Candela



Newsletter of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc Organisational Details are provided on the next page

DECEMBER 2010

ISSUE 62

Issue Theme ~ Endings and Beginnings

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"I am learning all the time. The tombstone will be my diploma." - Eartha Kitt

"You were born an original. Don't die a copy." - John Mason

I so love to adapt old things to new uses that I'm even now testing new uses for my old self. Our house is furnished almost entirely with things others have discarded. This practice is based on the knowledge that when my friends, relatives or neighbours acquire something new they wish to end their relationship with the old furniture, usually rather quickly! But I realise that I must in turn make room if I am to accept their offer, like I'm living in the midst of a row of toppling dominoes.



"Upgrade: out with the old, in with the new!" Keeping up with those model consumers, the Joneses, is ever so affordable these days. Thanks to the well-oiled marketing machine we are sold on the forward-looking philosophy that the things you possess - are already outdated and worth replacing with shinier, cleverer, trendier, sexier models.

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Newer feels better. And the sooner they're replaced the better, right? At a business conference I saw a trend illustrated. The presentation topic was the increasing speedto-market and someone from the movie industry explained how DVD versions of a movie are released ever more quickly after the movie has run its time in the cinemas. *

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<u>Next Issue</u> – March 2011

Theme : "Accepting the shadow side"

With Easter being late in 2011, on April 24th the next issue of Candela will be out in the Lent period. This is a good time for us to reflect on our shadow side. The Lord came into our world and we crucified him. We need to accept that the shadow side is there in all of us so that we can ask the Lord to fight for us and turn us around to a new way of thinking.



It would be great if we could have a number of different thoughts from members as to how you deal with your shadow side, and things that you have found helpful in your struggle with your own inner demons.

Thank you to everyone who wrote for this issue.

The deadline is the 20th February

Email to <u>rduckworth@optusnet.com.au</u> or by post to the registered office.



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<u>Please Note:</u> The views expressed in this Newsletter are those of each contributor and do not necessarily reflect any particular position of the Swedenborg Association of Australia or its Committee.

Membership of the Swedenborg Association of Australia Inc. is open to anyone who wishes to pursue an interest in Swedenborg, the man, his science and his spiritual teachings. For details on how to join, refer to page 12.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (cont)

The DVD 'sales window' (period during which people want the product) is becoming steeper and shorter, meaning more people demand having it right away and lose interest in the product in a shorter time. It's a quickening of the appetite for what's hot, evidence of the impatience that characterises the want-it-now mentality which marketing loves to encourage. With our fascination for newness, perhaps the patron of marketing should be the Roman god Janus, two-headed god of beginnings and endings, looking both backward and forward at once. Our calendar honours him with January, Janus' month in which he looks back at the old year and forward to the new. Interestingly, Janus is also the god of gates, doors and doorways, thus of entrances transitions out something of old into something new. While we must make every effort and wish to transform old, negative and unhelpful states in us, Swedenborg remind us that in reality, spiritual doors are opened and shut by the Divine alone, hence He is called the door by which man is to enter in that he might be saved - John 10:9 (Apocalypse Revealed # 916)

I personally also like to regard the doublefaced Janus head as a reminder to look into the world outside while simultaneously looking within.

Janus is not to be confused with the Jains, followers of that noble Indian religion of Jainism.

When it comes to making purchases, joy comes first and pain later. Acquiring something new is exciting, although it's usually the anticipation we enjoy more than the having. Getting rid of old furniture is eased when it helps build the anticipation for the new. But once in our possession that excitement wears off as the pain of paying it off sets in.

When it comes to our spiritual growth, endings and beginnings often have the opposite dynamic, involving pain at first and joy later. In spiritual affairs the pain of payment seems to come before the gaining of goods. Because in order to grow we might have to let go of familiar states that comforted but limited us, or to part with coping mechanism we befriended in earlier times of need and for self-preservation. Same may be required for attitudes and desires we have come to love that once soothed our pain. Or with courageous honesty we may have to admit a painful insight into our self which we had formerly tried to deny. These can be painful changes to bring about.

