

Saturday Message, March 13, 2010



A summary of the message delivered from the pulpit by Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. on Saturday March 13, 2010, follows:

“It has been an interesting week, one in which, I hope, we have learned to love and see one another better. I would like to address a few points this morning, if I may.

“I have heard a phrase used in this Community for many years and, in fact, for most of my life. And I think it is now time to say a few words regarding it. The phrase is, “Well, it’s just the body.” Now, we all understand the philosophy of our Teaching and the theological aspects of the Third Dimension, where we came from as spiritual and human beings, generated existence, and how matter was created in relation to Spirit.

“However, this particular mind-set is one that must be shed because it really goes contrary to the System of Cosolargy and the Teachings of Light. The great spiritual masters and teachers were not reckless by any stretch of the imagination. And so, I would simply like to say that our physical bodies, the body which naturally ages and passes away in time, is the earthly vessel by which we are able to do our work on Earth.

“Let us use my father as a prime example. Look at how he maintained a positive attitude on a daily basis and was able to extract the goodness and beauty and life of spirit which is to be found in all living things if we but recognize it. No doubt, he learned this from the Child Jamil, and it is something that he has passed down to us. He was able to recognize these attributes in all living things.

“So let us make a renewed commitment today – in keeping, in

line with our Teaching – to take care of ourselves. This week, which has been used by Powers opposed to us, to do us harm, can only do us harm if we allow it to. We know these cycles work in threes, and we have experienced that this week.

“I would like to recount a story to you – to those of you whom I didn’t speak to the night of Father Reano’s passing. As many of you know, Reverend Ted had an accident at the Sanctuary Monday and was seriously injured. Evidently, there was little hope and nothing the medical professionals could do here in Reno. So they made arrangements for him to go to the University of California at Davis and see specialists there. Once again, on Tuesday, the prognosis was not good. And then we learned that our dear Father Castell had passed into the Light. And as I was trying to make sense of all of this, a thought, like a bolt of lightning, entered into me.

“And this was the thought: that we could project the healing energy of Father Reano’s spirit, which was still present in this world, to Ted’s eye. And I called many of you that night and asked you to do just that: to envision Reano’s life force and send it to Ted for a healing. And it worked. It was real. The next day, the prognosis changed, and it appears that Reverend Ted will not lose his eye. Now some will say that this is absurd. How could it be? I will leave it for each of you to determine, but I believe that this is the power we possess when we work together. And Reano had something to do with this, as well. Perhaps he chose Tuesday to pass into the Worlds of Light so that something beautiful and full of life and spirit could impact and affect his dear friend and brother in Light. . . .

“Now let’s talk about a few other things this morning.

“First, we have decided, for various reasons, to postpone the next intercession with our friends of Satya-chetana. As we announced, the collaborative ceremony and prayer for peace was to be held tonight in conjunction with our Pannuches Meal. But

we have decided to move the date to Monday March 29 in the Chapel of the Holy Child.

“This second joint intercession will be part of a two-day seminar that our Community is to host for members of Satya-chetana who are interested in learning more about Cosolargy and the International Community of Cosolargy. The seminar, to be held Saturday and Sunday, March 27 and 28, will focus on the fundamentals of our System, the importance of our collaboration, and certain techniques of ours that they can begin to apply before going into higher techniques and concepts.

“We will make the details of the seminar available to you. And while most of you will not be directly participating in the learning sessions, I do ask that you each make every effort to attend services that weekend and participate in the intercession Monday evening.

“Let me briefly explain the importance of this. We have arrived at the point in the history of The Community where, as individuals, we can no longer afford to look at The Community and its activities – its activities here at the Center and also its activities around the world – in merely a personal or individualistic manner. We must now take on our roles as ambassadors and delegates of the Light representing the Community of Light. So look at these events as functions of your office and obligations and duties of your ministries.

“We are Cosolargists first and foremost. We are Second Advent Christians secondly. As Cosolargists, we are universal, and we are universalists. We can go anywhere and be with anyone, and that in no way takes away from what we are doing; indeed, it enhances it. And we affect and influence others in the exact same manner as we influence the Sun of Righteousness. So we must put aside our personal wants and needs, our likes and dislikes, and put on the mantle of Doctors of Cosolargy, Ministers of the Ministry of Light, Teachers of Righteousness.

“I will be traveling to India with Companions of The Way from April 22 to May 20, not only to visit with our brother, Swami Sri Atmananda, but also to visit various ancient solar sites and prepare the way for The Community’s next visit. We hope to establish the Teachings of Light there and meet with other spiritual leaders and masters. More information on this will be forthcoming and, as always, I ask for your positive thoughts and prayers.

“That is my message for today, such as it is, and I look forward to our sacred meal this evening. Let us now have the blessings. Thank you.”

Father Reano Castell Passes into the Light



A funeral service to honor the life of the Reverend Father Reano Castell (March 26, 1931 – March 9, 2010) was held Saturday March 20, 2010, in the Chapel of the Holy Child, Reno, Nevada. In recognition of Father Castell’s office in The Church, his casket was draped with The Church flag; in recognition of his citizenship and proud service in the Swiss army, the foot of his casket was draped with the flag of Switzerland.

The order of service included scriptural readings, eulogy, benediction of committal, and final blessing. A special addition to the service was the reading of the Swiss national anthem, “Landeshymne,” in both German and English, the anthem

often referred to as the “Swiss Psalm” because it reads like a sunrise prayer. Another special addition was the solo performance of the song “Edelweiss” from the movie *The Sound of Music* in recognition of Father Reano’s love for this national flower of Switzerland. (For the full order of service, see: [Father_Reano.order_of_service](#))



A banquet reception to celebrate the life of our departed Brother in Light was held at the Rectory-Abbey on Carmel following the service. The remains of Father Castell were anointed by the Head Bishop, the Right Reverend Gene Savoy, Jr., before the funeral in a private ceremony on Saturday March 13 and cremated following the funeral service.

