

Light Over the Mountains

Voice of the Blue Mountains Interfaith Group

Volume 6 - November/December, 2013

Statement of Purpose for The Blue Mountains Interfaith Group

We come together as representatives of the different religious and spiritual traditions in the Blue Mountains and we seek to work together on causes of common interest, such as the Care and Celebration of the Environment.

Each of us loves our own faith while respecting others who equally love theirs.

We recognize the Truth, that is a deep transcendent reality common to all, coming to us by different historical, scientific and cultural paths. We believe that we are spiritually enriched by our mutual sharing.

We are ready to share that richness more widely in the Mountains, catching a glimpse of sacred wonder in our Mountain surrounds.

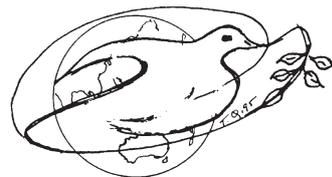
Editorial

When we first began to come together as the Blue Mountains Interfaith Group we were cautious and courteous. Our first joint activities were on safe grounds such as ceremonies of care and celebration of the environment. Gradually as we got to know one another our friendships ran deep and we valued the insights of each others' traditions. Recent issues of *Light Over the Mountains* (LOTM) have dared to take up topics which lie at the heart of the respective religions such as suffering, compassion and prayer, and there we have found a wonderful commonality of aspirations.

All mainstream religions have recognised a fatal flaw of humanity, whether it be sin, suffering, ignorance or whatever, and have sought some alleviation of this condition. So the subject of this issue of LOTM is Liberation/Salvation.

Again here we find much common ground, indeed despite different terminology, a certain convergence of insights.

Eugene Stockton 4759 1818
Pamela Croci 4757 2339
Angela Moore 0418 568 008
Jim Tulip 4758 8104



To those suffering from loss and heartache due to the bushfires we would like to extend our deepest sympathy and wish them a quick return to their homes, families and community.

To the firefighters we would like to acknowledge our sincere thanks and appreciation of their time and care in looking after all of us.

To our wonderful Blue Mountains Community our continuing support and love through our wholehearted prayers and concern for each and everyone of us.

May we all have a Peaceful Christmas Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Blue Mountains Interfaith
Group



Those wishing to subscribe to the online edition of LOTM can visit our website

<http://bluemountainheart.net/interfaith>

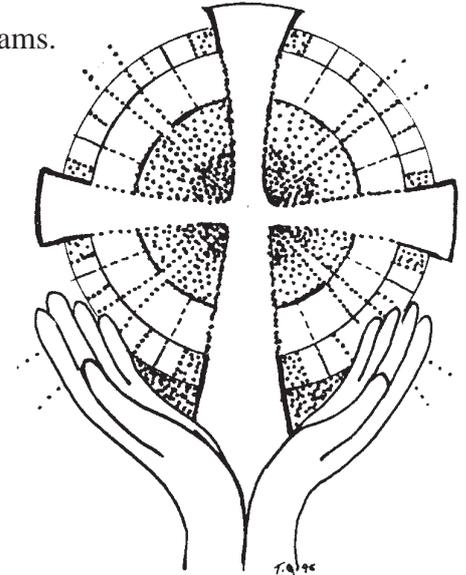
Dear God,

We give thanks for the darkness of the night where lies the world of dreams.
Guide us closer to our dreams so that we may be nourished by them.
Give us good dreams and memory of them so that we may carry
their poetry and mystery into our daily lives.
Grant us deep and restful sleep that we may wake
refreshed with strength enough to renew a world grown tired.

We give thanks for the inspiration of stars, the dignity of the moon
and the lullabies of crickets and frogs.
Let us restore the night and reclaim it as a sanctuary of peace,
where silence shall be music to our hearts
and darkness shall throw light upon our souls.

*Good Night. Sweet Dreams.
Amen.*

Michael Leunig



LIBERATION – *IN DUE SEASON*

From the blog “**Bluemountainheart**” by Angela Moore



The early advent of Spring has brought with it a curious phenomenon. This is one of those seasons in which cicadas, their long years underground finally at an end, emerge in their thousands to fill the trees with their deafening chorus. It is a sound that many of us associate with Christmas holidays and long, summer days at the beach; evoking endless sunshine and balmy nights.

