered essential to Christian belief and adherence. Those teachings—in the order he lists them—are, simply expressed:

1) There is one God, the source of all things, who from the beginning interacted with mankind.

2) Eventually, having announced him through various prophets, He sent the Lord Jesus Christ to call Israel and the Gentiles to spiritual regeneration.

3) The Lord Jesus was born of a virgin and the Holy Spirit, suffered, died, rose again and ascended into heaven.

4) Although it was not precisely defined or explained by the apostles, our Lord taught that God was Triune: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

5) The Holy Spirit is the inspirer and sanctifier of the saints.

6) Each human being has an immortal spirit that lives on after death and undergoes the consequences of its actions. (Later in *De Principiis* Origen expounds both reincarnation and the ultimate perfection of all men.)

7) Every person possesses free will and choice, and decides his course of life, whether good or ill, even though he can be influenced in his decision by others.

8) There are good and evil bodiless powers, including angels and demons, which can influence human beings, but who cannot violate their freedom of will.

9) The world was created at a point in time and shall eventually be dissolved.

10) The holy scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit and have not only meanings that are obvious, but also hidden, spiritual meanings that most readers cannot see or understand. This is because the scriptures are “the outward forms of certain mysteries and the images of divine things,” and known only to “those who are gifted with the grace of the Holy Spirit in the word of wisdom and knowledge.”

In conclusion he said that each person is to formulate his understanding within the broad framework he has given.

Why did the apostles of Jesus—and therefore Jesus himself—teach such a few simple doctrines and leave their understanding (and the understanding of the scriptures which at that time had not been collected into the Bible) to each individual’s capacity? Obviously because Jesus and his original disciples considered those beliefs and scriptures merely a framework within which each Christian should develop his own

insight, *that it was the life in Christ which constituted true Christianity* and not dogma. “We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10). “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). “For we are made partakers of Christ” (Hebrews 3:14). “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things” (Psalms 119:18). This is why Jesus told the apostles regarding the Holy Spirit: “He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17), that God shall dwell in each Christian just as He did in Jesus. (“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” Colossians 2:9.)

Saint Paul was speaking completely literally when he wrote: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (I Corinthians 3:16). “Ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people” (II Corinthians 6:16). “Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Ephesians 2:22).

Even more, Jesus said that “when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (John 15:26)—not an external church authority; but each true Christian is to be in communion with God directly, a prophet of God. For Jesus further said: “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come” (John 16:13). What contemporary “orthodox” church teaches this? Not one. Rather, it would be considered outrageous heresy. No wonder Jesus asked the apostles: “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). That is how far “Christians” have strayed from Christ.

The Holy Spirit—the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Truth—is the intermediary between man and Christ, working for their deification and revelation as sons of God. So it was only natural that Jesus and the apostles had but little regard for theological concepts. Their focus was on the life of Christ in the Holy Spirit within every individual Christian—and needing no supervision or authorization by an external religio-political structure called a Church. The Church—the Ecclesia, the called-forth ones—of Christ is the living body of his disciples, living in and by the Holy Spirit.

And how do Jesus’ disciples live in and by the Holy Spirit? Through the life-giving and life-sustaining Sacraments of Christ. The Christian life is a sacramental life, a life in Christ dependent on none but Christ and the good will of the disciple. For this reason we can say absolutely that the Sacraments are original Christianity outside of which there is no Christian discipleship, no Christian life. The Lord Jesus came to earth to bring Life through the Sacraments. Those who live that life constitute his living Church. As Saint Peter assures us: “Ye also, as lively [living]stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” I Peter 2:5). This is original Christianity, the original and only Church of Christ.

### **Abiding Presence**

The Lord Jesus told his disciples—and through them all of us: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). This is not meant in an abstract way, but in a very concrete manner. He accomplishes this through the divine Sacraments, the rituals by means of which he infuses his life and consciousness into us as the leaven of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 13:33). For he is speaking literally when he says: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and

am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Revelation 3:20, 21). And: “I will love him, and will manifest myself to him...and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:21, 23), so that it can be said of us as it was said of him: “In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9). This is an ideal far beyond present-day “orthodox” Christianity, so much so that they denounce it as heresy and “of the devil.” But it is nonetheless the ideal and intention of Christ Jesus for us. No wonder that Saint Paul wrote: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (I Corinthians 2:9).

### **Purpose and power of the Sacraments**

Because the authentic teachings of Jesus in their original integrity have been progressively either lost or deliberately rejected by state-supported churches over the last eighteen centuries, the Sacraments of Christ have been reduced to “mysteries” that must be approached by “faith” and “devotion.” But this approach cannot be supported by the apostolic teaching. Here is the original teaching regarding the purpose and power (effects) of the Sacraments:

*The Sacraments recreate us, not merely purify or make us somehow acceptable to God.* “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17). “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature” (Galatians 6:15). *Ktisis*, the word translated “creature,” in modern English should be “creation.” The Sacraments are intended to transmute us from human into the sons of God, as the previous citation from Romans indicates. This is what it means to be a new creation. This cannot be done by “faith,” “obedience,” or anything on our side. Only God does this by means of the Sacraments when they are rightly administered by those with divine authority and empowerment to those who have made themselves worthy for (capable of) their reception. The four essentials for effective reception of the Sacraments are: 1) a right administrator; 2) a right form of administration; 3) the right elements of which the Sacraments consist; 4) a right recipient.

*Ktisis* also means “building.” There is a lot of talk at this time about “genetic engineering,” but Jesus engaged in the engineering of spiritual genetics and passed on to his disciples the “power to become the sons of God” in the Sacraments (John 1:12). *Ktisis* further means “institution” or “ordinance,” underlining the fact that the Sacraments are actions that occur on the physical as well as the spiritual level, as essential requirements for those who aspire to be true disciples of Jesus Christ.

*Ktisis* comes from the root words *ktizdo* and *ptaomai* which mean to make a thing one’s own, to claim or acquire something. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10), as Saint Paul said. The idea is that through the Sacraments we become God’s living sons. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him” (I John 3:2), fully recreated through the Sacraments and sustained through continual participation in the sacramental life, the life in Christ. This has nothing to do with the feeble condition of being a Christian in the standard sense, including within the “sacramental” churches.

*The Sacraments bring us into living, conscious contact with Christ Jesus to such a degree that we become identified with him and through him with God.* “I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High” (Psalms 82:6). “Ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” (John 14:20). “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.... And the

glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them” (John 17:21-23, 26). I am the vine, ye are the branches” (John 15:5). The branches *are* the vine. A distinction can be made, but essentially they are the same. Only a yogi can understand this. “Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you?” (II Corinthians 13:5).

*The Sacraments are the power of divine transmutation into “Other Christs,”* for the word “Christian” literally means “little Christs.” Saint Paul refers to “them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1). “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (I Corinthians 1:30). “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20). “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is *Christ in you, the hope of glory*” (Colossians 1:26, 27). “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” (Colossians 3:4). We are intended to truthfully say with Saint Paul: “For to me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). Jesus proclaimed himself “the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5), but he also said to his disciples: “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 4:14). Satan said: “Ye shall be *as gods*” (Genesis 3:5), but Jesus says: “Ye *are gods*” (John 10:34).

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 13:14). “Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24). “After God” means that God is the divine archetype whose image we are to bear as sons of God, having “put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him,” for “Christ is all, and in all” (Colossians 3:10, 11). “For your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3), “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3). “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10).

### **Dare to be a Christian—a Christ**

When we read all the foregoing, how can we help but wonder where all the much-vaunted “literal interpretation of scripture” is to be found in the various churches? For these citations are to be taken literally, not in some feeble interpretation that is nothing more than an excuse or a refusal to dare to be a Christian: a Christ. It is pointless to “believe in” Christ and not in what he says. God draws us into union with Him through the Sacraments of Christ, for “it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). The Sacraments have two purposes: Life and Living. They impart to us the Life of Christ and they enable us to live that Life.

### **The Yogic Sacraments**

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant” said Saint Paul (I Corinthians 12:1). Unfortunately, this is not the perspective of modern Churchianity which either claims they are nothing more than symbols or that the Sacraments are mysteries that cannot be fathomed, and that it is wrong to try to understand them. Long before horror movies ground out the cliché about “there are some things man is not meant to know...” in various permutations, official theology did the same in relation to just about every aspect of Jesus’ teachings and their distortion

of those teachings. Certainly they “held the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18), to serve their own ends, one of which was to keep people ignorant, unquestioning and obedient. Consequently every aspect of Christianity was deformed to conform with their aberrant outlook. Although in some churches the Apostolic Succession was mechanically preserved, the sacramental forms were also deformed, sometimes almost rendering them inoperative (invalid) and almost always implying erroneous understanding of their nature and purpose. In this way truth was mixed with error. The fundamental cause of this was the loss of contact with the roots of Jesus’ Gospel: the wisdom of the Far East. (See *The Christ of India*.)

This unhappy condition persisted and worsened as the centuries passed until at the threshold of the twentieth century a remarkable thing occurred within the Theosophical Society.

### **Charles W. Leadbeater**

Charles Webster Leadbeater was a minister in the Church of England, worthy and tireless in his pastoral ministrations to all levels of society, especially the “lower classes” in London. Despite his success, when he encountered the Theosophical Society and its founder, Madam Blavatsky, he resigned from the Church of England and devoted his entire life to writing and teaching the principles of Theosophy. In time he went with Blavatsky to India and lived at the society’s headquarters outside Madras. There he developed his faculties of clairvoyance to an extent and scope uncommon at that time in the West.

Years later, during one of his lecture tours he was staying in Sicily. One morning he keenly perceived a tremendous wave of high spiritual force inundating the place where he was, as well as the surrounding area for miles around. After a while it faded away, but the next day it returned at the same time—and continued to do so on subsequent days. He traced its origin: the nearest Catholic church a few miles distant. The next morning he attended Mass and discovered that he was indeed right, and being in the church building itself he perceived the descent of spiritual power to an extent he had never imagined could take place in the “Romish Church”—or anywhere else. By now, as a highly developed clairvoyant, he had come to understand the value of ritual and the fact that its efficacy often has very little to do with the ideas projected onto it or the lack of understanding on the part of those engaging in it. He also realized that he was seeing a source of spiritual power that was uniquely effective, even compared to his experience in the East. Consequently he wrote to several of his Theosophical associates, telling them of his discovery and urging them to investigate the same.

### **James Ingall Wedgwood**

One of those Leadbeater wrote about the power of the Mass was James Ingall Wedgwood, Secretary of the Theosophical Society in Britain. Before becoming a Theosophist, he had been a fervent Anglo-Catholic and an organist at York Minster. Drawn to the monastic life, he entered an Anglican Benedictine monastery. In conversations with the abbot he revealed that he was a member of the Theosophical Society. In response the abbot insisted that he resign from the Society and abjure Theosophy—otherwise he should leave the monastery; so Wedgwood left.

The communication from Leadbeater revived his Catholic interests. Learning that the Old Catholics of Holland had established a mission in England, he contacted the English bishop, Arnold Harris Mathew, and in time joined the Old Catholic Church and became a priest. At the bishop’s request, in his private daily Mass he celebrated the Roman Mass in Latin, though publicly he used the English translation of *The Old*

*Catholic Missal and Ritual* by Bishop Mathew for the Mass and other Sacraments.

Thus having continual personal experience of the Mass, he frequently wrote to Leadbeater regarding it. After a while Bishop Mathew resigned and Wedgwood was elected and consecrated bishop for all English-speaking Old Catholics in the British Empire. Several members of the Theosophical Society in England had already become Old Catholic priests as a result of Wedgwood's influence, and Leadbeater agreed to become the bishop for Australia and its environs. So Wedgwood travelled to Australia and consecrated Leadbeater to the episcopate.

### **A “new” Mass and Sacraments**

Although Wedgwood had been used to celebrating the Old Catholic Mass in English for many London Theosophists, both he and Leadbeater realized that it contained many elements inconsistent with their metaphysical principles and esoteric experiences. Renting a house in Sydney, they set up a chapel and began celebrating Mass daily in English. While one bishop celebrated, the other would observe its effects clairvoyantly. Gradually they formulated a more effective and more truthful form of the sacred rite, though adhering very closely to the basic form of the Roman Mass. After a while they invited other clairvoyants to join with them in the daily Mass and contribute their perceptions and opinions. In this way the “new” Mass was tested over and over again in an objectively methodical manner, using the psychic insights of several reliable men and women as well as themselves.

On Easter of 1917, the new Mass was publicly celebrated and was enthusiastically received. By the next year it was obvious that the new Mass needed a new church for its furtherance. By that time many Theosophists in Europe, America, and Australia had joined the Old Catholic Church under Bishop Wedgwood's jurisdiction and quite a number had become priests. After a great deal of deliberation, it was decided to discontinue using the name Old Catholic and become “The Liberal Catholic Church.” Accordingly, the two bishops produced new forms of the ancient Sacraments, also based on the clairvoyant observations of themselves and others. In 1919 there appeared the first edition of *The Liturgy According to the Use of The Liberal Catholic Church. Prepared for the Use of English-speaking Congregations*. This was issued with the official authorization of Bishop James Ingall Wedgwood as the Presiding Bishop of the infant church.

*The Liturgy* contained sacramental forms based on the ancient Latin prototypes employed by the Roman Catholic Church, but which differed considerably in that some of the prayers were omitted or shortened and more exact esoteric expressions substituted for the Latin originals. An intelligent and precise understanding of all the Sacraments was made available to all Liberal Catholics by the publication of Bishop Leadbeater's monumental work *The Science of the Sacraments* that dealt with the inner psychic and spiritual side of the Sacraments.

### **Theosophy**

All of this amazing progress would have been impossible outside the understanding which bishops, clergy and laity had received as members of the Theosophical Society.

It is a historically proven fact that Jesus spent most of his life in India before beginning his ministry in Israel as a teacher of the Eternal Dharma, that he returned to India after his resurrection and lived the rest of his life in the Himalayan regions except for a few visits to the Apostle Thomas in the south of India. (Again, see *The Christ of India*.) As a priest of the Saint Thomas Christian (Malankara Orthodox) Church of India once remarked to me: “You cannot understand the teachings of Jesus if you do



not know the scriptures of India.”

India was the home, the heart, of the Theosophical Society whose freedom of thought and depth of philosophical insight had morally and spiritually enabled the creation of the Liberal Catholic Church. Its president, Annie Besant, had immediately become a member of the church and Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater as popular authors, officers and lecturers of the Society had greatly furthered its growth throughout the world. Their writings clearly show that the two bishops were adherents of the Advaita (Non-dual) philosophy of India and well conversant with the practice of yoga. These two factors are evident in every aspect of their writings—especially those relating to Christianity and in the rituals formulated by them. Because of this, various esoteric Christian groups have preferred to adopt those rituals rather than create their own, considering that the bishops had produced the best possible expression of authentic Christianity—itsself an Eastern religion. Even the American Catholic Church, a mission of the Saint Thomas Christian Church established at the end of the nineteenth century in America, abandoned the sacramental forms of the *Old Catholic Missal and Ritual* and adopted the Wedgwood-Leadbearer rites. A person believes as he worships, and worships as he believes. In this study I will be citing the sacramental forms found in the third edition of *The Liturgy According to the Use of The Liberal Catholic Church*, the last edition printed in Bishop Wedgwood’s lifetime and embodying changes recommended by both bishops. (Bishop Leadbeater left the body in 1934 and Bishop Wedgwood in 1951.) It should be kept in mind that *The Science of the Sacraments* is the final word on their Sacramental forms from a clairvoyant view.

### **The Yoga of the Sacraments**

A yoga is anything that joins or unites. In this sense the Christian sacramental system is perhaps the only real yoga indigenous to the West. Its purpose is the uniting of human consciousness with Divine Consciousness. Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater being esotericists in the Eastern tradition realized that rituals can be mechanisms or devices for the production and imparting of spiritual energies—not in a hit or miss manner or dependent on either emotional or intellectual factors, but precisely as tools of spiritual science. Being clairvoyant, they took the traditional sacramental forms and reworked them into rituals that powerfully affect the participants and recipients, moving them into a completely other psychic dimension, restoring their inner bodies to the original pattern and infusing them with the highest consciousness to “shine as lights in the world” (Philippians 2:15).

Continued—especially daily—participation in the Sacraments, especially the Mass, when supported and furthered by the practice of meditation, opens unlimited possibilities in the spirit, for they open the door to Christhood. Bishop Leadbeater, in *The Science of the Sacraments*, explains all this in detail, so I will only be filling in some aspects of the esoteric effects of the Sacraments in this study. I should point out that there are a few small differences between the text I am commenting on and the officially printed texts of the Liberal Catholic Church.

Though these sacramental forms originated in the twentieth century, they ideally embody the authentic teachings of Jesus and the purpose of the Apostolic Succession. Thus they can be looked upon as the spiritual tradition of original Christianity.

# Chapter One

## Apostolic Succession: The River of Life

### **There is a river**

“There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High” (Psalms 46:4). The City of God, “the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people,” who are “tabernacles of the most High,” is gladdened and made holy by the Sacraments of Christ. For “Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matthew 28:18-20). Christ Jesus himself is present in all the Sacraments in various forms and modes. As the Eastern Christian Church teaches, in essence there is one Sacrament: the imparting of the Divine Life to the disciples of the Lord Jesus through the various rites known as Sacraments and Sacramentals that comprise the Yoga of Christ who himself is the ultimate Minister of all Sacraments.

The Beloved Disciple was given a symbolic vision of Christ’s living body, “the blessed company,” in this manner: “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever....And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely....The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (Revelation 22:1-5, 17, 21). Through the exercise of the Apostolic Succession by its ministers Jesus becomes the Living Master of all his disciples.

### **What is the Apostolic Succession?**

What is the Apostolic Succession? It is the living power of Christ which has been handed on from Jesus himself through the twelve apostles and their successors, the bishops, by the laying on of hands even until this day. The Apostolic Succession was established when “said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained” (John 20:21-23). “And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 16:19; 18:18). Saint Paul wrote to Saint Timothy: “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery....Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands” (I Timothy 4:14; II Timothy 1:6).

## **Divine Essence and Divine Energies**

In the fourteenth century, because of attacks on the meditation practices of the Hesychasts (keepers of Silence), the spiritual authorities of the Eastern Orthodox Church led by Saint Gregory Palamas the Archbishop of Thessalonica formulated the mystical doctrine that the One God has practically speaking a dual nature—or rather, a dual mode of being. The Divine Unity is manifesting as Essence and Energies: Divine Consciousness and Divine Power. (This is identical to the yogic principle that Reality consists of Purusha and Prakriti—Spirit and Power.)

The meaning of this for us is the truth that the Apostolic Succession is the direct Working of God in the world, that the Power of the Sacraments is not a created power, a mere instrument of God's will, but is God Himself. Every time we approach the Sacraments we are entering into contact with the Absolute Being who is acting through the Sacraments and therefore acting upon and within us. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Corinthians 6:16). "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Revelation 21:3). This is exactly what is known in Eastern Christianity as *theosis*: deification, the fulfillment of the divine declaration: "Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High" (Psalms 82:6; John 10:34).

## **Holy Orders**

The handing on of the Apostolic Succession is known as "holy orders" or "ordination," which is itself a Sacrament. Although in the Western Church it has become common to think of there being several "minor orders," each of which possesses an ordination, in reality they are only blessings by a bishop to engage in certain minor ecclesiastical functions, which is why in monasteries they are often done by the abbot, even though he is not a bishop, and on occasion they may be delegated to a priest. There are really only three truly sacramental orders: Deacon, Priest, and Bishop. And they are conferred by a bishop alone.

A deacon assists the priest in his sacramental functions and may with the priest's permission under certain conditions himself baptize and minister the Anointing of the Sick and Extreme Unction, but this is not the norm. A priest performs all sacramental functions except that of Holy Orders and various consecrations which are proper to a bishop alone. A bishop exercises the plenitude of the Apostolic Succession, especially ordinations and consecrations. But in all these three orders it is Jesus the Great High Priest who performs the Sacraments through the agency of the deacons, priests, and bishops. Therefore all Christians are baptized, confirmed, healed, absolved, blessed and ordained by Jesus Christ himself. Each Christian is a direct disciple of the Lord Jesus as much as were the Apostles themselves. At the same time, all the Sacraments are effected by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9; I Peter 1:11), at the direction of the Lord. That is why, when he imparted the episcopal power to the Apostles he said: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." All Sacraments are actions of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, who functions through the duly ordained "Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the Mysteries of God" (I Corinthians 4:1).

Later we will be looking at the purpose and form of the three sacramental orders. (It is normal usage to say that deacons and priests are ordained, and bishops are consecrated, but this is a purely arbitrary distinction.)

### **A practical question**

Now comes the thorny questions regarding a church you either attend or may attend:

- 1) Does this church possess the Apostolic Succession?
- 2) If so, does it exercise it in a spiritually beneficial manner?
- 3) Do/Will I have to deny or lie about my esoteric beliefs to be a member and receive their sacraments?

All three must be decided by you—no one else—using your intuition developed through meditation and prayer.

### **And finally...**

A final question, which must be asked, is of major importance: What if I cannot find a valid sacramental church that will not demand that I renounce or hide my esoteric understanding?

That is so crucial a matter that no one should advise you, but you should decide on your own. Sometimes it varies from congregation to congregation. I have known Eastern Orthodox priests that personally held very esoteric views (even reincarnation) and approved of others doing the same. I knew one Eastern Orthodox bishop who created an esoteric church, but after a while it betrayed itself and became safely exoteric. I have known Catholic priests that also were esoteric in belief and firmly held and even spoke openly of such things as reincarnation.

A great deal of truth is hidden by the “orthodox” churches. For example, I know of two very famous “elders” of the Eastern Orthodox Church who firmly hold the belief that proficiency in meditation can supply the effects of the Sacraments. Both say—only in the utmost secrecy—that in the profoundest depths of mystical prayer they experience the exact same effects as when they receive Communion. This is actually in keeping with Eastern Christian theology, for there is really only one Sacrament: the imparting of the Grace of God (which in Eastern Christian theology IS God, not a created energy). The authentic Orthodox teaching is that the various Sacraments are different means by which that Grace is imparted to human beings. However, the exoterics would never agree to that, especially those in the West.

So you may want to consider seeking and finding what you need in meditation alone until some way opens by which you can be true to both yourself and God while partaking of the Sacraments.

# Chapter Two: Baptism

## **“Ye must be born again”**

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again” (John 3:1-7).

Miracles mean nothing if a person has not been born into Spirit. We have all been born into this perishable world of inevitable death, but Jesus has given us the second birth of Baptism, “wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” (Colossians 2:12), “that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

Baptism is the foundation of our life in Christ; therefore: “Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:18, 19). “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). “Baptism doth also now save us...by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 3:21).

## **The effects of Baptism**

The first effect of Baptism is purification from the darkening of our consciousness that is the result of sin—*amartano*. *Amartano* means “to miss the mark,” to fall short of realizing and manifesting our eternal, divine nature and destiny. It also means to err or be mistaken, indicating that sin is ignorance. It also means to wander: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way” (Isaiah 53:6), rather than the way of God and Christ. Significantly, it comes from the root *meros*, which means to be only a part rather than a whole, to be incomplete. That is why Saint Paul wrote: “Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10). Baptism cleanses and supplies that which we have lost through ignorance whose fruit is wrong action.

It is also a new birth, an awakening into the life of the spirit which heretofore has been eclipsed by the life of the body and the world. It is entering into a new perspective on life that is rooted in consciousness of our immortal self within the Immortal God. It is the opening of the potential to in time hear the words: “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). Even now, it can be said to the baptized: “Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee” (Acts 13:33). And: “I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7).

Baptism is also empowerment, for Saint John the Baptist said: “He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matthew 3:11). “Then Peter said unto them, be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the

Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). Ananias the prophet said to Saint Paul: “Why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Of course it is not the actions that are washed away, but the injurious spiritual effects of those actions. “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27).

### **The spiritual mechanics of Baptism**

Baptism is an inner spiritual act that also takes place in the outer world—as are all the Sacraments. Comprehension of the inner aspect is possible for those who have opened their inner consciousness through meditation, and with the assistance of *The Science of the Sacraments*, but we should consider the external instruments of the inner work.

First, water is taken and made “living water” through the blessing of a priest. That is, it is infused with cleansing and enlivening spiritual energies. (See Chapter Eight: Blessing of Holy Water.) Next, the candidate for Baptism, known as a catechumen (“learner”), is blessed and purified through prayers and the anointing with oil that has been blessed by a bishop and is known as Oil of Catechumens. Then the sanctified baptismal water is poured three times over his forehead as the Holy Trinity is invoked. Since the human body is mostly water, the spiritual energies in the baptismal water are drawn into the catechumen’s body, especially his brain (the “thousand-petalled lotus” of the yogis), producing a profound change in every cell, purifying, correcting, completing and empowering his entire being. Finally the process is completed and sealed by the anointing with Holy Chrism, also blessed by a bishop.

## **Yogic Baptism**

Baptism was not new to Jesus or his disciples for most had been Essenes, among whom Baptism was a requisite. Some had also been disciples of Saint John the Baptist who was Master of the Essenes. Jesus had himself been baptized by Saint John “to fulfill all righteousness” (Matthew 3:15). Obviously Christian Baptism was as radically different as was Jesus from an ordinary Essene—even from Saint John himself.

### **The beginning**

Baptism is begun by an invocation of the Trinity by the priest:

**In the Name of the Father ✠ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

This is a very real spiritual invocation of the Holy Trinity, not just pious words. The priest calls upon the Trinity at the beginning of all Sacraments because they are direct actions of the Trinity through the mediatorship of Jesus Christ; and the priest becomes their representative and instrument for the effecting of the sacramental rites.

As he intones this invocation, the priest also makes the sign of the Cross, the Christian’s major Sign of Power.

There are two forms of the sign of the Cross, one in which the right shoulder is touched and then the left. This is a continuation of the Kabbalistic tradition which was pre-Christian, and is used in the Byzantine Orthodox Churches. The other, used by non-Byzantine Churches, is opposite: the left shoulder is touched and then the right. Both forms begin with touching the forehead and then the trunk of the body. They are symbolic gestures, both recalling Jesus’ statements about the just sheep being set on

the right hand and the unjust goats being set on the left hand (Matthew 25:31-33).

The first form means: Jesus came down from heaven (touching the forehead) to earth (touching the trunk of the body) to impart righteousness (touching the right shoulder) to the unrighteous (touching the left shoulder). The second form means: Jesus came down from heaven (touching the forehead) to earth (touching the trunk of the body) to transfer us from the left hand of unrighteousness (touching the left shoulder) to the right hand of righteousness (touching the right shoulder).

The sign of the Cross is a profession of faith, but even more it is an evocation/ invocation of the spiritual power which effects the salvific change. It is a mighty sign of power, as two thousand years of its use demonstrate. Both forms of the sacred sign are accompanied by the words: "In the Name of the Father [touching the forehead] and of the Son [touching the trunk of the body] and of the Holy Spirit [touching both shoulders]. Amen."

The Son is the extension of the Father, and the Holy Spirit is the dual power that manifests as creation and its evolutionary purpose. The "Father" consciousness dwells in the head, in the Thousand-petalled Lotus or Sahasrara Chakra, the seat of the incarnate spirit-soul. The "Son" consciousness pervades the body in the same way that the Second Person of the Trinity, Ishwara, pervades and guides all creation. The "Holy Spirit" is the power that manifests as the body, for the Holy Spirit is the vibrating energy of the universe, of all relative existence. Making the sign of the Cross affirms that we are all images of the Trinity, as the Creed will later affirm.

Then he places his right hand on the candidate's head and prays:

**O God, omnipotent and omnipresent, Whose power worketh in every living creature, Who alone art the source of all life and goodness, deign to shed upon this Thy servant, who has been called to the rudiments of the faith, a ray of Thy light; drive out from *him* all blindness of heart, break all the chains of iniquity wherewith *he* hath been bound; open to *him*, O Lord, the gate of Thy glory, that being replenished with the spirit of Thy wisdom and strengthened by Thy mighty power, *he* may be free from the taint of evil desire and steadfastly advancing in holiness may joyfully serve Thee in the course Thou hast appointed for *him*; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

All the prayers in this rite express profound spiritual realities—many of them unknown to most Christians—so each one should be looked into, beginning with this one.

*O God, omnipotent and omnipresent, Whose power worketh in every living creature.* The baptismal rite begins with an affirmation of the Divine Life moving in every living creature and coming to inevitable fruition in the revelation of their divine nature, and not a cowering before God and a cringing prayer that some poor soul "born in sin" and "prone to sin as the sparks fly upward" would mercifully be granted entire remission of their sins in Baptism so they could have a clean slate to overwrite in their subsequent life as "sinners saved by grace" and guaranteed not to go to hell. Not at all! God is perfecting through His omnipotence and omnipresence every sentient being. Certainly most resist His efforts, but in time their innate divinity will bring them around to cooperating. And until they do, Baptism will do very little. Birth is a marvelous thing, but if it is not followed by life it is just a prelude to death. It is the same with Baptism.

*Who alone art the source of all life and goodness, deign to shed upon this Thy servant, who has been called to the rudiments of the faith, a ray of Thy light.* If we really want to live and be good, we must strive to become god, for only in divinity is there life and

goodness. “And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God” (Mark 10:18). “The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid” (Matthew 13:44). The treasure is in us and must be brought out by our own efforts. Whatever philosophy we may have imbibed that persuaded us of the value of Baptism, no matter how many books, lectures, or classes may have passed through our brains, we really know nothing more than the rudiments of faith, have seen only a ray of Light. For perfect Gnosis alone is truth and wisdom, and we must seek it, aware that Baptism opens the door, but we must walk through and keep on moving toward the Perfect Goal.

*Drive out from him all blindness of heart, break all the chains of iniquity wherewith he hath been bound.* Momentarily God can do all this for us in order to encourage us and give us a kind of free start or free sample of what lies ahead for those who persevere, but that boost is going to end in time—usually in a comparatively short time—and if we have not put what is given us out to increase and profit, even what we have shall be taken from us:

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

“Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.

“After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

“Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.

“For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath” (Matthew 25:14-29).

In the thirteenth chapter of Saint Matthew’s gospel he records Jesus’ parable of seed sown by a farmer. Some seed fell on ground that had only a shallow layer of earth with stone underneath. Because the soil had no depth, the heat from the stone caused the seed to germinate faster than normal and spring up quickly. But the plants soon withered away, scorched by the sun because they had no root with which to draw either moisture or nutrients from the earth. It is the same with people. In a burst of enthusiasm and dedication they adopt a philosophy or religion, but because they have



no depth of understanding and experience, in a while they become “burnt out” and drop away. It is necessary to maintain the process of Baptism by what the Buddhists call “cultivation”—meditation, serious study and assimilation of what results from them.

*Open to him, O Lord, the gate of Thy glory.* Baptism is wonderful, for it does indeed open the gate to glory. But we have to go through the gate and keep on moving higher. We must take to heart the words of Jesus: “Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish” (Luke 14:28-30). The purpose of a tower is to ascend the stairs and look out, to gain a high view. Jesus uses this simile because the whole purpose of sacramental life is ascension in consciousness.

Exoteric churches have made Sacraments a kind of good luck charm or fetish, a guarantee of salvation, but of themselves they are absolutely nothing if they are not put to use, as already pointed out. Just as money might as well be blank paper if it is not spent or put to any use, so it is with the Sacraments. Sacraments open and empower us for potential attainment and spiritual function, they do not bring it about. That is why Jesus said of those that claimed to be his followers: “By their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” Matthew 7:20-23). So not only was their religion profitless, it was actually iniquitous because it was false and hypocritical.

*That being replenished with the spirit of Thy wisdom.* Gnosis (jnana) is the object of the gate opened by Baptism, for such wisdom-knowledge-insight will completely regenerate the mind and heart of the initiate—and Baptism is the first step in being an initiate of Christ and attaining “the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16). To make it clear that the required gnosis is a living thing, part of the life of God, Bishop Wedgwood used the phrase “*spirit of Thy wisdom,*” not just “wisdom.” This is a reference to the Holy Spirit with whom the initiate is to be imbued in the Sacrament of Confirmation (known as Chrismation in the Christian East).

*And strengthened by Thy mighty power.* For the Holy Spirit is the Power of God, just as Christ the Son is the Word of God.

*He may be free from the taint of evil desire.* Desire (kama: desire, passion, or lust) arises from a false understanding of the object and of ourselves. “The abstinent run away from what they desire but carry their desires with them: when a man enters Reality, he leaves his desires behind him” (Bhagavad Gita 2:59). A sensible, level-headed understanding of the practical desirability of something and an equally sensible and level-headed going about obtaining it is not desire, but a legitimate intention and putting forth of the intelligent will (buddhi). The petition is for the person to be free from from egoic, compulsive urges of all kinds so spiritual intelligence can direct his life, and not passion in any form.

*And steadfastly advancing in holiness.* “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy” (I Peter 1:16). Holiness is our true nature; we need to overcome our addiction to falsifying ourselves, and start being what we really are. All kinds of addicts cant on about accepting themselves and being accepted by others, but it is all nonsense, a kind of emotional con game and blackmail. We have to get out of the lie and enter into truth on all levels. The Life Divine is not “inclusive” or “non-judgmental”—it is adamantly

exclusive of all that contravenes the revelation of our innate divinity, and since the exclusion can only be done by us, intelligent judgment is an absolute requisite—not hatred or condemnation, but a determined elimination of all the elements in our present situation that bring death and not Life. That is why Baptism and Confirmation give us a great empowerment: so we can successfully pass from death into Life, from darkness into Light by our own will and reason.

*May joyfully serve Thee in the course Thou hast appointed for him.* Only joy awaits the disciplined and purified initiate who follows the divinely-ordained path of his swadharma: the mode of life that accommodates and reveals his nature as divine spirit-self. “Holiness soon shall refashion his nature to peace eternal” (Bhagavad Gita 9:31). The undisciplined and unpurified will scarcely become an initiate though he be baptized a thousand times, and in time there “shall be taken away even that which he hath” by his own negative and misdirected will.

*Through Christ our Lord. Amen.* Through the joint endeavors of the Cosmic Christ, Jesus Christ, and our own Christ-nature all this shall come about. May it be so!

### **The exorcism**

Evil is the distortion or suppression of good, therefore we need to become free of all such distortion and suppression. Some baptismal rites contain all kinds of bombastic cursings and banishings that imply the candidate is virtually or potentially possessed by “the Devil.” The more they declaim the sillier they get. Naturally Bishop Wedgwood wanted no such lying implications in the baptismal rite. Yet evil does exist as a condition which desperately needs to be banished from us. Therefore the priest blesses the one to be baptized with the sign of the Cross, saying:

**In the Name which is above every name, in the power of the ✠ Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy ✠ Spirit, I exorcize all influences and seeds of evil; I lay upon them the spell of Christ’s holy Church, that they may be bound fast as with iron chains and cast into outer darkness, that they trouble not this servant of God.**

“Influences” are external forces that impel us to wrong thought or action, and “seeds” are internal forces that do the same. Both are the effects of our personal karma, which must be dealt with by ourselves, empowered by Christ. So the priest exercises the power of Christ through his priestly connection to bind and to banish or paralyze any negative forces that might prevent our purification and empowerment. The priest cannot dissolve or banish them forever, but can put them into abeyance, “into outer darkness” beyond our immediate life sphere, so we can use the initiatic powers of Baptism to overcome or neutralize them ourselves before they have a chance to return and impede or harm us. Jesus spoke of this symbolically, saying: “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation” (Matthew 12:43-45). For such neglectful people Baptism is the gate of destruction rather than the gate of glory.

