THEOSOPHY ONLINE MESSENGER
The School of Theosophy, Orlando.
Theosophical Society In Orlando. (Orlando Lodge).
Monthly Internet Newsletter
#5 December 18, 2002

STUDY---MEDITATION----SERVICE

Please send all comments and literary contributions to TomSoto, Editor.
Schtsyrl@webtv.net
We welcome your comments & questions

THEOSOPHICAL MEETINGS
Theosophical meetings are held on the
1st & 3rd Fridays of the month at 8:00 P.M. Public & Visitors Welcome
Special Programs & Lectures As Announced?
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-----SPECIAL YULETIDE PROGRAM-----
Friday December 20, at 8:00 P.M.
Audio presentation of Dora Kunzs' "Christmas of the Angels"
Discussion & lite refreshments.

SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY, ORLANDO
The School of Theosophy, Orlando is currently in session with Winter Semester 2002 and meets Sunday afternoons at 3:00 P.M.

LENDING LIBRARY-MEDITATION ROOM-
NATURE SANCTUARY
The Lending Library-Meditation Room & Nature Sanctuary are open weekly to the public.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN ORLANDO, FLORIDA (Orlando Lodge) The Theosophical Society In Orlando was chartered in January 1935 and has been active in the Central Florida community since that time.

Theosophical Meetings are held on the first and third Fridays at 8:00 P.M. September thru May.
The Society maintains a lending library, nature sanctuary, and Meditation Room open weekly to the public, September thru May. The School of Theosophy, Orlando presents classes in Basic Theosophy and Meditation twice a year, in the Spring and Fall Semesters. A school catalog and class syllabus are available upon request.

Theosophy is the Perennial Wisdom which lies at the root of all religion, yet is the exclusive possession of none. Members of the Society seek to promote a sense of tolerance, understanding, and universal brotherhood among all people. The aims and objectives of the Society are purely altruistic in the highest sense. The Society does not involve itself in sectarian or political causes whatever.

Theosophy is non-dogmatic and does not promote any creed or specific belief. Rather, through Study, Meditation, and Service members attempt to gain a greater understanding of themselves and their purpose in the universe. The Society is not authoritarian and has no clergy or leaders, other than democratically elected officers. It promotes complete individual freedom of thought and conscience, and refers the individual back to his own conscience as the only ultimate authority in regard to spiritual and moral decisions.
spiritual and moral decisions.

The Theosophical Society In Orlando is a local branch of a national and international organization with headquarters in Chennai, India. We invite your interest and participation in our programs.

The present campus of Orlando Lodge was acquired in 1976. In October of 1996 the members dedicated the campus as a designated Nature Sanctuary.

ORLANDO LODGE

We Thank You for helping to Light the Candle of Theosophy by forwarding this newsletter to your online friends.

CHRISTMAS/YULETIDE THOUGHTS
by Ruben Cabigting

CHRISTMAS is a great festival when the living Christ pours out divine love and spiritual energy through his angels upon people all over the world. Each and every one of us has indeed a great opportunity willingly to receive this gift on Christmas day.

Christmas is a time of peace to all people of goodwill. The Christmas spirit is the real feeling of brotherhood that is spread throughout the world especially on this occasion. Ideally, this feeling of peace and goodwill should be for the whole year, but since we cannot feel such noble Christmas heartiness at all times, at least there is a time each year when people practice it. We share our joys with the less fortunate on Christmas Day and help to realize the great brotherhood of humanity even for this brief time.

Mary, who bore Jesus in Bethlehem, is called our immaculate Lady, Star of the Sea, Queen of Heaven, Mother of God. We see her in pictures standing on the crescent moon, star-crowned; she nurses her child Jesus; and the cross appears on the back of the chair in which he sits on his mother’s knee. The Virgo of the Zodiac is represented in ancient drawings as a woman suckling a child—the type of all future Madonnas with their divine Babes—showing the origin of the symbol.