But something is wrong. Among the scores of nymph shells are many small bodies trapped between two worlds, frozen in death before life has truly begun. For some, emergence is almost complete while others have barely breached the armour enclosing their soft bodies.

Among the survivors, the weakest stagger drunkenly on the ground, unwilling or unable to fly. I rescue them and hide them in the trees; perhaps they will gain in strength if left in safety for a while.

It is too early. The unseasonable warmth has driven them from the ground and yet they seem unready. Their singing is desultory; one day the air vibrates with ten thousand tiny tymbals – the next it is hushed. The climate is changing and the smallest of creatures, whose life-cycles we take so much for granted, offer warning signs.



Days later the survivors, in their thousands, perhaps millions, settle into the rhythm of song. The stragglers have disappeared, eaten by birds or consumed by armies of small, black ants.

This morning the song is deafening, almost painful in its intensity.

But as I walk around the garden, still I find the unborn ones, half in-half out of their nymph-cases, enormous heads protruding from the shells while the tender bodies remain encased.

This season of cicadas reminds me most powerfully of two important aspects of life, aspects which are inevitably intertwined.

The effect we have on the environment with our careless use of the earth’s resources will see far-reaching consequences. Unless we heed the warnings of our insect friends, there will come a time when none can sing, nor insect, nor bird, nor human.

I am reminded also of the spiritual journey; of the seasons when we are strong, emerging into wholeness from our fallow times; of the disorientation we can feel if we move too quickly along the path and the need to seek shelter while we integrate what we have experienced; and lastly, of the way in which too cerebral an approach can abort the process entirely, or leave us with a disembodied spirituality that neglects our humanity and, ultimately, the world in which we live.

Our liberation comes in due season; we have only to read the signs and allow the process to unfold.

Thought For The Day

“Australia has constructed a myth about itself which cannot survive unless we forget a number of painful truths.

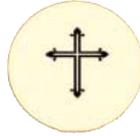
We draw a veil of comforting amnesia over anything which contradicts our self-image.

We forget that boat people who come here to ask for protection are not illegal in any sense – they are exercising the right which every person has in international law to seek asylum in any country they can reach.

We forget that the greatest number of unauthorised boats to arrive in a single day got here on January 26, 1788.”

*Julian Burnside
from AAANZ Mailing 21/10/2013*

A Christian Story of Fall and Salvation



From God's Big Bang of love material creation was to unfold in ever increasing complexity and diversity, until at long last living tissue was to flower into self-consciousness. A human being stands at the end of an unbroken line of living ancestors and ancestral forms of matter, like a flower blooming at last on the end of a fifteen billion year old stem, the culmination of all that went before.

The bright promise of creation, flowering in a creature who might lovingly respond to the Creator on behalf of all other creatures, was thwarted by Original Sin. The emerging god-like selfhood became infatuated with itself. The human being, fully aware of the mystery of its selfhood, was drawn between the opposite poles of self-transcendence in its Creator and of self-satisfaction in an idol of its own making. In general it chose the latter. From that choice flowed all manner of sinfulness, the blocking of God's plan for creation. As self-satisfaction became ever more complete and closed, the human being imploded more and more into a black hole of self-annihilation.

The story of the Fall in Genesis 2-3 is of course a myth, whose factual details are secondary to the telling, but it is a story of deep recurring truth, expressing accurately not only a beginning but a continuing condition. It tells the story of the disobedience of Everyman, of the loss of innocence and of incurring divine condemnation.

Self-centredness tends to be self-perpetuating. It is a whole way of life and even of human culture, to which most members of a society unquestioningly succumb. Even acts of love and altruism tend to be mixed with self-interest, or worse cloak one's basic orientation to self.

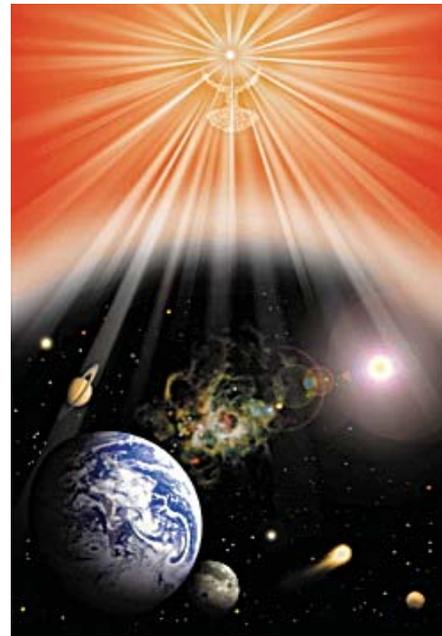
To be saved from my sin means to be saved from myself. This no individual or community can do of itself, because even its efforts to break free are tainted by self-motivation.

