

SYZYGY

REFLECTIONS ON THE MONASTERY OF THE SEVEN RAYS



*Palamas

"‘Syzygy’ is the appropriate name for this text, yoking together as it does a wide variety of divergent streams. This is at one and the same time a deeply personal account of Tau Palamas’ own spiritual journey and a rigorous examination of the Monastery of the Seven Rays’ practice in relation to other currents and approaches. The journey is a sometimes dizzying one as Tau Palamas reels from one subject to the next, and from personal reflections to deeply theoretical speculations, the whole thing supplemented with a parade of stark and arresting images from his own paintbrush. This is a demanding text, perhaps at times too adventurous; one certainly not for the tyro. Its ultimate effect, however, is properly magical, and no one interested in contemporary magical praxis and Bertiaux’s work will be left disappointed."

Abathur V°, Grand Master of the Friary/OSF

"A tour de force of creative synthesis, this extraordinary book sets out to fuse one of the most avant-garde branches of contemporary Western esotericism with the traditions of monastic prayer, contemplation and ritual, and carries out this more than usually demanding task with aplomb. Students of the mysteries weary of the rehashing of familiar teachings that dominates today’s occult publishing scene will find it a welcome if dizzying breath of fresh air."

John Michael Greer, *Grand Archdruid of the
Ancient Order of Druids in America*

"Syzygy is a fascinating exploration of the Voudon-Gnostic philosophy of Michael-Paul Bertiaux and the Monastery of the Seven Rays. The author, a Gnostic Bishop, takes us through his practice and experiences, telling us about meditation and prayer, Saints and spirits, magick and healing and even death and the dead. In the second half of the book, he offers practical ritual techniques to experience what he calls ‘the Otherworld’ for oneself. I suspect students of the Voudon-Gnostic coursework will find this text an invaluable companion for their studies."

Aaron Leitch, *author of Secrets of the Magickal Grimoires and
The Essential Enochian Grimoire.*



✠ SYZYGY ✠

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MONASTERY OF THE SEVEN RAYS

✠ Palamas

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Thank you to my lovely wife and children for being patient with me as I wrote this text in a wave of inspiration and heat.

And lastly, thank you to Michael-Paul Bertiaux for gifting us with his unique and creative world and for his correspondence and encouragement in the Orders.

✥Palamas

Preface

The book you are now holding in your hands is not really a “book.” Not in any conventional sense. To begin reading the words of Tau Palamas in SYZYGY is to be AUTOMATICALLY and IMMEDIATELY connected to a vast spectrum of Being typically unnoticed by the conscious mind with its pressing priorities and churning concerns. We might say this text, with its accompanying artworks, is a mutable message sent into the Heart of the Hearer. Written from WITHIN the Monastery of the Seven Rays, one must also be Present in this Mysterious and Sacred Space to partake of what is being offered.

Tau Palamas opens the doors to this divine dimension by introducing the Gyrovagi, Monks on the Move, Devotees who have not chosen to be tied to a Cloistered Life. The Monk of this Gnosis is operative in an unstable universe of perpetually shifting affairs. This entails the entirety of the World, both inner and outer, what Wittgenstein would define as “all that is the case.” For the Gyrovagi, however, the “case” goes beyond the outer world identified by the senses *and* the inner world of assimilation and organization. The Devotional Center of each Monk is found in a vision complimenting and calling to the first Syzygical setup. Syzygy refers to a Divine Pairing, a Union. The Gnostic Gyrovagi has not merely imagined another world but KNOWN IT through direct contact. This does not imply perfection. Simple contact with an all-pervasive perfection but begins a process (as understood from our human standpoint) within the Heart. This Knowing forms a link between the Perfection and the sudden shifts of temporal experience which we are inclined to regard as the Imperfect or “Fallen” World. The Monk is therefore brought to the Place of Crucifixion, the Crossroads of Legbha, a Mystical and Trans-Rational Juncture which Theologian Paul Tillich sees as the birthplace of the New Being. Life and Death meet here that the Eternal and Temporal may conjoin. So many schools of religion or the occult are driven towards the “Eternal” in a direct line of “Ascent,” an escape route from the “World Gone Wrong.” This “Eternal,” however, is emanating into the “Temporal” and it is through a Co-operative engagement that Eternity may unveil itself into Time.

Thus it is that Palamas observes an inclination of the Gyrovagi towards exposure to Hell, a “courting of instability.” The word instability is not meant to imply some romantic notion of hurling oneself into self-

destructive paths. Palamas is quick to point out the importance of refilling and refreshing along the Great Way (or "Grand Chemin," as we say). It is easy to indulge in one extreme or another but the Gyrovagi struggles with the balance and union between these two (yet another Divine Pair!).

Within the Monastery Teachings, our Patriarch Michael Bertiaux observes: "The greater the tension the greater the occultist." But this tension does not imply conflict. Rather, tension can ever increase when occurring within a vehicle capable of withstanding and directing it. It is not an issue of one side triumphing over the other but of the transformation of both through the Heart of the Occultist, who is likewise transfigured.

As a clergyman, Palamas leads us through the established forms of the Church as devices for entering into the experience of Soulgrowth and Gnosis but this does not imply that the reader must follow suit by joining any church. Rather, one is invited to translate the rites, devotions and forms directly into the occult imagination. As is noted in his words, energies become ENTITIES and these Entities are instructive and empowering in their nature. Through the spiritualism dominant in the atmosphere of the Monastery, one will be led into workshops where the underlying principles of craftsmanship will culminate in a *Modus Operandi* unique to each student. Those principles permeate every creative form and are rooted in the connective tissue which links all things together "behind the scenes." But as Bertiaux reminds us in his lovely lessons, Occultism will only ask us to become ourselves.

Within the Monastery Teachings, one will read of Lattices and Matrices. These point toward that baseline energy surging through all of our specialized endeavors. Through diversity of form, we must work through (and even establish) these linkage points. These join our personal maps to a grand structure behind all maps.

And what is *this* joined to?

Palamas writes:

"Beyond our physical representative of the entire system (Michael-Paul Bertiaux) there are the Masters of the planes, the Saints, the Lwa, the Masters of Magick, the Aeons and cosmic Syzygies...on and on and on!!! And beyond all energies and essences of the spirits...we have the ABSOLUTE! We have no position other than a humble one to maintain within this system."

So, how does one find an entry point whereby to come into the many spaces we are speaking of?

It is to be found in this very book, in the presence of Tau Palamas as he conveys his Spirit through the medium of the written word. Although highly detailed, *Syzygy* is very "user friendly." Palamas is careful to explain

many obtuse and strange terms in plain language. His goal is not to target a select audience or to mystify the reader. Rather, he (much like Bertiaux) seeks to make truly profound and occult realities accessible for all who hunger for these truths. There is a natural and flowing beauty to this. One does not need to comprehend all the ideas presented in these pages but simply open to their atmosphere. The learning occurs on a deeper level of the contemplative mind.

With its substantial supplemental material, prayers and ceremonial in Book 2, *Syzygy* is a handbook for the Gyrovagi Spirit within yourself. Whether you choose to seek study with our Orders, enter into the Ecclesia or simply work with this material on your own, the Gates are opened here. We are grateful to Tau Palamas for his labors in bringing *Syzygy* into the world. May it serve you well as you navigate the vicissitudes of life in all of its aspects.

Kyle Fite
Sovereign Grand Master for OTOA-LCN

1. No. 22



Introduction

"This Way is the way of the Gnosis, a very ancient word from the Greek language, which means the knowing of the spiritually attuned. In the Gnostic church, which is based upon esoteric prayer and spiritualism, we teach all persons to become attuned to the ways and words, or powerful lessons, which come from the Holy Spirits."

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW iii

The Monastery of the Seven Rays exists on multiple planes. It has a physical locale in the home of Michael-Paul Bertiaux in Chicago, IL USA. This will probably strike the reader as strange, but the entire world of Voudon✠Gnosis is far from the norm. What becomes even more demanding of the imagination is that the essence of the Monastery is spiritual. Its structures, cloisters...its scriptorium and workshops, Chapels and shrines are accessible through the means of the diaphanous regions which can be traversed through something akin to auto-suggestive trance states. The Monastery maintains a series of Courses that span a period of over four years. They are of such a mystical consistency that by the basic process of thoughtfully *reading* the material, some of these structures...these mental palaces, cathedrals and pieces of spiritual architecture appear in the mind's eye without so much as an invitation. Furthermore, the practices inherent in the material are initiatic in scope and often result in profound dreamwork, contact with spiritual entities and the understanding of spiritual verities and advancement upon the path of Light. From the very beginning then, we recognize that within the strata of the Western Esoteric Tradition—vast and varied as it may be—the Monastery of the Seven Rays stands apart as unique and powerful, albeit a little known or utilized system.

The above quote from our Beloved Patriarch Michael Bertiaux is a succinct statement on the nature of Gnosis and the unified field of Voudon✠Gnosis. Our title suggests this unity. There are many definitions of *syzygy*, but the original Greek word, *syzygos* means "yoked together." Another way of looking at a *syzygy* is to consider it a *cosmic pairing*, one form of which is discussed in the chapter, *Caritas*. Within this particular quote, Bertiaux places all under the "Gnostic Church," wherein this esoteric prayer and spiritualism come to life. My personal

quest and journey is Ecclesiastical in nature and so these reflections will be primarily from the standpoint of a Gnostic Clergyman. A key word in this powerful quote is *attune*, mentioned twice. Surely if this path can be summed up in a single word it is *attunement*; the very purpose of this book is the further awareness and development of *attunement* to the spiritual verities about us, our bodies and the Light we inherently possess and the manifold ways in which we encounter and work with the Holy Spirits. Each attendee of the Monastery will have a unique experience within it and will bring to it his or her own specific purpose and gnostic space.

Before proceeding further, I must admit to my being an absolute Neophyte in this arena. In fact, I am such of the *Beginner's mind* that I would suggest the monastic title of Postulant. However, the transformative and creative changes that have occurred in my life since taking my first steps across the threshold of the Monastery, via the brilliant Coursework therein, are unparalleled to **any** experiences I have had in the diverse branches of the Western Esoteric Tradition upon which I have embarked over the past thirteen years. It has been nothing less than a transmutation of both my creativity and my connection to the spirit world and I have the Monastery, Patriarch Michael-Paul Bertiaux and the vast Tradition of Voudon*Gnosis to thank for it. As the material of the Monastery of the Seven Rays is privately utilized in Voudon*Gnostic Orders, I will refrain from quoting directly from it and respect its lack of publication, and instead—utilize the colossal and mysterious, *Voudon Gnostic Workbook (VGW)* of Michael-Paul Bertiaux.

The initial core teachings on Voudon*Gnosis came to light in the form of Coursework from the Monastery of the Seven Rays (M7Rs, for short). The monastic *feel* of the following pages is based upon this notion that if we are practicing the Coursework and Lessons, then we are effectively members, even if only virtually, of the Monastery. In the Benedictine Tradition there is an Order for individuals attached to a Monastery in this way—it is that of *Oblates*. An Oblate may live at a Monastery or Convent—yet maintain a normal work life outside of such; or—and this is more often the case—live in the world altogether, while cultivating a deep and formal relationship to a specific Monastery. It is the latter relationship that we resemble as votaries of the M7Rs. The optional *Ritual Act of Oblation* found in Book 2 is meant to serve as a powerful Formal Vow to the Spirits & Saints, to take up this life within the Mystical Monastery and to form a *contract* with these Holy Spirits for mutual assistance and enlightenment.

Monastic Life is one characterized by balance, with periods of the day marked for communal prayer, private study and meditation, manual labor

and refreshment. We will discuss the cultivation of such balance in the chapter *Aequus Animus*, but rather than being a central focus of our work, it will be a sort of seam in the overall fabric. The life of a Voudon✱Gnostic Mage is often *not* characterized by consistent peace and tranquility and our Initiates sometimes put themselves willingly into the Fires of Hell to war with the Darkness and to better understand the darkness present within us. However, with such heavy labors we will suffer unduly if we do not refill, refresh and resume balance through some of the practices and keys within this text.

These *Reflections* will take us through Classical Monastic concepts and tools, yet all will be done with an eye on our very unique and “peculiar type of Catholicism” as Dr. Courtney Willis refers to it, as well as to the fact that we are spiritualists. The union of our two paths—Voudon/Gnostic—obscure as it must be to the onlooker, is a testament to the brilliance of our systematic approach to the spirit realm. It is to enter the multi-verses of Magickal spheres **and** to cultivate deeply experiential, mystical knowing (gnosis). Informed by Crowley’s work, this both/and approach dispels the myth that the practitioner must choose *either* the mystical *or* the magical path. The integrated work of Michael Bertiaux and his teachers before him, Lucien and Hector Francois Jean-Maine, pervade all that we do in our Monastic capacity. It is through their labors and continuous “spirit contacts” that the Egregore swells with new life and abundant energy in this year of the Snake.

It is hoped that these *Reflections*, along with the *Ritual Act of Oblation* and *Breviary* in Book 2, will aid and assist Brothers and Sisters of the Monastery as we form deeper and deeper ties to the Monastery, more integrated relations with the Spirits, and endeavor upon the winding path of Gnosis.



One of the things that jolts the newcomer to the Monastery, who often approaches the portico with a prior familiarity with the *Voudon Gnostic Workbook*, is the profound lucidity and organization of the Coursework of the M7Rs. Within a few months’ work with the Lessons, suddenly the VGW is no longer so incredibly obscure and difficult. This is the action of the spirits *through* the Monastery. It is my contention that many can gain wonderful insights into Voudon✱Gnosis through the VGW, but that its *passport*, so to speak, is the M7Rs material. Numerous stories abound concerning the VGW having its own *vibratory rate* and containing an intrinsic power similar to the Victorian thoughts on the *Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*. I, for one, experienced an almost trance-like state

several times while simply reading its chapters. This is consistent, in another way, with the method of the Coursework. I also felt compelled to go back to the book many times over a couple of years—even when my *intellect* was in the way of my *understanding* the mysterious ways of the spirits as they are worked, researched and developed within the text. But there is simply nothing compared to *re-viewing* the VGW by the light of the Monastery teachings. This had such a profound effect upon me that even after the very first sixteen weeks of study I began to think of the act of reading the lessons as *religious*. They are doorways. They are Gnostic Spaces and they have spirits attached to them who guide the reader, particularly when the Initiate practices *Lectio Divina* as we will discover in Part II, Chapter 2.

All of our Magickal work, spirit work, Voudon, ritual, etc., will be explored in terms of *katopathic* knowledge in the chapter on *Theoria Physike*. Whether the practice is dream work, sex magick (which in the sense of this text could be more properly described as *love magic*), mediumistic-shamanic practice or the Gnostic Mass—all of these practices fall into this category and comprise the *Theologia* that we actually **do**. In this way, Voudon*Gnostics resemble the Eastern Orthodox Churches who share in the understanding of Theology as an action rather than a mere scholastic pursuit.

Our Unitive Experiences, where we get a real sense of Indra's net—of the interrelatedness of all things—where Union is no longer an idea but a *Truth that we live* are discussed in the chapter titled *Silentium*, for this type of knowledge (*Apophatic* as opposed to *Katopathic*) is dealing with what is often referred to as the Ineffable, hence the series of Masonic Degrees surrounding the discovery of the Lost Word called *The Ineffable Degrees*. A further development of the Unitive Experience is revealed in the final chapter of Book 1, *Caritas*.

Our life path as Voudon*Gnostics is given shape and form in the chapter on *Conversatio Morum*. This is a lifestyle! Far from being a rejection of *this* life, our practice is a complete embracing of it, a re-visioning of it and a radical interaction with all of its diverse aspects. The M7Rs is a holistic empire, divinizing all aspects of our existence and sending us outward into the multi-verses and secret spaces laid out for us in our unique travels upon the Grand Chemin (the Great Way).

As our path is unique, so we have our own unique Gnostic Space in which we dwell—a polymorphic orb of the magickal imagination (ontic sphere), collected studies, experiences, and intuitions that direct our work. Mine has followed in step with my vocation as Bishop of the Gnostic Church. From the moment I put my hand to the plow and truly

began to enter the world of Voudon✠Gnosis, I began to have a series of dreams and intuitions concerning various Saints of the Catholic Church. This led to “contact” and further to interaction and *interrelation*. Upon investigation, these Saints, quite often, were those attributed to the *Lwa* of Haitian Vodou. In Haiti, the Saint is not viewed as a “mask” of the *Lwa*; it is completely syncretized (identified) with the *Lwa* so that a division no longer exists. Though this transformation in Haiti was by force in the beginning, the strong spirits of Les Vudu, the ancestral spirits and the *Lwa*, pushed *their* way with intensity, so that in time Damballa was *truly* visualized and experienced as St. Patrick of Ireland, Erzulie Freda as the Mater Dolorosa, and Bawon Samedi as St. Gerard, to name a few. Haitian Vodouisants, in fact, proclaim that one must be a Catholic to practice Vodou. All of my previous work in various Magical Fraternities and Orders concentrated upon *me* making contact with Spirits, Angels and the like via Ceremonial Magic, Invocation and Evocation. But these dream initiations were a horse of another stripe, *for it was I that was contacted this time*, not the other way around. This is one of the hallmarks of our system—we are simply *returning* to the Monastery, we did not join it. We are familiar to the spirits and Masters already; it is for us to accept the Call in this life or another.

It is crucial to understand that this is *one Brother's approach* to the M7Rs and I am in no way the official voice of *any* Voudon✠Gnostic Order. We have our Beloved Patriarch Michael-Paul Bertiaux to make official pronouncements and such. This is merely the pilgrimage of one Brother committed to the page. It is completely colored by my own path and background and thus is a true account of my *particular* experience within the Monastery, yet there are *universal* experiences across the continuum of practitioners as well. I hope that this little writing sheds light upon a subject that has altered my life significantly within a very small amount of time.

Glory to God in All things!

✠Palamas
Chapel of the Gnosis

A Monk in the World



“Monk” comes from the word, monachus—“solitary.” Though we may live in a common life with others and experience all of the same struggles and successes as our neighbor, we have been called to go out alone into the deserts of the soul, to explore the within and to thereby birth new worlds.



Gyrovagi

"Come to realize what the fullness of these teachings has done for you mentally, emotionally, spiritually, etc. Imagine yourself swimming in the endlessness of the ocean of the Monastery teachings and the Gnostic magick. See the ongoing, never ending energy as light, visualizing the on and on and on quality of it all."

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 278

It is with great disgust that St. Benedict speaks of the most wretched of all monks, the Gyrovague. We would do no better than to quote him to get a feel for this distaste:

Finally, those called gyrovagues are the fourth kind of monk. They spend their whole life going round one province after another enjoying the hospitality for three or four days at a time of any sort of monastic cell or community. They are always on the move; they never settle to put down the roots of stability; it is their own wills that they serve as they seek the satisfaction of their own gross appetites.

St. Benedict's Rule, 6

Now, what has this to do with us? It is this—that in a mystical sense, we **are** Gyrovagi. We are not hermits, anchorites, cenobites or otherwise; we are Gyrovagi. It simply takes a rethinking of Benedict's definition, a reexamination of what it is that is so bothersome about this lot, to see that a *new interpretation* of the word is in order as it directly speaks to our profoundly unique calling in the M7Rs.

Let us return to the quote by Master Bertiaux firstly. The Monastery teachings and Gnostic Magick are endless, a form of *never ending energy as light*. In other words, unlike the solace that must come with a tradition that teaches you *what* the spiritual realm is and *how* you must believe in it, behave in it and stay put in it, our Tradition places us in a furnace of creative activity—a realm that is unending, a great miasma of energies and entities that are inexhaustible and whose edges cannot be defined. In this way, indeed, we are "always on the move" and there is simply no "settling" down or stability in its strict sense, because the Occult world in which we dwell is a school one can never master in its entirety. St.

Benedict regards the Monastery as a "school in the Lord's Service," while we experience it as *a school of the gods*, under the direction of one divine Abbot, Bondye—the Absolute!

Additionally, in our Monastery, it is encouraged to go out and to explore unknown regions. These may send the student into Masonic studies, Martinist Initiations, Thelemic currents, Lovecraft-ian Magick, the Gnostic Church, etc., and so we truly do in fact go "round one province after another enjoying the hospitality for three or four days at a time of any sort of monastic cell or community." The spaces that the Gnostic, Voudon and Magickal currents can inhabit in our school are endless. No one will tell you what exactly to do and how to do it—nor will they tell you what to think within this cloister. So, though our work is couched in Monastic terms, we have a very original—some might suggest, *radically divergent*—expression of such. Quite often, our work is circuititious, and like the Ouroboros we are going round and round a topic or energy until we are "duly and truly prepared" to receive the initiation lodged within it. Gyrovagi comes from two separate words, which when put together literally translate to *wandering in a circle*. As Magicians, we know that a circular movement is indicative of the rise or return of the Light; it also shows up in Labyrinths and many of our most potent symbols. Going in circles is only distasteful to the linear thinker who imagines that there is one specific goal, one omega point at the end of life's journey. Conversely, for us it is about depth, and the circling is a movement inward.

The holistic quality of our work brings the body into play at every turn. We are Non-Dual Gnostics. The world of Gnosticism is such a wonderfully diverse place because Gnosis is a *direct experience*. Endless sects have been born from unique individuals' experience of *gnosis*. In truth, the variety of sects of Gnosticism reflects the variety of Initiates who experience this inner form of knowing. As Non-Dual Gnostics, we are guilty again of Gyrovaguerie as we satisfy our "own gross appetites." Physicality is blessed in our school—the body is seen as the Temple of the Holy Spirit, just as the Ancient Church viewed it before the influx of dualism overturned the Hebrew acceptance and celebration of the body. This is in fact why the Eastern Orthodox Church does not accept Augustine of Hippo as a Saint. He is "Blessed" rather than canonized as a Saint in that Liturgical branch of the Church *because* of his extreme dualistic leanings as exemplified in his creation of the idea of "original sin," unknown amongst Jews. This foreign concept relieved him of Sainthood for the Orthodox. While we celebrate and work with the body we also practice a form of *apatheia*, a thoroughly Monastic term that speaks to the monk who is no longer *controlled* by the passions. Bertiaux says,

"The true magician must be completely detached in order to realize his unity with the Absolute" (234). We know how to hone our energies into a razor sharp beam of creative force; this limiting of the field of attention is through *apatheia*. Even in our studies in sex magick it is readily seen that a huge amount of discipline is required for some of the more advanced practices, but what a joy to engage in this Royal and Sacerdotal Art!

Finally, as Gyrovagi it is verily our own wills that we follow, but we prefer the more specific quality of the phrase, *our True Wills*. In a sense, we cannot deviate from our True Will, in the same way that one cannot deviate from the Tao, yet it may take a number of lifetimes to come to the place of accepting such Will and letting nothing stop the accomplishing of **that**. And, in a wider context, our True Will is undoubtedly in line with Divine Will...just as our entrance into the Monastery was guided by past events, spirits and Masters. This is the *Way of Return*, as Louis Claude de St. Martin calls it.



In the Monastery, we enjoy the communal quality of working alongside other Mages, Teachers and Elders as well as fellow Postulants who are only beginning down the road into Otherwhere. There is a palpable solace in knowing that we are upheld, encouraged, challenged and enlightened by our fellow Brothers and Sisters, but at the end of the day... we are *alone with the Alone*! We came into the world as a solitary being, we leave it the same way and our journey in betwixt is ultimately solo. As a *little world* unto ourselves, we have our own ontic spheres and magickal universes to inhabit, morphic fields in which we generate energies. This solitary experience can be overwhelming for the Initiate as the feeling can occasionally be oceanic in the negative sense—floating and lost on the waves—and can tend towards what monastics call *acedia*, a despondency, lethargy and distaste for the spiritual life. We have a built in solution to this malaise.

The "roots of stability" that we, as Gyrovagi never settle enough to put down are reflective of the reality that *all is in flux* and everything changes. In this way, our lack of stability is consistent with the overall Universe. However *instability* doesn't equal *un-stable*. The atoms do not normally crash into each other. The inherent Chaos in the Universe gives way to Complexity when the scientist has the correct level of magnification. Structure is encountered in the infinitesimally small and in the macrocosmically large. Yet it is a stabilized dance between structure and energy, particles and waves. It is crucial that we feel ourselves as a part of this balance of precise lines *and* expressive brush strokes. This

is yet another *syzygy*, or cosmic pair of apparent opposites. So we court instability, because we know and experience and feel with our very skin that all is in flux, yet we realize that this energetic movement is mystically related to structure. This is the key for the Gyrovagi with regards to *acedia*. We must work with both the waves of energy that are miasmatic and lack concreteness *and* sharpen our instruments of knowledge and research to unearth the underlying structure within the spiritual realm. Then, what was once a source of struggle and spiritual despondency, becomes the fuel to drive our magickal machines.

*The Gyrovagi must persevere and the morphic forms will crystallize—the **energies** we encounter will reveal themselves as **entities**.*



Suscipe

“The gnostic artist is a magician when he allows the divine energy of creative and cosmic illumination to enter into his multi-dimensional consciousness and thus awaken the angels of their inspiration, which reside in his higher mind fields.”

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 266

In the *Ritual Act of Oblation* of Book 2, there is an Ancient Latin formulae that we use during the supreme moment of our Vow to the Spirits, the Lwa and the Saints. It is the *Suscipe me Domini*, from the most mystical of Psalms—119, familiar to the Elus Cohen in their regular practice of the Divine Names. This magical Psalm is separated into sections attributed to each letter of the Hebrew Alphabet, and contains the Divine Name attributed to each letter. Each section has 8 verses, and as is well known—our path has an affinity for the numbers 8 and 16. The *Suscipe* comes from the 116th Verse and is the apogee of Final Vows for Monastics the world over. Yet it is the primordial energy of *La Couluevre Noire* that vivifies our work and though our formulas may have adopted Liturgical modalities, it is the raw and ancient creative energy of the Snake Goddess that vitalizes our operations. That is why our *Ritual Act of Oblation* is no lifeless repetition of words, but an action—an *actual oblation* (sacrificial offering) to the primeval currents in earnest.

On our path, it is not enough to *do the ritual* or to say the words correctly. The word *Suscipe* translates to *receive*—to be a Light in our Monastery of Illuminates is to be a mystical transmitter of the creative energy of the Great Ones. And so we research, learn, and practice methods of cultivating this receptivity through the Coursework and our own original and creative practices. Some of these methods are more formal, such as *Lectio Divina* and *Obsculta*, while others are characterized by an open-ness to the spirits in dreamwork, in meditation and in magickal procedure.

One of the helps that the Spirits, the Lwa and the Saints offer us to aid our practice of *Suscipe* is by guiding us towards *marmas*, or power zones. There are marmas on the body and there are marmas in the physical and geographical spaces around us. For the location of these

in physical space, our psychic transmitters must be attuned to vibratory changes experienced in particular spots. It could be as simple as a section of a room that is fundamentally more pure, where it seems that inspiration flows freely and where we are drawn to relax, daydream or study. On occasion, we will be sensitive enough to locate more profound marmas where we intuit stronger currents, some telluric and others solar; still others are perceived more as a thought form or cloud radiating on the ethers around a physical locale. These are wonderful places for Initiations, Consecrations, Healing, Magick, dreamwork and the like, but they are also conducive to creativity. While operating in a marma such as this, we may perceive a column of energy flow. Such is the case for my own marma, which is demarcated by a circle in our Chapel and feels like a vortex of energy. All of our Healing work, Initiations, and Eucharists occur in that sacred spot, and it is also where all of the Astral Icons in this text were birthed. There is a deep and lasting connection between our Monastery and creativity. The marmas we locate are powerzones, places to which the spirits are attracted, and are aids to our receptivity which in turn stimulates the Gnostic artist to create.

The spirits also assist us in "Gnostic Daydreaming." This is a state in between meditation and light sleep where the (imaginary) line separating our ontic sphere (universe of magickal imagination) from our normal wake-a-day existence is tenuous and we become "totally open to the magickal and Gnostic currents which find expression in your sphere of consciousness"(270).

There are also more specific methods for opening up to the spirits in the VGW, such as the Lucky Hoodoo Dedication and requests that follow it (1-11), the Exercises in Gnostic and Ontic Awareness (270-271), and working with Ojas Radioactivity(129), all of which cause the magician to *light up on the Astral*, as it were, and to begin to attune his psychic transmitter more acutely for the reception and sometimes *flood* of images, forms, messages, teachings, etc., that await votaries of the Monastery and its Coursework. These practices open wide the gates of the within, but we must take care to pen down every instance of contact with the spirits or our rational mind will carefully tuck away the experience as not useful. As evolutionary beings, over millennia, our brains have developed in such a way that we stratify information and filter such for its survival quality or rational importance. This screening, or editing faculty of the mind is extremely helpful and practical, yet it is also the central block to our recognition of the spirit realm. Herein lies the necessity and efficacy of the Magickal Diary as a tool to make sense of the non-rational.