The relation of the winter solstice to Jesus is also significant. The birth of Mithras was celebrated at the winter solstice with great rejoicing. And Horus was also born then, his birth being one of the greatest mysteries of the Egyptian religion, with pictures representing it on the walls of temples. At the winter solstice, the image of Horus was brought out of the sanctuary with special ceremonies, and similarly at Christmas the image of the infant Bambino is still brought out and exhibited in churches in Rome.

The story of the Nativity is mystical as well as allegorical. The Christ’s life is a mystical experience, a birth that continually occurs in each of us as the inherent powers of the human Spiritual Self unfold. It is a universal spiritual process that is not confined or limited to only one particular time, place, or person.
only one particular time, place, or person.

Allegorically, the three Wise Men of the Gospel account are highly evolved intelligences who assist a candidate in the process of spiritual evolution. The Star of Bethlehem represents the presence of the One Initiator, the King of the World. The inn, which was full, typifies the worldly life of men, and the stable is the hall of initiation. The Virgin Mary represents the causal body, the vesture of light, within which all spiritual birth occurs. The obedient and gentle Joseph represents the disciplined mind. The domesticated animals in the stable represent the pure and controlled emotions. The shepherds represent spiritually evolved persons who come to witness the spiritual birth. In a similar manner, the Christmas tree represents the nervous system, its lights are the various centers of the candidate that are activated during the process of initiation, and the star at the top of the tree is the Star of the One Initiator shining triumphantly.

The Christmas festival, when correctly considered, should take on a new meaning of rejoicing, giving, loving, forgiveness, sanctity, and solemnity, so that the whole world may realize brotherhood, oneness, harmony, peace, and goodwill. Merry Christmas to all.

Ruben Cabigting is a staff member at the national center of the Theosophical Society in America and a bishop in the Liberal Catholic Church.

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=====YULETIDE GREETINGS=======

The Members of Orlando Lodge wish everyone a Blessed & Joyous Yuletide filled with Light, Love, & Peace!

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Special Interfaith & Yule Greetings -click on links-------
http://www.beliefnet.com/story/118/story_11800_1.html
http://www.fortunecity.com/victorian/cloisters/77/yule.html
http://www.stnicholascenter.org
http://wilstar.com/xmas/xmassymb.htm

==PEACE ON EARTH--GOODWILL TO ALL==

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Respect Diversity and Share!

No matter what, one way to make a difference in the world is to respect diversity and share your goodness. Whether the person/people you meet is/are homeless or from a different culture, race, or viewpoint, please choose to send a positive ripple effect with your life by respecting his/her/their right to be.

By sharing yourself in an open manner, the influence you seek to convey will be greatly enhanced. And you never know, you just may learn something new in the process!? Remember, “the single act of one touches many.” Your positive or negative impact will effect the people you come into contact with. This in turn will touch the lives of those they meet. Now, more than ever, is the time for us to be united, not divided

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A UNIVERSAL LIGHT
A UNIVERSAL LIGHT
by? Radha Burnier
Mrs. Burnier is International President of
The Theosophical Society.

The Light of Theosophy illumines every field of human activity. The
thoughts and labors of H.S. Olcott, H.P. Blavatsky, Annie Besant, have
inspired generations of people all over the world to devote themselves
to world welfare rather than personal interest; all of them in their
turn have activated others to live thoughtfully and unselfishly, and
learn to tread the path to perfection, which is universal, without
orthodoxies, dogmas, and meaningless rituals.

It takes courage to break through old customs and outmoded practices,
and all outstanding Theosophists were courageous people, plowing new
ground in the fields of religion, education, social relationships, and
even politics. To all my distinguished predecessors I pay homage and
sincerely hope that I shall prove worthy of them and of the trust
reposed in me by the members.

Sometimes, standing on the beautiful beach at Adyar, we can see a great
rush of water toward the shore, which is quickly and invisibly hauled
back to the ocean by a strong undercurrent. At times there is a dramatic
clash between the powerful forward swell and the unseen current carrying
back the mass of water. The collision throws the waves high up, and then
they fall with a crash. This seems symbolic of how the human mind
repeatedly rushes toward the dry sands and rocks of sensory and material
existence, not realizing that there is no escape from the mighty
invisible energy that will pull it back into the vast ocean of reality.
The collision between these cross currents periodically results in
catastrophes that shake up the human mind and human society?but, alas
only temporarily!