How did the death of Jesus save us from sin, free us from ourselves? Over the centuries theologians have wondered at the efficacy of Jesus' death: ransom, substitution, satisfaction? A contribution from the modern world might be one that sees the death and resurrection of Jesus as a *breakthrough*.

For mountain climbers Mt Everest long stood as an inaccessible goal. But once two men reached its peak, teams now routinely complete the climb. Such have been breakthroughs in other areas of human endeavour, such as sport and scientific research. The great breakthrough in human history was the death *and* resurrection of Jesus. It was the radical example of utterly self-less love, of one who wholeheartedly died to himself and rose to a new spirit self. Once Jesus had passed through ego-death to spirit-life, others could be enticed, emboldened and indeed empowered to follow the same way. Only the boundless love of Jesus could unleash our love: his breakthrough is our Pascal Mystery.

So creation once thwarted had made way for the New Creation. Those who are saved are those who have been saved from themselves, by a mystical death and resurrection.

The Deep Within pp.64-7



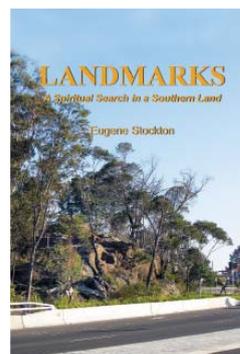
Liberation and Salvation

Liberation is experienced when we become free from our bodies, this world and all sorrow. Without a body we are a tiny point of light, like a tiny star. This tiny star or soul is who we really are: eternal, indestructible energy. As souls we return to our home, the Soul World or Nirvana, an infinite world of golden red light. There we experience total peace and sweet silence. We will all return together, when it is the accurate time to return. All souls will go through a purifying process and will return to the Soul World as pure souls with no defects.

Salvation (liberation in life) is experienced by all souls when they first come to earth from Soul World to play a part in a body. Salvation is the experience of total happiness, peace and purity. Slowly over time we lose this happiness as we pick up bad habits of ego, greed etc.

It is the Supreme Soul who gives everyone liberation and salvation, by purifying the world. This applies not just to human beings; animals and the elements also receive salvation. The Supreme Soul changes the old world of sorrow, hell on earth, into the new world of peace and happiness, heaven on earth.

*Contributed by Sally Segal and Jessica Yuille,
Brahma Kumaris*



Landmarks

A Spiritual Search in a Southern Land
Eugene Stockton

LANDMARKS is an exploration of an Australian spirituality. Drawing on the cultural experiences now in our land, it offers a graded, comprehensive presentation of Gospel teachings, with an Australian diction and imagery. The reader may find in it fresh insights into traditional spiritual themes.

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The Vedanta-Hindu perspective on 'SALVATION'



Hinduism-Vedanta does not have the concept of 'Original Sin' or 'being born into sin', but it does have a parallel process called **Ignorance** (Maya/Avidya, in Sanskrit). It does not have the concept of a 'Personal-God-Who-Saves' but does have the principle of each seeking Inner Peace, Happiness, Freedom or **Liberation** (Moksha, Nirvana, in Sanskrit) from Ignorance, and also provides the means and guidance to achieve it.

Ignorance, a veil that clouds the truth of being, is the automatic default condition of human birth. Our brains and minds are 'hard-wired' to Ignorance. Being a root cause, Ignorance induces me to make fundamental mistakes, ie. make wrong conclusions, develop mistaken ideas or beliefs about myself, others and creation. From these mistaken beliefs come negative actions as thought, word and deed, which cause harm and pain to myself and to others. Look at the world today. If I knew and lived the truth of being, I would not hold mistaken notions nor perform harmful actions. Such actions, injurious to myself and others, could be called 'sins' (Papam, in Sanskrit).

What am I ignorant of? What have I forgotten? Through ignorance, I overlook and miss my underlying and true nature of Divinity, like overlooking and missing 'gold' when seeing 'ring'. Divinity is the reality, matrix, substrate or background, the screen on which my life is projected and played. It is already and always present, here and now. Its nature is unconditioned Presence of Being, pure **Awareness** itself, Completeness, Fullness, Wholeness, Absolute Stillness, Peace itself, Happiness as such. This nature is Limitless, Changeless, Non-dual / One, a Unicity, Eternal, Immortal. All these words and concepts pointing to Pure Awareness are summarised into one word in Sanskrit: **OM**. Thus OM is a verbal reminder of Pure Awareness or Divinity.