Our receptivity, like the entirety of our labors and projects of the Monastery, is grounded in a balanced approach. By the 2nd lesson in our Coursework, we begin to see that it is not enough to simply be *mediumistic*. To be such is to open oneself up to **everything**, including the negative influences of others. Oddly enough, it is the thought-forms, projections, vampiric natures and overall negativity of other *people* that are of the most danger to the mage; the Spirits, the Lwa and the Saints are “good” (though this is an anthropomorphic generality, as they really don’t follow such moral principles at all whatsoever). We must then cultivate the appropriate knowledge, science and skill—along with our spiritist endeavors. This is a both/and system all along the way.



Returning to the idea of *Suscipe*—in our *Ritual*, as well as in our *Breviary* (Book 2), there is a clearly delineated procedure and structure in place to prevent one from being a passive medium. It is a three-stage approach that begins with the most crucial practice of all, *Purification*. We encounter strict and bold statements concerning Purification in the very beginning of the Monastery lessons. Further in the *Ritual* there is also a clear method for *integrating* the energies and entities that are invited into our sphere. This simple technique brings the spirits down from the ontic sphere and into our most treasured Temple, the body. This is such an efficacious magickal procedure that many a mage reduce all of their works to this mechanism. It is a form of the magickal Eucharist, not to be confused with the precise formulae of the Liturgical and Catholic Mass that carries on the primordial currents in another and distinct manner. Both of these stages, Purification and Integration (or Union), are built in protections from *passive* mediumship.

It is *Suscipe*, being attuned, utilizing our psychic transmitters, that leads to the explosion of creativity so characteristic of Voudon✧Gnostics. Whereas we emphasize that one must not simply be a passive medium, but must cultivate skill and the proper knowledge of procedure and protections from negative influences, we also emphasize that such *knowledge* is insufficient on its own as well. It must be accompanied by—nay, married to—**practice**, and when these two are in concert, when the symbiosis is complete, the Gnostic artist is born. Knowledge and Practice form the two sections of this book, with the first being considered a form of prayer (Ora) and the second being work (Labora).

The Gnostic artist is a conduit for angelic creativity. This is not to browbeat the Brotherhood into being a sort of Art guild—each has his or her own Gnostic space to inhabit and labor within—but as the

nature of Deity itself is to be a *ceaseless creativity in the Universe*, do not be surprised if the more you mingle with divine things, the more you feel *compelled* to create *something* in response. The Monastery is no stale Order of mimicry, demanding its Postulants live a life of following others' words, praying before others' Icons and worshipping others' ideas of Deity. Our Monastery demands participation, work, and a mind that is free and thinks for itself. Each of our individual ontic spheres acts as a morphic field which, when in resonance with another's field (spiritually or physically), causes *genesis* and *genius* to be born and creates a powerful upsurge of creative force and energy. This is one of the benefits of working as a collective rather than solitary.

Before embarking upon the powerful path of the Monastery, we must be receptive.



Aequus Animus

"...our own system of healing seems to have the advantage in that it can make use of a variety of healing energies and can also make use of a variety of methods in giving direction to the flow of the power to the person most in need of it. For this reason, there is a great need to see the energies as coming from each of our lessons, even if the lessons do not appear to be on healing"

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 335

It should be no mystery that before we, as Gnostic practitioners, go about doing healing work we should have a measure of such ourselves. We may not be in need of a major dose of psychotherapy, but most of us will be in need of a sort of *adjustment*...a healing of our disparate parts, an inner integration of our widely diverse energies. Oddly enough, the Monastery Coursework does just this. I have performed Banishings and Rites of Equilibrium, gone on Retreats and investigated the nature of psychology linked with magic, yet I have never encountered something as immediate and mysterious as simply reading through a text and being transformed by the act. At the forefront of our minds, however, should be the understanding that we are working upon ourselves for our own inner equilibrium *so that* we may, in turn, *heal others*. This is the "so what?" test of any system—how does it move outward to bring wholeness and Light to the world? Like the Ancient Greeks, we start with a form of self-knowledge and branch outward from there. The Coursework is very individualized, yet we are by nature a *collective* within the Monastery; the various Voudon✱Gnostic Orders inside of the Monastery comprise a microcosm of society itself.

What the lessons did for me, for instance, was awaken me to the fact that I have a spiritual inheritance that, should I abandon it in search of other *more exotic* forms, would greatly diminish my effectiveness as a Bishop and Priest of the Gnosis. For me, adopting foreign religious structures, terms, and entities would diminish the depth of my work and not serve my community very effectively. The community I serve is largely Christian—by birth, at least—and the symbol system of that religion is deeply ingrained within each member of my small Chapel's psyche. As previously stated, the Lwa of Haitian Vodou made contact

with me, not the other way around, and so I *had* to respond, but they were so considerate that they came to me in forms I was already familiar with—the Saints! Some were those which had been syncretized with the Lwa, but others felt more like *essences* than *energies* of the Divine and have therefore stayed at my side continually as guides. In our Tradition, the Lwa are more like energies, and Les Vudu are more akin to essences, and it may be that Les Vudu are behind this particular experience. The essence that I encountered was St. Gregory Palamas, who appeared in several visions and intensely showed up during one *Equinox Operation* (Elus Cohen). He swiftly became my Patron Saint and has attended all of my labors. Just as the Lwa, Hoodoo Elemental Spirits and others make “Contracts” with the Initiate, so did my Patron Saint. He required of me that I not abandon my heritage in catholic and Gnostic Christianity. Here I emphasize catholic as it is the Universal Church of the Cosmic Christ that I speak of, not a particular branch, schism or sect. St. Palamas was working for my adjustment and my healing, for he perceived that the lack of integration of my spiritual inheritance with my magical proclivities was affecting and hampering all aspects of my work. As a further part of our Contract, he also asked me to draw his image (Icon) and to burn incense and candles before it. To offer him a further sign of my fidelity and appreciation, I took his name in several Orders and decided to keep it even upon Consecration as Bishop. You see, once this sort of *relation* goes beyond an energy contact and becomes a living communion between spirits, then you have a most prized possession. And this healing relationship was born from exposure to the Lessons of the Monastery, even before my formal entrance into the same. We are moving from Evocation and Invocation to Relation. Healing is relational.

So how did this Patron Saint assist me in terms of *Curatio*, or healing? It was by means of adjustment. He perceived that I was getting out of sorts in my energetic and voracious excitement over the new realm of magic, working with the spirits and the Lwa, and so he brought me back to my core—my spiritual inheritance. From here he further showed me that the “work spirits,” the Lwa, many of the Saints and Elementals will *do* certain things for me, but that he was to be my honest confidant, one who would help keep me in the state of *Aequus Animus*, or “tranquil mind.” In other words, my healing was simply Equilibrium and the deep and abiding acceptance of my birth religion which, no matter how hard I tried in my youth, I could never escape as it had become such an integral part of my soul-life and was permanently painted upon my archetypal realm. Truly, the things we renounce,

we are eternally bound to—so best to just go ahead and at least make friends with them. If we do not, then we are negatively attached to something (like one's birth religion) and become stuck in a childish distaste for it that taints all of our spiritual practice. The practice of achieving this *tranquil mind* through relationship with the spirits will bring about integration in whatever form the Postulant needs.

If this sort of Saint relationship interests the reader, Part III of Book 2 outlines a simple procedure for accessing one's Patron Saint.



We are in need of a proper *dia-gnosis* before we embark upon some of the more difficult works and worlds in our Tradition. The Monastery has a magickal machine for this, the very same that stimulated and inspired the contact just described with my Patron Saint. This machine is the Monastery Coursework and Lessons. This is a deep mystery; simply by *reading* and studying and most importantly *practicing* the Coursework, we gain entry into the “Indestructible Soul of Cosmic Vitality” as Bertiaux puts it, wherein we may discover the source of all healing for ourselves and others. Sometimes it will be with the aid of our Teacher/Mentor that the proper *dia-gnosis* arises. Bertiaux says,

The guru will seek to awaken the chela to this power so that it may work at a conscious level in the body of the chela as patient. But it is extremely difficult for it to work and thusly to heal, if the chela is not in a waking state of initiatic consciousness. For this reason, such a process of healing must always be a waking up to the existence of the magickal energies. (333)

Even this “waking up” under the tutelage of our Teacher/Guru will be through the Lessons in an occult sense. More on the Guru role can be found in the chapter titled *Obsculta*.

This diagnosis, remember, is for *us* firstly so that we do not attempt to heal others without the fullest access to the source of Light, Healing and Life. The diagnosis is *initiatic*; the contact made with St. Gregory Palamas was profoundly deeper than the lodge-type Initiations I had received in the past and it wasn't limited by time—it continues even now and has opened up Zothyrrian spaces that I did not previously imagine existed. And this came about simply through exposure to the material.



The *Aequus Animus*, or tranquil mind and heart needed before the difficult work of traversing alternate universes and relating with spirits and such, is no lukewarm or tepid condition in the Initiate. It is, again, a matter of understanding the proper adjustment needed for restoring balance, which is exactly the nature of all healing. It is not as if we maintain, or even strive for, a state of dispassion, such as some monastic practices suggest. Anyone who has spent time with artists knows they are quite often the most passionate of types. The same can be said of great lovers, writers, inventors, etc., and of Brothers and Sisters of the Monastery who are typically all or at least some of the above. We are not interested in a life of contemplation only; ours is an admixture of contemplation *and* action. When we engage in the active portion, however, we are often set out of balance. Here is the need for Gnostic healing to return to the tranquil mind before the next round of astral battles, healings at a distance, or invocations of spirits. So then, returning to our technique of *Suscipe*, we maintain an openness with the Coursework and allow it to stimulate the initiatic currents that reveal our access to that “Cosmic Vitality” so needed for our work. We stay open to our Mentors as well, who may in their teaching challenge us—deliver us a healing word or phrase (*apothegm*) that brings about this crucial balance.

Quite often, *Healers* will tell you of the depletion that comes after healing a patient. The Healer may be in a lethargic state for a few days, may miss work and may unknowingly open him or herself up to negative energies and influences out of sheer vulnerability. Our Monastery offers a built-in protection from this in the concept and reality of the ontic sphere. We may *physically* feel exhausted after performing a healing work, but we will not feel completely depleted of *spiritual* energy. Bertiaux states,

The priesthood of esoteric theology is therefore concerned with the ways in which the magickal universe of the priestly mysteries comes into direct operation. It is not by means of any transference of power from one to the other. Rather the candidate enters the world of the mysteries and becomes one with them by living it fully...this is why great care is taken in the construction of the ontic sphere of the priest, so that he will be able to live within the world of the mysteries fully and without any lapse. (178)

Our ontic sphere then reflects the rays of the Christ/Legbha outward when we begin to offer healing to others. This will be explored in more

depth in the chapter on *Curatio*. Through our studies in the Monastery, we construct this wonderful ontic matrix, personalized to our own Gnostic space, interests and talents and supercharged by influences and entities of the Seven Rays, and in drawing from our own ontic sphere we find the equipoise needed, the *Aequus Animus*, to stay adjusted for the greater role of healing others.

The Aequus Animus is a necessity for the Initiate who lives not for himself alone, but for the healing and wholeness of others.



Scala Dei

"If we view our school and its teachings, we find—especially in the Monastery of the Seven Rays lessons—a remarkable structure and a plan or organizing law, which runs through every lesson and which makes each lesson fit perfectly in respect to what has gone before it and what will come after." (571)

"Therefore, I sent out a ray of light, especially of the Gnostic light in terms of all of those papers written for the Monastery of the Seven Rays. For what I sought to do was to diffuse the Vudu-Gnosis everywhere in the world. That having been accomplished, I was able to free myself for the true work of the avatara, which is the creation of the lattices of the Gnostic church in all parts of the world...by means of the lessons of the Monastery of the Seven Rays." (537)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

I recall with fondness being allowed into the Scriptorium of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers, Georgia several years back. My wonderful guide was a Brother with whom I had co-taught classes in his life before the Monastery. We both shared a love for all things monastic and he would occasionally come over to chant the Psalms and await the Vesper Light in the Evenings with me—before he declared his *fuga mundi*, or flight from the World, and entered the monastic enclosure. Holy Spirit is a gorgeous and austere Trappist Monastery with all of the classical Cistercian aesthetics of form and efficiency. My guide had received permission from his Abbot to take me into the Scriptorium on this day; we wore latex gloves while combing through Illuminated Manuscripts from the 14th Century. An idea was forming in my mind at the time—the idea that this Monastic life and world was like another plane of existence, that it was its own *Time Station*. This is precisely the nature of the brilliant and ingenious M7Rs.

As stated in the Introduction, there is a physical location for the M7Rs in Chicago, Illinois. It is essentially the spaceship known as Patriarch Michael Bertiaux's flat. According to Dr. Courtney Willis, the Monastery originated in Ecuador, moved to Spain and now is in Chicago. He states that the Monastery "had a proper tradition of its own, being

at one time a priory of the Discalced recollect friars who had embraced their own form of spiritism” (Preface to the 2007 edition, *VGW*). But this Monastery’s uniqueness is unparalleled, as it exists in the physical and in the form of a Gnostic space as well—a *Mental Palace* as Francis Yates puts it in her studies concerning the minds of great Hermeticists (such as Giordano Bruno) who stockpiled and stored vast amounts of occult data and knowledge within individual rooms and libraries inside a palatial space within their own minds. Bertiaux revives and restores this tradition to its pristine glory by moving far beyond mental storage houses and creating mental Holy Houses, of which the Monastery, vibrating on its own original frequency, is one. The spiritual architecture of this cloister is a delight to behold with the inner eye, and its chapels, cells and shrines are endless. The closest analogy I can think of is the descriptions of thought-forms by Charles W. Leadbeater in his *The Science of the Sacraments*.

The term *Scala Dei* literally translates to “ladder to God” and we use it in that sense but we also use it as the 12th Century Cistercians and Carthusians often used it, to denote their Cloisters, the places for spiritual development. The M7Rs is just such a cloister of non-stop activity, spiritual guidance and prayer, development of *all of the senses* and occult research. The visual in the above quote of Bertiaux sending out the lessons of the Monastery as a *ray* is absolutely beautiful. One can imagine the kind Adept in deep contemplation and a laser beam thought ray—possibly in blue or purple—bursting forth from his third eye center, encapsulating and comprising the entire Coursework of the Monastery and being diffused to all peoples and nations across the globe, and travelling further to enter alternative Time Stations and Zothyrion spaces. The Coursework is a projection of his own consciousness which, like the Pascal Candle at Easter that is not diminished in the least when it gives of its Light to all of the other parishioners in the Sanctuary, does not deplete him in the least because of the efficacy and strength of his priestly ontic sphere, developed over time into a Gnostic machine of productivity and creativity. So, we are participating in Bertiaux’s own mind space when we enter the Monastery. When we take the Lessons and sink deeply into their words and worlds, our own ontic sphere is achieving morphic resonance with his. Many of us have felt actual contact with him in these mental palaces—he once appeared to me in the form of a Minotaur. This interior *and* exterior school of spiritual development, this *Scala Dei* that we partake of in the form of the gift of the M7Rs and its Coursework, is a divine happening. Every lesson becomes a *point-event* that carries us further into the Cloister, yet we are not forced to fly from the world to experience this. In fact, we are enjoined to dig deeper into the soil upon

which we are standing, to divinize the material world around us through our Gnostic and magickal experiments, healings, and work.

During the Middle Ages, the Church authorities were having a difficult time with the plethora of growing ontological proofs of God that were being circulated throughout Medieval Europe and along the Rhine River Valley in particular. The Rhineland mystics—St. Hildegard Von Bingen, Meister Eckhart, Mechthilde of Magdeburg and others—began to experience their own private revelations and visions. This is essentially the meaning of Ontology in the religious sense—it is that God can be intuited by the mind, through *being itself* and is therefore accessible to **all**. There were seven separate encyclicals that condemned this practice as heretical, but the mystics kept having visions and visitations from the spirit realm and the people were following these same mystics, so finally the Church caught up with the movement and began Canonizing the mystics as Saints. These are our true Brothers and Sisters in the Monastery. Bertiaux says, “Great attention must be paid to special revelations, which come forth from the life-process of yoga as it takes on the form of an oracle” and “the student will be guided by his soul dreams in every process of growth because to be a Gnostic is to be aware of the inner sources of truth-of-existence” (221). He takes it even further, saying that we should write our own “cosmic mystery drama” our own “magickal book of revelations,” nay, even our own “holy books” (235). This Monastery in which we dwell is sufficiently elastic to allow for individual interpretation, exploration and even *innovation* within its walls without the fear that such empowering of its votaries will undermine the core teachings or create of its Postulants a congregation full of Bishops and Clergy with no laity. What a welcome approach for those of us who have experience with Authoritarian and Fundamentalist forms of spirituality and in this sense, I am *including* the occult world as this pervasive spirit of our times has infiltrated Lodges and Orders as much as Churches and Mosques. Fundamentalism is a negative Zeitgeist to which any group could fall prey. Those with the gift of clairvoyance have seen this spirit for what it is and it is truly the closest thing to pure evil that 21st Century humans have dealt with.

Now, in another sense we are speaking of *Scala Dei* as a ladder to God; our Monastery itself is such a ladder. But, in his genius, Bertiaux births a much more organic and spiritually attuned motif found again and again in the Lessons—the analogy of *lattices*. The lattices of Gnostic spaces, Vudu-tronics, Syzygies (the intergalactic form studied in the

Coursework) and other diverse Beings and Consciousnesses form an interpenetrating and mutually dependent weaving within hyperspace that we can move in and out of at will, once we are attuned to the Rays of the Monastery. He speaks of these lattices throughout the VGW, but it is in the chapters on Vudu-tronics that his description of such is raised to a fever pitch as he waxes mystical in statements such as,

Therefore, in the self-awareness of my identity, I sought an ideal consciousness and awareness of the lattices, which are my rays diffused in space and time (538), I realized that these lattices of Ifa were the means whereby my Luage and I could send all the rays to every sector of space or time, and I realized in this the mystery of my immanence in the world, for the world had become the lattice of my body (536) and again, Vudutronics ...enables us to see the universe of the magickal gnosis in terms of systemic lattices of ideal and real energies (529).

This myriad of laceworks, lattices and matrices allows our school of spiritual development to literally have no end. There are not enough lifetimes to explore all of these multi-verses and the Postulant of the Monastery is not held to such impossible standards. Instead, like a good shepherd, she opens us up to the possibilities and fundamentals of these Gnostic spaces and supplies us with the Coursework that progressively develops our minds and hearts to the depths of the Mysteries, beckoning the Seeker to "come and see." And then, when our mental trowel turns the first bit of the Monastery's soil, the Initiations arrive, the souldreams descend upon us, filling in the blanks and incongruities in our thought-forms while the relationships with the spirits and manifold forms of Otherwhere begin to grow and strengthen.

As monks in the world, let us labor in our Scala Dei and spread the Light of the Monastery through our own spiritual development and explorations into the lattices of gnosis and then freely give of this Light to others.

Monastic Life



The koinos bios, or common life of those attached to the Monastery of the Seven Rays is one characterized by regular practice and engagement. We work in common, yet in our several unique departments of active life—we practice within Tradition—yet a Tradition that is vivified by magickal beings.



Opus Dei

"I realized that the breviary was a magickal machine which could be used to contact the mysterious worlds of the higher Gnostic logic realm. Each one of the magickal hours was a ritual for approaching the proper magickal logic, which would then open up the proper time-station."

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 584

The *Opus Dei* or "Work of God" has gotten a bad rap in recent years due to the widely popular *Da Vinci Code* which opened the public's eyes to a secret organization of the same name within the Roman Catholic Church which is plagued by conspiracy theories and intrigue. That is a different *Opus Dei* altogether. The term comes from the Father of Western Monasticism, St. Benedict. In his "little Rule for beginners" nothing is to be preferred to the *Opus Dei* which consisted of the regular praying of the Psalms, hymns, antiphons, and Readings of the Church throughout each day. Terms synonymous with the *Opus Dei* are the Divine Office, the Liturgy of the Hours, the Work of God and sometimes simply the Hours.

As we enter the section of our *Reflections* concerned with actual Monastic Life, we are beginning to get a feel for the connections between the Classical Monasticism of the Church and our "peculiar type of Catholicism" previously mentioned. What we are doing, in essence, is *sacralizing Time*.

Bertiaux states, "By tradition, there exists eight 'Hours of Prayer', which are recited by monks and others under a religious rule of life in the west" (584). Here we have the mystical 8 again, the lemniscates on its side, the infinite. Eight is also the Ogdoad, which is explored in Valentinian Gnosticism in connection with the eight heavenly spheres. Eight is also half of our most mysterious sixteen, which amongst a plethora of correspondences connects on a deep level to the 16 Degrees of the OTOA/LCN (the Ordo Templi Orientis Antiqua/La Couleuvre Noire), the 16 Gods of Ifa, the Les Vudu of Guzotte, the 16 Axioms, 16 Magickal Beings, 16 Laws & Lwa and the 16 powers of the high-priesthood (142). With our day being divided into 24 Hours, of which a further division can be made of 4 periods of 8, we begin to see that we are working with a magickal system of numbers by simply becoming aware of the varied powers and attributes of

8 and 16. One begins to get the feeling that numbers themselves are alive and divine, and here we are in agreement with Pythagoreans, Freemasons, Kabalists and Hermeticists across the globe.

But how does this all relate to Benedict's "Work of God?" Of the utmost importance in the *Opus Dei* is the chanting, eight times a day, of the Psalter. We have already mentioned the magickal properties of Psalm 119. Is it expected of Votaries of the M7Rs to chant particular Psalms eight times a day? Let us return to the essence of the work, the sacralizing of Time. What we are embarking upon is a collection of Monastic practices—*Opus Dei*, *Lectio Divina*, *Obsculata* and *Conversatio Morum*—that will propel our work in the M7Rs to new heights because, as Bertiaux states, these Divine Offices, these Hours of the Day made Holy by Monastics the world over, are contact points for the "mysterious worlds of the higher Gnostic realm (584)." Each Hour that we practice or pray in accordance with this Ancient Tradition becomes a "ritual for approaching the proper magickal logic, which...opens up the proper time-station" (584). The meditative chanting of the Psalms goes back to the Desert Fathers and Mothers of the first few centuries of Christianity—those Adepts of the spiritual and ascetic life who pierced the numinous by their life and practice which was dedicated to union with God. They renounced all and thereby gained everything as Evagrius Ponticus suggests. There are many different Breviaries, collections of the Hours, Divine Offices and the like available to choose from to get a feel for what these practices incur. A sample *Breviary* is offered in Book 2 to give a taste of the formula. Each of the suggested practices and approaches in this book could be looked at as formulary, rather than as sacrosanct instruction. The Breviary employed in Book 2 is primarily inspired by the basic Hours of the Eastern Orthodox Church. In that communion, it is more of a common practice for the average pious Church member to be conversant with and experienced in the chanting of the Hours of the Church, as their Divine Liturgies (Mass) are typically centered around and performed after one of the Hours. Additionally, it is also not uncommon for regular members of the Eastern Church to attend Vespers and other Hours throughout the week. One of the reasons the *Breviary* included in this work is based upon Orthodox workings is that they do not change their Psalm numbering and chants from day to day the way that the eminently practical and hardworking St. Benedict did. This aids in memorization. Another reason is that they are profoundly beautiful and truly ancient, as the Eastern Church has not undergone such revisionist structures and scholastic reformations as its Western counterpart has.

The Offices of the day begin around 2:00 a.m. with Vigils (called Matins in the Eastern Church), then Lauds nearing morning. Next comes

the “little hours” of Prime, Terce, Sext and None—recited during the 6th, 9th and 12th hours and ending at 3:00 p.m. with None. Following these, we enter one of the most solemn services of the Church, beautiful in its simplicity and elegance—Vespers, right around sunset. This evening sacrifice is followed by the final Office of the day, the austere and profoundly moving service of Compline, which is the only one in the Western (Catholic) Churches that consists of an unchanging number of Psalms—every night it is Psalms 4, 90 and 133. There is no better way to get a real sense of the beauty of this practice than to go to a Monastery and participate in one of these magickal Hours.

For the average practitioner of the Coursework of the M7Rs, such an exhaustive and all-encompassing daily schedule is simply not practical. The suggestion here is not to begin to practice all of the Hours, it is to begin to, once again, sacralize time, and maybe attempt an Hour or two per day. Keep in mind that the word *Hour* is used here according to Tradition. The actual practice (in short form) may only take fifteen to twenty minutes. The regular practice of even Lauds and Vespers is quite enough to transform our day from the mundane to the Divine. Once a regular practice of these two Offices—in shortened form or in full—are incorporated into daily life, we begin to find time around noon for a swift “little Hour.” Now we are stopping three times a day to remember that we are alive, to acknowledge the journey of the sun across the sky and to connect with the magickal beings and time-stations corresponding to these Hours. Over time and with regular practice, what appeared difficult and impossible (the performance of one or two Hours a day) becomes something we do not feel quite right without.

The mystical connections of the Hours with our life in the M7Rs go beyond marking time. Remember, we are making time *sacred*. One way that this is accomplished is by learning to *chant* the Psalms rather than simply saying them. They are songs and are meant to be sung. The Gregorian Chants that have been popularized over the last decade or so are just this—Offices of the Church, Psalms chanted according to ancient modes and tones not found in today’s common music. Byzantine Chant, when properly performed, is nothing short of otherworldly. However, though such a study is certainly worth our while, we do not necessarily need to learn Latin or Greek, or study Gregorian Chant or the mystical Byzantine style of the Orthodox Churches. We can simply chant in a monophonic and basic way as one might hear at any Catholic, Anglican or Orthodox Church service, or even as the Tibetans do in low mono-tones. The specific method is unimportant for our work. Our focus is on chanting in any way we can, rather than reading. A beautiful benefit of chanting

the Psalms—beyond the aesthetic and the atmosphere of calm and peace (*Aequus Animus*) that comes along with it—is that it relieves the mind of its constant and frantic need to interpret the words. The Psalms are the words of a man involved in all walks of life and struggling with the spiritual world, but they were composed *in a particular place* and *at a particular time*. This must be understood to prevent us from getting hung up on wording that may be un-appealing in this 21st Century—terms such as mercy, sin and transgression must be understood as this particular individual's journey and struggles in the spiritual realm. But if we *chant* the Psalms, we won't be hung up on wording at all—we will be transported, which is the point. We may also find that the words become our own, reflecting our own path. A maturation begins. When we join in the cry for mercy, for instance, the cry becomes a cosmic recognition that we have not lived completely in the present, nor have we lived to our fullest potential, nor have our actions been in accord with the dictates of our heart and True Will or purpose. Then the words become a *metonoia*, a change of mind or heart.

Bertiaux states,

...at any stage of the Monastery of the Seven Rays teachings, we can find the operations and presence of the 16 magickal laws. They are the active agents in the system, which continue its powers and sustain the transfer of magickal vitality from the Gnostic time-stations of the higher realm to every part of the system as we know it. (585)

This quote comes directly after a chart where Bertiaux exemplifies the connections between the Hours of Prayer, Gnostic Logic, and the Higher Realm. The subtle brilliance of this connection between the Tradition of the Catholic churches and our Tradition of Voudon*Gnosis (both of which derive their essential energies from primordial currents older than words) is profound. He goes further and states, “In the structure of the Gnostic Hours of Prayer, it is important for the chela of this system to realize how magickal are the connections between these Hours and the Esoteric logics of the Higher Gnostic Realm” (585).

There is yet a further extension of the Hours, specifically in relation to the Psalms used therein, lodged inside our unique approach. The *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, familiar to Hoodoo practitioners, holds a beautiful secret within its covers beyond the practical uses of the Grimoire itself. Included within this text is

another book, the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*, or “Use of the Psalms for the Physical Welfare of Man”—further described as a “Fragment out of the Practical Kabbalah.” I first became aware of this mysterious book within the mystical tradition of Martinism. While going through some of the 7th Degree papers on the Martinist & Elus Cohen practice of the aforementioned “Divine Names” there was what appeared to be a random inclusion of a very strange paper on the therapeutic use of Psalm 119. Recall that this practice of the Divine Names is a deeply Theurgical practice. This paper was directly taken from the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*. Our Tradition has close ties to Martinism, so the discovery of this text within an official Martinist paper was a sort of confirmation of the continuum within which we are operating. There are simply no boundaries.

Our Chapel uses this text on the Psalms, along with a few other guides on the therapeutic use of Psalms in healing, counseling and general spiritual guidance. When combined with the occult knowledge of colors and their powers, these Psalms can be utilized along with candle magick for a myriad of purposes. In Book 2 we have included 16 Psalms with their traditional uses as well as some innovation and instruction born from experimentation.

We have also found that the Psalms are a brilliant book to use for Bibliomancy, especially when enhanced with the material from the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim* and other texts on the powers of the Psalms. Whereas systems such as the I Ching and the Ifa are binary divination tools, Bibliomancy casts the net wide and offers the reader a more complex oracle without the staggering symbol system and cabinet of correspondences that are common with practices such as the Tarot. Surely there is a time and place for all of these methods, but I highly suggest experimenting with the Psalms in this manner.