The eulogy for Father Castell was composed and read at the funeral service by the Right Reverend Sean Savoy. The transcript follows:

The Reverend Father Reano Castell

March 26, 1931 – March 9, 2010

EULOGY

Delivered by Rt. Rev. Sean Savoy

Introduction

It is a distinct honor for me to have been chosen to speak today for a few brief minutes on behalf of all of us who knew Reano, our dear departed Brother in Light. And I'd like to thank each of you in attendance and those who couldn't be here today who contributed information on Reano's life.

I first remember meeting Reano when he moved to Reno from British Columbia, Canada. I was 10 years old, and we were engaged in building the East Wing of the Rectory. Ironically, perhaps, all these years later I reside in that parsonage, so, believe me, Reano (and the rest of the building crew) aren't often far from my thoughts.

For twenty-seven years, Reano was part of life in The Community. And even though he was a fixture in the weekly lives of each of us for nearly three decades, I'm not sure many of us really understood the private Reano – the man beyond the old stories and jokes he was so prone to repeat – whether it be the story of being forced to eat his mother's onion pie, the time he put ink in the holy water at school, when he tied his classmate's pig tails together as a prank, or even when he had to kneel for hours on pebbles as punishment for his mischievous ways.

Those who did have the chance to know Reano on a more personal basis, I believe, found a good and loyal friend in him. I know that my father was one of them. In the early years – Reano began communicating with my father in the 1960s – correspondence between them was often by letter, but later on, Reano became more than an associate and student of Gene Savoy at a distance. By the time he moved to Reno in 1983, he had become an extension of our family and of the Rectory.

I remember it was Christmas 1983, and Reano was invited to a big Italian dinner. He walked into the Rectory kitchen and enthusiastically asked, "What can I do to help?" So my dad gave him a block of Parmesan cheese and a cheese grater. Reano had a great time grating the cheese while my mother and Ileana

cooked the pasta and sauces. Needless to say, it became a tradition anytime Reano came for Italian, that he was in charge of the Parmesan.

There wasn't a birthday or holiday to which Reano wasn't invited, and I believe these joyous times together gave him a sense of belonging—something that seemed of utmost importance to him.

In one of his early applications to join the Sacred College, he wrote:

“I would spend more time and energy to find the real purpose of life here. My primary goals are to gain a better understanding of this life and spiritual life, to help and lead man to ultimate reality of God. But how can I help? For some reason I'm setting on the fence, and I ask myself: Does God really want me? I don't know if I qualify for Ministerial training. I leave that to the Community and God.”

Despite this vulnerability and any flaws he may have shown, indeed, Reano put his trust in The Community, in his service to a New World, and in his devotion to God. Many of us here were witness to this dedication.

Background & Church Life

Reano was born March 26, 1931, to Enrico Castell and Martha Catharina Nagel in Olten, Switzerland. He was raised in a family of twelve children, five siblings and six orphaned cousins taken in by his parents. All the children were only a few years apart, but Reano was the oldest. His home and school were in the Swiss mountains. He skied to school in the winter months. When he was about 13, he was sent to live and study at a monastery in southern Switzerzland. There, he had to learn Italian because no one there spoke German, his native tongue.

As a young man he trained as a Swiss Grenadier, completing his mandatory military service. The following story relates one of

the dangerous episodes he lived through as part of his military training:

When Reano was eighteen, he was assigned to work in a tunnel in the Swiss mountains. His supervisor detected a gas leak in the tunnel, and it was up to Reano and his superior to warn all of the other soldiers and get them out of the tunnel safely. Everyone was out of the tunnel but Reano and his supervisor when the area exploded. They were thrown from the tunnel. Reano received severe injuries to his head and spine. He overheard the doctors telling his parents that he would likely never walk again, but he would not accept the prognosis. Six months after the accident, he walked for the first time, from his bedroom to the kitchen, where his mother was. Ironically, she told him to go back to bed because he was not well enough to be up yet. As a result of his injuries, he was prone to seizures for the rest of his life.

Reano also undertook religious studies. After one and a half years of ministerial training at St. Marie College, he continued his education in civil engineering, carpentry, and architectural drafting.

When he was twenty years old, he traveled by ship to Canada with only a quarter of American money in his pocket. Upon his arrival on Canadian shores, he bought two loaves of bread with his quarter. He kept one for himself and gave the other to a family with children. He walked and caught rides across the continent, working at various farms along the way. He sometimes worked for people who did not speak a language he knew. Eventually, he was taught English by the wife of one of his employers.

He saved his money and eventually married his wife, Betina. They settled in Victoria, British Columbia, where he owned and ran a contracting business, which employed several European master craftsmen specializing in the building of high-end custom homes. To complement his professional and spiritual

interests, over the years he took courses in, and later taught, cosmobiology, astrology, and Kabbalistic philosophy.

He was in correspondence with the International Community of Christ Church since the mid-1960s after seeing an article in *Fate* magazine about Gene Savoy. He later joined The Academy in 1971. In his letters to the Center – whether in Lima, Mexico City, or Reno – he often praised The Community for the depth of information, for the quality of our publications, and, most important, for the education and knowledge he believed he was privileged to receive.

Reano was an early member of the Andean Explorers, such as it existed in the 1970s, and wrote with praise for the book *Antisuyo* and of his appreciation for our work in Peru and the Amazon, as well as his desire to maybe one day visit the jungle. Although he never made that trip, he did serve on the board of directors when the club was resurrected in the 1980s, and he was honored for his early design work on *Feathered Serpent III*.

Giving over his contractor's business to his sons, Brandon and Rob, in 1983, he left Canada and his family to become a permanent resident of the Reno Community in order to complete his ministerial training in The Church and dedicate his life to the Sacred Teachings of Light within the Jamilian Order.

Frustrated that his wife was adamantly opposed to religion in general and was not supportive of his spiritual endeavors in this Church (or any other, for that matter), Reano – I don't believe – ever really got over the loss of his family, who rejected him and his decision to be part of The Community. Yet, Reano was steadfast in his decision.

Following first-level ordination in 1983, he was immediately assigned to The Church's Building Department and became a resident of the Chapter House at the Red Rock Consecrated Sanctuary attached to the Cathedral Abbey of Monte Viejo. Upon

taking the vow of nonmaterialism, he assumed liturgical functions and administration of the sacraments as an assistant to the Pastor, and in 1986 received second-level ordination. He was assigned as part-time faculty of the Jamilian University and was given a Lector's chair at the Chapel of the Roses at the Steamboat Priory.