Emanuel Swedenborg mentions that the purpose of all creation is for us to return to the Divine, which is in a sense the 'end' (ultimate aim) of creation. When we awaken spiritually we gradually come to recognise that purpose and willingly and actively begin to participate in it as we discover how we might make a personal contribution to Creation. Without willingness on our part, that ultimate wish, call, or aim of the Divine cannot be realised for us. We have been permitted by the Absolute to feel entirely free in choosing whether to participate, or not, and because of that freedom this whole creation is a risky exercise on the part of the Creator because we may or may not recognise or honour the invitation. Once we consciously embark on spiritual growth it may demand some hardship from us when taking us from an unproductive direction that goes against conditions for optimal soul growth. This may be needed to be point us to a healthier path. Such hardship might necessitate changes in relationships or express itself through a mild illness or other



situation that helps shift and refocus us to conditions for optimal inward better evolution. We start looking at old attitudes and habits that need to be ended or reformed and we ask sincerely to work with the Divine to shed what is necessary. A snakeskin does not grow hence a snake needs to shed it periodically. If shedding is unsuccessful, its blood flow can become constricted causing numbness and potential loss of part of its body or in severe cases may result in blindness and death. No wonder some North American native tribes associate the shedding of a snakeskin with life's new beginnings.

One of Swedenborg's great contributions is that he points out how all great processes commence with the end in mind, and progresses first with 'end' (aim, goal, purpose) then causes (the means by which the aim is to be reached) and then the effects which the causes bring about. In this manner the end (desired end-result) is in fact the *beginning* (first step) of the creative process. He adds that to enquire into causes purely from effects is unproductive, but to study effects from their causes is wisdom (see Divine Love and Wisdom # 119). The application of this principle to business has led to the great success of author and management consultant Steven Covey, who made one of his Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: "begin with the end in mind."

The End.



This year has been very productive for the SAA Committee and I would like to thank all those who work hard on the committee. My deep gratitude to those who retired for their loving dedication and service, namely Walter Mason, Kirk Holst, Wayne Kasmar, Chris Skinner and Julian Duckworth. We also welcome the enthusiasm and fresh commitment to the committee from Jan Primrose, Carl Sarelius, Alexis Jarvis and Neville Jarvis, I am also deeply grateful to Michael Chester for his insight and coordination efforts and to Ruth Duckworth for continuing to serve and additionally compiling this Candela magazine for our mutual benefit (in my opinion, she not only does this task superbly but enthusiastically and with a smile). It is also that time of year when we enjoy the most significant festivals of our Christian calendar, signifying the coming of a renewal into our lives

by way of the loving assistance of the Divine. On behalf of your committee I wish each of you a very enjoyable, safe and enriching Christmas. May it be truly a time of renewal.

Joe Vandermeer

"When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has been opened for us." -Helen Keller –

Wind's Eye

Words of Grace breath of Life DIVINE Presence

From East the Zephyr roams upon the Face of life. It touches all who "Whisper" its name.

Zephyr of the East open oneself to its Essence Whispers of Omniscience

Glad are "We" on the Path O Wind, thee We do seek fill our lonely hearts with thy Grace

Those in need, open your hearts for Zephyr Winds to fill thee With "DIVINE" Grace.

Michael J Wright

I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year,



when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow passengers to the grave, and

not another race of creatures bound on other journeys.

Charles Dickens



At Journey's End and Life's Beginnings

A Personal Reflection about Tom Bass

by Michael J Wright, Artist Sydney

It is told in story, fable, parable and in esoteric poetry that the death of the physical body is a transition point for one's spiritual life, one's Eternal Life to begin. On 26 February 2010, Tom Bass, sculptor and totem maker aged 93, entered into this new life.



I had the great pleasure to meet Tom via a former student of his, Barbara Cuckson. At the time, I was the curator of the inaugural Swedenborg prize for spiritual art. This was back in 1993. At my request, Tom agreed to be the judge of this art prize. This was the first of many personal enjoyable moments spent with this great totem maker. By some strange fate, the piece that Tom was drawn to which won the 1st prize was a lovely small mandala titled Spring by the artist Heather surname Her is similar Sved. to Swedenborg's in that Swedenborg's grandfather came from the town called Sveden. I feel a little bit of synchronicity at work here. This prize was the focal point of the Celebration of Spring, an annual event sponsored by the Swedenborg Centre, Sydney.