Far from a cursory regurgitation of words from the Bible, the practice of *Opus Dei* and the gift of the Psalms form the backbone of a life of divinized Time. Years of practice of this Sacred Art only deepens the work and engrains and instills the beauty of its contents within the psyche. As Gnostics of the M7Rs, we can benefit greatly from a regular practice that connects with these Holy Hours of the day and further with our greater Gnostic Realm of higher consciousness. As *Gyrovagi*, we have many methods and means to select from that will suit our individual needs and time constraints. The important part in the beginning is to *begin*.

The starting point of a Monastic existence is a balanced and regular practice—a life dedicated to the Divine and to making time sacred.



Lectio Divina

"These same Gnostics...taught us to enter into communion with God and thereby become able to see things, perhaps all things, the way god sees them...The Spiritual circumstances of light from the Holy spirits are always ours when we make use of the principles of esoteric prayer. We are living in a constant conversation or dialogue with divinity. The religious dimensions of life and thought comes to us and sits down beside us and enables us to see every day as a working with gods and Holy spirits."

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, iv

The practice of *Opus Dei* flows directly into *Lectio Divina* in a most profound way. *Lectio Divina* is commonly translated as "Sacred Reading" and along with chanting the Psalms during specific Hours of the day, this practice provides the quality of divinization to time and our everyday actions. In the same way that *Opus Dei* is utilized as is practical in our busy lives, so *Lectio Divina* is to be integrated into the daily, so that in time the texture of our everydayness is smoothed out into a form of living mindfulness. I have always practiced *Lectio* immediately after chanting the Psalms because my heart and mind are more attuned and in a state of readiness to receive and to perceive resonations with higher frequencies at that moment, rather than if I just roll out of bed and attempt this sacred monastic treasure.

I have found that for my own personality type, mornings are the best opportunity for *Lectio*. Quite often, it is after the Morning Office and while I am having my first cup of coffee that I languidly enter this Sacred space which often takes me off guard in its spiritual power and import. It is a relaxed form of meditation and has a simple procedure, though built into the practice is a sort of lattice that delineates the secret gifts and *lux occulta* within *Lectio*. Others will find evening better suited to this practice and in that regard, it is an ideal follow-up to Vespers.

The practice of *Lectio* consists of inwardly repeating, ruminating and basking in a small amount of Sacred literature—with the goal of that same literature being to open a window into Divinity. It is in this way *akin* to Bibliomancy, but whereas in Bibliomancy one is treating the reading as a specific Oracle, *Lectio* hopes to open a gateway to divinity—where the spirits may flow in and out of the Gnostic space created by

the sacred reading. Our own inner consciousness comes into play in *Lectio* and our personal ontic sphere is strengthened and energetically enriched through the practice. It serves as a mirror to the within, where realities of a subliminal and subconscious nature begin to cooperate with other divine helps to lead us into a deeply prayerful encounter with Spirit. *Lectio* is a dynamic endeavor, propelling the Initiate into an active and contemplative life at the same time. *Lectio* reveals the hidden God in mundane acts and creates of our sacred moments a spiritual laboratory—much like the occult laboratory and museum mentioned in our M7Rs Coursework. Through practice, *Lectio* becomes intertwined into our daily encounters with the spirits through the vehicle of the written word.

Initially, what is required to practice *Lectio* is a quiet mind. Throughout the practice we engage in this oscillation between receptive and active forces, but in the starting phase we *must* remain open and receptive and so we begin to see the interconnectedness of these various Monastic practices as we return once again to *Suscipe*. After practicing *Opus Dei* the general atmosphere we have created should be marked by serenity and calm. Psaltery becomes integral with the *Purification* stage of prayer and invites the spirits, the Saints and the Lwa into our Oratories. Simply by chanting Psalms that have been repeated over and over again through the Centuries, causing an egregoric participation in an ageless Wisdom, we are translocated to another dimension. Now we must simply read a small amount of sacred text, emulating a cow chewing its cud in our ruminatory technique of slow and careful reading. This is a quiet form of active meditation. As a diversion from the Classical method of *Lectio*, here we suggest using the M7Rs Coursework as the inspired Literature.



Those who use the M7Rs material know that there are prescribed amounts of time to work on each lesson. It is purported in the beginning of one's studies that the material needs to be digested thoroughly and thoughtfully, and that hidden within the Coursework like a series of astral mirrors—Gnostic spaces—are energies and entities that may be perceived. This makes the Coursework the most precise machine for *Lectio* available to Voudon*Gnostics. This practice is suggested upon the *second* reading of the week's material. So, with our Coursework in hand, we move beyond reading the material for information or even insight. In fact, the text itself actually becomes secondary as it is being utilized as a conduit for the Spirits to pass to and from in their journey between

materiality and the incorporeal. While engaging in this close reading and attentiveness, an interior resonance will occur and a new form of our lattices will arise. The lattice-work of *Lectio* was developed around the 12th Century and has become so interrelated and interwoven into the practice of *Lectio* that one can hardly imagine practicing the craft without these milestones.

The first marker along our path of *Lectio Divina* is *Lectio* itself—attentive reading. In this segment of the lattice, we are experiencing the words on a visceral level—we are allowing the Coursework to vibrate upon our tongues. It is even suggested that we read a small portion that speaks to us, *aloud* as this will deepen the experience. Remember, in this practice we are not reading for information; we are allowing the text to penetrate us and to form our soul-life and strengthen our ontic spheres. So we begin by slowly and deliberately, expectantly and piously, reading the material and repeating a small amount of it. It could be a sentence or two that speaks to us that we then begin to treat as a sort of mantra.

The second weaving in our lattice is *Meditatio*, not to be confused with meditation. This is the lattice wherein the phantasmagoric realm begins to interact with us. We have meditatively read and repeated a sort of mantra from the text and moved into a ruminating stage and now we are entranced and open and our spiritual/occult laboratory becomes a living furnace, populated by creatures both sacred and profane. Thoughts, hopes, fears, dreams, images, intuitions, and insights will arise in this stage. Whereas in many systems these are seen as distractions to be dealt with harshly, in *Lectio* these are messengers and the hallmarks of spiritual growth and the interaction of the spirits. The key in this phase is discernment and discernment will come with practice. This is the stage of illumination, yet also of the trickster.

The third portion of our lattice in *Lectio* is *Oratio*, which means “prayer.” We are reading a small chunk of Bertiaux’s words and then an ascent begins. We begin to rise upon the planes, see in the spirit vision, hear clairaudiently the words of others upon the ethers, in a word—we begin to *pray*. This stage is often marked by the sense of “self offering” to the spirits, the inner need to make a vow because of some new insight gained. This makes total sense as the Greek word for prayer is *proseuche*; vow is *euche*. So this stage becomes consecratory when it fully “takes.” The Vow utilized in the *Ritual Act of Oblation* is an example of how simple, yet powerful this inclination towards oaths and vows to the spirits and Saints becomes.

The final intermeshed lattice of *Lectio Divina* is *Contemplatio*. This is sometimes described as a *gazing into the within*. In this stage,

much like the Union stage of our Ritual in Book 2, we enter into silent communion with the Holy Spirits. This is a restful state, brought about by the sacred reading of a small passage. In this state *being*, in its most ontological sense, becomes the primary force, while doing and efforts of all kinds drop away and a state of oneness arises with this gift and action of grace.

When *Lectio* becomes incorporated into our daily practice, we can expect some changes. The novelties that we have sought for in the past become pedantic and we begin to see that the mundane is really just a pair of glasses we wear. When *Lectio* takes its effects, these glasses are set aside and we see things as they truly are—the glorious kaleidoscope of wonders about us that signal, at every turn, the action of the spiritual realm. Every landscape appears to be teeming with beings and energies; even the rocks appear alive and vibrating at their own pace. Along with this new vision, practitioners of *Lectio* can expect an increased understanding of obscure and sometimes obtuse texts such as the *Voudon Gnostic Workbook*. They can also expect a fair amount of clairaudience and clairvoyance, or what monastics tend to call “discerning of thoughts.” This life of making the everyday and commonplace into the miraculous and Holy is a dynamic and vibrant endeavor. Those of us who practice as Priests and Clergy in the various Gnostic Churches will see a difference in our Liturgy when a commitment to *Lectio* is made. The macrocosm unites with the microcosm more readily with the discoveries made through the practice of the lattice; *lectio*, *meditatio*, *oratio* and *contemplatio*. We begin a devotional relationship with the author of the text we are reading, which in this case is the Master Michael Aquarius himself, or another of his many forms.

Consider setting aside moments during the week when this form of intimacy with the Coursework can be cultivated. It is an authentic practice with yields that are immediate and life-altering.

Enter the holy furnace of Lectio Divina and even the mundane affairs of life become sacramental—actions of grace, visible signs of the invisible.



Obsculta

*“The spiritual circumstances of light from the Holy spirits are always ours when we make use of the principles of **esoteric prayer**. We are living in a constant conversation or dialogue with divinity.” (iv)*

*“**SOULDREAM**: This is a concept in Gnostic initiation and in esoteric physics, which refers to the image that comes up from the unconscious world of the spirits to the surface of the ego, during the process of meditation-relaxation, while in a state of Gnostic attunement.” (221)*

*“You will focus your mind and imagination on the **Teacher** and you will realize your one-ness with the Teacher in the world of ideal substance, where being is at its most dynamic and energizing manifestation. Here, you will know that the Teacher is, himself, a divine and eternal master.”*

(560)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

The very first word in St. Benedict's Rule of Prayer is *Obsculta*, which literally translates to “listen,” but within the context of the text suggest something more akin to “listening with the ear of the heart.” It is truly a beautiful starting point to the “little rule for beginners” and sets the tone for the entire text, even as it descends into the bodily privations and physical punishments of those who do wrong by the light of the Rule. But remember, we are Gyrovagi and answer to a different sort of Authority. Any bodily privation, asceticism or training that we go through is voluntary and has the single purpose of shaping our Will into a razor sharp edge. Reference could be made to the will training as developed in Crowley's *LIBER III vel JVGORVM*.

Obsculta is a generous form of Obedience in a sense. To deeply listen—to the spirits as they teach us in esoteric prayer, to our dream communications and to our Teacher (Elder or Guru)—and to follow the course they lay out for us with the trust of a child is to participate fully in the life of the Monastery. Returning to our Introduction, we recall that the very essence of our work is *attunement*. Whereas in *Suscipe* our focus was on attunement in terms of *receptivity*, in *Obsculta* our attunement is a form of listening with such Orphic receptors, such exquisite and highly

sensitive esoteric instruments that our behaviors evolve and morph, our methods of working are refined by a Holy word of instruction and our life is enhanced through what we encounter. We have placed ourselves in the hands of spirits, Masters, and living Teachers whose will is to aid, assist and instruct us in the ways of the Zothyrion world, which is a purely magickal realm even as it shares many similarities to the physical Earth. With only a cursory study of the scientific theory of parallel universes, or even string theory—we encounter support for such multiverses. But this is not a matter of belief or theory; this is a matter of experience. We may be armchair Magicians for the rest of our lives, or we may simply begin to traverse the realms at this very moment.

The spirits and Masters await our approach, the Communion of Saints are constantly at the ready, the Lwa and primordial currents take shape and form during esoteric prayer and souldreams and true Teachers—Elders in our Monastery—become living vehicles into Otherwhere. These same Teachers, when we place ourselves under their tutelage, can offer precise Initiations that coincide with our particular needs and developments. Holy Listening is essential to discern such subtle vibrations.

The VGW begins, in the Preface, with Bertiaux stating that:

After my development into initiation consciousness, I was able to write a number of lessons and other papers on these Holy Spirits and their work. I taught that when you use esoteric prayer, what you do is talk to the spirits as if they were sitting next to you... They are always ready to listen to us... (iii)

This is the crux of our methodology. It is almost as if our practice starts with a basic premise that the spirits are real and present in the first place, and then proceeds with how to treat them, how to ask for their assistance, and how to properly thank them and make offerings to them. As we all know from experience, expectation can lead to disappointment if we are *clinging* to the expectation for dear life. So we must approach the spirit realm based upon a faith that it is real and that it is the lifeblood of all physicality—but we must not cling to expectations that it will behave in a certain way, or that other's descriptions of it are a matter of dogmatic certitude. When we have attuned to the land of the spirits through *Obsculta*, we will discover that a critical and scientific eye is cogent to the work if we hope to do more than peer into the phantasmagoria like spiritual voyeurs. We are spiritual *voyagers*. Here, the sacred injunction is to listen intently, with the ear of the heart. Bertiaux states further, "Kardec always told us to look to the spirits for insights into the way we were to live each day" (*Preface*, iii) and it is

by the light of Kardec's Spiritism (distinct, but related to the event in the Americas deemed *Spiritualism*) that many engage in esoteric prayer. We learn, from the get-go, that mediumship is crucial to understanding the laws of these multiverses, but that again such mediumship is guided by appropriate knowledge and skill both to give color and insight to the forms that come forth and to offer protections against passivity that can lead to depression and further forms of mental illness.

Listening with such intensity is a form of esoteric prayer. It is true that we have preliminary practices, not the least of which are *Opus Dei* and *Lectio Divina*, both of which pave the way for esoteric prayer, but then we are in need of an actual opening of our inwardness, not the fine-tuning of our *physical* ears, but the metaphysical tuning of the ears of our heart. Just as in *Lectio*, where words and images seem to arise *ex nihilo* or *out of nothing*, in esoteric prayer we may experience something akin to a Martinist "pass" where spirits use the envelope of matter nearest them for communication. The spirits may deem it appropriate to interact with physicality by collecting the wafts of smoke of our incense into a morphic form, or engaging in harmonic resonance with a sound made somewhere else or inciting a dog to bark at the supreme moment of "Opening the Gates" to Papa Legbha. Any and all of these are forms or "proofs" for the Initiate as she whittles her auditory skills into the occult amplifier of *Obsculta*. Here our receptivity (*Suscipe*) gives way to a more erudite understanding and sensitivity—we dare to draw energy from the power Sources of the eternal and then, through *Obsculta*, we control the amplitude of the message and its meaning for us.

...when you are asleep the Hoodoo spirits come to you and take you in your dreams to their schools and temples...(10)

There is a subterranean vault which is nine layers beneath the surface of our mundane personalities—it is the inner sanctum of dream-time. Within this vault there are messages, symbols, beings, schools and temples as well as initiations to be had. We so quickly dismiss our dreams, casting them to the side as regurgitations of our daily experience or as stress-induced hallucinations, but it is in *dreams* that the Higher Initiations into the Gnostic realms occur. Within these dreams are the "revelations" previously mentioned, as well as the upsurge of elements of our soul's many previous journeys, and also spiritual and ontological verities. Now we are not simply being receptive to these, we are deeply listening to them and altering our course *because* of them. It is not enough to memorize a book about the symbols and language of dreams—though such a text

may assist in the de-coding phase of dreamwork; it is, however, the *lived interaction* with the spirits, via esoteric prayer, that enculturates us to the various schema utilized by the spirits in their schools and temples within. When these dreams, some of which are completely life changing, “take” in the same way that a Lodge-type degree “takes”, then “the student will be guided by his souldreams in every process of growth because to be a gnostic is to be aware of the inner sources of truth-of-existence. Attunement to the souldream comes as the result of the assembly of physical existence...” (221).

It strikes me now that the average reader may not be a practitioner. Why is this so? It is so compelling to approach the gates of the Sanctuary and then to turn, and possibly out of idle curiosity, knock upon *another* door. The M7Rs is open to all, but as the Lessons suggest, not all are ready “yet” for the teachings. The model here is an Aquarian, open-armed type who realizes that the work involved in attainment is such that quite literally, few will pass on beyond the trials—though *all are welcomed*. This is not to discourage the reader. In fact, it is to wake the reader up! It is simply not enough in this particular path to “read the book” or mimic a few practices or even to experience a Lodge-style Initiation. This path is only for those willing, knowledgeable, courageous and fit enough for the labor. Experience will suggest that “silence” follows this listing, as it also does in the Hermetic axiom (To Know, To Will, To Dare and to Keep Silent).

Now we come to the role of the Teacher. Even while composing this text I have watched the unfortunate misunderstanding, misuse and even abuse of the role of a guru in the (sometimes bizarre) realm of Voudon*Gnosis. At this juncture, it is important to return to Classical Monasticism as it has had something to offer us at every turn. In the Monastic world, there are Spiritual Directors and Elders, as well as what the Russians call Staretz and what the Greeks call Gerondas. These spiritual Fathers and Mothers are the physical vehicles for the Postulant to labor with—to make the needed leaps from the chimerical to the real, from the diaphanous to the opaque and from misinformation to Truth. It is a role in Monastic life like no other; the Elder is given certain privileges that no one else within the monastic enclosure receives—he is given a place of honor amongst dignitaries even when he may be fairly recent in his Novitiate and he is received amongst Clergy as an equal, but “favored by God.”

In our M7Rs is another mystery altogether. It is the mystery of “Return.” I will follow Ludwig Wittgenstein’s lead and won’t speak of that which I cannot, but verily, votaries of the M7Rs are *returning* to

an unfinished work, to a rough ashlar, to a portion of their very *isness* that remains undone and which **MUST** be completed now or at some other point in history. The Elder knows this, “because the priest knew the student before and they worked, in a past lifetime, on a special project” (189). This was assured by my own Elder in the M7Rs. It is a form of clairvoyance developed by the Elder. I do not want to gloat upon this subject because it is so incredibly esoteric and mystical that everything that is said seems misleading. This is a sensibility, a feeling, a familiarity. In *Liber Thisharb*, Crowley directs our attention to it, but again it feels like this is saying too much about something that is utterly secret, sacred, and ineffable.

Our Elder may be assigned to us or may show up in another arena. This is the way of the spirit-world. It is less organized and tidy than our notation-centric physical world. I have had Elders who have embodied a moment, wherein their divine inspiration was simply to tell me to move in another direction. I have had others who are still involved in my development, and then there have been others who are not limited by time and space, who may utilize prayer or dreams to contact us, who give “an initiation which can be given by the priestly mind, when we awaken” (188). In *The Way of a Pilgrim*, such a relationship is exhibited which, far from the megalomania associated with some of the current forms of guruyoga being superimposed upon our path, is one of gentleness, insight and a penetrating gnosis, though such gnosis is not lorded over us. These same true gurus will challenge us, but will do so for the sake of our soul growth and their love for us, not for the inflation of their own lower egos. In this Classic and simple tome of the Russian Orthodox Church, the chela is visited by his deceased Elder in dreams and physical “proofs” manifest of the visitation. No matter what our relationship with our Guides and Gurus, it is imperative that we understand that to lean too heavily upon them is to carry a lamp that is almost completely shrouded. In the last analysis, the path is our own and we must walk with our own two feet and trust our own unique Will and the light that it bears.

Obsculata is to fine-tune our instruments so that the *reception* of the rays of Light from the Monastery transitions into *integration* of the material. It is to move from hearing to truly listening. This listening requires the whole self and demands of us action and participation.

Growth will come...but it will come to the humble—those obedient to the inner voice that propels us forward and nurtures our Soul.



Conversatio Morum

"The Reservoir of Power—Mysticism is the lifestream of the spirit. It is the lifestyle of those who commune daily with God-Energy...Each day we come to learn how these holy powers operate in our lives and how we can be and become more attuned to these Holy Spirits than we are or have been...Let me tell you that the Holy Mother of God, the Primordial and Eternal Goddess is seeking to make the esoteric prayer-life and teachings of the spiritual world the experience of all Her children." (iv,v)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

Through *Opus Dei*, *Lectio Divina* and *Obsculta*, we have been developing an approach—a lifestyle—that can stimulate our growth and accelerate our spirit action in the M7Rs. *Conversatio Morum* is this monastic lifestyle; it is to live this monastic way with fidelity and to be converted by it. This conversion of life that occurs through complete participation in the Monastery is a form of metonoia, or change of mind or heart. The penetrating quality of the M7Rs lessons is such that when they are fully absorbed by the Postulant, this process of conversion and fidelity to the monastic way are two of the accompanying fruits. The physical attachment to a set of buildings, a cloister and literal Monastery gives way to this lifestream of the spirit of which Bertiaux speaks, and daily attunement with these spirits occurs within a hyper-spatial monastic enclosure, not too dissimilar to the "Holy House of the Spirits" or inner "Sanctuary of the Gnosis" that Bertiaux develops throughout the VGW.

For some of us this will be visualized as an actual monastery and our actions and lifestyle will reflect this visualization as we chant Psalms in the mornings, listen to sacred readings in our refectory at lunch, practice *Lectio* in preparation for meditation and listen with the ears of our heart to the intuitions and movements of the spirits and Gnostic energies within. But there are other qualities that are inherent for monastics and we can expect these to follow our fidelity to monastic life. These include, but are not limited to, simplicity, frugality, humility, work and obedience.



Simplicity is deceptive in its import and power for the Initiate. We picture the mage as one with a table set before him, instruments abounding, grimoires with abstruse sigils and doctrines, inks and quill pens, wearing robes and hoods and the like. We have been thoroughly instructed in the ways of the Magi via Hollywood. Though we may make use of items and instruments of this nature, votaries of the M7Rs—not too unlike some branches of Franciscans and definitely the Order of Dominicans and most especially the Rose~~+~~Croix—*wear the habit of their country*. In other words, an ostentatious parading of membership in the Monastery is eschewed and a simple quiet is maintained concerning our work and projects within the world of the masses. We wear no particular garment and our instruments and tools may be limited to our physical body. Our instruments and tools may simply be our hands. Bertiaux states, “Look, for example at your right hand. God gave you this very magical machine. Christ died on the Cross that the power in this hand be used for good things always...look at your fingers...as tubes of light, or occult energy...” (63). This is simplicity at its highest level. Western monastics speak of *simplicitate cordis*, or the simplicity of the heart. We may also think of Jesus and his suggestion that *if thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light*. This simplicity is a state of mind and of the heart in which we can bask and which can seep into all aspects of our life, bringing a sense of beauty and balance to the world around us, the world whose dominant Faith appears, at least upon the surface, to be Consumerism. Bertiaux states, “So really you are doing a very conservative act, as you are building a cosmic system out of your own powers. You are creating a positive temple in order for you to do lots of GG magick. We teach simply this simple method. But in simplicity is the greatest of powers” (65).

At no stage of our work within the Monastery are we enjoined to go out and purchase *things*. The entire work is done in such frugality and simplicity that it is counter-cultural to say the least. Within the Orders allied with the Monastery, fees are not incurred beyond, on occasion, assisting a Brother or Sister in the costs of mailing items and lessons, but even this is rare. Frugality extends beyond our lessons and informs the way we treat objects in our normal life. When the mystery of Frugality as it is practiced by our Monastery arises in our daily lives, we see that we can live on less, that we can make more sound investments by purchasing things that will last rather than *buying* into the disposable lifestyle of the masses—we see that our labors in the Light in sooth require very little.

The sort of work that we engage upon in the Monastery can, albeit strangely, result in the inflation of the Ego. Schooled as he is in various theories of Psychology, Patriarch Bertiaux speaks at length on the Id, the

Ego, Superego and the like, and introduces us to new terms such as the Transcendental Id. All along our journey on the Grand Chemin, however, we must realize that we are participating in a world made manifest by our Patriarch. We are participating in Universes that he birthed into existence in some cases, and that he opened wide through his audacity and courage in others. And though we are individuals with our own ontic spheres and lattices of being, it is he who, as the Master of the Rays, has opened the way for us to traverse. This is our built-in protection from megalomania and it is the supreme cause of our humility within the cloister. It may appear in the beginning that there is very little Hierarchy within the Monastery, because we labor in harmony and for a common goal. However, there *is* a Hierarchy. Beyond our physical representative of the entire system (Michael-Paul Bertiaux) there are the Masters of the planes, the Saints, the Lwa, the Masters of Magick, the Aeons and cosmic Syzygies...and on and on and on. And beyond all energies and essences of the spirits, we have the **Absolute**. We have no position other than a humble one to maintain within this system.

In Catholic monasteries, it is readily observed that a very balanced system of labor is in place. The monks have the regular set of daily prayers, *Opus Dei*, and liberal amounts of time to practice *Lectio*, but they also have time for manual labor on the various projects for which their particular monasteries have become known. The one I have had the most experience with specializes in bonsai trees, but they also create stained glass, produce baked goods, and restore Illuminated Manuscripts. All of these projects are done in a prayerful spirit, with a focus on quality and craftsmanship. How does this relate to our Hyper-spatial monastic labors? It is the notion of the nobility of work. Our lessons and Coursework within the M7Rs requires work. Penetrating the void and interacting and engaging with the spirit world—work. Taking on special projects to develop further understanding and depth within the Courses—work. Developing devotional means to contact our Master—work. Discovering our True will within the Monastery—work. Unveiling our Angel, or Geni—work. Every aspect of our endeavor *is work* and this work is made all the more noble when we adopt the same attention to detail, craftsmanship and quality that monastics utilize in their labors. We ennoble the Monastery itself with such a strong work ethic, such complete fidelity and such strength of character.

In Bertiaux's description of contacting the Otherwhere of the Zothyrion plane, he speaks of how it came to be that he would be the Teacher of such a Gnostic system. He goes on to explain that the lattices and idealities utilized to enter these alternate realms are the means

and can only occur “by such a method of obedience...which can only be known intuitively, or not at all” (523). This magickal obedience that Bertiaux learned from the magickal realm was then passed onto us—underneath his Patriarchy, where those who are “obedient to the patriarchal gnosis shall be freed of all other claims and shall be able to enter into the Gnostic light which can only be seen through the eyes of that obedience” (523). This is a form of magickal obedience which is to be understood intuitively. Within *all* monasteries obedience is taught, but it is more on a mundane plane wherein we learn how to behave or, as has been mentioned previously, we suffer the consequences of the Rule. But in our system, “Obedience is a spiritual quality and is identified with the light of Gnostic intuition, which the master as patriarch possesses” (523). This is a far cry from the sort of obedience that ensnares and limits the individual's freedoms and actions in the world; in the M7Rs, our obedience is one learned and experienced ontologically, *within the within*, where the aforementioned Hierarchies come to light. This is a felt-sense. It is identified with the same sort of obedience that is born when the Elder *is a true guru* and passes onto his chela those words of wisdom and life that only a true Teacher of the Gnosis can deliver.

The lifestyle of monastics within the M7Rs is characterized by a complete conversion of life and the inner manifestation and outer fruits of such fidelity to the Way.

The Dark Night of the Senses



*We enter the Immeasurable regions in our labors within the Monastery.
This path is not for the faint of heart or the fearful, but for the laborer
in the Light who boldly enters the darkness and thereby attains to the
Transcendent.*



Theoria Physike

"All of these Masters of Magick are connected by the most powerful magickal and occult links to Michael Bertiaux. Now this does not mean that he is the only person so connected, but it does mean that he is connected with very powerful Masters of Magick, who provide him with the materials given in his lessons and course materials. There are other courses in existence and I am sure that they are doing much to help the evolution of the human mind. However, for ourselves, there is the coursework written by Michael Bertiaux and the sources for that course work... are those beings which can be identified as Masters of Magick."

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 303

We are now embarking upon the super-sensual worlds in this part of our *Reflections*. In the work of St. John of the Cross, the concept of the "Dark Night of the Soul" is emphasized, but as we are Non-Dual Gnostics the *senses* are utilized for us as instruments of knowledge and, in turn, divinized and returned to their natural state of equipoise and harmony with the biosphere. In St. John's work, the Dark Night of the *Senses* is an arid time in the spiritual life, due to the sensory part of the soul being incapable of the goods of the spirit. So, he suggests, while the spirit is *tasting*, the flesh tastes nothing at all and becomes weak in its work. But our system inherits a body-positive philosophy that is truly IN-carnational. As St. Athanasius suggested, "God became man so that man might become god." And so we move beyond this dualism of the mind and body and enter the glorious realm of synergy, the interrelations between the gods—even the **Absolute**—and humans. We enter this region with the assistance of the Masters of Magick, through their teachings that were digested, interpreted and presented to us in the Coursework of the M7Rs via Patriarch Bertiaux.

Some schools of mysticism suggest that all visions, imaginings, voices and the like are to be shunned and dismissed—moved beyond and purged for the inner work of stillness. We concur that there *are* Transcendent, ineffable moments of prayer that are unequalled to these visions and "presentiments" as they are referred to in the VGW; however, we miss an entire branch of our system, that of *katophatic* knowledge, if our focus is entirely on the Transcendent. For our work is again

a *both/and* approach and our experiences will fall into both camps of Immanence and Transcendence. We engage with the divinized material realm while in the body and through the body. The portions of Divinity that we are dealing with are energies and essences of the Divine when we labor in the *kataphatic* regions, while it is a measure of *the* Essence that we explore in our more Transcendent and *apophatic* knowledge (this will be divulged further in *Silentium*). In other words, we can talk about, write about, make clear analogies, artwork, poetry and otherwise about our kataphatic experiences, while the apophatic ones are truly ineffable and lend themselves more to the mystery of *unknowing*.