The insistence of exoteric Christianity that Baptism expunges all sin and the effects of sin, making the baptized person perfectly free of all sin in any form is a harmful fable, as anyone that was baptized as an adult is aware. Yes, he is blessed and purified

to a marked degree, but the wiping out of karmic evil (“sin”) can only be done by him, and the sacramental life enables him to do this. (“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). So the exorcism gives the candidate a kind of breathing space in which to gather his inner forces and set about his self-correction. Instead of karma troubling him, he should trouble karma by erasing it.

The priest then lays his hand on the candidate’s head continuing:

**For he who is the Lord of love and compassion hath deigned to call *him* to his holy grace and blessing and to the font of Baptism.**

It is the divine will for the baptized to be able to truthfully say: “In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us” (Romans 8:37). That is why there are so many verses in the New Testament in which Christians are designated as “over-comers.”

### **Our psychic anatomy**

The errors of exoteric Christianity have many roots, one of which is complete ignorance of how human beings are constituted. Western Christianity believes that a human being consists of a completely non-material immortal spirit in a totally material mortal body, and that they constantly fight with one another, implacably, just as in their mythology God and His supposed nemesis, the Devil, are in perpetual conflict. Since their God is never at peace, it is no wonder that they never are, either. Actually the defects of exoteric Christians are attributed to their God—for after all, are they not created in his image?

The authentic Christian teaching is that humans are threefold, being images of the Trinity. A human being is made up of a spirit and a body, certainly, but there is a third component that is of paramount significance: a psychic level that links the material and the spiritual and enables the material and the spiritual to communicate. This psyche includes the mind, intellect and will, and is formed of subtle astral and causal energies. If a religion does not directly deal with all three levels it is incompetent and can do no lasting good, much less lead to the divination of the individual unless they have been greatly evolved in previous lives in traditions that had knowledge of these things.

The only source of complete and accurate knowledge of the psychic levels or bodies is the science of Yoga. Part of that knowledge is information about certain psychic centers or chakras in the person’s bodies that directly affect his mental states and which are themselves affected by his emotions, thoughts, and acts of will. This knowledge was totally familiar to both Bishop Wedgwood and Bishop Leadbeater (who wrote a book on the subject), and was incorporated in their baptismal rite since Baptism is mostly about subtle energies.

### **Be opened**

The priest makes the sign of the Cross over four of the candidate’s chakras: between the eyebrows (the “third eye”), throat, heart, and navel chakras. As he does this he says:

**Ephphatha: that is, be thou opened.**

The results of this action are described in *The Science of the Sacraments*. “These are four of the special force-centres in the human body, and the effect of the sign, and of the intelligent exercise of the will, is to set these centres in motion....The particular

power which the Priest exercises in Baptism opens up these centres and sets them moving much more rapidly.... The centre opens much in the same way as the eye of a cat opens in the dark; or it is still more like the way in which a properly-made iris shutter opens in a photographic camera. These centres are opened in order that the force which is to be poured in may flow more readily.”

Rather than praying, the priest addresses the divine Self of the candidate, saying:

**Let thy mind and thy heart be opened to the Most Holy Spirit of the living God, that thy whole nature may be dedicated for ever to His service; so mayest thou have power to receive the heavenly precepts and to be such in thy conduct that thou mayest be a pure temple of the living God.**

All this is the result of the cleansing and empowering that will take place in the candidate’s physical and psychic bodies—especially in the psychic bodies.

Baptism is the first step in discipleship to the Master Jesus. Certainly a disciple needs to be aware of the Master’s will and purpose for him. Therefore the priest prays that the Holy Spirit will open his heart and mind so he may be ever engaged in the Yoga of Christ in which the Lord Jesus will guide him. We need more than books and talks—even by saints. We need to receive the heavenly precepts directly from heaven, from spirit, and grow (evolve) “unto a holy temple in the Lord” (Ephesians 2:21).

Notice that there is not a hint in any of this ritual so far, nor will there be even unto the end, that God or some other agent will take over and start doing everything for the candidate. It is just the opposite. Baptism initiates the process of spiritual growth “unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). Although the disciple is at every moment watched over by God and Jesus and his saints and angels, and can certainly petition their help and guidance, the process is carried on by the disciple, for that is what his evolution is all about. Each sentient being evolves automatically, subliminally until he reaches the point where he can engage in conscious self-evolution. That is what Baptism and Confirmation are all about. They are true initiations: the beginning of the person’s conscious evolution.

Next the priest extends his right hand toward’s the candidate so a current of spiritual energy will flow into him, and prays:

**Do Thou, O Lord, with Thine ever-abiding power, watch over this Thy chosen servant, whom we dedicate to Thy service, that, using well the beginnings of Thy glory and heedfully observing Thy holy laws, *he* may be found worthy to attain to the fullness of the new birth; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The “ever-abiding power” of God, is the Holy Spirit Who according to the Eastern Orthodox prayer “art in all places and fillest all things; Treasury of good things and Giver of life.” The Holy Spirit is ever with all things, especially sentient beings, but in so many human beings She is virtually inactive due to their lack of capacity for theosis. Therefore the priest is praying that in the mind, heart, will and life of “this Thy chosen servant” She shall be supremely active to empower and guide his spiritual journey.

Two other things stand out in this prayer: the need to observe the laws of spiritual development, which include morality, ethics, and inner cultivation; and that although Baptism may be considered a new birth, the person must use it as the first step in the journey to the fullness of the new birth: the fruition of theosis or divinization. We all consider it a tragedy when a new-born child, or a child of any age, dies, but it is also a

tragedy when a new-born initiate dies through spiritual stagnation, or after only a few months or years.

**Come...**

Placing the end of his stole on the candidate's shoulder, the priest says:

**Come into the temple of God, that thou mayest have part with Christ unto life eternal.**

He places the end of his stole on the candidate's shoulder to represent that it is Christ himself who invites him. The temple of God is not just the physical church, but the greater temple, the Church of Christ that is purely spiritual in character and which no earthly organization can truthfully claim to exclusively be. It is crucial that an aspirant understands that Baptism cannot make him a member of any earthly church, for he is not joining himself to an institution of any type at all but to Christ whose true disciples make up his Church as living stones (I Peter 2:5). Any priest who claims that Baptism makes someone a member of "his" church is either an abysmal ignoramus or an abysmal fraud. "From such turn away" (II Timothy 3:5).

The eternal life of Christ is what is offered, as the disciple is a "partaker of Christ" in many mystical ways, as he will discover as he journeys onward to Christhood.

### **Safeguarding**

After they have come to the place of Baptism, the priest takes upon his right thumb a little consecrated oil known as the Oil of Catechumens which was consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday. It is used only in Baptism and the Ordination of Priests for cleansing and safeguarding of those touched by it.

The priest makes a small cross with the oil on the person's heart center and the nape of the neck opposite the throat center. If the heart center is not easily reached or there is some other reason not to anoint the center of the breast, a cross is made at the hollow of the throat instead. The first-described way is best, though, because its purpose is to purify, connect and set a magnetic shield or seal upon the two centers so emotion will not easily impel the person to unwise or negative speech or to erroneous or confused thought. As he makes the crosses the priest says:

**In the Name of Christ our Lord, I ✠ ✠ anoint thee with oil for thy safeguarding.**

### **His holy angel**

Next a tremendously important act takes place: the linking of a holy guardian angel to accompany the person for the rest of his life—for safeguarding, but also for guidance, blessing and inspiration. This is done by the priest making two signs of the Cross before and behind the person, reaching to the entire length of his body, as he says:

**May his holy Angel ✠ go before thee, and ✠ follow after thee; may he be with thee in thy downsitting and thine uprising and keep thee in all thy ways.**

Such a gift is awesome, indeed.

### **The Baptism**

Baptism—*baptisma*—means to immerse, and it is historical fact that as a rule

Christians baptized by triple immersion—one immersion at the name of each aspect of the Holy Trinity. At some time after the Reformation it became increasingly the practice to baptize by pouring the consecrated water on the head three times, usually in the form of a cross. There seems to have been little uniformity as to whether the water was poured on the top of the head or on the forehead. The famous Bishop Fulton Sheen definitely poured the water on the top of infants' heads, for I have seen photographs of him doing so. But I have also seen Roman Catholic priests pour the water on the foreheads of those baptized on Holy Saturday.

Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater prescribed pouring the water on the forehead in the form of a cross as one of the aspects of the Trinity is named—three times in all. This no doubt arose from two sources: the usage they had seen in the Roman and Anglican churches and their knowledge of the chakras. For the ruling chakra in our spiritual energy system is the sahasrara, the astral/causal brain known to yogis as “the thousand-petalled lotus.” Pouring water on the forehead will profoundly affect the sahasrara, and thereby the entire complex of bodies. Sensitive people have said that when they were baptized by water being poured on their forehead they immediately felt and inwardly saw blazing light penetrating every cell of their entire body.

Therefore as the candidate leans over the font so none of the consecrated water will be spilt onto his clothes or the floor, the priest pours some of the consecrated baptismal water over his forehead thrice in the form of an equal-bar cross, saying:

**N., I baptize thee in the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. Amen.**

When this is done, the divine energies infused in the baptismal water enter into and penetrate the person's total being. Since the physical body is mostly water it, too, is deeply cleansed and energized. Certainly the newly-baptized gets a foretaste of Saint Paul's affirmation: “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27).

Cleansing and empowerment are the major effects of Baptism, but there is a great deal of healing and realignment of the bodies as well as reconfiguration and a tremendous increase in their overall rate of vibration. So much so that Saint Paul could confidently state: “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature” (II Corinthians 5:17).

### **The water of Baptism**

In the *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, the most ancient Christian document we have outside the New Testament, direction is given to baptize “in living water.” Naturally, non-sacramental Christians have no idea what this means, and assume that the flowing water of a river or stream is meant. Some even go so far as to have water flowing through their baptisteries. But the document means to baptize in water that has been infused with divine life through rituals of consecration.

At first Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater recommended that Baptism should be done with water blessed according to the usual rite for the blessing of holy water since its purpose is the infusion of water with purificatory, enlivening, healing and blessing energies. Later, at the end of the usual blessing of holy water the following prayer was added if the holy water was to be used for Baptism:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, Who in the mystery of Thy boundless love didst take upon Thyself the limitations of human form and in Thy gracious compassion didst gather little children into Thine arms; stretch forth, we pray Thee, the**

**right hand of Thy power over this Holy Water and fill it with Thy heavenly ✠ grace and ✠ blessing, that *those* to be baptized therewith may receive the fullness of Thy love and ever remain in the number of Thy faithful children. R: Amen.**

The prayer is straightforward and needs no explanation, except to point out that although the priest makes the sign of the Cross over the water, it is really the right hand of God that blesses through his hand.

### **Chrism**

Next to the consecrated elements of the Holy Mass, the living body and blood of our Lord Jesus, perhaps the most sacred object in the life of the Church is Holy Chrism, also consecrated by the bishop on Holy Thursday: “that whatsoever persons or things shall be anointed therewith may receive the fullness of spiritual consecration.” The consecrated Chrism is the special vehicle of the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit that dwelt upon the mercy seat of the Ark in the Most Holy Place of the Temple and descended upon and into the Apostles at Pentecost dwells in and overshadows the Chrism.

The major use of Chrism is in the Sacrament of Confirmation, but it is used in Baptism at this point. The priest takes upon his thumb some of the sacred Chrism and, anointing the newly-baptized on the top of the head in the form of a cross, says:

**With Christ’s Holy Chrism do I ✠ anoint thee, that His strength may prevent [go before] thee in thy going out and thy coming in, and may guide thee into life everlasting.**

We really do need Bishop Leadbeater’s words on this.

“The chrism is that kind of sacred oil which contains incense, and therefore it is used always for purificatory purposes. Incense is made in various ways, as we have said; but it almost always contains benzoin, and benzoin is a powerful purifying agent. Therefore it is the chrism with which the cross is made on the top of the child’s head—in order, as an old ritual said ‘to purify the gateway.’ Remember that man, when he ‘goes to sleep,’ as we call it, passes out of and away from his physical body through the force-center at the top of the head, and returns that way on awakening. Therefore this chrism is applied to the gateway through which he goes out and comes in, while the Priest utters the word given above.

“The effect of this anointing is great, even upon those who are but little evolved. It makes the force-center into a kind of sieve, which rejects the coarser feelings, influences, or particles; it has been likened to a doorscraper, to remove pollution from the man, or to an acid which dissolves certain constituents in the finer vehicles, while leaving others untouched. If during the day the man has yielded to lower passion of any kind, whether it be anger or lust, this magnetized force-center seizes upon the excited astral particles as they sweep out and will not let them pass until their vibrations are to a certain extent deadened. In the same way if undesirable emotions have been aroused in the man while away from his physical body, the sieve comes into operation in the opposite direction, and slows the vibrations as he passes through it on his way back to waking life.”

### **Closing the chakras**

The expanded chakras having been cleansed, energized, aligned and oriented to higher consciousness by the preceding steps of Baptism, the priest says:

**Be thou closed....**

as he makes the sign of the Cross over the brow, the throat, the heart and the navel of the neophyte. ("Neophyte" is a word coined in the mystery religions of ancient Greece meaning "newly enlightened.")

### **Reception**

As I have said, the Church of Christ is a purely spiritual entity, and this is indicated by the priest, his thumb still moist with Chrism, making the sign of the Cross on the neophyte's forehead as he says:

**I receive thee into the fellowship of Christ's holy Church and do ✠ sign thee with the sign of the Cross in token that hereafter thou shalt not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ our Lord, to acknowledge him when he shall come, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin and selfishness, and that thou shall continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant throughout the ages of ages. Amen.**

The complete entry into Christ's Church is a spiritual one and is effected by the anointing with Chrism—by the action of the Holy Spirit and not by any lesser agent.

The "coming" of Christ mentioned in the baptismal prayer has two meanings: 1) When Christ "comes" to us by inspiration or spiritual insight into what should or should not be believed or done, and we need courage to confess our faith by acting on that. 2) When he who was born as Jesus Christ two thousand years ago at the onset of the Piscean Age will sometime be born at the beginning of the Aquarian Age which began in the year 2000. It is a tradition of esoteric Judaism that the Messiah would be born twice: first as son of Joseph and be rejected, and then as son of David and be accepted. So this prayer is offered that if he should be living at the revelation of the Second Advent the newly-baptized will be a dedicated disciple of Jesus, recognizing and following him as in his day-to-day following right now.

That is why on every Seventeenth Sunday After Trinity we pray: "Almighty God and loving Father, of Whose only gift it cometh that Thy faithful people do unto Thee true and laudable service; grant, we pray Thee, that we may so loyally serve Thee in this life that we may be numbered among Thy leal and trusty soldiers in all lives to come, through Christ our Lord. Amen." ("Leal" is an archaic word meaning faithful, true, loyal, honest and genuine.)

### **The white vesture**

Quite early in the history of Christianity it became the practice to clothe the newly-baptized in a white garment to symbolize his birth into the Christ Light and to remind him that he should ever abide therein. So strong was this tradition among the Saint Thomas Christians of South India that until after the middle of the twentieth century they only wore white clothing when they entered a church.

Therefore some type of "white vesture" is brought, and the priest, having blessed it with the sign of the Cross, places it upon the neophyte, saying:

**Receive from holy Church this white vesture as a pattern of the spotless**



**purity and brightness of Him whose service thou hast entered today, and for a token of thy fellowship with Christ and his holy angels, that thy life may be filled with His peace.**

### **The candle**

Handing a candle that was lighted from the sanctuary lamp to the neophyte, the priest says:

**Take this burning light, enkindled from the fire of God's holy altar, for a sign of the ever-burning light of thy spirit. God grant that hereafter His love shall so shine through thy heart that thou mayest continually enlighten the lives of thy fellow-men.**

Here we are reminded that our spirit is an "ever-burning light," being part of the Light that is God. Baptism is intended to empower us for reclaiming our lost awareness of that reality. Therefore our prayer should ever be: "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

The second part of the prayer reminds us of our obligation to follow the second greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 22:39).

### **The dismissal**

Finally the priest places his hand on the neophyte's head, saying:

**N., go in peace and may the Lord be with thee. Amen.**

In this simple, even humble, way the awesome rite of New Birth is ended, perhaps to indicate to the neophyte that it is never really closed but should be continued by his daily living until he himself hears the words: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased...enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mark 1:11; Matthew 25:21).

# Chapter Three: Confirmation

## **Twofold restoration**

The Sacrament of Confirmation, or Chrismation, follows Baptism as its completion. Thus the spiritual birth of the Christian initiate is in two stages, for as Jesus told Nicodemus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:5, 6). The great Origen used to refer to those who had not been reborn through the Sacraments as “bodies,” meaning that they functioned only as instinctual animals, dormant in their higher minds and spirits.

When Adam and Eve transgressed in Paradise, they “died” in their higher levels of being and had to be clothed again in physical bodies (“skins”) and returned to the earth from which they had come (Genesis 3:21, 23. See *Robe of Light*). Before their fall, they had lived in the spirit and had literally been clothed with the Light of the Holy Spirit, but after they fell in their consciousness, that spiritual clothing was withdrawn “and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked” (Genesis 3:7). The purpose of Jesus’ advent in this world was to restore man to the condition he possessed in Paradise so he could continue his upward evolution. That is why he told the wise thief: “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43). Baptism and Confirmation effect this return to the state of original humanity, again clothing us “with light as with a garment” like him in whose image we have been made (Psalms 104:2; Genesis 1:27).

## **Jesus, our example**

As our example, Jesus was himself baptized by the holy prophet and forerunner John. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:16, 17). He intended the same for us, and instituted the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The two are so inextricably bound up that they are really only two halves of a single thing: the New Birth of the spirit.

## **Pentecost**

The first reception of the Holy Spirit by those who believed in Jesus as the Messiah was on the day of Pentecost, which was also the birth day of the Church. At the time of his ascension Jesus told the apostles to remain in Jerusalem, “for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:5). Accordingly, they returned to Jerusalem and assembled in a room in the house of John Mark, the future Evangelist, and waited for the promised descent of the Holy Spirit. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:1-3). From that time onward the Holy Spirit was imparted by the laying on of hands of a bishop and anointing with Chrism, which is why Saint Paul wrote to the Christians at Ephesus: “After that ye believed, ye were sealed with that

holy Spirit of promise” (Ephesians 1:13). After some time, in the Eastern Church priests anointed the newly-baptized with Holy Chrism (blessed by a bishop) for the reception of the Holy Spirit, and Confirmation began to be known as Chrismation.

### **Confirmation**

The purpose of Baptism is purification, correction, and awakening. The purpose of Confirmation is the imparting of the Life of Christ through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, “the Spirit of Christ” (Romans 8:9; I Peter 1:11). When the Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary in Nazareth he told her: “The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). It is intended to be the same for every initiate of Christ: the Holy Spirit working within to enable us to conceive and bring forth Christ, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:26, 27). Every disciple of the Master Jesus is intended to one day truthfully say: “For to me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). “Not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Galatians 2:20). How different is this holy ideal from the usual idea that Christians are to be no more than well-stabled, well-behaved animals, obedient to church authorities, believing all they are told by those authorities, and eventually rewarded with everlasting embodiment in a heaven that is little more than the present earth without its defects.

To be baptized “with the Holy Ghost, and with fire” (Matthew 7:11) is the final step in the New Birth into the Christ Life which is to culminate in our attaining Christhood.

### **The Spirit of Truth**

Part of that attainment is the unfolding of “the mind of Christ” (I Corinthians 2:16) within us, which is both illumined intelligence and spiritual intuition—in other words: Gnosis (Jnana). Jesus told the disciples that the Holy Spirit “shall teach you all things” (John 14:26), that the Holy Spirit, “the Spirit of Truth...will guide you into all truth... and will shew you things to come” (John 16:13).

It is simply impossible to describe all that the Holy Spirit will do in the life, mind and heart of the disciple: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (I Corinthians 2:9-13).

## **Yogic Confirmation**

In the Western Christian tradition, although a priest may baptize, only a bishop may confer the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### **Invocation and blessing**

As with all Sacraments, Confirmation begins with the invocation of the Trinity:

**In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Immediately the bishop blesses those to be confirmed, saying:

**May the ✠ blessing of the Holy Spirit come down upon *thee*, and may the power of the Most High preserve *thee* in all *thy* ways. Amen.**

It is this effect of spiritual preservation (perseverance) that gives the Sacrament its name, Confirmation.

### **Veni Creator**

In the ninth century Blessed Rabanus Maurus, an abbot and the archbishop of Mainz, Germany, authored the renowned hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* that is sung on Pentecost and at all ordinations of deacons, priests, and bishops in the Western Christian tradition. Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater preferred the following translation which is then sung:

**Come, Thou Creator Spirit blest  
And in our souls take up Thy rest;  
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid,  
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.**

**Great Paraclete, to Thee we cry,  
O highest gift of God most high;  
O living fount, O fire, O love  
And sweet anointing from above.**

**Thou in Thy sevenfold gift art known;  
Thee, finger of God's hand, we own,  
The promise of the Father, Thou  
Who dost the tongue with power endow.**

**Kindle our senses from above  
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;  
With patience firm and virtue high  
The weakness of our flesh supply.**

**Far let us drive our tempting foe  
And thine abiding peace bestow;  
So shall we not, with Thee for guide,  
Turn from the path of life aside.**

**O may Thy grace on us bestow  
The Father and the Son to know  
And Thee, through endless times confessed,  
Of Both eternal Spirit blest.**

**All glory while the ages run  
Be to the Father and the Son,  
Who gave us life; the same to Thee,**

## **O Holy Spirit eternally. Amen.**

Bishop Leadbeater wrote this regarding the hymn and its use: "It has become the accepted form for the appeal to God the Holy Ghost on all occasions when we ask for a special outpouring of His mighty power, and its effect is very remarkable. As it is being sung, the whole church is gradually filled with a wonderful red glow, a kind of luminous fiery mist.... This celestial fire grows stronger and stronger as the hymn proceeds, and eventually a mighty vortex of it forms itself above the head of the Bishop, and pours itself down through him shortly afterwards at the critical moment of the imposition of his hand. As soon as the hymn is finished, the Bishop immediately proceeds with the actual Confirmation."

### **The Confirmation**

The bishop is seated. Each person to be confirmed comes and kneels before the bishop, placing his hands together palm-to-palm. The purpose of this is to put the person to be confirmed "in circuit." By the joining of his hands, a person gathers in any scattered auric energy and seals his aura.

The bishop holds the candidate's hands with his left hand, takes some Chrism upon his right thumb and, placing his right hand upon the head of the candidate, says:

### **Receive the Holy Spirit for the sweet savor of a godly life.**

"Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you" (I Corinthians 3:16). In this exact moment the Holy Spirit pours into the crown chakra (brahmarandhra) of the person and fills his entire being on all levels. "God is in you of a truth" (I Corinthians 14:25).

Just as Baptism leaves an indelible effect or mark on the person, so does Confirmation. From this moment on he will be a living temple of the Holy Spirit—at least potentially, for everything depends ultimately on the will of the individual person. Even God does not trespass on the territory of human free will, although a host of ignorant and evil humans and discarnate intelligences are eager to do so. Yet they cannot utterly wrest the will power from anyone, and once a negatively-turned will is turned back to positive, no evil force has any lasting power over him.

As said at the beginning of this chapter, Genesis tells us that Adam and Eve had no clothing, but did not know it because they were surrounded by an aura of light and did not even see their bodies, though they were aware of them. This garment of light was the distinctive characteristic of embodiment in the astral world (just above this material world) known as Paradise. When Adam and Eve broke faith with God by disobedience, they underwent a spiritual death and the Paradise body of light fell away from them and they saw their astral bodies that were in the form of the last physical bodies they had inhabited. Though those bodies were of the highest evolved form on the earth plane, they were animal bodies and the sight of them made the two transgressors ashamed. Having died to Paradise, they sank back into material existence and the creator-mothers, the Elohim, specially created bodies for them that were halfway between earth and Paradise: the human form we all now inhabit. (Again: see *Robe of Light*.)

What is relevant to us here is the fact that those who are confirmed are given a light body to which they can ascend to Paradise for further evolution at the time of earthly death. Thus through Baptism and Confirmation they are restored to normal humanity, to the condition of Paradise. From this moment onward they live on earth as strangers

and pilgrims (Hebrews 11:13; I Peter 2:11), no longer just destined for higher life, but empowered to lay hold on it even while on the earth.

### **Sign of the Cross**

Next the bishop makes the sign of the Cross with the Chrism on the forehead of the person—just as was done by the priest when receiving him into the fellowship of the Church in Baptism—as he says:

**Whereunto I do ✠ sign thee with the sign of the Cross, and I confirm thee with the Chrism of salvation.**

Then he makes the sign of the cross three times over the head of the newly-confirmed, saying:

**In the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. Amen.**

These crosses greatly affect the entire sahasrara chakra (thousand-petalled lotus) of the person and prepare the way for its development through meditation and participation in the Mass and other Sacraments.

Once more the bishop lays his hand upon the head of the newly-confirmed and says:

**Therefore go thou forth, my *brother*, in the Name of the Lord, for in His strength thou canst do all things.**

Now is fulfilled the statement of Jesus in Revelation: “Behold, I have set before thee an open door” (Revelation 3:8). For what has just been done to each confirmand has opened the door in heaven through which Saint John the Apostle ascended into the world of his visions (Revelation 4:1). And in that world the initiate of Christ can indeed do all things.

### **Peace**

The conferring of Baptism and Confirmation are easily done, but to attain their purpose is not a breeze-through. It can entail very real struggle, but the bishop has assured them they can do it all. It is common to speak of the blows of life, so in conclusion the bishop touches the person lightly on the left cheek saying:

**Peace be with thee.**

in the hope that his light touch may be the hardest blow they will have to meet. It is both a blessing and an encouragement.

### **Exhortation**

When all have been confirmed, the bishop says to them:

**My *brothers*, now have you received the gift of the Holy Spirit; see to it that your bodies are ever pure and clean, as befits the temple of the most high God and the channel of so great a power; and understand that as you keep that channel open by a useful life spent in the service of others, so will His life**

**that is with you shine forth with ever greater and greater glory.**

This exhortation outlines three great truths: 1) Purity is an indispensable factor of authentic spiritual life. 2) In this world where selfishness is considered by many a virtue, we need to be continually reminded of that second greatest commandment involving us with our fellowmen. 3) The Life of God is our life, intended to “shine forth with ever greater and greater glory.”

### **Thanksgiving and blessing**

The bishop rises and faces towards the altar and intones alternately with those present:

**B: ✠ Our help is in the Name of the Lord.**

**R: Who hath made heaven and earth.**

**B: Blessed are the pure in heart.**

**R: For they shall see God.**

**B: Trust ye in the Lord for ever.**

**R: For He is our Rock of Ages.**

**B: The Lord be with you.**

**R: And with thy spirit.**

**B: Let us pray.**

He turns and extends his hands toward the newly-confirmed, and prays:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, Who didst give the Holy Spirit to Thine apostles, and didst ordain that by them and their successors She should be given to the rest of the faithful, we render Thee hearty thanks for this Thine inestimable benefit now bestowed upon us.**

**We offer unto Thee the *life* which Thou today hast blessed, that *he* may so bear *himself*, true and faithful in Thy service, that *he* may be found worthy hereafter to stand before Thee in the ranks of the Church triumphant, O Thou great King of Glory, to whom be praise and adoration from men and from the Angel host. Amen.**

The he blesses them, saying:

**God the ✠ Father, God the ✠ Son, God the Holy ✠ Spirit, bless, preserve and sanctify you; the Lord in His lovingkindness look down upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up the light of His Countenance upon you and give you His peace, now and for evermore. Amen.**

The initiation into discipleship of the Master Jesus, and through him discipleship of Christ-God, is thus complete. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” (I John 3:2).

# Chapter Four:

## Mass and Communion

“And Jesus knew their thoughts; he said to them, Why murmur you, and reason thus among yourselves? The Christ is everlasting life; he came from heaven; he has the keys of heaven, and no man enters into heaven except he fills himself with Christ. I came in flesh to do the will of God, and, lo, this flesh and blood are filled with Christ; and so I am the living bread that comes from heaven; and when you eat this flesh and drink this blood you will have everlasting life; and if you will, you may become the bread of life” (Aquarian Gospel 125:19-22).

Regarding the eternal status of our Lord Jesus Christ, Saint Paul wrote: “This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him,...an high priest...made higher than the heavens,...who is consecrated for evermore. We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Hebrews 7:24-26, 28; 8:1, 2). Our Lord Jesus is the minister, the priest, directly involved in all the Sacraments, for the Holy Spirit, who effects them, does so at his direction according to his infinite knowledge. However, the holy Mass is unique among the Sacraments because he is not only present as an invisible Divine Presence, he becomes physically, materially present and is communicated to each one who receives Holy Communion. This is the fulfillment of his promise: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20).

### **The Bread of Heaven**

After feeding the multitude by miraculously multiplying the food, Jesus went with his disciples to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, but the people sought him out even there. To them he spoke of this great mystery:

“I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

“The Judeans therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

“Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

“Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we



believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” (John 6:48-58, 60, 66-69).

### **The first Mass**

On the day we call Maundy Thursday, the Lord brought into literal manifestation that which before he had only spoken about. Saint Paul described it to the Corinthians in this way: “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me” (I Corinthians 11:23-25; see Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19, 20).

The Mass is a ritual whose purpose is to effect very real changes in the consciousness and subtle environment of those present. Ideally, through Mass and Communion we are enabled to say with Saint Paul: “We all, with open face reflecting as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18).

From the beginning Christians held that the living, historical body and blood of Jesus Christ of Nazareth become present during each celebration of the Mass, and are received by the communicants under the superficial appearance of bread and wine. Such an assertion is amazing if not overwhelming, but if we look into the mystical teachings of the Gospels, we will find illumination.

Jesus prepared us for the mystery of the Mass by two miracles: the changing of water into wine and the multiplication of food to feed many thousands.

### **Water into wine**

“And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him” (John 2:1-3, 6-11).

Everything that exists in the relative universe is energy moving to specific patterns that cause the energy to be formed into the various substances and elements. All material objects consist of molecules formed of atoms which are formed of atomic particles—electrons, protons, and neutrons—which are basically three modes of energy behavior. The only difference between a wooden table leg and a piece of gold is the pattern of basic energies. And those energies, if reduced to their final constituent, are found to be *consciousness*, which is spirit. It is, then, no exaggeration, but rather the simple truth, to say that matter is manifested consciousness or spirit.

When we realize this, we can understand to a degree how Jesus turned water into wine: he simply altered the energy pattern of the water. By being one with the Infinite

Consciousness, Whose thoughts are manifesting as creation, he needed only to “see” or “think” of the water as wine—and it was so! In the realm of God, thought is act, as is shown in Genesis: “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light” (Genesis 1:3). With God, the willing is the doing.

The wine at Cana was the water that was there originally—it had simply been reshaped to a new configuration of energy. If we take our hypothetical wooden table leg, rearrange its atomic and molecular structure until we have gold instead of wood, melt it down and cast it into a vase, we can still point to the golden vase and say: “This is my old table leg,” for the essence, the energy that had been the wood, will have simply been altered.

Material forms being the manifestation of states of consciousness, it is not amiss to say that the body of Christ is also the *Consciousness*, the essential being, of Christ. If that Consciousness is implanted in us by our receiving his body and blood—or, more correctly, the Consciousness-Energy that was his body and blood now recast into the mold of bread and wine—that Consciousness will begin to pervade our bodies and our blood, awakening our own consciousness and transmuting us into Christ—which is exactly what being a Christian is all about.

Understanding this, we realize that Christ did not resurrect his body for dramatic effect nor only as a demonstration of immortality. Rather, he retained his perfectly deified body so it could be made the seed of immortality in those who were united to him through Communion. Saint Paul tells us that the Lord Jesus “is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Hebrews 8:1). Obviously his body is not material flesh and blood as upon earth, but as Saint Paul also says, “a spiritual body” (I Corinthians 15:44) made of the Light that is God (“God is light” I John 1:5.) And since that Light has become all things, it can take on the form of bread and wine in an instant in the Mass.

### **Multiplication of food**

All matter is potentially infinite since it is a manifestation of the infinite God. The body and blood of Christ are extended infinitely. In this way millions of Christians could receive the body and blood of Christ at the Mass throughout the ages. This was foreshadowed by the multiplication of food by Jesus.

“And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children” (Matthew 14:15-21).

Another time:

“Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way. And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude? And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground. And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them,

and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full. And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children” (Matthew 15:32-38).

Since matter is energy, and energy is consciousness—ultimately Divine Consciousness—it only follows that all matter is potentially infinite, that its limitations are a matter of energy behavior only, not of actual nature. Being one with the Infinite Consciousness, Jesus simply “saw” or “thought” of the food as it was in its essential nature: limitless consciousness. And his thinking made it so. From a small amount, meager even for one person, he fed tens of thousands—and had basketfuls left over.

### **In the Mass**

This being so, what actually happens in the Mass? As it was with the earthly food, so it is with the Consciousness that manifested as Christ’s body and blood. Bread and wine are prepared and placed on the altar before the beginning of Mass. In the first part of the ritual they are offered with prayers and blessing. Then in the central part of the Mass, the Canon, there is a recalling of the salvific acts of Christ on the night in which he was betrayed. Taking bread and wine, he changed them, making them extensions of his body and blood which were manifestations of his divinized Consciousness, and gave them to the apostles with the explicit declaration: “This is my body....This is my blood” (Matthew 26:26, 28).

Jesus told the Apostles—and through them, us—to continue doing this (Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:26). And so we do. At the very words of Jesus uttered by the priest as his representative, the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus the Christ. That is, the substantial energies of the bread and wine are exchanged for the energy-consciousness that constitutes the body and blood of the living Christ while (usually) retaining the forms of the offered bread and wine.

If scientifically analyzed, the two substances will be found to be “nothing more” than earthly bread and wine, but their essences are the very energies of the body and blood of Jesus, vehicles of his perfect Consciousness. Therefore, in Holy Communion we receive Christ himself, body and blood, under the appearance (behavior) of bread and wine.

The Mass is thus the supreme spiritual act. Through it we are united in every part of our existence with Jesus Christ, and through him with Christ-God. He imparts to us the fulness of his own Life. His body and blood enter into our body and blood, his life energies enter into our life energies, his mind enters into our mind, his intellect enters into our intellect, and his will enters into our will as seeds of divinity. Just as yeast pervades and changes dough into living bread, the Consciousness of Jesus Christ through his body and blood begins to pervade and change us, enabling us to “pass from glory to glory” until we, ourselves, become The Glory. This is the divine alchemy of the Mass.