In 1993, under new pastorship papers, he was given several administrative appointments under the designation of Canon, including a seat on the Sacred Overseer, the leadership of the Building Department, the priorship of Steamboat Hot Springs Priory-Mission, and the role of secretary-director for the International Community Guilds and the Steamboat Springs Water Works.

In 1998, he was made Rector of the Church of the New Covenant, and in the year 2000, he was appointed co-Chair of the American Association of Concerned Clergymen of the Advocates for Religious Rights & Freedoms. Reano remained active in some or all of these capacities until his passing, although his administrative duties became fewer and fewer in the last few years.

In 1991, he was among the first to enter the Order of Patriarchs, and it is this role that he cherished toward the end of his life, holding to his daily devotions and the rituals of life at the Sanctuary. As a "Father" of The Community, in his later years – despite the frustrations of old age – Reano assumed a more serene attitude, even though he never lost the feistiness that endeared him to – and often frustrated – his fellow companions.

Some may not realize that before he took his vows of poverty/nonmaterialism, Reano was a constant supporter of The Community with his financial donations. He supported many projects, including the Publishing Department, exploration and research projects and, of course, the Sanctuary. Even after taking his vows, he was generous with the small amount of

funds he had available to him. He would often give small contributions to help out other projects of The Community not related to his areas. And just a few years ago, after saving up several thousand dollars unbeknownst to anyone, he was able to purchase and install a small greenhouse for the perpetuation of the Sanctuary.

Memories

Reano had many talents. He was a master builder, a contractor, a draftsman, a painter, and a craftsman. He was a competent astrologer and an avid reader. He might have been a meteorologist, as he could often predict the weather with a certain accuracy. He loved to garden. He loved to dance. Does anyone remember his now infamous "chicken dance," which he would perform from time to time at gatherings? He loved to make fondue on his birthdays. And he loved his wine. Yes, how he loved his wine – a Valpolicella or a nice Chianti, please.

Always the ladies' man, he enjoyed the company of all the devoted women of The Community, and did not hesitate to turn on the charm during one of our holiday parties or at a dinner of the Andean Explorers.

Reano enjoyed having the company of the men working on projects at the Sanctuary—especially recently, when he no longer had the weekly visits by my father or the Saturday lunches he used to enjoy at the Rectory to keep his spirits up.

In his last years, Reano continued to be active as best he could with work crews, if only to lend a helping hand and, more important, to offer moral support. And he never faltered from his duty to escort the Sunday groups on their trips to perform "second services" each week.

Certainly, each of us has our own memories of Reano. To summarize, I'd like to share a few memories of Reano as submitted by his friends and companions. These brief stories

convey best the essence of the man, far better than I could attempt to do.

“I am very proud to have had Reano as a dear and loyal friend all of these years. I loved sitting at the table with Reano and Rev. Gene and listening to them discuss work projects and tell jokes. I also loved my many walks around the Sanctuary with my friend. I will miss his beloved presence very much.”
(Barbara Whitney)

“Over the last two years there has not been one week where he would not tell me at least twice about how every Wednesday the late bishop would come out to the Sanctuary and bring with him a bottle of wine, a loaf of bread, cheese and olives, and the two of them would sit and talk about ‘certain things’ (he would say), and then they would go hiking around the Sanctuary. He never really recovered from the loss of his friend, and I believe that he is with him now.” (Ted Staver)

“Reano was one of the first people to greet me when I joined the Church. His warm laugh and great sense of humor always lifted my spirits and put a smile on my face. I learned that my birthday fell on the same day as his daughter’s, who had a very short life. This seemed to create a bond that stayed with us for many years.” (LaCynda Gibson)

“Reano always remained loyal to his beloved teacher. When his parents passed away about 1994, he turned down his inheritance and the title of [burgermeister] of the region he had been raised in. His surviving family continued to reject him. He hung on to The Church for the sake of his faith and his loyalty. He proudly accepted and took very seriously the title Rev. Gene gave him, “his Swiss Guard.” (Barbara Whitney)

“He loved to sit with a glass of wine and talk for hours about his days in the Swiss army. He was a grenadier (equivalent to our Green Berets). ‘You had to be one tough son of a gun to make it through that,’ he would often say. And he would talk

about the refugees that came into the country during the war and how the Swiss would extend their hands in welcome and that 'in those days we helped one another, not like today.'" (Ted Staver)

"One of the most endearing contributions I will always remember Reano for was his great and long-lasting role as our dear Santa Claus. We had more fun watching him and listening to him coming in with all of the reindeer. I think [they] had more fun than any of us." (LaCynda Gibson)

"I remember the time the Bishop, Reano, and I were watching the men work on the Temple Mount. Some of this work involved dynamiting portions of the rocky terrain to make way for the fence. Reano had been pushing the ignite button to ignite the dynamite, and at one point he looked at me, smiled, and asked: 'Here, you want to do it?' Of course I did. (LaCynda Gibson)

"When I think of Reano, my mind races with episodes of adventures. I remember the time he was working out in the field at Red Rock and his thumb nail got caught on something and bent backward. (Ouch!) One of [the men] grabbed him, drove him to the Chapter House, and held his hand over the sink with running water, and flipped the thumbnail back into place. The yell from Reano echoed throughout the valley." (LaCynda Gibson)

"I considered Reano a master storyteller. He had a way of telling a story over and over again and everyone would listen as if it were being told for the first time." (Robert Roy)

"I was saddened to hear of the passing of Rev. Father Reano. He was a wonderful, precious man who was always very kind and helpful to me. I will miss his gentle presence." (Bruce Bunch)

"Reano was a good man and a dear friend of your father's who loved him very much. I am sorry to hear of his sudden passing." (Sylvia Ontaneda-Bernales)

“The passing of Rev. Father Reano was a great shock to me. He has shown many kindnesses to me. May his soul rest in peaceful Light.” (Shinobu Uwataki)

“The first memory I ever had in my life was of Reano. I was around one year old, and I remember him tucking me into my crib at night.” (Matthew Madonna)