This was Tom's introduction to Emanuel Swedenborg. He had known of Swedenborg but knew little about him. The thing I enjoyed about Tom was that he was very open to new ideas of the spirit. He thought deeply about the different spiritual - religious paths even though he, like myself, was brought up Catholic. He and I had similar views in that we felt there were many ways back to the Eternal. Tom showed this in his sacred totems as symbols that represented Higher Truths. To quote my spiritual teacher, Dr P Groves, on the symbolic nature of forms:

"All forms are excitation centres, which stimulate the mind to take notice of their qualities and learn to look beyond them to their force."

I did have the great pleasure of introducing Tom to Dr Groves. They remained friends until Dr Groves' death in 1999.

In late 1998, I received a call from Tom telling me of his new book Occasional Prayers. Tom expressed to me his wish to share these meditative prayers with others and for them to have a Swedenborgian connection. At this point in time, the Swedenborg Centre was fully booked till the end of the year. Luck was with us. The minister of the New Church, Roseville kindly donated the use of the church for this wonderful occasion. Now as the details of what and how to celebrate this book launch process flew back and forth, I suggested perhaps some music and readings of his personal prayers. Tom was delighted with this idea.



Ethos, Civic Square, Canberra.



This book launch unfolded on Saturday 14 November 1998 at the New Church, Roseville, Sydney. The guest speaker was Rev Dorothy McRae McMahon. The musicians were Julian Duckworth singing solo, Roy Simmonds on organ and Marion Ives on Irish harp. Marion Van den Driesschen read several of his very sacred prayers. The one I enjoyed is titled

The Journey Prayer

You know My God How often I go through a day Acting as though You didn't exist Forgetting

I pray for the day When I am Reminded of and see Your presence in Everything that is. Then I will be aware of the Dignity and beauty Of each person. The value and meaning In every event and Every material thing That I use - the air. The light. The touch and taste, The shape and space of things, Then You, the God Of my Inner knowing. Will be my constant guide And companion.

Amen

8/9/85

Tom Bass

Tom said to me, of his relationship to prayer, "As prayer is never for the purpose of supplication or to ask for something, it is fundamentally a declaration of trust,, a thanksgiving and an affirmation of the things that I realise about my relationship with God. That is, the divine influx that maintains and gives life to all that is."

Swedenborg wrote, "Prayer in itself considered is discourse with God."

I gave this book Occasional Prayers to my teacher Dr Philip Groves to read. Some time later Dr Groves said that he thought this book of prayers of Tom's really should not have been published. I was stunned by his frankness. He went on to say that the prayers were of such a very deep personal nature, he himself was deeply touched and felt that their contents perhaps were not ready to be read by the general public. When I conveyed this to Tom, he was very touched and agreed with what had been said.

A similar event has recently happened. Over 60 years ago, Carl Jung wrote a very private journal that he called The Red Book. This journal contains some of his Innermost thoughts and visionary mandala drawings. He said that it should never be published yet his family agreed to its publishing early this year. We are lucky to have access to it and of course to Tom's Occasional Prayers.

In early 2000, I approached Tom about a series of nine talks and exhibitions that I had in mind, focusing upon the spiritual process of Sacred - Healing - Totems as visual aids to quieten the mind and open the heart of those who have ears within. I was hoping that Tom would give the first talk of this journey, which was titled Sacred Healing Totems - Symbols of Spiritual Life. He said that he'd love to. All who attended this talk took away a personal spiritual insight. To sum up this talk in a few words, Tom said, "Totems represent the hub of real communities of people, both in the natural and spiritual worlds." This nine part journey of sacred healing totems is still an unfolding process for me.

Over the next ten years, I had the occasional phone conversation with Tom and saw him sometimes at sculpture exhibitions. He was always full of life and had such a love of sculpture states that couldn't be shared. To me, he was always in the present moment and what a pleasure it was to have known him as a friend.