### **History of the Mass rite**

Every viable religion has some form of ceremonial offering, which usually concludes with the assembled worshippers partaking of that which was offered. This was the norm at the time of Jesus, who added another dimension which resulted in the awesome mystery that is the Holy Mass. Taking bread and wine he blessed them, as was the custom of the Hebrew religion into which he had been born, but in the giving of them to his disciples he stated that they were not just bread and wine: they were his body and his blood. Further, he enjoined them to continue this ceremonial offering and

partaking. He did this on the Passover, for as that ancient rite commemorated the passing-over of the Hebrews from bondage into freedom, passing through the Red Sea unharmed and dry-shod, this new Passover would effect the passing of the participants into a dimension of life hitherto unknown and inaccessible. Continual participation in it would not only maintain that new spiritual status, it would continually increase it, bestowing on the communicants that abundant life which was the very purpose of Jesus' incarnation.

There seems to have been no standard order for this sacred rite which was called *Quarbana* (Aramaic for Offering), Eucharist (Thanksgiving), Liturgy (Daily Work), and *Missa* (Mass). This latter title became the usual term in the West, and was first used by the Jewish Christians of Milan. *Missah* is a Hebrew word meaning "the just/right thing," and referred to an ancient form of religious taxation. So the Mass is a form of tribute that is right to give. It can be no accident that the heart of the ritual begins with a dialogue between priest and participants that concludes with the priest calling out: "Let us give thanks unto our Lord God," to which those present respond: "It is meet and right so to do." The priest then prays a prayer whose opening words are: "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty...." In other words, it is our *missah*—that which it is right for us to offer (*quarban*). Therefore in time it was simply known as the *Missa* in Latin, and anglicized into the word "Mass."

### **The Latin Mass**

We have Latin texts of the Mass that are a millennium and a half years old. The exact origin of the Western Mass is unknown. We do know that it came from northern Africa and was always in the Latin language, although up till that time all Christian worship in Italy was in Greek, though Latin was the common language. How it was that suddenly the Latin Mass became the norm in Rome and throughout all Europe is unknown. Even Saint Cyril (of Saints Cyril and Methodius), evangelizer of the Slavs and creator of the Cyrillic Alphabet, celebrated that Mass, for in his own handwriting we have his manuscript translation of the Latin Mass into ancient Slavonic which became the basis of what is known as the Glagolitic Rite.

Naturally some variations of the Latin Mass developed, but all were very much the same even though titled according to their place of celebration. During the Counter-Reformation in the mid-sixteenth century Pope Pius V directed that, with a few exceptions, the entire Western Church should adopt the Roman Mass form. Eventually it began to be called "the Tridentine Mass" because it was authorized by the Council of Trent. As could be expected, through the centuries the Roman Church made some differences in the rite, but mostly of a ceremonial rather than a textual nature. Finally, in 1968, by the promulgation of the *Novus Ordo Missarum* (New Order of Mass) Pope Paul VI ended the celebration of the ancient Mass and substituted another form that, though based on the "old" Mass, was something very different. And there our interest in the Roman Rite ends, for we are going to be looking into another Mass form altogether: "The Liturgy of the Holy Mass Prepared for the use of English-Speaking Congregations of Old Catholics."

### **The background**

Before we consider the ritual text itself, we must look at its background, for that is the major—though not the sole—determinant of its form and character.

England has always been a major force in Catholic worship. Letters are extant from ancient popes pleading for European bishops journeying into England to bring them vestments from that land, for the Saxons were considered the masters of vestment

design and manufacture. They were also admired for their production of sacred implements such as chalices, patens, gospel books, croziers, and reliquaries.

Saint Augustine of Canterbury introduced the Roman Mass into England, which from that time until the Protestant Reformation produced some of the foremost liturgists of the Western Church. Charlemagne, who was desirous of bringing about liturgical uniformity in the Holy Roman Empire, sent for Alcuin of York who wrote all the Mass propers for the Sundays after Pentecost and codified the rest of the Mass. Later, at the time of the Norman conquest, Saint Osmund of Salisbury produced a corrected and restored Mass form known as the Sarum Rite. From that time forth the Sarum Missal became the norm for all of Europe with few exceptions until Pius V issued his missal.

Considering this remarkable past, we need not be surprised that the Mass rite we will be looking into was the work of two Englishmen of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Charles W. Leadbeater and James Ingall Wedgwood, both members of the Theosophical Society in Great Britain.

### **A “new” Mass**

In this study I will be commenting on the original Mass form introduced in 1917. This was based closely on the order of the traditional Roman Mass, but differed considerably in that more exact and esoteric prayers and terms were substituted for the Roman Catholic originals. My exposition is really meant to be a supplement to Bishop Leadbeater’s *The Science of the Sacraments*, which is essential reading for those who want to understand the inner life that is the Mass.

Perhaps the newest feature of the new Mass was the active and effective participation of those present. Saint Peter had long ago written: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. ...ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:5, 9). A great deal of empty talk had gone on, especially since the Protestant Deformation, about “the priesthood of all believers,” but only the Wedgwood-Leadbeater Mass form made it real.

Although the celebrant has a unique function in the Mass through the special empowerment and intercessory covenant bestowed by his ordination to the priesthood, all the baptized and confirmed disciples of Jesus are empowered for a very real and perceptible function as co-celebrants with the priest. This is evident throughout the entire rite. It is not only a matter of making responses or singing hymns, though that has an esoteric, spiritual effect, but the disciples exercise a definite priestly function, making the Mass much more than it would be without them. God, Jesus, saints, angels and human beings work together in the Mass.

### **To serve and worship Him**

As active participants in the Mass, we do two major things: serve and worship. Every person who believes in God understands the value of worshipping Him, but the view of Mass as a literal form of service to God is unique to this Mass, even though it is common for Protestants to speak a church “service.”

Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater strongly emphasized the fact that the Mass is an invocation of great spiritual force which benefits and even transforms the world, and that the degree of its power is greatly determined by the awareness and intention of the people attending. By carefully attending to the ritual actions and participating in them with full understanding and exercise of will-intention, they bring down to the world inexpressible blessing, healing, and transformation. In this way they serve God

as surely as do the holy angels that have come for the same purpose. In the Mass we are truly earthly angels if our attunement and intention is right.

The Greek word translated “worship” in the New Testament is *proskuneo*, which means to approach, to draw near, as does the Sanskrit equivalent, *upasana*. One purpose of approaching God is to be bathed in the radiations of Divine Life so we will begin to vibrate in sympathy with It to such a degree that we can become united with It. The Mass is an instrument by which divine strength and blessing are conveyed to those present who can receive them. The divine benediction is also poured forth upon the surrounding area, sometimes for miles, and as already mentioned some of it flows to the entire world.

Those attending the Mass become living receptacles of the highest spiritual light-energies, living temples of the Most High. The strength and blessing is poured forth upon us, but we must be capable of receiving it. A bucket placed upside down in a waterfall will stay completely dry inside, but if it is turned upward, water will fill it. It is the same with us. Going to church means very little if we are deaf, mute, and blind in the spirit, waterproof to the Water of Life.

## The Yogic Mass

### Preparatory Purification and Prayer

Great purity and moral strength is needed to approach such an awesome Mystery as the Mass, so before the rite itself is begun there is a need for preparation and purification.

### Holy water

Even though the ultimate purpose of all authentic religion is the freeing of the individual from rebirth in the material plane, to facilitate that purpose all viable religions have and use the power to purify and elevate the vibrations of matter. True religion is capable of invoking high spiritual energies and merging them into matter so that it becomes an instrument of transformation and liberation. Every effective spiritual tradition has some form of holy water. The earliest liturgical texts of Christianity give forms of blessing water for use in church and the homes of the laity.

The use of holy water is one of the most beneficial elements of esoteric Christian practice, for it is virtually invincible in its might. Saint Teresa of Avila wrote at length on its superiority to words and gestures of power for the banishment of negativity. For this reason bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater used it—blessed by an additional prayer—in the rite of Baptism as a true washing of renewal and regeneration. (The holy/baptismal water ritual will be analyzed in a later chapter.)

The common Western form of blessing holy water is extremely old and was uniform throughout Europe. Bishop Wedgwood revised it to better reflect the esoteric understanding of its purpose and effect. Salt and water are blessed separately and then combined and blessed together. The prayers invoke the divine blessing for the purpose of healing, exorcism, empowerment, and sanctification. It is only reasonable, then, to use it in preparation for the celebration of the holy Mass. Therefore the priest sprinkles with holy water the altar, himself, and all present as they sing an antiphon, a paraphrase of Psalms 51:7:

**Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord, and I shall be clean: Thou**

**shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

Hyssop is a medicinal plant known in Hebrew as Ezov that is both aromatic and cleansing. In the Mosaic ritual it was used in sprinkling sacred water for purification and healing. The key idea is that the power of God is being invoked for our purification—not a self-purification but a divine purification.

Verses from the Psalms follow this opening which we need not consider one by one here. They all have the theme of divine assistance, which is certainly needed to worthily celebrate the holy Mass, and the protecting and preserving providence of God—also needed.

When the antiphon is concluded, the following exchange takes place between priest and people:

**Priest: O Lord, open Thou our lips:**

**People: And our mouth shall show forth Thy praise.**

**Priest: Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?**

**People: Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart.**

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

### **The meaning**

These are not just poetic and solemn words; they have a great lesson for us.

*O Lord, open Thou our lips: and our mouth shall show forth Thy praise* [Psalms 51:15]. “And that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8), wrote Saint Paul regarding faith. But it is true of much more, for “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17), according to Saint James. This is because God is the Self of our self, the source of our very existence. We all have what is known as “our higher self,” but God is our Highest Self. This is impossible to understand intellectually, but it can be directly realized through cultivation of a deep spiritual life. We, like Saint Paul, should eventually be able to say with full understanding: “For to me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21). Therefore we are acknowledging that true spiritual capacity comes from our Divine Self: God. And we are asking for the opening of consciousness that will result in our dedication to the praise of God.

*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart* [Psalms 24:3, 4]. It was the custom of the Hebrews to worship in elevated places—symbols of elevated consciousness. “The hill of the Lord” is the highest level of our spirit. But to ascend to that level and be “seated on the right hand of God” like Jesus, we must have two things: pure action (“hands”) and pure thought (“heart”). The sprinkling with holy water was external purification, but internal purity is required to be fit to ascend the mountain of the Lord like Moses and Elijah and give Him glory.

To be pure (*katharos*) means to have all impediments removed and to be clear at the very center of our being, our spirit. Pure persons have sensitive and malleable energies, including mental energies, that are polarized upward (positively). In that state it is possible for an individual to be profoundly affected by the Mass and to ascend in consciousness to heights not before possible. Such persons can really “worthily perform His service” by drawing near to the Divine.

Only the power of God can purify us, for the Power of God is the Consciousness of God which is at the core of our very being, which is our being. Only realization of our divine Self can bring about this purification. As in the Sistine Chapel fresco, the finger of God must touch the finger of man and form a divine circuit which transforms humanity into divinity.

*The Lord be with you. And with thy spirit.* The true “you” or “I” is the immortal spirit which is the essential being of each one of us. The Mass is not a kind of communal activity or social assembly: it is a gathering of spirits, of sons of God met together to commune with their Source. Such an activity will enable them to truly know both themselves and God.

This exchange expresses the will and desire that God should be a living Presence to all assembled there, that a living experience of the Infinite Spirit may come to all the finite spirits. This greatly strengthens the bond between the priest and all participants, and will be repeated throughout the rite at key points.

### **Angelic assistance**

Holding such an exalted intention in mind, the priest continues:

**Let us pray. Hear us, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God, and from Thy heavenly throne send down Thy holy angels to guard, cherish, protect, visit, and defend Thy servants who have met together in this Thy habitation. Through Christ our Lord. R: Amen.**

The Mass is an act of spiritual alchemy, and although both priest and congregation work together to effect it, they are given much help by the holy angels, as Bishop Leadbeater explains in detail in *The Science of the Sacraments*.

Angels are beings in the next stage of evolution beyond the human status. Having perfected themselves within the range of human potential, they are now growing and evolving as angels with the purpose of eventually passing into the archangelic levels and evolving even from there upward. (See *Robe of Light*.)

Angels, unlike us, are not bound by time or space. This means that they can be in many places at once, wherever they are needed. That is why saints who are approaching the angelic level of evolution, such as the Capuchin stigmatist Padre Pio, often have the same power. (Actually, saints are those who have ascended to the status of angels, but remain as intercessors for us that are still human.)

There are infinite gradations of angels, just as there are numberless types of human beings, but their common purpose is to love and serve God. All that they do is done within the framework of this supreme purpose. Their happiness is not in what they do, but in why they do it: the love of God....

They are truly flaming fires of divine love (Psalms 104:4). They are not little naked babies with wings growing out of their backs or little heads with wings under their chins, such as the Victorians depicted angels. Rather, they are flaming fires before the face of God, before His throne (Revelation 1:4).

One thing that marks them out from us is the positing of their consciousness. Even when we are in the presence of God, we have our minds crammed with the things of earth. But although the angels are in this world with us they are always seeing God. That is why the Lord Jesus said that the angels “always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 18:10). That is their normal state. They behold Him, however, only within the limited scope of their ability, and that is why they aspire to serve Him and go higher—so they may see Him better and may move deeper into His



life.

The holy angels should not be looked upon so shallowly and cheaply as people usually do, nor should they be ignored, for they are a part of our evolutionary life, an essential link with the worlds above us. Their thought is to serve God through assisting us. Nothing is too small for them, since they do it for love of God—and the distinction of large and small does not exist within the infinity of God.

Because they love God, they love us with the love of God. For this reason we dare to ask that they “guard, cherish, protect, visit, and defend” us “who have met together in this Thy habitation.” For God does indeed dwell on every sacramental altar.

### **The Spiritual Temple**

Clairvoyant sight reveals that when Mass is celebrated many angels come and work on the inner planes with the priest and congregation. It is seen that there is a special, directing angel who directs the other angels who have come with him to be his assistants. Bishop Leadbeater describes and explains the work of this angel. It was his observation that when the celebrant and people were aware of this angelic activity it became greatly enhanced and empowered, and there could be a very fruitful co-working of humans and angels.

Although we meet in a material place that has been purified and magnetized for the celebration of Mass, at each celebration a force field of subtle, astral and causal energies—a spiritual temple thought form—is created. One of the major tasks of the angels is the building of this thought form, a field of highly vibrating energies that not only influences those present, but becomes a kind of lightning rod that keeps drawing down more and higher spiritual influences for the benefit of the participants and the surrounding area—and to some extent, the whole world. Bishop Leadbeater describes and explains the work of these angels. It was his observation that when the celebrant and people were aware of this angelic activity it became greatly enhanced and empowered, and there could be a very fruitful co-working of humans and angels.

In *The Science of the Sacraments* you will find detailed drawings of the various stages of this building of the spiritual temple, as well as explanation of their effects. There is also a color picture of the completed thought form. It is not a material temple we need, but a structure of spiritual energies that will awaken and enliven those who are sensitive to them. It will be spiritual in substance and effect.

A friend of mine knew a former secretary of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Vienna. Shortly before the Second World War, a priest of the archdiocese sent the archbishop a collection of pages on which a clairvoyant parishioner had written a description of what he saw at the celebration of Mass, as well as color illustrations of his perceptions. The secretary escaped the Nazis and in America came across a copy of *The Science of the Sacraments* and was amazed to see how close Bishop Leadbeater’s description was to the document he had seen in Vienna.

The eucharistic thought form is an instrument by which divine strength and blessing are conveyed to those present and capable of receiving them. The divine benediction is also poured forth upon the surrounding area, sometimes for miles, and as already mentioned, some of it flows to the entire world.

### **The Christing of the Mass**

Throughout the Mass we encounter the words: “Through Christ our Lord.” *Christos*, the anointed one, is the Greek translation of “Messiah.” It refers to the “oil” of divine blessing and the radiance of one whose countenance has been so anointed. In Jewish mysticism, Messiah is the title of the highest level of consciousness. Anyone

who has gone to that level and returned to the world is “Messiah.” So Christ has a twofold meaning: the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the personal, creator (Ishwara) aspect of God, and one whose consciousness has been united to that Infinite Christ and become “a” Christ. This is very important, but just as there are many Buddhas there are many Christs. Within esoteric Christianity we mean either God or Jesus of Nazareth who is totally one with God (Christ), and therefore himself a God, a Christ. But we also mean ourselves: we are all potential Christs, and the Sacraments of Christ—which include the Mass—impart the necessary elements for our Christing. “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:12).

### **More about “Christ”**

Because the books of the New Testament have been in use for two thousand years, often by great saints, they have a very real spiritual power. For that reason we use them in the first part of the Mass. But *The Aquarian Gospel of Jesus the Christ* by Levi Dowling presents a clear and exact picture of Jesus’ spiritual nature as an individual Christ within the Infinite Christ. There the important distinction between *the* Christ and *a* Christ is clearly set forth.

When Jesus was taken into Egypt to escape Herod, so was Saint John the Baptist. They lived in a settlement of the Essenes where Mary and Elizabeth were instructed in the teachings they were to give their sons later on when they would be old enough to comprehend them. They were told: “Your sons are set apart to lead men up to righteous thoughts, and words, and deeds; to make men know the sinfulness of sin; to lead them from the adoration of the lower self, and all illusive things, and make them conscious of the self that lives with Christ in God” (Aquarian Gospel 12:15, 16). Every one of us is a spark of divine light in the Ocean of Light that is Ishwara, the Lord, the Christ of God the Absolute, known in India as Brahman. Those who perfectly reflect the being and consciousness of Ishwara, the “Son of God,” are themselves Christs and sons of God.

Christ is said to be love for a very practical reason. The emotion we human beings call love is only a glimmer of that great force that is Universal Love: God. In *The Holy Science*, Swami Sri Yukteswar Giri says that love is really the positive cosmic force or magnetic pull that draws all sentient beings upward on the evolutionary path to union with God. “The universal Love of which the sages speak is Christ. The greatest mystery of all times lies in the way that Christ lives in the heart. Christ cannot live in clammy dens of carnal things. The seven battles must be fought, the seven victories won before the carnal things, like fear, and self, emotions and desire, are put away. When this is done the Christ will take possession of the soul; the work is done, and man and God are one” (Aquarian Gospel 59:9-12). That is how Christ is the mediator, the reconciler, between God and humanity. Jesus, being a Christ, fills the same office, but we must not confuse the two. It does not honor Jesus to claim he is something he is not and to deny that he is what he is. In the Mass we must be aware which Christ is being spoken of in the prayers—and sometimes it is both together in spiritual union.

Regarding himself, Jesus said to Saint John the Baptist: “The multitudes are ready for the words of life, and I come to be made known by you to all the world, as prophet of the Triune God, and as the chosen one to manifest the Christ to men” (Aquarian Gospel 64:10). And later to a large group of people: “Men call me Christ, and God has recognized the name; but Christ is not a man. The Christ is universal love, and Love is king. This Jesus is but man who has been fitted by temptations overcome, by trials multiform, to be the temple through which Christ can manifest to men. Then hear, you

men of Israel, hear! Look not upon the flesh; it is not king. Look to the Christ within, who shall be formed in every one of you, as he is formed in me” (Aquarian Gospel 68:11-13). “God has christed me to manifest eternal love” (Aquarian Gospel 69:13). “Every one may have this Christ dwell in his soul, as Christ dwells in my soul....The man of God is pure in heart; he sees the king; he sees with eyes of soul: and when he rises to the plane of Christine consciousness, he knows that he himself is king, is love, is Christ, and so is son of God” (Aquarian Gospel 71:7, 15, 16). We are Christians for this very purpose: to become Christs exactly as did Jesus.

Saint John the Baptist said this about Christ and Jesus: “Christ is the king of righteousness; Christ is the love of God; yea, he is God; one of the holy persons of the Triune God. Christ lives in every heart of purity. Now, Jesus who is preaching at the Jordan ford, has been subjected to the hardest tests of human life, and he has conquered all the appetites and passions of the carnal man, and by the highest court of heaven, has been declared a man of such superior purity and holiness that he can demonstrate the presence of the Christ on earth. Lo, love divine, which is the Christ, abides in him, and he is pattern for the race. And every man can see in him what every man will be when he has conquered all the passions of the selfish self. In water I have washed the bodies of the people who have turned from sin, symbolic of the cleansing of the soul; but Jesus bathes for ever in the living waters of the Holy Breath [Holy Spirit]. And Jesus comes to bring the savior of the world to men; Love is the savior of the world. And all who put their trust in Christ, and follow Jesus as a pattern and a guide, have everlasting life. But they who do not trust the Christ, and will not purify their hearts so that the Christ can dwell within, can never enter life” (Aquarian Gospel 79:8-18).

Christ leads us to Jesus and Jesus leads us to Christ. So when we pray: “Through Christ our Lord,” we mean both the eternal Christ and Jesus the Christ. For they cannot be separated, just as we and God are one, though there is a distinction between us.

### **Amen**

Amen means both “so be it” and “this is so.” It is actually a major word of power. When we end a prayer with Amen, we throw our whole spiritual force into its fulfillment. Throughout the Mass we must carefully listen to the words of the priest, for they form within a part of our mind a force field of the power necessary to bring about whatever the priest is saying. This energy forms in our aura, growing with each word said by the priest as well as by the degree of our attentiveness to what he is saying. When he ends the prayer or declaration and we intone “Amen,” the prayer-force of everyone present is released from our auras and stream to the altar. There they are joined into one force-entity with that of the priest and rise upward. In return an equal force comes down “from above, from the Father of Lights” (James 1:17) and affects each one present, furthering the purpose of the Mass within us and within our lives.

### **The Sign of the Cross**

To begin the Holy Mass itself, the priest comes before the altar and makes the Sign of the Cross, invoking the deifying power which Jesus brought to earth and perpetuates through the Sacraments.

Although there are few points in the Mass where making the Sign of the Cross by the people is indicated in the text, those present should feel free to make it much more often, as is the custom among the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Christians. For it both invokes and rouses up from deep within us the divine, spiritual energies,

especially that of the intelligent, spiritual will. Making it at significant points in the Mass can help to lock in or impress the effects of those moments.

### **The Name...**

As the priest makes the Sign of the Cross he intones:

**In the Name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. R: Amen.**

The Sign of the Cross begins with the words “In the Name,” and concludes with “Amen.” This is generally considered to be a kind of conclusion to the invocation, but in reality it means that Amen is the Name of the Trinity. Actually, Amen is a Western form of Aom, the most sacred syllable-mantra known in India, that according to the upanishads is declared to be an invocation of the Trinity within and without (more of this when we consider the Creed). (See *The Word That Is God* and *Aom Yoga*.) Since the Hebrew form means “Let/May it be so,” it was adopted long before Jesus. Yogananda declared that Amen had the same basic vibration as Aom. So we retain it, but we know that we are really invoking God by His True Name: Aom. In this way the Mass is begun by invoking the Godhead Itself. And we affirm that invocation by responding: Amen.

### **Purpose and intention**

In Indian ritual, it is usual to make at the beginning what is called a sankalpa. A sankalpa is defined in *A Brief Sanskrit Glossary* as: “A life-changing wish, desire, volition, resolution, will, determination, or intention—not a mere momentary aspiration, but an empowering act of will that persists until the intention is fully realized. It is an act of spiritual, divine creative will inherent in each person as a power of the Atma.”

In the same way, right at the beginning of the Mass both the priest and the people make a powerful sankalpa, stating their ultimate intention.

**Priest: I will go unto the altar of God.**

**People: Even unto the God of my joy and gladness.**

This has two meanings, one external and one internal. The external intention is to approach the literal earthly altar upon which the holy Mass is to be celebrated in order to eventually partake of the offered Sacrifice and enter into communion with Christ-God through communion with Christ Jesus, who will once more become incarnate through the Holy Spirit in the form of bread and the pure juice of the grape (not the fermented and corrupted liquid, “wine”). The internal purpose is to ascend in consciousness to that high spiritual realm which is rightly called the altar of God because there God and man can meet face-to-face.

We wish to do so because God, and God alone, is the source of our joy and gladness.

### **The Canticle**

To further set this purpose in mind and to orient our minds toward those rarefied spiritual heights, priest and people sing alternately a series of Psalm verses, compositions of Jesus in his prior incarnation as David:

**Priest: I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the**

**Lord.**

**People: I will be glad and rejoice in Thee: yea, my songs will I make of Thy Name, O Thou most Highest.**

**Priest: O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me to Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling.**

**People: And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God my God.**

**Priest: The Lord is in His holy temple: the Lord's seat is in heaven.**

**People: The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth His handiwork.**

**Priest: O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy.**

**People: The Lord shall give strength unto His people: the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.**

**Priest: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit.**

**People: As it was in the beginning, and now and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.**

These verses are secondary sankalpas, on the basic sankalpa: "I will go unto the altar of God. Even unto the God of my joy and gladness."

*I was glad when they said unto me: we will go into the house of the Lord.* One of the greatest events in my life was the discovery of the divine Mass. I reveled in it after twenty-one years of preachin', prayin' and singin' that totalled up to absolute zero. I went to daily Mass where there would be a handful of faithful as in love with the Mass as I was. They were the real parish. But on Sunday I went with a crowd of bored, restless and hungover people who were there only because the church taught them that if they did not attend Sunday Mass it would be a mortal sin, and if they died they would go straight to hell for eternity. That was very sad, but also very human. Nevertheless, there were those who came with gladness, anticipating seeing and receiving Jesus. As Father Faber wrote: "O how our hearts beat high with joy whene'er we hear that glorious word!" Outside Mass it was usual for the altar to be covered with a felt cloth that was embroidered on the front with the words: Holy, Holy, Holy (or: Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus), but I heard of one church that had the words (in Latin): The Master is Here and Calleth for Thee. Glorious invitation!

*I will be glad and rejoice in Thee: yea, my songs will I make of Thy Name, O Thou most Highest.* "You find yourself in this transient, joyless world. Turn from it, and take your delight in me" (Bhagavad Gita 9:33). Though written down thousands of years ago, these are eminently relevant to all human beings right now today. Outside God there is no real or lasting gladness and joy; the sooner we learn that truth the sooner we will find joy and gladness. Our hearts should sing with the Name of the Most High. And shall.

*O send out Thy light and Thy truth, that they may lead me: and bring me to Thy holy hill, and to Thy dwelling.* We must know how to invoke the light of spiritual intuition to guide us through the dark labyrinth of this world. There is a yogic note here, too. The "holy hill" is the sahasrara chakra, the thousand-petalled lotus of the astral and causal brain. That is where God dwells in us in the depths of our spirit—which pervades our body yet is centered in the the sahasrara, for our spirit is the true "jewel in the lotus." The sahasrara is symbolized by the ark of the covenant. The two cherubim on either side of the ark represent the two lobes of the brain. The pineal gland, the seat of spirit-

consciousness between them, is the “mercy-seat” where God dwells and communicates with us. (Which is why we posit our awareness at the point between the eyebrows, for that stimulates the “third eye”—the pineal gland—and develops spiritual consciousness.)

*And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness: and upon the harp will I give thanks unto Thee, O God my God.* According to the earliest Christian hymns, *The Odes of Solomon*, the Holy Spirit is the harp of the spirit. “As the wind moves over the harp, and the strings speak, so speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord, and I speak by Her love” (Odes 6:1). “The harp of Thy Holy Spirit open to me, that with all [its] notes I may praise Thee O Lord” (Odes 14:8).

*The Lord is in His holy temple: the Lord’s seat is in heaven.* Again, God is not far away, but is ever present in his holy temple, the “heaven” of the awakened sahasrara. We need only attune and ascend to discover this to be true. “Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you” (I Corinthians 3:16; see also 6:19).

*The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament showeth His handiwork.* “Heaven” is the expanse of consciousness within and without. In Sanskrit it is also called the Chidakasha, the Conscious Ether. There the glory of God is revealed in the sahasrara as well as throughout our entire makeup which is certainly the divine handiwork. Not only is the altar of God within us, our entire being is the altar of God as shall be ultimately revealed to the persevering yogi.

*O magnify the Lord our God, and worship Him upon His holy hill: for the Lord our God is holy.* Again we are exhorted to lift up our awareness to the higher centers of consciousness in the sahasrara. Then we can worthily and effectively worship God, for in that Most Holy Place we shall meet with the Holy God. That is why God said through David: “Ye are gods, and all you children of the most High” (Psalms 82:6).

*The Lord shall give strength unto His people: the Lord shall give His people the blessing of peace.* When we do all these things we shall be imbued with the strength and peace of God. For Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). Divine power and divine peace shall be ours when we go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of our joy and gladness.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit.* To remind us that all this is the work of the triune God within us who are also a trinity of body, mind, and spirit, we give praise to the Trinity. “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (I Thessalonians 4:3).

*As it was in the beginning, and now and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.* These words are to remind us of Jesus’ prayer: “O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). We wish to resume that eternal glory which we had with God before ever there was a creation, much less the world. Then we possessed it like infants, but now through Christ we are enabled to regain it in the full spiritual maturity and consciousness of sons of God. “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness” (Psalms 17:15). “When I awake, I am still with thee” (Psalms 139:18).

### **The confiteor (“confession”)**

Next we take another step in the purification that will prepare us for participation in the Mass. In the older forms of Mass the people recited a *confiteor*, a confession, in which they declared themselves sinners and begged for forgiveness. Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater knew that acknowledging a problem is the first step in solving it, that denying it only perpetuates it. So they formulated a remarkably positive

and affirmative statement to be said at this point. First however, they inserted three sets of responses to prepare us for the confession itself.

**Priest: ✠ Our help is in the Name of the Lord:  
People: Who hath made heaven and earth.**

**Priest: Turn us again, O Lord, and quicken us:  
People: That Thy people may rejoice in Thee.**

**Priest: Trust ye in the Lord for ever:  
People: For our Rock of Ages is the Lord.**

*Our help is in the Name of the Lord: Who hath made heaven and earth.* The Sign of the Cross is made at the beginning of this affirmation to remind us that we did the same when invoking the Holy Trinity. In this way we understand that it is such an invocation that is our help and deliverance from all trouble. Further, God is not just the creator of heaven but of earth, that all things are ultimately His handiwork and therefore nothing is inherently evil or sinful, that any problems we create for ourselves stem from our negative and corrupt will and not from anything He has made. It is easy to blame material existence, but honesty reveals that it is our mistaken identity with materiality, our mistaking its qualities for our qualities, that is the root of all our spiritual, mental, and physical ills. As the cartoon character Pogo said: "We have met the enemy and they are us."

*Turn us again, O Lord, and quicken us: that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.* The divine power, the very power that is being abundantly poured out on us throughout the Mass and which shall be infused into us by Communion, shall turn our face back to God, for that is our original state. In the light of His face we shall rejoice in Him as a natural result.

*Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for our Rock of Ages is the Lord.* We do not approach God in hesitation and fear, but in confidence, heeding the counsel of Saint Paul: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrew 4:16), and praying with the Psalmist: "Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation" (Psalms 25:5). There is no place for fear or doubt because "our Rock of Ages is the Lord" who has loved and cared for us from eternity, "before the world was," and "with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

Then we bow and recite the confiteor:

**O Lord, Thou hast created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of Thine own eternity; yet often we forget the glory of our heritage and wander from the path which leads to righteousness. But Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are ever restless till they find their rest in Thee. Look with the eyes of Thy love upon our manifold imperfections and pardon all our shortcomings, that we may be filled with the brightness of the everlasting light and become the unspotted mirror of Thy power and the image of Thy goodness. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Reciting this formula puts us in the right frame of mind for contemplating our failings or faults. It expresses marvelous esoteric truths and aspirations worthy of the sons of God.

*O Lord, Thou hast created man to be immortal.* We have lived countless lives in pre-human forms, and unfortunately have brought along with us behavior patterns that are not truly human. Nevertheless, it is only in the human form that we have become self-aware and questioned the why and wherefore of ourselves. Although it is intelligent, self-reflective thought that marks us out from the other life forms on the earth, the trait that stands out most in the mind of humanity is our mortality. Death is the specter that looms before all of us, and the more conscious we are the more it casts its shadow over us. Humans have always rebelled against death, superficially because of their attachment to the body and possessions, but fundamentally because they know that death is somehow *wrong*, that dying violates their nature.

Those more evolved, and therefore more conscious, have explained to us that we do not die, only the body dies, that we live in a series of bodies until we grow beyond the human condition and pass upward into the non-material (astral and causal) realms. There we are no longer evicted by death from the body, but live in a form until we have evolved beyond needing it, beyond the state of evolution it reflects. Then we intentionally drop that body as easily as we take off a coat, and take on a higher one. And so it goes, up and up the ladder of evolution until we no longer need a body, however subtle, and dwell in Spirit alone. So when we say that we were created to be immortal, we also imply that we were not meant to be humans forever, that this is just a stage along the way to manifesting Divine Being.

*And made him to be an image of Thine own eternity.* This underlines what I have just said. We are not meant to be human forever, but gods within God, reflections of Eternal Perfection. Moreover, this is an inevitable destiny because it is the unfoldment of our eternal potential. It is like a tree growing from a seed.

How important it is for us to have this view of ourselves! Lying religion tells us that we are mortal, helpless, and the most we can hope for is pleasing God by behaving and being God's servants, the reward for this being permitted to praise and serve God forever and ever and ever. Even worse, it tells us here on earth we are prone to evil, helplessly driven to do wrong by our innately sinful nature. It tells us that it is our nature to helplessly commit sin, but we shall be punished for it by a just God. That is like telling a lame person he will be punished for limping. What else could he do?

*Yet often we forget the glory of our heritage.* Here is the answer: we are not evil, we are ignorant, forgetful of our true nature and purpose—which is to be perfect children of God, immortal and eternal. We came from God and we go to God. In between there is a great deal of confusion and suffering, but the “going” is a sure thing. Jesus brings this out in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) who, in the midst of awful misery, begins to think of his father and of home—so different from the mess he has gotten into. So he returns home, and all is well. It is the same with us. The word “repent” found in the Bible does not mean to whine and be upset for having sinned. It literally means to turn around 180 degrees—a complete reversal—and rise from material consciousness to spiritual consciousness, to be what we really are. The reason we suffer is because in thought and deed we continually violate our nature. We do not sin against God, we sin against ourselves:

*And wander from the path which leads to righteousness.* We stray from the safe and direct path and get increasingly lost. We are not evil—we have lost our way. Jesus affirms this in the eighteenth chapter of Saint Matthew in the parable of the shepherd and the lost sheep. However lost that sheep may be, it is still a sheep. In the same way, no matter how confused and deluded we may be, we remain the potential gods we always were. In the parable the shepherd goes out seeking the lost sheep. That is why the next clause is:



*But Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself.* We have only one purpose: to be one with God, to participate in Infinite Life. And that participation is absolutely going to be attained, we need never doubt it. Yet, we have fallen into the dream of existence that seems separate from God, and have become addicted to dreaming and to the illusions within the dream. Most of us do not believe there is any other “reality”—how ironic. We have come to prefer fantasy to reality. And we cling to it from life to life, resisting any attempt to wake us out of the fever-dream, absorbed in the hallucinations we are running after. And so we suffer—not because God is punishing us, but because we cannot be satisfied with dreams, for we are not dreams, we are real—points of light in the Ocean of Light that is God.

