



Resurrection by Mimi Coleman

Seminary Newsletter

of the Christian Community in North America

Dear Friends of the Seminary,

Looking back at this first 'year' of Seminary in Toronto, it feels like we spent time walking in a beautiful rose garden. The beauty was in beholding the blossoming of hearts. The blooming of our students was many-colored.

Deepening one's relationship to surrender and grace, taking ownership of the inner 'yes' and 'no' or finding the true meaning of solitude, these were all roses that we saw. And the scent of this beauty is still around us.

And yet, please don't imagine that Patrick and I were the gardeners! For the true gardener is the one who tends to and cultivates each one of us that we all may open up more to the 'sun'.

In fact, as directors, we too experienced blossoming. In my first year as director, I am most surprised with how much I am learning. Yes, to be a Seminary director certainly involves teaching, but learning is the main thing. In this way, Patrick and I are were also flowers in HIS garden.

I am deeply grateful to The Gardener, also to Patrick and our students for helping to create such rich fragrance!

And today, as we walk through this time of pandemic, it is important to warm ourselves with new sources of light. Our current project of 'The Light in Every Thing', weekly podcast conversations between the two directors, has been for us like a sun-ray breaking through the clouds. We hope that this light we have found can be of some help in this challenging moment of world history.

And let us not forget about the buds and sprouts that live in the soil of our future! We are very much looking forward to receiving new students in the autumn, God willing, as well as the returning students. And, as many of you know, ordinations here in Toronto are on the horizon for December 11,12, 13 of 2020. Mark your calendars! This means that we will have a third track of students, the candidates for Ordination, those flowers who we hope will eventually produce seed.

Faithfully and gratefully yours,



Jonah Evans

Table of Contents

Opening Letter

Opening Letter from Jonah.... p. 1

Prayer and Sacrament

Praying for Oneself?... p. 3
by Victoria Capon

The Sacramental Sphere... p. 5
by Lisa Majoros

The Cup - homily... p. 6
by Mónica Sánchez Valderrama

A Prayer for Our Time... p. 7
by Erica MacLennan

The Word and the Arts

The Times, They Are a-Changin' p.8
by Robert Bower

The Christ Voice... p.10
by Mimi Coleman

Finding my Voice and Speech... p.11
by Mónica Sánchez Valderrama

Finding the True Voice... p.12
by Gillian Cross

Music & the Mystery Dramas... p.14
by Sylvia Kuilman

Strader for Our Times... p.15
by Jeana Lee

A Way Through... p.19
by Tish Pierce with Regine Kurek

Table of Contents (cont.)

Connecting and Community

The Colors of Money... p.22
by Jeana Lee

Growing Together - homily... p.23
by Jong-Won Choi

Bearing our Loads - homily... p.25
by Kate Kennedy

He is Our Peace... p.26
by Dhruva Corrigan

Reflections From a Friend p.28
by Shiela Johns

Thank you, Janice Morgante!... p.30

Closing Letter

Flames - A Letter from Patrick... p.31

Photos and Info

End of Year Presentations... p.32

Seminary Group Photos... p.33

Contact Info... p.34

PRAYER AND SACRAMENT

Praying for Oneself?

Victoria Capon, Ordination Preparation, United States

Praying for oneself is often the hardest prayer to offer the Divine. We may feel self conscious, selfish, egotistical, or just too focused on ourselves when we consider doing this. But if, in our daily lives, we want to know and walk with Christ and serve the greater community out of Christ led deeds, we really have nowhere to begin but with our selves.

A dear friend of mine recently asked me how one would pray for oneself and this is an expanded description of what I wrote to her.

For me, praying for myself includes four aspects that are also the beginning of my daily prayers. First, acknowledging my unworthiness, second, offering deep heartfelt thanks, third, naming and affirming who Christ Jesus is to me, and fourth, asking for healing, guidance, strength, forgiveness, or what ever my need is at the forefront for me that morning.

Praying for myself is something that I have only learned how to do since attending seminary. Rev. Jonah Evans was one of the priests that came for a week in Spring Valley, NY, to offer us a morning course. In the course he offered during my first year, he opened each morning gathering with a prayer. The prayer always began with a prayer for himself, which I deeply appreciated for his open vulnerability. He drew from the familiar words and gestures that come from the beginning of the offertory in the Act of Consecration, beginning with describing our selves as “unworthy creatures.”

Through my years at seminary I have learned that only with an objective perspective, not from a place of beating ourselves up, but through observing ourselves from a higher and less attached place, can we see our fallen humanness more clearly. We can honestly see our ourselves through knowing and acknowledging our strayings, our denials of Christ’s being, and our weaknesses. When the material world blinds us to the spirit in all things, when our lower self gets the better of us and we speak or act in ways that we later regret, when we

get caught up in our daily lives and forget that Christ walks with us, those are our strayings. If we can acknowledge our fallen selves, then the Divine has something to work with. If we can not do this, then we block ourselves from the healing powers of the Holy Spirit. If we can also have compassion for our own unworthy humanness, then we can much more easily and honestly offer that compassion to others.

Then, I thank Christ for all that he has given. I thank him for this day, the struggles, the pain and the opportunity to learn from it. I thank him for the people in my life no matter if they are people I am having a hard time with or not. I thank him for the grace and the truth that is offered and shown to me, and his endless patience and love. I do not speak this whole list every day necessarily, but just what comes to the forefront.

Through offering thanks, we can unite our soul with him as he unites himself with the Father God while offering thanks during the Last Supper. These are the words that bless the wine and the bread and as it is spoken during the transubstantiation in our Act of Consecration. This is a very deep and powerful mystery. Giving thanks to Christ in itself is a precious gesture with endless rewards. I have discovered that by offering heart-felt thanks to him in any moment, whether after a challenging or painful situation, or after a beautiful day, this act can be the opening of a conversation or communion with Christ. Thanks is the plate on which Christ's spiritual food, spiritual love, and healing is served. It is the basis for communion with Christ in any moment.

When affirming my relationship with Christ Jesus, I answer the question he poses to his disciples and to us - "who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). I acknowledge him as our sibling, our friend, and also our healer and redeemer, the Way, the Truth and the Life, our God. In doing this, we turn toward him and follow him in this gesture of affirmation of relationship. We can more consciously walk with him when we acknowledge who he is to us.

Next, I ask for his healing, strength, or guidance and then listen. I ask for the capacity to see, hear, and know myself and others through His Eyes, His Ears, His Heart. Through asking for strength, healing and guidance and then listening, in asking to know myself and others as he knows me, then I can much more readily open my heart and offer love and compassion to myself and to other people no matter who they are.

These four steps are part of my personal prayer life, and praying for myself becomes a prayer for the world. Yes, we are individuals, we are also inseparable from the world around us. We all breath the same air. We all feel pain and we all suffer. We all came from the same beginning and we will all return. Through Christ Jesus's love, we can transform our fallen selves and begin to change the world.

The Sacramental Sphere

Lisa Majoros, Continuing Student, United States

Sometimes we might have the experience of arriving early to the chapel before the Act of Consecration begins, the morning light from outside filtering gently in through the chapel windows. In silence, we see seven candles standing on the altar. They were here before us. They are still unlit. They are waiting.

A door opens and a new light is brought from an inner room. A server walks in, carrying a flame. She touches the flame to the top of each candle, and they light up, one by one. Each one radiates brightness. Together they create a glow that fills the space around the altar. Into this glow moves a priest; and a book and a cup and a plate are placed before the candles. Into the glow, the priest speaks. Within the glow, elements are consecrated. The candle light has illuminated a sphere within the morning daylight, a sphere where a great transformation can happen.