Such are the times when the challenges are most intense and the
opportunities great. All of life is offering us opportunities all the
time, but in small ways. And it takes a long while, even many
incarnations, to be aware that even the small encounters with people,
objects, or situations, both pleasant and seemingly unpleasant, are part
of the benevolent scheme of Nature to awaken consciousness and to open
our hearts to the truths of life.

We are witnessing today a blind rush for power, wealth, and
enjoyment?irrespective of moral and ethical considerations. The
violence, cruelty, corruption and selfishness are unprecedented because
our age of technology makes a system of everything and manufactures
increasingly efficient tools to be put to good or evil use.
Nevertheless, by bringing into sharp focus the dire results of the
struggle modern humanity carries on against Nature's laws and design,
our era provides an exceptional opportunity for a deeper understanding
of the human problem?the problem of egoism battling against the
universe.

Krishnamurti often spoke of mediocrity as if it were a sin, or even a
crime. Mediocrity, we may say, is insensitivity of mind, its failure to
respond to the simple opportunities of daily life, which pave the way to
spiritual awakening.

Shut in a shell of self-concern, such a mind is callous and blunt to
disasters and danger signals. The lesson of twentieth-century history is
that the majority of people do terrible things?killing and even
torturing, spying and betraying family and friends?because everybody
torturing, spying and betraying family and friends? because everybody else does it. The abominable cruelty systematically practiced on humans and animals is tolerated without a murmur by the majority of people because it is the norm of the age. Few rise up to affirm that what is wrong does not become right because a million people do it. Present-day culture, if at all it is culture, is stunting those faculties which put the human heart in touch with the source of life and health. As Light on the Path declares: “He that chooses evil, refuses to look within himself, shuts his ears to the melody of his heart.” That melody is in every human heart, deeply hidden, perhaps silent, but it is there.

In the early days of the TS, members were advised by an Adept:

The Society, as a body, has a task before it which, unless performed with the utmost discretion, will cause the world of the indifferent and the selfish to rise up in arms against it.

Theosophy has to fight intolerance, prejudice, ignorance, and selfishness, hidden under the mantle of hypocrisy. It has to throw all the light it can from the torch of Truth, with which its servants are entrusted. It must do this without fear or hesitation, dreading neither reproof nor condemnation. Theosophy, through its mouthpiece, the Society, has to tell the Truth in the very face of lie; to beard the tiger in its den, without thought or fear of evil consequences, and to set at defiance calumny and threats.

Many members of the Society have in fact stood up for causes which were scoffed at in their time? they braved calumny and sarcasm.

But the work of the TS is not merely to try to rectify the ills and wrongs in human society, but also to encourage its members to go to the root of human problems, to find and understand their origin within themselves and learn to rise above the illusion-breeding, conditioned mind.

Without such action it is not possible for humanity to become heir to the vast creative gifts and potential for wisdom inherent in consciousness.

One of the Objects of the Society is to investigate the hidden laws of Nature and the powers latent in man. What are these powers?

Often the answer points to trivialities. But we have arrived at a stage in human history where it is not enough to undertake psychical research and arrive at some superficial findings about telepathy and other abilities that may be classified as the lower siddhis. We need to recognize the deeper meaning in the words of this Object, and study earnestly our hearts and those of our fellows, in order to avoid constantly deceiving ourselves into believing that unrealities are real. Slowly, as we plunge into the quiet depths in our own consciousness, there may be the beginning of reflection on the profound secrets of Nature, hidden in the material as well as subtle inner dimensions of both human beings and the universe.