*And our hearts are ever restless till they find their rest in Thee.* “It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty: or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite” (Isaiah 29:8). A. E. Merritt wrote a book called *Dwellers in the Mirage*; that title applies to all of us, but not forever. Our own inner ferment, our own inner discontent, will increase more and more until it becomes the major factor in our lives and forces us to wake up and face both unreality and reality. We will realize that our rest is in God, and will pray:

*Look with the eyes of Thy love upon our manifold imperfections.* God is love and has nothing but love for us. He sees our manifold imperfections as the seeds of many perfections. They are just skewed wrongly, like a twisted mirror. But when restored and set right, the divine image is revealed in us. So we need to see them in the same way and be confident. As someone once said: “God does not make junk.” Yet we see and acknowledge that at present we do have a great deal of imperfections. We do not accept them in the sense of lazily tolerating them or remaining attached to them. We see them as steps to better things. And like steps we put them under our feet, rise, and leave them behind as the dreams they are.

*And pardon all our shortcomings.* “Shortcomings” is the exact and true translation of *amartano*, the Greek word translated “sin” in the New Testament. The word literally means to miss the mark or to fall short of the mark. There is nothing there about transgressing God’s law and becoming guilty and deserving punishment. Sin is the failure to live up to and manifest our own divine nature. It is like the falling down of a child trying to walk. We do not punish the child, we help it, knowing that in time it will walk without falling. God really disregards (pardons) our shortcomings just as we disregard the child’s failures in its struggle to walk. God knows we will walk and then run to the goal of union with Him:

*That we may be filled with the brightness of the everlasting light.* “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all” (I John 1:4,5). So we will be filled with the brightness of the Eternal Light. Our consciousness will be the Consciousness of God.

*And become the unspotted mirror of Thy power.* Yes, the Divine Power will also be ours, for we will be unspotted mirrors reflecting the Divine Countenance. We will share in the omnipotence of God. That is why Jesus said: “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do” (John 14:12). Certainly the saints heal the sick and raise the dead; I have known some of them, including Saint John Maximovitch of San Francisco, a canonized saint of the Russian Orthodox Church. But there are greater things, such as those accomplished by the Mass: spiritual healing and correction, spiritual awakening and spiritual empowerment. In the fourth chapter of *Autobiography of a Yogi*, Swami Kebalananda

tells Yogananda of the remarkable healing of a blind man by Yogiraj Lahiri Mahasaya and concludes with these words: “The numerous bodies which were spectacularly healed through Lahiri Mahasaya eventually had to feed the flames of cremation. But the silent spiritual awakenings he effected, the Christlike disciples he fashioned, are his imperishable miracles.”

*And the image of Thy goodness.* Jesus said: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John 14:9). It will be the same with us. Jesus did not intend to be unique, but to enable all to be exactly what he had become. “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Revelation 3:21). This is the true Gospel (Good News) of Christ, the true Christianity.

*Through Christ our Lord.* God is one, yet He has manifested in a threefold manner for our evolution. God has become Power, the Holy Spirit, and has entered into that Power as its directing Intelligence—the Son of God. But God also remains transcendent to this evolutionary process, and thereby is called “the Father.” “Christ” is a title of God as the Consciousness within all things—including us. That Christ is drawing every one of us upward into the revelation of our own Christhood. So when we say “through Christ our Lord” we are speaking of God the Son and Jesus as His perfect image who came to also draw us to the Father, and also implying our own divine sonship. For if that did not exist, it could not be eventually manifested. That is why Jesus prayed: “O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5). It has been ours from eternity, and will be revealed in God.

*Amen.* May the glorious destiny spoken of in this prayer formula come to pass—and soon. Even now it is so potentially and we pray for its actualization.

This prayer is used as a confiteor in Mass, but it is also a superb intercessory prayer for the entire human race—I often use it in that way, especially when I see or hear about those who live in great misery or mental distortion.

### **The absolution**

The priest is not just a well-wisher or a coordinator of ritual. He possesses a living link with Jesus Christ and thereby with the Eternal Christ. This link was made at his ordination, and cannot be broken. (Bishop Leadbeater has written about this extensively in *The Science of the Sacraments*, and it is very much worth your while to read it.) He now performs the final step in the purification we need to proceed with the divine unfoldment that is the Mass.

Moving to the altar, the priest says silently this brief prayer:

**Help us, O Lord, to cast far from us all iniquity, that we may enter with pure minds into Thy holy of holies. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Since he is to pronounce the absolution he needs to put himself in the right frame of mind, an attitude far different from that of the traditional Mass formulation. Absolution is not some magical rite by which “the poor, miserable sinners” are temporarily cleansed—and expected to lapse back into the mire. Rather, absolution is a help, an empowerment, so we can through own will cast away our failings and weakness and “walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4), in purity of mind and heart that we may enter into the very depths of God and live in Him through the action upon us of the sacred Mass.

Turning to those present, the priest intones the following formula, making the Sign of the Cross where indicated:

**God the Father, God the ✠ Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and sanctify you; the Lord in His lovingkindness look down upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord ✠ absolve you from all your sins and grant you the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.**

*God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.* We are threefold beings, as is God. We need to “vibrate” to the Cosmic Trinity in order to awaken and develop our trinitarian reflection of that archetypal Trinity. Therefore we began the Mass with an invocation of the Trinity and will continue invoking It until the final blessing in the Name of the Trinity. The purpose of Mass is the deification (*theosis*) of the participants, not to “give God His due” and placate His “just anger.” This is the very attitude that Jesus came to deliver humanity from. But “sinners” of the last two thousand years have much preferred it to the Christ perspective: we are even now sons of God, working for the revelation of our eternal nature (I John 3:2; Revelation 3:12, 21). It is a lot easier to be a sinner than a saint—and we are called to be gods! (See Psalms 82:6 and John 10:34.)

*Bless.* Because of this the priest conveys the blessing of the Trinity to those who have just recited the Confiteor. This blessing comes from God and is not a pat on the head, but an imparting of the “power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12) which Jesus came to freely impart to “whosoever will...take the water of life freely” (Revelation 22:17).

*Preserve.* A lot of people get very religious when they walk into church and completely forgetful of religion when they walk out. The blessing of the priest is meant to lock in or permatize the blessing received as well as the other effects of the Mass that will be imparted to those who are open to them. (Mere attendance at Mass does not guarantee anything.) Many people have a spiritual awakening and make some spiritual effort, then they slip back into their former unconsciousness. This blessing is meant to help us prevent that.

*And sanctify you.* We need the purification and perfection of every atom of our being. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God....Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:8,48). “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked....And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 2:6; 3:3).

*The Lord in His lovingkindness look down upon you.* In the Confiteor we prayed: “Look with the eyes of Thy love upon our manifold imperfections.” Actually, God has no other motive than love, for God is love (I John 4:8;16). So the priest is reminding us of this: God is ever looking upon us in infinite love, whether we ask for it or not. It is God’s nature to see us, and our nature to see God. Many years ago I became acquainted with a true American saint, Brahmachari Paramachaitanya, usually called “Brother Philip.” Here is how I wrote it about later:

“Then Brother Philip began to speak quietly of the souls within the universe and their return to God. Nearly all of what he said has long faded from my conscious memory, but one thing has not. His voice changing subtly, he stated with a marked firmness: ‘God meditates on them and they change. They have to!’ Turning to me he added, as his eyes brimmed with supernal joy: ‘They don’t have a choice!’ The very idea he expressed was thrilling, but what he communicated to me in his glance was immeasurably more so.”

*And be gracious unto you.* A lot of people cultivate positive attitudes but put no action behind it. I knew a minister that used to pray about something and then say to

his companions: “Now let’s get up and ‘put some legs’ on those prayers!” All the complexities of this evolving universe are the “legs” God has put on His purpose. His grace is ever flowing through us, but we need to be gracious to God in return by becoming aware of that flow and cooperate with it, so it will carry us onward to the Goal.

*The Lord absolve you from all your sins.* We need to be free from our weakness, our ignorance, and all the glitches we have put into our psychic makeup by the failings that are “sins.” “Absolve” comes from the same root as “dissolve.” The priest makes the Sign of the Cross and sends forth to us a ray of divine Light that loosens the barnacles of our “sins” and starts them melting away. And if we cooperate with the Light they will completely vaporize and trouble us no more. Bishop Leadbeater explains that the Absolution also straightens out our psychic kinks and removes the obstacles to the inflow of the Divine Life that will accomplish our purification and perfection.

*And grant you the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.* According to the book of Proverbs (13:15): “The way of transgressors is hard,” but in one talk Yogananda commented about the spiritual path: “This way is not easy, but the way of the world is much harder”—and certainly entails much more suffering. The abiding grace and comfort—ease of heart—that the Divine Power we call the Holy Spirit provides us is unflinching and leads us to that level of consciousness where no comfort is needed, but all is “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Romans 14:17).

To all this we reply “Amen—let it be so,” hopefully with the intention to shape our life and thought accordingly.

### **A moment of reflection**

We are wanting to purify ourselves, which is necessary, yet we must never lose sight of the fact that we are eternally part of the Divine Life, that in our essence we are pure and perfect. But that purity and perfection has been covered up by ignorance and illusion. Like a diamond coated in mud, what is needed is the removal of the covering to reveal what has always been there. We are not sinners, though sin has obscured our actual nature. Sin is never our nature, nor is any impurity or defilement, yet it veils and clouds our inner sight, blinding us to our true Self. Our involvement must be with the revelation of that divine reality, not with what obstructs us. In other words, it is not sin that should occupy our minds, but spirit—for that is real, while sin is unreal. What is needed is not wailing over sin, but realizing that it is a mere shell, a mirage, that we must cast from us if we would live in the Light. And that casting away is possible because Christ is the basis of our being. So our evolving life must proceed in the Consciousness of Christ, our entire life must be oriented toward Christ.

In countless past lives, and in a goodly part of this life, we have dwelt in illusion, thinking that we were separate from God, that we were something other than God. But now we have awakened, and whereas before we thought we were sinners, we find that just the opposite is the case. In one of his talks Yogananda told his hearers: “Call yourselves ‘sinners’ no more! Christ is yours, and the Great Masters are yours!” This is true: now the saints and masters are our companions, for we, too, are of the family of God, extensions of the Divine Life. We need not join that family for we have been “born” into it by the opening of our awareness to the eternal truth. We have come home.

The intention of Jesus is to give us the environment in which we can grow into embodiments of the Divine Presence. We are incorporated into a spiritual association by means of the Sacraments, and grow together, progressing onward to perfect humanity and beyond. This is what the Church of Christ really is. “Church” is a

meaningless word. In the Greek text, wherever the word appears, the actual word is *ekklesia*, which means “the called-out ones,” and was a term used in Greece for what in America used to be called “selectmen,” a kind of local council chosen by the people. So the followers of Christ are those that have heard the call to transcend relative existence, to go beyond the realms of birth and death. They are living the life that transcends the limited life in which we now find ourselves. Yogananda often said that our present consciousness is like a little cup that needs to be expanded through meditation so Infinity can enter into it. The growth is always “in the Lord,” in the God-consciousness that is cultivated through meditation and observance of spiritual and moral principles.

Through Baptism and Confirmation we are brought into the life-sphere of Jesus the Christ, and through Communion we are united with him and draw upon his Life as the nursing infant lives from the bodily substance of its mother. We are not “in him” to remain dependent and nothing of ourselves, but as the infant in the womb is intended to emerge into a life of its own, so through Christ we ascend and evolve to become what he is: “an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Then in us, too, the plenitude of Divine Conscious will manifest (Colossians 2:9), and we will be living gods upon the earth as was Jesus, truly “Christians”—other Christs. All this is the life in the spirit which Jesus came to impart to those who had evolved to the point of desiring it (John 10:10).

Everything, including our participation in the Mass, must be done in spirit-consciousness; our limited human, ego-controlled consciousness simply cannot accomplish anything in the spirit. We must tap our eternal relationship with God. Only God can lead to God. Religious life must be inner-based, in the spirit. Those who so labor, with minds fixed in spirit, will be “a workman that needeth not to be ashamed” (II Timothy 2:15). We establish ourselves upon the Eternal Rock, the Foundation that is God. This is eternal security.

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2, 3). There we have it. We are eternal sons of God, divine in nature, and those who know it and want to manifest their divinity rid themselves of all that obscures and limits their holy nature. All that is not “god” must be dissolved. That is the purification Saint John is referring to. He does not say that God will cleanse and purify us through Jesus, but that each one of us must do it ourself. Certainly, Jesus has opened the way, but we must walk that way on our own, drawing on the inner power and wisdom that has been opened for us by the Sacraments. Jesus came to free and enable us, not to make us perpetually dependent on him. He called us friends (John 15:15), not slaves, servants, or helpless sinners. So it is up to us to reveal our divine sonship through casting away all iniquity—all that darkens or limits our consciousness.

### **Censing of the altar**

By the sprinkling of holy water at the beginning of Mass the altar and place of worship were purified, and by confession and absolution the participants have also been purified. Now this purification is increased and sealed by the priest. Putting incense into a censer containing burning coals he blesses it, saying:

**Be thou blessed ☩ by Him in whose honor thou shalt be burned. Amen.**

It may seem strange to speak to “inanimate objects,” but since everything is a

manifestation of the Divine Energy, the Holy Spirit, everything is inherently conscious, and an empowered will can bring about changes even in “mere” matter.

The priest then censes the altar and people. Fire is a great purifier, and even an enlivener. Consequently it has been used in rituals throughout history. In Christian ritual it has traditionally been employed in two forms: for light in candles and lamps, and for the burning of incense.

Incense, too, has been used since time immemorial, and for the same reasons as fire. The incense, turned into smoke, both purifies and attunes the consciousness of those who smell it. The various ingredients of incense were long ago analyzed by those with clairvoyant sight. For example, frankincense, the main ingredient in church incense, has a psychic correspondence with the sun, with the solar world to which all ascend who have become freed from the karmic compulsion for further births on the material plane. Consequently it purifies and awakens the consciousness of those who use it. Incense smoke also expels negative vibrations and raises the vibrations of all it touches. Through his clairvoyant faculties Bishop Leadbeater was able to determine the effects of many forms of incense and make recommendations for several formulas to be used in Christian ceremonial.

Through this censing the place where Mass is celebrated and all those within it are purified and elevated physically and psychically. The purification is now complete, and we are ready to progress to higher and even holier things.

### **We, too are builders**

The first act of purification is complete, and the work of the Mass is beginning to move forward. The angels have come for the erection of the eucharistic thought form edifice, but it is not all the work of the angels. We, too, have our part to play now and throughout the Mass in being builders together with them—mostly in the role of providing living spiritual energies which they will use as the material of the thought form. We do this by attentively following all the words and gestures, listening carefully to all the priest says and calmly being aware of our responses and singing of the hymns. Certainly we should both feel and mean what we are saying/singing, but it is a grave error and a distraction to try to “psych” ourselves up and become vortices of emotion rather than intelligent participants in the Mass. It is not our will we need to project, but our intelligent understanding in an attitude of receptivity. For if we do not receive we will not respond.

### **The power of speech**

We often speak of “mere” or “empty” words, but that is only in the sense of intellectual meaning. Every spoken word carries very real power (vibration) within it, “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” as Jesus said (Matthew 12:34). There is a great esoteric principle here: the human voice is a conduit for the vibratory character of a person’s level of consciousness. That is why Jesus said: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63). This is how the truth in the mouth of liars has the vibration of a lie, but the same words spoken by someone of high consciousness has the vibration of truth and benefits the hearers. I once read the account of a woman who had visited a saint who spoke about the reality of immortality. She commented in her writing that she had heard the same words many times before, but when the saint spoke them she was profoundly affected and felt that she was hearing them for the first time. And that, too, was revealed by Jesus (Matthew 12:35) when He said: “A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things” by means of his speech.

Throughout the Mass the prayers, readings, responses, and hymns—especially since they all employ the singing voice—are projections of our personal energies, which the angels receive and use to build a thought form structure (“temple”) that will in turn draw down to us “a hundredfold” in energies that will affect us in countless ways—all to our elevation and evolution. And since our aspiration is toward God and our ascent beyond the realms of birth and death, those energies are powerful instruments in our Godward orientation.

### **Salutation**

Having completed the censuring, the priest returns the censer and moves back to the altar, bows before it, turns to the people with hands joined in salutation and again there is the exchange:

**Priest:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And with thy spirit.

Then the Introit is sung by all.

### **The Introit**

The Mass traditionally began with the singing of a hymn or psalm as the clergy entered the main part of the church and went to the altar. This became known as the Entrance Hymn or Introit. Usually it made reference to the theme of the Sunday or holy day. The Mass as formulated by the two seer-bishops retains the Introit, but with some differences.

First of all, the Mass Introit is always the same, rather than changing constantly as in the earlier forms of Mass. This is in conformity with the liturgical practice of the Eastern (Byzantine) Orthodox Church. The Old Catholic Church of Great Britain, of which Bishop Wedgwood became the head, had been received into union with the Eastern Church by Archbishop Gerassimos Messara of Beirut on behalf of the Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch. (This act of union was brought about through the influence of Saint Nectarios, the great wonderworker of Greece, who had been the Bishop of Pentapolis in the Alexandrian Patriarchate of Egypt.) Bishop Wedgwood was closely associated with the Russian Orthodox Church in London as well as in France and Switzerland, and was always invited to stand within the iconostasis when he attended the Orthodox Liturgy. As a result, the Mass has several Eastern liturgical traits, as I will point out.

However, he was also drawing on the tradition of the West in his choice of the Introit of Trinity Sunday to be the usual one. For in Catholic England before the takeover of Protestantism it had long been the practice to celebrate the Trinity Sunday Mass on all Sundays after Trinity Sunday until Advent. One result of this was the laity coming to know the Latin propers by heart and singing them along with the choir.

The second and most important difference in the matter of the Introit is esoteric. Obviously, if the Introit is always the same, it will produce the identical vibratory effect. This is very valuable. But it is the inner effect of the Introit that is the major factor in this. The traditional Introits were merely hymns of entrance into the physical place of worship. But in the Mass of Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater, the Introit is a literal entrance into a higher level of existence and experience, for it directly invokes the Holy Trinity.

The English Christian esotericist, Dr. Violet Firth, who wrote under the name of “Dion Fortune,” was a personal friend and esoteric associate of Bishops Wedgwood

and King as well as other clergy of the Old Catholic Church of Great Britain. In her writings she spoke of a process she called “rising on the inner planes” of awareness. Just as we turn the radio dial to get different programs, so it is possible to enter all planes of consciousness if we know how to attune ourselves accordingly. Although we might speak of “up” and “down” in this process, it is really a matter of greater or lesser subtlety of vibration. So when I say we enter a higher level of existence I mean it as a matter of higher awareness.

The Mass is both an ascent and a descent: we ascend and Higher Consciousness descends to us. In the Mass earth and heaven truly do unite. As said earlier, the finger of God touches the finger of man in a divine circuit which is intended to transform humanity into divinity.

### **Blessed be the Holy Trinity**

The words of the Introit are:

**Blessed be the Holy Trinity, the undivided Unity, eternal, immortal, invisible, to Whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

**O Lord our God, how excellent is Thy Name in all the world.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, and now, and always, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.**

**Blessed be the Holy Trinity, the undivided Unity, eternal, immortal, invisible, to Whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

This is the first of three great invocations of the Holy Trinity that open the Mass, each of which merits close examination. (If we count the beginning exclamation by the priest, there are actually four invocations of the Trinity.)

*Blessed be.* This sounds peculiar to us, but it was not so in previous centuries when “blessed” included being praised. In the Old Testament the word is *barak*, which means to praise, reverence, and prostrate before in worship. The word in the New Testament is *eulogetos*, which means “praised” and “celebrated with praises.” So at the very beginning of the Mass proper we are declaring our intention to praise, reverence and worship God.

But why? God does not need any praise from us, who really cannot conceive of the Divine nature, and certainly God does not need flattery and fawning from us. The benefit is for us alone. It has been known from time immemorial—and now to modern physics—that when we fix our minds on something two things happen: we influence the object and the object influences us. So when we fix our mind on God we immediately enter into communication with God and the Divine Influence starts flowing toward and into us. This is a very effective way of purifying, elevating, and expanding our awareness. Furthermore, divine qualities begin to awaken in us so we can become restored to our original status as image/reflections of God. In this way the Mass is a powerful means of spiritual restoration, particularly when supported by regular meditation.

*The Holy Trinity.* God is both transcendent and immanent. God is also absolutely one, and the Trinity is a symbolic way of speaking about that Unity. In ancient India the sages clearly understood and expressed the truth that God is Om Tat Sat: divine creative intelligent energy, divine guiding intelligence within that energy, and primal intelligence that transcends those two. Yet there is only One Consciousness, not three. Om Tat Sat is exactly, not just approximately, what Jesus meant by “Holy Spirit,” “Son,” and “Father.” He used such symbolic terms in the hope that it would be easier for his



hearers to grasp.

The Father is the transcendent Consciousness beyond all relativity; the Son is the extension of that Consciousness into the Primal Energy that is the Holy Spirit manifesting as creation. The Father is the Impersonal God and the Son is the Personal God. The Holy Spirit is the evolving power that causes us to pass up the evolutionary ladder from a single atom of hydrogen to divinity. That is why the Holy Spirit is God the Mother. We are growing within Her divine womb, within Her very Being, so that one day we will be “born” into the world of pure Spirit to be “sons of God” with and within God. Multiplicity is a dream from which we awaken into:

*The undivided Unity.* For God is absolutely one, even though presently manifesting within—and as—the many. That is why we must understand that all relative existence and experience is a dream, a kind of training film within which we develop the capacity for union with the Infinite, a sharing in Infinite Life. When we reach that state we will really understand what has gone on. Until then we work with as much as we can understand at the present, but always with the readiness to expand that understanding and even go beyond it into a better comprehension. That is why dogmatism and unquestioning clinging to concepts is a major obstacle to spiritual growth. It is all passing scenery, and we need to keep right on moving through. Ashoka erected a stupa upon which were the words: “Jesus the Son of Mary said: The world is a bridge—pass over it; do not build a house on it.” This is especially true psychologically. The trouble is, the world of our ego traps and enslaves us, even in spiritual philosophy. As one wise person said, life itself is a taking up and a putting down. It is the same with theological concepts—we need them, but we must use them to outgrow them.

*Eternal.* In the West we think that eternity is time without end, but that is an error. Eternity is the state of being of God that is completely outside time and space. So when we say that God is eternal we mean that state which is beyond beginning and ending, beyond birth and death. That is why the Greeks called God *Theos*—the Absolutely Other.

*Immortal.* God is Existence—is Life itself. Nothing can exist or live outside of or separate from God. Within God death is a complete impossibility. As the upanishads say, by meditation on the Immortal we attain immortality. To unite with God is to transcend the dream of death.

*Invisible.* God is not just invisible to our physical eyes, God is invisible to our intellect—beyond its grasp. Anything that is “seen” by either our outer or inner eyes is not God—at least not God in the sense of the Divine Essence. This should stimulate us to evolve beyond those eyes into the state of direct knowing in which God is seen and known. This is the goal of every sentient being.

*To Whom be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.* Our contemplation of God must become continuous, and the faculty to do so is awakened and developed only through meditation. This is the whole picture, so we end it with the word “Amen.” For not only is the Word the Beginning, it is also the End. Continuing this idea we then say:

*O Lord our God, how excellent is Thy Name in all the world.* For the Trinity is manifesting as all creation while also transcending it and leading us beyond it. It is “excellent” for It has the power to transform all that exists into the Divine Reality.

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.* This is not just a verbal formula: it is an act of impelling our consciousness into the realm of Triune Reality, of entering into true Life. It is an invocation of Perfect Being:

*As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.* We are not orienting our consciousness to the realm of coming and going, beginning, and

ending, but to true Eternity—to that Consciousness from which the possibility of past, present, and future arises, but which can never be affected or touched by them. It is Itself the Aeon, the state of being, which encompasses and transcends all possible states of existence. Eternity is the aim of the Mass, just as It is the aim of meditation.

This is the first “rising on the inner planes” effected by the Mass.

The Introit is an exposition of the Trinity, but the Creed says: “We believe in the Holy and all-glorious Trinity, Who pervades the whole universe, Who dwells also in the spirit of man.” The Introit, then, is also an affirmation of our own innate status. As eternal spirits we should also praise and honor our real nature as part of the infinite Consciousness that is God. We, too, are triune in nature, yet still one in essence: eternal, immortal, and (presently) invisible; to whom, in the attainment of perfection, there shall also be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen: may it be so!

### **Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyria eleison.**

In the Introit we directly invoked the Holy Trinity as the Archetype of which we are living reflections. Now we are going to evoke and empower our personal triune nature, the glory which we had with God before the foundations of the world (John 17:5). To do this we sing a ninefold invocation of the Trinity in Greek:

**Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.  
Christe eleison, Christe eleison, Christe eleison.  
Kyria eleison, Kyria eleison, Kyria eleison.**

The triple recitation of each invocation affirms the trinitarian nature of all beings, including the three divine aspects that comprise the Trinity.

Greek is used in this formula because originally Christianity was predominantly a Greek-speaking community, even in Rome where Latin was not the liturgical language until several centuries had lapsed. This is important to know, because in the Mediterranean world original Christianity was most in harmony with Greek philosophy, especially that of Plato and Aristotle, and later the Neo-Platonism of Plotinus. Certainly the spiritual roots of Christianity were in India, but so were those of Greek philosophy.

“Kyrie” means “Lord” and is a reference to God the Father. “Christe” means “Christ” the Anointed, the Messiah, and is a reference to the Son of God, or Ishwara. “Kyria” means “Lady” and refers to the Holy Spirit Mother. (In both Hebrew and Aramaic, the spoken language of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is referred to as feminine. This was changed after the Council of Nicea in the fourth century when Christianity became the state religion in which God could only be male.)

This is the meaning, but the effect is very much more. As already said, we are threefold, as is the Trinity, for we are images of the Trinity. This triune nature can be spoken of in many ways and with many listings of what these three aspects of our nature may be. We, too, have a transcendent consciousness (superconscious), an immanent or incarnate consciousness (conscious), and a material nature at the core of which is the subconscious. This can be more easily stated as spirit, mind, and body, and perhaps better stated as causal, astral, and physical (material) bodies.

“Eleison” means “have mercy” or “have compassion.” It is a very active word, meaning to help someone by removing their suffering or need. It also indicates a profound desire to help, an attitude of good will. Perhaps the best word for it is loving-kindness. Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater preferred this last meaning because it does not have the connotation of people being “miserable sinners” who are sure to be

eternally condemned to fiery hell if God does not have mercy and forgive them. The root word, *eleimon*, is the attraction of Divine Love which draws all sentient beings to evolve unto union with God which by its nature will bring about the cessation of all suffering, for the possibility of suffering will be permanently ended. Therefore the bishops felt that “pour forth Thy love” was a truer rendering of *eleison*.

Leo Tolstoy wrote a story entitled *The Three Hermits* that was based on an experience of the Russian Orthodox bishop of Archangelsk when he was making a journey to the famous Solovetsky Monastery in his diocese. Nicholas Roerich summarized it as follows:

“On an island there lived three old hermits. They were so simple that the only prayer they used was: ‘We are three; Thou art Three—have mercy on us!’ Great miracles were manifested during this naive prayer.

“The local bishop came to hear about the three hermits and their inadmissible prayer, and decided to visit them in order to teach them the canonical invocations. He arrived on the island, told the hermits that their heavenly petition was undignified, and taught them many of the customary prayers. The bishop then left on a boat. He saw, following the ship, a radiant light. As it approached, he discerned the three hermits, who were holding hands and running upon the waves in an effort to overtake the vessel.

“‘We have forgotten the prayers you taught us,’ they cried as they reached the bishop, ‘and have hastened to ask you to repeat them.’ The awed bishop shook his head.

“‘Dear ones,’ he replied humbly, ‘continue to live with your old prayer!’”

As I have said, these are not simple praises or acknowledgements but *invocations*: calling into us the Light of the Trinity to strengthen and perfect Its likeness within us. At each one the subtle powers of the Aspect invoked enter into us through the mediary of the spiritual atmosphere created by the Mass. For that reason it is very important that we sing these invocations carefully and with full attention and awareness of their purpose. At their completion our causal, astral, and physical bodies have been pervaded by the divine powers in turn, attuning us to the Cosmic Trinity without and the personal trinity within.

This makes us ready for the third invocation of the Trinity.

## **The Gloria**

Now in joyful praise of the Trinity we sing the Wedgwood-Leadbeater version of the very ancient hymn known as the Gloria:

**Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of goodwill. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee; we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.**

**O Lord Christ, alone-born of the Father; O Lord God, Indwelling Light, Son of the Father, Whose wisdom mightily and sweetly ordereth all things, pour forth Thy love: Thou Whose strength upholdeth and sustaineth all creation, receive our prayer; Thou Whose beauty shineth through the whole universe, unveil Thy glory.**

**For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

This is a great deal of material, and all of it significant, especially considering the

extensive alterations made in it by the bishops. From the very first it is evident to those familiar with the traditional Mass forms that Wedgwood and Leadbeater had something very different in mind, even though they followed the traditional ordering. They well knew that “no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles” (Mark 2:22), and acted accordingly.

First we address God the Father.

*Glory be to God in the highest.* God is everywhere, but since it is our desire to ascend to the highest level of consciousness, we invoke God accordingly. It is a fact that God comes down to us, much like an adult plays with children on hands and feet like one of them. That is very necessary, but the time comes when what is needed is a rising up toward God’s level as much as possible. So we fix our mind on God the Absolute, the Source, and aspire to That.

*On earth peace to men of goodwill.* God, though the Highest, yet extends His hand to all those that on earth possess “good will”—the aspiration to rise and transcend all relative limitations. To them peace will come, for their wills will come into harmony and alignment with the Divine Will, and they will begin to be drawn upward toward the One Goal: God. For it has been God’s will from eternity that we should rise and return to our Origin in full consciousness and realized potential: gods within God. So that must be our will as well.

*We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee.* Notice that this does not say that we fear or tremble before God and feel unclean (Isaiah 6:5), “a worm and no man” (Psalms 22:6), loathing and condemning ourselves, confident that God feels the same toward us. No, we shake off that useless egotism (for it *is* egotism) and fill our minds with perceptions of God—for we are going to leave the human condition behind like the broken toys of childhood and move onward to greater and greater things. For through meditation empowered by the other Sacraments and the Mass: “we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (II Corinthians 3:18).

This being so, we praise, bless, worship, and glorify God—not because we want to please or placate Him, or because we want material advantage from Him. Rather, we do so because God is the source of our existence, because we are eternally one with Him, because God is the Self of our Self, the Ocean of Spirit in which all spirits live forever. We are glorifying our Supreme Self and elevating ourselves by so doing.

*We give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory.* Because that Glory is our glory. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being.... For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28). We are inseparable from God. How absurd and blasphemous is the belief that we can ever be separated from God or eternally damned. We are ever living in God, waves on the sea of Infinity. Knowing that, we give thanks to God that we are a part of His great Glory—a part of Him. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is” (I John 3:2). This and this alone is the Apostolic Faith, the Gospel of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). And for that we give thanks.

*O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.* The Father is the Transcendent Reality Who is the Infinite Consciousness that is symbolized by the word “heavenly” in Jesus’ teachings. The *ouranios* (heavenly) is that which dwells in and is the *ouranos* (heaven). “Heaven” is a symbol for unbounded Consciousness. God is also “Lord” because He is the ultimate Power and Director.

*Kurios Theos* is the Greek original translated “Lord God.” *Kurios* means the Supreme Being, the Lord. It also has the connotation of the ownership of all things and the one who controls and directs all things. It also implies one who has an intention of purpose for what is owned—which is the evolution, perfection, and liberation of every sentient being. The realm of relative existence is a school whose sole purpose is the enlightenment and freedom of all enrolled therein. *Theos* means “the absolutely Other” in the sense of the complete transcendence of Divinity. It specifically means Brahman, the Father aspect of God.

Now we address God the Son.

*O Lord Christ, alone-born of the Father.* Though transcendent in nature, God extends Himself and enters into creation as its inner Ruler and Controller. In this aspect He is called “the Son” because in the East from time immemorial it has been said: “The Father is born in the Son.” As the early Christian writer Tertullian said, the Son is an emanation of the Father—actually *is* the Father in extension. It is the Son—Ishwara—who creates and directs all things. God the Father does only one thing: the projection/emanation of the Son, which in the Gospel is called “begetting” the Son. Although “only begotten” is the usual translation of *monogenes*, Wedgwood and Leadbeater preferred “alone-born” because *monos* primarily means “alone” or “sole.” Also, exoteric Christianity has misinterpreted “only begotten” to mean that because of the virgin birth Jesus alone can be properly called Son of God—and thereby has made it carry a mistaken connotation that is hard to shake. It is essential that we keep in mind that there is only one God. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are only symbolic terms for the One Reality that is beyond all words and symbols. Those titles can help us dimly grasp the fundamental truth, but must never be mistaken for truth itself. For God alone is Truth.

*O Lord God, Indwelling Light.* “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light” (I John 1:5). Ishwara, the Son, is God in His dynamic aspect. He directs and controls all things, but not externally as many religions think. Rather, He directs all things as their inmost being. He is within everything as the Indwelling Light of Divine Consciousness. And this indwelling is not passive, but supremely active.

*Son of the Father.* He is the Father entered into relative existence.

*Whose wisdom mightily and sweetly ordereth all things.* The word “wisdom” here indicates the intelligent purpose of God in creation. Being omnipotent, obviously he does all things “mightily”—in power. The word “sweetly” may seem peculiar here, especially since we are used to thinking of God in terms of awe and even fearfulness. But it is a Biblical expression from the book of Wisdom 8:1. (If your Bible does not have this book, it is not a complete Bible. It was part of the King James version until fanatical Protestants removed it.) The idea is that God and all He does is “sweet,” permeated with the bliss (ananda) that is the essential nature of God Himself. We are not to look upon the glories and might of God and tremble and fall down on our face, rather we are to look up and rejoice, for we are part of that Great Work, that sweet order, and by it we are destined to become the sons of God. As said before, this is the true Gospel (Good News) of Christ, the true Christianity.

*Pour forth Thy love.* God is Love (I John 4:8:16), and in this petition we are asking Him to pour forth His own Being upon and into us, that His intended process of theosis, of deification, may be begun and in time completed in us, that we may be Christs, “the Anointed,” of God. That is a bold request, but one that God has intended to fulfill for us from eternity. As our example, Jesus, prayed: “O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John

17:5). In the traditional Gloria the words were “have mercy on us,” but since *eleison* is mercy arising from love, the two bishops felt that this was a better expression, being both more accurate and more meaningful.

*Thou Whose strength upholdeth and sustaineth all creation.* All creation is held in the omniscience of God, for everything is a manifestation of the Divine Will. What we call “natural law” is really the intention of God. When we realize this, then we can understand what Jesus meant by saying: “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father” (Matthew 10:29). Literally, the falling of the sparrow to the ground is an act of God, not just because God is omnipotent, but because creation is His creative dream, a dream within which we are dreaming along with Him. (Listen to Yogananda’s recorded talk *Awake In The Cosmic Dream.*) To emphasize this truth, in the very next verse Jesus declared: “The very hairs of your head are all numbered” in the consciousness of God. All things exist because God exists, because His existence is their existence. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).