We sit in our chairs in anticipation, feeling the sun rising within us, recognizing the presence of the light that will fill our daylight, waiting to be touched by the flame of the Spirit. When the priest turns, carrying the substances that have been transformed in the spirit-filled glow of the candles, we rise to meet them. We each one take the light-drenched substances into us, and we feel the touch of spirit-light on the side of our face as we hear the peace greeting. We might feel something change within us. Together we become a light-filled sphere within which a word can be spoken, within which something new can happen, and into which others can also move. Individually we stand bright; together we glow in Christ communion.

Soon we hear the words “the Act of Consecration of Man, thus it has been” and the priest and servers, the cup, plate, and book all leave the room. The candles remain, glowing over the altar. The server returns



Altarpiece by Sylvia Kuilman

and releases the flames from each candle, one by one. The glow melts into the room, spreading from the altar into the far reaches of the chapel, invisible.

As we greet each other outside the chapel, is our Christened glow visible? It expands and fills the space between us into the far reaches of where we go in our day.

The Cup - *homily**

Mónica Sánchez Valderrama, Continuing Student, Peru

A cup is a vessel open to receive something poured in from above and has a strong base on which to stand. It has been used since ancient times for festivities and religious rituals. In Genesis 44:1-2, part of the story of Joseph takes place in Egypt, where he orders his silver cup to be placed in the sack of one of his brothers. This act ultimately led to uniting the family. In Roman times, one cup was used for the whole family. It was placed in the middle of the table for everyone's use and was considered a sacred object.

Human beings, who work together gathered around a shared ideal, a project or initiative can also create a vessel, a vessel for offering their work by elevating it to heaven and receiving the grace to realize what emerged as an inspiration; that is how over time many human initiatives have helped the positive evolution of humanity, such as movements of thought, implementation in harmony with nature, great architectural, artistic and literary expressions.

It is how the human being turns, his work together, into a vessel for the transforming forces.

At the last supper, Christ raised the cup to receive the grace of the Father and the wine, from that moment on, became the bearer of his life-power, became his blood. By drinking from the cup we enter into communion with Him and with each other; we do this act in common, in unity, we form a community. So also, the value of the cup takes another meaning and now is called chalice. We become a new kind of family, with a cup in our table, we transformed into a Community Chalice into with Christ's Spirit may be poured to create a new opportunity for humanity a new life in the spirit.

**hom-i-ly* /'hämələ/

noun: **homily**; plural noun: **homilies**

1. a religious discourse that is intended primarily for spiritual edification rather than doctrinal instruction; a sermon.

A Prayer for Our Time

Erica MacLennan, Beginning Student, B.C. Canada

I wrote this prayer in response to a question posed to me a few days ago: Do we have enough love to overcome the fear of death?

My response was: No, only Christ Jesus does.

So then I wondered about praying about this Love to overcome Fear. The result is below.

Oh Christ, You who was, You who is,
 You, Christ Jesus, who comes again:
Fear and anxiety are breaking in upon the world, are
 breaking in upon us.

So we offer up to You, Oh Christ,
 our love,
 our striving to unite with You,
 our longing to abide in Your Love.

May it be
 through Your Grace we become sources of
 Your Love;
 through Your Grace we become bearers of
 Your Peace;
 through Your Grace lives in us
 Your Life and Light,

Your Love
Your Peace,
Your Life and Light, Oh Christ,
 flow through us into the world.

Amen

THE WORD AND THE ARTS

The Times, They Are a-Changin': Reflections on *Christianity As Mystical Fact*

Robert Bower, Beginning Student, United States

About 15 years ago, my then boss, Farmer John and I lamented over a farm worker with whom we were struggling. We concluded it was pointless and agreed that this person “would never change”. Upon hearing this, Lora, a dear friend of mine and a co-worker, who has since crossed the threshold (in 2007), said, “I have to believe that all people can change; for if I don’t believe that people can change, then how can I believe that I can change.”

Full stop. Period. She, of course, was right.

I was reminded of this in our *Anthroposophy and Christianity* class when we were studying *Christianity As Mystical Fact* in our Winter term. This foundational class aims to provide us with a solid base in both the physical and spiritual worlds such that as one moves towards the priesthood one is ever more prepared to think and speak clearly. We began back in October arduously working through Rudolf Steiner’s early book *A Theory of Knowledge Based on Goethe’s World Conception*, 1st published in 1886. Understanding this book has been difficult but important for me. Coupled with my pre-seminary assignment to present on Steiner’s 1903 essay on *Reincarnation and Karma: a Perspective Necessitated by the Natural Scientific Point of View* at the beginning of last fall, I have been thoroughly immersed in working towards developing my own thinking in the same direction as that employed by Steiner when he brought forth anthroposophy to humanity. This essay may lead one to conclude that the idea of evolution is more perfectly exemplified by the picture of an incarnating human soul over multiple lives than in the commonly held modern view of the physical evolution of the species (which requires many leaps over missing links to be ignored).



Conversations after the service

As we learned of the thinking which Rudolf Steiner wished to cultivate, through this *Theory of Knowledge* book, in those whom he hoped would take up the study of spiritual science, or anthroposophy, a base began to be built (though, in me, it is still far from solid). In taking up our next book, *Christianity as Mystical Fact*, I was led to a deeper understanding of it than I had previously.

Add to it all of the other courses which we experienced in our time at the Seminary during its first year in Toronto, and one began to notice parallels and cross confirmations throughout our studies. This brings me to a small section within *Christianity as Mystical Fact*. Our group effort to work through this book and individually share sections of it with our fellow students, led me to a brilliant passage therein about *Change*. Rudolf Steiner chose the words of Plutarch, a Greek Platonic philosopher and priest, to convey within the evolution of the mysteries the needed understanding of the temporal vis a vis the eternal. And initiates of Plutarch's time, as evidenced by Plutarch's clear writing on the matter, were led to understand that man's own "mortal nature is in a middle state between becoming and passing away." And that we are presented with but a "faint unstable image" of all that we perceive through our physical senses. Steiner summarized this by writing "in the flux of becoming lies everything which the senses take for real being—and that applies not only to the things round about, but to oneself." Plutarch expresses that we are constantly dying to whom we were. Further we have "a ridiculous fear of one death, we who have already died so many deaths, and are still dying!"

If one exercises clear thinking, one then is led to realize that, of course, we can change. For already, we are constantly changing. And this change is not just on a physical level. Delights, admirations, disapprovals, loves, and hates, all change within our souls. Plutarch concludes, "for without change it is not reasonable that a person should have different experiences and emotions; and if he changes, he is not the same person, he has no permanent being, but changes his very nature as one personality in him succeeds to another. Our senses, through ignorance of reality, falsely tell us that what appears to be is."

Lora inherently knew this wisdom and, further, the harm we do to others when we imprison them in our thinking about them. This imprisoning appears wrong on many levels. Christ doesn't have this problem. In the seminary, we have been led to work toward seeing

others as the Christ sees them – to hear, in our being, the words of Christ and to offer these words to others when called for. In these changing times may we heed these calls to be open towards others and work towards developing our own capacities for love such that the love of Christ may flow through us.