Theoria itself means “vision” or “gazing upon.” The Eastern Orthodox churches make a distinction between *theoria* and *contemplation* that is helpful here, as contemplation is often synonymous with meditation, whereas *theoria* is a result of interaction with the Deity’s *energies*. *Theoria physike*, in our work, refers to the vision attained in magick that is accompanied by images, words, experiences and revelations. It sometimes gives way to *Silentium*, but it is a segment of our journey that is not to be dispensed with in favor of quietude, as we have **much** to learn about our own inner universe through our multitudinous practices.

What is the practice of *Theoria Physike*? It is essentially all of our work in the creative spheres of Gnosis—every practice that yields visions, images, words and symbols, all dream initiations, esoteric prayer and methods of Voudon*Gnosis. It is the entire realm of our work qualified by *experience* that we are able to relate to others via words and/or analogies and artwork. The most important utility of beginning this section of the “Dark Night of the Senses” with *Theoria Physike* is that it is **grounding** our work in the physical world (even as we traverse other realms) through mind-stuff and bodily experiences of the senses. *Theoria Physike* is contemplating God within nature—the One, through the Many; it is recognizing the inherent spiritual nature that resides within the myriad of forms. Our practice in the M7Rs greatly differs from traditional monasteries in this sense, as emphasis is usually placed upon wordless, imageless prayer that leads to silence. Again, we practice both, but the majority of our labors are creative and synthetic, utilizing Gnostic spaces from many branches of the Western Mystery Tradition as well as those outside of such. This is another reason why you will see so many writers and artists amongst members of the M7Rs, because we inherit the spirit of such luminaries as William Blake who, though most assuredly a mystic, made fantastic explorations and investigations into the spiritual realms and committed them to paper in his art and poetry. And closer still to our work we have Patriarch Bertiaux, who has been blessed to

receive direct instruction from the Masters of Magick that guide us through the Coursework of the M7Rs, along the inner realms where our research unearths new worlds and energies, entities and passed masters. As a mystic, writer and artist himself, he is most assuredly the model for what a life of *Theoria Physike* looks like.

Let us delve into this a little further. It is *through the body*, particularly if we study the *points chauds*, the Grimoire Ghuedhe, Ojas radioactivity and other more physical means of illumination, that we *experience* spirit vision. Bertiaux states, “The body is the meeting ground for all of the mysteries” and “the mysteries are physical processes” and further that the magician is to “awaken the Afro-Egyptian sacrament within the soul and allow it to be present everywhere in the body” (167). Within many branches of the Mysteries, the body is to be dealt with harshly—*Brother Ass* it is sometimes referred to. Again, our Dark Night of the Senses is one wherein the body has full participation. Even if we are lost in a Gnostic day dreaming bit of reverie, we are still *in the body*; even if we shoot forth a ray of our Body of Light into another realm, it is attached by the silver cord mentioned in Ecclesiastes to our *physical* body. It is often argued that the body and mind are completely separate because you can lop off an arm and yet still use the intellect. Well, we know from science that all parts of our system are connected, but some have more specific functions. Lopping off the arm will limit functions related to the arm; however, damage a portion of the central nervous system and the intellect is readily affected. We are a complete process, whole in every manner. All is experienced via the body.

In our *Breviary* in Book 2 we will see the simple structure of the Three-fold Path of prayer. The stages are: *Purification*, *Illumination*, and *Union*. This was mentioned previously in the discussion on relating to and communing with the spirits, Saints, and the Lwa. In *Theoria Physike* we are engaging in the second stage of *Illumination* (*Photismos* in Greek). It is light oriented and vision-centric. It is truly the realm of magick. It is prefaced by the required stage of *Purification* which, again, protects us from passive mediumship and other possible issues. In this illuminating state, often the Postulant will “taste and see” in the beginning. She might peruse the Gnostic spaces and magickal realms as a sort of tourist, getting a feel for the alternate landscape. This swiftly transitions into seeing *beings and entities* within the phantasmagoria (astral) which may be difficult to materialize completely in this entry phase. Next, the entities begin to take shape and crystallize—we may begin to feel or telepathize that

they are speaking to us. This transitions further into *relationship*, which is the veritable key to the mysteries in so many respects. The entities we encounter depend largely upon our approach—grimoire magick, Voudon, ceremonial work, Gnostic prayer or otherwise: each contains its own *beings* which may require passwords, signs and such. But behind these beings are the Primordial Currents of old—the Great Ones. In this respect, the form that they take upon themselves in *Theoria Physike* assists us in our relating to them, but the energy behind the form is ancient. There is no other system in comparison with that of the Monastery in this way. We recognize and work in all manner of methods and with all manner of symbols and beings, but we are gaining deeper and deeper access to the Primordial Currents which inform every aspect of our work. These antediluvian *entities* are the source of our spirit *energies*.

Recall that my own encounter with these Ancient Ones was through the Saints. For many, this would seem like an unlikely source, but we must recall that in Haiti and also in Cuba, for that matter, these Saints have been completely syncretized (identified) with the Lwa and Orishas. With my own background being more Catholic, it would not be congruent with my work to leave the system and culture that I have inherited for something more exotic such as the deities of Ifa, even though I am free to do such research and work. The energies will take on whatever forms we are working with; this is why practitioners may even make use of Lovecraftian magick in our system. This is truly refreshing when compared to approaches that consider the spiritual realm to be a “closed” system. We are dealing with a wide-open celestial sphere, *via the terrestrial*, that is polymorphic and exquisite in design and which has **much** to teach us about ourselves and the Universe. We simply must be true to ourselves and trust in our own resources to decide upon what manner of working we may embark. No one can do this for you, though they may offer pointers.

On occasion, our magickal experiences will either encounter dark forces or we will voluntarily enter qliphotic spaces to do battle, such as the Elus Cohen endeavor on the Equinoxes of every year. There are micro-cosmic dark forces as well as macro-cosmic. The micro-cosmic are within us and may be understood as *logosmoi* or thoughts that attack us in a demonic sense. When these logosmoi are given energy by us, when they are dwelt upon or when they stir up strong emotions such as anger, resentment or hatred, they grow and swell into thoughtforms, which are the macro-cosmic expressions of these dark forces. This is sometimes referred to as the bad-UFO experience in Bertiaux's writings. The UFO globules that are more of a positive nature, or sometimes neutral, refer

to the excess of sexual radioactivity. This is a swollen egg of pure kama, as opposed to the negative thoughtform. It is helpful here to picture the thoughtform shaping into a cloud and disc-like formation (UFO-like), which to the clairvoyant or receptive person may be physically seen floating above. Often the colors projected or emanating from this cloud-form will reveal the nature of the evil. It is through the monastic practice of *Nepsis* that we deal with these dark arenas.

Nepsis is a sober-minded type of vigilance that might also be termed watchfulness. The Desert Fathers and Mothers dealt with micro and macrocosmic logosmoi frequently while alone in their furnaces of spiritual warfare, and they used this spiritual weapon with great skill and assiduity. In fact, it is quite simply a form of awareness. As soon as the practitioner recognizes the nature of the logosmoi, it is sacrificed by the sharp sword of attention and falls to pieces immediately. It is only through dwelling on the troubling thought that it morphs into a thoughtform and becomes demonic. While working with the M7Rs Coursework, we can utilize this monastic tool to stay in the Light and to slay the darkness that can only overtake us if we ignore it or feed it. We can also use it, as the Elus Cohen do, to relieve the world of some of these human-projected negative energies superimposed upon the globe. This is serious work and not to be taken lightly or attempted out of vain curiosity.

Theoria physike is a vast field of study and this chapter does not even scratch the surface. What is of utmost importance here is to recognize the prominence of this aspect of our work and its import for our understanding of ourselves and the Universe. The Primordial Currents that we work with in our manifold and individualized ways have much to teach us and wish to guide us and work with us. By engaging in this form of katophatic knowledge, our Gnostic spaces are deepened and truly become wellsprings of wisdom and instruction.

*What the beings of the magickal realms desire from us is **participation**, we must draw down energy from our ontic spheres and journey upon these planes for our instruction and for the enlightenment of our Brothers and Sisters, for we each have a particular Gnostic space to embody.*



Homila Pros Theon

"You are making a sacramental universe of being and you are coming to realize that Godly energies are now in your experience and existence. This is your exercise in theogony. In the analysis of being, we must always view the mystical domain as pure reality or as the life of truth." (564)

The spiritual circumstances of light from the Holy spirits are always ours when we make use of the principles of esoteric prayer. We are living in a constant conversation or dialogue with divinity." (iv)

So be perfectly honest with them (the spirits) for they can tell intuitively when you are sincere and when you are not sincere... Therefore be perfectly honest with them and you will be helped." (5)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

In the previous Chapter, we learned that *Theoria Physike* is the work we undertake in our Tradition; it is the magick that we practice. Such magick can digress into mechanism if relationship is not discovered to be the key. We now enter upon a few very simple methods for transitioning from the mechanical to the organic—from abstraction to daily living. *Homila Pros Theon* means "conversation with God."

As has been demonstrated and as is encountered in every aspect of the Western Esoteric Tradition, we are Emanationists. Many of our symbols suggest such Emanationism. It is easy to misunderstand a glyph such as the Etyz Chayim or Tree of Life, utilized by Kabbalists of all varieties, and see in it a linear depiction of the spiritual realm. However, the more deeply one studies Kabbalah, the more one encounters descriptions of the various trees interpenetrating each other. One example envisioned by Charles Stanfield Jones (Fratr Achad) even creates of interlocking trees a snowflake shape. In other arenas, we investigate Masonic and Egyptian models that use the symbol that stands for the Sun in Astronomy—the point within the circle. The point, in that illustration, is the Absolute, *whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere*, as the Thrice-Greatest Hermes teaches us. The emanations flow forth from the ONE. In Haitian Vodou, all Lwa are under the one, the unknowable—Bondye. In many of the

Classical Gnostic sects that cropped up around Alexandria, there were detailed lineages of descending powers—Aeons and Archons under the Demiurge, the fabricator of reality who was under the silent, True God. In all of these instances we have Emanationism. There is ONE above all—Ain in Kaballah, The TRUE GOD or VERY GOD of the Gnostics, the point within the Circle, Bondye...the ABSOLUTE.

Recall that in *Theoria* we are discussing katophatic knowledge, or knowledge about the Deity that is speakable, that we can work with, make images of, visualize—that can be discussed. *Theoria* sometimes gives way to wordless and imageless prayer, but that is not necessarily the goal for all of our work within the Monastery. We subscribe to Immanence *and* Transcendence—we can interact with God's energies (Immanence) and there are profound silent moments of Union with that which is beyond words (Transcendent). So in *Homila Pros Theon*, we are conversing with God(s), and the definition itself suggests that this is again *katophatic* knowledge we are working with as the Absolute is beyond language.

How do we go about this conversation with God? Before the voluminous VGW even begins its series of mystical lessons, within the Preface itself, Bertiaux gives away the show: “what you do is talk to the spirits as if they were sitting next to you” (iii). This is a form of communion with the spirits, who desire our closeness and interaction. These are the *energies* of the Absolute, not the Absolute in its entirety. This is why sometimes Bertiaux speaks of gods, spirits, etc. that are plural. For those of us working a Christian Gnostic path, the Communion of the Saints is identical to this spirit interaction. The more we are receptive, the more we begin to see the continuum wherein the Saints, spirits, Lwa, and the like, far from being identical are utilized and contacted for differing reasons and in return, contact *us* in like manner.

When communing with Saints, there are specific prayers that have been used over the years as well as Icons and Lithographs of the Saints for visual and meditative purposes. A collection of sixteen of these prayers of the Saints is included in Book 2. But in the same way that it is not enough to simply present an altar with all of the right materials, the right gifts of tobacco and rum, the correctly drawn veves and such to the Lwa, it is not enough to say a few prayers to the Saints and light the appropriate colored candle. Returning to Bertiaux's brilliant economy, we must “talk to the spirits.” This is the key to the beginning of *Homila Pros Theon*—we must, ourselves, talk to *them*. What we discover in time, with patience and assiduity and regular practice, is that they talk back. Sometimes this will be an intimation within the mind. Occasionally this will occur in dream-time. Our evidence of intercommunion with the Saints and spirits

might arise as the previously mentioned *passes* where a candle flickers oddly, a cool breeze arises seemingly out of nowhere, or a knock or battery of knocks is perceived in the distance. In all of these instances and in the endless others that the spirit world makes use of, we must persevere until contact is made and from contact, relationship is born. So to begin *Homilia*, we simply start the conversation.

There is another method wherein we make use of *Homila*—it is that of the previously mentioned Magickal Diary. Amongst Ceremonial Magicians, this is one of the most Classical of all practices to chart one's progress, skill level as it increases over time, and to keep records of all experiences and interactions on the spirit planes. Our mind is so constructed that if we have an experience that is too far out of the ordinary, the habit of the mind is to forget these odd occurrences as they are not deemed necessary for survival and are not in line with normal life. We will have a profoundly moving, possibly life altering experience and then as soon as we begin to try to relate the event to others, we find that, like our dreams, it begins to disintegrate in its details. This reveals the necessity for both a dream journal and Magickal Diary—it is to capture those moments quickly, before the rational mind obliterates them. There is no need for two such journals, however, as the Magickal Diary can contain dream material and will be a more holistic record of the Initiate's growing ontic sphere if it includes both. Such becomes the record that is used with one's Mentor or Elder to establish readiness to advance in the M7Rs Coursework.

In Monastic practice, our relationship with the Elder is characterized by *parresia*—a frankness and boldness in our speech. Within the M7Rs, this is also encouraged with the Teacher/Elder; however, it also refers to our Magickal Diary, which when used in this way becomes yet another tool for conversation with God. According to Bertiaux, “there is only one law of morality in the spirit world and that is to tell the truth to the spirits” (5). Here the Diary becomes a bold conversation, because as we take note of our experiences and interactions with the spirit realm, they reveal back to us, through our own words, the means that they have selected to communicate with us. There are many great examples of these Diaries which delightfully unfold the wisdom that can be distilled from the daily use of the Diary. It is traditional practice to use such a journal when embarking upon the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage—to contact one's personal Holy Guardian Angel. Examples of such are Crowley's *John St. John*, Achad's *A Master of the Temple*, Marcus Katz's *After the Angel* and William Bloom's *The Sacred Magician*.

Studying these examples of the Magickal Diary can relieve the Postulant from being overly selective about what to include in the Diary, as some of these even include detailed descriptions of meals! But no matter what we decide to include in our record, we must practice radical truth-telling as this is the way of the spirits.

Throughout the VGW, Bertiaux enjoins us to record the results of practices in our Magickal Diary. Some of these are extensive exercises, such as those on Vudu research, and may utilize our magic number 16 in terms of the number of questions to answer, practices to attempt or questions to ask of the spirits. Every time we engage with a collective that operates on our 16 principle, we are moving into our metamathematical lattice in the spirit world that is dictated by numbers. Simply answering 16 questions or posing the same in our Magickal Diary is a *call* to all of our correspondences of 16. If the work is more Vudu-centric, then it will be to the Lwa; if it is more abstract, it may invoke the 16 Magickal Axioms; if it is devotional, 16 primary Saints may reveal themselves (see Book 2). This book itself is based upon the same sanctity of numbers: Book 1 = 4 parts with 4 chapters each—16!

In *Homila Pros Theon* we are making a “sacramental universe of being.” We are talking with the spirits, the Lwa, the Saints, and others with honesty and frankness. We are creating a dialogue with them in our daily actions as well as in our Magickal Diaries. This is both an attunement and a relationship. Whereas in more dualistic branches of study the focus is on the spirit realm *outside of us* and completely *beyond* this physical Universe, we are divinizing the reality around us. Soon we begin to see the physical as the matrix in which the spiritual is acting and moving. The clairvoyant experience that corresponds with this could be likened to walking around with microscopic lenses on our eyes; as we move our arms about in the air, we actually see the molecules moving in the air and in our arms. When we move our arm towards a table, we see other molecules moving inside of the table at such a rate that our hand will not pass through them. We see multiverses within each molecule when we adjust the magnification on these magickal lenses further. This is no life of abstraction—this is a Sacramental way of Being and a deification not only of ourselves but of All of Creation. This is the life of the Monastery of the Seven Rays.

We do not need to flee this life to find the eternal and the spiritual, we just need to see—really see—the composite nature of the spiritual and terrestrial realms and build communication with those of Otherwhere to unveil the treasures of Being.



Memento Mori

“So we come together in the Esoteric Communion of the body of Ghuedhe, represented by Christ on the Cross; the skull at the foot of the Cross representing the primordial power of Death, or the Ghuedhe Root of all mysticism and the Divine Sacrifice, or Death. It is energy because the student and the teacher will now become the sacrifice for all of their life, they become Ghuedhe and so they give up being themselves.” (185)

“We live and we die in this body many times, let us know it is one with all time—past, present, and future.” (186)

“However, all spirits are serviteurs of Ghuedhe and so all are included in his plan to lead all beings to the Man-God who died on the Cross. All Loa are saints attributed to Famille Ghuedhe.” (62)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

We are all, almost constantly, dealing with what Paul Tillich called the shock of non being, and what Sigmund Freud touted as the trauma of self consciousness—Death. We are encircled by it. We weave and skirt around it on the highways of life, but at every darkened corner it appears. We plan and prepare with various types of insurance but we know deep down that it is futile, that nothing can insure us from the big conclusion, the finale, our own demise. Day after day we engage in a life that is constructed upon an edifice designed to either distract us from this reality, or in the case of certain religious communities to relieve our fear and comfort us about it. It is so central to our psychology that it could and probably should be the first serious question asked by all therapists—“what do you think about death?”

But what do we *do*, in the West, about this looming reality of death? Our current method is avoidance, at best. We simply push this idea (which surfaces frequently) that we are going to die down deeper and deeper until it becomes a kind of ghost, a sort of heebeejeebie that we would just rather not speak of. In the Monastery of the Seven Rays, as in all monasteries across the globe, we investigate, welcome and engage in concepts of death and we do so via *Memento Mori*, the “remembrance of death.”

It was once thought that in Trappist Monasteries, Brothers would greet each other with the mystical and slightly morbid “*Memento Mori*.”

In fact, this urban legend is still circulated, much like the mis-translation of *Ora et Labora* (work and pray) which has been re-printed as *Ora est Labora* (to work is to pray). Trappists certainly practice *Memento Mori*, but it is not their quiet greeting within the Cloister. They have a series of hand gestures, a sort of sign language they utilize which can be differentiated between monks; they speak a *Benedicamus* upon each other. Many monks, however, throughout the millennia have had a human skull as a part of their austere possessions that serves as a constant *reminder of death* and its nearness every single day. One thinks of the Capuchin monks in their famous crypt in Rome which has several rooms with almost four thousand bones of past monks decorating the space. This is no morbid infatuation with the darkness, it is a realization, a coming to terms, a transmutation of what gives us the willies into something that inspires and transcends everydayness. Ancient Tibetan shamanistic practices included the drinking of a sacred libation from a skull, as did the varied practices of the Knights Templar. Bertiaux states, "Masonic orders and secret societies also are often fed by the powers of this tradition, because many magicians of the GG (Grimoire Ghuede) are brothers of fraternal orders and lodges" (63). Undoubtedly, the presence of a skull about one's Oratory or prayer corner serves as a reminder of what is to come.

The practice of *Memento Mori* is analogous to spiritual alchemy where the first stage in the production of the Stone of the Wise is Nigredo. It is in this stage of Nigredo where putrefaction becomes the necessary force of energy that transforms and transmutes the raw materials and ingredients of the soul. This is related to the first law of Thermodynamics which describes the conservation of energy and is applied to the redistribution of atoms in the decomposing force in nature. Every gardener sees evidence of this transition and dispersing of atoms on the physical plane through composting. Additionally, the distance from God that the practitioner experiences in the *Dark Night of the Soul*, **the soul anguish** that accompanies us along our journey, at times directly relates to this putrefaction stage and is the preparation for new life.

The Ghuede are among the most loved of Lwa in Haiti. Every "Fet" or celebration ends in welcoming and honoring them. They are the tricky, devilish, playful, sometimes explicit, divine jesters of all Lwa. The Ghuede are the Lwa attributed to both fertility (sex) and death. These two principles may seem contentious, yet as has been shown from the beginning, we are dealing with a number of *syzygies*—cosmic pairs—which sometimes seem like opposites. Consider the compost heap again. We put in organic material that is devoid of the life principle and it

transitions; the molecules change and alter and continue to move while the material transmutes into a sort of fuel. Suddenly, what was a delicious avocado is now rotten and putrid and will soon be a very rich additive to the soil—it is in fact *continuous* with the soil. So for the land to be fertile, there must be death. We hear Jesus speaking thusly, *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit* (John 12:24). The famille Ghuede are an immanently practical group of Lwa which is why they are one of the most popular of all of Haiti, and New Orleans for that matter. They are the celebratory and mysterious connective tissues of death, sex, and rebirth.

It seems to be that the cultures that live closest to death, understand death in a deeper way. In the West we have such a disposable culture that even death is quickly packaged and made to appear unreal for those who attend funereal rites. It is our compulsion towards this kind of phoniness that allows the disrespectful treatment of the dead. If we wanted to honor the spirit that once embodied the corpse, we might have something like a jazz funeral or a wake or another significant rite that *celebrates* the deceased. Furthermore, had we a real understanding of the disbursement of our atoms into various directions, we would never allow something like our custom of expensive caskets and chemical embalmings. We would let the body do as the avocado and feed the soil, and we would please the Ghuede by such action.



What does this mean for votaries of the M7Rs? Those who use the VGW will encounter the bizarre, the macabre and, to some tastes, the grotesque. It is the opinion of this author that this is all part and parcel of the *shock of non-being*. There are certain realities that we *must* come to terms with. This can easily condescend to a sort of sex-obsession, particularly amongst those who have been brought up in a situation where such is oppressed. This isn't wrong in the least. It is simply what happens when we form taboos and swing the pendulum too far in one direction. But in the Monastery of the Seven Rays, we want to move past such complexes and move forward into the realm of the numinous. We are interested in divinizing all aspects of life and so, guess what? That *includes* death. We agree with monastics the world over that a thorough understanding of death is critical, and that participation in the life of deceased friends, family members and Saints is a significant part of spirituality—that our ancestors **are** within us in a mystical sense, enriching our ontic spheres. Death is coming. We have to deal with the real, the true and the inevitable in this spiritual existence and death

is one of the very few things that we can, with one hundred percent accuracy, predict is coming for us within our portion of seventy to one hundred years.

And so what is there to do about this impending doom? Nothing. There is nothing to be done about what is so absolutely common and natural. We breathe, we eat, we sometimes procreate, we die. This is the way of things. Within the Monastery is an understanding of *metempsychosis*—the concept that as energy is neither created nor destroyed, so then is our ancient consciousness which has something appointed to it to accomplish. This is the deeper understanding of one's True Will; it is a legacy that we are to bequeath to generations after us. It is a tree we plant that we may never enjoy the shade thereof. So we must consider death deeply. We must look it in the eyes. We must confront our shock of non-being, our fear of being forgotten, our concern over being erased. We must practice *Memento Mori* and remember death daily.



You are now Ghuedhe...To bring in Ghuedhe, you have to be ready for His visit. He will come to you and make it possible for you to bring the teacher to you, but you have to be ready and this means for you to make yourself ready as a body... Make the body ready for Ghuedhe, He will come only when the body is calling Him in its own way. Make the body ready with power and with the red and black forms of power. Make the body ready and then the body will become the place of the dwelling of Ghuedhe. (185)

Look at how much the "body" is mentioned here. This is consistent with the entire program of the Monastery—the Body is the Temple. And what are the red and black forms? If we were to simplify these down to the most succinct definitions possible, the Red rays are those that are Eros oriented and Creative, while the Black rays are those that are Logos oriented and Occult in nature. Again, this is very much a simplification, but it is consistent with the VGW. We see the fertility of Ghuedhe (red ray) and his death nature (black ray) and begin to understand the continuity of this seemingly diverse and complex system of working.

Let us return to the monk, with his skull in his Oratory, ruminating on death that is present at every stage of life. What does this meditation hope to accomplish? The meditation on death has, at its apogee, the expectation that such will result in a complete transmutation of one's life. Re-read this. If we keep death at the forefront of our prayers, meditation

and work, we can expect nothing short of an entire renovation of our whole life. Our creativity *and* our occult work will be informed and transformed by this understanding.

The Ghuedhe are ever present to attend to our meditations on death. I recall one evening in a cemetery (this is their stomping grounds, particularly of Bawon Samedi) where I was spinning off into an unconscious reverie and was taking upon myself a variety of oaths in a frenetic dance of the zombi. This was not, as has been the case in my former magical experience, *my* idea—it came *upon* me, like a possession. I did not summon the Ghuedhe family nor did I have any interest in experiencing something that, to be completely truthful, was rather frightening while occurring. It was later, especially in light of *Homila Pros Theon*, that it was revealed to me whose action it was in the cemetery. Had I not taken upon myself the practice of communing with the spirits, the Saints, and the Lwa—especially via the Magickal Diary—I probably would have chalked this experience up to a momentary psychosis. But here is where our Tradition is brilliant because it uses as a sort of spiritual barometer, this “so what?” test which consists of the maxim *by their fruit you will recognize them*. It was from incidents anterior to the cemetery occurrence that I gained evidence of Ghuede’s dealing with my soul; in other words, we had met before and the meeting was **life affirming**. The M7Rs suggests this time and time again—you are not knocking upon the Monastery doors for the first time, you are returning. That is what the famille Ghuede revealed to me; we had been here before. I had experienced this **same** insistent call of the beyond via death through a childhood experience with a Passion Play. I had been *transported* by a childhood initiation through the medium of a Church play which, like St. Ignatius of Loyola’s system, re-enacted the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is an instance of the Lwa contacting us, rather than the typical magickal Tradition of the mage summoning the spirit. We find in this occurrence an equilibrating effect, where we may have been at labor for years upon our own instrument, hoping, praying and working to make it efficient for the spirits, and then, out of nowhere, they approach us. I have to make a special point of saying this for myself as well as for all of my Brothers and Sisters upon the path: when the spirits, Saints, Lwa and others are ready, **they approach us**. **They** initiate contact. What is the result, usually? We misread the message. But sometimes, we listen.

Remembrance of Death—what does this really mean? It is simply to remember at every given moment that **we are going to die**. Such knowledge and realization should beckon us to live fully and completely in *this moment*. In such remembrance it is also to dig a bit deeper and

therein to form, again, *relationships*. The Ghuedhe are a family. These are not simply *archetypes* to engage with via some sort of mental judo; they are living, thriving entities/energies. Even if all we do is to add a skull or two to our Oratory, we are honoring the dead who are ever present amongst us and who welcome our arrival. It may be that we feel inspired, should we be priests of the Gnosis, to offer up a Requiem, as all Requiem Masses of the world belong to Ghuedhe. (48) Whatever the case may be, since many of our spirit energies are those of the dead, and since we are embarking upon the course of extinction with every breath, we **must** acknowledge and work with the energies that are of death.

Memento Mori is a sacred practice that presents us with a reality that is so dependable and real that an entire Religion could be birthed upon it.



Silentium

"The true magician must be completely detached in order to realize his unity with the Absolute." (234)

"...in the gnostic metaphysics, which we have accepted, God-Energy is understood as immanent in the gnostic consciousness of the very highest magicians...A characteristic of very high Gnosticism would be the idea of transcendence..." (271)

"Each world and its spiritual ruler reflect the infinite light of God the Absolute in every possible direction." (372)

"...the power and mysteries of our school are significant and sufficient for perfection and divinization (theosis)." (196)
~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

So far in our *Reflections* we have worked with concepts of *kataphatic* knowledge—experiences and gnosis within the spirit realm that we can describe, define, categorize, and qualify. In *Silentium* we are entering the realm of *apophatic* knowledge, which is a sort of negative theology where it is more cogent to describe what God is *not* or where we attempt to use analogy for such states of being and high meditation that are a form of unknowing. It is in the deepest of silences that this experience is cultivated. There is a rich tradition of apophatic theology amongst monastics of both the Western Catholic Churches as well as the Eastern Orthodox, but we are a distinct lot and so we will be working with this concept through the mysterious channels of the M7Rs. In our Tradition, though this transcendental state is certainly deemed exalted and “a very high Gnosticism” as Bertiaux says above, in the same quote he continues, “...would be the idea of transcendence, but *transcendence is overcome only by the magickal methods of those magickal computers which are awakened by gnostic methods*” (271) [italics added]. We are working in a form of Gnostic physics, interacting with beings, traversing new lands and becoming vitalized by the God-Energies which are Immanent and deeply Incarnational and so our focus—our locus of control—is both internal and external and is *causative* in the most positive and creative sense. We are *forming* the universes in which we operate, but which, upon closer observation, reveal spaces that were already present and that we

are *participating* in. So we are living in this profoundly internal sphere while at the same time joining in the actions and life of something larger than us. It is by our very processes of Gnostic physics and working with our magickal machines that we pierce through to a transcendent moment which is not our *only* goal in the spiritual life, but which is one that is completely transformative.