*Receive our prayer.* The Greek word translated “prayer” in the Gospels is *proseukhe*, which literally means “to draw near.” So real prayer is not in the words, but in the drawing near of the spirit, the consciousness, to God. The Mass is the supreme outer means to draw near to God, for on the inner, spiritual plane it is a continual drawing near and entering into contact with God. So although we certainly are asking God to grant our petition to pour forth His love and reveal Himself to us, it is our drawing near to Him in the unseen realm that we particularly want Him to accept and foster by bringing us to Him—to give us the experience of the Prodigal Son: “And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him” (Luke 15:20). Once again, we are praying for union with God.

*Thou Whose beauty shineth through the whole universe.* The whole universe is God’s glory. Sri Ramakrishna often remarked that the same world which appears to be the abode of sorrow and evil is transformed into “a market of joy” when spiritual realization is attained—that instead of darkness, sorrow and death, we see the world as the embodiment of light, joy and life: the very Presence of God. Therefore it is only reasonable to pray:

*Unveil Thy glory.* It is this Beatific Vision which shall transform the seeing into the Seen. For to see God is to be God.

*For Thou only art holy.* Holiness is to be found in the Holy.

*Thou only art the Lord.* Mastership, likewise, is to be found in the Lord.

*Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Spirit.* There are two extensions of the Father: the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit means “the Holy Breath” in the sense that the Holy Spirit is the outbreathing, the very transforming Life of God. The Son is the Divine Masculine and the Holy Spirit is the Divine Feminine. In a sense the moment that God extends Himself He becomes dual: the consciousness within creation and the creation itself—the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are inseparable, which is why in mystical Christianity Jesus and Mary, as embodiments of the Son and the Holy Spirit, are considered indispensable to our attaining perfection. I met a great saint and mystic, a bishop who spoke to me of the need to enter “the secret hearts of Jesus and Mary;” that if I did so, at the time of death “the Light of the Virgin Mary” would take me to God. Since Jesus is in perfect union with—and embodies—the Son of God, we call him “Lord.” The Virgin Mary, being in perfect union with—and embodying—the Holy Spirit, we call her “Lady.”

The depiction of Mary with the Child Jesus is a profound spiritual symbol,

indicating the relationship of the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the iconographic form called *Odigitria* or Directress, the Virgin Mary looks at us as she gestures with her right hand toward the child Jesus whom she holds on her left arm. The message is that the purpose of creation is knowledge of the Creator. One half of material existence covers up the presence of God, but the other half reveals it. That is why those who turn away from God are said to be on the “lefthand path” and those who seek God are on the “righthand path.” Both are functions of the Holy Spirit in relation to evolving spirits. As material existence the Mother God first conceals God and then reveals Him. A prayer of Bishop Wedgwood speaks of “the limitations of time and space, wherewith it is Thy will to veil our earthly eyes from the excess of Thy glory” until we are capable of the Divine Vision. Equally correct is the depiction that shows the Divine Child within the breast of the Mother, indicating the presence of the Son within creation, within the Holy Spirit Mother. It is also symbolic of us, as well, for we are living within the vast ocean of creative Life that is the Holy Spirit, and in time we are to be “born” of Her back into the world of the Father.

*Art most high in the glory of God the Father.* Although we think of the Son and the Holy Spirit as God come “down” to us in order to draw us back upward into the Bosom of the Father (John 1:18), they of course are always in the Most High, in the Glory of God the Father because they *are* God the Father. This, in a measure, we are intended to be, also. Wherefore with all our heart we respond: *Amen.* May it be so!

### **The Collects—joining in prayer**

Twice in the book of Revelation it is stated that Jesus “hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father” (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). Throughout Mass this should be kept in mind, for in the sacred rite as formulated by Wedgwood and Leadbeater all conscious participants are auxiliary priests, concelebrants with the presiding priest. They are not mere witness-beneficiaries, spectators only, but active assistants as much as are the angels that are present and cooperating throughout the Mass.

As a sign and strengthening of that unanimity of angels, priest, and congregation, the celebrant turns and salutes those present, saying as before:

**P: The Lord be with you.**

**C: And with thy spirit.**

This time the priest says:

**Let us pray.**

Although the Greek word *proseuxomai* is translated “pray” in the New Testament, it also means to praise and worship. If we are adept in prayer, then our prayer brings us right into the presence of God.

The opening prayers are called “Collects” because when they are prayed it draws everyone present together into a unified purpose as well as a psychic unity. The thought form created by the prayer rises upward to be carried by the angels to the throne of God. In the book of Revelation (5:8; 8:3, 4) this is symbolized by the smoke of incense which is said to be “the prayers of the saints.” Since “for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction,” a response from on high is immediate.

In Eastern Christian eucharistic liturgies the prayers are unchanging, and this was adopted by bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater for the first and final Collects.

The first Collect, setting the tone for the entire Mass, is:

**Almighty God, unto Whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name. Through Christ our Lord. R: Amen.**

This is a very ancient prayer, originally written in Latin, and it expresses what should be the aspirations of all who seek higher life and consciousness.

*Almighty God, unto Whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid.* We are intimately known to God, for God is not outside us, but within us, experiencing all that we experience. So this is a declaration of our unity with God. It also affirms the love of God for us, a love than cannot possibly be lessened or altered. Knowing all about us, God—Who Saint James the Apostle calls “the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning”—loves us with an unchanging love (James 1:7). Knowing this, the prophet Jeremiah exclaimed: “Great is Thy faithfulness!” (Lamentations 3:23). We also are looking forward to the time when, as Saint Paul says: “Then shall I know [God] even as also I am known [by God]” (I Corinthians 13:12).

*Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit.* “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment” (Matthew 22:37, 38). Despite all the fatuous babble nowadays about “unconditional love,” a little reflection should reveal that only an unconditioned being—namely God—is capable of unconditional love. Although God loves us however unworthy we may be, we should seek to love Him back in a worthy manner. As Saint John wrote: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure” (I John 3:2, 3). For that reason we pray that our minds and hearts may be cleansed by the in-breathing of the Holy Spirit, that in Her our darkness will be dissolved and only the Divine Light shall remain.

*That we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name.* Only the pure in heart can truly love; and those that love live in God, Who is love (I John 4:8, 16). That is why Jesus said: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). They alone can worthily praise God in their hearts and lives as well as in word. Saint John also said: “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth” (I John 3:18). Before that, Jesus had said: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

The second Collect is always proper to the Mass of the day which has a dominant theme that is first expressed in the Collect and then in the two scripture readings, and sometimes in the Gradual. The Collects, written mostly by Bishop Leadbeater, are of an entirely different character and purpose from those of the traditional Mass. The old Collects have three main features: forgive us; make us good; give us. Leadbeater’s Collects are prayers of spiritual aspiration, of reaching out for divine experience. They can be summed up in the petition from the Lord’s prayer: “Thy kingdom come.” Further, most Sundays have a specific intention in relation to spiritual growth in some form, and can be celebrated at other times of the year to invoke the spiritual energies that will empower those present to attain that growth. The Sundays of Advent present to the worshippers those inner qualities that should be cultivated to “prepare the way of the Lord” in their lives, to prepare them for the birth of Christ in their own



consciousness. Likewise, the Sundays of Lent present the kinds of purification and virtue that will ensure the resurrection of Christ in each individual life. The subsequent Sundays teach us how to maintain and increase the Christ Life.

Other Collects may be added according to the season or the day.

### **The Epistle**

The Collect has set the theme, and now it is expanded upon by a reading from an epistle of one of the Apostles or from the ancient Prophets. A careful listening will show us how to facilitate the aspiration set forth in the Collect.

At the conclusion of the reading all respond: **Thanks be to God.**

### **Gradual**

In the old Mass rites, the Gradual—which means “steps” or “stairs”—was sung as a reader ascended into a pulpit for the reading or singing of the Gospel. These changed very frequently, usually daily, but Bishop Wedgwood felt that it was better to have a standard Gradual with only a few Graduals proper to special holy days or seasons. In this he was following the practice of the Byzantine Orthodox liturgy in relation to the brief hymns known as Troparia. Interestingly, in the twentieth-century English translations and liturgical music books of Bishop Fan Noli of the Albanian Orthodox Church, the Troparia were actually called Graduals.

The standard Gradual is composed of scriptural passages:

**He that loveth wisdom loveth life: and they that seek her early shall be filled with joy.**

**Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end.**

**Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law: yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.**

**The path of the just is as the shining light: shining more and more unto the perfect day.**

This is an ideal expression of the Gnostic Christian character of the Mass, so it is worth a closer look.

*He that loveth wisdom loveth life: and they that seek her early shall be filled with joy.* So essential is Gnosis—Wisdom—that Jesus said in his prayer: “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God” (John 17:3). Wisdom includes intellectual knowledge, but is the insight born of spiritual intuition that has been cultivated by self-discipline and self-purification using the means provided us by the Lord Jesus Christ, especially the holy Mass. Those who “seek her early” by making Wisdom paramount in their life shall surely “be filled with joy.”

*Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes: and I shall keep it unto the end.* There is a path to Light and there is a way to travel it. That is the true science of the spirit. It is an exact and precise methodology—nothing is haphazard or left to chance and whim. The entire Christ Life is as methodical and ordered as is the Mass itself. Those who possess the Christian Gnosis will keep it unto the end: Christhood itself.

*Give me understanding, and I shall keep Thy law: yea, I shall keep it with my whole heart.* There is no place here for the blind faith and unquestioning obedience so beloved to the hearts of exoteric Churchians and professional religionists. First we must learn the way of Christhood, and an essential ingredient of that is understanding. Only when we understand will we be able to keep the law of spirit with our whole

heart, spontaneously and naturally. A true teacher or philosophy explains everything here and now, leaving nothing to “faith” or “the sweet bye and bye.”

*The path of the just is as the shining light: shining more and more unto the perfect day.* Evolution is continual development and expansion. Those who are attuned to the divine current of Spirit live each moment in the Light that is Life. And if we allow it, that Light and Life shall increase daily until we enter the Perfect Day of conscious life in God. No matter how dark and confused the world around us may be, awakening to inner realities causes us to begin walking in the Light here and now—no need to wait for some vague future promise. “Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God” (I John 3:2).

### **The Gospel**

At the completion of the Gradual the priest salutes the people and announces the Gospel:

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

**Priest: The reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint N.**

**People: Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

During this final response the people make the Sign of the Cross over the third eye, their lips, and the center of the chest—the chakras that were awakened and worked with in Baptism. These Signs of the Cross stimulates the “third eye” chakra between the eyebrows, the chakra at the hollow of the throat, and the heart chakra in the center of the chest. (The throat chakra is represented in this action by the lips to which it is directly connected.) This stimulation is very important, for these three chakras are the respective seats of the will, the intelligence, and the perceiving faculties. Further, they embody the threefold trinity of each person. The brow chakra embodies the Father principle, the throat chakra embodies the Son principle (the power of the Word), and the heart chakra embodies the Holy Spirit principle. Heretofore we have invoked the cosmic Trinity, but now we affirm and stimulate our personal Trinitarian nature.

At the conclusion of the Gospel all respond: **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

### **The Creed**

Unless there is a sermon immediately after the Gospel, the Creed is then intoned:

**We believe in God, the undivided Unity, embracing all in oneness.**

**We believe in the Holy and all-glorious Trinity, Who pervades the whole universe, Who dwells also in the spirit of man.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ, the Lord of love and wisdom, first among his brethren, Who leads us to the glory of the Father, who is himself the way, the truth, and the life.**

**We believe in the law of good which rules the world and by which one day all His sons shall reach the feet of the Father, however far they stray.**

**We strive towards the ancient narrow path that leads to life eternal**

**So shall His blessing rest on us ✠ and peace forevermore. Amen.**

This is one of the most important moments in the Mass, for it expresses the Christian Gnosis in a form as profound as it is brief.

*We believe in God, the undivided Unity, embracing all in oneness.* As I said

previously, Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater were adherents of the Non-dual (Advaita) philosophy of India as uncompromisingly taught by Madame Blavatsky, with whom Leadbeater lived for several years in India. God is absolutely undivided Unity, and those who know God are lifted into that Unity and liberated from the mirage of duality. God encompasses all modes of existence, *is* all modes of existence, for God is Existence Itself. “I am the birthless, the deathless, Lord of all that breathes. I seem to be born: it is only seeming, only my Maya. I am still master of my Prakriti, the power that makes me” (Bhagavad Gita 4:6). (Or, more literally: “Although I am birthless, the imperishable Self, although I am the Lord of all beings: controlling [governing] My own prakriti, I manifest through My Maya.”)

*We believe in the Holy and all-glorious Trinity, Who pervades the whole universe, Who dwells also in the spirit of man.* In relation to creation—Maya or Prakriti—God has taken on a threefold mode: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But the Son and the Holy Spirit are only temporary manifestations of the Father, lasting only as long as creation. This Trinity pervades the whole universe as its basis or “ground of being” and does the same within every individual spirit in manifestation. In the Gospel of John, Jesus many times indicates that he only does what he first sees the Father do, or is told by the Father to do (John 3:11; 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:28; 11:42; 12:49, 50). In these words he speaks for all conscious beings: we are image-reflections of the triune Godhead, and live and do as It lives and does. That Life is within each one of us inseparably.

*We believe in Jesus Christ, the Lord of love and wisdom, first among his brethren, Who leads us to the glory of the Father, Who is himself the way, the truth, and the life.* As a perfected being, love and wisdom were the dominant powers of Jesus. With love he healed and with wisdom he enlightened. As Adam the father of humanity (see *Robe of Light*) he was “first among his brethren” in both time and eternity, for he was the first in that creation cycle to ascend to divine status. Then he descended to lead us to the glory of the Father. He was the Way-Shower, the perfect exemplary of the Way, the Truth, and the Life, leading all who will follow his example to the glory of the Father. “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out” (Revelation 3:12). “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Revelation 3:21).

*We believe in the law of good which rules the world and by which one day all His sons shall reach the feet of the Father, however far they stray.* Since all that exists is God, only good really exists—evil being only a distortion or misperception of the good, having no real existence of its own. Consequently, no matter how awful a mess things can appear to be, there is an essential condition of good that shall inevitably be brought forth. That is why Saint Paul could write: “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). And what is that purpose? That “one day all His sons shall reach the feet of the Father, however far they stray.” For the Father has an infinite number of “sons” who exist in and by Him, of whom He is the infinite Self. This is a great mystery, but all shall come to comprehend it fully, for they are eternally a part of it. No one is ever lost to God, much less “damned” by Him. All the prodigal sons eventually return to the bosom of their Father.

*We strive towards the ancient narrow path that leads to life eternal.* The path of Christ is not just two thousand years old. Saint Augustine wrote in the fourth century: “The identical thing that we now call the Christian religion existed among the ancients and has not been lacking from the beginnings of the human race until the coming of Christ in the flesh, from which moment on the true religion, which already existed,

began to be called ‘Christian.’” Earlier Saint Paul had written that the Christian Gospel was that which had already been taught throughout the whole world, “which was preached to every creature which is under heaven” (I Colossians 1:23). Authentic, original Christianity is not new, but eternal in essence, embracing the Ancient Wisdom that has existed from the beginning of the world. All master teachers of humanity are revivers of that Wisdom, reminders of what was at their time either lost or almost extinguished. That is why the Creed says that we seek “the ancient narrow path that leads to life eternal.”

*So shall His blessing rest on us and peace forevermore. Amen.* The way of blessedness is found in seeking God, the source of everlasting peace. And even before we reach the heights of consciousness we will find peace in His blessing as He draws us upward into His perfection and freedom. For as the seers of India have declared, He is Satchidananda: Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss.

### **From the rising up...**

Now the first part of the Mass, the time of teaching, is completed and we begin the bridge that shall lead us into the heart of the Mass known as the Prayer of Consecration—the Canon. Therefore the priest strengthens the bond between himself and the people by once more saluting them.

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

Then he intones a paraphrase of Malachi 1:11 and Jeremiah 33:11:

**From the rising up of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, the Lord’s Name shall be magnified; and in every place incense shall be offered unto His Name and a pure offering. There shall be heard in this place the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord. R: Amen.**

The Mass is the Great Sacrifice here prophesied, the completion of the sacrifice of Melchizedek in which he offered bread and wine on behalf of Abraham (see the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the book of Hebrews). David prophesied of Jesus, saying: “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (Psalms 110:4). As will later be narrated by the priest, Jesus instituted the Mass and fulfilled the prophecy made so long ago.

### **The Offering**

Now, as did Melchizedek and Jesus, the priest offers bread and wine, the pure, unfermented “blood of the grape” of which Moses sang prophetically in Deuteronomy 32:14.

First he offers unleavened bread, for the Mass is the New Passover, saying:

**We adore Thee, O God, Who art the source of all life and goodness, and with true and thankful hearts we offer unto Thee of Thine own life-giving gifts bestowed upon us, Thou Who art the giver of all.**

As Bishop Leadbeater points out in *The Science of the Sacraments*, this is also a prayer asking that the bread be representative of all God has bestowed on us—all of

creation, ultimately—that all may be consecrated to God and be revealed to us as His incarnate Presence everywhere.

Next the priest pours grape juice into the chalice and then a little water. The grape juice represents Infinite Spirit and the water represents finite spirit. When a small amount of water is mixed with juice or wine it becomes an integral part of the wine, indistinguishable from the wine, for it has actually been assumed into the substance of the wine. In the same way the goal of the individual spirit is to unite and merge with the Infinite Spirit, yet not losing its existence in any degree. Therefore the priest prays as he puts in the water:

**According to immemorial custom, O Lord, we now mix water with this wine, praying Thee that we may evermore abide in Christ and He in us.**

Finally he offers the chalice, praying:

**We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice with joy and gladness; may the worship which we offer ascend before Thy Divine Majesty as a sacrifice, pure and acceptable in Thy sight. Through Christ our Lord. R: Amen.**

With joyful anticipation we celebrate the entire Mass, knowing the wondrous Gift that will be given to us in Communion.

The priest blesses incense, saying:

**Be thou blessed ☩ by Him in whose honor thou shalt be burned. Amen.**

He then seals the offering process by fire: censuring the offered elements, the altar, and those present as he quietly says:

**As this incense rises before Thee, O Lord, so let our prayer be set forth in Thy sight. Let Thy holy angels encompass Thy people and breathe forth upon them the spirit of Thy blessing.**

A hymn may be sung at this time, and in our monastery we sing the following:

**Now the powers of heaven invisibly minister with us. For lo, the mystical Sacrifice, all accomplished, is ushered in. Let us with faith and love draw near, that we may become partakers of life everlasting. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

At the conclusion of the censuring, when the priest returns the censer he says quietly:

**May the Lord enkindle within us the fire of His love and the flame of everlasting charity.**

Then he washes his fingers so they will be perfectly clean for the awesome Mystery soon to take place.

Now the solemn completion of the offering in which priest, people, bread and wine are bound together in spiritual union approaches. Therefore the priest turns and bows to the people, saying:

**Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.**

Here, too, we see that the bishops realized the importance of all present for this mystical operation, for they prescribe that the people should respond:

**May the Lord receive the sacrifice at thy hands, and sanctify our lives in His service.**

Turning back to the altar, the priest prays:

**We lay before Thee, O Lord, these Thy creatures of bread and wine, in ✠ token of our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; for here we offer and present unto Thee ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a holy and continual sacrifice unto Thee, that we, who are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people, may hear that His most joyful voice: “Come unto Me, O ye that be blessed of My Father, and possess the Kingdom which is prepared for you from the beginning of the world,” through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with Thee throughout all ages of ages. R: Amen.**

When he makes the Sign of the Cross at the words “in token,” a very real though subtle connection is made between all those present and the offered bread and wine. From now on all actions in relation to these offerings will affect those who have been linked to them. (Since the effect of these actions is purely individual I have not described my personal observations.) In this way the people become united with the offerings and their prayers along with those of the priest will further magnetize them and make them ready for the Great Offering. For the wise do not just give God things of earth—of His own creation—they offer themselves, their souls and bodies “to be a holy and continual sacrifice.”

### **The Preface**

The final steps in our bridge to the heart of the Mass are now taken.

In the early centuries of Christianity persecutions were often fierce, and Christians needed to to hide their identity. In Rome for a long time there were no churches, but Christians met in interior rooms of houses in groups of twenty-five (one bishop and twenty-four minor clergy and laity). They used various signs that only another Christian would know. One test they used was the dialogue that introduces the Preface.

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

**Priest: Lift up your hearts.**

**People: We lift them up unto the Lord.**

**Priest: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.**

**People: It is meet and right so to do.**

Only two points need be pointed out here. First, the person is identified with their spirit. Second, the Mass is called both Missa, “the right thing,” and Eucharist, “thanksgiving.” So the third set of statements are particularly relevant to what we are doing and shall continue to do until the end of the Mass.

The priest continues, invoking all the nine ranks of heavenly powers (this is a unique feature of the Wedgwood-Leadbeater Mass):

**It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty everlasting God.**

**Therefore, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers, with Cherubim and Seraphim, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name, evermore praising Thee and saying:**

To this the people respond:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory; glory be to Thee, O Lord most high.**

**Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

This particular arrangement of phrases is also unique to this Mass. The glory of heaven and earth are not to be only enjoyed or wondered at, but to be offered back to God Who manifested them for our evolution. Nothing should be thought of as ours, but as belonging to God. Our offering them to God is merely being sensible—and beneficial to ourselves. Our resolve to praise Him that comes in the Name of the Lord—Christ Himself—is equally so. Lifting our minds and hearts to the heights we give glory to God in the highest, as we did at the Gloria, but now much more meaningfully.

Through the Mass the spiritual energies have steadily increased in volume and in subtlety as those in attunement with the rite have truly “risen on the inner planes.” Now this process is greatly accelerated, and those whose inner bodies can respond are rapidly lifted up in consciousness to the point in the inner worlds where the astral begins to melt into the causal, where Form begins to merge into Thought. He who has descended to us now begins drawing us upward in an ascent that shall bring us before the throne of God, enabling us to say with Saint Paul that “[God] hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). At this point we, too, “come in the name of the Lord” and stand before the Throne, led by the Great High Priest himself who since our linking with him in the tabernacle of the altar has been accompanying us in our upward movement.

### **The Canon**

We have now entered the heart of the Mass, the prayer of consecration known as the canon or anaphora.

As a first step toward Consecration the priest prays:

**Wherefore, O most loving Father, we Thy servants do pray Thee, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, to ✠ receive, to ✠ purify and to ✠ hallow this oblation which we make unto Thee.**

How can things of earth be capable of transformation into Christ? It is the purpose of the Mass to make them able. Priest, people, bread and wine are to undergo that wondrous change. Consequently the priest will continue to prepare them for that Great Work. Whatever happens to the bread and wine will also happen—at least to a degree—to the priest and people, including being blessed and prepared by signs of the Cross made over the offerings which also awaken and stir up the essential divine nature of all things for its eventual revelation-manifestation. This can occur because of the subtle linking of the participants and priest with the bread and wine.

So when he makes the Sign of the Cross at the words “to receive, to purify and to hallow,” everything linked together is affected. This is possible because the priest is standing in the place of Christ. Whenever Teresa Neumann the stigmatist was in the throes of her visions of Jesus’ passion and she was suffering along with him in the agony of her heart, if from outside her room, unseen by her, a priest made the Sign of the Cross in blessing toward her, the suffering would instantly stop and she would say in gratitude: “O! something good from the Savior.” Such is the miraculous linking of the priest with Christ at his ordination, making him and all priests “ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (I Corinthians 4:1).

That which is bread and grape juice is gradually being changed in preparation for the Great Change when they shall truly become earthly channels of Divine Power. And the same is happening to those present according to the degree of their capacity to respond to the Divine Actions.

### **Remembrances**

Before entering into the Action (*Actionem*) of the holy Mass, the priest calls to mind those whom he and those present wish to share in the blessing, upliftment and healing powers that will soon pour forth in measureless abundance. Bishop Leadbeater explains that as each is named, the holy angels go to them like flashes of lightning and convey blessing power to them. So by commemorating them we actively bring them into the orbit of divine care.

**We desire to offer this Holy Sacrifice first for Thy holy catholic Church; may it please Thee to grant her peace, to watch over her, to bring her to unity, and to guide her throughout the world; likewise for N. our Bishop, for all our bishops, clergy and faithful, and for all here present, whose faith and devotion are known unto Thee.**

What is the “catholic Church”? Obviously the company of those who profess faith in Jesus the Christ and who strive as best they can to follow his teachings and example is meant here, but “catholic” comes from the Greek words *kata holos*—“containing the whole”—so no one can be left out. Saint Paul, writing to the Christians of Corinth, said: “Ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (I Corinthians 3:23). Christians belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God. Therefore the “Church of Christ” must contain all humanity, especially those that are seeking God to the best of their knowledge whatever their religion may be. So in the Mass we are praying for the welfare of all humanity, and we pray that they may have peace, the guiding care of God, and the realization of their unity with one another. In the list we include ourselves last, thinking first of the welfare of others. For this is the perspective of Christ.

**We do also call to mind all who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness or any other adversity (especially...).**



Again, we forget no one, though at this time the priest and people silently bring to mind the names of those they especially pray for.

**And for those who are again about to enter this earthly life through the portal of birth; and likewise for their mothers-to-be (especially...).**

Reincarnation being a basic fact of life, we naturally pray for those in the womb who are no longer disembodied but not yet fully embodied-born. We also pray for their mothers' welfare.

**Likewise do we offer it for all those Thy children whom it hath pleased Thee to deliver from the burden of the flesh (especially for...), that freed from earthly toil and care, they may enjoy the felicity of Thy presence, evermore praising Thee in word and deed, O God everlasting, living and true.**

Finally we remember those who are no longer in the body but experiencing their karma in some other life-spheres or "worlds." Our prayer is for their continued spiritual growth and progress toward perfection in God. Such a commemoration can greatly benefit the departed, and it also conveys to them awareness of our continuing love for them.

#### **"The heart of Bishop Wedgwood"**

Next the priest prays what Bishop Gerritt Munnik, who for several years was his personal secretary, called "the heart of Bishop Wedgwood." These three paragraphs embody the mystical and sacramental understanding of the bishop.

**Uniting in this solemn Sacrifice with Thy holy Church throughout all the ages, we lift our hearts in adoration to Thee, O God the Son, consubstantial, co-eternal with the Father, who, abiding unchangeable within Thyself, didst nevertheless in the mystery of Thy boundless love and Thine eternal Sacrifice breathe forth Thine own divine life into Thy universe, and thus didst offer Thyself as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, dying in very truth that we might live.**

*Uniting in this solemn Sacrifice with Thy holy Church throughout all the ages.* Again we see that the Church of Christ embraces all humanity past and present, though here the virtuous are mostly in mind. The forms may be different, but the spiritually awakened of all eras have taken an active part in the cosmic Sacrifice of which the Mass is a resplendent ray.

*We lift our hearts in adoration to Thee, O God the Son, consubstantial, co-eternal with the Father.* This entire segment is addressed to the Second Person of the Trinity, the Only-begotten Son, the Personal God known in Sanskrit as Ishwara, and not Jesus; and it must be understood in that context. Of course, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are a single Being, and are therefore consubstantial and co-eternal.

*Who, abiding unchangeable within Thyself, didst nevertheless in the mystery of Thy boundless love and Thine eternal Sacrifice breathe forth Thine own divine life into Thy universe.* Ishwara has entered fully into the creation to such a degree that we may say He is incarnated in it. Yet He has undergone no change in doing so. Paramount is the fact that all this has been done by Him as an act of infinite Love. Sacrifice is a trait of

love, so He has sacrificed Himself in order that we might evolve in Him to become sons of God in the fullest degree. The Mass is a part of that Great Sacrifice, which includes our individual life. God really is the self-sacrificing Priest of the cosmos.

*And thus didst offer Thyself as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, dying in very truth that we might live.* Ishwara has “died” in the sense that He has entered into His own dream and is presently dreaming that he is limited or confined to the universe and is experiencing the experience of every sentient being within creation. Thus he is born, lives, suffers and dies a countless times as every moment. Therefore we read in the Bhagavad Gita: “I am the Atman that dwells in the heart of every mortal creature: I am the beginning, the life-span, and the end of all” (10:20). “Light of all lights,...the heart’s dweller” (13:17). “The Lord lives in the heart of every creature. He turns them round and round upon the wheel of his Maya” (Bhagavad Gita 18:61).

**Omnipotent, all-pervading, by that self-same sacrifice Thou dost continually uphold all creation, resting not by night or day, working evermore through that most august Hierarchy of Thy glorious Saints, who live but to do Thy will as perfect channels of Thy wondrous power, to whom we ever offer heartfelt love and reverence.**

*Omnipotent, all-pervading, by that self-same sacrifice Thou dost continually uphold all creation.* The Only-begotten of the Father is the foundation, the substratum of all relative existence, much like the motion picture screen is the substratum of the epics we view in the theater. This creation is the Great Theater and He is the Cosmic Director of the dramas that occur there. Because Ishwara exists the world and all within it exist. Without the omnipresence of God nothing could ever come into being.

*Resting not by night or day, working evermore through that most august Hierarchy of Thy glorious Saints, who live but to do Thy will as perfect channels of Thy wondrous power, to whom we ever offer heartfelt love and reverence.* The processes of creation are delegated to numberless great and powerful beings who once were human like us but have evolved to the status of gods. They are continuing their evolution by participating with God in the evolution of creation and sentient beings. There is a very precise and ordered hierarchy in the creation. Some of these minor deities or devas function on the purely physical level, some on the astral and some on the causal. Their ranks include the saints of angels that are the nearest to us and continually interact with us and our world. Therefore we render them our love and reverence.

**Thou, O most dear and holy Lord, hast in Thine ineffable wisdom deigned to ordain for us this Blessed Sacrament of Thy love, that in it we may not only commemorate in symbol that Thine eternal oblation, but verily take part in it, and perpetuate thereby, within the limitations of time and space, wherewith it is Thy will to veil our earthly eyes from the excess of Thy glory, the enduring sacrifice by which the world is nourished and sustained.**

*Thou, O most dear and holy Lord, hast in Thine ineffable wisdom deigned to ordain for us this Blessed Sacrament of Thy love.*

Our Lord Jesus Christ may have instituted the divine sacrifice of the Mass only two thousand years ago, but God the Son ordained it from eternity. The Mass is the fruition of Divine Love and has been a secret within the heart of God from the very beginning. It is also the fruition of Divine Wisdom for it has the purpose of our deification, the revelation of our divine sonship.

*That in it we may not only commemorate in symbol that Thine eternal oblation, but verily take part in it.* The Mass is not a symbol nor is it a mere commemoration. Rather it is the extension and communication of God's Life that takes place anew every time the Mass is celebrated. Yet it is organically united with all the Masses that have ever occurred as well as with every moment and act of the Universal Sacrifice of which the Mass is a part. So it is also a single, perpetual event embracing both time and eternity. And we are participants in that Great Offering, and further we draw abundant life from it, for we have already seen that the Christ is dying that we might live.

*And perpetuate thereby, within the limitations of time and space, wherewith it is Thy will to veil our earthly eyes from the excess of Thy glory, the enduring sacrifice by which the world is nourished and sustained.* The which transcends all relativity is brought into time and space to perpetuate the evolutionary life that we may one day pass back into the transcendent Bosom of the Father. For the Son is always in the Bosom of the Father (John 1:8). It is only reasonable then, that in the prayers of the Eastern Orthodox Church the Mass and Communion are called "the holy, pure, immortal, heavenly, life-giving and awesome Mysteries of Christ."

After he had washed the disciples' feet, Jesus "said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?" (John 13:12). These three small paragraphs are intended to help us understand which God is doing to us in the Mass.

### **The final preparation**

Holding his hands over the offerings with open palms as a bishop does when he ordains to a sacred office, the priest prays and blesses, saying:

**Wherefore, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, we pray Thee to look down on and accept these offerings, which we, Thy servants, and Thy whole household, do make unto Thee, in obedience to the command of Thy most blessed Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.**

**Which offerings do Thou, O Father, deign with, Thy Holy Spirit and Word to ✠ bless, ✠ approve and ✠ ratify, that they may become for us His most precious ✠ Body and ✠ Blood.**

These Signs of the Cross also affect those present, continuing to prepare them as part of the oblation being made unto God.

### **The Incarnation**

Taking up the now highly magnetized bread he continues:

**Who the day before He suffered took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and with His eyes lifted up to heaven unto Thee, God, His Almighty Father, giving thanks to Thee, He ✠ blessed, brake, and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take and eat ye all of this.**

**FOR THIS IS MY BODY.**

As surely as "God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Genesis 1:3), so now what was heretofore bread is the Living body of Christ manifesting through the intermediary of the body of Jesus Christ, the very body that was born of Mary, raised Peter from the raging waves, was nailed to the Cross, was raised from the dead and

ascended into the heights. And in a mystery we, too, have been “consecrated” and changed to prepare us for the actual reception of that divine, living body. Therefore the priest lifts It on high for our adoration.

Next he takes up the chalice, saying:

**In like manner, after He had supped, taking also this noble chalice into His holy and venerable hands, also giving thanks to Thee, He ✠ blessed it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take and drink ye all of this.**

**FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT: THE MYSTERY OF FAITH, WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS.**

**As oft as ye shall do these things, ye shall do them in memory of Me.**

And now what was the blood of the grape in the chalice is the blood of the Infinite Christ and of Jesus Christ that was shed in the scourging and the crowning with the thorns and at the nailing and piercing on the Cross. We, too, are profoundly affected by that transmutation just we were at the consecration of the bread into the body of Christ. This, too, the priest upraises for our adoration.

This form of consecration is unique to the Western eucharistic rites and therefore merits our attention.

What is “the new and eternal testament”? The opening of the Gospel of Saint John (which is also the closing of this Mass rite) tells us: “as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God,...which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12, 13). The Mass culminates in our receiving of Communion, whose purpose is to empower us to become sons of God in the fullest sense: sharing in His divine consciousness. This participation in this Sacrament of Life prepares and enables us for the ultimate spiritual rebirth into “the bosom of the Father” (John 1:18). No wonder that Saint Paul wrote: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (I Corinthians 2:9).

It is also “the mystery of faith” because the Blood of Christ is the Life of Christ. The word *mysterion* (mystery) is derived from *muo* which literally means “to shut the mouth” in the sense of being beyond all verbal expression, too vast for intellectual comprehension. It also means something that is hidden, an inmost reality not perceived by external means. Real faith is not belief but spiritual intuition. Communion of the Blood of Christ opens this within us and causes us to intuit the glorious purposes of God inherent in this great eucharistic mystery.

This wondrous grace is poured out (“shed”) upon us through the Mass to free us from all bonds of “sin”—ignorance of God and our own true divine Self. “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

### **The adoration**

Bowing, all sing:

**Thee we adore, O hidden Savior, Thee,  
Who in Thy Sacrament dost deign to be;  
We worship Thee beneath this earthly veil,  
And here Thy Presence we devoutly hail.**

This verse, taken from an English Litany of the Blessed Sacrament, says all that can be said. Much more has been written about this entire Prayer of Consecration in the *Science of the Sacraments*—far better than I ever could. As much as is humanly possible, Bishop Leadbeater has explained just how this all takes place.