The Christ Voice

Mimi Coleman, Continuing Student, United States

Writing a sermon is one way to listen for the voice of Christ. It is a "tuning in" with both humility and in confidence. Without humility one cannot approach it in the right way; without confidence one would not try at all. Writing a sermon feels like a miraculous transformation—from "How can a few words that I might put together possibly do justice to the being and presence of Our Lord?" to then having an idea that is not only adequate but seems to have grace-filled abundance, so that the words pour onto the page from my heart.

During Passion-tide we hear such a story of contrast: John 6:1-15, the feeding of 5000. We ourselves are living the contrast as well: we experience the emptiness of soul and mournful awaiting and we hear of this miraculous story of plenty. That is a good example of the journey of contrasts one can take while writing a sermon.

It starts with a *voice of questioning*: Christ knows how they will be fed, but asks anyway where food can be bought. That is like me knowing I will have to write something but feeling uncertain. Where will I start? Where can the words be found?

Other voices come in as well: The voice of Philip, who seems to say it cannot be done (they cannot afford it). That is like my inner voice that says this is difficult and that I cannot do this.

Then the voice of Simon Peter who seems to find a possibility (a boy with five loaves and two fishes) but then questions: "What is that among so many?" That is like my inner voice saying "Maybe I can do this, but I am not really sure if I have what it takes."

Finally the voice of Christ again, "*Make the people sit down*" and we hear there is much green grass in that place. That reminds me that I can really do this! I have to sit down and experience the plenty. I can

give thanks, like Christ Jesus gave thanks over the loaves and fishes, I can be grateful for this opportunity to sit at the feet of my master and experience his abundant and unconditional love and grace. The people eat their fill. I write and write, I cross out words. Suddenly my idea seems to open up, the words can flow out onto the page. It is not like the words are perfect but what comes out is more than enough material to use for the purpose. Thank you Dear Lord!

Christ Jesus tells them to "*Gather up the surplus, that nothing be lost*" and they fill twelve baskets! I have what I need to offer a sermon. The words on the page are just a beginning. Once I stand before the congregation something will be added. I need not doubt. I might forget something but nothing will be lost. The words will come as they need to come, an extra anecdote or example. A final thought.

Sermons are not just about words, but examples of the most unusual arithmetic: $5 + 2 = 12$.

Finding My Voice and Speech

Mónica Sánchez Valderrama, Continuing Student, Peru



Art Teacher Regine Kurek and continuing student Mónica Sánchez Valderrama contemplate Mónica's resurrection painting.

I have come to inhabit a new space within myself. In order to go within, I need to first cross through an old space; and this act of crossing helps me affirm that the new space, which I have come to inhabit, is what I want with all my might. There, I find myself in a starting point toward the new.

In order to recognize this new space, I have had to use all the strength of my being. I could do this because of the confidence gained by having accompaniment and new tools. Some of these tools I gained previous to coming to Seminary, other new tools I encountered along my path these last two years.

One of the greatest encounters on this path has been to recognize myself within my own voice, with all that is carried by this image. From rediscovering myself within the timbre of my voice, later to recognizing it, and identifying with it, this path has been challenging and laborious.

It has taken me a long time to achieve clear pronunciation in English. To speak and to utter my voice in this new language, like a daily exercise, has not been easy. I could not defend myself, or overcome

potholes as I could in my mother tongue. I should be able, by now, to pronounce English well, taking special care over the consonants; this allowed me to see how I did it in Spanish - I found much to practice in my speech, helping my authentic voice could begin to flow.

I continue in this work; I know that it will take time, however, to reach this point of understanding, to find what I need to work on within myself. I had to walk a long path and take courage at times, to move through my wounds, conflicts and great confusions. I have come to recognize that which, up until now, has helped me move forward, that which has had to die within me to open up space and let the New enter in. That is how I now can walk across the old ruins of the past in order to enter the new space that I begin to inhabit, and that is where I hear more and more my own voice, the one I can recognize and accept, like a gift from the divine, to each of us human beings.

That is how the scroll of life continues to unroll...

Finding the True Voice: My Voice, Our Voices, His Voice

Gillian Cross, Continuing Student, Australia

At the seminary we have many opportunities to speak! - in class, articulating and discussing the new thoughts brought into our midst, naming the gaps in our understanding, facilitating a study group, presenting a part of the class content, for example, a section of An Outline of Esoteric Science, exercises in speech class, learning lines and performing scenes of the Mystery Dramas, and individual conversations with the directors about our path. And this year we second year students started writing and speaking sermons. Whether it's everyday talk, class discussion, or an event culminating in speech, speaking is the forming force of so much of our work, development, and unfolding of our destinies.

Linda Sussman, in the "Speech of the Grail" speaks about the dwelling that language builds within us and among us, a place to abide. We can form this dwelling through how we speak, including our inner speech towards ourselves, together when we speak with each other, and when we speak with the supersensible worlds in meditation and prayer. Through the very way we speak to ourselves,

others, and the invisible worlds, we are building where we live and how we live, we are creating reality. When we are striving to change, let go of, and raise our habitual and unhelpful inner and outer speech, the calling for something new breaks down the old way and seeks the new.



Participants in Bastiaan Baan's Open Course on The Christ Voice of Conscience share what they have learned in a final group circle time.

When speaking a sermon, each of us has stood before the congregation and spoken words that have been given their meaning through life, through dying and becoming. After inspiring class work we would work on a sermon at home and bring what we wrote to class to share it within the trust and faithfulness established in our group. Hearing in reflection what we shared, what spoke and touched those that listened, helped what was inessential to fall away. The sermon work, for me at least, was grace and wrestle, lead down a path to a truth I didn't know I knew, to the discovery of a new voice. But then we were called to the next step: into the chapel. With Christ as our helping guide through

this process of becoming, we then spoke to the congregation before the lighting of the candles for the service. A candle at the side table with the substances let those in the chapel know that there would be a little more light this morning. With humbling joy I had the chance to witness how this speech, the life of the Word, changed each of us. Another part of each of us was made visible, we were more ourselves, a healing unity deepened among us.

In Mark 11 Jesus Christ cleanses the temple and teaches "Has it not been written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations." In his house we speak, as individuals, one voice - the voice that all can hear and can understand. Our houses can be filled with many things, good and evil, kindness or apathy, openness or judgement. Our 'I' can be a house of prayer, a dwelling that can be shaped and filled with prayerful, conscious speech, speech that fills our temple like incense and builds it anew, by the Word that heals and makes whole. "Sick is the dwelling...but through your Word..."

How Music Finds the Light of Sun in the Mystery Drama:

The Portal of Initiation, scenes 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 during the weeks of preparation with Patrick Kennedy and the Open Course with Daniel Hafner (March 2-6).

Sylvia Kuilman, Continuing Student, Holland

“Wouldn’t it be nice to have music with the Mystery Drama!”

“Good idea,” my director Patrick answers, continuing: “Maybe you can think of ‘something’ that goes with it!”

Since I had never really experienced the Mystery Dramas and so strongly considered the depth, the beauty, and the secrets of life in Rudolf Steiner’s Mystery Dramas... No way can I think of ‘something’ that goes with it!