The God-energies with which we interact are Immanent; they are here in this life (though in veiled forms in the diaphanous realms) and are processes and entities that we can describe and express through words and images. God-Essence is entirely distinct and is completely indescribable, ineffable. God-Essence is Transcendent. It is beyond the beyond—the “which for which there is no which-er” as Alan Watts says. It is the “super-essential darkness” of which Meister Eckhart speaks. It is a *participation* in the Absolute, Gran Bon Dieu. In the words of Raimundo Panikkar, “God is silence itself.” *Silentium* is both descriptive of a practice and of the nature of the Godhead itself—Silence, a deeply penetrating quintessential darkness.

According to Bertiaux, the work that we engage in within our Monastic school leads to *theosis*. Keeping in mind that our theology is an original Ray of divine teachings filtered through our Master Teacher, this *theosis* is not identical to that of Christian theology, yet it shares some characteristics. In the Eastern Church, *theosis* is preceded by *theoria* and *catharsis*, similar to our *Theoria Physike* preceding this study on *Silentium*. In Book 2, the Three-fold Path of Katharismos (*Purification*), Photismos (*Illumination*) and Henosis (*Union*) will be elucidated and it will be clear how all branches of our tree of magick and mysticism fall eloquently into these categories. The final stage of Henosis is closely allied with our understanding of *theosis*, but whereas Henosis is primarily concerned with oneness and Union, *theosis* is a form of divinization or deification where one is becoming *more divine*. These two concepts occur simultaneously in many cases as the lived experience of Henosis or Union usually has, as one of its fruits or effects, a divinizing effect on the mystic. Keep in mind that these are not watertight compartments and so the categories are more akin to markers or signposts than clearly delineated stages. *Theosis* has more to do with the transformation of the whole person, which is often born from a deeply felt Unitive experience. Bertiaux states, in the chapter on the Dainichi Revelations, that “The result is that the student becomes more and more of a perfected being” (293). Our final chapter in Book 1, *Caritas*, will reveal a great secret involving *theosis* which is most assuredly a departure from the classical definition.

This idea of becoming *more divine* sounds suggestive of the dualisms that we have said are not a part of our branch of Gnosticism. But here is the key to this particular slant: becoming *more divine* in our Monastery means to **be fully human**, in full capacity of our potentiality as mystical, spiritual and terrestrial beings. It is not to *become* a pure spirit or to *become* something higher than human—we agree with the Psalmist that we are only a *little lower than the angels* and that our position in the grand scheme of things is a most glorious one. Further, Bertiaux states,

This means that you will perceive all being as if experiencing it for yourself and within your own being. You will take on the body-consciousness of the infinite body of bliss. While you are in this state of attunement, you will come to the realization that all being is interconnected to where you are and what you are doing. You will see yourself as pure essence. (293)

These practices and journeys into Otherwhere deepen our humanity and strengthen our bonds with all of creation.

Silentium describes our sense of understanding the Absolute. Whether we are coming from the Japanese standpoint of shunyatta (emptiness), the Kabalistic angle of AIN (no-thing) or the Christian Mystics and their Via Negativa (way of negation), the Absolute is considered in silence. We know that we cannot even approach the outer portico of these mysteries with words or images. They will utterly fail in every department. We are left destitute of language and bereft of explanations, quantifications or theories. We are alone with the Alone. There is no way to say *something* about the *EVERYTHING*; such would limit its Omneity. And so we remain silent.

What form of *Silentium* do we practice in our Monastery? We recall that Trappists have a strict vow of silence and have developed a form of sign language to communicate only out of necessity. But is this outward silence enough? We know, as do the Trappists themselves, that it is *not enough*. However, outward silence is something that we must court and cultivate within our lives in the world. We would be duly awarded a measure of peace if we would carve out spaces of silence to combat the noise and frantic busy-ness of the world around us. It may be that we have strict understandings between ourselves and those in our family or those with whom we share our life, that when we enter our Oratory or prayer corner or Gnostic workshop, there will at least be certain times when outward silence should be respected. I tend to announce this by the simple striking of a gong. I remain quiet until I strike the gong again.

This outward silence strengthens our root structure in the ontic spheres so that a tranquility and holiness form the skeletal structure of our field. Outward silence teaches us also to respect the things of this world, to not slam doors, stomp through the house or jerk about frenetically as is customary in much of today's fast paced culture.

But, of course, there is an inward silence that is beyond all such outward signs. Votaries of the Monastery who avail themselves of this precious gift are rewarded a hundred-fold for their efforts. The Eastern Orthodox have a lovely term for this form of inner silence: *hesychia*. This is a deep silence and quiet of soul, an inner retirement into the cavern of the heart wherein all manner of treasures lie. The place of the heart will be explored further in *Caritas*. To realize our unity with the Absolute, Bertiaux suggests we must be completely detached. This is consistent with the Hesychast Tradition and is sometimes aligned with the concept of *apatheia*, or dispassion. In this detached moment of silence, we are not under the control of our emotions, worries, passions or any distraction; we are free from distraction and are completely unified with our sometimes disparate elements. This feels like a unity with ourselves in the beginning stages, but as we develop silence further and deeper, the realization that accompanies such monastic labor is that this is, in fact, unity with the *all*! This experience may follow our practice of *Opus Dei*, or could be a further development of the Contemplatio stage of *Lectio Divina*, or it could even be the result of a powerful magickal operation endeavored upon in *Theoria Physike*. It is primarily characterized by a largeness of soul, by an expansiveness felt in every fiber of the body, by the profound sense of interdependence with the world around us. We no longer feel that we are *strangers in a strange land* when this inward silence takes hold of us in its unifying force. We know with a gnostic certitude that we are continuous with this planet and that we are as natural a symptom of this Universe as a wave is of the ocean. Bertiaux says, "One comes to see that world as akin to oneself. The closer one grows to it, the deeper the initiation" (601). The most powerful moments of *Silentium* are life changing and world-view altering. A noticeable change comes upon the visage of the Postulant that has made such progress of the soul. A lightness takes over our countenance and a profound depth in things spiritual *and* physical follows suit because we no longer see the two as being at odds or contending. They are in cooperation, with spirit being the fuel, life principle and heart of the Cosmos.

Silentium will bring a depth to our manifold workings in the Monastery. We each have so many differing areas of study, gnostic spaces, and fields of research and discovery that it is helpful to have a

handful of unifying forces. *Silentium* is just such a force. It is connected with the Nomen Mysticum we take in various Orders. We are becoming a silent serviteur, a silent worker, an Unknown, piercing the Cloud of Unknowing through our labors. Cultivating a love of silence will open up the wellsprings of divinity that lie latent within our soul; the dormant forces for good, creative bursts of energy and a vocation to serve the Light and our neighbor will arise naturally from this love of silence. It is a quality inherent in all aspects of monasticism.

Silentium is a hidden form of worship that is a participation in God's essence, a transcendent experience of the ALL within the limited.

Transmutation



In quiet Oratories we labor, our work is nothing short of the entire renovation of the self by fire. We share a communal and fraternal bond with love as the capstone of our inner edifice. The Rays of the Monastery reach us wherever we may be and connect us eternally with our Secret Master.



Ora et Labora

"Focus your mind through attention upon the spirits and you will talk to them in silent thought and attune your mind to how they respond...in this sense, then, the student is always able to get back from the spirits mind-energy, because he is attuned to them always. This wonderful method is really practical for the everyday working person or even someone who does a lot of mental work...and (still others) developed telepathy and mental mediumship, because they were obliged to do purely physical work and their minds were free for the easy development of these powers through the use of silent thought." (9)

~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

The Monastery of the Seven Rays could be thought of as a *Workshop of the Spirits*. In this school of service to Bondye, the Absolute, we are constantly at labor to participate in, and further the work of, evolution. It is nothing short of a divine calling or vocation to be a Postulant in our blessed fraternal houses of the spirit. Within this *Workshop*, each member has his or her own special tasks to perform, Gnostic spaces in which to dwell, and a particular work to accomplish—a sort of spiritual legacy bequeathed to those who come after us and which propels the operation of the Monastery forward. Many of us align ideas of True Will with this apportioned task, which provides an additional kick of volition and purpose to the work, unequaled by any other labor we take upon ourselves in the world. It is crucial for us within the Monastery that once we begin our labors and make our vows to the spirits, that we *defer not to pay them*, for it would be better for us to not take on a particular work at all than to begin the process and then to fail in our accomplishment thereof and be burned by the trials incumbent in the Initiate's journey. Many are drawn to our monastic enclosure, but few persevere to the end and endure the ordeals which prepare us for a more permanent bond with the M7Rs, that of monastic Profession.

Ora et Labora means "prayer and work." These *Reflections* are organized into two Books, *Ora* and *Labora*. The *Ora* section is here used to denote our theology and suggested connectivity of the Monastery of the Seven Rays to Classical Monastic thought and practice. While *Labora* means "work," we must recall that to the Eastern Orthodox, *theologia* is something that we *do*. It is no mere scholastic pursuit. So both parts of the

book are active in this way, though the emphasis on actual ritual and Saint work is in the *Labora* section.

I have been fond of this Benedictine motto for quite some time as it is suggestive of a spiritualized view of work. I first became familiar with it through Benedictine studies, but when I became a Freemason, I began to see the phrase crop up again in a slightly different version. In most Masonic texts, a mistranslation has been perpetuated—*ora est labora*—which although an attractive idea (work is prayer or prayer is work, as the case may be) is a mistranslation and doesn't even make grammatical sense in Latin. St. Benedict himself did not use either phrase, but monastics accept *ora et labora*, along with Pax or “peace,” as being good mottos for the Monastic way. Even a cursory reading of Benedict's Rule reveals that this phrase is consistent with his overall view of monastic life and its balance of labor and prayer. The phrase relates directly to our Monastery, to the *Workshop of the Spirits* where, as was previously mentioned, armchair Magicians will not survive due to the intensity of the workload and the way that it filters into all aspects of the daily. Our Monastery has a precious gift in the Coursework and Lessons, but it is not enough to simply read the material. We must collaborate with the forces, energies and entities for the overall evolution of the Cosmos. We are co-collaborators, co-workers and co-creators with the ALL, via its many energies and essences with which we work directly on a regular basis. We are Initiates.

We have stated from the beginning of these *Reflections* that the Monastery utilizes a both/and approach in several areas, one of which is in terms of action *and* contemplation. Truly, *ora et labora* means just that when viewed in the most broad way, as our prayer may descend into the depths of contemplation and our work is most assuredly active. Here we take recourse to a segment of the “Book of Meon” from the VGW:

These mysteries of Light are the beginning of contemplation (Theoria) and all contemplation (the fullness of Theoria or the theoretical pleorma) is the beginning of all action (Praxis). Theoria and Praxis are a pair, for Theoria is the gnosis of numbers and Praxis is the Ekklesia of numbers. Thus the contemplation and action are the children of Truth but contemplation loves gnosis and action loves Ekklesia. (238)

Here an added depth grows to our notion of *Theoria Physike*, as we see that in our kataphatic methods of prayer, our action is realized (Praxis) and brought to fruition via the overall Monastic and Gnostic assembly (Ekklesia). Our inner work draws us nearer and nearer to Gnosis, while it

is within the Monastery proper that we engage in the labor. This symbiotic relationship is a magical vehicle of the gods.

There are many, many different schools within our Monastery for the Postulant to take advantage of to express their own wills and to align with Divine Will. Some of these are on the Inner Planes, where “Hoodoo spirits come to you and take you in your dreams to their schools and temples and then they teach you to be able to recall what happened to you and what you learned” and further, where we may have a “dream power class every night”(10). Other schools are highly individualized, such as those for the Gnostic Artist or the Healer. And still other schools are those developed by the *Postulant* him or herself, through the inflation of the Gnostic Ego. The list is endless and the creativity the Monastery inspires ensures that the list will remain infinite.

The nature of our Inner Plane work is as diverse as the types of Postulants that enter the Monastery. This is one of the liberating qualities of the M7Rs as it leads us into the Mysteries, but it doesn't limit what those same Mysteries may reveal along the way, or the methods we choose to get there. We are free to make use of any means to establish contact and relations on the Inner Planes in our Monastery. In the Grimoire Ghuedhe papers of the VGW, Bertiaux calls the performance of such magical experiments a “school of inner plane work” (54) which reminds votaries of the many “schools” of Benedictine Monasticism. The mind-energy that we work with, the mind-stuff that we manipulate, forms and shapes into worlds with complete landscapes inhabited by the most exotic and interactive beings—a world of vital energy that, far from simply being a novel form of using the imagination, becomes for us a source of what the next chapter describes as *Curatio*. The work that we undertake on the Inner Planes, as a form of prayer, is often rather devotional. This caught me by complete surprise as I did an operation one evening before going to sleep and awoke to the reality that Bertiaux himself is “working very closely with many of you on the inner planes” (159). This was when the Patriarch appeared to me in a dream vision as a Minotaur—not in the least bit frightening, but completely assimilated to his humanity. He approached me in this dream, flashing with white light coming off of his animal-like presence, and gave me a word. Now, often we here of those stories of the Desert Fathers and Mothers of early Monasticism who would give the seeker a word, or a small phrase that would be healing and life giving. The term for this is *apothegm* and these little nuggets are typically full of wisdom and insight. They may act in a similar manner as Zen koans in some cases. Well, this

particular word that the animal form of Bertiaux gave me is the reason for this book. Sometimes it is that powerful—a contact through a dream that in turn causes changes on the physical plane. This is pure magick. When I asked the Patriarch about this dream, he responded with characteristic erudition and simplicity, “this is one of our devotions.” Students of Michael Bertiaux find him imminently approachable and generous in his guidance and spiritual direction, while at the same time his words often cut sharply with the power of the Desert Fathers’ *apothegm*.

Another example of the types of schools in which we labor within the Monastery is that of the Gnostic Artist. In the same way that Inner Plane work encapsulates *ora et labora*, so does the term Gnostic Artist as it is equally about prayer and work. As Bertiaux says, “There are many ways of doing gnostic physics” but that in this particular method the magician is “concerned with those very basic laws and principles, whereby the creative energies are actualized” (266-277). *Theoria* and *Praxis* unite in the ontic sphere of the Gnostic Artist. The artist opens up to Otherwhere, as a medium and then, through a stroke of absolute magick, births an image from the realm of ideas into form. Bertiaux eloquently states, “The gnostic artist is a magician when he allows the divine energy of creative and cosmic illumination to enter into his multi-dimensional consciousness and thus awaken the angels of their inspiration, which reside in his higher mind fields” (266). Here we are transmuting our theories and conceptual understandings into a physicality that others may enjoy or be transported by. The indelible presence that a piece of Gnostic Art transmits becomes a doorway for others to enter. The Eastern Orthodox Church teaches this same idea in terms of their sacred art of Iconography. One does not just select “Gnostic Art” in a stylistic sense as, say, one might choose to work in Expressionism or Non-representational Art—the Gnostic artist must be a seer and a conduit herself. Bertiaux continues, “The gnostic artist is an instrument for divine and angelic activity in what he does, for he contacts those highest levels of consciousness and being which religion designates as the divine and/or the angelic” (267).

We mentioned previously that Bertiaux explores Classical Psychology in a number of places in the VGW. In his section on the Magickal Inflation of the Gnostic Ego, he propounds an idea that is extremely original and revolutionary in the world of the Western Esoteric Tradition. We think of the inflation of the Ego as a purely negative thing and most assuredly it is in almost every instance, but there is subtlety in Bertiaux’s concept for he is “in the process of discussing inflation of the ego, as *magicians*

see it, rather than engaged in talking about a process which might well be pathological” (236) [italics added]. We are transmuting *all* of life within the Monastery, and the Ego is not immune to this renovation. We are talking about the *Transcendental Ego* in this sense, whose contents Bertiaux calls *inflata*—ontic entities of both objective and subjective types. In this process, “universes are created under the control of the ego and these are the various meta-realms of the ontic sphere” (236). Here is where the revolution comes in, for what Bertiaux suggests is that through this Magickal Inflation are born magickal orders, degrees and grades, re-worked Old Orders on modern lines, schools of consciousness and the creation of religious and philosophical systems. Most Hierophants would fear this sort of innovation, because they become concerned that these new systems and Orders might steal their own potential candidates. But this is not the case under our Patriarch who, unlike these “old Order” leaders, does not act in his leadership role as an Emperor with his back to the wall for fear that his minions may overtake him. Bertiaux places himself in a position of complete security as Master of the Rays, without the slightest tinge of this pedantic concern. Further, this Magickal Inflation is related to the previously mentioned creative work of Gnostic Artists (visual and otherwise) as well as the development of magickal personalities. Far from being a negative Ego-trip, this mysterious concept is the very life-blood of our ontic spheres. And it takes work to develop. It also takes care and humility born from true self-knowledge, for even as our *inflata* are born and dancing before us, we know our position within such work is demiurge-like and still *under* the Divine Authority of the Absolute.

Finally, within our Monastery *ora et labora* is precisely demonstrated in the practice of mentorship and accountability with the lessons. Our monastic mentors, who often take on the role of a Staretz or Elder, hold us accountable not only to the study of our Coursework, but to the practices and Initiations therein—work and prayer. When an Initiation doesn’t “take,” it is common that the Mentor will challenge the Postulant further—possibly offering us (as Bertiaux did) an *apothegm* that jumpstarts the initiation itself, or the encouragement to practice the initiatory method repeatedly until it does take. Whatever the suggestions, delivered with love, compassion and devotion, the Mentor holds us accountable to our life of combined contemplation *and* action. *Ora et labora* is a compendious summation of the whole of the Monastery of the Seven Rays.

The uniting of action and contemplation, work and prayer, is the method of the Monastery and the means by which we further evolution and labor alongside the spirits.



Euratio

"The ontic sphere or magickal imagination of the esoteric priesthood is made to reflect the ways in which the powers of the Heart of Legbha can be projected outwards." (178)

"This is why great care is taken in the construction of the ontic sphere of the priest, so that he will be able to live within the world of the mysteries fully and without any lapse." (178)

"Magnetic Materialism will also focus upon the subtle anatomy of the patient and by means of magickal forms of massage and passes made over the field of the body the patient will begin to wake up because the subtle chakras of the body of vitality will move more and more in the direction of becoming conscious and hence well." (333)

"One important factor in healing and especially in relation to field-work is that the healer must always be attuned to the spiritual source." (335)
~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

Euratio was mentioned in the chapter on Aequus Animus where we were discussing the necessity for the Gnostic priest and metaphysician to develop his or her own balance and form of self-healing through various adjustments needed. We discussed the connection between healing and the ontic sphere of the practitioner as well. This must precede actual healing work with others so that we have the vitality and strength in our own energy field to draw from, which in turn is continuously fed by rays from the Heart of Christ/Legbha.

In our Transmutation of the Self, we are moving *outwards* from the intense inner work that we are constantly engaged in within the Monastery teachings and initiations. All of the internal labor upon our ontic sphere, all of the creative energy and force built up within it and all of the contacts and relationships with various entities, spirits and Saints enter the realm of Praxis when we begin to heal others. We now return to the "so what?" test previously mentioned. Our system is not designed for us to horde the Light to ourselves, to lock away jealously within our own minds and energy fields—it is designed to move outward, to heal

others and to further the evolution of the Cosmos by birthing Light in every corner of the daily. This is also one of the reasons this particular text hopes to be more accessible to true seekers in whatever station of life they find themselves, rather than limiting the readership of such a tome to those who can only afford extravagant, and often gorgeous, works of book Art in limited editions.

The Coursework of the M7Rs spends a great deal of time working on our ontic sphere, which many visualize as a sort of mind-energy space, an etheric bubble or cloudlike in shape, within one's own morphic field. What we are creating, building up and charging with our own energy, ojas and other radioactive sources, is a reservoir to pull from and an individualized universe to journey within. Much has already been said about the latter, especially in terms of *Theoria Physike*, but it is the former that reaches outward with its tentacles of blessing, empowering and healing others. This ontic sphere receives much from us and our internal work, but if we are attuned to the Higher energies then we are able to receive the most pure and therapeutic rays from the Heart of Christ/Legbha. An analogy for this abstract notion is found in Kabalistic thought. We engage in a great deal of work that is within the higher regions of Yesod, which includes Holy Beings as well as the phantasmagoria of the shells or husks of the dead, qliphotic forces and spirits. But we move higher into the realms of the Christ/Legbha in Tiphareth, where the Beatific Vision and the mystical experience of Union is achieved. Here, the diaphanous becomes distinct and the forms that were once polymorphic and hardly trustworthy, solidify and crystallize in this realm of Beauty and Harmony. This is *the* source of most of our pure rays that on a macro-cosmic scale imbue our micro-cosmic ontic spheres with healing energy. And so, as Master Bertiaux says, we must "always be attuned to the spiritual source" so that we may utilize the "transformative powers or rays of the Living Christ, or the Cosmic Continuum" (387). This is emanationism of the most practical sort; far from being a mere conceptual understanding of emanating energies from the Divine Essence, this is a practical making use of these energies for the healing of others. It is the physical experience of the Ideal. It is praxis and true theologia.

Curatio in our Monastery is what many refer to today as energy work, though it has a uniqueness and an advantage to which many contemporary workers unfortunately do not have access. Much of today's energy work is a hotchpotch of theories and practices from the East, often without much depth in terms of knowledge and skill, and with an overall feel of

eclecticism that makes it appear divided and lacking in terms of source. Our Monastery teachings on the development of the ontic sphere and the opening to the Higher Rays is a much needed teaching today and though Bertiaux's teachings often seem rather eclectic and syncretic themselves, they are grounded in experience and a deep connection to Source(s) that are primordial and life giving. His synthesis of many branches of study is by way of a thorough understanding of the roots of all structures and methodologies. Certainly his upbringing in Theosophy has influenced this deep understanding of the perennial philosophy found in the heart of the world's great Religions.

I recall the first time I spoke of these energies that I felt I had been in contact with since I was young. I was sitting in a restaurant with some friends and began putting my two index fingers near each other, pointing them towards each other yet not touching them and then pulling them away and bringing them closer again. My friend asked what I was doing and I said, "I am feeling the electricity and energy—you try." We all did this simple practice for a few minutes until my friends realized that we looked a bit crazy to those around us. This is a simplified version of tapping into the energy that is already latent within each of us. How much more does this energy become amplified when we take advantage of the storehouse method of building up our own ontic sphere and then further, in bringing down more pure Rays from the Higher Gnostic realms? There is no comparison between the common method of constantly depleting one's own energy levels and that of the Monastery method of living fully within the mysteries with no lapse. Bertiaux speaks of a similar practice in the section on Esoteric Electrical Engineering (EEE) in the VGW. He gives clear instructions on a method of using the hands as conductors and resistors, creating a sort of magnetic energy field between the hands. We utilize this method in our own Chapel during Healing Masses. It is akin to the radiating vitality created in the simple and beautiful Lucky Hoodoo ritual of Dedication in the VGW. Bertiaux, in describing how the EEE method has the practitioner holding his palms out and facing each other, says he will "study the energy patterns by thinking about energy flowing out of the palm of the right and meeting a different kind of energy coming out of your left hand's palm...in the middle...imagine that you see a very tenuous line of light energy" (287). Those who practice Reiki and other forms of healing hands will recognize this energy immediately, but Bertiaux does not stop with the recognition of this energy that is already present. He begins to teach us how to feed it, to make it more powerful, to "link you more closely to those magickal and gnostic forces beyond the here and now and take you to cosmic realms" (288). Through repetition

and attunement, the practitioner opens to the Higher Realms and becomes a conduit for *Curatio* in its most divine of forms.

Within our own Gnostic Chapel, we receive requests for healing regularly. Some of these are from our regular worshipping community who come for Mass and participate in our healing work physically. But others approach us from a distance and ask for us to offer healing energy in a non-physical, hyper-spatial way. The Monastery provides such a method. As we have worked and labored with various entities and energies and cosmic processes in our Coursework and Initiations, we are prepared for the more exalted labor of *Raying* or diffusing the Light that we have received to others. The Source, again, is the Heart of Christ/Legbha, but there are other Rays to be utilized and the "work of the Gods is varied and that one God will specialize in one work, another in some other kind of work" (288). Through actual, lived experience we discover our own methods and work in our own traditions, whether it be working with the spirits, the Lwa or the Saints, and we come to recognize through the combined forces of knowledge, skill and practice which entity to call upon in our process of *Raying*. Bertiaux gives a beautiful technique for this special form of healing at a distance that, as a form of prayer, calls upon divine aid but goes deeper by actually sending or broadcasting outward rays of healing to those in need. He says,

...you will focus your mind on helping those in need and call upon the powers of the Gods to come down and pass through you to those who are in need. In this case, you are serving as the point of observation for the energies which will be sent out by the process of ray-ing to those around you or known to you. ...let me be a source of ray-ing at this time and whenever I want to work for them. Thank you, my Legbha. (181)

What an amazingly simple, and eloquently stated approach to healing! He goes on to say that the practitioner may relax afterward and even fall asleep, so that energies can flow through perfect relaxation without the interruption of our ego. Notice there is no cause of sleep due to the depletion of the practitioner; the sleep following the healing work is simply to assist in *Raying* in the most perfect way. Also notice the personalization of *my Legbha*. This is not some abstract notion of a far-off God. This is not conceptual prayer to an Archetype. This is the *Heart of Christ/Legbha* that we have grown close to, with which we have a deep relationship. This approach to the spirits, the Saints and the Lwa is described by Bertiaux as:

a total and permanent fellowship with the gods and with all of the magickal spirits. This is achieved by means of entry upon the process of magicko-schematic transformation. The entire space of the mind and the soul is subject to this transformation, which leads the individual onwards to deeper and more powerful forms of knowing and to more and more significant states of reality...this is the gnosis of the transformed life. (150)

The Transmutation and transformation that occurs within our Monastery is both outwardly and inwardly holistic. The mind, soul, spirit **and** body are all brought into alignment and attunement. Our vibratory rate shifts to a higher frequency such that in time, the various props of Magick are no longer a necessity, though we may continue to utilize them. A dark mirror, for instance, is no longer needed for scrying into Otherwhere; we will be able to simply quiet the mind and we are there. A specific Tarot pack for divination will no longer become a necessity because we will be able to read the Oracles written all over daily events by any means, from rolling a single die to channel surfing for a *word* or phrase to answer the question of the moment. And, we will no longer feel that a plethora of instruments, tools and training are required for our particular form of healing because we have a most precious gift for those in need—our hands, and our connection to the Source(s) of all Healing and Wholeness.

We move outward in Curatio, from our own internal adjustments and healing to the profound depths of becoming a conduit for divine energies, and for the treatment of others in need.



Benedicamus

"The Gnostics maintain that in their process of initiation and magickal development, the candidate-student is able to become transformed by a special type of physics, i.e., the psychic physics of the meonic energies. In the temples of radio-psychology, the student is bombarded with highly radioactive particles and quite literally the building blocks of the chela's psychosomatic network become something more than what they were before." (431)

"We are concerned with the analysis of the structure of the pleroma and how this can be revealed in a variety of magickal tests and measurements, given under the auspices of the Gnostic and esoteric understanding of pastoral psychology and theology." (427)
~Michael Bertiaux, VGW

"Each person possesses in his deepest psyche this pleroma in one form or another and this pleroma is actively broadcasting" (427) says Bertiaux in his theosophical description of radionic energies. This pleroma is distinct from *the* Pleroma, for such is *the fullness* and the finite cannot contain the fullness. However, we participate in the pleroma on an individuated level through our personal ontic sphere, the magickal bubble of collected energies we have received by nature of *being*, have created in our various magickal and energetic operations and which receives rays from Higher Realms. This is our participation in the pleroma of *our own sphere*. From this bulbous and rich egg of potentiality, we broadcast creative, healing, initiatory and blessing-type energies. To move beyond a purely psychological experience, one must needs be working with authentic Gnostic currents, according to Tradition, for as Bertiaux suggests, "if you are outside of the Gnostic Patriarchate, all of your magickal work is entirely psychological. It is necessary to be properly connected to the Gnostic Computer of the Universe" (334). This concept is shared by the Eastern Orthodox Churches with regards to their work and the necessity to *be Orthodox* to receive the fullness of the blessings. This sophisticated understanding of Tradition (with a capital T) informs the entire edifice of the Monastery of the Seven Rays. The *Tradition* here is lineage informed by energy contacts and vitalized by common usage.

Benedicamus means both *ble*ss and *let us ble*ss, depending upon the capitalization and context used. The actual way that monks greet each

other in the cloister is with this small phrase, *Benedicamus Domino*, which translates to *let us bless the Lord*. This phrase is also used in the Roman Mass during Lent, instead of *ite Missa est*, or *the Mass is ended*, for during that most magickal Liturgical season of the Church (leading to Easter), the sacrifice is not ended as yet. *Benedicamus* is also related to the final action of the day by the Abbot of the monastery at the end of the Office of Compline where each monk and visitor is sprinkled (*Asperges*) with Holy Water as the final blessing before retiring for the night. The *Asperges* is also the *first* action of the Priest in Mass, so we see that there is a sort of Alpha and Omega symbolism built into this form of blessing. It is circular.