“Just a thought about Reano. For Mother’s Day he gave the women of The Church hand-drawn cards of the Madonna and Child – which he did twice that I can recall – a very kind thing for him to do.” (Mary Foust)

“I was talking about this with Reano two weeks ago: I remembered walking up to the Church of New Ephesus with Reano. It was spring and it had been a wet winter. The wildflowers were everywhere. I spotted a small white flower which I did not recognize. Reano looked down, and with a gasp in his breath, he said it was edelweiss, the national flower of Switzerland. He just stood there gazing at that flower. I knew he was thinking of home. When he looked up, there were tears in his eyes. He said the flower told him he was home at Red Rock, just like Switzerland.” (Amanda Buchanan)

And this final thought from a fellow Canadian:

“Reano was a man for all seasons. From assistant hog farmer in central Manitoba, Canada, to independent building contractor in Victoria, B.C. From Swiss national guard trooper jumping out of low-flying light aircraft into Swiss mountain snow banks to sergeant in the PPCCL, a crack Canadian forces airborne regiment. From apprentice carpenter to master builder; and from school boy in monastic school to a Rt. Rev. Priest and venerated Patriarch in the International Community of Christ (not to mention a rather convincing Santa Claus). He played a very important role in the construction of the Community’s infrastructure, notably the Chapter House and Sanctuary buildings and the open-air churches; the East Wing

of the Rectory; the Cathedral towers, platform, and communion table. These projects and many others that are well known to all of you. They stand better than any words of mine as tribute and memorial to his life and character. I enjoyed working with Reano. While working it was no nonsense, but when the work was done there was always time for a glass of wine and a story or two. He was a good friend, and I know that even as we celebrate his well-lived life and are glad he is in a better place; we feel a sadness at his passing. Rest in The Light, my friend!" (Patrick Newman)

As a child, I came to know and respect Reano – with all of his eccentricities, his charm, his intelligence, his good will, and, of course, his accent. I have many memories of him, but I believe enough has been expressed this afternoon in tribute to him. I will say, however, that although he could be hard line – “no-nonsense,” as Pat put it – on the job site, during Young Explorers outings at the Sanctuary, or on the sports field – where he made sure the guys, or the kids, including myself, followed direction, he was a proud, kind, and good man who strove for the proper outcome no matter what the project.

Most of all he was a spiritual person, who will be greatly missed. As a final tribute, the pasture area in front of the Chapter House where he lived for twenty-seven years, will be designated Castell Park and Memorial Gardens in his honor.

It became a popular tradition in the 1970s to take the melody of *Edelweiss* – one of Reano’s favorite songs and flowers – and to make it into a Benediction. I thought it would be appropriate to read these words as a conclusion to our thoughts on Reano’s life.

May the Lord, mighty God,

Bless and keep you forever.

Grant you peace, perfect peace,

Courage in every endeavor.

Lift your eyes and see His face,

And His grace forever.

May the Lord, mighty God,

Bless and keep you forever.

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Saturday Message March 6, 2010



The homily delivered by Bishop Gene Savoy Jr on March 6, 2010 dealt with some recent unfortunate occurrences as well as upcoming events, and held suggestions for approaching them. The transcript of his message follows:

Good morning!

Well, it's been an interesting week for all of us; a week in which, I hope, we have learned to love and see one another in a better light. And I would like to address a few points this morning, if I may.

I have heard the phrase in this Community for many years; in fact, for most of my life. And I think it's time to say a few words regarding it. The phrase is, "Well, it's just the body." Now, we all understand the philosophy of our Teaching and the theological aspects of the Third Dimension, where we came from as spiritual and human beings. We understand the concepts of generated existence and how matter was created in relation to spirit, and we are all well aware of the imperfections of this state in which we find ourselves. However, I believe that this particular mindset is one that should be shed, because it really goes contrary to The System of Cosolargy and the Teachings of Light. The great spiritual masters and teachers who have lived in this world, in all parts of this world, in all epochs of time, were not reckless or careless by any stretch of the imagination. So I would simply like to say that our physical bodies, the body that naturally ages and passes away in time is the earthly vessel by which we are able to do our work here on earth. And I would like to use my father as a prime example. Most of you knew him, most of you knew him for many years, and quite well. And I would like you to recall to mind how he maintained his positive attitude on a daily basis and was able, as a discipline, to extract the goodness and the beauty and the life of spirit in everything, which is to be found in all living things, which he was able to recognize. No doubt he learned this from the Child Jamil, who was a friend to all living things, and it is something that they were able to pass down to us. But what they were able to do was to recognize on a constant basis these attributes in Creation.

I am not here to lecture you, but what I would like us to do is to make a renewed commitment, in keeping with our Teaching, to take care—especially to take care of ourselves. And that is

a lesson that we all, all of us, can learn. This week we have seen how the powers opposed to us have tried to do us harm; however, they can only do us harm if we allow them to. And we know these cycles work in threes, and we experienced that this week. So let us look at the good side, and allow me to recount a story to you, which may sound a little strange to those of you whom I didn't speak to the night of Fr. Reano's passing. As we mentioned earlier, Rev. Ted had an accident at the Sanctuary on Monday and was seriously injured—his eye. Evidently, there was little hope and nothing that the medical professionals could do here in Reno. So they made arrangements for him to go to the University of California at Davis, where they have specialists and perhaps something positive could take place. He went on Tuesday, and, again, the prognosis was not good. In fact, it was very bad, that most likely they were going to have to remove the eye. Later that day we learned that our dear Fr. Reano had passed into the Light. And as I was trying to make sense of all this that evening, a thought, like a bolt of lightning, came to me. And I called many of you with this thought. And this was the thought: to envision Reano's life force and direct it to Ted for a healing. And that's what I asked some of you to do. And I believe it worked. I believe it was real. The next day the prognosis changed, and it appears that Rev. Ted will not lose his eye. In fact, they rather remarked at how well he's doing. Now, some will say that this is absurd, how can it be, but I will leave it for each of you to determine, but I do believe that this is the power that we possess when we work together. And Reano also had something to do with this, because perhaps he chose Tuesday to pass into the Worlds of Light so that something beautiful, something full of life and spirit could impact and affect his Brother in Light. Something to think about.