Shortly after the start of rehearsals, I hear in my sleep in the middle of the night the missing link; the melody I have been searching for. Yes! That must be it: yes yes yes! And then it disappears as I want to grab my pencil to write it down. I feel sorry and happy at the same time and go back to sleep. The next morning there lies a little red book with a rose cross on the front cover on the kitchen table:

Mystery Dramas, composed by Daniel Hafner, with two melodies in it written down for piano! What a beautiful surprise. The one without words (which Rudolf Steiner at the time hums at the rehearsal when the other Maria enters), the other one a song with piano accompaniment, the song of Sophia’s children:

The light of sun is flooding through open spaces

The singing of the birds is resounding through fields of air

The plants come forth from the being of earth in blessing

And souls of men rise on high in thankful feelings

Up to the spirits of the world!

Happy as a child, I show my find to Patrick at the seminary. The two simple but pure and wonderful pieces go very nicely with it all! The first melody weaves at the beginning of both scenes 3 and 4 on the Tuesday afternoon performance and scenes 5,6 and 7 on the Wednesday afternoon performance, as a repeating theme through

the scenes. At the end of scene 7, the second melody sounds as a heavenly gift to the sealing of the marriage of Maria and Johannes, a gift to the world.

On the last morning of the Open Course we all sing the song above with its magical words, myself at the piano, with Daniel as our cantor, before sharing and rounding out the treasures of the previous days.



Strader (Jeana Lee) and Capesius (Mimi Coleman) appear in the meditation of Johannes (Jong-Won Choi)

Strader for our Times

Jeana Lee, Continuing Student, United States

I was given the character of Strader from Rudolf Steiner's four Mystery Dramas to befriend over the summer, to present to my fellow students in the fall, and to portray on stage during the Seminary Open Course in the spring. As with all the characters in the Mystery Dramas, Strader's life and earlier lives can give us useful examples of the long process of a human initiation. In our modern times, Strader is especially interesting because he is the engineer, the maker of technology. He is the character most influenced by one of the two polar extremes that characterize the Adversaries of humanity. Ahriman, who is strongly active in the mechanized technological world of today, gives Strader much of his valuable thinking and reasoning capacities. Strader is able to overcome Ahriman's hold on him, but whether technology can also be freed from Ahriman's dominance is an open question.

In the earliest incarnation of the individuality we know as Strader, he is the representative of the fire element in the Egyptian temple. Fire has the qualities of giving light and clarity; it has the quality of warmth, and of transformation. These characteristics are revealed in the individuality of Strader through his later incarnations, especially in the current incarnation of Doctor Strader.

The next incarnation that the Dramas depict is in the Middle Ages. It is useful to keep in mind that more plays were planned, which would likely have revealed additional incarnations and illuminated the working of karma more clearly. Even so, there are threads that one can follow between the lives that are shown. In the Middle Ages, the individuality of Strader is called Simon the Jew. He suffers with an inner conflict wherein he sees the Christ Being and longs to reach out

to Him, but experiences the work of the Adversary in his own human nature holding him back. He is unable to overcome the Adversary within him during this incarnation and his life is one of solitude and doubt. At the same time, this Adversarial power is what gives him the ability to glean knowledge about the medicinal uses of plants, which allows him to heal others. He brings future technology in to his present moment.

In the first Drama (The Portal of Initiation), when we meet Strader in his present incarnation, the working of Ahriman is strong in him. He is a man who values pure reason and disdains everything but scientifically proven fact. As a youth he had felt the bliss of a spiritual life in the cloister, but it was spirit estranged from matter, and when he encountered natural science he felt betrayed and was thrown into doubt. He renounced the cloister and embraced materialism with zeal.

Again Strader is thrown into doubt and his faith in empirical reasoning is shaken when he witnesses the seer Theodora having a prescient vision of the spiritual world. He cannot deny that her vision is a real phenomenon, and this forces him to recognize the limits of scientific research that is estranged from the spirit. This touches a deep longing in him, because only in the spirit world can the soul feel truly at home.

Strader's crisis is intensified when he sees the painting of his friend Capesius in which something beyond the visible world is expressed. Somehow the artist Johannes Thomasius is able to show what is usually invisible in the being of Capesius. Strader decides that all thinking is in vain and all knowledge is illusion. For a man whose purpose and being have been the pursuit of knowledge, this is a devastating blow.

Ahriman had given Strader his scientific certainty and strength of thought without warmth of feeling, and Strader cannot silence his longing for the truth of the human heart that no amount of knowledge can explain. Through Theodora's help, he begins to find the light within his heart and the courage to trust himself.

Even so, we find Strader in the second Drama (The Trial of the Soul), having given up his research and taken up work in a factory. He sees life as a meaningless treadmill. Yet, during this time he also reaches certainty about the truth of repeated earthly lives, as the one



Students enact the final moments of Scene 7 of the Soul's Awakening. From left: Johannes (Jeana Lee), Maria (Jong-Won Choi), Theodora (Sylvie Rober), Luna (Tish Pierce), Benedictus (Gillian Cross), Philia (Lori Scotchko)

remaining fruit of his scientific reasoning. We learn that he was adopted as a child and has thus recapitulated something of the experience of Simon the Jew, being a stranger in his own home.

In the third Drama (The Guardian of the Threshold), this pain of isolation and loneliness is largely overcome through his relationship with Theodora. In her he finds the only source of certainty in his life. Her experiences of the spiritual world prove to him its existence, and even though he cannot himself experience it, he can overcome all doubt of its reality. During their seven happy years of marriage, Strader recognizes that his work in technology, and the invention of machinery can be enriched by spiritual activity, and he is inspired to create a new machine.

Then Theodora dies, and for her sake Strader turns to the teacher Benedictus. He takes up spirit discipleship of his own, rather than approaching the spirit world through Theodora as he had done. Facing Ahriman in the spiritual realm, Strader reaches the limits of his human thinking. It is as though his thinking was a hammer that hit the anvil of Ahriman, and in doing so, became conscious of itself. Strader is finally able to experience the spirit directly, through this consciousness of thinking itself, and through his love for Theodora that warmly permeates this striving towards the light.

In the fourth Drama (The Souls' Awakening), this warmly enlightened thinking has allowed Strader to invent a new machine, one that will create artistic work, of Johannes Thomasius' design. His goal is to make the machine produce works of art. But his attempts fail. In this abyss of powerlessness, Strader encounters his teacher Benedictus, who tells him that he, Strader, carries seeds for future times that would do harm if they manifested on earth too soon, and this is why his work will continue to be blocked. Ahriman wants to shake Strader's faith in himself, in his invention, but with the help of Benedictus and the love of Theodora, Strader is able to recognize Ahriman's reality, which weakens Ahriman's hold on him. Even so, Strader's invention is never built. He reaches a kind of resignation, a soul-maturity, expressed by his repeated words: "And yet will come what has to come about."

At the end of The Souls' Awakening, Strader dies. The man who once valued only cold reason had become united in love with everything life could offer, as his circle of friends attest. The light of clarity has been warmed by the community of friends. He found spirit in matter



Director Patrick Kennedy leads the seminary student body after the Mystery Dramas' final scene in recognizing the hard work and accomplishments of speech teacher Sylvie Roberge.

and matter in spirit, and through his process self-enlightenment, he brought the seed of a new technology into existence.

As the representative of fire, Strader is the agent of transformation. Machines, technologies are the transformers of culture. Consider the effects of fire itself as a technology, or of the wheel, or the printing press, and how they have fundamentally altered human culture. We can look also at the technologies at work in our modern world and how our cultural practices have changed through our use of them.