Pure Awareness is what I already am but I do not know it. Because of this ignorance of my true nature, I confuse what I am with what I have. What I **am** is Divinity. What I **have** is a human nature, my human persona (Greek: mask) with my name, the human body-mind structure, mechanism or system. This human nature is limited, with a sense of incompleteness (.."it is never enough ... I need more"..),

inadequacy (.."I am not good enough... I am small, weak, limited and insignificant"..), of being unfulfilled (.."there is something always missing"..), bound by space and time, constantly changing and in flux, temporary, mortal.

Because of ignorance of my true nature, I mistakenly think this human persona, with its structures, qualities and defects, its positives and negatives, is what I am, all that I am and nothing else. With this erroneous and limited notion of myself, I view others and creation in the same light. I see separation, division, difference, inadequacy and limitation. Hence, the attitude of ".. me versus the other" ... "us versus them..". Because of my sense of lack, I grasp and cling and get attached to objects hoping they will fulfil and complete me, ie. I expect them to make me happy. At the same time, I have an aversion for and avoid other objects which give me discomfort and displeasure, because I think that avoiding them will make me happy. All this, because of ignorance.

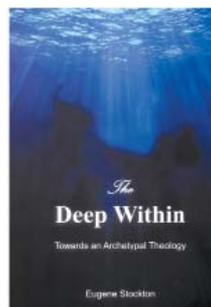
Objects are tangible, eg. money, property, my physical body, etc., and intangible, eg. pleasure, prestige, success, relationships, thoughts, ideas, my mind, etc. All objects, tangible and intangible, are temporary, limited and changing in themselves too. Nothing lasts. Everything keeps modifying and decaying. Science calls it 'entropy'. My own experiences in life confirm this fact; look at photos of myself over the years!

So the expectation of trying to find lasting happiness through objects is a definite set-up for disappointment, misery and suffering (dukha, in Sanskrit) in life. It is an effort bound to fail however hard and frantically I try, like trying to get blood out of stone or running as fast as I can, only to find that I am still on the same spot. I get nowhere.

Objects have their use for survival, sustenance, comfort or pleasure, but there is no inherent happiness, fulfilment nor peace in objects. Any satisfaction they give is transient. Despite whatever experiences I have or acquisitions I make, I continue to feel incomplete and miserable.. "I want more, better, different"... "maybe the next relationship" ... "perhaps the next million will" ... I therefore suffer. I experience hell, samsara, here and now.

How will I find lasting Peace and Happiness? By overcoming my ignorance, the root cause of suffering and unhappiness. How do I overcome ignorance? Not just by belief but by direct knowledge, by directly recognising, appreciating or realising my true nature of Divinity, Pure Awareness. Like recognising 'gold' while seeing 'ring'. To do this, I need to make a clear distinction between what I am and what I have, between **subject** and **object**. Making this distinction is critical and is the first step. There is an extensive methodology (Prakriyas, in Sanskrit) in the Vedanta-Hindu tradition that helps me overcome my ignorance and its effects.

When that is done, then the Divinity, Pure Awareness, which I already am, is revealed and recognised directly and immediately. It was, is and will always be present. I did not know it initially, but now I do. I can recognise 'gold' while seeing 'ring'. Ignorance has been removed. I realise and am convinced that what I really am is Divinity / Pure Awareness, and I discern that what I have is a human nature and form. This is the inner Freedom from suffering; it is Enlightenment, Peace or Liberation (Moksha, Nirvana) which Hinduism-Vedanta directs seekers to. It can be likened to 'salvation'.



The Deep Within Towards an Archetypal Theology Eugene Stockton

An examination of the influence of deep consciousness on our religious expression, opening out to mystical prayer. This study, from a Christian perspective, is relevant to all religious traditions.