Michael J Wright





SWEDENBORG A MAN OF HIS TIME, A MAN FOR ALL TIME – Part 1 By John Maitland

(Delivered at the Swedenborg Association of Australia, Sydney, 16th July 2010

INTRODUCTION

I will focus on two aspects of Swedenborg's life and career that I think are interrelated. The standard account of Swedenborg's life and career divides it sharply into three periods: his childhood up to the age of eleven when he left home for university and lived initially with his brother-in-law Erik Benzelius; the scientific and practical period up to the age of fifty-six when he experienced his vision of Christ (1744) and his religious phase culminating in his death at eighty-four.



(Portrait of Emanuel Swedenborg at 19 years old.)

His childhood is usually dealt with quickly largely owing to the paucity of evidence. The treatment of the scientific and religious phases of his life tends to

divide them so sharply that one could be forgiven for thinking that we are reading about two separate people! The striking nature of his religious conversion and especially its seeming suddenness are emphasised. One of the things I will look at is the validity of this sharp differentiation between the scientific and religious phases. I will also point out the lasting influence of a childhood lived in a very devout Lutheran household in which his father was a pastor.

Part 1 addresses the domestic environment in which Swedenborg grew up and examines some of the ways in which the culture of his time influenced his work and thinking. Part 2 will examine the validity of the interpretation of his work that sharply separates his scientific and religious activities. The two issues are related.

There is evidence that religion was essential to Swedenborg throughout his life and not just after his vision of Christ in April 1744 in Holland. It is true that he publishes nothing of a religious nature until 1745 when he wrote Worship and Love of God but I believe that the influence of the religious environment of his childhood did not disappear after he left home but rather flowed like an underground stream within his being, bursting into consciousness and daylight, so to speak with his vision of Christ. That was his Damascus Road experience.

SWEDENBORG'S CHILDHOOD & DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT

Each person's birth is subject to the vagiaries of chance in three significant ways: the parents to whom we are born, the country in which we are born, and when we are born. These three factors are major determinants in shaping our personalities, our interests, how we think, and what we think.

Our parents and the home in which we are raised lay the foundations for our lives with regard to love and all other emotions, moral values, how we learn and attitudes to knowledge and truth. The country of our birth and its culture provide the language, and the concepts and ideas by which we understand our lives and our society.

Swedenborg's significance is that although a man of his time, he also wrote for eternity. He presented his spiritual works and writings as the result of direct revelation from the Lord. When studying Swedenborg's writings and those of his many interpreters and commentators, the reader gains the impression that the meaning of his work will hardly vary from age to age and that an understanding of his own cultural milieu is unnecessary for understanding his work.

How and in what ways can a person's work transcend the boundaries of the time and culture in which it is produced and provide guidance for all time?

Swedenborg is an eighteenth century Swede growing up in the household of a Swedish Lutheran pastor, embracing and mastering the powerful method and results of scientific endeavour flowing from the Renaissance and



Reformation eras, writing in Latin, and expounding the Bible in symbolic terms. Will our understanding of Swedenborg be enriched and deepened, and above all be more accurate, if we also study the culture in which he produced his work? I believe that it will.

To appreciate the importance of Swedenborg's upbringing it is necessary to meet his father. A major source for Jesper Swedberg's life is his autobiography. It comprised 1012 folio pages and he provided a copy for each of his six children and one for the library of the Upsala University so that the "less envious" might profit by it. Although written for his children, they barely rate a mention in it. Toksvig notes drily that

> Emanuel hardly figures in it, except as the author of some Latin verses which his father requested him to write on the occasion when a copper plate engraved with the Bishop's picture was 'miraculously' preserved in a fire. [[]S.Toksvig (1948), Emanuel Swedenborg: Scientist & Mystic, p.20, Swedenborg Foundation]

Biographers such as Ernst Benz, Cyril Sigstedt and Bergquist (Swedenborg's most recent biographer, 2005), list Jesper's 'Life' as an important source for understanding him but Toksvig more than any of them actually quotes quite extensively from the document. The picture that emerges is not a very attractive one.

He brings to mind Dickens' character Uriah Heep, "I am a very 'umble man Sir!" He was from a mining family and appears to have been financially comfortable. His marriage to his first wife brought him wealth, of which he availed himself by leaving her during her first pregnancy to spend a year abroad in 1684, visiting England, France and Germany.