The question of what Strader's machine might have been is one of great interest. Could such a machine ever exist? What activity of human beings would be needed to create such a machine? If we look to Strader as an example, we see that he faces powerlessness, uncertainty and doubt, and then he opens himself to love and to experiences of the spiritual world. He uses his individual gifts to transform technology for the use of the spirit, within the community of his karmic companions. The moral capacities that Strader gains through the pains of his life's journey enable him to work into the material world in a transformative way.

In our own times, our conscious and conscientious use of technology can have creative power. Bringing moral virtues, like compassion, patience, and joy to our use of technology can actually redeem this realm of Ahriman. During times of isolation, computer screens can become portals into the homes of friends, can facilitate hearts connecting, and the presence of Christ where two or more are gathered in His name.

A Way Through

Tish Pierce, Beginning Student, United States, interview with art teacher, Regine Kurek

Every Monday during the autumn and winter terms in Toronto, the seminarians were given the space, the time, and the materials to create art! Our teacher and guide in this was Regine Kurek, the director and founder of Arscura, the school of art which is currently based at The Christian Community Church in Toronto. Regine has held her classes in this space for many years; now she is on the faculty of the seminary as well. After experiencing two terms of Regine's classes I was curious and intrigued about how she had gathered all that she had brought to us. And so we sat down and talked about her background, her inspirations, and her mission.



Regine Kurek with Tish Pierce

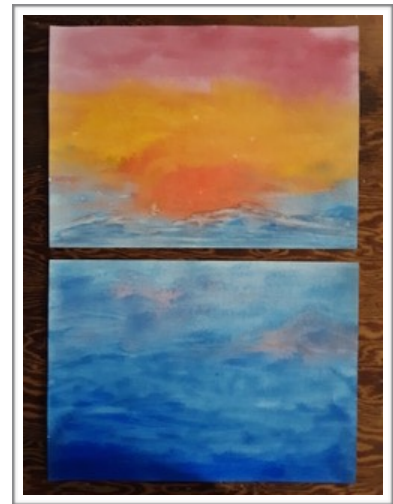
At the end of our two semesters, Regine hung the “altar paintings” that we had made. It was a project that we worked on in the last three sessions, although Regine said that we could have worked on them for many, many weeks. We attempted these after having a myriad of experiences in the art classes. I was looking at these paintings with some community members who had participated in the Arscura Program and had done “altar paintings” as well. They were trying to put into words the experiences that they had had. It was something about “going through,” whatever it turns out to be. It is not so much about what you have in the end. I spoke to Regine about this.

Regine: Years ago, Jonah asked me to create an art process during Holy Week that he wanted to offer to the community. This became a five-day workshop with lectures by him and artistic explorations led by me through The Holy Week. He had led us through the Act of Consecration of Man, through its four stages—Gospel, Offering, Transubstantiation, and Communion. At that time, it became clear to me, more spiritually and more cognitively clear, that it truly was an archetype, what I had been offering out of my own experience in art classes. It was what I called “dying and being born, dying and being re-born.” I never consciously connected the two paths, the religious path and the artistic path; though, of course, in theory, I would have said art, science, and religion are one for me. And so there are layers of growing into this idea of art as a modality for transformation, for healing, for inner development.

I was interested in the layers. She brought so many different experiences to us in the art classes. In the first term we worked with wet-on-wet watercolor and in the second term some black and white chalk and conte drawing and acrylic paints—these were the media. The classes were filled with a variety of experiences brought to us in the form of ‘invitations.’ In the very first class, Regine invited us to create a kind of landscape of where you are now and then to share that with another person. So, we looked at each other’s paintings. We had breathing space. We had the opportunity to talk about our next task, which was to make another painting that was growing out of one of the sides of the original painting—to choose one of the four directions. *R: I wanted to give an opportunity to expand from what was. It’s interesting to see “this is the future; this is the past.”* We were given the space, the time and the materials to contemplate, to explore and to do.

What was her journey as an artist, therapist, and teacher? What were the layers? Regine did an art training, a teacher training, has a degree in Anthroposophical Art Therapy, and a diploma in Biographical Counseling. Her first teacher was Martin Domke, who was a friend of the family and a student of the Bauhaus teacher, Oskar Schlemmer. *R: The Bauhaus ideal is that all the arts come together for the benefit and the purpose of human community in the Gesamtkunstwerk (a complete or integrated work of art). It was a deeply social ideal that they lived, too.* As a child, she and her sister spent time in Martin Domke’s studio where he gave them paints and clay and told them stories. She later would do a Foundation Studies in Art with him. Her next teacher was Herman Kirchner who developed a real process for people with special needs with form drawing. He kind of lifted these socialist, even communist ideas into more of an anthroposophical and spiritual consciousness regarding the arts. And then with Rudolf Steiner and Waldorf pedagogy, a whole other layer came into this, that emphasized the deeper healing and spiritual dimensions.

I experienced her class as being artistically and, very subtly, spiritual and healing. It wasn’t just in the exercises she brought but how she brought them. We started each class sitting in a circle and spending time looking at the work from the previous class that Regine had hung, then she would bring something new for contemplation and then invite us to do an exercise that she had suggested. And at the end of class we would spend a good amount of time looking at each other’s work.



In this exercise, one painting became an expansion of the first. Painting by Tish Pierce.

Things would come up in this process that touched on themes that we had been studying in the seminary. In the first term, we worked on a full color wheel with the light and darkness in it. Then we were to mix the reds and the blues from the sides and the black from the bottom to make peach blossom, which could be called a spiritual color. I was shocked in realizing that we had to add black in order to attain it! Later the peach blossom experience would come back in a feeling for me when we studied demonology and polarities in the class on the Gospel of St. Mark taught by Anand Mandaiker.

In the second term, we first started with exercises in black and white. Then, as a continuation, we did another with a base of black and white and added red to it and were asked to allow a face to emerge. Regine had worked with us in preparatory exercises in drawing faces, in scribbling faces, and drawing faces without looking and then she said, “you have the face in you.” A face did emerge and the experience was very strong. Was it demonic? Was it beautiful? My feelings about it went back and forth.

R: I love this exercise, to work with the black and white and then to bring the red in. It has both aspects—it could look quite demonic—it really has the whole gamut, right? When you bring the black and the red together, the peach blossom can emerge. And so both sides are there.

R: I heard so many times, from both Patrick and Jonah (also in Jonah's work with our community during the last three years even before the seminary was here), of what their aims are for the students: It's not so much to produce beautiful art. That's not why this is on display now [the exhibit of our work in the community room]. But it's for you and for us, therefore, for everyone to experience—Can I go there artistically, can I bring myself into this situation and find myself in the unknown in some way, and come out the other end with something valuable? It's not to fix everything or to be perfect, but to be able to do it, to be an example. The process of art-making goes through a crisis, goes through dying to a new birth. It's a process that is painful; you bring something and you feel exposed. Most likely what you first see are the aspects of the unredeemed. So, you are constantly facing your double or your unfinishedness. And yet, if you are an artist you have these incredible ideals—many people do hold these imaginations of perfection, that we hardly ever reach.

R: This is what the directors of the seminary gave as the purpose or goal for the arts classes—to offer opportunities for the students to take this perspective: to meet myself and to recognize myself and, to reach further, to reach beyond. To recognize where I am - because you're doing that all the time. You are assessing

and self-assessing and you are being assessed - To recognize my vulnerability, maybe, my fragility, where I'm good, where I'm strong, and where I'm one-sided, or where I'm not practiced ...And, yet, to want to go further, without inflation, (these are my [Regine's] words) without having to beat myself up, because we are no longer following the old path of self-flagellation. To find and walk that middle path, to find Christ in everything—in me, in this search, me on this path.