Now, let me talk about a few other things this morning. We had announced a couple of weeks ago, and we have friends, guests from Satya-chetana—thank you for being here this morning—we,

as many of you know, were going to collaborate on the next intervention, or intercession, this evening, and we have decided to postpone that collaborative ceremony for peace in the world. And that date has been moved to Monday March 29 here in the Chapel. This second joint intercession will be part of a two-day seminar that our Community is hosting for members of the Satya-chetana Movement who are interested in learning more about Cosolargy and what we teach and the International Community of Cosolargy. The seminar is to be held on Saturday March 27 and Sunday March 28, and it will focus on some of the basics of our System. We'll also discuss the importance of our collaboration and will give certain techniques of ours in relation to the sun that they can begin applying before going on to some higher solar techniques and concepts. We will make the details of the seminar available to you, and while most of you will not be directly participating in the sessions, I do ask that you all make an effort to attend services that weekend and to participate in the intercession on Monday evening and to, if you are asked, to volunteer for certain aspects of the two-day seminar. And let me briefly explain the importance of what we're doing—and the importance of your participation. I believe that we have arrived at the point in the history of this Community where as individuals we can no longer afford to look at The Community or its activities—not only its activities here in Reno, but its activities which are taking place around the world—in a merely personal or individualistic manner. We must now take on the role of ambassadors and delegates of the Light, representing the Community of Light. And so I encourage you to look at these events as functions of your office and as obligations and duties of your ministries. We are Cosolargists first and foremost. We are Second Advent Christians second. As Cosolargists, we are universal, and we are universalist. We can go anywhere, be with anyone, and that only adds to what we are doing in the world; indeed, it enhances it. As we affect, through our beauty and our light, others, in the exact same manner as we influence the Sun of Righteousness.

So I encourage you, to a large degree, to put aside your personal wants and needs, your likes and dislikes, and put on the mantle of doctors of Cosolargy, ministers of the Ministry of Light, and teachers of righteousness.

Now, I will be traveling to India with Companions of the Way from April 22 to May 20, and I will be visiting with our Brother Swami Sri, but also to visit various other ancient and solar sites and to prepare the way for The Community's next visit. We hope to establish the Teachings of Light in India with the help and the collaboration of Swami Sri, and I hope to meet also with other spiritual leaders and masters. And as more information becomes available to us on this, I will relay that to you, and of course ask for your positive thoughts and prayers.

So that is my message for today, and I look forward to our sacred meal this evening, and I thank you for your attention, and we will now have the blessings.

Edith Forgy Memorial



A memorial rite was held to honor the life of the Reverend

Deaconess Edith Wood Forgy on Saturday November 21, 2009, at the Memorial Chapel of The Holy Child. Edith passed into the Light on October 19, 2009, at the age of 77. The order for service included scriptural readings, eulogy, benediction of committal, and final blessing. A banquet reception to celebrate the life of our departed Sister in Light was held in the vestibule following the service. Flowers for the memorial were donated by the Reverends Nola Slevin and Robert Roy. The eulogy for Edith was composed and delivered by her long-time friend and housemate the Reverend Canon Rebecca Willis. A transcript of the eulogy follows:



“Edith was born May 15, 1932, in Texas. Her family moved frequently and lived in several towns along the Texas coast. She did dearly love Texas and spoke frequently about the hill country and about the coastal area. She graduated from the University of Texas in Austin with a masters in accounting, and was one of the first women to obtain this degree from Texas University. She worked 40 years as the accountant for a construction firm: Austin Engineering. She was close to the owners and greatly enjoyed the many trips she shared with them on the company boat and to Mexican resorts.

“Those of us in The Church first met Edith in October of 1985 when she came for Convocation. She was ordained on October 31, 1985, with a class of 14 members, including myself. She always referred to us as the Halloween Kids.

“The two of us made an immediate connection with the Church Community and began coming for weekends at least once a month. She would fly in from Austin and I from Denver, and we met in Reno to attend the weekend services. By the Christmas season of 1986 we were beginning to make plans to move to Reno. After

chapel during the vigil that year, Rev. Gene announced that The Church was to receive a donation of the Steamboat Hot Springs. On a drive out to look the afternoon of the announcement, Edith was particularly dismayed to see the terrible state of disrepair of the property prior to any renovations. During 1987 Edith moved from Austin to Reno and into a parsonage at Steamboat. The current production building was not yet on the Steamboat property, but that building was eventually to become our parsonage. It was moved from Flint Street in Reno to Steamboat and renovated by work crews and Church building staff.

“When Edith arrived in Reno she had breast cancer. After surgery and laetrile treatments the cancer was still active. Reverend Gene gave her some solar techniques to do, and within a year she was cancer free.

“During her time in Reno Edith was a minister under full vows. She worked on many projects and helped as a member of the Chancellery staff as well as at Steamboat. She loved transcribing, and many of the set of lectures we now have in printed form were transcribed by her from the original recordings. She will be remembered by those who knew and worked with her for her smile, her sense of humor, and her love of animals, particularly cats and dogs. Reano will remember how much she loved to dance, and they shared many dances together at parties at the Rectory. Nola remembers how much Edith hated snow. Whenever snow was predicted she would chant “no snow, no snow, no snow.” One weekend, snow was predicted for Sunday morning, and she was particularly vehement about her “no snow” chant. On Sunday morning we had a record snow fall, which caused services to be cancelled. Edith and Nola laughed about this for some time.

“In 1997 Edith decided that she needed to return to Austin to take care of her sister. She kept in close touch with the Church and attended Convocations until her health began to fail. It was hard to get her to say what her health problems

were, she always brushed it aside. saying. 'one day at a time.' She had many good friends in the Church, and several have left messages in her memory on the internet Guest Book from the Funeral Chapel in Texas."

Christmas Message December 25, 2009



On Friday December 25, 2009, Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. delivered a Christmas message during the traditional holiday Communion of Fellowship Service at the Chapel of the Holy Child. A slightly edited version of the message is provided here:

Good morning and Merry Christmas!

Those of us gathered together in this Chapel dedicated to the service of God are drawn together from many faiths, but we are all one in the family of God.

