



Church of St. Francis

The Liberal Catholic Church
Province of the USA • Villa Park, Illinois

Candlemas 2015

Theosophy and Christianity

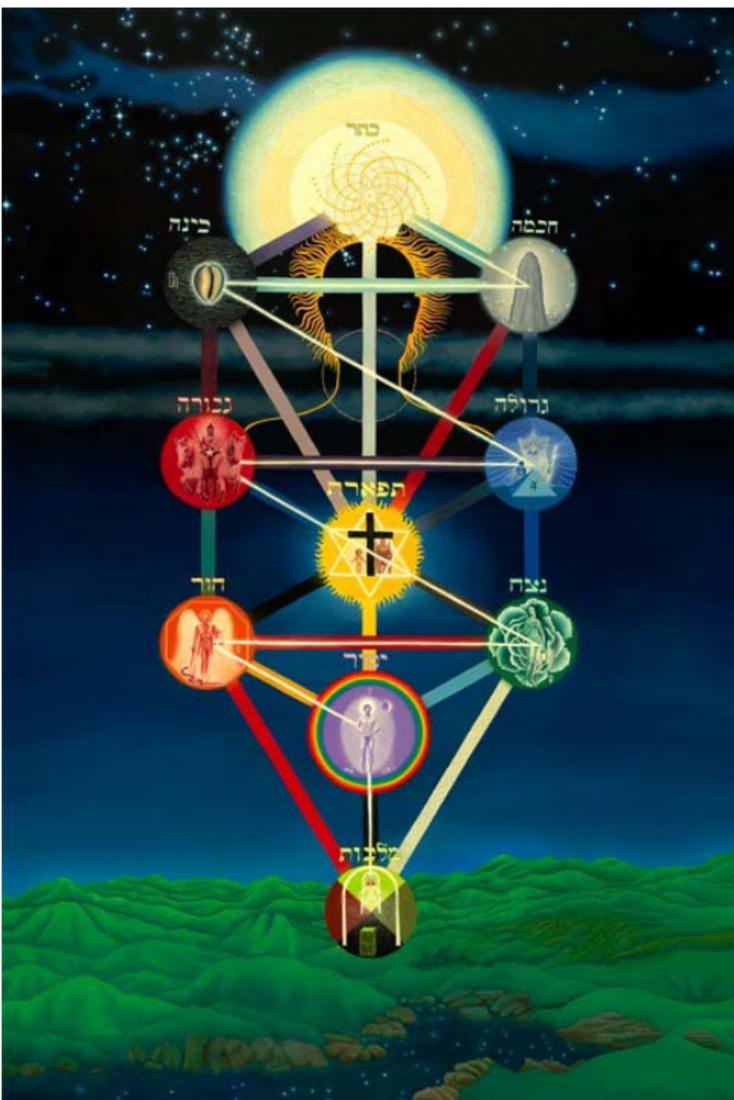
(excerpt- pages 10-13)

by

Annie Besant

Theosophical Publishing House, Adyar, Madras, India. First published as No.10 of the Benares Pamphlet Series. Published as Adyar Pamphlet 1914, Reprinted 1932

The theory of popular and ecclesiastical Christianity (now being so rapidly outgrown) regards mankind as a race essentially corrupt, cursed at its fall by its incensed Creator, and thenceforth lying under the wrath of God; in order that some of this race may be saved, God becomes incarnate, and, suffering in the place of man, redeems him from the consequences



of the fall; out of the race some are saved by this sacrifice, and the righteousness of the Redeemer is imputed to the redeemed; man, naturally helpless, is rendered strong by the help extended to him by his Savior, without whom he can do nothing. This is the exoteric creed professed universally in the past by Christians, and professed by the great majority today.

The Theosophic view of man is the very reverse of this. It regards man as essentially divine, but the

divine in him crusted over with a thick veil of matter; this divine essence in man is the Buddha, the Christ, and it is the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world". Through the veil of matter the light shines dimly, but in the lowest and the vilest some gleams of light are seen from time to time. Every man is a potential Christ, and the work of evolution is to render this potential Christ an active one; man's strength wells up from the divine within him, it is an essential property, not an external gift; the light is there — his work is to render his lower nature translucent, and to let it shine.

That the Christ is "God in man", inclusively and not exclusively, might well be argued — for those who take the New Testament as an authority — from the Fourth Gospel. Neoplatonic throughout, this view of the meaning of the Christ comes out very plainly in chap. x. 34–36. Jesus had been accused of blasphemy, in that He made himself God; His answer was a claim to rank as God because He was man, and divinity was inherent in humanity.