T. This brings us back to the original question. How is it different working with seminarians? Different from others in your classes? I think it's not very different.

R: It is for every human being. This path, the artistic path, is the same for all of us, because I could say we are all artists. We are the priest, the artist, the healer, the teacher, right? We are in this creative field. We are working with human beings; we have to have creativity and we are doing that in the spirit. Again, it brings these-- art, science, religion—into a unity again; we have the possibility of becoming fully human. And that's how I have always done this arts education. I was always interested in the human being. And then I use my tools and the things I have been taught. I'm so grateful to all my teachers, some of whom I mentioned. I knew it at the time, when I heard something—thinking, "this is where I want to go." I brought the enthusiasm and the fire. I often said to people, all my life, I am on a mission—to work with Art as a spiritual journey or tool for education and healing and to work with people through art. Not for myself, just the lonely artist, but to create art together with others. It was a mission I came with, but it always, strangely, also came towards me as a challenging invitation.

CONNECTING AND COMMUNITY

The Colors of Money

Jeana Lee, Continuing Student, United States

For someone who grew up on US “greenbacks,” I found Canada’s multi-colored plastic-paper bills rather strange at first. The fives are blue, the tens are purple, the twenties are green, and the fifties are orange. But regardless of the national currency, money itself has different “colors,” depending on its activity. In Rudolf Steiner’s course on economics, he describes three types of money: *payment*,

loan, and *gift*. A payment is made in exchange for good and services that have already been completed. It is connected to work that has already been accomplished in the past. A loan is given in the present but will require repayment in the future. It is related to work that has not yet been done. A gift is connected to the present time. It has no past or future “strings” attached. A true gift is free. In this way, it is the most powerful type of money. The activity of gift money is to allow the recipient to freely unfold their chosen labor, to engage in free spiritual deeds.



Former Seminary Director Bastiaan Baan joins current Directors Patrick Kennedy and Jonah Evans in teaching an open course.

The work of a priest, in its ideal, is made of such free spiritual deeds, and depends upon free gifts. How does one place monetary value on something like the Act of Consecration of Man, or a course at the Christian Community Seminary? Spiritual substance cannot be bought and sold, but it can be given and received.

Indeed, generous gifts from donors and friends of the seminary have enabled me to freely unfold my life’s destiny so far. To participate in the life of devotion, work, study, and spiritual development that happens daily here at the seminary has been an incredible blessing. My individual life has been interwoven with the lives of all of those who have made it possible for me to continue on this path.

Priestly work depends upon the free deed of gifting. This is essential for the continuation of the free spiritual life within society. Gifts can come in many forms, and need not be monetary. Thank you all for your gifts, in whatever form they may come.

Growing Together - *homily*

Jong-Won Choi, Continuing Student, United States

In spring, flowers burst into bloom one after another in the warm and bright sunlight, making our flower gardens full and rich with different shapes, colors, textures, and fragrances.

When the air is warm enough, all the buds that were waiting - like many praying hands toward the sun - open up their petals, and greet the sun with their joyful blossoming faces.

We also grow and bloom in a garden, a garden of ‘I’s and ‘you’s. ‘You’ can only be found when we have an ‘I.’ Little children don’t have a

sense of 'I,' and therefore no sense of 'you' either. That is why mothers often say to their young children, "Mama will do that," instead of "I will do that." With heart-felt knowing, mothers meet their children in the world in which they live. However, as the child grows and develops the sense of his own 'I,' the world presents itself quite differently; it is full of 'you's! He then joins the world in which we live: the world of 'I's and 'you's, a garden where each one of us can grow and bloom, adding unique beauties. Everyday, we, as 'I's, grow together with many 'you's that are in our garden: family, friends, colleagues, and others.

In our growing together, depending on who we are with and how we are seen, we often bring out different parts of ourselves to others. To some 'you's, we are nicer, kinder, or we even offer the best of ourselves; while with some other 'you's, we don't really care so much. In both cases, we affect one another, as we all are breathing the same air in the garden.

Who else is in our garden? Who else is seeing us? By whom and how do we want to be seen? And how do we see others? Where can we find the warmth and light to grow and bloom?

There can be many different ways of seeing one another. We can see others with some fixed ideas from past experiences. We can see others with criticism, judgement, mistrust, selfishness, or indifference. We may even label some people as 'bad guys,' and try to avoid them. The air can be cold in the garden, and like the rose garden in winter time, there will be not a single blossom in the garden of 'I's and 'you's then.

However, we also experience precious encounters when, regardless of our weaknesses and mistakes, we are seen, with care, interest, deep understanding, acceptance, trust, appreciation, and hope, and yet also with honesty and truthfulness. From this, we receive light and warmth, the light that can guide us to our true self and the warmth in which we can freely unfold ourselves. We, too, can blossom, and greet the light and warmth with our joyful blossoming faces.

The most naughty child, who misbehaves in class most of the time, can surprise the teacher with excellent participation when his grandparents are invited to the class. Sometimes, in our efforts to bring out the very best of ourselves, miraculously(!), we can even do something that we could never do before. We can find ourselves anew,



transformed. There we can have a blossom of surprise with a color of wonder and a fragrance of joy.

When we gather at the altar, we are greeted with “Christ in you” by the being who has His being in love. Always. With ever-present renewed trust. With ever-reliable wisdom, filled with truth. With ever-growing warm love. Even when we feel most unworthy and most helpless. In His beholding, may we blossom. May we also blossom in each other’s beholding.

Bearing Our Loads - *homily*

Kate Kennedy, Continuing Student, United States,

One morning when I came into my kitchen, I noticed a large piece of popped popcorn on the floor. And I saw that it was moving! Underneath the popcorn was a black carpenter ant. He was trying his best to hold it up as he went scampering away. I could almost sense his glee at having come across such a bounty as this.

Meanwhile, I tend to sigh and grump when carrying in a load of groceries. Not to mention all the things that are carried that can’t be seen. Perhaps I am not alone in this.

We live in a time when it is not exceptional to be carrying heavy loads. None of us seems to escape this fate. Talk to someone you have just met for long enough and you will uncover a sick relative, a burdensome job or just the pain of being alive that they are walking around with. All the time.

And dodging or putting down these loads doesn’t seem to help much. New ones always find us... eventually.

A few years back I came across a parenting blog that offered some advice, which was as profound as it was simple. The writer suggested that the load of parenting could be made instantly lighter if you replaced one word for another. Her advice was this: Instead of saying “I *have* to,” to yourself, say, “I *get* to.”

“I have to pick my child up and take them to the doctor” becomes “I *get* to pick my child up and take them to the doctor.” “I have to make dinner” becomes “I *get* to make dinner.”

What if we started saying “I get to” to the more difficult things? Or rather, if we looked at the difficult things in order to find within them the things we *get* to do. What would change if we actively cultivated gratitude for what comes to meet us in our life?

In the Act of Consecration, there is a moment when the priest bends their knee and reveals the mystery of thanksgiving. We hear the words of the Last Supper where Jesus looks up to the Father, thanking Him and “uniting His soul therewith.” On the eve of the day when Christ will suffer and die, He thanks His Father, who brings this destiny. And in thanking Him, He unites with Him.

Our feelings of gratitude bring us closer to the divine. It is, after all, the divine will that is at work in our lives all the time, even when our lives are hard. Perhaps *especially* when our lives are hard. Turning to our lives with a sense of thanksgiving draws us closer to that divine source, the divine will. It unites us with that source, giving us the power to carry what we are being given – at times even with joy.