We celebrate today as the birthday of the man Jesus. For twelve days, we of the Second Advent Church celebrate the Christmas Season, which culminates on the thirteenth day—January 6—the Day of Epiphany.

Epiphany comes from the Greek, meaning “manifestation” or “appearance,” and in the early Church, January 6 was the day that commemorated Jesus’s baptism at the Jordan by Saint John. The day celebrates the “shining forth” [another meaning of *epiphany*] or revelation of God in human form in the person of Jesus Christ, his manifestation as the Son of God to the world—the Word of God incarnate. The date of Epiphany on

January 6 was very early fixed, and ancient liturgies speak of *Illuminatio*, *Manifestatio*, *Declaratio*: Illumination, Manifestation, and Declaration. The Gospel of Matthew [3:13-17] says:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

And the Gospel of Luke [3:21-22] says,

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased.'

But a very important line has been deleted from both Matthew and Luke—one which is substantiated by other ancient scriptures more authoritative than Matthew and Luke. The line reads:

Today [or This day], I have begotten you.

So, let us read this again:

*You are my son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased. **This day I have begotten you.*** [Emphasis added]

In the ancient Christian Church, just as in Buddhism, this divine event—this “appearance” or “epiphany”—was a manifestation of Jesus’s immortal nature. The day commemorated

the incarnation of Jesus as Christ, the moment when God appeared in Divine Light and ordained Jesus His son in Spirit. Thus, Jesus was given a new birth by God the Father. So we know that Jesus was not “born” the Son of God, but *became* the Son of God when the Word, the Divine Logos, incarnated within him, giving him new life of spirit. This was a fundamental concept in the Messianic or First Advent Church: that Jesus *became* Christ. And this is why Epiphany and the Christmas-Epiphany Season is so important to us, because it represents and symbolizes the birth of spirit—the epiphany of the Conscious Soul.

I made the reference to Buddhism because while Buddhists celebrate the birthday of Siddhartha Gautama on April 8, the day of his “enlightenment”—the day when he became the Awakened One, Bodhi Day—is honored on December 8 at sunrise. And, of course, we do this in the Second Advent Church. We honor the birth of the man Jesus on December 25, the old Roman festival of the Unconquered Sun, but more importantly, we celebrate Jesus’s spiritual birth—the day when the Word of God entered into him and he assumed the Holy Office of Christ. This we do on January 6 as a promise of the spiritual rebirth we are all heir to in the Second Advent of God’s Appearance.

Now, this morning, we learned of the passing of one of our Sisters in Light, Theresa Andronis. I was thinking of her first thing this morning, at about 6 a.m., and we learned that she passed shortly thereafter. This morning, we saw various forms and figures in the sun, and I felt her presence very strongly. So, while we may miss the human being Theresa, we know that she has ascended into the Light, and how fitting that she should transfigure as we begin our Epiphany Vigil, when we celebrate the birth of the Conscious Soul. We are also reminded that her pain and suffering has been conquered and that she is one with the Holy Beings of Light.

In hellenistic times, an epiphany of the divine in a person was a common theological concept. The celebration of Epiphany

originated in the ancient Church, where it later included a commemoration of Christ's physical birth in the Eastern Church. In Rome, however, by the middle of the fourth century, Christ's physical birth was being celebrated on December 25, according to the Philocalian calendar.

A winter festival was the most popular festival of the year in many cultures. Reasons included the fact that less agricultural work needed to be done, as well as the expectation of better weather as spring approached.

The twenty-fifth of December was the Roman festival marking the "birth of the Unconquered Sun," the *natalis solis invicti*, which celebrated the winter solstice and the lengthening of days. This celebration allowed several solar deities to be worshipped collectively, including the Syrian sun-god *Elah-Gabal*. It was also observed as the birth date of the god *Mithras*, the "sun of righteousness" and patron god of the emperors, who, five hundred years before the birth of Christ, was born of a virgin in a cave. We know that it was also connected in the Roman world to the *saturnalia*, a time of merrymaking and the exchanging of gifts. Charity was also emphasized as part of the Roman New Year.

The festival was placed on the date of the solstice because this was the day that the sun reversed its southward retreat and proved itself to be "unconquered." Several early Christian writers connected the rebirth of the sun to the birth of Jesus. John Chrysostom wrote, "They call it the 'Birthday of the Unconquered.' Who indeed is so unconquered as Our Lord?"

Northern Europe celebrated a winter festival called Yule, held in late December and early January, and its traditions had a major influence on *Christemasse* or Christ's Mass.

In the old Christian calendar, November 28 through January 6 was observed as the Festival of Lights, a vigil for the birth of the Cosmic Christ. Japanese Shintos honor the sun goddess

Amaterasu on December 22. In ancient Egypt, December 21 to December 25 was the festival commemorating the birth of the god Horus by the goddess Isis; and in the Hopi nation, December is celebrated as a time of purification and renewal. So we can see that this time of year is universally recognized as a time when we come out of the darkness into light.

The contradiction between the Greek and Roman Churches led to a great debate in the fourth and fifth centuries, which culminated in the Eastern Church accepting the twenty-fifth of December as Christ's birth and the Western Church celebrating Epiphany as the day the Magi visited the infant Jesus.

In the Second Advent Church, we honor both days and celebrate the Christmas-Epiphany Season from December twenty-fifth through January sixth. We commemorate Christ's birth in physical form, but, as we have said, more importantly, we solemnize his spiritual rebirth.

Therefore, the message of the season is life of spirit. That was the essence of Christ's teaching. And this is what the Christmas Season represents: Life, Birth and Rebirth – the cycle of renewal.

The lights and trees we display this time of year have always been symbols of everlasting life. In ancient Egypt, China, Israel, and the Celtic lands, evergreen trees, wreaths, and garlands were symbolic of eternal life. To us in the Second Advent Church, they also represent the True Light of God and the Tree of Life.

In the Middle Ages, Christmastide, or the period from the night of December 25 through the morning of January 6, was a period of continuous feasting and merrymaking. Twelfth night, or Epiphany Eve, as we call it, was forever solidified in popular culture when William Shakespeare used it as a setting for one of his most famous stage plays. In those times, Christmas was overshadowed by Epiphany.