What is it that is happening in the more subtle realms as the Priest, for instance, sprinkles water from the aspergil near the altar outward into the direction of the congregation? As Bertiaux is schooled in both Theosophy and more specifically, in the work of CW Leadbeater, we can see that Bertiaux's concept of radionic energies corresponds directly with the Liberal Catholic Church's idea of magnetized energy and the rush of etheric force sent outward by the Priest in this moment of blessing, and that it is *the Priest's will* that directs its cleansing flow. (See C.W. Leadbeater's *The Science of the Sacraments*, 1920.) When attuned to the proper Source (i.e., the Heart of Christ/Legbha in this case), the Priest draws from the same ontic sphere as he does for magickal and healing work, and directs a particular form of energy that has its own specific nature (and which, depending upon the intent, may also include entities) to bless those in the congregation, *Benedicamus*.

It requires both a high level of initiation *and* Holy Orders to even be able to discern the ever so slight distinctions in the energetic forms and waves within the ontic sphere of the Priest. Additionally, one has to control the *quantity* and *quality* of the blessing, so as to protect candidates or congregation members from a negative bombardment which could overwhelm the psyche, as well as to align the blessing in the proper manner. For instance, in our Chapel, we do a general asperges in the beginning that moves the aforementioned bubble of cleansing blessings throughout the sacred space we create as well as individualized *purifications* with the same Holy water. An identical force cannot be used for these two actions or the results could be detrimental to the guest. There is a sort of *holding back* of the rush of etheric matter (which, incidentally, feels like it *wants* to flow outward all at once) so that the guest receives the proper quantity for individual purification. Additionally, these same radionic energies are made use of when blessing objects. The quality is greatly shifted in this form of blessing, where we are working with "more Permanent or Occult Atoms of the physical and metaphysical vehicles of the gnostic" (423).

We have, for example, a signed and stamped *Blessing and Protection* from the Patriarch Bertiaux himself. This has become a radionic transmitter of a constant nature—of blessings and protection via these occult atoms derived from Bertiaux's own ontic sphere which resides in constant communication and relations with the Higher Realms. This is far more than a mere talisman. It has become an amplifier in our Chapel, and when viewed occultly, projects the Seven Rays outwards during heightened moments of the Mass. The priest performs this same sort of permanent blessing upon everything from Icons to houses as requested. Again, just as in Healing work, this *could* completely diminish the psychologist's or magician's personal storehouse of energy, but such does not occur for the Gnostic, whose ontic sphere participates in the pleroma.

Within the M7Rs we are working with these Gnostic energies. The Monastery itself is a child of the Gnostic Church. As one of our primary goals is transmutation and transformation of the entire self, *Benedicamus* becomes for the Postulant, Novice and Professed monastic alike one of the keys to the complete development and mastery of the latent powers within. We are working with a metaphysical version of quantum mechanics, and it would behoove us within the Monastery to familiarize ourselves with such Sciences as Quantum Physics, Entanglement Theory and Morphic Field theories, as these come closest in their descriptions and theorems to the mystery with which we are working and the experiences we are having. For instance, the *Benedicamus* rays that my Chapel receives from Bertiaux via the signed and stamped *Blessing* are a form of quantum entanglement, where we become an entwined *pair* and relate in an occult way because of these radionic atoms. Additionally, the relationship created through the Blessing causes morphic resonance between spirits. As a part of our transmutation by way of these energies, Bertiaux says,

We are experiencing the release of esoteric power or the gnostic consciousness of initiation and initiation physics, from its own entrapment within the layers of the psychic depths. The experience is plutonian or transformative, as in nuclear physics one thing is transformed into the next or another level of energy projection. It is transformative also because one energy is freed and thereby becomes another and more dynamic form of energy. (430)

Let us return to the use of *Benedicamus* as a monastic greeting. Bertiaux describes a method of observing these radiations verbally. In

this way, he says, "The words act as stimulation to that level of our being, pressing on certain sensitive marmas and causing a release of energy" (426). If this greeting, then, has behind it the Gnostic training of the personal pleroma, the very word *Benedicamus* can become a point-event between two people that stimulates the powerzones (marma) latent within each of us. This is a concise and condensed form of blessing, the simplicity of which is unmatched in all of our dogma and practice. To simply say a word in greeting to another Monastery member—a word—with such radionic force behind it, blessing them and rushing forth a quality-controlled cleansing current, is a potent act of Gnostic magick that could transform our relationships when utilized to the fullest capacity.

As practiced in the Roman Catholic Church during Mass, it is the action of the *Asperges* that is the *Benedicamus* of the Priest and the Congregation. In the Divine Liturgy of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, however, it is by way of a word, and a sign. Recall that most Divine Liturgies follow one of the Hours (*Opus Dei*). In fact, in every Orthodox service that I have attended the Hour flows so directly and seamlessly into the Divine Liturgy that until one realizes it is the *Benedicamus* that signals the beginning of the Liturgy, one may not know it has formally begun. But the beginning is our greeting and it is our ending of the day; it is *Benedicamus*, and the words are, "Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen" while the sign or gesture is the sign of the cross projected outwards towards the people. The priest, up until this moment, has been moving in and out of the doors of the Iconostasis, preparing the gifts (Bread and Wine) and attending to the Deacon who is chanting the Psalms and prayers. He turns, however, at this precise moment to face the crowd and offer this *Benedicamus* of word and symbol. So our method of radionic projection can vary, as per occasion—it can be through blessed objects, the action of *asperges*, greeting, word and/or signs. And, of course there are many other applications.

If we are praying the Offices of *Opus Dei*, whether in shortened or full form, we should make a point to incorporate *Compline* at least monthly. This short service, the final of the day in Monasteries, has in most traditions fixed Psalms (4, 31, 91 and 133) apportioned to it that are easily memorized over time. Compline occurs directly before the *Great Silence* of night, which in traditional monasteries is held to strictly. I recall my first visit to a monastery. As Compline was ending, I noticed how even though my day at the cloister had been one of profound quiet, it was not until the final Blessing and exiting of the narthex after Compline that I realized how incredibly silent the night in the Monastic enclosure

would be. Most monks do not immediately retire to bed at this time, as Compline typically ends around 8:00 p.m. and Vigils starts around 4:00 a.m. A great wave of peace and blessings rushed over me as I left the church, my glasses bespotted with Holy Water and my hands stuck in the prayer mudra. I wandered off into the deep silence in the same way the monks did and I realized that there is no more beautiful way to conclude the day than with these twin gifts—silence and *Benedicamus*. When we pray Compline in our own personal Oratories, it is completely consistent with our Monastic practice to take advantage of the power of *Asperges* (sprinkling Holy Water) upon ourselves and our prayer corner (and our family members or friends of like mind or even our pets) as well as sending forth prayerful Blessings to those close to us and then to retire in silence, rather than return to the modern day, blue lit altarpiece (television) that is broadcasting lower frequency waves that effect our psyche and our ontic spheres more than we realize.

Whether we are making use of Initiatory, Creative, Healing, Empowering or Blessing radionic energies, we are drawing from our own personal pleroma that receives rays from the Higher Realms and which can, in turn, transform the world within and around us.



Caritas

"In the Gnostic Church of Consciousness, which is a school of initiation, we live in the divine vitality. The power of love is warm and all-comprehending. It is not an abstract perfection or is it by any means a perception of limit. It is everywhere.

And you, my dear student, are linked to the powers of light, the true saints and blessed ones, by this very same Gnosis of Love."

"True initiation is the process of realization, whereby we say to ourselves quite firmly that we are parts of the divine universe of all beings. Love is the ultimate reality and the universe is made up of pure lights, which have become fully aware of this power of love. Once one has tuned into this power, by actual, mental and spiritual effort and not mechanically, you know that the high energies are now pouring through your soul and your body."

~ Michael Bertiaux, VGW, 598

Within monastic enclosures across the globe, *Caritas* is practiced and considered to be, since the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, the highest of virtues. Monks practice it in their relations with each other, with the physical world around them, and by way of hospitality with visitors to their monasteries. But when we look at the meaning of *Caritas* as found in the writings of Aquinas, we discover the meaning exceeds these expectations concerning the treatment of others and that it constitutes a divinely infused form of love, which—as opposed to a love that can change and be altered by emotive states—resides *in the will*. This is according to Aquinas, not Crowley. The emotions do not sway *Caritas* as it is the most gorgeous form of Entanglement known to humans. It is pure, lasting, life-changing and transformative **love**. We typically translate the word to "charity," but it is as far from the current use of that word as the east is from the west. Martinists also will recognize *Caritas* as a particular acclamation made within Lodge settings; the meaning within that Order concerns this divinely infused love, but within the Monastery of the Seven Rays, it is taken one step further.

By the time the votary of the M7Rs reaches the 2nd year Coursework, he or she is fully embarking upon a system of sexual magic and instruction. As all traditional monasteries are celibate and cloistered, this is yet another occasion where we drastically differ and diverge from

Classicism. There is no escaping this study within the Coursework or the VGW as it forms the backbone of our Non-Dual Gnosticism, for it is through the body that we come to know ourselves and that which is wholly *Other* most completely. As Bertiaux says, “Holy power is in many parts of the body” (63). There are many ideas and teachings surrounding this approach, but I want to present one that is not new in any sense, but is generally not emphasized. It is simply that one of the highest and most pure forms of Gnosis that can be experienced is through genuine *Caritas*, deep and profound Love between two individuals that share something that may be likened to *soul affinity*. It is the *Way of the Heart* of Martinism, translated to a literal relationship between a lover and the beloved. In our own contemplative Order (The Order of the Three-fold Path or OTP) we have a saying: “the Gnosis born from Love is a far cry sweeter than the Gnosis born from labor upon the self.” This is not to suggest that it is *only* by this means that one can attain to the heights—it is only suggestive of the fact that when this form of Love is present within the context of a Gnostic relationship, then the esoteric sexuality and spirituality of our Monastery is sharpened to a razor point of transformation at all levels possible. Love, in this manner—between two committed individuals—creates a sensitive period for gnosis where what might take years of labor suddenly is quickened and happens instantaneously with naturalness and suppleness. Let us begin by returning to the body.

It is reiterated time and again in these *Reflections* that we in the M7Rs are body positive and that we consider the body to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit in the same way that the Early Church did, yet extended into the present generation and infused by the Light and power of the Jean-Maine lineages. Bertiaux states, “This is why the Gnostics of our school viewed the physical as so important. For the body was a perfect image of the eternal and work on the body of a gnostic and initiatic character constituted its own means of entry into the mysteries of the Pleroma of Light” (165). Here we find the Pleroma, or the Fullness, brought in again, but this time it is capitalized and extended beyond the personal pleroma we draw from in our work. Notice we can participate in the Pleroma, yet it is not to be contained. This deeply Incarnational approach to the Body, this celebration of its beauty, harmony and mystery is brought into play in our work with *points chauds* or “hot points” that we find throughout the VGW. When these hot points are stimulated between two individuals that share *soul affinity*, the points become multi-dimensional and extend forth powers of attunement, empowerment, initiation and therapy. The giver and the receiver, sharing in *Caritas*, are thereby enabled to clearly see and experience transformation through physical touch, via the spiritual

circuitry of *points chauds*. Bertiaux continues, “the physical body of the initiate is in its own unique way also the Pleroma of Light” and so when engaged in such esoteric bodywork, we are entering a sphere—a magickal Temple that draws from the pools of “the Fullness” (165) itself.

Much of the Grimoire Ghuedhe and Osiris-Legbha work in the VGW is concerned with the Red and Black Rays. It is stated, “the body is the meeting ground for all of the mysteries, but especially for the mysteries which are associated with the Red and Black Rays” (167) and so the penultimate study of body-work in our Order involves these two Rays which again can be simplified down to the Red Rays being creative and Eros oriented and the Black rays being occult and Logos oriented. Our studies develop powerzones and explore hot points and mysteries lodged latently within the physical organism itself. This is in complete divergence from some of the Manicheistic doctrines of Gnosis that teach that the body is a prison or that it is evil. But with the addition of the concept of *Caritas*, we can develop these studies even further as “Love is the ultimate reality.” Whereas the work within the VGW is suggestive of a Guru and chela relationship to bring this exploration of the body to fruition, I am suggesting—when both of the Lovers are initiates and Gnostics—that it is through this loving relationship of *Caritas* that the two can discover that “Ghuedhe power is esoteric because it is within a container of flesh, the skin of the body is the place of hidden energy” (185).

How is it that a simple Postulant like myself can possibly add to the framework of the Monastery through this reflection on *Caritas*? By what authority can I make such proclamations and innovations? By virtue of the Monastery teachings themselves. Our Monastery encourages innovation and creativity in all facets of its labors. “Great attention must be paid to special revelations” Bertiaux says, and the “student will be guided by his souldreams in every process of growth because to be a gnostic is to be aware of the inner sources of truth-of-existence” (221) and further, we are encouraged to “write your own magickal mythos...your own holy books” (235). This idea of *Caritas* is not born from study or theoretical work, though such is exhibited to add support to the idea, it is born from *experience* and it is born from a literal and physical relationship. In the same way that it is not enough when we are working with the spirits, the Saints and the Lwa to make contact only, it is not enough, when we are studying the processes and mysteries of sexual or love-magic, to make *contact only* with another person. We likewise must cultivate a deep and lasting relationship, based upon *Caritas*. Keep always at the forefront of the mind that though we may utilize *Evocation* and *Invocation* in our magick, the key of Voudon✧Gnosis is *Relation*.

When *Caritas* exists between two lovers within our Monastery, the entire process of morphic fields is born. The concept of these morphic fields comes from the metaphysical and scientific studies of Rupert Sheldrake. The lovers begin to experience something beyond attraction and emotional connection—they begin to experience a divine form of Love, *Caritas*. From this Love is born a morphic field around the couple, an etheric bubble that can be sensed even at great distances (another instance of Entanglement) and by others who are sensitive or gifted with clairvoyance. From the morphic field between the two is born morphic resonance, the vibratory rate of the couple is altered and harmonized so they form a sort of neo-pythagorean spiritual chord upon the ethers. Their numbers line up, in other words. From this glorious resonance is born morpho-genesis. This may come in a number of forms—projects undertaken by the couple, gnostic and initiatory work, and the most natural of all, children (which may be of a magickal nature *and* a physical reality). In my own case, my wife and I share in all of the above, having a fully functioning Chapel where we serve others and perform Healing Masses, spiritual counseling and such, as well as an Initiatory Order and most importantly, our *Caritas* has born a child in a most magickal and actual sense. Our particular calling and vocation within the Gnostic Church is one that requires the two energies of the male *and* the female to assist in healing and balancing the potencies of our guests. Nothing about our work in the Order or in the Church would be the same if it was singular. We share a mystical pairing—a cosmic pairing—a syzygy.



Within our *Reflections* we have skirted around the idea of the Three-fold Path of Prayer, introduced to the world through the mystical writings of St. Dionysius the Areopagite in the 6th Century. This is more completely discussed in Book 2, but it relates to *Caritas* in that the final stage in the Three-fold Path is Union; this form of Love is the most penetrating and eternal form of such Union. As we are drawing rays from the Heart of Christ/Legbha, Bertiaux states that “the emphasis is not upon making a point of contact and that is all there is to it. Rather, the emphasis is upon the taking into oneself of the entire life and being the mystery and living in accord with it” (178). Relationship bears the fruit of “esoteric communion” which is “more than the sacramental rite of self unfoldment” because two are becoming one. (197) Duality itself is overcome in the relationship characterized by *Caritas*, and so, as Bertiaux states, “not only does that older dualism not exist, but none of the dualism of conscious mind can exist for the initiate of this system...there is only one mind and

there is only one will...all of being is interlocked and immanent, within the context of the gnostic continuum" (474). In the Three-fold Path, *Union* follows *Illumination* which follows *Purification* and this is the case for the couple as well. We have explored examples of all three interpenetrating processes along the way, but with regards to relationship this is a much more organic form. It is not enough for the couple to simply make love for Union to truly occur—there must be a bridge moment where the physical translates and transforms into a spiritual and divine action whereby the individual is obliterated, if even momentarily (but certainly in a prolonged state with practice) and gnostic consciousness is born. This is the moment when, "the finite is translated into the infinite and absolute level of being" (584). This is the physico-spiritual sensation of the annihilation of the separate ego in a most exhilarating fashion. When this experience is exalted to its fullest, the experience exceeds Tiphareth and enters the Abyss where new oaths are exacted that resemble the Bodhisattva Vow.

Thus far, there has been the suggestion of a sexual nature to this form of body exploration and ultimately, Union through *Caritas*, but such is most assuredly not limited to sexual union. In fact, the first instance of such in my own experience was not explicitly sexual at all and can be simply stated as *sharing breath* with one's Love. This happened between my wife and I before we were married and before sexual relations. It is not suggested to *practice* this with any regularity or for extended amounts of time because of the depletion of fresh oxygen that occurs, but it a form of mystical exchange in *Caritas* that opens the tunnels of each other's ontic spheres so that you actually participate in each other's individual pleromas. Bertiaux states,

The breath of the Teacher is being or the root in the Pneuma of reality, unlike all other physical energies having an occult purpose. It can be applied to the world of the body as the means whereby power is infused at each point of wisdom and at each doorway to the infinite. It is within each breath that we find the 16 spaces of esoteric logic. (570)

The Pneuma of reality here worked with and studied can certainly be practiced in a solitary modality or between the guru and chela in that form of relationship, but in this case we are suggesting this in terms of *Caritas* and within the confines of a committed Love relationship between two people. Simply put, it is to *breathe each other's breath* through locking the two mouths together and, rather than kissing, actually breathing

alluded to throughout these reflections—Voudon *and* Gnostic, Work *and* Prayer, Contemplation *and* Action, Anima *and* Animus—and it is the sincere hope of the writer that these will begin to live and move and have their being in the life of the reader. This both/*and* approach opens wide the vistas in our Monastery and reveals the interrelatedness of all of our studies and practices. It is never enough to take up a work such as the M7Rs and read it on occasion, amongst a plethora of other related Initiatory Traditions, and let that be that. It will not penetrate the consciousness of the Postulant with such a passive treatment. The work must be taken upon oneself as a Vocation—as a sacred duty to perform in the goal of accomplishing the Great Work. The Monastery of the Seven Rays is a journey and a lifestyle.

In the 1970s, through a little publication called *Fate* magazine, the Monastery of the Seven Rays Coursework was advertised. At that time, votaries would receive teachings from Spain, one lesson at a time, and truly dig deeply into the nature of the study and sink their teeth into the quality of the work itself. The concept of *Lectio Divina* may not have been so necessary at that time; the material was so carefully meted out that one could not rush forward, and the spiritual pedestrian was cut off immediately and not allowed advancement by the mentor. But today, in our information age—with all manner of teachings and practices readily available with the click of a button—we are in desperate need of encouragement to slow down and really enter into the nature of the Monastery. This will not come about through a wholesale downloading of all of the Monastery teachings and a cursory reading thereof; it will come about through careful, studied attention and most importantly through practice. Do not expect your labors to be attended by the spirits, the Saints, and the Lwa if this is just one practice among many. It takes a pinpointed, razor sharp will directed towards a single goal that accomplishes such contact and, more importantly, the cultivation of such *relationships*. Brothers and Sisters attached to the Monastery are at the ready to assist as well, but they are used to those who cannot withstand the trial by fire that accompanies the work. As has been mentioned previously, all are welcome, but few will do the actual work and withstand the heat of a complete renovation of the personality and transmutation of the Self within our monastic enclosure. Persevere and all will come to fruition.

Book 2

Labora



Introduction

In Book 1 we focused upon the major ideas and themes surrounding the theologia of monasticism the world over and within the context of the M7Rs in particular. It was dedicated to the theology of communion with the spirits, the Saints, the Lwa and such. This is essentially prayer, *Ora*—to beseech. Our main purpose was to see how best to cultivate this prayerful way with the spirits, through relating to them and to those within our daily lives. Book 1 was also aimed at introducing the Monastery of the Seven Rays and its method of working upon multiple planes.

Book 2 is a practical piece. Its signature word is *Labora*—to work. In this small study, we will examine pragmatic methods for cultivating relationships with the Saints and spirits and initiating a regular practice that will sustain our work within the Monastery in a deep and meaningful way. Both Books are practical and work oriented, but Book 2 contains more specificity and ritualized structure to the ideas presented.

The Three-fold Path of Prayer, a child of St. Dionysius the Areopagite of the 6th Century, is a fundamental framework that can be utilized for any form of ritual work we devise. It is implicit in most rituals, from the Masonic variety to Holy Mass, yet the stages are not clearly delineated therein. For the purposes of both our *Ritual* and our sample *Breviary* we will make use of this expression of divine economy and exemplify the stages of *Purification*, *Illumination* and *Union*. In each stage there are many optional methods that one could interpolate, rather than using what I provide here, so long as the optional action(s) stay consistent and relate to the stage of Prayer that we are in. As my work is primarily Ecclesiastical in nature, these practices will reflect that background, yet the reader is free to innovate and utilize this scaffolding in any way that he or she sees fit. Again, the crucial aspect is to actually *practice*. The *Ritual Act of Oblation* does not formally align the practitioner with any specific body or Order that utilizes the M7Rs material. It is a *personal* action with the spirits, the Saints, and the Lwa and a formal sacrifice to *them*, to, as Bertiaux suggests, “show them we mean business.” You must have in mind some sacrifice that you want to make for the spirits, so that you are making a true Oblation to them. This may be in the form of a monetary gift to a noteworthy cause, or a person in need. Or it could be a more physical sacrifice such as the IX Degree style (see the VGW) work of *Caritas*, which results in an elixir that could then be added to the wine

on the altar. I even know of one practitioner who used something akin to the Mass of the Phoenix for his Oblation and he aligned the practice with the setting sun as is appropriate.

The *Breviary* gives the votary of our Monastery an example of how a round of prayers might be incorporated into our day. Provided are a set of prayers for the morning, mid-day, evening, and night. The words and traditional prayers are to be chanted as opposed to simply read. This Breviary also makes use of the Three-fold Path of Prayer, and gives optional times for *Lectio Divina* to be incorporated within the prayer cycle as well as other actions that are aligned to the stage of *Illumination*. There are numerous Lectionaries, collections of the Divine Office, Books of Hours and the like that we may select from in our practice of *Opus Dei*, but I have primarily incorporated the daily prayers and Psalter of the Eastern Orthodox Church as they have become such a constant in my own life and Chapel. Those who prefer to use prayers and artifacts from the Gnostic Gospels and other collections of Gnostic Literature are encouraged to do so. Each time a cross (✠) precedes versicles, this indicates signing oneself from the head to the lower abdomen, then right shoulder to the left. Sometimes it can get confusing when discussing the Hours of the Church, so here is the general layout for most Monasteries.

- **Matins**, which used to be part of the all night Vigil, still in the Roman Church is the latest Night Office. Midnight, in general. Some Monasteries of the West term this Office, Vigils.
- **Lauds** are the Dawn prayers, which in general are around 3:00 a.m.
- **Prime** is the Morning Prayer and technically considered the 1st Hour. Begins at approximately 6:00 a.m., depending upon sunrise and the season.
- **Terce** refers to the Mid-Morning Prayer or 3rd Hour around 9:00 a.m.
- **Sext** is Midday Prayer, the 6th Hour at noon.
- **None** is the afternoon Prayer, or 9th Hour at 3:00 p.m.
- **Vespers**, or Evening Prayer, is around 6:00 p.m., at the time of lamp lighting.
- **Compline** is Night Prayer and should be directly before retiring. Sometimes 9:00 p.m. is associated with this Office.

In the *16 Saints* section, a few suggestions for calling upon one's *Patron Saint* are provided in hopes of making contact and building relationship, which will stimulate dream interaction with these Saints and Lwa. Additionally, a listing of 16 Saints along with a common prayer to each—with the Lwa correspondences—is included, and the appropriate colored candle to light for the Saint. It must be remembered when exploring work with these Saints that they have become syncretized (identified) with the Lwa to such a degree that there is no longer any line of separation between them in practice. That being said, different houses use different Saints in correspondence with the Lwa so there may be some distinctions found amongst various Vodouisants, Houngans and Hoodoo-ists.

In our final section on the *16 Psalms* we will introduce their usage in Healing and consultation. This is in keeping with the development of the Hoodoo use of the Psalms over time, stemming from the *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*, as contained in the *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*. As with the Saints, some amount of candle magick to be utilized with the Psalm is also included. Some of these prescriptions are traditional and some have been developed through research and practice.

Note—all Bible passages are taken from the King James Version.



Ritual Act of Oblation

✧*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit*

ALTAR SET UP

It is important to have all items at the ready before commencing such a ritual. The overall altar set-up is identical to the second Lucky Hoodoo ritual in the VGW (6). Orient the altar so that you are facing physical East. On a table or altar, set a red candle in the East, a green candle in the South, a blue candle in the West and a yellow candle in the North. In the center of the altar, there should be a black candle. In between the black candle and the blue candle in the West, there should be a goblet of *red wine. In between the red candle and the black candle there should be a pen and a pre-written "Vow" ready to sign at the proper moment of the ritual. If you are making a monetary offering to the charity or cause of your choice as your Oblation, place it next to the black candle in the center of the altar.

Additional items to have on hand are a censer and incense, Holy water (preferably blessed by a Priest/Priestess), Florida water (if available), and Holy oil (high grade Frankincense oil, or oil of Abramelin). The important factor concerning the incense is that it be pure and unblended. Other suitable options include aloeswood, galangal (traditional in Vodou), sandalwood or benzoin. It is not necessary for it to be of the resin variety, as a *joss* stick or pure stick of Japanese *koh* are completely appropriate for this work. Note that Japanese *koh* will generate the least amount of smoke and is practical for small or enclosed spaces. As a welcome to the spirits and as a prelude to chanting the purifying Psalm, sprinkle the four corners of the room and the altar with the Florida Water.

You will need to go over the ritual a few times to get a feel for its simplicity and its flow. The *Suscipe me Domine* should be committed to memory so that your hands can be free and you can truly pray this deeply monastic prayer vow. Be prepared, because this singular act is a form of High Magick that will have ramifications on multiple planes. You can expect to *light up on the Astral* with such a vow and Ritual Act of Oblation.

**If practicing Caritas and performing a IX Degree type ritual for the generating of Ojas radioactivity prior to the Vow, as a most pure oblation include the elixir of the Syzygy in the goblet of wine. Seal with the sign of the cross.*

THE VOW

On a piece of virgin parchment, handwrite the following vow and anoint the vow in the four corners with your Holy oil. If you have a specific stamp or seal that is meaningful for your relationship with the Monastery, include the same on the bottom right hand of the Vow.

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

I _____ (name in the Monastery), _____ (name in the "outer" world), do hereby offer myself to the Absolute, Bon Dieu and in service to the Holy Mother, the Theotokos, Gran Erzulie and to all of the Saints, the Spirits and the Lwa as a votary of the Monastery of the Seven Rays and dedicate myself to the labors therein on this day, __ of _____ in the year of _____ .

X _____

RITUAL ACT OF OBLATION

Purification

Begin the ritual with the *Benedicamus* and the sign of the cross, saying:

✠ *Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen*

Proceed to light the incense upon the altar. Next, sprinkle the Holy water upon yourself and upon the altar in the sign of the cross (top to bottom, right to left). Then, light the candles in this order—after lighting each, whisper to yourself *Come spirits of the North... West, South, East*. 1st light the yellow candle, 2nd the blue, 3rd the green and 4th the red. Finally, light the black candle in the center, saying *Be present all you Saints and spirits of the four directions*. Next, touch the vow and the goblet of wine and say, *May the Lord of Lights accept the sacrifice at my hands, for the praise and glory of His Holy Name, for my good and the good of all of the Monastery. Amen*

Next, chant the *Miserei Mei*, the act of contrition and oblation Psalm. Make a deep bow towards the East and then:

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightiest be justified in Thy words and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou has loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom has Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy Salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

✠*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever, world without end. Amen.*

ILLUMINATION



Next, begin to feel that you are in the presence of the Ancient Ones. Quiet your mind and practice *Obsculta* by tuning into and adjusting the amplification of the vibratory rates occurring upon the ethers around you. Realize your alignment with the primordial currents through the Monastery of the Seven Rays and invoke, saying:

Come Holy Spirits and Saints, you Passed Masters and Patrons of the Great Ones! Be Present with me and witness my Ritual Act of Oblation to you through my labors in the Monastery of the Seven Rays.

Wait a moment in silence and receptivity. If you perceive any *passes*, showings or signs of the spirits in the Holy space you have created, quietly take note of these. This may be in the form of candles flickering in a strange manner, cool breezes without a natural draft, other sensations or the sense that you are being spoken to from within. Then, continue, saying:

Consider, O Holy Ones, this Act of Oblation, as a sign of my resolve to work with you in the Monastery and to cultivate a relationship with you and all of the true guides along the Grand Chemin.

I dedicate myself to you today, O Voices of the Deep (make a full and complete bow) and I ask you for your aid and assistance in my many future endeavors within and without the Monastery.

I will strive to be faithful to you and to persevere in my work within this Holy Enclosure. Amen.

Wait again in silent receptivity. Take a few deep breaths and then commence with the Union stage of the Oblation.