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What is the benefit of this insight? How does it help practically? With this recognition, I live my ordinary and everyday life in a completely different way. I know and abide as what I really **am**, Divinity/Pure Awareness, and I use what I **have**, my human persona, to function and interact in the world. Like appreciating 'gold' while using 'ring'. I clearly see what is permanent and what is temporary. I face the inevitable fluctuations of life from this stable standpoint and meet all dualities, like success-failure, gain-loss, health-sickness, pleasure-pain, beginnings-endings, birth-death, etc. with equanimity, mental poise and peace. I engage with life and deal with whatever it presents. I do not retreat from life.

Does this discovery and recognition pertain only to me? Is it just for me? I realise that I am Divinity in my human form and so is everybody else and everything else. Divinity, Pure Awareness is so ordinary and commonplace. It is the singular substrate for the multiplicity in creation.

Hence I view others and creation in the same light – they are the same sacred Divinity manifesting as their myriad forms ... from the tiniest grain of sand to the mightiest mountain, from the smallest plants to the biggest trees, from microscopic animals to huge mammals, every human being ... everything without exception is sacred. Everything is the one Divinity manifested as the many.

Every form reminds me of Divinity. I see Divinity in everything. How could I harm anything or anyone? What else can I do but respect, love and serve them. What a world it would be if everyone recognised this truth of being, the play of Divinity and forms!

I am at rest with myself and in harmony with others and creation. This is Peace and Happiness, Heaven, Nirvana, 'Salvation' here and now. "I am saved." What a blessed life!

Peace. Peace. Peace.

Shanti. Shanti. Shanti.

OM.

Contributed by Ben and Susan de Silva



"there is a crack, a crack, in everything,
that's how the light gets in".

Leonard Cohen "anthem"

A Nation freed from slavery



In Jewish thought, the concept of salvation is intimately related to the idea of liberation from enslavement. It is inevitably connected most notably with the Exodus from Egypt and the journey to the Promised Land and, theologically, to salvation from idolatry to monotheism.

In Orthodox thought, it is extended to the restoration of the holy nation, linked with its Holy Land, and the establishment of a New Jerusalem and a new Temple of the Lord, whether it be in this world or in some new cosmic order.

And the concept of liberation, for Jews in our time, must always carry with it echoes of the liberation of the concentration camps after the unimaginable atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps.

However, for the purposes of this article, my interest as a Progressive Jew is more deeply concerned with the archetypal significance of our personal and collective liberation from the tyranny of our own spiritual blindness.

We may remember that, despite their enslavement, many among the ancient Hebrews were reluctant to leave Egypt, where they were fed and felt secure. In fact, they reproached Moses as they wandered the desert on the way to the Promised Land, wishing they had remained in the security of their captivity. So it is than in our time, our culture seeks to enslave us in an endless round of greed, acquisition and dissatisfaction – of superficiality and sound-bites and a preoccupation with youth and beauty.

When we are challenged to disengage from these addictions, how often do we complain that it is more comfortable to stay where we are, rather than venture into the unknown, into the desert places where we encounter our own emptiness and stand, naked, before Reality, our sustenance provided one day at a time?

It is only through our commitment to following the path of spiritual growth that we find our salvation from the emptiness of the unexamined life. It liberates us to recognise our connection with one another and all of creation – to play our part in tikkun olam (repairing the world) and, ultimately, to embrace life with courage, safe in the knowledge that regardless of circumstances, "underneath are the everlasting arms".

*Contributed by Angie Moore
Emanuel Synagogue, Woollahra and
the Jewish Community*

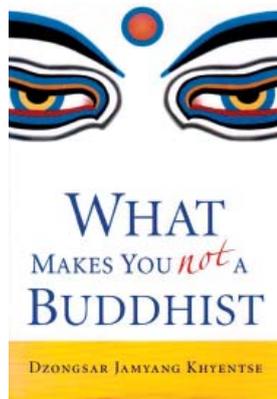
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**RENE BUHLER – Phone 4782 1317
Email renebuhler@yahoo.com**

This book brings to the reader, in modern day language, authentic Teachings of the Buddha and what it means to be free. Free from all suffering which is Enlightenment.



Buddhist Enlightenment



When I was a young man, at the beginning of my life, I looked at nature and saw that all things are subject to decay and death and thus to sorrow. The thought came to me that I myself was of such a nature. I was the same as all created things. I too would be subject to disease, decay, death, and sorrow. But what if I were to search for that which underlies all becoming, for the unsurpassed perfect security which is nirvana, the perfect freedom of the unconditioned state?