American colonists brought their version of the Twelve Days over from England and adapted them to their new country, adding their own variations over the years. The modern-day Christmas wreath, for example, originated with these colonials. A homemade wreath would be fashioned from local greenery, and if fruits were available, they would be added. Making the wreaths was one of the traditions of Christmas Eve; then they would be hung on each home's front door on Christmas Day, the First Day of Christmas, through the morning of Epiphany, when a special Epiphany cake was baked and all the remainder of the edibles from the previous twelve days consumed.

As said, this was a time of feasting, merrymaking, and otherwise celebrating the season. Sometimes gifts were exchanged each of the twelve nights and a candle lit each morning of the Twelve Days. And the evening before Epiphany was celebrated as the biggest night for dancing and gift-giving.

However, after the Revolution, Christmas and the Twelve Days fell out of favor in America because it was considered an English custom. It was not until the 1820s, when anti-British sentiments were fading, that people began to worry that Christmas was dying out. Writers, including Washington Irving and Harriet Beecher Stowe, imagined Christmas in Tudor days as a time of heartfelt celebration, and efforts were made to revive the holiday. Charles Dickens's book *A Christmas Carol* played a major role in reinventing Christmas as a holiday emphasizing family, goodwill, and compassion, as opposed to communal celebration.

Latin nations also have various forms of celebrations for the Twelve Days of Christmas, the most popular being the cooking of traditional foods to celebrate Epiphany. In Hispanic America, a *rosca de los reyes* – a king cake – is baked. In France, a *galette des rois* is baked with a small china figure of the Christ-child inside. In some countries, children polish

and leave their shoes by the doorstep, bed, or tree, ready for presents, before going to sleep on the eve of January 6. And in Italy, the tradition of La Befana, whose name is taken from the word Epiphany, is the bringer of gifts who arrives on the eve of Epiphany.

With the onset of more Americanized and secular traditions throughout the past two centuries, the traditions of the Twelve Days of Christmas have been largely forgotten. Indeed, contemporary marketing and media tend to espouse the erroneous belief that the Twelve Days end on Christmas, rather than begin on it. However, we of the Second Advent Community have held to our own favorite ways to celebrate the Christmas-Epiphany Season.

This year, let us concentrate not on gifts and splurging but on what is important : family and friends. These are hard times, and it's not bad for children to understand the concept of hard times. With respect for what people are going through, we have forgone the traditional Christmas Eve dinner and New Year's festivities that we have commonly celebrated. We will, of course, have the children's tea and our Epiphany Eve banquet, but this year is a year to be frugal. I encourage you all to bear that in mind. Be sparing with your spending and hold to the family—the family of the community—that is truly important. That is the biggest gift we have been given, along with the gift of the Sun of Righteousness.

We are all both mortal and immortal beings. And as we feed our physical bodies we must also feed our spiritual bodies. Listen to the message conveyed by these words from the Odes of Solomon [Ode 38] that we recite at Christmastime.

I rested in the spirit of the Lord: and the spirit raised me on high. And made me stand on my feet in the height of the Lord, before His perfection and His glory, while I was praising Him by the composition of His songs.

The spirit brought me forth before the face of the Lord: and although I was a son of man, I was named the illuminate, a son of God. For according to the greatness of the Most High, so He made me: and like His own newness He renewed me, and He anointed me from His own perfection.

And I became one of His neighbors; and my mouth was opened, like a cloud of dew. And my heart poured out as it were a gushing stream of righteousness.

And my access to Him was in peace; and I was established by the spirit of His kingdom. And I went up to the light of truth which preserved me. And it became to me a haven of salvation and set me on the arms of immortal life.

Love begins in our family life, reaches out to our friends, and embraces our neighbors. Like a seed it must be planted before it can grow. **Also, like a seed, it must be watered if it is to grow. A seed unwatered for many years will still grow many years later if it is given that precious and vital resource.** If we can express love as we do at Christmastime throughout the whole year, we will begin to live the life exemplified by Jesus.

So let us each examine our hearts. The world and our flawed mortal natures take away our ability to love one another at times. This inability harms the spirit. Each one of us should strive to rise above the limitations of the physical world and embrace the spirit, which is expressed by love. By so doing, God comes to each of us, adopting us as His son or daughter; for we are all Children of God.

That is the message this Christmas Season. Let us make a commitment to each other today to love one another however unable we may have been able to previously express that love. We need to too. Let us make a commitment to forgive the transgressions of those we love and to apologize to those whom we may have transgressed upon. I certainly apologize to any of

you I may have hurt this year and ask for your forgiveness.

In lighting the candles today in remembrance of those who have gone on to another life, let us place our trust in God who is the author of our spirit and soul. When death claims our physical bodies, it is the spirit and soul that endure and go on to a higher world if we can but experience the rebirth of spirit the we celebrate on January 6 . But if we not love – even if that love is not accepted – our spirits fade like a flame, ultimately going out. Love kindles and brightens the spirit and the soul. By loving we are made eternal, for God is Love. Love binds us to those departed, to those about us while we live, and it binds us to God. For if we do not have love, compassion, and kindness in our hearts, how can we ever hope to know God? There is no enmity so hard that goodness cannot melt.

Therefore, on this day commemorating the birth of Jesus, let us make a renewal to exemplify what he taught. This, I believe is the message of the Christmas Season: to open our hearts, forgive the transgressions of our loved ones/brothers and sisters, and love one another. To quote a line from one of the late Bishop's previous Christmas sermons: "All men and women everywhere may shine forth as the Sun of Righteousness if they but live and exemplify the love of God in their daily lives."

We should be proud of our accomplishments in this Community. Christmas is a time for celebration. So let's celebrate! Let's celebrate our Teaching; let's celebrate our fellowship; and let's celebrate our love for one another. The world is a crazy place. It is hard to find the friendship and the fellowship and the love that we experience in this Community, in spite of our familial difficulties sometimes.

This Community is moving forward, and we are growing. We are no longer concerned with merely surviving—those days are over. Not to say that we won't have our ups and downs from time to time. But let's *celebrate* the fact that we are here, that we

are established in this world, and that we are a beacon of light to those who seek the Light.