Rising, all sing as the priest, following the custom of the Eastern Orthodox Church, censes the newly-incarnate Lord:

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to worship the Lord.  
Come and behold Him, Monarch of the Angels.  
O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, throned on Thine altar;  
Ever to Thee be highest glory given.  
Word of the Father, Splendor everlasting;  
O come, let us adore Him; O come, let us adore Him;  
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

Throughout the singing a multitude of spirits of many kinds gather to join with us in our adoration and share in our joy.

### **Empowering the link**

Now the priest strengthens and further activates the subtle connections between the Lord's body and blood and us as he prays:

**Wherefore, O Lord and Heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants, bearing in mind the ineffable sacrifice of Thy Son, the mystery of His wondrous incarnation, His mighty resurrection and His triumphant ascension, do here make before Thy Divine Majesty the memorial which Thy Son hath willed us to make, and we do offer unto Thee this, the most precious gift which Thou hast bestowed upon us: this pure ✠ Host, this holy ✠ Host, this glorious ✠ Host, the holy ✠ Bread of life everlasting, and the ✠ Chalice of eternal salvation.**

These and all subsequent Signs of the Cross further our personal transformation, making us ready for our eventual Communion.

### **Angelic oblation**

The priest continues:

**This do we present before Thee in token of our love and of the perfect devotion and sacrifice of our hearts and minds to Thee; and we pray that Thou wouldst command Thy holy Angel to bear our Oblation to Thine altar on high, there to be offered by Him, who, as the eternal High Priest, for ever offers Himself as the eternal Sacrifice.**

God has sent down to us the supreme gift of body and blood of Christ and Jesus. At this prayer an angel takes the subtle essence of the offered bread and wine (which has

been replaced by the Consciousness of Christ) and takes it on high to be accepted by God as our offering.

This is the Angel of the Presence written about in the *Science of the Sacraments*. He and the priest have worked together in closest union in this awesome process we call the Mass. But now he ascends at the priest's request and the priest takes over his function, linking himself fully with the Holy Gifts as he prays (making the last cross upon himself):

**And as He hath ordained that that heavenly Sacrifice shall be mirrored here on earth through the ministry of mortal men, to the end that Thy holy people may be knit more closely into fellowship with Thee, we do pray for Thy servant who ministers at this altar, that, meetly celebrating the mysteries of the most holy ✠ Body and ✠ Blood of Thy Son, he may be ✠ filled with Thy mighty power and blessing.**

Not forgetting the priestly aspect of the rest of us, he continues:

**Likewise we pray Thee to sanctify Thy people here present with these Thy heavenly gifts, and through these mysteries do Thou ✠ hallow, ✠ quicken, and ✠ bless them, that both in their hearts and in their lives they may show forth Thy praise and glorify Thy holy Name.**

Once again spiritual energies flow from Christ himself into our higher centers of awareness.

**All these things...**

The priest takes the chalice in his left hand and the bread in his right. He then makes the Sign of the Cross with the bread five times over the chalice as he prays:

**All these things do we ask, O Father, in the Name and through the mediation of Thy blessed Son, for we acknowledge and confess with our hearts and lips that ✠ by Him were all things made, yea, all things both in heaven and earth; ✠ with Him as the indwelling Life do all things exist, and ✠ in Him as the transcendent Glory all things live and move and have their being.**

**To whom with Thee, O mighty ✠ Father, in the unity of the Holy ✠ Spirit, be ascribed all honor and glory, throughout the ages of ages. R: Amen.**

At the words "throughout the ages of ages," he lifts up the oblations so the chalice is at eye level. This was the original elevation done for the veneration of the people. Much later, in the eleventh century, it became the practice to elevate them immediately after their consecration.

Although the corresponding prayer in the traditional Roman Mass refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, this prayer speaks of the Son of God, the the infinite Christ and Creator, Ishwara.

And here I should point out that the processes I have been describing relating to the subtle levels of those participating in the Mass occur *only* in the Mass rite formulated by Bishop Wedgwood and Bishop Leadbeater. The consecration is the same in all rites, but only the Wedgwood-Leadbeater form affects the participants in

such marvelous ways. Other eucharistic rites produce very sacred atmospheres that certainly benefit those that are attuned to them, but that is all. Only these Mass rituals directly and intentionally work on the subtle bodies of those present for the transformation of their consciousness. For this Mass is a true Yoga, developing the spiritual intuition and other highest-level faculties in those who are purified and in full attunement with it, awakening them into the abundant life that Christ intends for us (John 10:10).

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Now that our mental energies are harmonized and unified, we are ready to turn our consciousness upward, directly to the supreme heights, to God the Father Himself Who is sitting upon the "great white throne" (Revelation 20:11), in which we aspire to permanently be established. This was what Jesus promised in the already-cited verses: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out" (Revelation 3:12). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:21).

The priest prefaces this by saying:

**Let us pray. Instructed by the words of sacred Scripture, and following the tradition of holy Church from of old, we now say:**

and all respond, singing:

**Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

This is not just a prayer, it is a powerful invocation and evocation of Consciousness, one of the most important formulas of power in the Christian tradition. For many centuries it was the practice of fervent Christians to perpetually recite the Lord's prayer, often using a string of beads to remind them to keep praying. In fact, our word "bead" comes from "bede" which means to pray or petition. So popular was this practice that an entire street in London consisted of shops selling those beads—hence its name of Paternoster Row, Paternoster being Latin for "Our Father." Also in those centuries it was common practice for many among the aristocracy and the wealthy to be accompanied at all times by a "bede-man" who stood by them and constantly prayed the Lord's Prayer silently, which was considered an invocation of the entire range of spiritual blessings needed by human beings. In some orders, such as the early Carmelites, a certain number of repetitions of the Lord's Prayer were done in place of the formal hours of the Divine Office. And pious laity often followed the same practice—especially those who had no books from which to read the prayers and psalms of the Office.

But it also has a meaning we should investigate.

*Our Father, Who art in heaven.* The "abode" of God is God: Infinite Consciousness symbolized by the boundless sky known in Indian mysticism as the Chidakasha or Conscious Space (Ether)—not some heaven modeled on the earth or any other kind of relative existence.

*Hallowed be Thy Name.* The very thought of God should be consecrated and consecratory in our minds. The holy names that invoke divine remembrance should be highly prized. The Greek word translated “name” is *onoma*, which means a name, an object named, and something that is being called upon—and in this instance implies the act of calling upon God. So we pray that any reaching out for God inwardly and outwardly will be made holy by divine response. For “hallow” is a translation of *agiadzo*, which means to make holy and also to purify. We are also asking that our invocation of God be purified and made effective—and the same be done to us.

*Thy kingdom come.* May the divine Consciousness descend into us and become our consciousness—may our finitude be transformed into Infinity and may we be gods within God.

*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.* Thus may we become perfect reflections of God here and now, being ourselves revelations of the Divine.

*Give us this day our daily bread.* May our life in the spirit be continually sustained by spiritual enlivenment received through direct, conscious and continual communion with God, “the heavenly bread, the life of the whole world.”

*And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.* Jesus is enunciating an inescapable law: “All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them” (Matthew 7:12). “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:14). Even in the Beatitudes he set forth this principle, saying: “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy” (Matthew 5:7). Saint Paul wrote: “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). So although here we are praying about being forgiven for our transgressions, we are also assenting to the entire law of karma and the responsibility it entails. Further, we are promising to follow that law in the future in all things.

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* This does not mean that God would lead us into enticement to wrongdoing, but we are praying that we need not undergo difficulties or testings that will reveal our inner disposition to wrongdoing, but that they be revealed to us directly through the purification of our mind. We pray that by our conforming to the karmic laws it will no longer be necessary for us to undergo the reaping of negative karmic seeds, but that the purification of our hearts will enable us to escape them through having learned the lessons they were meant to teach us—for karma is never reward and punishment but reaction meant for our instruction in the universal laws. We are aspiring to reach such a degree of wisdom that there will be no need for karmic reaction. It is a matter of awakening into higher consciousness where karmic reaction will no longer be needed. As the Gita tells us: “Do not say: ‘God gave us this delusion.’ You dream you are the doer, you dream that action is done, you dream that action bears fruit. It is your ignorance, it is the world’s delusion that gives you these dreams” (Bhagavad Gita 5:14).

*For Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.* This is a recognition of God’s eternal nature and a prayer for participation in that Eternal Being to such a degree that we will truly be gods within the greater Life of God. This transformation is the core of Jesus’ teachings, of “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

### **Heartfelt thanks**

This is no fanciful dream, but a reality, for we see in the great saints and masters that it is possible for men to become gods. In gratitude for that example and assurance, the priest now prays:



**Here do we give unto Thee, O Lord, most high praise and hearty thanks for the wonderful grace and virtue declared in holy Mary, the ever-virgin Mother, and in all Thy glorious saints from the beginning of the world, who have been the choice vessels of Thy grace and a shining light unto many generations (especially Saint N. whom we commemorate this day). And we ✠ join with them in worship before Thy great white throne, whence flow all love and light and blessing through all the worlds which Thou hast made.**

Although the Lord Jesus is the pivotal element in the spiritual journey of his disciples, they receive tremendous help and blessing from all those that have gone on before us in the path of Christian discipleship, the primary one being the holy Virgin, the original Eve returned as the New Eve—the Eve of Renewal, the Mother of all the Living (Genesis 3:20. See *Robe of Light*). Yet we honor all the “glorious saints from the beginning of the world,” whatever their formal religion or philosophy may have been. For the true God is One, and unites all who live in Him.

There is a major point in the final sentence: “And we join with them in worship before Thy great white throne, whence flow all love and light and blessing through all the worlds which Thou hast made.” This is not poetry but fact. In that moment we stand before the great throne, the great seat or center of the Consciousness that is God. And we unite with all the saints of all ages in worship, baptized in the love, light and blessing that flows therefrom.

### **A thousand altars**

The time of Communion is very near; a few more steps and we will have reached it. Our subtle bodies have been energized and corrected several times, and now the final stage is here. The priest takes up the Host and breaks It in half, and from the left half breaks off a small particle as he prays:

**O Son of God, who showest Thyself this day upon a thousand altars and yet art one and indivisible, in token of Thy great sacrifice we break this Thy Body, praying that by this action, ordained from of old, Thy ✠ Strength, Thy ✠ Peace, and Thy ✠ Blessing, which Thou dost give us in this Holy Sacrament, may be spread abroad upon Thy flock; and as Thou, O Lord Jesus Christ, wast made known to Thy disciples in the breaking of bread, so may Thy many children know themselves to be one in Thee, even as Thou art one with the Father. R: Amen.**

Union and unity is the pervading theme of this prayer on more than one level. First: the absolute indivisibility of Christ and Jesus, the joining of heaven and earth through the sacred Mass; second: the union of Jesus with each communicant; and third: union with one another and with the Father. This is the fulfillment of Jesus prayer on the very night in which he instituted the Holy Mass: “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me” (John 17:20-23).

The breaking of the Host and the three Signs of the Cross with the particle effect

the final step in the preparation of our subtle bodies for Communion.

## **Peace**

Approaching the Communion, the priest prays:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst say to Thine apostles: “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you,” regard not our weakness, but the faith of Thy Church, and grant her that peace and unity which are agreeable to Thy holy will and commandment. R: Amen.**

What is needed is not mere political, civil peace or mere lack of conflict, but the abiding peace and stability that is to be found only in God. As Jesus told his disciples on that holy night of the first Mass: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Everything possible has been done to bring about the unanimity of the priest and those present. Jesus said: “If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift” (Matthew 5:23, 24). Who can say what conflicts even from past lives may be present in our subconscious minds? Therefore the priest turns and salutes the people:

**Priest: The peace of the Lord be always with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

## **May our souls be lifted**

And now the final prayer before Communion:

**O Thou who in this adorable Sacrament hast left us a living memorial and pledge of Thy marvelous love for mankind, and dost therein graciously draw us into wondrous and mystic communion with Thee; grant us so to receive the sacred mysteries of Thy Body and Blood that our souls may be lifted into the immensity of Thy love, and that being filled with a high endeavor, we may ever be mindful of Thine indwelling Presence and breathe forth the fragrance of a holy life. R: Amen.**

This prayer expresses the prime purpose of the Sacrament. “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification” (I Thessalonians 4:3). “God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification” (II Thessalonians 2:13).

## **Unto Thee...**

In response to the prayer, the people sing:

**Unto Thee, O Perfect One, the Lord and Lover of men, do we commend our life and hope. For thou art the Heavenly Bread, the Life of the whole world; Thou art in all places and endurest all things, the Treasure of endless good, and well of infinite compassion. Amen.**

This prayer, written by Bishop Wedgwood, contains great metaphysical wisdom.

*Unto Thee, O Perfect One, the Lord and Lover of men, do we commend our life and*

*hope.* It is important for us to realize that God is indeed a Person (Purusha), which is why we are persons also, being His images. Yet God does not have a conditioned personality such as we have taken on temporarily as a result of our experiences in material embodiment. Further, God loves us—not in the petty egoic emotional attachment that this world thinks is love (which is often nothing more than ego extension and psychic vampirism)—in that He is perpetually drawing us upward and back to full consciousness in His greater Consciousness which He intends to share with us. The only way to peace and fulfillment is for us to center ourselves in that upward current, to commend unto Him our entire life and hope. For outside of God there is no true life or hope—only self-induced illusion.

*For thou art the Heavenly Bread, the Life of the whole world.* “In him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). God is Existence itself. We live by Him every moment. Every atom—every particle of every atom—is a living entity drawing its existence directly from God. We are not creations of God, but His manifestations. Once we stray from consciousness of that unity only confusion and misery can result. For God is not just the Life of the world, as the Holy Spirit He *is* the whole world.

*Thou art in all places and endurest all things.* This is a rarely understood truth. God does not just know all things at a distance through a faculty of omniscience, but rather He is inside all things, just as we are inside our bodies. Therefore He experiences everything that takes place. When a volcano erupts, He experiences it happening to Him as He experiences the very entity of the earth. Further, He experiences everything every single human being undergoes. Many people complain that God permits suffering, but they do not realize that He is experiencing the suffering of every sentient being. There is no joy or pain He does not make His own. This had to be done so we could evolve the scope of our consciousness through many lives in every possible gradation of consciousness. This is the great Sacrifice God endures every moment for love of us. He suffers that we might end suffering. Right now He is living and dying and being reborn over and over—and all for us, for He needs nothing. We have covered this earlier.

*The Treasury of endless good.* However long the process of evolution to Divine Consciousness takes, God will continue to supply us with all we need. Although we may dislike some aspects and even rebel and complain to Him (or petulantly deny His existence), every single moment of our relative existence is good. However great the suffering, grief, confusion, and despair it is all good for it will work toward our liberation. “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

*And well of infinite compassion.* The literal meaning of compassion is “suffering with.” From His love God both permits our suffering and suffers it right along with us. For He will not settle for anything less than our attainment of His Consciousness and Life as His sons, perfect extensions of His being. We are as inseparable from God as He is from Himself.

### **At the altar**

As the foregoing is sung by the people, the priest receives Communion, first saying the brief prayer:

**Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; yet, obeying Thy command I will take the Bread of Heaven and the Cup of Salvation and call upon the Name of the Lord.**

The first part of this prayer is taken from the following account of Saint Matthew: “When Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed” (Matthew 8:5-8).

The word used in the Greek text of the Gospel is *ikanos*, which means to be sufficient for something or to be at a certain degree of ability, and its quotation here indicates that no one of earth is really worthy of Holy Communion or fully able to grasp all that is intended and given us in Communion. Yet Jesus has told us to partake of his Consciousness embodied in his eucharistic Body and Blood, the Bread of Heaven and the Cup of Salvation. For as David he had sung: “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord” (Psalms 116:12, 13). The Hebrew word he used for salvation was *Yeshuwah*, meaning deliverance in the sense of liberation (Sanskrit: moksha). Interestingly, it is identical with the Aramaic form of Jesus’ name, Yeshua, which means The Lord Shall Save.

So though our negative ego might have (false) scruples and try to keep us from receiving Communion, we remember the command of the Lord and do so anyway.

As the priest receives Communion he says:

**The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto life eternal. Amen.**

After receiving he stands in silent awareness for a moment and then says:

**Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift.**

Because it truly is beyond the scope of thought and word, he says only these few words.

### **The Communion**

We hasten now to increase our participation in the Life of God through Jesus Christ who is now incarnate on the altar and soon to be united with us. The priest turns to us and invites us to the Fount of Life, saying:

**Ye that desire to partake of the Body and Blood of the Lord, draw nigh and receive this most holy Sacrament.**

These words are reminiscent of an ancient hymn with which Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater would have been familiar. Once two saints had a disagreement and, human beings being what they are, they each had followers that made all kinds of trouble with the other’s followers. Being saints, they wanted to end this situation, so they and their companions met at an isolated church. As everyone else attended Mass, the saints walked together outside the church and resolved all their problems. Their agreement coincided with the time for Communion and they heard angelic voices singing from within the church: *Venite, Sancti*: Come, Holy Ones...; so they entered and all took Communion together in unity of heart and mind. In commemoration this hymn was composed, based on words the angels had sung to them:

Draw nigh and take the body of the Lord;  
And drink the holy blood for you outpoured.

By that pure body and that Holy blood,  
Saved and refreshed, we render thanks to God.

Salvation's Giver, Christ the Holy Son,  
By his dear cross and blood the world hath won.

Offered was he for greatest and for least,  
Himself the Offring, and himself the Priest.

He, Lord of Light, and Savior of our race,  
Hath given to his saints a wondrous grace.

Approach ye, then, with faithful hearts sincere,  
And take the safeguard of salvation here.

He, that his saints in this world rules and shields,  
To all believers life eternal yields.

He feeds the hungry with the Bread of Heaven,  
And living streams to those who thirst are given.

Alpha and Omega, this Christ the Lord,  
Hath come now to be received within.

O Lord of all, our blessed Savior Thou,  
In this Thy feast of love be with us now.

As each one receives Communion the priest says to them:

**The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep thy soul unto life eternal. Amen.**

The purpose of Communion is to strengthen and empower us to “lay hold” on eternal life (I Timothy 6:12, 19), so the priest prays that Communion will keep us steady in that sacred path, that we shall follow it unto its end in God.

When all have received Communion they sit in silent meditation, experiencing the wondrous union that has been effected in them. Here is what four great saints have said about this:

“Participation in the body and blood of Christ produces in us none other effect than to make us pass into that which we receive” (Saint Leo the Great).

“[Christ says to us:] I am the food of the strong; have faith and eat Me. But thou wilt not change Me into thyself; it is thou who will be transformed into Me” (Saint Augustine).

“He who assimilates corporal food transforms it into himself; this change repairs the losses of the organism and gives it necessary increase. But the eucharistic food, instead of being transformed into the one who takes it, transforms him into itself. It follows that the proper effect of the Sacrament is to transform us so much into Christ,

that we can truly say: 'I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me' [Galatians 2:20]....The efficacy of this Sacrament is to work a certain transformation of ourselves into Christ by the process of love...[and] the property of love is to transform the one who loves into the object of his love" (Saint Thomas Aquinas).

"Your meditations may be as profound, as exalted, as devout as you like, you may practice every pious exercise you can manage, but all this is as nothing in comparison with the Blessed Sacrament. What men do may be godly, but this Sacrament is God Himself. It is in this Sacrament that man is transformed by grace into God" (Saint Johannes Tauler).

In Communion we receive Christ God through the intermediary of Christ Jesus, whom we also receive, so perfect is the union of the two. And the ultimate purpose of this Communion is for us to eventually be exactly what Jesus is: Christ. For Christ is not just a person, infinite or finite, Christ is also a state of being and consciousness.

### **Under the veil**

After the brief meditation the priest returns to the altar and exclaims:

**Under the veil of earthly things now have we communion with our Lord Jesus Christ; soon with open face shall we behold Him, and rejoicing in His glory, be made like unto Him. Then shall His true disciples be brought by Him with exceeding joy before the presence of His Father's glory.**

The Lord Jesus told his disciples: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). He also prayed: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). The concept of the Sukhavati—the Pure Land where great Masters, Buddhas and Bodhisattvas dwell with their devotees to guide them on to the supreme enlightenment—is a most ancient one. And Jesus in these verses affirms the truth of it. His true disciples shall be brought into the presence of the Divine Glory and evolve to abide within It forever.

The people respond in the very words Saint John the Apostle heard spoken before the throne of God in the highest heaven (Revelation 7:12):

**Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.**

For they are standing before "the great white throne" as surely as any saint or angel has stood there before them.

### **The final prayer**

Then:

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

Saying "Let us pray," the priest says the final prayer of the Mass:

**Let us pray. We who have been refreshed with Thy heavenly gifts, do pray Thee, O Lord, that Thy grace may so be grafted inwardly in our hearts, that it may continually be made manifest in our lives. Through Christ our Lord. R: Amen.**

“Faith without works is dead” (James 2:20, 26), and so is Communion unless its effect “may be so grafted inwardly in our hearts that it may continually be made manifest in our lives.”

**Ite...**

Again:

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

He then sings a phrase in Latin:

**Ite Missa est.**

This is usually incorrectly translated: “Go, the Mass is ended.” Actually it is an idiomatic phrase that has no English equivalent. It means that the *Missah*—the Right Tribute—is completed or has been accomplished. The result of divine and human action has produced many things, all of which go to make up the *Missah*. Now is completed the Mystery of Immanuel: God With Us. And so we all respond:

**Deo gratias.**

“Thanks be to God”—for even our actions have originated in and been carried out through our divine nature. For has not God said to us: “Ye are gods” (Psalms 82:6; John 10:34)? And His word shall not return to Him void (Isaiah 55:11).

There is much more to this interchange, though. Throughout the Mass we have been progressively ascending within the planes of inner consciousness, but now the priest has dismissed us by saying: “Ite Missa est.” From that moment we begin gradually descending to the consciousness that is centered in this plane of our usual evolution.

Therefore the priest blesses us to carry the benefits of the Mass back with us to remain within our lives to bless a starving and thirsting world, saying:

**The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord:**

**And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you, and remain with you always. R: Amen.**

Knowledge and love—these are the two foundations of enlightenment in God through Jesus Christ the Lord. And for this the continual blessing of the triune God must be among and within us always. So we ourselves set the seal by answering:

**Amen.**

May it be so!

### **The final steps**

The preceding interchange takes place too quickly for us to be fully “returned to earth” at its end, so the priest provides sufficient time for us to acclimatize ourselves by the reading of the beginning of Saint John’s Gospel:

**Priest: The Lord be with you.**

**People: And with thy spirit.**

**Priest: The beginning of the holy Gospel according to Saint John.**

**People: Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.**

**He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (*All bow.*) And the Word was made flesh (*all rise*), and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* Logos, here translated as Word, has more than one meaning: 1) a spoken word; 2) a full statement; 3) a discourse on a subject; 4) all the preceding, but in the mind, not verbalized; 5) will; 6) intention or purpose; 7) being an emanation of the mind, a symbol of the Only-Begotten of the Father, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity; 8) the Divine Word, the primal, creative Sound Vibration or Holy Spirit. So when we read about “the Word” we must determine which—one or more—of the meanings are intended. That will determine the character of any explanation of the text. This opening passage from Saint John certainly implies that we are being told about the Son, Ishwara the Creator immanent in creation as its inner Guide, and the interaction between Him and the creation, including human beings.

Although the Godhead is absolutely One it is also Triune in an incomprehensible manner. This should not particularly bother us, for the ancient sages have assured us that nothing can be said absolutely about God, which means that to call God Unity is no more accurate than to call God Trinity. But we have to accommodate our limitations and work with what we have, confident that as we evolve the divine nature will become increasingly comprehensible to us.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are inherent in the transcendent Godhead, so Saint John is telling us that the Only-Begotten of the Father, the internal Word and Will, is absolutely eternal, and has not come into being, but has always been a “part” of God while at the same time God—the Whole.

*The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* When the process of creation began in the



depths of God's Consciousness, the Word-Son was already fully there, He did not come into being or undergo any change. Every iota of relative existence was an emanation of Him brought about by His own self-determination (self-will). He is the sole Source of all things. He was in the bosom of the Father (John 1:18) and all spirits were in His bosom. There is no Will in the Godhead but the Logos-Word.

*In him was life; and the life was the light of men.* The Son is essentially Consciousness, the Consciousness in which all other consciousnesses or spirits are eternally rooted and existing. His Consciousness is our consciousness; though two they are one, and that is how it is that He experiences all things from the movements of every particle of every atom to every thought and experience of all sentient beings. This we have already discussed.

*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.* Although an emanation of His Consciousness, insentient creation, manifest or unmanifest, is unconscious and therefore "darkness" that does not and cannot possess the ability to be aware of His existence. This statement also applies to those consciousnesses or spirits who have not yet evolved the capacity for such comprehension.

*That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* The ability to be aware of that True Light and to be Lightened by It is the sole factor that determines whether or not we are human beings or merely humanimals. Those who dwell in human form without either possessing or exercising that faculty are not human in the fullest sense, no matter what other abilities they may have, including intellectual genius. That is why one holy woman I knew used to say regarding her spiritual teacher: "I was not a human being until he got hold of me."

*He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.* God the Son is the Inner Ruler of material creation which is an extension of His Consciousness or Being, yet it not only does not know Him, it cannot know him.

*He came unto his own, and his own received him not.* Both the material creation and the unevolved spirits within it are intimately linked with the Lord (Ishwara) who is continually acting upon them and evolving them according to their eternal nature. Yet they do not perceive Him and "receive" Him by uniting their consciousness with His—the creation does not have the capability and the unevolved have not yet developed the necessary faculties for it. It is unhappily true that some sentient beings do perceive the Presence of God in and around them but perversely refuse to acknowledge It and turn away in their wills from Him. But it is also happily true that in time they will turn toward Him, for it is their very nature to do so.

*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.* "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Psalms 27:8). *Paniym*, the Hebrew word translated "face," means face, presence, sight (seeing), and person; so to seek the face of God is to seek God Himself. "Seek and ye shall find," said Jesus (Matthew 7:7). Those who seek and find shall receive His Consciousness into their own consciousness, His Spirit into their spirit, and thereby "become the sons of God." For they will have believed on His will and intention for them. It is an act of their heart—their essential being which is one with God.

*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* This "birth" from the confining womb of creation into Boundless Being as liberated Sons of God comes from God alone, for it is the revelation of God, of "Christ in you, the hope of glory" from eternity (Colossians 1:27). As one of Yogananda's prayers said: "Spirit to Spirit goes."

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory*

*as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* Having made Himself “flesh” as creation, the Only-Begotten dwelt within and without us, and those who have been born into His Consciousness have perceived His Glory, having themselves become part of that Glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, and thereby also Full of Grace and Truth like Him.

The divine Mass is also encapsulated in these words of Saint John for it is an integral part of that divine birth process in which the Being and Consciousness of Christ the Word is infused in us and made operative as the leaven of Divine Consciousness—of Divinity Itself (Matthew 13:33).

**The final word**

There is nothing more to say but the response of the people to the reading of Saint John’s words.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

# Chapter Five: Confession and Absolution

“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven....Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained” (Matthew 18:18; John 20/23).

## Sin

Every action has an equal and opposite reaction in every level of our existence, and that force of reaction is what we mean by karma. We mistakenly think that karma is a matter of values or morals, but in reality it is simple reaction—nothing more. The factor that lifts it into a practical aspect of life is our own personal consciousness. We and we alone decide what our karma is going to be, for we alone decided in the past what our present karma was going to be. It is totally a personal matter. There is no such thing as someone else interfering with the karma of another person, nor is there such a thing as someone else taking on another’s karma. It is all squarely on our shoulders, and nowhere else.

It does no good to worry over anyone’s karma, including our own. That is why in the Bhagavad Gita we find: “The Lord is everywhere and always perfect: what does He care for man’s sin or the righteousness of man? The Atman [Spirit] is the light: the light is covered by darkness: this darkness is delusion: that is why we dream. When the light of the Atman drives out our darkness that light shines forth from us, a sun in splendor, the revealed Brahman [God]” (Bhagavad Gita 5:15, 16). That is all there is to it.

Why, then, do exoteric Christians make such a fuss about sin with so little positive effect? Because they have no idea what sin is, nor its actual effect, and certainly not how to be rid of it—really free of it, not just having stuffed it in a corner and made sure it could not do anything for the present.

Sin is *amartano*: failing to come up to the mark. And what is the mark? Our eternal nature as spirit. What does sin do? It blinds us to knowledge of our real nature and binds us in our attempts to free and reveal our spirit. How are we rid of it? The Gita tells us in the verse just before the ones I cited: “Do not say: ‘God gave us this delusion.’ You dream you are the doer, you dream that action is done, you dream that action bears fruit. It is your ignorance, it is the world’s delusion that gives you these dreams” (Bhagavad Gita 5:14). Sin will ever be with us until we awaken and rise into spirit-consciousness and shake off the dream-delusions of this material world. “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light” (Ephesians 5:14).

Absolution, then, is an infusion of spiritual light and consciousness, a spiritual energization that aids us in throwing off the bonds of the darkness of ignorance of who we really are: sons of God. It is a help, but all the work must be done by us. This is necessary for us to understand, because in more than one Sacrament there is reference to sin and absolution from sin. When misunderstood, they make us feel helpless, powerless against sin, but when rightly understood they strengthen our resolve to attain higher life, empower us, and show us the way.

Such a lengthy exposition is needed so we will not read into the sacramental forms of bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater the destructive ideas and attitudes of exoteric “Churchianity” that are a blight to humanity.

Now we can look at their version of Confession and Absolution.

## Yogic Confession and Absolution

According to centuries-old custom, the person who wishes to make confession kneels at a prie-dieu in the church, beside which the priest is seated. It is also not uncommon for them to kneel at the altar rail, the priest sitting just inside.

In this Sacrament it is the person confessing that begins the rite with invocation of the Trinity:

**In the Name of the Father ✠ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Father, give me your blessing, for I have sinned.**

There is no correction until a person admits the problem. Self-honesty is an integral part of truthfulness. Yet, the penitent does not need condemnation or “a good talking to,” as some exoteric priests think, nor an exposition of how he is a sinner. Rather he needs blessing—but a special blessing. So the priest blesses him, making the sign of the Cross over his heart and mouth, saying:

**The Lord be in thy ✠ heart and on thy ✠ lips, that thou mayest rightly confess thine offenses.**

“Rightly confess” means to speak with actual understanding of the nature and consequence of his thought and actions with a genuine intention to expunge the roots of his failings from his inner mind so they will not be repeated, and with an openness to the spiritual counsel he will receive. (If he receives no such counsel, the priest is unworthy and he should go elsewhere for advice.)

It should be pointed out here that we sin against ourselves, and sometimes against others if they are involved or affected by our misdeeds. Therefore confession is meant to be a profound self-examination and prelude to self-amendment. It is a clear-sighted acceptance of responsibility for our actions. This being so, the penitent says:

**I confess before God almighty, Father Son, and Holy Spirit, and to you, Father, that I have sinned in thought, in desire, in word and deed. Especially I have...**

Now he calls to mind and recounts all those things whereby he has violated his nature as a child of God. It is to be supposed that he will not have killed or robbed or maimed anyone—things like that should have been ended in previous lives. But thoughts of hatred, hostility, or resentment, of greed and envy, or wishing ill of others, may well be quite present in his heart, and they should all be set forth in his confession, for often the admission of them is the banishing of them. Anything that is inconsistent with the life dedicated to the search for total union with God is a sin for a Christian initiate, and the aspiration to that state is not optional—it is the sole purpose of Christ in our lives.

When he has spoken everything to the priest, he concludes:

**For these and all my other offenses which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry, firmly purpose amendment, most humbly ask remission of**

**almighty God, and of you, Father, absolution and the benefit of spiritual counsel and advice.**

Then the priest speaks to him about the practical ways of spiritual life and how he may strengthen his will for any correction needed.

As the final element in this Sacrament, the priest blesses and prays, saying:

**Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath left power on earth to His church to absolve all those that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him, of His tender compassion forgive thee thine offenses; and by His authority committed unto me I ✠ absolve thee from all thy sins. In the Name of the Father ✠ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. R: Amen.**

**The King of Love and Fountain of all goodness restore unto thee the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and give thee grace to continue in the same, that thou mayest inherit the kingdom of heaven and be made like unto His own pure and glorious image. R: Amen.**

We must remember that in earlier English usage “forgive” meant to disregard or cancel something out. It was common to speak of “forgiving” a debt when it was canceled (remitted). So God is not miffed and we do not need “pardon” in the usual human manner, though a pardon granted to a criminal is also a cancellation.

Absolution is an empowerment of the penitent for a better life, and on his subtle levels many kinks are straightened out, for as Bishop Leadbeater says, the blessing of the priest combs out many snarls and tangles in the astral and causal bodies. His sins are not wiped out, but their effects are removed or loosened so he will not be hindered in striving for a higher level of life and consciousness which will purge him of all defects and negative karma.

The rite of Confession is a great blessing and a tremendous help to the serious initiate of Christ but, as I said at the beginning, all the work is to be done by us. So we must understand Confession as a great benefit that must be put to use, otherwise it is pointless, even superstitious.

# Chapter Six: Anointing of the Sick

“He sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick” (Luke 9:2). There is no such thing as a purely material phenomenon; nothing can exist in this world unless it has a counterpart, a substratum, in the astral and causal worlds. A complete and viable religion deals with all human phenomena, for everything, including sickness, has metaphysical roots. It is very clear from the Gospels that sickness is rooted in spiritual disharmony and conflict, that it is a result of “sin.” So much so that after healing a man Jesus told him: “Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee” (John 5:14).

On another occasion: “Behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house” (Matthew 9:2-7).

This being so, healing has always been a significant aspect of living Christianity.

## Yogic Anointing of the Sick

### **Invocation and exhortation**

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick begins, like all Sacraments, with an invocation of the Trinity, the priest saying:

**In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Because holy water has both exorcistic and healing properties, the priest touches the forehead of the patient with holy water and sprinkles his surroundings to expel any negative energies or entities that may be causing or aggravating his illness.

Then the following is read by the priest or an assistant:

**Hear the words of the Apostle James: Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:14-16).**

### **Confiteor/confession and absolution**

Since, as already said, illness has roots in negativity or sin, the sick person recites the confiteor from the Mass:

**O Lord, Thou hast created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of Thine own eternity; yet often we forget the glory of our heritage and**

wander from the path which leads to righteousness. But Thou, O Lord, hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are ever restless till they find their rest in Thee. Look with the eyes of Thy love upon my manifold imperfections and pardon all my shortcomings, that I may be filled with the brightness of the everlasting light and become the unspotted mirror of Thy power and the image of Thy goodness; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

If, however the ill person feels troubled in conscience regarding any matter, since it may be an obstacle to his cure, or even the cause of his affliction, he may make a confession of it. If the patient is very weak, or not fully conscious, the confiteor may be said on his behalf by the priest or another, or it suffices that he make a mental act of aspiration. Whichever form his confession may take—simple recitation of the confiteor or a special confession—at its conclusion the priest absolves and blesses him, saying:

**Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power on earth to his Church to absolve all those that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, of his tender compassion forgive thee thine offenses; and by his authority committed unto me I ✠ absolve thee from all thy sins. In the Name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**The King of Love and Fountain of all goodness restore unto thee the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and give thee grace to continue in the same, that thou mayest inherit the kingdom of heaven and be made like unto His own pure and glorious image. R: Amen.**

Again I want to point out that in earlier English usage “forgive” meant to disregard or cancel something out. Each one of us is to be a conscious co-worker with God in our journey to deification, and it is the Holy Spirit who is the evolver and sanctifier of those who seek spiritual perfection. But sin puts us out of phase or sync with the Holy Spirit and we become hindered in spirit and also hinder the Holy Spirit from working Her work in us. We need to be restored to our former condition of unhindered communication with God, “the King of Love and Fountain of all goodness” and empowered to continue in that state in order to gain the kingdom and become “His own pure and glorious image.” That is why Saint Paul said: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Hebrews 13:20, 21).