So, in the first flush of my independence, I went against my father's wishes, shaved off my thick black hair, put on a saffron robe, and left my father's house for a homeless life. I wandered a long time, searching for what is good, searching after an unsurpassed state of peace.

At last I came to a pleasant forest grove next to a river of pure water and sat down beneath a big tree, sure that this was the right place for realisation.

All the conditions of the world came into my mind, one after another, and as they came they were penetrated and put down. In this way, finally, a knowledge and insight arose, and I knew that this was the changeless, the unconditioned. This was freedom.

The reality that came to me is profound and hard to see or understand because it is beyond the sphere of thinking. It is sublime and unequalled but subtle and only to be found by the dedicated.

Most people fail to see this reality, for they are attached to what they cling to, to pleasures and delights. Since all the world is so attached to material things, it's very difficult for people to grasp how everything originates in conditions and causes. It's a hard job for them to see the meaning of the fact that everything, including ourselves, depends on every thing else and has no permanent self-existence.

If I were to try to teach this truth, this reality, nobody would understand me I thought. My labour and my trouble would be for nothing.

But then it came to me as an insight that I should teach this truth, for it is also happiness. There are people whose sight is only a little clouded, and they are suffering through not hearing the reality. They would become knowers of the truth.

It was in this way that I went forth to teach:

For those who are ready, the door

To the deathless state is open.

You that have ears, give up

The conditions that bind you, and enter in.

from The Majjhima Nikaya

Contributed by Rene Buhler

"What Makes You **NOT** a Buddhist" was written by Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse, a renowned Tibetan Buddhist Teacher and published by Shambhala Publications in 2007.

With unusual force and originality Khyentse expresses the essence of Buddhism, the four seals.

He presents to the reader a set of challenges:

1. Can you accept that all things are impermanent and that there is no essential substance or concept that is permanent?
2. Can you accept that all emotions bring pain and suffering and that there is no emotion that is purely pleasurable?
3. Can you accept that all phenomena are illusory and empty?
4. Can you accept that enlightenment is beyond concepts: that it is not a perfect blissful heaven but instead a release from delusion?

Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse encourages us to examine our most fundamental assumptions and beliefs and shines a light on common misconceptions, stereotypes and fantasies, of what it is to be a Buddhist.

Pamela Croci

PS You can download the book on pdf file at several sites on the web.



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Salvation for a Christian



“Brother! Sister! Are you saved?” this blunt and challenging question from the evangelical preacher has often put the issue of “salvation” at the forefront of being a Christian. It has, however, a narrow focus on the Will and the Emotions, and leaves open the big questions “saved from what?” and “saved for what?” The answer, here, might be “saved from sin” and “saved for the Kingdom of God”. But this, then, only leads to other questions.

When Martin Luther King, fifty years ago, could shout out: “Free! At last!”, his followers certainly knew what “salvation” as “freedom” was. So too with Nelson Mandela’s Africans on Apartheid in South Africa. In modern times this rallying cry has taken on the status of an “ideology behind versions of women’s liberation, disability-rights campaigns, sexual-minority rights such as homosexual and transgendered people, and even animal rights.” (*The Tablet*, 31.8.13). Salvation as Freedom has entered the general currency of modern society, which may remind us that “the primary meaning of the Hebrew and Greek words translated *salvation* is non-religious”. The Hebrew and the Christian bibles are full of the “sense of victory or rescue from danger, defeat, or distress ... when God is the agent”. (*The Oxford Companion to the Bible*). Here lies the difference.

The Judaeo-Christian tradition has grasped the point that it is God who saves. The New Testament gives many examples of how “faith” has “saved” people like the woman with the hemorrhage (Mark 5.34) and blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10.52). Modern translations render the Greek verb *sozo* “has made you well”, where “forgiveness of sin is a spiritual kind of healing concomitant with the physical restoration of health”. (*OCB*, p. 670). It is the dynamic and physical presence of God in Christ Jesus that makes salvation such a driving force in western religious experience.

Contributed by Jim Tulip

To be saved from myself

Do thou, in the same manner, fill thy spirit with the ghostly meaning of this word SIN, and without any special regard unto any kind of sin, whether it be venial or mortal: pride, anger, or envy, covetousness, sloth, gluttony, or how great a sin it be? For all sins they think – alike great in themselves, when the least sin separateth them from God, and hindereth them from their ghostly peace.

And feel sin a lump, thou knowest never what, but none other thing than thyself.