If the universe is a mystery, it is a still greater mystery that evolution has arrived at the human mind with its irrepressible aspiration to know the truth and also to love the truth. With loss of faith in organized religion, with all its superstitions and emphasis on authority, people in general have come to trust only the truths of science, gathered by observation of the objective universe. The position has changed now with recognition that the observer has a direct impact on what is observed.
Life is not a cry, it is a song, say the wise ones. Behind the suffering and chaos, there is a plan and purpose, says Theosophy. Can we know it as a fact? Only by finding the truth about ourselves, and breaking down the internal barriers to perception. The words "universal brotherhood" are generally taken to mean that we must behave in an unbiased, friendly, and kindly manner. But it is much more than that; a true brotherhood is a living body or nucleus which is regenerative. The Universal Brotherhood of the Theosophical Society must not be a passive condition, but a dynamic, harmonizing power that embraces all in close kinship. That kinship is at a deep level; it is "the spiritual and psychic blending of man with Nature" which reveals the truth that lies hidden under the objects of sense and thereby promotes a spirit of unity and harmony.

Regenerative universal brotherhood is the foundation for the emergence of a nonsectarian, nonauthoritarian religious feeling among the peoples of the world, counteracting the futile materialistic trend.

The statement was made in the Mahatma letters: "Modern science is our best ally. Yet it is generally that same science which is made the weapon to break our heads with." Since then, science has made great strides. A new picture is emerging as a modern generation of investigators and thinkers in the scientific field are putting forward views that tend to shatter the rigid materialism of the last two centuries.

This change in scientific thinking helps to usher in a fresh sense of responsibility in humankind for the welfare of the earth and all its other inhabitants. Well-known writers like Professor Lewis Thomas are suggesting that the evolutionary process has been sustained, from the time of the earliest microbes, by a system of cooperation, communication, and interconnection in Nature and not by a bitter struggle for survival, as people have believed for more than a century. Others say that it cannot be taken for granted that violence is dominant in Nature; altruism and mutual support are very much a part of Nature's order.

Professor Charles Birch emphasizes the place of feelings of compassion and sympathy and the existence of purpose in Nature. The concept that there is an inscrutable, universal intelligence and power, which may be called God, is no longer totally unacceptable to scientists. A whole stream of fresh thinking flowing from the scientific community promises to alter the education that future generations will receive. Science may indeed become the ally of the Wisdom-Religion; true religious awareness may possibly return to the world through the back door of science! As Arthur Hugh Clough wrote:

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking, 

????? Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making, 

????? Comes silent, flooding in the main.
And not by eastern windows only, 

?????When daylight comes, comes in the light.
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly, 

?????But westward, look, the land is bright!

Theosophy is in essence both science and religion. It is a call to use our reason to understand life in its varied aspects, knowing full well the limitations of reason. For something more than reason is needed to grasp the essence of a flower, a song, a person, let alone the truth of
grasp the essence of a flower, a song, a person, let alone the truth of the vast, living universe of which we are a small part. As Annie Besant said: "Truth must come to each individual as the result of study, reflection, purity of life, and devotion to high ideals." The art of living must be practiced and the science of life learned by all of us in order to fulfill successfully the aims and objects of the Theosophical Society.

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THEOSOPHICAL? LINKS
Further Detailed Information about Theosophy, and/or The Theosophical Society....

International Headquarters, Adyar, Chennai, (Madras) India ?
http://www.ts-adyar.org

National Headquarters,
Theosophical Society In America,
Wheaton, Illinois ? www.theosophical.org

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Helpful Inspirational Links .........
http://www.digiserve.com/mystic
http://www.llangley.com/yoga/wisdom/rightnow%5B2%5D.htm
http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Olympus/3987/theosop.html
http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/dondeg/bpweb/BP_index.htm
http://www.gandhiserve.org
http://w3.gwis.com/~ajmani/gayatri.html
http://www.iwgonline.org
http://www.interfaith-center.org
http://www.interfaithcalendar.org
http://www.actsofkindness.org
http://www.ishval.org.uk/index.html
http://www.yakrider.com/Resources/resources.htm

Vegetarian Links.......
http://www.vrg.org
http://vegsource.com
http://www.bhojan.org/dynamic/index.php

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Your access to The Light is within you, quiet the mind and emotions and look within.

We welcome your comments, questions, and participation in Theosophical activities.
Feel welcome to contact or visit Orlando Lodge any time.
We hope you have enjoyed this issue of Theosophy Online Messenger.
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