He is Our Peace

Dhruva Corrigan, Beginning Student, United States

As a student at the seminary this year I was given the opportunity to take up a study of Paul’s letter to the Christian community in Ephesus and to share the fruits of my study with my fellow seminarians and with the broader congregational community in Toronto. My focus was on the mystery of *the community* as the new temple, as the body of Christ. We considered what the function is of our churches as places of worship, recognizing that our church buildings are not temples, not dwelling places for God, but are places where the community comes together in unity in the presence of Christ, where individuals take Him into themselves through the sacrament, that we as the community might become the dwelling place of God through Christ in us. Our churches, where we hold the holy Mass [Act of Consecration], are the places where we build up the body of Christ through the eucharist, where we are woven together into a unified body much like our own bodies are woven together by our life forces.

Since the end of our time in Toronto I have continued to wrestle with the idea of the *ecclesia*, the church, in the age of the free human being.

I have grappled with the challenges of a unity comprised of diverse individuals: How can a single, cohesive and holy body be formed from individual human beings? How can we, as Christians, work towards this unity? And what truly is the means by which this unity is formed? These are the questions that arise, the questions that, when asked in faith, begin to frame the mystery of the Christ *community*.

In a time of physical distancing in which we are asked to remain at home to protect ourselves and those around us, the question of what it means to be a community is more pertinent than ever. We are all striving to find ways to remain connected to our families and loved

ones, to our churches and congregations, and perhaps even to Christ himself when the Act of Consecration cannot be celebrated publicly. How do we continue to weave the tapestry that is the story of humanity's future, the tapestry that began when Christ turned the cross into a loom on Golgotha and gave the story a new beginning? How do we continue to cultivate togetherness and build the temple that is Christ's body while physically removed from each other's presence?

As all of these are questions relating to the new mysteries of our time, we can expect that they do not have simple or fixed answers! And so we see our priests and our communities rising to the challenges we face in diverse ways, working with the technologies of our age to keep the spirit moving and weaving among us, keeping us connected and questioning, seeking, communing. Learning to be a Christian is always a process, a seeking, a becoming, and we must bear with what is happening and what is to come as we learn together how to face new kinds of challenges.

For myself I have found that my connection to the Christian Community during this time begins where our Mass leaves off: with *the peace*. It is when I can grow quiet and come into the calm of Christ's peace that I can reach out to and approach in prayer the human beings from whom I am physically distant, or those who have crossed the threshold of death and can move among us more freely. Furthermore, I have become convinced that it is through this peace itself, not just as a state of soul but as an actual soul-*substance*, that the temple of the community is built, that the body of Christ is knit into unity. "For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into



Sunday Morning Sunrise

one and has broken down the dividing wall... so that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace.” (Ephesians 2.14-15)

And it is certainly peace that is needed now by our brothers and sisters around the world, now in this time when we must act together in solidarity as a unified whole, and when fear and anxiety are perching over each doorway through which we pass. Now especially is the time to share the peace that has been given to us in the sacrament and which is given to us in the depths of our own souls through Christ Jesus himself, the cornerstone of the new temple, the head of the body that is the community. Now especially must we allow the peace to fill our souls in prayer that it may, through us and our communities, overflow into the world. And so it is with heartfelt feelings of love and hope that I say to you, dear friend:

May the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Reflections on My Experience of Participating in the Friends of the Seminary Conversations

Shiela Johns, Friend of the Seminary, Ecuador

I was intrigued by the invitation that arrived in January to consider becoming part of a new initiative of The Seminary of the North American Christian Community - the Friends of the Seminary. I lived in the Washington D.C. area for 30 years and was active in facilitating music for that congregation for most of those years. I worked with three priests, the last of whom was Patrick Kennedy. I have now lived in Cuenca, Ecuador for over 5 years. My husband and I love our lives here and have no plans to relocate, but among the things I miss is my connection to the spiritual nourishment of the Christian Community. I was a perfect candidate for this group.

I actually hadn't realized how much I missed the conscious, thoughtful, and authentically caring manner of speaking and conversing that seems always to characterize a priest of the Christian Community. It was like balm to my soul. The specific content of the meeting was not nearly as important to me as just soaking up the

FRIENDS CIRCLE

Go beyond the newsletter and join our *Circle of Friends*: special online content, meetings and communications. Sign up here:

<https://>

www.christiancommunityseminary.org/news/

experience of this level of thinking, reflecting, and sharing that took place.

In all three of the meetings I participated in, we were able to dive right into things that really matter - even in March, when the experience of daily life around each one of us had quite suddenly turned completely upside-down. The comfort of being able to address content that lives above and beyond even such unprecedented personal experiences of the moment, provided a deep affirmation to me of our capacity to continue *to choose that on which we put our attention* - even if it requires more will forces right now. The power of gathering with others of like-mind, even electronically (and therefore without any masks!) seemed to strengthen that will and resolve to give ourselves over to the spiritual truths that are REAL and UNCHANGING. Out of this affirmation of our spiritual



The Toronto skyline

foundation in the midst of so much that is creating such turmoil and distraction, I know that we will at some point be able to turn to the deeper spiritual considerations of our current situation but with a grounded perspective that is rooted in what we understand about the nature of human evolution. We can also come to understand the activities of those beings who work counter to our healthy development, and the reality of the time in which we are living.

I have taken notes from all three meetings, which I am grateful to have, as there were so many significant points of learning and understanding that were touched on in all three conversations, but what remains the most powerful for me is the experience itself, and the strengthening of my own inner capacities that I have felt after each conversation. I am very appreciative of this unexpected opportunity to feel such an affirming human connection around things that matter most amidst this time of social isolation. I look forward to our future conversations on whatever topic is chosen, because I do not expect either the soul nourishment or the spiritual rewards from these conversations to diminish in any form. Thank you all for your commitment and creativity in continuing to provide so many of us with this opportunity to meet the needs of our essential humanity at a time when there are few other outlets for such affirmation.

THANK YOU, JANICE MORGANTE

With Love and Gratitude from the Whole Seminary!

After five years of service at the seminary of the Christian Community in North America, Janice Morgante is now moving on. I can almost hear the surprise and concern rising in your souls as you read these words! Indeed, the leaps we have made as an institutional body in service to the mission of the seminary rest in large part upon her incredible, capable and devoted efforts. Particularly our friends who have come to an open course or been in touch with the seminary know how she combines the beautiful capacities of readiness to help and real skill in doing so. One recent participant in our online extension course remarked, “She is like the secret third director!”

Indeed, what the seminary owes Janice for her years of service is truly immeasurable. In her, you can feel so tangibly the grace-giving guidance of the spiritual world. We mean this very concretely! The waters we have needed to navigate in transitioning from New York to Toronto required the presence of someone who could understand all of the international legal and financial challenges of such a move. So we were sent *exactly* that person, even before we knew we were going to move to Canada!

Dear Janice, we know you are happy to see how the whole seminary has flourished through your service and trust we will always be connected. With love and gratitude from us all!