*“Jesus answered them,
Is it not written in your law, I said. Ye are Gods ?
If he called them Gods, unto whom the word
of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;
Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified,
and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest;
because I said, I am the Son of God ?”*

It was not in virtue of a unique position, but in virtue of a common humanity that Jesus is here made to claim to be divine; He identifies Himself with man, instead of standing with a gulf between Himself and His race. And so Paul, writing to his Galatian converts:

*“My little children, of whom I travail
in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”*

Men have thought to exalt Christ by degrading man, whereas that which is the Christ — not limited to an individual but the Soul triumphant — is the very light and life of men. This is the esoteric truth that has been hidden under the exoteric veil, and those on whom the beauty of this conception has dawned will no longer have any sense that they have lost their Christ, when they see Him incarnate in every son of man.



Annie Besant



HOLY EUCHARIST

From the Greek meaning "thanksgiving", the Holy Eucharist is the central act of Christian worship. Designed to help those who take part therein, it is intended also to pour out a great flood of spiritual power upon the surrounding world at large, and it summons the congregation to intelligent and energetic participation in this work. So real is this participation that the congregation may expect to feel a great spiritual upliftment.

SUNDAYS AT 10:00AM

followed by refreshment and fellowship
hour downstairs.

“The Liberal Catholic Church provides a bridge between the Catholicism of the past and the future, carrying all that was most beautiful in the old Catholicism into the new age. It hopes to become even moreso a distributing agent of esoteric teaching. It leaves its members free in matters of belief. Its clergy regard it as their chief work to be “stewards of the Mysteries of God”, and look upon the Christian Church as a great brotherhood of all who turn to Christ as the inspirer of their spiritual life, their Master and Friend, and consider that His Sacraments should be given freely to anyone who reverently desire them, without any conditions being imposed in the way of intellectual restriction.”

2015 LITURGICAL CALENDAR

with Intent of the Day

1/18	Baptism Sunday	
1/25	Transfiguration – 3rd Sunday after Epiphany	Sincerity and Control of Speech
2/01	Septuagesima Sunday	The Gift of Wisdom
2/03	Sexagesima Sunday	The Holy Spirit as Sanctifier
2/10	Quinquagesima Sunday	The Holy Spirit as the Fire of Love
2/22	1st Sunday in Lent	Self-examination
3/01	2nd Sunday in Lent	Control of speech
3/08	3rd Sunday in Lent	Understanding
3/15	4th Sunday in Lent	Spiritual Refreshment
3/22	Passion Sunday	Humility
3/29	PALM SUNDAY	
4/05	HOLY EASTER	

CANDLEMAS

This ancient festival marks the midpoint of winter, halfway between the shortest day and the spring equinox. Candle-mas is a traditional Christian festival that commemorates the ritual purification of Mary forty days after the birth of her son Jesus. On this day, Christians remember the presentation of Jesus Christ in the Temple. Forty days after the birth of a Jewish boy, it was the custom to take him to the temple in Jerusalem to be presented to God by his thankful parents. In pre-Christian times, this day was known as the 'Feast of Lights' and celebrated the increase strength of the life-giving sun as winter gave way to spring.



Rosary of the Seven Rays

The Church of St. Francis invites you to chant the rosary in honor of Our Lady. The rosary used in this meditation is based on the Franciscan Crown Rosary, also called the "Rosary of the Seven Joys of the Blessed Virgin Mary." No rosary is needed. It is a sung meditation. All are welcome. For more information please contact Rabbecca Collin. The Rosaries are held on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am before Holy Eucharist on days where a Mary Feast Day falls withing the Octave. The 2015 schedule is:

1/04 Octave of the Solemnity of Mary
2/08 Octave of the Presentation of Our Lord
3/29 Octave of the Annunciation
5/31 Octave of the Visitation
6/28 Octave of Our Lady of Perpetual Help
8/19 Octave of the Assumption
9/09 Octave of the Nativity of Our Lady
10/11 Octave of the Our Lady of the Rosary
11/22 Octave of the Presentation of Our Lady
12/13 Octave of the Immaculate Conception

Healing Services

Following the above Feast Days of Mary and First Sundays after Mass. The purpose of the Service of Healing is to bring spiritual upliftment to those in need, and secondly to give some relief, whenever possible, to those who are suffering from various physical ills. All are invited. Contact Fr. Jeffrey for more information.

Solemn Benediction

Saturday March 21, 2015

Saturday June 20, 2015

The Church of St. Francis invites you join us in a Saturday evening service of Solemn Benediction at 6:30pm, preceded by a Healing Service at 6:00pm.

5th Sunday Pancake Breakfast

& Presentation by + Ruben

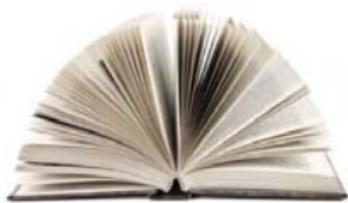
March 29, 2015

Join us after Holy Eucharist for our Fifth Sunday Pancake Breakfast, featuring of course pancakes, vegetarian sausage, hash-browns and other yummy fixings. Visit with old friends, and make some NEW ones! All are welcome, and there is no charge. It will be followed by a special presentation on Theosophical insights by Bishop Ruben. Upcoming Dates:

May 31 • August 30 • November 29

VESTRY MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is Sunday March 1, 2015. We welcome Kathleen McNamara, who was appointed by Rev. Metz to fill a recent vacancy.