He had an incredible capacity to see the hand of God in almost everything he did or that happened to him. At seven he was saved from drowning in a millrace and he believed that a guardian angel saved him. He wrote

> And if I'm not mistaken I think Satan meant to drown me as he meant to drown Moses in his tender years or to kill me as he tried to kill Christ through Herod's cruel and inhuman slaughter of the infants of Bethlehem. Probably he didn't like it that even in my childhood I

was fond of reading the Bible aloud to the people who came to pick hops and so on. My greatest joy was to preach to them. I sat up high but fell down so that I was lame for some time; that too was his doing. [Toksvig, p.15]



Toksvig's assessment of his character is supported from the selections she makes from his autobiography. shallow, Brightly indefatigable energy, dramatic preaching style in when an age extremely long sermons in abstract theology were the norm;

belief in angels, ghosts, demons were as natural to his thought and understanding as breathing to his body. He seems to have been something of a careerist although he always maintained that he never sought preferment. It was the hand and blessing of God.

However, there were several spiritual emphases that informed Jesper Swedberg's life and that found expression in the thought and life of Emanuel himself. The first was the centrality of the Bible in his life, not unexpected in a Lutheran minister. For Swedenborg, the Bible was also central to his religious writing.

The second was the influence of Pietism, a Protestant movement that reacted to dry theological discourse by emphasising 'experiencing God's presence' and 'living one's faith' rather than merely professing 'correct belief'. Jesper appears to have come under this influence in his trip abroad in 1684. Swedenborg was also to emphasise right living as complementary to right believing - his marrying of the Good and the True.

Jesper's belief in angels and spirits has already been noted and he heard voices from time to time guiding him. Swedenborg was to write extensively on these matters and apparently in his childhood he had unseen playmates. He also would talk of matters beyond his years and when asked by his parents where he heard such things he replied that it was from boys from whom he played in the garden



house. His father believed that it was rather angels speaking through his mouth. Swedenborg also said in old age to an inquiring Englishman that from 6 to 12 years old he loved to discuss faith with clergymen. [Toksvig, p.22-23]

I conclude this segment with two quotations demonstrating Swedenborg's ambivalent relationship with his father. The first is from *Arcana Caelestia* (5135) written when he was 60.

> The truths that a person learns and believes in his earliest years when he is a young child but which later on he either endorses, or has doubts about, or refuses to accept, are in particular these: There is a God, and He is one; He created everything; He rewards those who do what is good and punishes those who do things that are bad; there is life after death, when the bad go to hell and the good go to heaven [.....]; also, people ought to pray every day and to do so in a humble way. [....].(Lars Bergquist (2005), Swedenborg's Secret, p.17, The Swedenborg Society)

The second quotation is from Swedenborg's *The Spiritual Diary*. Swedenborg sees his father in a dream and writes as follows:

In a dream appeared my father in the life of the body, and in the dream I spoke (to the effect) that a son need not recognize his father for father after he has become his own master (sui juris). While being educated by him therefore in his house, then (his father) should be recognized as father because he is then in the place of the Lord: nor does the son then know what to do save from the information and guidance (manuductione) given him by the father. But when he goes forth from his (father's) house and becomes his own master so as to be able to guide himself from his own mind and know what to do, then the Lord is his father. These things I spoke in а dream, and I awoke: (Bergquist, pp.13-14)

Do these quotations not point to a religious stream that flowed underground as it were in

Swedenborg during the years of his scientific endeavours?



Administrative Matters

Secretary's Report:

Since June we have been happy to welcome into membership the following: Milton Cameron (Vic) Mena Johnson (NSW) Jonathan Lockyer (NSW) Dean Rhodes (NSW) Cor Visser-Marchant (ACT) Robyn Stanton (NSW) Claudette Vaughan (NSW) Eve Cardwell (Vic) It is so appropriate that the theme for this issue is "Endings and Beginnings" as several members of your Committee have recently retired, ending their regular input into discussions, and new Committee members have been elected, beginning their greater involvement in the future directions of the Association. At the recent Committee meeting the three new members were welcomed warmly and spoke briefly about their wish to more fully support the work of the SAA. The Committee also strongly reiterated the invitation to members to attend a Committee meeting and take part in discussions or put forward ideas. It is not necessary to be able to attend in person at North Ryde attendance by phone or internet is available. Committee meetings in 2011 will be held on 16th February, 18th May, 31st August and 16th November – all Wednesdays at 6 p.m. – so keep these dates in mind. You may even receive a personal invitation!