### **Preparatory prayer**

To ready the person for the anointing, the priest prays, saying:

**O Lord, who hast given unto man bodily health and vigor wherewith to serve Thee, we pray Thee to free Thy servant from *his* sickness so far as may be expedient for *him*, and by the might of Thy ✠ blessing to restore unto *him* full health, both outwardly in *his* body and inwardly in *his* soul; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The first part affirms the truth that our perfection is part of the divine plan, even though we have strayed from that original intention for us. Further, bodily health and

vigor have one purpose: the service and realization of God.

The second part reveals the realistic understanding that it is not always better for a person to be healthy and whole. Sometimes the karmas must manifest so a lesson can be learned. Also, limitations and even confinement are sometimes necessary for the protection of the person. For example, people who have the habit from previous lives of running and bouncing around, hyperactive and engrossed in personal influence and gain, may need to be handicapped or ill so they will have to sit still and hopefully turn within and become spiritually aware. It is my observation that people are often physically inhibited so they will not misuse an aspect of their body-mind complex. Every mentally inhibited person I have met has been of exceptional intelligence, and their inhibition protects them from misusing their intelligence as they did in previous lives and thereby harming themselves and others. The same is true of physical inhibition: the denial of full function keeps them from misusing it and creating misery for themselves and others.

The third part reminds us that bodily healing is not sufficient—otherwise the illness will occur again. We need spiritual healing of mind and heart, for that is where the roots of sickness are to be found. Many times I have heard healers denounced as frauds because people who were healed by them had a recurrence of the problem or even died of it. The real situation was that the disease, but not the cause of the disease, was removed from them—the affliction was a symptom of their inner conflicts and disharmonies. So the problem was again manifested in their bodies, never having left their minds. Karma is totally in the mind: if the mind is not changed the karma will remain and may even compound itself. This is why it is so necessary for people to know and understand the inseparable truths of karma and reincarnation.

### **The anointing**

Now the person is ready for the anointing. Taking upon his thumb some of the Oil of the Sick, the priest anoints the patient in the form of a cross upon the forehead, saying:

**In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and invoking the help of the holy Archangel Raphael, I ✠ anoint thee with oil, that thou mayest gain refreshment, both of soul and body. Amen.**

This simple sentence tells us a great deal. First, that in the person of the priest Jesus himself is the healer. This is possible through the profound linkage of the priest with Jesus at his ordination. (See *The Science of the Sacraments* to understand how this can be.) Second, within the spiritual kingdom that is the Church, healing is specially under the aegis of the Archangel Raphael and his assisting angels. (Bishop Leadbeater explains this very well.) So when the priest comes to administer this Sacrament, he does not come alone: Christ and his angels are present at this moment. Third, true healing consists of empowerment of the soul and body, an actual renewal, so the original pattern of health can be restored and manifested.

The wellsprings of life on all levels of the human being are those centers of power known to the yogis as chakras. Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater were very conversant with these aspects of our physical, astral and causal bodies (Bishop Leadbeater wrote a book on the subject) and incorporated their knowledge in this ritual. They directed that now the priest should anoint the seven major chakras, either directly touching them with the holy oil, or making the sign of the Cross in the auric space near them. In this way the centers are energized, healed, and corrected in their



function for the subsequent maintenance of the person's health.

The priest then says to the one anointed, omitting the words in brackets if they do not apply:

**As with this visible oil thy body is outwardly anointed, so may our heavenly Father, almighty God, grant of His infinite goodness that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of strength, relief and gladness. And [howsoever His goodness shall dispose of thee, whether this world still detain thee in the flesh or the future receive thee out of the body,] may He so replenish thee with the spirit of His wisdom and strengthen thee with His mighty power, that thou mayest persevere in the way of holiness and ever serve Him joyfully in the course He hath appointed for thee; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Once more it is affirmed that our health is meant to be employed in our search for Christhood.

The priest then blesses the person, saying:

**Christ, the Son of God, look down upon thine affliction and heal thee of all thine infirmities. May the Light of His Love enfold thee forever.**

Merely being free from physical suffering is not enough for the initiate of Christ. Therefore he aspires to be empowered that henceforth he may persevere in the way of holiness and ever serve Him joyfully in the course that He has appointed for him—and all through Christ the Lord.

### **Final blessing**

The rite is now complete, so the priest gives a final blessing, saying:

**Unto God's gracious love and protection we commit thee; the Lord ✠ bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His Face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of His Countenance upon thee and give thee His peace, now and for evermore. Amen.**

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Hebrews 13:8).

# Chapter Seven: Extreme Unction

Many years ago I came across a most interesting account of a man who was martyred for his Catholic faith in England. As a young man he was confused by the conflicts between the “old” Catholic religion and the “new” Protestant religion. While attending Oxford University he went to the local Protestant bishop and asked him bluntly: “Which is best, the old religion or the new religion?” Having cast aside the religion of his childhood—and that of more than a thousand years of his ancestors—for the sake of worldly gain in the new religion, the bishop sat quite a while in silence. Then he quietly but firmly said: “For living, the new religion is best; but for dying the old religion is best.” “I may die at any moment,” said the young man, “so the old religion must be the best for me,” and he left to immediately take up the Catholic faith, leaving behind a sad old man who knew that at the hour of death he would not have the grace and blessing of the holy Sacraments. Having taught that the Bible and personal faith alone were necessary for salvation he would be left with them alone—a bleak prospect, indeed. The young man, on the other hand joyfully lived as a Catholic and, hearing the call: “Come, ye blessed of my Father,” joyfully died a martyr for that precious faith, the faith that three hundred years later won the hearts of Bishop Wedgwood and Bishop Leadbeater, both of whom had grown to manhood in the “new” religion, of which Bishop Leadbeater had been a minister.

## Yogic Extreme Unction

The purpose of Extreme Unction is to prepare the initiate of Christ for the transition into higher worlds which, through mistaken identity with the mortal body, we call “death.” Therefore it is done only when departure of the spirit seems imminent. It, too, begins with the invocation by the priest:

**In the Name of the Father ✠ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

### **Absolution**

According to the ritual instructions, in his own words the priest “should exhort the dying man to make a momentary act of contrition and then to turn with love and devotion to the Lord Jesus.” The priest immediately pronounces the absolution from the Anointing of the Sick:

**Our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath left power on earth to his Church to absolve all those that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, of his tender compassion forgive thee thine offenses; and by his authority committed unto me I ✠ absolve thee from all thy sins. In the Name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

But if there is no time because the person seems right at the point of departure, he uses the following shortened form:

**I ✠ absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father ✠ and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## **Holy unction**

The priest anoints the person on the forehead with Oil of the Sick as he says:

**By this holy ✠ unction and of His most tender love, the Lord pardon thee whatever faults thou hast committed through thy thoughts and desires and the senses of thy body. R: Amen.**

Then he anoints the seven chakras just as in the Anointing of the Sick. In this way the bodies of the person become balanced and harmonious in their functions, for “death” is not a cessation of life but a process of life.

## **Viaticum–Communion**

To assist the person in leaving the body in the highest state of consciousness possible to his level of evolution, he is united to the Consciousness of Christ through the reception of Holy Communion. As he administers Communion to him the priest says:

***Brother, receive the Viaticum of the most holy Body [and Blood] of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may the peace of the Lord go with thee. R: Amen.***

## **The blessing**

In conclusion the priest blesses the person, saying:

**Unto God’s gracious love and protection we commit thee; the Lord ✠ bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His Face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of His Countenance upon thee and give thee His peace, now and for evermore. Amen.**

## **After death**

If death takes place while the priest is present, he may at once proceed to the Absolution, as set forth in the Order of the Burial of the Dead:

**P: Rest in the eternal grant unto *him*, O Lord.**

**C: And let light perpetual shine upon *him*.**

**P: Come forth to meet *him*, ye Angels of the Lord.**

**C: Receive *him* into your fellowship, O ye saints of God.**

**P: May the choirs of Angels receive *him*.**

**C: And guide *him* into eternal peace.**

**P: Rest in the eternal grant unto *him*, O Lord.**

**C: And let light perpetual shine upon *him*.**

**P: O God, in Whose unspeakable love the souls of the departed find rest and peace, in Thy Name we ✠ absolve from every bond of sin Thy servant who has cast off this garment of flesh. May Thy holy Angels bear *him* in their tender care, that *he* may enter the brightness of the everlasting light and find**

*his* peace in Thee; through Christ our Lord. R: Amen.

These are not just beautiful words: there will be a response from the angelic realms and the worlds of the saints. Many people fortunate enough to have a religion that understand these things have testified after unexpectedly returning to life that when someone prayed for angels and saints to assist them, angels and saints did indeed come and help them, sometimes showing them higher worlds and then bringing them back to re-enter their body. This is the difference between a real religion and a theoretical one.

# Chapter Eight: Blessing of Holy Water

Every viable religion—*i.e.*, one that really works—has a form of holy water. This is because all things are really consciousness, and those who know how can alter or influence that consciousness, either adding new characteristics to it, or even changing it from one thing to another. In the West the ritual for blessing holy water had not varied for many centuries, but Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater saw the possibility for improvement and did just that.

Water is itself magnetic to a high degree and therefore highly sensitive to vibrations. Recently a great amount of scientific research has been done on the responsiveness of water to thought, speech, and even the written word. Salt adds greatly to water's magnetic properties, so in the Western tradition it was always part of the holy water blessing.

Also, in Western practice it was often common to exorcize ritual items or things that were to be blessed. This was because, as usual, science was lagging behind religion in knowledge of the simple facts of material existence and life. Religion understood that objects could be magnetized by thoughts, words, and even emotions. An object handled or near a person filled with intense passions—especially anger or hatred—could be deeply stamped with negative vibrations that could effect its behavior on all levels.

I once read the account of a psychic who had been in a traffic jam in which a man began shouting and cursing at her and her car. From then on she was continually having trouble of some kind with the car. Since it had never developed any problems before, she was puzzled. But then she remembered the angry man and realized he had literally psychically attacked her car, though unaware he could even do such a thing. She did a simple cleansing of the car and everything went back to normal tranquillity.

So when we think of a psychic attack, we must not think only of malevolent magicians and curse spells, etc. A simple fit of anger or even indulgence in grief or depression can negatively affect the things in our environment at the time. That is why in the beginning of Mass the priest sprinkles the altar area and church with holy water, saying: "In the strength of the Lord do I repel all evil from this His holy altar and sanctuary, and from this House, wherein we worship Him...." For not only can people bring negative energies and entities into church, the furnishings of the church, including the altar, can be affected by negative emotions. For example, someone could have handled items on the altar while brooding over a supposed wrong done them, or with thoughts of revenge or even hope of someone being harmed. This will really defile the objects, especially if they were made of metal. (Interestingly, oak wood picks up vibrations as easily as metal.) So though it seems odd to exorcise a consecrated altar and church, it is perfectly sensible and the bishops knew that from their study of Theosophy.

## Yogic Blessing of Holy Water

In this ritual we encounter a similar situation as in the blessing of incense during the Mass: the priest speaks directly to the salt and water when he exorcizes them. Usually he says something like "I exorcise this ... in the Name of..." but not here. Why? For two very good metaphysical reasons.

The first I already gave in the commentary on the Mass where I wrote: “It may seem strange to speak to ‘inanimate objects,’ but since everything is a manifestation of the Divine Energy, the Holy Spirit, everything is inherently conscious, and an empowered will can bring about changes even in ‘mere’ matter.”

The second is the fact that various kinds of intelligences can lodge themselves in physical objects and thereby have an effect on those that use them or even ingest them. For example, there is a very well documented case of a man that stole a cabbage from a neighbor’s garden. After cooking and eating it he became possessed. During the exorcism the possessing entity said: “I was sitting on the cabbage minding my own business, but he came along and picked me up with the cabbage, took me home and ate me along with it so I have a right to be in here.” The exorcism was successful and a lot of local thieves learned a valuable lesson. So the priest is also speaking to any wandering or “tramp” spirits that may be in the water. Water and salt are very susceptible to psychic influence and invasion. By its nature water is extremely sensitive and receptive, and salt, being a crystalline formation is also a kind of psychic magnet.

In short: the world is alive and sometimes needs talking to.

### **The salt**

Salt is a crystalline formation and possesses fiery cleansing properties. It is ideal for the neutralization or banishment of negative vibrations, and very effectively breaks negative psychic links. The simple ingestion of blessed salt can free people from psychic obsession and even outright possession. (I am speaking from personal experience and observation.)

Since everything is potentially conscious, being a manifestation of Consciousness Itself, the priest takes a container of salt and speaks directly to it, saying:

**I exorcize thee, creature of salt, by the living ✠ God, by the holy ✠ God, by the omnipotent ✠ God, that thou mayest be purified from all evil influence, in the Name of Him who is Lord of Angels and of men, who filleth the whole earth with His majesty and glory. Amen.**

We can understand those words, and so can the salt.

Having a direct link with Christ, the priest then infuses the water with divine blessing or exorcistic powers, praying:

**We pray Thee, O God, in Thy boundless lovingkindness to stretch forth the right hand of Thy power upon this creature of salt which we ✠ bless and ✠ hallow in Thy holy Name. Grant that this salt may make for health of mind and body to all who partake thereof, and that there may be banished from the place where it is used every power of adversity and every illusion or artifice of evil; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

This prayer tells us a lot.

1) Holy salt is an extension-expression of the boundless lovingkindness of God, a blessing not a weapon. In fact, much of its exorcistic effects stem from the aversion of evil to good—to God and love—not from any aversion or enmity on God’s part, since such a thing is impossible.

2) Holy salt is a tool for healing on all levels.

3) Holy salt does banish evil, but through evil’s willful aversion to good.

4) Even more, it can dispel illusions and frustrate the machinations of evil.  
And all through Christ our Life.

For this reason it is good to always have blessed salt on hand, to use it in any way that seems appropriate to further our welfare. If we cook with blessed salt or put it on our food it will greatly shield us from negative influences—energies or entities.

### **The water**

Next the priest speaks to the water:

**I exorcize thee, creature of water, by the living ✠ God, by the holy ✠ God, by the omnipotent ✠ God, that thou mayest be purified from all evil influence, in the Name of Him who is Lord of Angels and of men, who filleth the whole earth with His majesty and glory. Amen.**

All creation is filled with the power and glory of God, so it is hardly surprising that something can be consecrated to God and made to shine with His Light.

Now he blesses the water, praying:

**O God, who for the helping and safeguarding of men dost hallow the water set apart for the service of Thy holy church, send forth Thy light and Thy power upon this element of water which we ✠ bless and ✠ hallow in Thy holy Name. Grant that whosoever uses this water in faithfulness of spirit may be strengthened in all goodness, and that everything sprinkled with it may be made holy and pure and guarded from all assaults of evil; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

From this we learn that:

- 1) Holy water empowers and protects us.
- 2) Holy water is a vehicle for the Light and Power of God.
- 3) It empowers us for good since when we are touched by it the divine light and power enter into us.
- 4) It restores whatever it touches to its original holy purity.
- 5) In all these ways it becomes a guardian for whoever uses it.

### **The joining of salt and water**

Now the two are join in an invincible union as the priest casts the salt thrice into the water in the form of a cross as he says:

**Let salt and water mingle together in the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. Amen.**

### **The blessing**

The priest completes the blessing with the following prayer:

**O God, the Giver of invincible strength and King of irresistible power, Whose splendor shineth throughout the whole of creation, we pray Thee to look upon this Thy creature of salt and water, to pour down upon it the radiance of Thy ✠ blessing and to ✠ hallow it with the dew of Thy lovingkindness, that wherever it shall be sprinkled and Thy holy Name shall**

**be invoked in prayer, every noble aspiration may be strengthened, every good resolve made firm, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit vouchsafed to us who place our trust In Thee; Thou who with the Son livest and reignest in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God throughout all ages of ages. Amen.**

This invokes the total benevolence of God, reminding us that “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). Good and evil are also seen by this ritual to be a matter of choice, of the fixing of the will. So the choice is ours; and those who make the wrong choice of evil can at any time turn around to the path of good.

### **Baptismal water**

Holy water is the basis for baptismal water. When there is to be a Baptism, taking holy water the priest blesses it with the following prayer:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, who in the mystery of Thy boundless love didst take upon Thyself the limitations of human form and in Thy gracious compassion didst gather little children into Thine arms; stretch forth, we pray Thee, the right hand of Thy power over this Holy Water and fill it with Thy heavenly ✠ grace and ✠ blessing, that *those* to be baptized therewith may receive the fullness of Thy love and ever remain in the number of Thy faithful children. Amen.**



# Chapter Nine: Blessing of Objects

The extension of holiness into the very fabric of the universe is one of the purposes of worthy religion. This is perfectly reasonable considering that in essence all things are holy because they are composed of the Divine Light and Life we call the Holy Spirit. So really we are evoking the inmost nature of an object when we bless it.

Environment is not just a matter of sociology, the vibration of all surrounding us affects us greatly because we and they are part of a unified field of Being. This is why we can feel so different as we go from place to place. The East has been aware of this for thousands of years, but in the West only the psychically sensitive perceive it—mostly on a non-conceptual intuitive level. Consequently very little is done about it on a practical level, though at one time when all of Europe was Catholic there was a much higher level of awareness of the value of being surrounded with blessed objects.

## Yogic Blessing of Objects

The ritual of blessing is very simple and to the point, and many objects may be blessed together, especially if they are of the same type.

### **The exorcism**

As explained in the commentary on Holy Water blessing, objects can pick up negative energies from various sources that are negative but not intentionally malevolent. For example, an angry or frustrated person could slap or kick a container of things that are going to be sold commercially—not because he was angry or frustrated with them but just because they were at hand to express his intense feeling. Those things would absorb the negative energies and could influence those who purchased them or bring a kind of unconscious ill-wishing into their home.

I can give you what I think is a funny example. Years ago I saw an article in a magazine about a budding (now famous) super psychic and her book on psychometry which could be ordered from her directly. So I ordered one, and when I got it found that I could not read it because the moment I touched it I was in her garage where the books were stored on metal shelves. Two sounds assaulted my psychic ears: the incredible racket made by her much-too-high heels on the cement floor as she stalked around the garage, and her loud, angry raving at her husband about something. I could see her very clearly and the much-too-tight chartreuse dress she was wearing. I dropped the book, and later every time I touched it the same thing happened, so I tossed it in the trash can. But I found it funny that her intense, out of control rage had so permeated the book—and therefore the others on the shelves—that I became an instant psychometrist—at least in relation to that book!

Consequently it is very necessary to exorcise an object before blessing it. From then on it will be protected from negative influences.

The priest exorcizes the object in a very straightforward manner, saying:

**In the Name of God, I exorcize all influences of evil that they may be banished and driven forth from this ..., which we are about to dedicate to His service. In the power of the ✠ Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. Amen.**

From now on the object will be in the service of the Creator by radiating sacred and purifying vibrations wherever it may be.

### **The purification**

Any negative energies have now been expelled, but the object should be purified and infused with positive energies prior to the complete blessing, so the priest sprinkles it with holy water and censes it so the solar energies of frankincense will purify it.

### **The blessing**

Then the priest blesses it, praying:

**O God, who in the mystery of Thy boundless love didst breathe forth Thine own divine life into Thy universe, and art Thyself the continual source of its existence, stretch forth, we pray Thee, the right hand of Thy power over this ..., which has in diverse ways been purified, and fill this creature with heavenly ✠ grace and ✠ blessing; grant that whosoever shall *use* this...may be enlightened in heart and mind and serve Thee in all good works; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Since God is present in every atom of His creation, the object is naturally blessed in essence, but many factors can temporarily overlay that inherent holiness, so it needs an all-encompassing blessing. Does God have two hands: right and left? Practically speaking, He does. The left hand is the power of involution, of descent into matter, and the right hand is the power of evolution out of matter. In another aspect, the left hand is the withdrawing of energy and the right hand is the bestowing of energy. That is why the priest refers to God's "right hand" in the prayer.

As we know, there is no such thing as solid matter—there is far more space between the molecular particles of an object than there is matter. When the two signs of the Cross are made, the divine Light is infused into the object and fills up that space and makes the object a source of blessing and even healing, often by its simple presence. This will contribute to the upliftment of the consciousness of whoever comes in contact with it, helping them along the path to enlightenment in Christ our Lord.

# Chapter Ten: Blessing of a House

Yogananda used to say: “Company is greater than will power,” and certainly we cannot help but be affected by the people around us because all human beings emit energies that influence anyone within their aura, the magnetic field that surrounds them at all times. Material objects have their inherent vibrations as well as any energies that may have become attached to them in various ways. This being so we can extend Yogananda’s assertion and say that environment is greater than will power in many instances. For this reason it is extremely beneficial for the house we live in to be blessed (and the place where we work, if we can manage it). Certainly our automobile should be blessed with the general blessing of objects rite.

A place blessed by the Wedgwood-Leadbeater ritual becomes a great source of protection and blessing to those living or entering there. Here are some of my experiences I would like to tell you about. The first four are a bit spooky but very informative. The fifth is extremely satisfactory.

## **Blessing and healing**

One day our monastery telephone rang, and when I answered it a woman on the other end of the line asked me if I ever did exorcism—that she had been under psychic attack for several months and no priest (she was Roman Catholic) would agree to come to her house and do one. She had even contacted the director of the local Franciscan Third Order and described her experiences with what she felt were invisible, malefic beings bothering her. In response the director laughed and said: “O! just wait till they start wrapping around your arms and legs and crawling all over your body!” Some help. Then she had written to several monastic foundations and gotten some very odd advice, such as to go to every door and window in the house and imagine she was smearing Jesus’ blood on them for protection. Need I tell you it did not work?

From our conversation I could tell this was a highly intelligent woman and very level-headed. There was no way I could refuse help, so I explained that the first step in exorcism was blessing, that often nothing further was needed. (Blessing can be an excellent diagnostic tool to determine evil influences, obsession and possession.) On a day convenient for her, one other monk and myself when to her house. Meeting her confirmed my positive impression of her on the telephone. As we entered the house I could see a child lying in bed within a side room. “That is my grandson,” she told me. “He has had fever for a few days. Maybe you can say some prayers for him after blessing the house.” I agreed, and with the other monk’s assistance I did the house blessing.

The woman was amazed at the total change in atmosphere. As she was expressing this, her grandson came running in, healthy and rambunctious as usual. This told me that his illness had come from the negative energies directed at the house. When they had gone, he had instantly recovered. “I guess he doesn’t need any healing,” his grandmother observed as he frisked around. I heard from her occasionally in subsequent years, and the trouble never recurred.

## **A mother-in-law’s curse**

Once a woman who came our monastery Mass on Sundays asked if I would bless her house. She had married a man whose mother was an overt sorceress in an Eastern European country. After she came on a visit to them, everything went wrong between

them and even with the house. So strong was the malevolence that the husband gave up and divorced our friend, hoping in that way to at least get his mother's curse off of him. After the divorce things calmed down, but our friend felt that something was still not right, and asked if I thought a house blessing would help. Since it is a good thing to bless a house in all circumstances I suggested one be done.

Along with another monk I went and blessed the house, which had a very normal atmosphere right from the first. Because of this I assumed there was no problem. Right at the end of the blessing I asked the woman to open the doors of a glass-fronted cabinet where I could see many items of china displayed. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "my mother-in-law gave me those. She brought them from Europe and made a big point about my having them." "Then I know they should be blessed," I replied. She tried to open the doors and found them locked. "But I never lock them," she said. It took a while to find the key, but she managed. The moment the holy water touched that china a tremendous negative force exploded out of them, terrifying our friend and certainly impressing us. In a moment the force was gone—literally running out the door. So all was well from then on. The potential harm had been defused.

### **The black magic house and garage**

A local businesswoman came to our monastery one day and asked to see me (we had met briefly at a psychic fair some weeks before). She told me that she and her husband owned quite a few rental properties. One of them was in a rundown part of town, and a woman she had felt was very peculiar had rented it for a few years, always paying the rent by mail so they had not met with her since she had first rented the house. Occasionally neighbors had called and said strange things were going on in the house, but when they telephoned the woman about it she told them the neighbors were unhappy with her because she chased their children away when they came on the property. Recently the woman had become seriously ill and had to be taken to a hospital where she died.

When the owners went to look at the house to see about getting it ready for rental, they were stunned to find that a hole had been burned in the living room floor and the space below was filled with the decaying bodies and skeletons of many kittens. The renter had sometimes hired a young woman to help her in various ways and even stay in the house for a time. When they contacted her, the woman came to the house and told them that the renter had practiced black magic, part of which was sacrificing kittens—that the hole had been made by a sacrificial fire that had gotten out of hand. She told them that if they dug a bit they would find the bodies of many more kittens in the garage, which had a dirt floor. They went right out to it and found over two dozen skeletons buried there.

The owner had come to me because they could not rent the house because everyone who looked at it was repelled. She herself said that she hated spending even a few minutes there because of the evil atmosphere, and asked how much it would cost for me to psychically cleanse the place. I told her that there would be no charge—it was my job to take care of things like that. So in a few days two of us went to see what could be done. A great deal needed to be done.

The vibrations of the house were really foul, but the blessing cleaned it up without a bobble. It seemed a good idea to take a look at the garage. There we found a definite, eerie feeling to the place, including a broken crucifix partially buried just inside, so we did the blessing. Things got better, but were still not right. This really puzzled me. What more was needed? Then I remembered reading a book where a man told of having to bless the outside of a building as well as the inside. We walked around the

inside of the garage and I could tell that the whole thing was completely clear. But when we went outside and walked around the building it was very wrong indeed. We decided that more dead kittens must be buried around the whole structure. Not being interested in digging them up, we decided to sprinkle all around the garage with a good deal of holy water and blessed salt. When that was done, all was clear. In two days the house was rented.

### **Portrait of a demon**

A man once came and did some work for our monastery. In conversation with one of the monks he said that his father-in-law had committed suicide a day or so before and that no priest would agree to hold a memorial for him, much less a Mass. Our chapel could not hold the large amount of people who would attend a service for the man, since he was very beloved by many, so we celebrated a Mass that only the family attended, and then we had a public memorial service in a large cemetery chapel. We continued to pray for his soul, confident that God was much more merciful than man. As Saint Therese of Lisieux once said: "God's justice means that He *understands*."

The family became very friendly with us, and one day we got a phone call from the suicide's daughter asking if we could do something about strange phenomena in their house. They had been told that the previous owners had been involved of some kind of negative occultism, and every so often really odd things would happen, usually more annoying than frightening.

When I went to the house to bless it, they took me into their bedroom and opened the closet door to show a childish, cartoon-like line drawing of a little demon. It was exactly like the one shown in the book *The Amityville Horror*. I figured it was a kind of silly affectation on the part of the prior owners, but Judy said: "We have painted over that more than six times, and after a few days it reappears just like it is newly painted." And it did look like it was freshly done, not like something that was just showing through layers of paint.

Since I had no idea about the matter, I just went ahead and blessed the house, making sure to douse the the picture with a lot of holy water. That very day the drawing began to fade and in a week or so was completely gone. The proof of its nature was in its disappearance.

### **Holiness becometh Thy house**

"Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever" (Psalms 93:5).

There was a house out in the country that was to be moved quite some distance to another rural property. The owners were worried as to how successfully it could be moved since it had been built in 1914, so I went to bless it before the move in hope that would make a difference. I decided not to do the blessing myself, but brought along one of our monastery priests and a visiting friend. I just sat in the living room and observed. The house had a very peaceful, homey atmosphere and I felt very much at ease sitting there. But suddenly a tremendous positive force surged through the whole structure as the walls, ceiling and floor were transformed in vibration. It no longer felt like a house but a holy temple. I am not exaggerating in the least. If ever a building could be sanctified, that house had just been canonized. All three of us were awed. And the capstone was that all this took place at the very first drawing of a line of holy water at the front door. Just the beginning of the blessing had done so much already.

### **Rites of unique power**

We have consistently observed that the simplest acts in Bishop Wedgwood's rituals possess a power and produce an effect to a degree not seen by us in any rites intended for the same purpose. For example, in the traditional Western rite for Holy Saturday there is an elaborate ceremony for the blessing of new fire and the Paschal Candle that represents the presence of the resurrected Christ for the next forty days. Every time I witnessed it done in the traditional manner I found it truly impressive. But the first time we did the Wedgwood form, which basically consists of four simple sentences, we were astounded at the power conveyed by them. And when the candle was lit an atmosphere was generated like I had never experienced on previous Holy Saturdays.

## Yogic Blessing of a House

### **The doorways**

When the priest enters the house he says:

**Peace be to this house and to all that dwell herein.**

In many cultures there is a strong belief that invisible guardians live at the threshold of a place. The ancient Romans used to prostrate themselves before the threshold before they entered a new house for occupation. And friends used to do similar acts and even make offerings asking for the blessing and protection of those who lived there. The custom of carrying a new bride over the threshold comes from Roman times.

Taking holy water, the priest draws a line with it at the front door as he prays:

**We pray Thee, O Lord, so to bless this doorway by Thy mighty power that those who enter here may leave behind them all unworthy thought and feeling, that Thy children who dwell in this place may ever serve Thee in peace and holiness of life; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

He then goes to all other entrances to the house and draws a line of holy water before each, repeating the same prayer. This seals the house and prevents negative energies from entering there. I have seen negative people unable to enter a blessed house even when they wanted to. One man that came to our monastery looked like he was pushing against some invisible barrier. He had come with three other people who were already inside and watching him in bewilderment. "Come on in!" snapped of of them in annoyance. His response was to turn around, run down the walk, jump in the car and drive away, leaving them with no way to get home. Later we learned that this man was a fervent practitioner of magic by which he manipulated the behavior of others, even making them purchase things in his store that they did not really want. After four years of tremendous profits the whole thing collapsed when thieves carried away everything and he had no insurance.

So a threshold is no simple thing.

### **Purification and blessing**

He next blesses incense and censers and sprinkles with holy water the entire house for purification.

Returning to the front door he prays:

**O God, Who in Thy providence hast appointed a wondrous ministry of Angels, we pray Thee to send down Thy holy Angel to ✠ bless and to ✠ hallow this house, that they who dwell herein may live in the power and love of Christ our Lord and Master and may continually serve before Thee in all good works; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.**

In the way the house is not just blessed by the priest but by the angels and by their Master Christ. All that remains is for those to live there to increase the blessing by their daily lives of dedication to God and man.

“This day is salvation come to this house” (Luke 19:9).

# Chapter Eleven: Consecration of Holy Oils

## **Intermediaries**

Much of the transformation worked by the Christian Sacraments is done by the absorption of divine powers (energies) into the various bodies of those aspiring to be disciples of the Master Jesus. In every spiritual system we find intermediaries which serve to link the divine worlds with the mundane. Acting as transformers to step down powers which in their original forms the human body and mind could not cope with or assimilate, they enable that assimilation and adjustment without which no one could be an initiate while embodied in this material world. These intermediaries can be human beings specially empowered and constituted by the Sacrament of Holy Orders or actual blessed or consecrated physical elements

The body is seventy-five percent water, which is why water is one of the intermediaries in the first Sacrament, Baptism. The human body also consists of fat (oil), so consecrated oil is another intermediary, especially in the New Birth Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

## **Holy Thursday**

According to the visionary stigmatist Anna Catherine Emmerich, on Holy Thursday evening the Lord Jesus not only instituted the holy Mass, he also instructed the disciples in administration of the other Sacraments, explaining to them the three kinds of holy oils they should use and showing them how to consecrate them. Consequently, a bishop consecrates the holy oils at Mass in the morning of Holy Thursday.

## Yogic Consecration of Holy Oils

The traditional rituals of consecration are extremely elaborate and very long. Knowing the strength of divine power with which a bishop has been imbued at his consecration, Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater formulated rites that would employ this empowerment to the full so there was no need for the old, complex procedures that in many instances were mostly superstition and liturgical drama. As Bishop Leadbeater wrote in *The Science of the Sacraments*: “If he understands his business and uses his opportunities, every Bishop ought to be a veritable radiating sun, a lighthouse amid the stormy sea of life, a battery charged with almost unlimited power for good, so that he may be a fountain of strength, of love and of peace, and his mere presence may itself be a benediction.”

## **The consecration**

After *O Come, All Ye Faithful* has been sung, the bishop is seated at a table placed before the altar. Four containers are placed on the table: three of olive oil for Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens, and Holy Chrism, and one of balsam for use in the Chrism. Balsam is a broad category including any fragrant resinous substance exuded by a tree or ligneous plant. In the West it is the practice to use powdered frankincense (olibanum) as the balsam.

## **Exorcism**

The bishop exorcises the four containers simultaneously, saying:



**In the Name of God, I exorcise all influences of evil, that they may be cast out from this oil and balsam which we are about to dedicate to His service, in the power of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. R: Amen.**

### **Oil of the Sick**

The container that is to be consecrated as Oil of the Sick is placed before the bishop and the others are taken off the table but kept nearby.

The bishop consecrates the Oil of the Sick, saying:

**In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and invoking the assistance of the holy Archangel Raphael, I ✠ consecrate and ✠ hallow this oil for the healing of the sick; may the blessing of the Great Physician rest thereupon, that it may give refreshment and peace alike to soul and body. R: Amen.**

Now the oil is infused with the healing powers of Christ, the same powers which healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. Wherever this oil is used, there healing angels will be present to assist in the name of Christ and the Archangel Raphael.

It is interesting that this formula of consecration is echoed in the words spoken by a priest in the ritual of Anointing of the Sick.

### **Oil of Catechumens**

The oil to become Oil of Catechumens is now placed before the bishop, who consecrates it, saying:

**In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I ✠ consecrate and ✠ hallow this oil, that it may serve for the cleansing and safeguarding of those who receive the holy rite of Baptism or consecration to the Order of the Priesthood. R: Amen.**

Now the powers of purification and protection are infused in the oil. In the ordination of priests the hands of the ordinand are anointed with this oil to purify them and impart to them the power to purify by expelling all negative influences by their touch or by the sign of the Cross made by them.

### **Holy Chrism**

Now we have come to the apex of the sacred ritual: the consecration of Holy Chrism, the vehicle of the Holy Spirit.

The container of balsam is placed before the bishop who consecrates it, saying:

**In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I ✠ consecrate and ✠ hallow this balsam, that everything touched therewith may burn with His purity, before Whose splendor the Angels veil their faces. R: Amen.**

From henceforth this balsam is an intermediary for the Living Fire that is the Holy Spirit.