THE CREDO OF CHRISTENDOM

From a lecture given by Anna Kingsford, on the 12th June 1884,
to the Hermetic Society, and published in *Light*, 21st June 1884

*Credo in Deum,
Patrem omnipotentem,
Creatorem caeli et terrae.*

THE Christian Faith is the direct heir of the old Roman faith. Rome was the heir of Greece, and Greece of Egypt, whence the Mosaic dispensation and Hebrew ritual sprang. Egypt was but the focus of a light whose true fountain and centre was the Orient in general – *Ex Oriente Lux*. For the East, in every sense, geographically, astronomically, and spiritually, is ever the source of light. But although originally derived from the East, the Church of our day and country is modelled immediately upon the Greco-Roman mythology, and draws thence all its rites, doctrines, ceremonies, sacraments, and festivals. Hence the exposition to be given of Esoteric Christianity would deal more especially with the mysteries of the West, their ideas and terminology being more attractive and congenial to us than the inartistic conceptions, the unfamiliar metaphysics, the melancholy spiritualism, and the unsuggestive language of the East. Drawing its life-blood directly from the pagan faith of the old Occidental world, Christianity more nearly resembles its immediate father and mother than its remote ancestors, and will, therefore, be better expounded by reference to Greek and Roman sources than to their Brahminical and Vedic parallels.

The Christian Church is Catholic, or it is nothing worthy the name of Church at all. For Catholic signifies universal, all-embracing: – the faith everywhere and always received. The prevalent limited view of the term is wrong and mischievous. The Christian Church was first called Catholic because she enfolded, comprehended, and made her own all the religious past of the whole world, gathering up into and around her central figure of the

Christ all the characteristics, legends, and symbols hitherto appertaining to the central figures of preceding dispensations, proclaiming the unity of all human aspiration, and formulating in one grand ecumenical system the doctrines of East and West.

Thus the Catholic Church is Vedic, Buddhist, Zend, and Semitic. She is Egyptian, Hermetic, Pythagorean, and Platonic. She is Scandinavian, Mexican, and Druidic. She is Grecian and Roman. She is scientific, philosophic, and spiritual. We find in her teachings the Pantheism of the East, and the individualism of the West. She speaks the language and thinks the thoughts of all the children of men; and in her temple all the gods are shrined. I am Vedantist, Buddhist, Hellenist, Hermetic, and Christian, because I am Catholic. For in that one word all Past, Present, and Future are enfolded. And, as St Augustine and other of the Fathers truly declared, Christianity contains nothing new but its name, having been familiar to the ancients from the beginning. And the various sects, which retain but a portion of Catholic doctrine, are but as incomplete copies of a book from which whole chapters have been torn, or representations of a drama in which some only of the characters and scenes have been retained.



Anna Kingsford, (16 September 1846 – 22 February 1888), was an English anti-vivisection, vegetarian and women's rights campaigner.

She was one of the first English women to obtain a degree in medicine, and the only medical student at the time to graduate without having experimented on a single animal. She founded the Food Reform Society in 1881, travelling within the UK to talk about vegetarianism, and to Paris, Geneva, and Lausanne to speak out against animal experimentation.

Kingsford was interested in Buddhism and Gnosticism, and became active in the theosophical movement in England,

becoming president of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society in 1883. She said she received insights in trance-like states and in her sleep; these were collected from her manuscripts and pamphlets by her lifelong collaborator Edward Maitland, and published posthumously in the book, *Clothed with the Sun* (1889). Subject to ill-health all her life, she died of lung disease at the age of 41, brought on by a bout of pneumonia. Her writing was virtually unknown for over 100 years after Maitland published her biography, *The Life of Anna Kingsford* (1896).

Church of St. Francis Vestry & Congregational Guardians 2014-2015

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Dawn Regnier – Vice President

Rev. Jeffrey Forth – Junior Warden

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Annie Pepich – Assistant Treasurer

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Kathleen McNamara • Frank Pepich

Congregational voices also include:

Sandy Brigando • Pat Meike • Carolyn Smith



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The Church of St. Francis

Newsletter Schedule.

Christmas • Candlemas • Easter

Whitsuntide • St. Alban's Day/Midsummer

Lammastide • Feast of St. Francis (Annual Report)

Editor: Frank Pepich

fpepich@gmail.com

The event schedule is correct at the time
this newsletter is published,
but may be subject to changes.