And because that ever the whiles thou livest in this wretched life, thou must always feel in some part this foul stinking lump of sin, as it were oned and congealed with the substance of thy being.

*The Cloud of Unknowing (ch. 40)
Anon. 14th C.*

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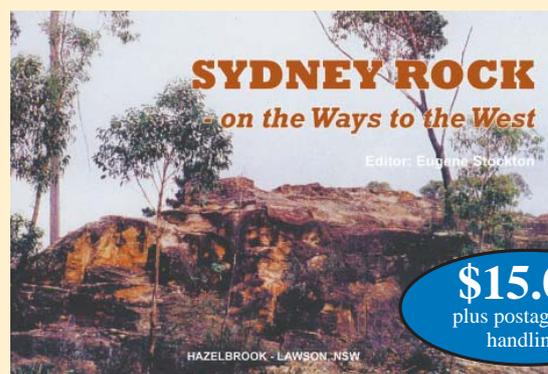
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An invitation to be part of a studio audience discussing contemporary spirituality

Blue Mountain Education and Research Trust, in association with the cyber community www.catholica.com.au have been planning for some months an extended conversation on contemporary spirituality facilitated by one of Australia's leading religious affairs journalists and presenters, Stephen Crittenden. In 2009 he became the Arts, Culture and Religion Correspondent for the online newspaper *The Global Mail* and now is a freelance writer and presenter for a range of publications including *The Global Mail*, *The Guardian* and *National Catholic Reporter*.

On **Sunday 17th November** we will be recording a series of video conversations, moderated and facilitated by Stephen with four Australian authors with an international reputation and readership who, in recent books have been exploring the future for religion and spirituality.

Speakers

Father Eugene Stockton has served as a parish priest and priest assistant to the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry (Parramatta Diocese). The book we will focus on in these conversations is titled *"The Deep Within: Towards an Archetypal Theology"*.

David Tacey is Associate Professor in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the School of Communication, Arts and Critical Enquiry at La Trobe University, Australia. The book we will focus on in these conversations is titled *"The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality"*.

Peter B. Todd has been a research psychologist at the Neuropsychiatric Institute Sydney and a member of the Biopsychosocial AIDS Project at the University of California. The book we will focus on in these conversations is titled *"The Individuation of God: Integrating science and religion"*.

Dr Kevin Treston has been a teacher, author and consultant in pastoral ministry for over 50 years in many countries including his own country, Australia. The book we will focus on in these conversations is titled *"Emergence For Life Not Fall From Grace: Making Sense of the Jesus Story in the Light of Evolution"*.

We extend an invitation to readers of *Light Over the Mountains* to register as part of the studio audience and participate in the recording of these conversations. The video-taped conversations will be later webcast and form the basis for an extended conversation in cyberspace inviting greater audience participation and comment.

For full details of the project, and to register as part of the audience, please visit www.catholica.com.au/bmert

Book Launch incorporated in an Ecumenical Advent Festival

When? Friday 20 December

Where?

Santa Maria Hall, 253 Great Western Highway, Lawson. (Parking in grounds of Our Lady of the Nativity Church)

Time? 10 am till 2 pm

The Advent Festival is a joyful, reflective preparation for Christmas, consisting of song, prayer, silence and proclamation of the Word of God, followed by a shared luncheon of finger foods. (Each brings a plate).

This year we hope to enhance our Festival with the inclusion of the launching of Jacinta Shailer's new book, *The Seasons in Haiku*. In this small book Jacinta has illustrated an English version of the Japanese poetic form called Haiku, with her own photography of the four seasons.

You are all welcome to come with family and friends.



Muslim worshippers at the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem.

Please note that the contents of this newsletter are spiritual writings and that you should take care how you finally dispose of your copy.

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<http://bluemountainheart.net/interfaith>

An invitation to be part of the studio audience for a very special conversation on spirituality...

CATHOLICA www.catholica.com.au and The Blue Mountain Education & Research Trust

presents a conversation with four leading writers, Dr Eugene Stockton, Prof David Tacey, Peter B Todd and Kevin Treston exploring changing perceptions of faith and belief in our world today.
Facilitated by Stephen Crittenden

Sun, 17th Nov 2013, Our Lady of the Nativity Primary School Hall, from 10.30am Limited Numbers - Registration essential at www.catholica.com.au/bmert

Register Now!