The oil for the Chrism is placed before the bishop. Beginning the consecration, he

says:

**In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I ✠ consecrate and ✠ hallow this oil, now set apart for the making of Holy Chrism, that it may bestow upon those who receive it of the fulness of spiritual strength. R: Amen.**

The Power of the Holy Spirit, the fulness of spiritual strength, will dwell in the Chrism and will be imparted to whoever or whatever is anointed with it.

Continuing and completing the consecration, the bishop mixes the balsam and Chrism and prays, with his hands extended over the mixture:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, the Fountain of all goodness, who dost pour down Thy gifts abundantly upon men, and for their strengthening, dost hallow and set apart these earthly things as a channel of Thy marvelous power, send forth, we pray Thee, Thy ✠ blessing upon this Holy Chrism, that whatsoever persons or things shall be anointed therewith may receive of the fulness of spiritual consecration. Let Thy heavenly blessing descend upon those who are signed by this Chrism with the sign of Thy holy service, that, guarding well their spiritual heritage, they may shed around them the fragrance of a godly life, O Thou great Shepherd and Ruler of the souls of men, to Whom be honor and glory for evermore. R: Amen.**

This prayer ensures that we will have a correct perspective on the awesome ritual that has just taken place as well as all Sacraments. Their purpose is to strengthen us. We are not sinners and aliens to holiness and God, but we have become weakened. Being prodigals that have wandered from our home, “getting and spending we lay waste our powers” as Wordsworth said. We do not need to be changed into something else, but we do need to be “reborn” in the sense of being renewed and restored. We need the fulness of spiritual consecration so we can find the Way and pursue it unto the end—in God.

Note that the sign of the Cross is said to be the sign of holy service to God, not death or sacrifice for sins. It is the sign of higher life in God. Those who guard well their spiritual heritage, drawing upon it as the well of life, will “shine as lights in the world.” For although Jesus said: “I am the light of the world” (John 8:12), he also said: “Ye are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14). The abundant life which Jesus came to give us (John 10:10) is sealed by the Holy Chrism in Confirmation. Those who use that grace of empowerment surely “are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” we receive in that Sacrament (II Corinthians 3:18).

### **Completion**

When Jesus appeared to his disciples after the resurrection: “he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (John 20:22). Remembering this, the bishop breathes three times in the form of a cross over the Chrism. Then each priest present also breathes over it in the form of a cross, for both bishops and priests are the representatives of the Holy Spirit in the world as “stewards of the mysteries of God” (I Corinthians 4:1).

The Chrism is then also taken away and the Mass proceeds as usual. Just before the final blessing the bishop speaks to the priests about the necessity to keep the holy oils as a precious trust in a manner befitting their great worth.

In this way once more the direct blessing of Christ has been given to the world in

fulfillment of his assurance: “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20).

# Chapter Twelve: Holy Orders

In the book of Hebrews Saint Paul wrote a great deal about Jesus being for us a High Priest “who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (8:1). And he shares that priesthood with us that those he chooses may be “an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ..., a royal priesthood, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (I Peter 2:5, 9). This is accomplished through the Sacrament of Holy Orders which imparts the Apostolic Succession to those receiving them, about which I wrote at the beginning of this study.

Because of their great importance—without them there would be no Sacraments and no Church—the rituals are quite complex. Rather than give the entire texts I will only present the parts that are of significance to our comprehension of the Sacrament. Once again I urge you to consult *The Science of the Sacraments* for a full explanation of the inner and outer sides of these sacred actions.

Before describing the rituals I would like to say that holy orders are not mechanical but truly spiritual. For two thousand years men have been given holy orders, but not all have been ideal deacons, priests, and bishops, because no ordination can make a man a worthy servant of Christ. That is done by the man himself.

In my beginning teens a woman who had been a beautician told me some of her experiences in a little town populated by what may kindly be termed “backward” people. Displayed on the walls of her business were photographs of beautiful models in various hairstyles. One day a tremendously ugly and equally stupid woman came in and pointed at one of the photos, demanding that hair style. My friend did her best and reproduced it exactly, but when the woman looked at herself in the mirror she wheeled around and, pointing at the photo, protested: “But I don’t look like she does! I want to look like her!”

A lot of men think that ordination can make them a priest like Saint John Vianney or Saint John of Kronstadt. It cannot. Even God cannot. As Yogananda once told a complaining disciple: “You have God’s blessing and you have my blessing. What you lack is your blessing!”

## Ordination of a Deacon

After the epistle of Mass and before the Gradual is sung, the bishop sits before the altar and the person to be ordained a deacon is formally presented to him. The bishop speaks to him briefly, during which he says:

**It appertains to the Deacon to minister at the altar, to read or intone the Gospel, to preach and in the absence of the Priest to baptize.**

By this we see that the deacon is really being made an assistant to the priest. Though it is not mentioned here, the deacon also may administer the Anointing of the Sick and Extreme Unction at the request of the priest, though with some differences.

The litany for ordinations is sung. At its conclusion the bishop prays a special prayer for the candidate’s blessing and strengthening. Then the *Veni Creator* is sung (as in the rite of Confirmation). At its conclusion the bishop places his right hand upon

the head of the ordinand and says:

**Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Deacon in the Church of God.**

When the bishop says the foregoing words, the Holy Spirit enters the ordinand and conditions and empowers his bodies, literally recreating him into a deacon. To seal this recreation, the bishop then prays with his right hand extended toward the new deacon:

**O God the Holy Spirit, Who hast deigned to descend upon this Thy servant in spirit and in power, strengthen him with Thy sevenfold might for the faithful performance of this ministry. May that power ever flow forth in his actions and kindle his speech; may he be resolute and steadfast in the service of his brethren so that, having always the witness of a good conscience, he may continue strong and stable in Christ, a pillar in the temple of our God, Thou Who with the Father and the Son livest and reignest, God throughout all ages of ages. Amen.**

The bishop sits and invests the ordinand with a white stole and a dalmatic, blessing him with the sign of the Cross and a brief prayer for each one. Then he hands him a book of the gospels to be read at Mass, saying:

**Take thou authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, both for the living and the dead. In the Name of the ✠ Father and of the ✠ Son and of the ✠ Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Regarding this, Bishop Leadbeater says: "In the same holy Name, and with the same triple sign of power, he gives him authority to read the Gospel in the Church of God, both for the living and the dead. In each of these cases the threefold influence of which the Bishop is so especially the custodian is energized, poured forth, called strongly into manifestation, so that by playing upon the corresponding principles in the ordinand it stirs them into sympathetic vibration, so that they are, at any rate for the time, enormously more active and receptive than ever before. It is for the deacon to see that this great temporary advance is maintained and increased."

David the Psalmist spoke of God as He "who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire" (Psalms 104:4). The new deacon is now of their number, therefore the bishop concludes the sacred rite with this prayer:

**O Christ, the Lord of Love, who, by the heavenly and earthly service of Angels which Thou orderest, dost shed over all the elements the efficacy of Thy will, pour out on this Thy servant of the fullness of Thy ✠ blessing, that in the fellowship of those glorious Angels he may minister worthily at Thy holy altars, and being endowed with heavenly virtue and grace he may ever be watchful and zealous in the service of Thy Church, Thou who reignest for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Mass proceeds as usual, and after the singing of the Gradual the new deacon sings the Gospel. Everything else is as usual, except he is specially commemorated in the Canon of the Mass.

## Ordination of a Priest

A priest is ordained after the singing of the gradual at Mass. The ordinand is presented to the bishop as in the ordination of a deacon. The bishop then charges him very solemnly with a lengthy and very necessary exhortation to realize the tremendous obligation he is now taking upon himself by being ordained a priest. In the first part of this address, the bishop says:

**It appertains to the Priest to offer sacrifice, to bless, to preside, to loose and to bind, to anoint, to preach and to baptize.**

In other words, it is the office of the priest to open the gates of eternal life and to keep them open for those who sincerely and rightly seek that everlasting life.

**Wherefore, dearly beloved son, whom the award of our brethren has chosen that you may be consecrated to this office as our helper, after solemn premeditation only and with great awe is so sublime an office to be approached, and great indeed must be the care with which we determine that they who are chosen to represent our Blessed Lord and to preside in His Church commend themselves by great wisdom, by worthiness of life and the persevering practice of justice and truth. Do you, then, dearly beloved son, keep these things in remembrance and let the fruit thereof be seen in your walk and conversation, in chaste and holy integrity of life, in continually abounding in all manner of good works. Strive without ceasing to increase within yourself the perfection of heavenly love, that having your heart filled with the love of God and of man, you may be almoner of Christ's blessing and bearer of His love to the hearts of mankind. Forget never how great a privilege is yours to bring the little ones to Him through the gateway of baptism and to lift the heavy burden of the sorrow and sin of the world by the grace of absolution. Consider attentively what you do, imitate those things which in the Church of God it is your duty to handle and to transact. And forasmuch as you will now be called upon to offer the Holy Sacrifice before the throne of God, and to celebrate the sacred mysteries of the Lord's love, be earnest in ridding your members of all imperfections. You whose duty it is to offer unto God the sweet incense of prayer and adoration, let your teaching be a spiritual remedy unto God's people; let your words of blessing and consolation be their help and strength; let the sweet savor of your life be a fragrance in the Church of God.**

**Thus both by word and deed may you fashion the temple of God, so that neither shall we appear blameworthy before the Lord, who in His Name shall thus advance you, nor ye who shall thus be advanced; but rather may we all find acceptance and abundant recompense for this day's act, which of His infinite goodness and loving-kindness may He deign to grant.**

The litany of ordination is sung. At its conclusion the ordinand kneels before the bishop who extends his hands toward him and prays:

**O Lord Jesus Christ, the Fountain of all goodness, who by the operation of**

**the Holy Spirit hast appointed diverse Orders in Thy Church, and for its greater enrichment and perfecting dost pour down Thy gifts abundantly upon men, do Thou pour forth Thy sanctifying grace upon this Thy servant, who is about to be numbered among the Priests of Thy Church. May his hand be strong to achieve, may wisdom guide and direct his life, may the beauty of holiness sanctify him and shed a spiritual fragrance about his path, so that in all his works begin, continued and ended in Thee, he may show forth the abundance of Thy power and glorify Thy Holy Name, O Thou great King of Love, to Whom be praise and adoration from men and from the Angel host. Amen.**

“Immediately after this prayer the Bishop amid perfect silence lays both hands on the head of each ordinand. The same is done after him successively by all the Priests present, each willing intensely to give all that he can of help and consecration to the candidate. The Bishop uses his power to pour into him the power of the Christ and to draw him into the closest possible relation to Him. The three principles of spirit, intuition and intelligence in the ordinand are made to glow with indescribable fervor. The oblique line connecting them is opened up into activity, and greatly widened, so that not only does the spirit become much more one with the Christ-spirit, but he is also able to express himself far more fully than before through the intuition and intelligence.

“It does not at all follow that he *will* do so in daily life; that depends upon the individual effort of the Priest; but the potentiality is there, and he who knows of it may use it to great effect if he will. The whole aura of the ordinand expands prodigiously with this direct influx of power from the Christ; every atom within him is shaken as its various orders of spirillæ are aroused. The influx rushes into [him] through the corresponding principles of the Bishop himself, which is the reason why he lays both hands upon the head of the candidate, instead of using only the right hand to distribute what is drawn through the crosier in his left, as he does in the case of the deacon, or at Confirmation.

“When the neophyte’s aura is thus dilated and extremely sensitive, the Priests pour in their influence. They do not confer power as the Bishop does, but each gives his quota of good; and adds whatever he has that is of value, while the neophyte is in a condition to receive it. The Priests may quite probably be on different Rays, and at any rate are sure to differ in character, so each will have some quality to contribute. The bestowal of the priesthood is above all things the granting of a wonderful, colossal opportunity, and no effort is spared to help the recipient to take advantage of it.

“The power of the Christ, the direct outflow from the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, comes always in the silence, for it has not yet descended sufficiently into materiality to manifest as sound; but the Holy Ghost came as a rushing, mighty wind and showed Himself in tongues of fire, conferring upon the apostles an unusual power of speech. So at the second imposition of hands later the words of power are employed as in the other Orders; but the tremendous gift of the first imposition descends in a silence that is felt. It is this act which actually makes the man a Priest and endows him with the power to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. The prayer which immediately follows the ordination beautifully refers to this.” (*The Science of the Sacraments*)

Consequently the bishop prays with extended hands:

**O Lord Christ, whose strength is in the silence, grant that this Thy servant whom now Thou dost join unto Thyself in the holy bond of the Priesthood may**

**hence forward minister faithfully of the priestly power to those who ask in Thy Name. Amen.**

The *Veni Creator* is now sung as all kneel. When it is ended the bishop puts both hands on the head of the ordinand and solemnly says:

**Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Priest in the Church of God; whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained.**

Now the ordination is complete, and the man is now “a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec” (Psalms 110:4).

No words can convey the divine character of the Christian priesthood, but the prayer that follows the preceding words gives a hint:

**O God, the Source of all holiness, of whom are true consecration and the fullness of spiritual benediction, we pray Thee, O Lord, to ✠ open to Thy heavenly grace the heart and mind of this Thy servant, who has been raised to the Priesthood, that through him Thy power may abundantly flow for the service of Thy people. May he be earnest and zealous as a fellow-worker in our Order, and thus prove himself worthy of the sacred charge committed unto him. And, as by a spotless blessing he now shall change for the service of Thy people bread and wine into the most holy Body and Blood of Thy Son, may he be ever watchful that he keep the vessel of his ministry pure and undefiled. May every kind of righteousness spring forth within him, and may his heart be so filled with compassion for the multitude, that he may forget himself in the love of others. Thus steadfast in that Thy most joyous service, may the radiance of Thy love and Thy glory shine ever more brightly in his heart, till he rises unto mature spiritual manhood, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, when his life shall be hid with Christ in God. Amen.**

The priestly stole and vestment are placed on the new priest with prayer. Then the bishop takes Oil of Catechumens and sanctifies the priest’s hands by anointing them as he says:

**Be pleased, O Lord, to consecrate and hallow these hands by this anointing and our ✠ blessing; that whatsoever they ✠ bless may be blessed, and whatsoever they consecrate may be consecrated and hallowed, in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Bishop closes the priest’s hands together, palm to palm, and binds them together with a strip of white linen. This is a very important act, for this enables a gradual assimilation of tremendous purifying, strengthening, and blessing power by his hands.

Although his hands are bound, the priest is presented by the bishop with a chalice containing wine and water, with a paten and a host upon it. He cannot take and hold them, but he touches them with his fingertips as the bishop says to him:

**Take thou authority to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate the Holy**



**Eucharist both for the living and for the dead; in the Name of the Lord. R. Amen.**

The hands of the priest are then unbound and cleansed according to mediæval custom with lemon and breadcrumbs.

The Mass is continued as usual, the new priest reading the Gospel and being commemorated in the Canon of the Mass.

After the celebrant intones: "Under the veil of earthly things..." the bishop is again seated before the altar and gives the new priest a final charge, then stands and gives him the following blessing:

**The blessing of God Almighty, the ✠ Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy ✠ Spirit, come down upon you, that you may be blessed in the priestly Order, and in the offering of sacrifice to Almighty God, to whom belong honor and glory to the ages of ages. R. Amen.**

He then sits and solemnly says:

**Dearly beloved son, consider attentively the Order you have taken and be ever mindful of the sacred trust reposed in you. Since it hath pleased our Lord to call you thus closer to Himself, forget not the service of your brethren, which is the golden pathway to His most glorious Presence. Freely ye have received, freely give.**

The Mass is continued and concluded as usual. But the priesthood continues forever.

## Consecration of a Bishop

From earliest times it has been recommended that a bishop be consecrated by three bishops, one of them being considered the chief consecrator and the others his assistants, though often throughout the Church's history bishops have been consecrated by a single bishop when circumstances warranted it. This is especially true in the Roman Catholic Church when the Pope has directed a single bishop to consecrate a priest to the episcopate. Sometimes one or both of the assistant bishops are represented by an official letter from a bishop who approves the consecration but cannot be present. Bishop Leadbeater was consecrated by Bishop Wedgwood alone. In what follows I will only be referring to the consecrator for the sake of simplicity. For the same reason I am omitting some preliminaries that are not really part of the Sacrament itself.

After the gradual of the Mass has been sung, the consecrator sits before the altar and addresses the bishop-elect, saying:

**It appertains to a Bishop to consecrate, to ordain, to offer sacrifice, to anoint, to bless, to loose and to bind, to baptize and to confirm, to preside, to interpret and to judge.**

This encompasses the plenitude of sacramental power that is to be bestowed by consecration to the episcopate.

The litany of ordination follows, the bishop-elect lying prostrate before the altar. At its conclusion the bishop-elect kneels and an open book of the gospels is placed upon his neck and shoulders to represent the yoke of Christ which he is now fully assuming. With hands extended toward him, the consecrator prays:

**O Lord Christ, the Fountain of all goodness, who by the operation of the Holy Spirit hast appointed diverse Orders in Thy Church, and for its greater enrichment and perfecting dost pour down Thy gifts abundantly upon men, making some to excel in wisdom, others in devotion and yet others to be well-skilled in action, pour down upon this Thy servant of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, that in the pontifical dignity to which we are about to raise him he may shine resplendent with all manner of heavenly virtue, O Thou great Shepherd and Bishop of the souls of men, to Whom be praise and adoration from men and from the Angel host. R. Amen.**

The *Veni Creator* is now sung. The consecrator then places both hands upon the head of the bishop-elect and says:

**Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a Bishop in the Church of God.**

Now a new Apostle of Christ is there kneeling before the altar. It is not glamorous; it is awesome and of tremendous obligation, for the Lord Jesus assures us: "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48).

With hands extended over the new Bishop, the consecrator prays:

**O God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, most blessed and adorable Trinity, Who wert and art and art to come as thou hast now bestowed upon this Thy servant of Thine awesome power, and hast deigned to consecrate him as thy representative and a teacher of Thy people, ✠ open, we pray thee, his heart and mind to Thy heavenly grace, that he may handle wisely that which he has received and, being ever mindful of Thee, he may exercise his sacred power to the honor and glory of thy holy Name. Fulfill in Thy chosen Bishop the perfection of Thy service, and having entrusted him with the supreme dignity, do Thou sanctify him with unction from above.**

Now the consecrator sits and the head of the new bishop is bound with a long napkin. The consecrator with his thumb anoints the new bishop's head with holy chrism as he says:

**May thy head be anointed and consecrated with the heavenly blessing in the pontifical Order, so that the power which thou dost receive from on high may flow forth from thee in ever greater abundance and glory. In the Name of the ✠ Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy ✠ Spirit. R. Amen.**

"This anointing of the head is an important item in the ceremony, for the chrism is especially the vehicle of the divine Fire. On the lower levels it is a powerful purifying influence, and on the higher it gives strength and clearness. Although it is applied down here in the physical world, its effects extend far above into unseen realms. The

soul mirrors itself in the personality, and this reflection, like many others, is upside down. The higher mind or intellect is reflected in the lower mind, the intuition in the emotional or astral body, and the spirit itself down here in the physical vehicle. Ordinarily the triple spirit is so widely separate from the man as we know him that there is no apparent result from this reflection; but as in the Bishop this triple spirit has the opportunity of awakening, the application of chrism to the head intensifies the power of reflection, and makes the triple spirit glow most wonderfully, besides, clearing the way down into the physical brain for the flow of the new forces.

“The force-centre at the top of the head (called by Indian students of higher physics the *Sahasrara chakra*, and referred to in Baptism as the gateway through which the man passes in and out) is in most men a vortex producing a small saucer-like depression, just as are the other centers in the human body. They take that shape because force is constantly flowing into the physical man through them from higher planes; but in the great Saint force which he himself generates is constantly rushing *outwards* through this centre for the helping of the world, and so the vortex, rotating more rapidly than ever, becomes a cone instead of a depression, and is often to be seen in statues of the Lord Buddha as a distinct projection at the top of the head.

“Manifestly it is intended that the Bishop shall join this more advanced type of souls, for the action of the chrism tends strongly in the direction of this development. If he understands his business and uses his opportunities, every Bishop ought to be a veritable radiating sun, a lighthouse amid the stormy sea of life, a battery charged with almost unlimited power for good, so that he may be a fountain of strength, of love and of peace, and his mere presence may itself be a benediction.” (*The Science of the Sacraments*)

Rising and extending his hands toward the new bishop, the consecrator prays:

**Thou Who art wisdom strength, and beauty, show forth thy glory in this thy servant. Let Thy wisdom dwell in his mind and enlighten his understanding, that in judgment he may be a true and a wise counsellor unto his people, discerning in all spiritual knowledge. May he be strong and of a good courage, sustaining his people in the face of darkness and despondency, a tower of strength to them that falter on the way. Let the beauty of holiness shine forth in his conversation and his actions. Do Thou fill him, O Lord, with reverence and make him devout and steadfast in Thy service. May gentleness adorn his life, that he may win the hearts of men and open them to the light of the Holy Spirit. Above all, may he be so filled with Thy love that he may touch the hearts of men with the fire from heaven and bring them from the darkness of ignorance into Thy marvelous Light; Thou Who livest and reignest, O Trinity of Might and Wisdom and Love, one holy God throughout all ages of ages. R. Amen.**

The consecrator now anoints the hands of the new bishop with the sacred chrism as he says:

**May these hands be consecrated and hallowed for the work of the pontifical Order by this anointing with the holy chrism of sanctification. In the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of Holy ✠ Spirit. R. Amen.**

“The anointed hands are now potentially the hands of the Trinity. This anointing of

the hands with chrism arranges the mechanism for the distribution of the three kinds of force (coming forth, if we push our investigation far enough back into light of ineffable glory, from the Three Aspects or Persons of the ever-blessed Trinity) which flow through the Bishop by virtue of the gift of the Holy Spirit at his consecration. For that reason the triple cross is made over him." (*The Science of the Sacraments*)

The consecrator makes the sign of the Cross over the heart and hands of the new bishop, saying:

**Mayest thou abound with the fullness of spiritual ✠ blessing, so that whatsoever thou dost ✠ bless may be blessed, and whatsoever thou dost hallow may be hallowed, and that the laying on of this consecrated hand may avail for the spiritual safeguarding of Thy people; in the Name of our Lord Christ. R. Amen.**

He then joins the new bishop's hands and binds them with a linen strip. As in the ordination of a priest, the purpose is to give the hands time to assimilate the divine power imparted to them through the anointing.

It is traditional in the Western Church for bishops to carry a staff called a crozier that is in the shape of a shepherd's staff. (In the Eastern Church they carry a pateratissa, a staff in the form of the caduceus of Asclepius.) They also wear a pectoral cross. (In the Eastern Church they wear a depiction of the Virgin Mary known as a panagia.) Only in the Western Church does a bishop wear a ring. These three items are now blessed by the consecrator.

The napkin and linen binding the head and hands of the new bishop are then removed and he cleanses his hands.

The consecrator hands the crozier to the new bishop, saying:

**Receive this staff, and wield thy power with care as Shepherd of Christ's flock. By virtue of the sevenfold fire of God the Holy Spirit be thou all things to all men; giving more strength unto the strong, yet showing gentleness unto the weak; full of wisdom for the wise, and for the devout full of deep devotion. Yet as the seven flashing colors of the rainbow make but one pure white ray, so shall thy sevenfold power be all the one great power of love.**

The consecrator suspends the cross around the neck of the new bishop, saying:

**Receive this cross, remembering that only by the perfect sacrifice of the lower nature to the higher canst thou fit thyself to bear it worthily. Go forth in the power of the cross, and may the sevenfold light of the Holy Spirit so shine through thee that thou mayest win others to the beauty of sacrifice.**

He places the ring on the ring-finger of the right hand of the new bishop, saying:

**Receive this ring in token of the link which binds thee to our Lord, for symbol of thine office as His legate to thy people. In His most holy Name, be thou a healer of the souls of men, a channel of His love.**

Then he delivers to him the book of Gospels, closed, which had previously been held on his shoulders as he says:

**Receive the book of the Gospels, and be thou a teacher of the Divine Wisdom unto the people entrusted to thee.**

The consecrator gives the salutation of peace to the newly consecrated Bishop and the Mass proceeds as usual, the new bishop being commemorated in the Canon. After the final blessing the new bishop is vested in cope, mitre, and gloves.

As the *Te Deum* is sung, the new bishop proceeds around the church, giving his blessing to the people. When he returns to the sanctuary, he is seated and the consecrator says this final prayer:

**O God, the Shepherd and Ruler of all the faithful, look down in Thy lovingkindness on this servant of Thine who has now become a pontiff and ruler in Thy Church; grant him, we pray Thee, O Lord, both by his ministration and by word and example, so to profit those over whom he is placed that, together with the flock committed to his care, he may continually increase in the knowledge of Thy mysteries. Though Christ our Lord. R. Amen.**

Here we have the sum of it all. The entire purpose of Christ's Church and the Sacraments that are its literal life-blood is to increase in the knowledge of the Divine Mysteries, for such knowledge leads to liberation of the spirit, the only true salvation. To devote ourselves to the cultivation of the spirit in wisdom is our holy and joyful obligation and privilege.

Finally the new bishop gives the final blessing of the Mass, pays homage to the consecrator, and all depart in blessedness.

Let us give Bishop Leadbeater the final word:

“Those of the laity who have the opportunity of seeing any of the major ordinations are privileged people. It is a great thing, a fine thing to be able to see the carrying on of this scheme given to by the Christ hundreds of years ago. By their presence, by their earnest devotion, the laity can help, and can strengthen the hands of those who are passing on this wondrous gift. They themselves have not been ordained, therefore it is not in their power to pass on the Holy Orders; but it is in their power to uphold the hands of those who are doing it, and to give in that way very real help in what is being done.

“Another point is that such a Service offers a magnificent opportunity to those who are trying to develop clairvoyance. Those who are beginning to see should try to see all they can. Humanity is evolving, the powers of our higher bodies are coming nearer to the surface, and sometimes some of us are able to see a little more than we used to see. Here are occasions when there is a great deal more to be seen than is visible to the physical eye. It is well worth while for those present to make an effort to put themselves into a receptive attitude, in the hope of seeing or feeling something of what lies behind the outer form of what is done.

“There will be wondrous outpourings of power visible to those who have learnt how to perceive them—floods of light, flashes of splendid color, great Angels who have come to help. Many can feel their presence, and there are some who can see them. There is no reason why others should not share this advantage. Let them put themselves in an attitude of sympathy; let them try to see and to feel. That is one way in which we, the clergy, like the laity to cooperate with us in the work which we have to do.” (*The Science of the Sacraments*)

### **A final but important point**

In these rites it is evident that ordination and administration of the Sacraments is limited to baptized males alone, so we should address it here.

There is no reason at all why a woman should not be a Protestant minister, and from childhood many of my friends have been—and excellent ones, too. The thing that makes the difference in the rites we have been considering is that of Apostolic Succession. We are not speaking sociologically, but esoterically. The Christian system of Holy Orders is of a nature that demands an exclusively male clergy on all levels—not just in relation to the priesthood and episcopate. Again, this is a matter of subtle spiritual energies. To effect the Christian Sacraments the polarity of a male human priest and the Divine Feminine polarity of the Holy Spirit working together are absolutely necessary. It is just as I say: a matter of polarity. As a reader of *The Science of the Sacraments* can ascertain, all the Sacraments involve complex elements and processes on the unseen planes for their actualization. Whimsy or social prejudice or personal desire simply never enter into it. In *The Science of the Sacraments* Bishop Leadbeater writes:

“Another of the conditions under which we receive this mighty gift of grace is that it is arranged to flow through the masculine organism. In these days when it is the fashion to ignore or decry all distinctions of nature, and to claim that everybody can do everything equally well, women-folk sometimes clamour for priestly position, asking why they should not hold such an office and exercise its powers just as well as men. The ordinary clerical answer is in the old words: ‘We have no such custom, neither the Churches of God,’ fortified perhaps by the reminder that the Christ is said to have chosen His twelve apostles and His seventy preachers exclusively from among men. That is an argument of some force; but the student can add to it a further consideration—that this particular type of magic is not adapted to work through the feminine organism. There are other types of energy which *are* so arranged, but they are of quite different character, and are little known to our present civilization—much, I fancy, to its loss. The cult of our Blessed Lady in the Roman Church is an unconscious effort to fill a gap which many people instinctively recognize.”

And later:

“It is often asked whether a woman could validly be ordained. That question has practically been answered in an earlier chapter. The forces now arranged for distribution through the priesthood would not work efficiently through a feminine body; but it is quite conceivable that the present arrangements may be altered by the Lord Himself. It would no doubt be easy for Him, if He so chose, either to revive some form of the old religions in which the feminine Aspect of the Deity was served by priestesses, or so to modify the physics of the Catholic scheme of forces that a feminine body could be satisfactorily employed in the work. Meantime we have no choice but to administer His Church along the lines laid down for us.”

We must remember that both Bishops Wedgwood and Leadbeater devoted their lives to the work and furtherance of the Theosophical Society which was founded by a woman, Madame Blavatsky (in salutation of whom Bishop Leadbeater bowed down and touched his head to the ground in reverence, as was the custom in India). After her passing the Society was headed by Annie Besant whom both bishops held in the greatest spiritual esteem and whom they consulted by correspondence throughout their formulation of the rites we have been analyzing. So no one can accuse them of simply conforming to social custom or pressures in their insistence on an all-male clergy.

Actually, just as with their experimentation in liturgical forms, the bishops did

privately in the presence of other clairvoyants, some of whom were women, attempt to ordain three women. Not only did the bishops and the clairvoyant observers unanimously declare that the ordinations simply did not “work” or take hold, all three of the women insisted that they were psychically harmed to some degree by undergoing the rituals. One woman said that she did not regain her normal status for half a year, another said that her recovery took a little over a year, and the third woman said that she felt an impairment and imbalance in her subtle bodies for three years. So everyone realized that the attempt to ordain women would not only be useless, it would be detrimental to them. (Remember that these three women were Theosophists who had refined and developed their subtle faculties of perception and wished to be ordained, so their testimony was of real value.)

So confident were the bishops in the perceptions of themselves and the invited observers as well as the women who underwent the experiment that it became an inviolable rule in the Liberal Catholic Church that only men could be ordained to any order. Because of the matter of polarity, also perceived by clairvoyant observers, no women were permitted inside the altar rails or altar area during the celebration of Mass, so there were no women servers or active participants at or near the altar. This was because it is normal and natural that when men and women stand near each other their energies begin to react upon one another and create horizontal eddies of psychic force. Of itself this is no problem, but in the Mass one of the major effects is the directing upward of a tremendous amount of spiritual and psychic force (see the illustrations in *The Science of the Sacraments*), and the presence of mixed polarity in the altar area greatly impedes this. That is why in the East right now, and previously in the West, men and women stood on opposite sides of temples and churches. In this way a magnetic field is produced that facilitates any upward-oriented ceremony or activity (such as satsangs in India).

Evidence of the original Liberal Catholics’ conviction in this matter is the fact that whenever Mrs. Besant gave the sermon at a Liberal Catholic Mass she always stood outside the altar rails to do so, for she was in total agreement with it.

It should be pointed out that when Bishop Leadbeater says that “the present arrangements may be altered by the Lord Himself,” he is not speaking of some invisible inner plane revelation that anyone could claim to receive, but a change publicly instituted by the Lord in his second incarnation as “son of David” (mentioned in the chapter on Baptism). There is no thought in the bishop’s mind that “the present arrangement” could be changed by a psychic perception or a majority vote of a bishops’ synod.

What about the contention that the early church had “deaconesses”? It is the truth. But they were not female deacons, as historical records abundantly demonstrate, but teachers and advisers of the women of a congregation. In the Byzantine Empire the deaconesses stood on the women’s (left) side of the church and directed them at certain times in the Liturgy, particularly during the time of Communion. They also prepared women for Baptism, did the anointing at Baptism (which was a full-body anointing), and took them Communion when they were ill. Their function was pastoral and not sacramental in character.

# Chapter Thirteen: The Inner Sacrament

“Ye are of God, little children” (I John 4:4).

In the Divine Liturgy of the Byzantine Orthodox Church, the Deacon or Priest says toward the end: “Having received the divine, holy, pure, immortal, heavenly, life-giving and awesome Mysteries of Christ, O believers, let us worthily give thanks unto the Lord.” Although this is a reference to Holy Communion, these words apply to all of the Sacraments. They are truly divine, holy, pure, immortal, heavenly, life-giving and awesome. Yet for all that, they are external rites, and if the participant is not prepared inwardly they remain mere externals without any effect in his spiritual life or progress.

The Sacraments are divine, holy, pure, immortal, heavenly, life-giving and awesome Seeds of Life, but as Jesus indicates in the parable of the sower and the seed (Matthew 13:3-23), if the ground is not prepared in which they are sown, nothing comes of them. That is why Saint Paul wrote to some lax disciples: “Christ is become of no effect unto you” (Galatians 5:4). The word he used is *katargeo*, which means to be inactive or inoperative, even powerless. This is the condition of those who have not engaged in the cultivation of interior consciousness, the consciousness of spirit, even though they have externally received the Sacraments. For in the final word: “The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21). Since in our total being we are both external and internal, these two aspects must be cultivated to the maximum degree and manner. There must be continuous inner and outer development for our evolution beyond humanity to divinity. Otherwise Christ is of no effect for us.

The ultimate Sacrament is the Inner Sacrament of Meditation, without which we do not live and grow in the spirit. In the Introduction I cited scriptures which speak of God and Christ living in us. In Revelation Jesus says: “Behold, I have set before thee an open door” (Revelation 3:8). The Sacraments open the door to that spiritual state, but meditation is the entering of the door. The Sacraments only give us potential; it is up to us to actualize that potential through our own efforts in spiritual development.

It seems that from the beginning and through the history of Christianity there have been two kinds of Christians: the Externals (exoterics) and the Internals (esoterics). Jesus spoke of them in this way:

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not” (Matthew 25:1-12).

The foolish are those that have no internal reserve of spiritual consciousness derived from meditation and remaining focused on interior life. For a meditator does not get up from meditation and immediately plunge his awareness into his material surroundings like milk poured into water and diluted, but holds on to the effects of



meditation and remains objective among the external surroundings. He always maintains an interior, spiritual perspective, for his life is fully inward, never outward. This takes a great deal of practice, but he gladly works toward that goal.

In time those whose religious life is only external begin to fade away, become feeble and even burnt out like a spent wick. Being foolish they still do not understand the root of their problem, so they seek out the wise and ask them to share their “oil” with them; but that is impossible—they must fill up their interior reservoir through personal inner cultivation: meditation. Those who dawdle until the end of a cycle of spiritual opportunity or are overtaken in their emptiness by death will find the door to liberation closed against them by their own neglect and lack, and so shall return again to this earthly life as they have so many times before. The wise, on the other hand, enter into to the spiritual marriage of union with God, for they are “brides” the heavenly Groom has come to receive.

“And so shall we ever be with the Lord” (I Thessalonians 4:17).

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out” (Revelation 3:12).

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne” (Revelation 3:21).