*

Here is a note from Janice to everyone: *“All of us experience the rhythm of seminary life over one, two, three or four years. I’ve completed my fifth year with the seminary which saw it relocate to Canada. This time feels very right to me as the time to turn to work in the wider world, as you will do when you have completed your work at the seminary.”*



Toronto Seminary Staff, from left to right: Gail Ritscher, Jonah Evans, Melanie Nason and Janice Morgante

SUPPORT AND
CONNECT WITH US
ON OUR NEW SITE:

On Easter Sunday of this year, in the midst of the heaviest time of the pandemic related lockdown, Jonah and Patrick started a podcast with nearly daily conversations over the 40 days of Easter. It was called *The Road to Emmaus*. It has now become a weekly podcast titled, *The Light in Every Thing*. In addition, videos, written pieces and digital booklets are being made available there.

Patreon allows us to grow our financial foundation, asking participants to contribute as low as \$3 a month up to \$40 or more. With already 213 patrons, we are building something that will make this training possible for people in any financial situation.

Find us here:

<https://www.patreon.com/ccseminary>

Flames - *Closing Letter*

The whole mission of Christ is connected with fire. “I came to cast fire upon the earth; how I wish it were already kindled!”, we hear Jesus say in Luke’s Gospel (12:49). When the mighty Sun-Spirit we call ‘Christ’ came to Earth and planted his being within her, he planted a seed of this fire.

On Pentecost Sunday, the disciples were kindled by that flame. It illumined their minds with its light, revealing the spiritual reality of what had happened on the mount called Golgotha. It expanded and warmed their hearts, opening them in loving understanding to the human beings around them. It ignited a fire in their deepest being, a knowing: I, too, must do as he has done - I must give myself in loving sacrifice to the need of the world.

We hope you have felt the light, warmth and energy of that fire in the pages of this newsletter. Our students leaned in towards the living flame of Christ this year in ways that we found remarkable, honest and courageous. And they have been kindled.

These past weeks saw many cities in the United States catch fire - a destructive fire born of pain and rage. The slow murder of George Floyd by multiple police officers in broad daylight was witnessed by nearly the whole world. We have had to bear witness to something that lives in human beings that is full of darkness. In the face of this revelation, another fire can be kindled: the burning fire of conscience. A kind of prayer rises in the human soul: *What can I do to make amends for what has been done? What can I do to build a new human community where such a thing could never happen?*

“What you do to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you do to me”, we hear Jesus say (Matthew 25:40). A training for servants of the flame of Christ - the fire of love that lives as wisdom, compassion and conscience within us - is what this seminary would be.

We have witnessed how the students often came, seeking the healing power of Christ for themselves. Now they are coming away with a deep feeling: I must bring this healing, this living flame out into the world. May you all be touched by this living fire!

Faithfully yours,

Patrick Kennedy

End-of-Year Presentation Themes

For the year 2019-20

Date	Second Year
June 21	Kate Kennedy - The Common Good
June 22	Jong-Won Choi - The Environment
June 23	Gillian Cross - The Grail-Word
June 24	Jeana Lee - Debt and Worth
June 25	Lisa Majoros - The Living and the Dead
June 26	Mimi Coleman - No Hands But Yours
June 28	Mónica Sánchez - Facing Evil

Date	First Year
June 22	Marc Fortin - Sermon on the Mount (Matthew)
June 23	Tish Pierce - Healings in the Gospel of Luke
June 24	Erica Maclennan - The Son of Man and the Crucifixion (Matthew)
June 25	Sylvia Kuilman - The Son of Man and the Crucifixion (Luke)
June 26	Robert Bower - the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew) and Dhruva Corrigan - The Kingdom of God (Luke)

THIRD TRIMESTER: INDEPENDENT STUDENT PROJECTS

In the third trimester of the year, the students return home, visit other seminaries in Europe, or visit other congregations in the world and take up a larger, independent research project. During the whole training, they are deepening aspects of their relationship to the spirit (truth), which this project is meant to support by 1) developing their own, original access to the spirit and 2) cultivating the art of communicating the spirit to others.

The Seminary

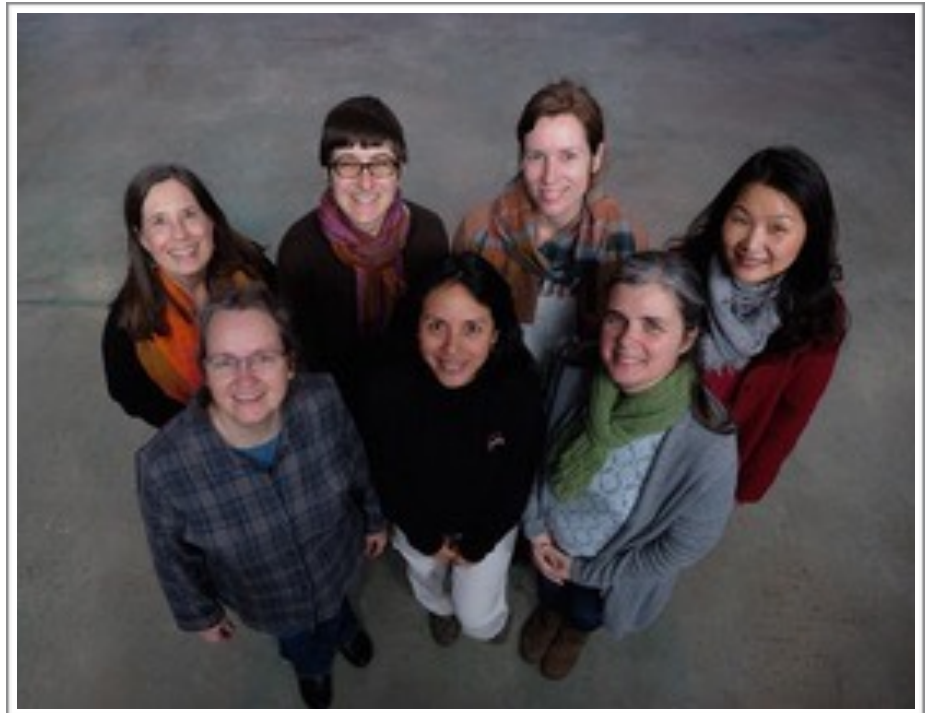
of the Christian Community in North America

2019-20



Beginning Students in our
"Knowing Christ"
program: Erica
McClennan, Marc Fortin,
Robert Bower, Tish Pierce,
Sylvia Kuilman, Dhruva
Corrigan

Continuing Students in our
"Walking with Christ"
program: (front row) Mimi
Coleman, Mónica Sánchez
Valderrama, Kate Kennedy;
(back row) Lisa Majoros,
Jeana Lee, Gillian Cross, Jong-
Won Choi





Donations can be sent by check to either our U.S. address or our Canadian address (see below) or by PayPal on our website: christiancommunityseminary.ca/donations/

Checks are payable to the Seminary of the Christian community in North America.

US tax receipts are available upon request. It is anticipated tax receipts will be available in Canada soon.

Please note our *contact information*:

- TORONTO: 901 Rutherford Road, Vaughan, Ontario, L6A 1S2, Canada
- NEW YORK: Care of the Church of the Christian Community in Spring Valley, 15 Margetts Rd, Chestnut Ridge, NY 10952
- TORONTO TELEPHONE: (905) 771-0705.

Note: A message only may be left at the US number (845) 356-0972 and calls will be returned within a day.

- EMAIL: info@christiancommunityseminary.org
- WEBSITE: www.christiancommunityseminary.ca

The Seminary Newsletter Student Editing Team
Lisa Majoros, Mimi Coleman, and Robert Bower
Layout and Final Editing
Patrick Kennedy
Photo Credits
Richard Chomko, others from students