With best wishes for the festive season from your Committee,

Alexis Jarvis Secretary





The richness of life opens up wonderful beginnings By Michael Chester

I have seen some wonderful programs on the development of the embryo and fetus during the nine months of pregnancy as the new being changes into the human form. So much is happening each second. For example a new born baby is born with about 100 billion neurons, similar in number to the number of stars in the Milky Way. The speed with which these neurons are formed and organised *in utero* is astonishing and is part of a wondrous process in enabling us to have a planetary existence.

During the first three years of our life more wondrous processes occur. For the infant who receives loving sounds, caring touches, responsive eye contact, social intimacy, safety, the brain develops well as the neural pathways are repetitively and indelibly



stimulated, strengthened and sensitised. Neurons that fire together wire together. The way we speak to, handle and to respond а baby determines the very structure of that baby's brain. And it has been well known that the first three years of a child's life has a great impact on

the rest of that person's life. Francis Xavier's saying "Give me a child until he is seven and I will give you the man" highlights the importance of our early years.

It is a marvel that throughout the whole of our life the pattern of wiring in the brain is constantly changing and shows that the brain is not fixed after a certain age. These dynamic changes happens via the interaction between the forces that maintains the body and the sensory input from the environment.

As I was going to school I received encouragement to work hard now so as to enjoy the benefits later on. Parents realise that the quality of their child's schooling has a big impact on the next stage of their life and often move to live in the same suburb as the desired school to ensure their children can attend. It affects what type of person they will become, what training is open to them and what type of work they can move into. Many students recently completed their HSC. Their efforts up to this stage of their life will influence new beginnings, what course they can follow at the tertiary level, or what job they will apply for and so on.

Many of you know that Swedenborg was a very gifted student who wanted to serve his country well with a productive life. A year after Swedenborg completed his university studies he began his first overseas trip to England, the Netherlands, France and Germany, meeting many interesting people, continuing his guest to understand how things work, and learning practical skills such as book-binding. He became very good at gathering what was known in a scientific area and integrating it with his own understanding so that it was useful to others. His quest to know and understand led him to seek the nature of the soul so he began studies in anatomy and physiology. His burning desire to understand the interactions between spirit and body led him to go inwards to understand himself better. He allowed himself to be guided by Higher Life, his intuitions and dreams until his spiritual senses were opened. From then on he used his observational and reporting skills to explore the spiritual realms with great insight and benefit to others.

Swedenborg's life illustrates well that the richness of life opens up wonderful beginnings. He was born into a loving and caring family. His father inspired him to love the teachings of Christ, which stayed with him throughout his life. He was stimulated by the conversation of the people who visited his home. He was guided wisely by Eric Benzelius and Olof Rudbeck to study well and to participate in the scientific pursuits of his age. All this led to a rich scientific life and to transformative experiences so that at the end of his life he was held in high regard by those close to him. The interplay of the influx of life and the impressions from the natural world gave rise to a wonderful soul whose writings are an expression of goodness and truth.

May Swedenborg's life and the achievements of other people encourage us to participate in the rich dynamics of life. We can travel to new places, pursue a burning question, learn new skills, start a course, make new beginnings in areas that are unfamiliar so that we have a broad range of interests. This will enable our developing soul to perceive more fully the nature of reality and participate in its dynamics. For the end of our planetary life is the beginning of our eternal spiritual life.



From this it may be seen how far someone errs who believes that the Lord has not foreseen and does not see the smallest individual thing with man, or that within the smallest individual thing He does not foresee and lead, when in fact the Lord's foresight and providence are present within the tiniest details of all the smallest individual things with him, and in details so tiny that it is impossible to comprehend in any manner of thought one in many millions of them. For every smallest fraction of a moment of a person's life entails a chain of consequences extending into eternity. Indeed every one is like a new beginning to those that follow, and so every single moment of the life both of his understanding and of his will is a new beginning. And since the Lord foresaw from eternity what man was going to be like in the future and even into eternity it is clear that providence is present in the smallest individual things, and, as has been stated, is governing him and diverting him so that he may be such, this being achieved by constant re-shaping of his freedom.