UNION



In this stage, feel yourself becoming one with the Spirits by virtue of your will to be in alignment with them and to work for the transformation of yourself and the divinization of the world. Sense the swelling of your ontic sphere as you sign the Vow and chant the Holy Psalm. Most visionaries

describe this as bubble-like and etheric like a cloud—the very Shekinah Glory cloud—around the sacred Temple of your body. As you partake of the wine, know that you are taking the life of the spirits and the Saints into your most hallowed temple. Continue:

*Accept, O Gracious ones, this, my vow (take the vow and pen and sign)
and consider me a part of your Gnostic family of Light bearers.*

Replace the vow back on the altar in between the black and the red candle. Now, put your right hand over the cup, palm down, and your left hand over the vow, palm down. Chant the *Suscipe Me Domine* three times and then drop three drops of wine in the East of your Oratory. Finally, drink the remainder of the wine in three draughts.

*Suscipe me Domine, secundum eloquium tuum et vivam. Et non
confundas me ab expectatione mea. (3x)*

*(Uphold me, O Lord, according to your word and I shall live. And let me
not be disappointed in my hope) ~Psalm 119*

FINIS



Breviary

As I became more and more involved in the development of the inner life, both gnostic and monastic, I realized that the breviary was a magickal machine which could be used to contact the mysterious worlds of the higher gnostic realm. (584)
Michael Bertiaux, VGW

MORNING PRAYERS

These prayers are most efficacious if performed at the rising of the sun. Consider the sun as the rising of the Light, the Solar Deity being born within us all every single day. Absorb the glory and strength of the sun, out of doors if possible, or near a window. Adjust these simple prayer structures to fit your needs, and build upon them as it seems appropriate to your particular path and practice. The largest audible portion of morning prayers is the *Purification* stage, as you are laying aside all earthly cares.

PURIFICATION

Begin with the *Benedicamus*, Blessing oneself and the surroundings with Holy water and by the sign of the cross (top to bottom, right to left) and saying:

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

Glory to Thee, our God, Glory to Thee. (Now begins the "Trisagion Prayers")

Heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of all Truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, O Treasury of every good and Bestower of life—come and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O Good one.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy upon us (3x)
✠*Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

All Holy Trinity, have mercy upon us. Lord, be gracious unto our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities, Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake.

*Lord Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy
✠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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*

(Lift your eyes heavenward and upraise your hands before the Qabalistic Cross.)

For ✠Thine (touch the forehead) is the Kingdom (lower abdomen) and the Power (right shoulder) and the Glory (left shoulder), now and ever (prayer mudra) and unto the ages of ages, Amen.

Through the prayers of the Saints and of the spirits and of the Lwa, Heart of Christ/Legbha have mercy upon us.

Then chant the following morning Psalm 62:

O God, my God, unto Thee I rise early at dawn. My soul hath thirsted for Thee; how often hath my flesh longed after Thee in a land barren and untrodden and unwatered. So in the sanctuary have I appeared before Thee to see Thy power and Thy glory. For Thy mercy is better than life; my lips shall praise Thee. So shall I bless Thee in my life, and in Thy Name will I lift up my hands. As with marrow and fatness let my soul be filled, and with lips of rejoicing shall my mouth praise Thee. If I remembered Thee on my bed, at the dawn I meditated on Thee. For Thou art become my helper; in the shelter of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul hath cleaved after Thee, Thy right hand hath been quick to help me. But as for these, in vain have they sought after my soul; they shall go into the nethermost parts of the earth, they shall be surrendered unto the edge of the sword; portions for foxes shall they be. But the king shall be glad in God, everyone shall be praised that sweareth by Him; for the mouth of them is stopped that speak unjust things.

✠Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Then chant the Benedictus, a classical morning prayer from the New Testament:

Blessed be the Lord, God of Israel for he has come to his people and set them free. He has raised up for us a mighty savior, born of the House of his servant David. Through the holy prophets he promised of old, that he would save us from the hands of our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us. He promised to show mercy to our forbearers and to remember his Holy covenant. This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham; to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship him without fear, Holy and righteous in his sight, all of the days of our life.

(Pause and make a deep bow and sign of the cross upon the body and continue.)

You, my child shall be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way, to give his people knowledge of salvation, by the forgiveness of all their sins.

Face East, the direction of the rising sun and do a full prostration, saying:

In the tender compassion of our God, the Dawn from on High shall break upon us, to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

✠*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.*

ILLUMINATION

Utilizing the practice and training of *Lectio Divina*, take the reading for the week from the Monastery of the Seven Rays Coursework and put yourself in spiritual communion with the author(s) of the work. Keep in mind that your careful reading of a small selection of this lesson will move through the stages of *lectio*, *oratio* and finally, even if it is only for a fraction of a second, *contemplatio*. You are making yourself receptive (*Suscipe*) and practicing the deepest form of listening (*Obsculta*) as you ruminate on the small section of the lesson that stands out to you. It has *something* to tell you. Attune yourself to the words. Align with their vibratory rate and let your ontic sphere deliver the message to your conscious mind. We are practicing a Royal Art and a Sacred Science.

UNION

The Union stage of our Breviary is aligned to *Silentium*. This is the moment in our morning prayers where we cease speaking, cease expecting a message from Otherwhere and simply rest in the bosom of the Deity. On occasion, when the stage of *contemplatio* truly takes in our practice of *Lectio Divina*, we will silently slip into this stage without volition. It will simply happen to us. The Chinese have a wonderful phrase for this, *tzu-jan* or *of itself so*—this is a spontaneous occurrence and no amount of force on our part will make it happen. We must simply sink deeper into our inner sanctum and find the place of quiet. Monastics often use the term *quies* for this deep solitude. If this deep silence does not envelop you spontaneously in the beginning, do not worry. Simply redirect the mind by following your breath. It may help to use mala beads as a sort of counter to ensure that you sit with the silence for a sufficient amount of time. The small, Japanese *koh* incense sticks are typically designed to use for a meditation session and last for around twenty minutes. This is perfect for a real entrance into the sanctum of *Silentium* and allows one to work without any sort of timing device.

Once we have completed our portion of silent meditation, we may now call upon the Gran Erzulie, via the Theotokos and in magnifying her, ask of her the spiritual protection and nearness that we desire before the day commences. We say:

Unto thee do I commit mine every hope, O Theotokos, the Mother of God, our Gran Erzulie! Guard me under thy shelter this day and protect me in all of my labors. It is truly meet to call thee blessed, the Theotokos, the ever-blessed and all-immaculate, and Mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, thee who without corruption gavest birth to God, the Logos, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

✠*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever and ever. Amen.*

MID-DAY PRAYERS



For many of us, Mid-Day prayers are the most difficult to get around to. We are in our various departments of work life and busy-ness tends to win out over quietude. But if we can simply memorize this one Psalm, maybe sign ourselves and look at the mid-day sun in its plenitude, then we will have brought about an inner revolution in our treatment of the daily. We will be well on our way to rising from the malaise of everydayness, to the miracle of mindfulness.

✠*O Lord open my lips, and my mouth shall declare your praise.*

Psalm 120:

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains —
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD,*

*the Maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip —
he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.*

*The LORD WATCHES OVER YOU —
the LORD IS YOUR SHADE AT YOUR RIGHT HAND;
the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.*

*The LORD WILL KEEP YOU FROM ALL HARM —
he will watch over your life;
the LORD WILL WATCH OVER YOUR COMING AND GOING
both now and forevermore.*

Conclude:

*Almighty and merciful God, you grant us rest amidst our labors; look kindly on the works we have undertaken, make good our defects, and bring all things to that fulfillment which best accords with your Divine Will. We ask this through the most Sacred Heart of Christ, our Lord.
Amen.*

VESPERS



Over the years, I have found Vespers to be one of the most precious gifts of the day. As the sun descends in its journey across the dome of sky, we pause and praise the entire creation and celebrate the Vesper (the evening star, usually Venus) Light in its rising. The prayer titled *Lumin Hilare* is the oldest hymn of the Church, dating back to the 3rd Century. It is to be chanted as you are lighting the candles upon your altar, so you will need a solitary light for the beginning chants which are performed as the sun is setting. This transition from the dying sun into darkness and then into the lamp-lighting moment of *Lumin Hilare* is representative of Initiation where the candidate beholds the “sun at midnight.” If one is utilizing a Martinist altar set-up, light the three altar candles with a profane candle that can then be used simply for reading the Psalter. Additionally, Psalm 140 is the *Incense Hymn*, and so it is proper to wait until the moment of beginning that Psalm to add resin to your coals or light the stick of incense if you are using that form.

PURIFICATION

By a solitary Light, face the West and make a deep prostration, chanting:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Glory to Thee O God. 3x

Then the *Benedicamus*:

✠ *Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages.
Amen. Glory to Thee our God, glory to Thee.*

(Proceed to the Trisagion Prayers that were used in the morning.)

*Heavenly King, O Comforter, the Spirit of all Truth, who art everywhere
present and fillest all things, O Treasury of every good and Bestower of
life—come and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our
souls, O Good one.*

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy upon us (3x)

✠ *Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and
ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

*All Holy Trinity, have mercy upon us. Lord, be gracious unto our sins.
Master, pardon our iniquities, Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for
Thy Name's sake.*

Lord Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy

✠ *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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead
us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*

*For ✠ Thine (touch forehead) is the Kingdom (lower abdomen) and the
Power (right shoulder) and the Glory (left shoulder), now and ever
(prayer mudra) and unto the ages of ages, Amen.*

*Through the prayers of the Saints and of the spirits and of the Lwa, Heart
of Christ/Legbha have mercy upon us.*

Begin the *Incense Psalm*, 140:

*Lord I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; hearken unto me, O Lord. Lord, I have cried unto Thee, hearken unto me; attend to the voice of my supplication when I cry unto Thee: Hearken unto me, O Lord. **Light the incense** Let my prayer rise before you as incense, the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice; hearken unto me, O Lord. Set, O Lord a watch before my mouth, and a door of enclosure round about my lips. Incline not my heart unto words of evil, to make excuse with excuses in sins, With men that work iniquity; and I will not join with their chose.,*

The righteous man will chasten me with mercy and reprove me; as for the oil of the sinner, let it not anoint my head. For yet more is prayer in the presence of their pleasures; swallowed up near by the rock have their judges been. They shall hear my words, for they be sweetened; as a clod of earth is broken upon the earth, so have their bones been scattered nigh unto Hades. For unto Thee, O Lord, O Lord are mine eyes, in Thee have I hoped; take not my soul away. Keep me from the snare which they have laid for me, and from the stumbling-blocks of them that work iniquity. The sinners shall fall into their own net; I am alone until I pass by.

✠*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto the ages of ages, Amen.*

ILLUMINATION

Now begin the Lamp-Lighting hymn, the *Lumin Hilare*, provided here in English and in Latin. This Ancient Hymn should be accompanied by the mystical presence of the angelic realms when performed with solemnity.

O Gladsome Light of the Holy Glory of the Immortal Father, Heavenly, Holy, Blessed Jesus Christ! Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God Father, Son and Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of praise. O Son of God and Giver of Life, therefore the whole world doth glorify Thee.

Lumen hilare iucunda lux tu gloriae, fons luminis de lumine, beate Iesu caelitus a Patre sancto prodiens. Fulgor diei lucidus solisque lumen occidit, et nos ad horam vesperam te confitemur cantico. Laudamus unicum Deum, Patrem potentem, Filium cum Spiritu Paraclito in Trinitatis gloria. O digne linguis qui piis lauderis omni tempore, Fili Dei, te saecula vitae datorem personent.

At this stage, having lit the altar candles, it is appropriate to do any form of divinatory work or return to your *Lectio Divina* and receive more wisdom from the Monastery Coursework. If you are in need of Healing of some sort, proceed to the following Responsorial Psalm and place your hand upon your body where you are in need of Healing at each refrain. (This can also be performed for others in need.)

PSALM 141

With my voice unto the Lord have I cried, with my voice unto the Lord have I made supplication. I will pour out before Him my supplication, mine affliction before Him will I declare.

✠ *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, Heal our infirmities.*

When my spirit was fainting within me, then Thou knewest my paths. In this way wherein I have walked, they hid for me a snare.

✠ *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, Heal our infirmities.*

I looked upon my right hand, and beheld, and there was none that did know me. Flight hath failed me and there is none, that watcheth out for my soul.

✠ *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, Heal our infirmities.*

I have cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my hope, my portion art Thou in the land of the living. Attend unto my supplication, for I am brought very low. Deliver me from them that persecute me, for they are stronger than I.

✠ *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, Heal our infirmities.*

Bring my soul out of prison, that I may confess Thy Name. The righteous shall wait patiently for me, until Thou shalt reward me.

✠ *Blessed Art Thou, O Lord, Heal our infirmities.*

As we transition from the Illumination stage into Union, perform the *De Profundis* after a full prostration all the way to the floor, with head on the floor in the traditional prophet asana of Islam, the primary movement (raka'at) during Salat.

PSALM 129

Out of the Depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my prayer.

Let Thine ears be attentive, to the voice of my supplication. If Thou shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, O Lord, who shall stand? But with Thee there is forgiveness, for Thy Name's sake have I patiently waited for Thee, O Lord; my soul hath waited patiently for Thy word, my soul hath hoped in the Lord. From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch let Israel hope in the Lord. For with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption; and He shall redeem Israel, out of all of his iniquities.

✠Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever and ever, Amen.

UNION

Raise yourself up from the prophet asana and remain in a sitting posture, in whatever position is most comfortable for meditation. It is appropriate at this stage to practice mantra meditation. In our own Chapel we chant, or vibrate rather, YE-He-Shu-Vah. We simply draw in a deep breath and then, on the exhale, vibrate the Holy Pentagrammaton, sacred to Martinists and other practitioners of the prayer of the Heart. Again, prayer beads make a nice counter during this practice, but are not a necessity. If you have time, you may want to repeat the mantra 64 times (8X8).

Close your Vespers Service with:

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening in mindfulness. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy Name unto the ages. Amen. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have set our hope in Thee.

✠Blessed art thou, O Lord teach me Thy Statutes

✠Blessed Art Thou, O Master make me understand Your commandments.

✧Blessed Art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me by your precepts.

*O Lord your Mercy endures forever, disdain not the work of Your hands.
For unto Thee is due praise, unto Thee is due chant, unto Thee is due
glory, to the ✧Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever
and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

Now, direct your mind and heart to our Holy Mother, Gran Erzulie,
the Theotokos:

*More honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious
than the Seraphim, thee who without corruption gavest birth to God the
Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.*

*Hail Mary, Full of Grace the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art thou amongst
women and blessed is the fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of
God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death, Amen.*

*✧Through the prayers of the Saints and of the spirits and of the Lwa,
Heart of Christ/Legbha have mercy upon us.*

COMPLINE



Compline should be performed immediately before retiring for the night, or at least before we enter the Great Silence where no more distractions will plague us before we journey into Otherwhere by way of dreamscapes. If there is a Monastery meditation to be performed before going to sleep, it should be done immediately prior to Compline. These simple Psalms and the *Nunc Dimitis* are truly a Holy method for entering the darkness, where quite a few of our most profound initiations will occur.

PURIFICATION

Begin with as minimal lighting as possible:

O God, come to my assistance, Lord make haste to help me...

✠Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Chant Psalm 4 with solemnity:

Answer me when I call to you, my righteous God

Give me relief from my distress;

have mercy on me and hear my prayer.

How long will you people turn my glory into shame?

How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?

*Know that the Lord has set apart his faithful servant for himself;
the Lord hears when I call to him.*

Tremble and do not sin;

when you are on your beds,

search your hearts and be silent.

*Offer the sacrifices of the righteous
and trust in the Lord.*

Many, Lord, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?"

Let the light of your face shine on us.

Fill my heart with joy

when their grain and new wine abound.

In peace I will lie down and sleep,

for you alone, Lord,

make me dwell in safety.

*✠Glory to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and
ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

Proceed to Psalm 91, another favorite of Martinists:

*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the
shadow of the Almighty.*

*I will say of the LORD, HE IS MY REFUGE AND MY FORTRESS; MY GOD; IN
HIM WILL I TRUST.*

*Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the
noisome pestilence.*

*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust:
his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*

*Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that
flieth by day;*

*Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction
that wasteth at noonday.*

*A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but
it shall not come nigh thee.*

Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.

*Because thou hast made the LORD, WHICH IS MY REFUGE, EVEN THE
MOST HIGH, THY HABITATION;*

*There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy
dwelling.*

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

*They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a
stone.*

*Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon
shalt thou trample under feet.*

*Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will
set him on high, because he hath known my name.*

*He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in
trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him.*

With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.

✠Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ILLUMINATION

In silence, listen inwardly by the art of *Obsculta* for any word or phrase that rises to the surface of your mind. Take note of the word or phrase in your Magickal Diary (*Homila Pros Theon*), as this is the moment at the close of the day when the Saints and spirits are most active and are about to commence their journeys with you in dreamtime. It is appropriate here to do an *Examination of Conscience* as well, reflecting on the events of the day so that your dreams may be actual journeys, rather than merely replays of deeds left undone or actions that we haven't fully dealt with yet.

Continue with Psalm 134:

*Behold, bless ye the LORD, ALL YE SERVANTS OF THE LORD, WHICH BY
NIGHT STAND IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.*

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

The LORD THAT MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH BLESS THEE OUT OF ZION.

✱*Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

End your Prayers with the *Nunc Dimittis*, the dismissal Canticle of Simeon:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace : according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen : thy salvation,

Which thou hast prepared : before the face of all people;

*To be a light to lighten the Gentiles : and to be the glory of thy people
Israel.*

Latin version:

Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine, secundum verbum tuum in pace:

Quia viderunt oculi mei salutare tuum

Quod parasti ante faciem omnium populorum:

Lumen ad revelationem gentium, et gloriam plebis tuae Israel.

UNION

End with the Asperges, the final act of *Benedicamus* for the day. As you sprinkle the Holy water with these final words, project outwards the radionic Blessings to all that you know and love. The Union stage continues and finds fruition in the Great Silence that is a Holy Sleep, wherein we achieve Union with the spirit realm. By ending the day with the *Asperges*, you are uniting with monastics the world over.

ASPERGES

May the divine assistance of the spirits, the Saints and the Lwa be with us always, and with our loved ones everywhere. ✠Blessed be our God, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

FINIS



16 Saints

CONTACTING ONE'S PATRON SAINT

Those who work with Saints, as well as those who work with the Lwa (and in this case, the two are syncretized), know that to truly get the most out of the relationship, it takes (like all relationships) cultivation, great devotion, and profound gratitude. The Saints appreciate such devotion in the same way that we do on this plane, but as they are metaphysically in a completely different sphere, we reach *upwards* to them by our very acts of devotion and the raising of our minds into the ontic sphere we have been bolstering and energizing. Burning the colored candles that the Saints are drawn to (which relates to the Seven Rays), having lithographs or artwork depicting them or their deeds, and saying prayers that other pious individuals have utilized over time forms a creative link between the Saint and the individual by way of the schema of repeated words—via prayer. This is a form of bhakti yoga, as is all of Christianity.

One's *Patron Saint* is distinct from the Saint name that one receives when joining the Catholic Church or when becoming a Priest or taking Monastic vows. The Patron Saint becomes your personal intercessor and intermediary between the worlds—a spiritual guide and conductor that you can depend upon and that is always willing to lend aid to our prayers and practices from the other side. There are many ways of discovering one's Patron Saint, among which are:

- Choosing a Patron that relates to your line of work or area of interest, such as an Ecologist choosing St. Francis of Assisi or a Police Officer selecting St. Michael.
- Selecting a Patron based upon the day on which the Saint is celebrated, due to your personal affinity for the day, or it lining up with your birthday, or a festival that you hold dear.
- Searching through collections or *Lives of the Saints* and allowing your mind to become receptive (*Suscipe*) so that you can allow the Saint to *pick you* by standing out, or appealing to your interests or needs.
- Meditating upon a collection of Saints and their images or Icons before retiring to bed and then writing down the first

one that comes to mind upon awakening or that shows up in dreamscapes.

- Use a collection of the *Lives of the Saints* in Bibliomancy, and see where your hand lands upon the page. Practice the art of *Obsculta* in this manner by simply allowing your eyes to relax, looking outward while your hands thumb through the pages until you feel drawn or called to stop upon a particular page. Continue staring outward and allow your hand to move over the page selected and stop at a particular point on the page that intuitively *feels* right. The Saint nearest your fingers is your Patron.

Any of these could be effectual for discovering your Patron Saint. Recall that my own, St. Gregory Palamas, appeared during a ritual where I was engaged in a sort of energized enthusiasm, inflamed in prayer—and had a vision of the Saint. I had been studying him prior to the Equinox ritual and had fully absorbed his Icon in my psyche, which most assuredly assisted in my ability to readily recognize his presence and later on to recreate it visually. He has been near me since this initiatory experience and has greatly assisted me in distinguishing the specific and helpful quality of one's Patron (which strangely enough, sometimes is confused for one's Holy Guardian Angel or *Augoeides*).

The 16 Saints and their prayers that are included here are quite particular ones. Many practitioners will recognize them immediately as being the Saints most often associated with the Lwa of Haitian Vodou as well as connected with various Orishas of Santeria. But, recall once again that these Saints are not *mere masks* for the Lwa—they have become completely identified with them. To invoke one is to invoke the other. To pray to a Lwa is to pray to the Saint and vice-versa. However, in many cases, due to their level of interpersonal qualities, it takes only a small amount of time before the tables are turned and we are no longer doing the invoking—the Saint or the Lwa are coming to us. Particular ones will be attracted to us, possibly due to our personality types, emotional content or the nature of our spiritual or earthly work.

Your interest level in the Saint and what they can do with and for you will determine how far you want to go in the relationship with them. If, for instance, you are praying to St. Lazarus, or St. Peter, whom you know to be syncretized with Papa Legbha, and you feel drawn to make further contact with the Saint/Lwa, you may be inclined to take the path of a Haitian voduisant and take a few coins, some rum and tobacco and head towards a crossroads around sunrise. Simply praying to St. Lazarus or St. Peter, and building up one's devotion to him, can spark

such a leap from praying with words to dream initiations, to rituals in the Saint/Lwa's honor, to offering them gifts of gratitude in exchange for their *actual* assistance to you. Often in dreamtime we will get a sense of the Primordial essences behind these energies, which again suggests the necessity for the Magickal Diary.

However you decide to work with them, it is encouraged to simply begin. It is completely consistent with our Three-fold Path model to pray to the Saint of your choosing during the *Illumination* stage when using the Breviary. You may want to have a traditional lithograph of the Saint and burn the appropriately colored candle. Additionally, if you are more drawn to Haitian Vodou, then you may want to look into the appropriate veve and the many other items: foods, scents, drinks and gifts the Lwa appreciate.

In conclusion, let us consider the power of color before calling upon the Saints and burning the appropriately colored candle. We know that color and light are vibrations and frequencies. But color is also a medium to move into through our gnostic meditations. Bertiaux says, "Color necessarily implies space and space implies levels of consciousness, so that in the gnostic universe, each color is a communicator" (266). By burning the color associated with the Saint, we are connecting with the many corresponding energies associated with the color—planetary influences and Sephirotic associations. Here is a listing of the most basic correspondences with colors:

Black is receptive and feminine as well as Occult and Logos oriented. The power of the color black in candle magick is that it can receive whatever we put into it and then, radiate the same outward.

White is the purest of colors. In terms of light it contains all of the colors in the prism. It is a positive color and represents spirituality in its highest form.

Red is an active color, associated with Creativity and Eros. It is all action and passion and is associated with energy, strength and sometimes war-like conquering and psychic self-defense.

Pink is used in various healing work and is also a very affectionate color. Erzulie Freda in particular likes pink.

Orange is a very positive color associated with stimulating energies that are adaptable and attractive. Orange tends to attract positive vibrations.

Yellow is associated with intellect, harmony and imagination. Yellow is used often in *Curatio* as well.

Green immediately brings to mind health and fertility. It is associated with the earth and abundance in all things.

Blue is typically associated with the various devotions to the Theotokos. Blue is tranquil and incites sentiments of innocence and youth.

Purple is a very powerful color used to counter psychic attack and in spiritual warfare with *logosomoi* and negative thought forms. It signifies sovereignty and wisdom. Purple is also associated with healing in all of its forms as well.

For both the Saints and the Psalms, the candles utilized should be properly *dressed*, which includes banishing the candle of negative influences (Psalm 68 is appropriate for this), giving the candle a *Benedicamus* with the Asperges and finally, consecrating the candle with pure Frankincense oil or oil of Abramelin. Combine this action with a Holy location such as we described in our section on geographical marmas (*Suscipe*) and you will receive a powerful influx from the ontic sphere into your candle. All of the candles used for this in our Chapel spend an entire night in our Vortex before being used in ritual.

16 SAINTS

The Saints of the Church are so very easy to work with and are accompanied by immediate psychological and physical results and benefits. They are somewhat of an *open secret* within Catholicism and yet do not limit themselves to working with Catholics. By merely setting up a small corner of one's room where a particular Saint is honored and paid homage to, we invite a presence. Accompany this with the appropriately colored candle (seven day or otherwise), a few treats or particular items that the Saint/Lwa enjoy, and celebrate their Feast Day, and soon you have an unseen friend and guest. You may hear of common practices such as burying a figurine or prayer card of St. Joseph on the grounds of a property that you wish to sell or other curious practices related to the Saints and get the feeling that they are simply *useful*. But it is in the daily *relationship* with them that you begin to learn of their interests and how they can really assist your journey from the other side. For the prayers included herein, again consider *chanting* them. These are familiar calling cards of the Saints and in truth have very little to do with the literal words or meaning of the words and everything to do with egregore and the repetitious, mandala-like quality of joining in the Communion across space and time. Speaking of repetition, repeat their call (prayer) several times before moving into silently awaiting their manifestation.

Note—the prayers of the Saints used in this work are traditional Catholic prayers in the public domain.



ST. PATRICK, (DAMBALLAH)

Feast Day: March 17th. Candle color: white.

Prayer for protection:

*I bind myself today God's power to guide me,
God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to teach me,
God's ear to hear me, God's eye to watch over me,
God's word to give me speech, God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me
against the snares of demons, against the seductions of vices,
against the lusts of nature, against those who wish me ill.
Christ, protect me today*

OUR LADY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, (AYIDA WEDO)

Feast Day: December 8th. Candle color: white.

Prayer:

*O God, Who by the Immaculate Conception of
the Blessed Virgin Mary, did prepare a worthy dwelling place for Your Son,
we beseech you that, as by the foreseen death of this, Your Son,
You did preserve her from all stain, so too you would permit us,
purified through Her intercession, to come unto You.
through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.*

ST. ANNE, (GRAN ERZULIE & AYIZAN)

Feast Day: July 26th. Candle color: white.

Prayer of petition: (Begin prayer by invoking the Holy Trinity and make the sign of the cross)

*Oh, glorious Saint, mother of Mary, grandmother
Of Jesus Christ. I call to you and beg you, have my wishes
Answered by God, to the satisfaction of you and your holy
Husband. I am in a situation of debts and miseries and am
Overwhelmed by uncertainty and tribulation. Give me the strength
To perform faithfully, the daily duties at hand. Amen*

ST. JOSEPH, (LOKO)

Feast Day: March 19th. Candle color: yellow.

Prayer:

Noble Joseph, head of the Sacred Family, executioner of the infallible and designator of knowledge and infinite mercy. Father of Jesus and happy husband of Mary. How I rejoice in seeing you elevated to high dignity, and adored with heroic virtues. For the sweet hugs and kisses which you gave the Infant Jesus, I beg you admit me from this point in the happy number of your brotherhood.

Protect the virgins, tutor of the virginity of Mary. Extend to us the grace to conserve without blemish, the purity of body and soul. Take pity on the poor and the sick, for the sweat and grief which you suffered in order to save the Creator and Savior of the Universe. Give us the bodily nourishment, make us have patience in the work of this life and to treasure the infinite riches for eternity.

Guide all parents, oh happy Patriarch, make the fathers and mothers the image of your virtue and perfection. Make them models of mercy with their children. Protect the priest and religious institutes and imitating your life, fill the obligation of their ministry with perfection.

Fill our lives with blessings. Do not abandon us powerful lawyer, those who are in need of your aid. You had the happiness of dying in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Reach out to us, so that we may die repenting for your sins and pronouncing with fierce affections the sweet names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Amen.

**STS. DAMIAN AND COSMAS, (THE MARASSA)**

Feast Day: September 27th. Candle color: green.

Prayer for healing and spiritual guidance:

Holy and admired Martyrs Cosmas and Damian.

Full of admirable glories and favors by the merciful divinity, I worship your kindness and pray to see you for all eternity, crowned with glory and praise by our Lord, you

Who are honored with many graces. I beg you to intercede with the Divine Majesty

By presenting my plea, especially this prayer, so that the Lord will help me with my spiritual needs and the illness that I have. Amen.

ST. GERARD MAJELLA, (BAWON SAMEDI)

Feast Day: October 16th. Candle color: white.

Prayer:

Oh Glorious Saint. You who suffered so from adversity and endured so much pain. You were persecuted, and slandered, yet endured so admirably, maintaining sound peace of mind. Reach out to me the spirit of fortitude in all adversities of my life.