Allow me to close this Christmas message with these words from the Gospel of John:

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.

If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

You are my friends if you do what I command you.

I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. [John 15:9-15]

I wish you all a very merry Christmas, a happy Epiphany, and a joyous New Year, filled with God's many bountiful and beautiful blessings. Let us go forth from this place with renewed resolve to take the message of the Second Advent to all the world in greater power and glory, each of us shining like the Sun of Righteousness and striving to exemplify Christ in our daily lives.

God's Confirmation of the Active Principles of Divine Law



Resident members of the International Community of Christ gathered at the open-air Cathedral Church of the Americas to celebrate the anniversary of God's Confirmation of the Active Principles of Divine Law with Communion and Divine Service on August 1, 2009.

The event is recorded in Second Advent scripture in *The Book of God's Revelation*. This same book records the Revelation received by The Church on April 18, Second Advent Easter, and fifty days later on June 6, Second Advent Pentecost. Among the revelations received on June 6, The Church received instruction on the New Act of God; that is, God's conception of the Newly Created Light, a New Light that renovates the whole of creation. On this same date, The Church received instruction on the Four Newly Created Intermediary Lights that manifest through this conception.

Second Advent scripture tells us that God's manifestation of these Four Intermediary Lights fixes the Four Newly Created tables of the Law to be taught to the Ordained in holy institutions of learning. So that the unwritten code of the Law may be codified on earth for the emancipation of the human race, God has decreed Twelve Newly Created Active Principles

of Divine Law of His New Covenant, which are subordinate to the Lights of God and subordinate to the Tables of the Law, yet are instruments of the Divine Plan for human redemption.

With the Revelation given on Pentecost, June 6, 1982, God decreed these twelve Active Principles to be in force upon Confirmation. The event of Confirmation occurred on August 1, 1982, when the "New Light of God appeared over the face of the sun, confirming the Active Principles of Divine Law."



Pannuches Meal Rite Observed

The 50th Pannuches Meal Rite was observed on Saturday August 29 and the 51st Pannuches Meal Rite was observed on the evening of Saturday October 17, 2009; the Reverend Mother Ileana Isfan and Reverend Father Reano Castell officiated in the absence of the Right Reverends Gene and Sean Savoy, who were both away on a mission to Japan.

Building Projects at the Sanctuary



During the fall, workers at Red Rock Consecrated Sanctuary installed a small mobile home with wiring and plumbing hook-ups as an additional residence. Located northeast of the chapter house, residence of the Right Reverend Reano Castell and the Reverend Ted Staver, the new facility will house the Reverend Michael McIntyre, who has been actively assisting in Sanctuary projects.

In April, work crews of The Community began further checking and upgrading the water irrigation lines at the Sanctuary as well as continuing the planting of trees. The area encircling the Church of the Christian Churches is being planted with trees laid out on an enormous schematic of the Second Advent Solar Cross of Enlightenment. Once the evergreens are grown the cross will be visible from great distances and heights.

Each of these projects has been supervised by Castell and Staver, along with the Right Reverend Peter Foust, who has devoted most of his time during the last year specifically to Sanctuary undertakings.

In addition, The Right Reverend Gene Savoy Jr. has held preliminary meetings this spring with Nevada architects in regard to construction designs for a monastery complex at the Sanctuary (architect Bryan Kernin) and columbarium (Rick LaCotta). Further meetings with various panels of ministers from The Church are being scheduled as well.

Japanese Mission Up and Running

The Community's mission in Japan, led by Bishop Yukinori Matsushita, continues to work and function on a regular basis with sunrise services, meetings, classes, and public outreach offerings.

ICC Observes 47th Feb. 2 Celebration

On Monday, February 2, 2009, The Community gathered at the Church of New Epiphany for Sunrise Divine Services in celebration of the forty-seventh annual observation of the Manifestation of the Sun of Righteousness, February 2, 1962.

SPRING 2001



Bishop Gene Savoy Sr. greeting Rt. Rev. Reano Castell at the Cathedral Church after Sunrise Service

On January 14, 2001, The Most Right Reverend Gene Savoy Sr. was invited by the Reverend Onie Cooper to deliver the Benediction at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Service held at the Second Baptist Church in Reno, Nevada.

*

In February 2001, irrigation and fencing was installed at the Church of the Christian Churches to provide mule deer with much needed forage this Spring, thus completing the second phase of projects negotiated with the Nevada Department of Forestry and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to preserve and enhance the Sanctuary's wildlife. In addition, 2,200 feet of irrigation from the Sanctuary's reservoir was laid in preparation for the installation of deer drinkers later this

summer.

*

On February 15, 2001, the International Community of Christ hosted an ecumenical luncheon at the Rectory-Abbey at Bishopstead. Since 1999 Northern Nevada clergy have been meeting at informal luncheons, which are hosted quarterly by one or another of the area churches that support interfaith work. This luncheon was the first hosted by The Second Advent Church. Nearly forty area clergy attended. The Most Right Reverend Gene Savoy Sr. was able to introduce the representatives of the area's mainline churches who were in attendance to Second Advent doctrine and tradition.

*

On March 21, 2001, the Reverend Robert Petrovich represented the Second Advent Community at an interfaith service in support of the area's Muslim Community held at the Northern Nevada Muslim Center. The service was held to bring the attention of the Reno community to the concerns resulting from the robbery and beating of two Muslim elders in front of the Muslim Center. Rev. Petrovich was able to speak to a number of Muslim Community leaders following the service, including Dr. Ahmed Essa.

*

In March 2001 The Most Right Reverend Gene Savoy Sr. received a special invitation to attend the Welcoming Service for the new Episcopalian bishop. The Reverend Gene Savoy Jr. attended on his behalf.

*

On Saturday, April 7, 2001, the congregation of the International Community of Christ, Church of the Second Advent was formally advised that the reorganized Church of Latter-Day

Saints has officially changed its name to “Community of Christ.” An news report on the topic appeared in the *Reno Gazette-Journal* the same day.

*

In April 2001 reconstruction began on the Oratory of the Monastery Gardens at Red Rock Consecrated Sanctuary.