Arcana Coelestia 3854

Letters to the Editor

I'd just like to say we are grateful to receive Candela, forwarded from my son in Perth.



My thoughts on Christmas are that we can be reminded that the Lord is always with each one of us in our lives in person and in spirit, something that we constantly need reminding about, and in the simplest form possible, a baby.

Yours Sincerely Win Page

I would love to hear from more of you. It need only be a short letter or email: perhaps some thoughts on the theme for the next issue, a comment on a previous issue or even a short article.

Or do you have any questions that puzzle you? The SAA Board would be happy to respond to any of these and it may be helpful to other readers too.

Ruth Duckworth

Editor <u>rduckworth@optusnet.com.au</u>

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

There has always been a Word – not so much a book or text – but a contact-point or connection between God and his creation, and most of all between God and us who have the ability to think about God and reflect on our existence.

God as he really is – infinite and eternal – is beyond our comprehension and so we can only come to know God through things we <u>can</u> understand on our level. Love comes to mind, but you could also include orderliness, being useful, change and growth, among others. These are things we can explore and they give meaning to our idea of God. They are the Word which comes from God to us.

The beginning of John's gospel goes on to link this Word with the coming of God into the world, as **the Word made flesh.** We now have the Word made very accessible and there with us. This is what we celebrate at Christmas. It completes the way the Word is with us, as long as our lives give flesh to the Word.

Julian Duckworth.

A hymn by John Keble 1792 - 1866 New every morning is the love Our wakening and uprising prove; Through sleep and darkness safely brought, Restored to life and power and thought. New mercies, each returning day, Hover around us while we pray; New perils past, new sins forgiven, New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven. If, on our daily course, our mind Be set to hallow all we find, New treasures still, of countless price, God will provide for sacrifice. The trivial round, the common task, Will furnish all we ought to ask; Room to deny ourselves, a road To bring us daily nearer God. Only, O Lord, in Thy dear love, Fit us for perfect rest above, And help us, this and every day,

To live more nearly as we pray.



RRP \$6.00

Discounted Items for the Ouarter

As a reader of Candela, if you order the following titles in the Dec 2010 to Feb 2011 period, you will receive approx. 25% off the retail price (while stocks last).

(see the discounted price and postage on the form below)

Complete the Order Form (you can copy it) and return it to the Swedenborg Centre or phone on 02 9888 1066 and mention this notice.



Spiritual Life/The Word of God by Emanuel Swedenborg

14th printing 1983, 160 pages, paperback A brief but comprehensive survey of the essentials of spiritual living based on extracts from Swedenborg's Apocalypse Explained. This book provides devotional reading on spiritual growth and the steps to undergo regeneration, the significance of the Ten Commandments, our possible profanation of good and truth, and the power of God's Word.



In the Company of Angels by Dr Cherie Sutherland (2000 DVD) **RRP \$12.00** What are angels? Do they exist? What do angels really look like? What do angels do? Bestselling author and expert on near-death experiences, Dr Sutherland talks about her research gathered from around the world plus many interviews with people who have experienced the light and love of angels.



Observing Spirit by **Peter Rhodes** (2005, 227 pages, pb)

RRP \$20.00 Peter Rhodes presents a practical guide to spiritual progress on the path to Heaven with Gurdjieff and Swedenborg. Stressing personal responsibility for overcoming negative traits, each chapter explains how we can realize our true spiritual awareness by cultivating awareness of our baser reactions and by applying the tools of Gurdjieff's spiritual method, "the Work", to our everyday existence.

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It would be good to establish Groups in other areas. If you can help, please contact Michael Chester.

Our website is updated regularly. Go to meetings on <u>www.swedenborg.com.au</u> for more details. Please let us know if you would like to be informed via email. **Details of 2011 meetings to be given in the March Candela.**

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