How might I attain the virtue of patience? The smallest work frightens me. The smallest obstacles hurt and anger me. I must come to realize that it is only through the path of tribulations that Heaven is reached. Guide me through this journey of life, Saint Gerard. Give me strength to embrace willingly the crosses that God sends me so that afterwards, I will deserve to be with God in the Heavens. So mote it be! Amen.

ST. LAZARUS, (LEGBHA)—substitute St. Peter, depending upon House

Feast Day: December 17th. Candle color: yellow.

Prayer of petition:

Patron saint of the poor, I call upon thy spirit to ask of thee a favor. I hold in my hands a crutch and a medal bearing thy name. I call on thee to do justice for me at all times. I believe in thee, St. Lazarus, in the name of the ✠Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, may thou judge the merit of my request, relying on thy infinite goodness through thy intercession with Jesus Christ. Amen

**Make request*

SACRED HEART OF JESUS, (GRAN LEGBHA)

Feast Day: All times. Candle color: red.

Prayer:

O most Holy Heart of Jesus, fountain of every blessing, I adore you, I love you, and with lively sorrow for my sins I offer you this poor heart of mine. Make me humble, patient, pure and wholly obedient to your Will. Grant, good Jesus that I may live in you and for you. Protect me in the midst of danger. Comfort me in my afflictions. Give me health of body, assistance in my temporal needs, your blessings on all that I do, and the grace of a Holy Death. Amen.

OUR LADY OF CZESTOCHOWA, (ERZULI DANTOR)Feast Day: August 26th. Candle color: blue.

Prayer:

O Mary, our Dear Lady of Czestochowa, look graciously upon your children in this troubled and sinful world. Embrace us all in your loving and motherly Protection. Protect our young from Godless ways, assist our dear ones grown old with age to prepare for their journey home. Shield the defenseless and be our strength against all sin. Spare your children from all hatred, discrimination and war. O Queen and our Mother, be our comfort and strength! Through your most Holy Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ST. MARTHA, (LA SIRENE)Feast Day: July 29th. Candle color: green and white

Prayer:

Oh, holiest Saint Martha, you who walked through the mountains and were able to tame the Serpent, take care of me. I humbly ask of you to protect me from my enemies, make my soul pure, and give me eternal salvation. Amen

OUR LADY OF SORROWS, (ERZULI FREDa)

Feast Day: September 15th. Candle Color: pink.

Prayer:

*O most holy Virgin, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ:
by the overwhelming grief you experienced when you witnessed the
martyrdom, the crucifixion, and death of your divine Son, look upon me
with eyes of compassion, and awaken in my heart a tender commiseration
for those sufferings, as well as a sincere detestation of my sins, in order
that being disengaged from all undue affection for the passing joys of this
earth, I may sigh after the eternal Jerusalem, and that henceforward all
my thoughts and all my actions may be directed towards this one most
desirable object. Honor, glory, and love to our divine Lord Jesus, and to the
holy and immaculate Mother of God. Amen.*

THE THREE KINGS, (SIMBI)

Feast Day: January 6th. Candle Color: white or tri-color.

Prayer:

*Most High God! Thou that enkindlest the fires of the shining stars! O Jesus!
Thou that art peace and life and light and truth, hear and grant our
prayers.*

*This present day has been made holy by thy mystic baptism,
whereby thou didst sanctify those waters of the Jordan,
which of old were thrice turned back.*

*It is holy by the star shining in the heavens,
whereby thou didst announce thy Virginal Mother's delivery
and didst, on the same day, lead the Magi to adore thee in thy crib.*

*It is holy too, by thy changing the water
of the pitchers into wine; which the steward of the feast,
knowing that he had not so filled them, drew forth for the guests.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Jesus, that didst appear on this Day!*

And to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, for everlasting ages. Amen.

ST. ISIDORE, (AZAKA)

Feast Day: May 15th. Candle color: brown.

Prayer:

Almighty and everlasting God, creator and redeemer of my soul; I thank you for having provided us with your humble and blessed servant, Isidore, protector and advocate as well as remedy for all ailments, the result of the toils and struggles of this life. O Lord, I am ailing and am truly sorry for all the wrongs I have done against your divine bounty, and I hope that by the intercession of this Saint you give me the grace to purify my soul of all faults so that, by saying his prayer with love, I may be made worthy to obtain the graces that I now seek, so long as your Holy Name is glorified and my soul bettered. Amen.

ST. PHILOMENA, (FILOMEZ)

Feast Day: August 11th. Candle color: pink or green.

Prayer:

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to grant us the pardon of our sins by the intercession of Saint, virgin and martyr, who was always pleasing in Thy sight by her eminent chastity and by the profession of every virtue. Amen.

Illustrious virgin and martyr, Saint Philomena, behold me prostrate before the throne whereupon it has pleased the Most Holy Trinity to place thee. Full of confidence in thy protection, I entreat thee to intercede for me with God from the heights of Heaven deign to cast a glance upon thy humble client! Spouse of Christ, sustain me in suffering, fortify me in temptation, protect me in the dangers surrounding me, obtain for me the graces necessary to me, and in particular

(Here specify your petition.)

Above all, assist me at the hour of my death. Saint Philomena, powerful with God, pray for us. Amen.

ST. CLARE, (KLEMEZIN)

Feast Day: August 11th. Candle color: white.

Prayer:

Glorious Virgin and distinguished mother Saint Clare, clearest mirror of holiness and purity, light of all the virtues. For all the favors which the Divine Husband granted you in such abundance, and by the special right of having made your soul the throne of his infinite greatness, reach out for us with your unbounded piety, to cleanse our souls of stains and faults. We also ask you for peace and tranquility of the church, so that the unity of faith, and the holiness of customs will always be conserved and that we will become immune to the efforts of our enemies. And if it is for the greater glory of God and the good of my spirit, you as Mother and Protector, present my wishes in Divine dispatch, and with your infinite kindness I will reach for your greater honor and glory. Amen.

ST. MARY MAGDALENE, (MAMAN BRIGITTE)

Feast Day: July 22nd. Candle color: red.

Prayer:

St. Mary Magdalene, woman of many sins, who by conversion become the beloved of Jesus, thank you for your witness that Jesus forgives through the miracle of love. You, who already possess eternal happiness in His glorious presence, please intercede for me, so that someday I may share in the same everlasting joy. Amen



16 Psalms

As mentioned within the text in the chapter on Opus Dei, there are numerous uses for the Psalms. One of the traditional Hoodoo techniques with the Psalms is to use them in Healing and for a variety of needs and purposes. These attributions of the Psalms come primarily from the additional text within the *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*, titled *Sefer Shimmush Tehillim*. Other contributors to this science of the Psalms include Dorothy Spencer and Robert Laremy, and the tradition of Hoodoo practice itself. With experience, one can customize the usage of these ancient chants. After some experimentation, it becomes clear that these sacred texts which have been chanted and chanted over the millennia by monastics of all stripes have within them a latent caloric, a hidden energy that can be realized and harnessed for the difficult work of *Curatio*. Many Psalms have been utilized to reverse curses and hexes, bring back a lost love and assist in things such as court cases and diverse dealings with the law. But it is in the higher form of *Curatio* that we discover the real energy underneath each piece of sacred poetry.

For the ritual use of these Psalms, once again set up your altar in the Lucky Hoodoo arrangement. The particular color candle associated with the Psalm's power should be used in the center of your altar on the right of your central black candle. If the Psalm used suggests writing some of the Psalm on parchment, it should be placed under the candle particular to the Psalm, except for in the case of the Banishing Psalm, in which case you use the black candle already present.

In terms of *Curatio*, where you are working with an individual who has requested healing or shares with you a particular need, begin and end the Psalm with this traditional Rose✠Croix prayer:

"Lord Christ-Legbha, God of our welfare, who told your Apostles and Those, their successors to chase away the demons and to heal sickness, we beg You, by the mysterious virtue of your Very Holy Name, YEHESHUVAH, and by the virtue of this Healing Psalm, to give my words the same healing power given to your Disciples. Heal him/her Yourself, Lord Christos, through my words and hands and may Glory be rendered to You, now and forever and unto the ages of ages. ✠Amen."

Place hands upon the one in need of healing. Draw healing energies from your ontic sphere, strengthened and enriched by the sacred versicle.

Follow after the Psalm with this same prayer.

In other situations where the Psalms are used for Protection, or for Love lost or otherwise, use this traditional Rose✠Croix prayer:

"Lord Christ-Legbha, God of our wellbeing who told your Apostles and Those, their successors, to chase away the Demons and to bring about purity, goodness and a tranquil mind, we ask of You, by Your Very Holy Name, YEHESHUVAH, and by the nature of this Psalm, to give my words the same mysterious virtues that you gave to David. Grant your servant his request of _____ and thus may Glory be rendered to You now and forever and unto the ages of ages. ✠Amen."

16 PSALMS

PSALM 68: This is a traditional *Banishing Psalm*. Write the **first three lines* on Virgin Parchment and place them under your central Black Candle, and then, after the Rose✠Croix prayer, chant:

**Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.*

But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, AND REJOICE BEFORE HIM. A FATHER OF THE FATHERLESS, AND A JUDGE OF THE WIDOWS, IS GOD IN HIS HOLY HABITATION. GOD SETTETH THE SOLITARY IN FAMILIES: HE BRINGETH OUT THOSE WHICH ARE BOUND WITH CHAINS: BUT THE REBELLIOUS DWELL IN A DRY LAND. O GOD, WHEN THOU WENTEST FORTH BEFORE THY PEOPLE, WHEN THOU DIDST MARCH THROUGH THE WILDERNESS; SELAH: THE EARTH SHOOK, THE HEAVENS ALSO DROPPED AT THE PRESENCE OF GOD: EVEN SINAI ITSELF WAS MOVED AT THE PRESENCE OF GOD, THE GOD OF ISRAEL. THOU, O GOD, DIDST SEND A PLENTIFUL RAIN, WHEREBY THOU DIDST CONFIRM THINE INHERITANCE, WHEN IT WAS WEARY. THY CONGREGATION HATH DWELT THEREIN: THOU, O GOD, HAST PREPARED OF THY GOODNESS FOR THE POOR. THE LORD GAVE THE WORD: GREAT WAS THE COMPANY OF THOSE THAT PUBLISHED IT. KINGS OF ARMIES DID FLEE APACE: AND SHE THAT TARRIED AT HOME DIVIDED THE SPOIL. THOUGH YE HAVE LIEN AMONG THE POTS, YET SHALL YE BE AS THE WINGS OF A DOVE COVERED WITH SILVER, AND HER FEATHERS WITH YELLOW GOLD. WHEN THE ALMIGHTY SCATTERED KINGS IN IT, IT WAS WHITE AS SNOW IN SALMON. THE HILL OF GOD IS AS THE HILL OF BASHAN; AN HIGH HILL AS THE HILL OF BASHAN. Why leap ye, ye high hills? this is the hill which God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD WILL DWELL IN IT FOR EVER. THE CHARIOTS OF GOD ARE TWENTY THOUSAND, EVEN THOUSANDS OF ANGELS: THE LORD IS AMONG THEM, AS IN SINAI, IN THE HOLY PLACE. THOU HAST ASCENDED ON HIGH, THOU HAST LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE: THOU HAST RECEIVED GIFTS FOR MEN; YEA, FOR THE REBELLIOUS ALSO, THAT THE LORD GOD MIGHT DWELL AMONG THEM. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation. Selah. He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto GOD THE LORD BELONG THE ISSUES FROM DEATH. BUT GOD SHALL WOUND THE HEAD OF HIS ENEMIES, AND THE

HAIRY SCALP OF SUCH AN ONE AS GOETH ON STILL IN HIS TRESPASSES. THE LORD SAID, I WILL BRING AGAIN FROM BASHAN, I WILL BRING MY PEOPLE AGAIN FROM THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA: THAT THY FOOT MAY BE DIPPED IN THE BLOOD OF THINE ENEMIES, AND THE TONGUE OF THY DOGS IN THE SAME. THEY HAVE SEEN THY GOINGS, O GOD; EVEN THE GOINGS OF MY GOD, MY KING, IN THE SANCTUARY. THE SINGERS WENT BEFORE, THE PLAYERS ON INSTRUMENTS FOLLOWED AFTER; AMONG THEM WERE THE DAMSELS PLAYING WITH TIMBRELS. BLESS YE GOD IN THE CONGREGATIONS, EVEN THE LORD, FROM THE FOUNTAIN OF ISRAEL. THERE IS LITTLE BENJAMIN WITH THEIR RULER, THE PRINCES OF JUDAH AND THEIR COUNCIL, THE PRINCES OF ZEBULUN, AND THE PRINCES OF NAPHTALI. THY GOD HATH COMMANDED THY STRENGTH: STRENGTHEN, O GOD, THAT WHICH THOU HAST WROUGHT FOR US. BECAUSE OF THY TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM SHALL KINGS BRING PRESENTS UNTO THEE. REBUKE THE COMPANY OF SPEARMEN, THE MULTITUDE OF THE BULLS, WITH THE CALVES OF THE PEOPLE, TILL EVERY ONE SUBMIT HIMSELF WITH PIECES OF SILVER: SCATTER THOU THE PEOPLE THAT DELIGHT IN WAR. PRINCES SHALL COME OUT OF EGYPT; ETHIOPIA SHALL SOON STRETCH OUT HER HANDS UNTO GOD. SING UNTO GOD, YE KINGDOMS OF THE EARTH; O SING PRAISES UNTO THE LORD; SELAH: TO HIM THAT RIDETH UPON THE HEAVENS OF HEAVENS, WHICH WERE OF OLD; LO, HE DOTHTH SEND OUT HIS VOICE, AND THAT A MIGHTY VOICE. ASCRIBE YE STRENGTH UNTO GOD: HIS EXCELLENCY IS OVER ISRAEL, AND HIS STRENGTH IS IN THE CLOUDS.

O God, thou art terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God.

PSALM 64: For *Protection*, chant this Psalm with the **first two lines* written upon parchment and placed under a red candle, next to your central black candle. Call to mind the fact that the Red Ray is Eros related and creative. The creative force of this protective Psalm will develop a type of force-field with the Christ-current energizing the same.

**Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:*

Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, AND SHALL TRUST IN HIM; AND ALL THE

UPRIGHT IN HEART SHALL GLORY.

PSALM 27: For confidence and *Empowerment*, burn a white candle in the center of your altar and chant this Psalm. Remember that white is a symbol of Holiness and purity and that the empowerment you desire comes from on High.

The LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION; WHOM SHALL I FEAR? THE LORD IS THE STRENGTH OF MY LIFE; OF WHOM SHALL I BE AFRAID When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. One thing have I desired of the LORD, THAT WILL I SEEK AFTER; THAT I MAY DWELL IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE, TO BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD, AND TO ENQUIRE IN HIS TEMPLE. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD. Hear, O LORD, WHEN I CRY WITH MY VOICE: HAVE MERCY ALSO UPON ME, AND ANSWER ME. WHEN THOU SAIDST, SEEK YE MY FACE; MY HEART SAID UNTO THEE, THY FACE, LORD, WILL I SEEK. Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: thou hast been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation. When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD WILL TAKE ME UP. TEACH ME THY WAY, O LORD, AND LEAD ME IN A PLAIN PATH, BECAUSE OF MINE ENEMIES. Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty. I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING. Wait on the LORD: BE OF GOOD COURAGE, AND HE SHALL STRENGTHEN THINE HEART: WAIT, I SAY, ON THE LORD.

PSALM 30: For *Physical Healing*, write the **last three lines* of this Psalm upon Virgin Parchment and place under a green candle to the right of the central black candle. The green Ray that you are invoking is nurturing, fruitive and regenerative.

I will extol thee, O LORD; FOR THOU HAST LIFTED ME UP, AND HAST NOT MADE MY FOES TO REJOICE OVER ME. O LORD MY GOD, I CRIED UNTO THEE, AND THOU HAST HEALED ME. O LORD, THOU HAST BROUGHT UP MY SOUL FROM THE GRAVE: THOU HAST KEPT ME ALIVE, THAT I SHOULD NOT GO DOWN TO THE PIT. Sing unto the LORD, O YE SAINTS OF HIS, AND GIVE THANKS AT THE REMEMBRANCE OF HIS HOLINESS. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. LORD, BY THY FAVOR THOU HAST MADE MY MOUNTAIN TO STAND STRONG: THOU DIDST HIDE THY FACE, AND I WAS TROUBLED. I CRIED TO THEE, O LORD; AND UNTO THE LORD I MADE SUPPLICATION. WHAT PROFIT IS THERE IN MY BLOOD, WHEN I GO DOWN TO THE PIT? SHALL THE DUST PRAISE THEE? SHALL IT DECLARE THY TRUTH? HEAR, O LORD, AND HAVE MERCY UPON ME: LORD, BE THOU MY HELPER.

**Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness; To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD MY GOD, I WILL GIVE THANKS UNTO THEE FOREVER.*

PSALM 41: For *Psychological Healing*, burn a yellow candle next to the central black candle and chant this Psalm. Yellow will call upon Tipharetic energies that are stabilizing, harmonious and beautiful. The need for psychological healing is also the need for the Beatific Vision. As is sometimes said, the mystic and the lunatic are swimming in the same waters—it is simply that the mystic is floating and the lunatic drowning. This is the nature of the Beatific Vision and of this Healing Psalm.

Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD WILL DELIVER HIM IN TIME OF TROUBLE. The LORD WILL PRESERVE HIM, AND KEEP HIM ALIVE; AND HE SHALL BE BLESSED UPON THE EARTH: AND THOU WILT NOT DELIVER HIM UNTO THE WILL OF HIS ENEMIES. THE LORD WILL STRENGTHEN HIM UPON THE BED OF LANGUISHING: THOU WILT MAKE ALL HIS BED IN HIS SICKNESS. I said, LORD, BE MERCIFUL UNTO ME: HEAL MY SOUL; FOR I HAVE SINNED AGAINST THEE. Mine enemies speak evil of me, When shall he die, and his name perish? And if he come to see me, he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; when he goeth abroad, he telleth it. All that hate me whisper together against me: against me do they devise my hurt. An evil disease, say they, cleaveth fast unto him: and now that he lieth he shall rise up no more. Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. But thou, O LORD, BE MERCIFUL UNTO ME, AND RAISE ME UP, THAT I MAY REQUITE THEM. BY THIS I KNOW THAT THOU FAVOUREST ME, BECAUSE MINE ENEMY DOTHT NOT TRIUMPH OVER ME. AND AS FOR ME, THOU UPHOLDEST ME IN MINE INTEGRITY, AND SETTEST ME BEFORE THY FACE FOREVER. Blessed be the LORD GOD OF ISRAEL FROM EVERLASTING, AND TO EVERLASTING.

AMEN, AND AMEN.

PSALM 83: To aid *against Enemies*, particularly in times of psychic attack, chant this Psalm while burning a purple candle to the right of the central black candle. Write the **last three lines*, beginning with, "Let them be confounded..." upon Virgin Parchment and place under the purple candle. This Psalm draws from the Kadosh-energy of Nekham-Adonai. Masons and Elect Kohens alike will recognize the significance of this energy and the alignment with both the color purple and the vengeance that the repeated lines conjure upwards.

Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah. Do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook of Kison: Which perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth. Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna: Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession. O my God, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

**Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: That men may know that thou, whose name alone is*
JEHOVAH, ART THE MOST HIGH OVER ALL THE EARTH.

PSALM 64: To be freed from all Doubts, burn a gold candle to the right of the central black candle. Doubt is an insidious enemy and one that can significantly damage your path in the Light. Draw a Star of Solomon upon Virgin Parchment and place the Star under the gold candle where the Tipharetic rays will be attracted to level out the inequitable forces of doubt, then chant this Psalm. If you happen to be a member of the Scottish Rite and have the 27th Degree (formerly the 28th Degree, Knight Adept, Prince of the Sun) apron or cordon at the ready, these should be worn while the Psalm is chanted by the gilded light.

Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve my life from fear of the enemy. Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words: That they may shoot in secret at the perfect: suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not. They encourage themselves in an evil matter: they commune of laying snares privily; they say, Who shall see them? They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep. But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded. So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away. And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing. The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, AND SHALL TRUST IN HIM; AND ALL THE UPRIGHT IN HEART SHALL GLORY.

PSALM 67: For *Love*, write **the last two lines*, beginning with “Then shall the earth...” upon Virgin Parchment and place under a red candle to the right of the central black candle and chant the Psalm. This Psalm is suitable for working along the lines of *Caritas*. When this particular form of love-magick is shared between two individuals, the last two lines can be utilized as a mantra and worked with in mantric prayer. This is in great divergence of all approaches that suggest that what is profound is far *beyond* us and acknowledges that we are mysteries unto ourselves and that one mystical method of accessing these hidden gems is through complete absorption in the *other*, our Lover. This mantra written upon Virgin Parchment could also be placed under the lover’s pillow at night for spells involving the creation of new life.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

**Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.*

PSALM 112: For one's *Work*, burn a brown candle to the Earth spirits and to St. Francis who will attend this prayer. After chanting the Psalm, in trust, place a penny in a hole you have dug in the soil and pour the wax from the brown candle upon it before burying it. You may also call upon St. Isidore, in which case performing this operation on May 15th will yield the most profound results.

Praise ye the LORD. BLESSED IS THE MAN THAT FEARETH THE LORD, THAT DELIGHTETH GREATLY IN HIS COMMANDMENTS. HIS SEED SHALL BE MIGHTY UPON EARTH: THE GENERATION OF THE UPRIGHT SHALL BE BLESSED. Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever. Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous. A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honor. The wicked shall see it, and be grieved; he shall gnash with his teeth, and melt away: the desire of the wicked shall perish.

PSALM 122: For *Peace*, burn a blue candle to the right of the black candle upon the altar and in utmost devotion **repeat this *first line eight times** before chanting the remainder of the Psalm. The use of our mystical number 8 here reiterates to the spirits around us, the many analogs of this number that represents the infinite. Chanting this portion of the Psalm eight times, while constructing the spiritual architecture of the Monastery of the Seven Rays within one's own ontic sphere, will truly (in Strength) Establish the house of the LORD (YHWH).

**I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.*

OUR FEET SHALL STAND WITHIN THY GATES, O JERUSALEM. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, UNTO THE TESTIMONY OF ISRAEL, TO GIVE THANKS UNTO THE NAME OF THE LORD. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD OUR GOD I WILL SEEK THY GOOD.

PSALM 39: For *Patience*, write **the eighth line* beginning with "And now, Lord what wait I for?" through "...surely every man is vanity" upon Virgin Parchment and place under an indigo colored candle to the right of the black candle upon the altar. Within the period of waiting, your answer will arise.

I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred.

My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, LORD, MAKE ME TO KNOW MINE END, AND THE MEASURE OF MY DAYS, WHAT IT IS: THAT I MAY KNOW HOW FRAIL I AM.

BEHOLD, THOU HAST MADE MY DAYS AS AN HANDBREADTH; AND MINE AGE IS AS NOTHING BEFORE THEE: VERILY EVERY MAN AT HIS BEST STATE IS ALTOGETHER VANITY. SELAH. SURELY EVERY MAN WALKETH IN A VAIN SHEW: SURELY THEY ARE DISQUIETED IN VAIN: HE HEAPETH UP RICHES, AND KNOWETH NOT WHO SHALL GATHER THEM.

**AND NOW, LORD, WHAT WAIT I FOR? MY HOPE IS IN THEE. DELIVER ME FROM ALL MY TRANSGRESSIONS: MAKE ME NOT THE REPROACH OF THE FOOLISH. I WAS DUMB, I OPENED NOT MY MOUTH; BECAUSE THOU DIDST IT. REMOVE THY STROKE AWAY FROM ME: I AM CONSUMED BY THE BLOW OF THINE HAND. When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth: surely every man is vanity.*

Selah. Hear my prayer, O LORD, AND GIVE EAR UNTO MY CRY; HOLD NOT THY PEACE AT MY TEARS: FOR I AM A STRANGER WITH THEE, AND A SOJOURNER, AS ALL MY FATHERS WERE. O SPARE ME, THAT I MAY RECOVER STRENGTH, BEFORE I GO HENCE, AND BE NO MORE.

PSALM 119, 97-104: For *Wisdom*, burn a purple candle to the right of the black candle and chant this portion of the Divine Psalm 119. For the most intense presence of Holy Wisdom, begin with this short Invocation:

WISDOM, HAGIA SOPHIA...HOLY SOPHIA GRANT US PEACE!

O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

PSALM 46: For *Devotion*, write the *very last line, beginning with “The LORD of hosts...” upon Virgin Parchment and place under a light blue candle to the right of the black candle upon the altar and chant this Psalm. Light blue is often associated with a suppleness of character, a pliability of mind that allows for deep and penetrating understanding and tranquility. Along with loyalty and religious observance, such are the qualities of devotion.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. The LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US; THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR REFUGE. SELAH. COME, BEHOLD THE WORKS OF THE LORD, WHAT DESOLATIONS HE HATH MADE IN THE EARTH. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.

***The LORD OF HOSTS IS WITH US; THE GOD OF JACOB IS OUR REFUGE.
SELAH.**

PSALM 119, 129-136: For *Guidance*, burn a magenta candle to the right of the black candle upon the altar, and chant this portion of the Divine Psalm. Magenta is often associated with one's True Will/Purpose. It is Scorpio related and often acts in a magnetic way, drawing others to you for guidance and instruction. Now is the moment to be receptive to the delivery of an *apothegm*, a Holy word or maxim that is coming your way.

Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple. I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me. Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts. Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; and teach me thy statutes. Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

PSALM 65: For *Gratitude*, write the *tenth line beginning at “Thou visitest the earth...” through “...when thou hast so provided for it” upon Virgin Parchment and place under a white candle and chant this Psalm. This Psalm recognizes the gifts of the earth, and along with the white candle, celebrates the purity thereof. Do not look askance at the creation around you, for it is brilliant and gorgeous—self sustaining and abundant in creative force! Be grateful.

Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away. Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple. By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation; who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea: Which by his strength setteth fast the mountains; being girded with power: Which stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people. They also that dwell in the uttermost parts are afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice.

**Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it.*

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side. The pastures are clothed with flocks; the valleys also are covered over with corn; they shout for joy, they also sing.

PSALM 49: For *Spiritual abilities*, write **line three*, “I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp,” upon Virgin Parchment and place under a purple candle and chant this Psalm. Realize that the various systems of divination are precisely this—a parable and a dark saying. It is up to the reader, the diviner, to see the light.

Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together. My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

**I will incline mine ear to a parable: I will open my dark saying upon the harp.*

Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquity of my heels shall compass me about? They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever:) That he should still live forever, and not see corruption. For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others. Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue forever, and their dwelling places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names. Nevertheless man being in honor abideth not: he is like the beasts that perish. This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings. Selah. Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him. Though while he lived he blessed his soul: and men will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself. He shall go to the generation of his fathers; they shall never see light. Man that is in honor, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.

The Author & Artist



✠PALAMAS (Coptic Gnostic Church) is the founding Bishop of the Chapel of the Gnosis and the contemplative fraternity, the Order of the Three-fold Path. He is active in the Confraternity of Oblates of the Monastery of the Seven Rays and an Adept in the OTOA-LCN. A Freemason and Martinist for over a decade, ✠Palamas enjoys integrating diverse channels of the Western Esoteric Tradition with his writing, art and home life in the North Georgia mountains.

"‘Syzygy’ is the appropriate name for this text, yoking together as it does a wide variety of divergent streams. This is at one and the same time a deeply personal account of Tau Palamas’ own spiritual journey and a rigorous examination of the Monastery of the Seven Rays’ practice in relation to other currents and approaches. The journey is a sometimes dizzying one as Tau Palamas reels from one subject to the next, and from personal reflections to deeply theoretical speculations, the whole thing supplemented with a parade of stark and arresting images from his own paintbrush. This is a demanding text, perhaps at times too adventurous; one certainly not for the tyro. Its ultimate effect, however, is properly magical, and no one interested in contemporary magical praxis and Bertiaux’s work will be left disappointed."

Abathur V°

Grand Master of the Friary/OSF

"A tour de force of creative synthesis, this extraordinary book sets out to fuse one of the most avant-garde branches of contemporary Western esotericism with the traditions of monastic prayer, contemplation and ritual, and carries out this more than usually demanding task with aplomb. Students of the mysteries weary of the rehashing of familiar teachings that dominates today’s occult publishing scene will find it a welcome if dizzying breath of fresh air."

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"Syzygy is a fascinating exploration of the Voudon-Gnostic philosophy of Michael-Paul Bertiaux and the Monastery of the Seven Rays. The author, a Gnostic Bishop, takes us through his practice and experiences, telling us about meditation and prayer, Saints and spirits, magick and healing and even death and the dead. In the second half of the book, he offers practical ritual techniques to experience what he calls ‘the Otherworld’ for oneself. I suspect students of the Voudon-Gnostic coursework will find this text an invaluable companion for their studies."

Aaron Leitch, *author of Secrets of the Magickal Grimoires
and The Essential Enochian Grimoire.*

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