

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

June 2021 | Volume 82 No. 2
WINTER ISSN 1177-8032

**SPIRITUAL
INVOCATION**

Using the Wow Factor

Invocation and Prayer

TheoSophia



TheoSophia is the official magazine of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand.

TheoSophia is published quarterly and is received by members as part of their annual subscription. For further information and back issues, turn to page 31.

Contributions are welcome. Articles will be considered if up to 1,500 words, and sent as an email attachment to the editor. Note that *TheoSophia* articles will also be used in part or whole on the website: www.theosophy.nz

Please contact the editor at editor@theosophy.org.nz or visit our website for the guidelines: www.theosophy.nz/

Disclaimer: The Theosophical Society in New Zealand is not responsible for any statement in this magazine. Views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the society or editor. Except where required by the context but especially in quotations from earlier literature, the word 'man' is to be understood in the generic sense.

Editorial Team:

President John Vorstermans
Editor Pamela Zane Keys
Editorial Advisors Clive Conland, Warwick Keys
Graphic Design Kelly Bassett, Chocolate Fish Design
Proofreader Vicki Jerome

Printed by H&A Design & Print, Whanganui. Telephone 64 6 345 3145

Published by: The Theosophical Society in New Zealand Inc.
18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051, New Zealand
Telephone and Fax 64 9 523 1797, hq@theosophy.org.nz, www.theosophy.nz/

THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Our Mission is to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the Unity of Life.

July 2018 Naarden meeting of the TS



Cover:
Feathers
by James Lee
Pexels.com

In this issue

INVOCATION AND PRAYER

From the Editor's Desk	3
Poem: <i>The First Day of Winter</i> by Clive Conland	3

FEATURES

<i>Spiritual Invocation</i>	8
<i>John Sell</i>	
The Spiritual Life in Today's World	11
<i>HPB Lodge</i>	
Lilian Florence Edger: An Inspiring Trailblazer – Part 2	12
<i>Richard Sell</i>	
The Practice of Prayer	18
<i>Pamela Zane Keys</i>	
Using the Wow Factor	20
<i>Warwick Keys</i>	
Ho'oponopono	24
<i>Sushma Webber</i>	

REMEMBRANCE – Bernice Croft	19
-----------------------------------	----

BOOKS

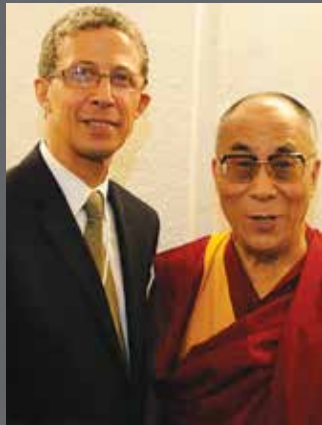
<i>Practical Spirituality</i> by John Sell	2
Special Book Review by Ravi Ravindra: <i>A Quest for Wisdom</i>	16
The Geoffrey Hodson Library	16

THEOSOLOGY IN ACTION

Diary Dates	3
President's Perspective: <i>Invocation and Prayer</i>	4
International President: <i>Impractical Wisdom</i>	6
Earth Beat Aotearoa Festival	26
Summer Seminar and Unity Workshop	27
International Women's Day	27
Theosophical Order of Service	28
Vegetarians Today	30
Resources	31
Directory	32
<i>Invocation for Freedom</i> by John Sell	Inside back cover

NOTICES

International President Re-elected	2
Call for Nominations	2
Theosophical Digest	23



6

Impractical Wisdom



8

Spiritual Invocation



20

Using the Wow Factor



24

Ho'oponopono

International President Re-elected

In accordance with the requirements of Rule 10 of the Rules and Regulations of the Theosophical Society and the results of the voting which were 95% in favour and which have been checked by the Election Committee and the Executive Committee, Mr Tim Boyd is hereby declared re-elected President of the Theosophical Society for a second term of office for seven years from 27 April 2021.

Hearty congratulations to Tim Boyd from the New Zealand Section.

CALL FOR TSNZ NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT AND TWO GOVERNANCE BOARD MEMBERS

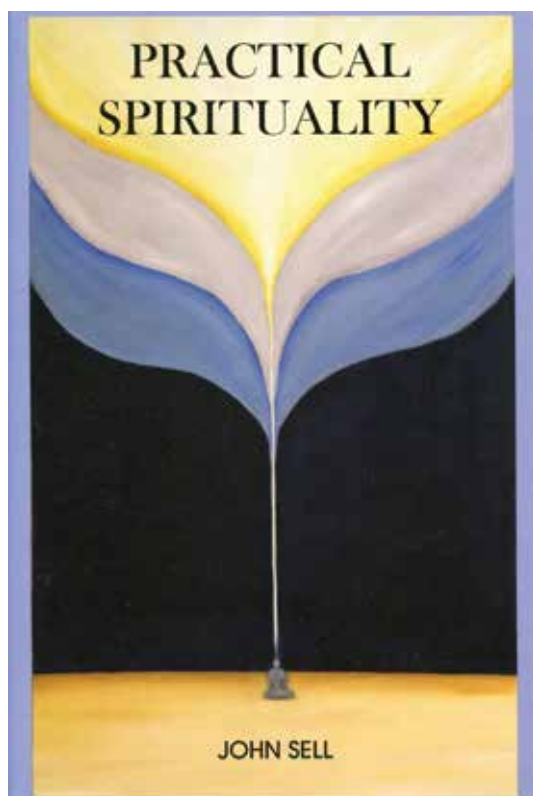
Nominations for the position of National Vice-President for a one-year term and for two Governance Board members for a three-year term, commencing after the Convention in January 2022, are now open and must be made in writing, with each nomination being proposed by three members of the Society in good standing.

Candidate nominations should be accompanied by a photograph, short curriculum vitae, relevant biographical data, personal statement (all to fit on one A4 page) and the agreement of the candidate to stand. Details of prerequisites for these roles are outlined in bylaw 1.1 and 1.2. Full details, including outlines of job requirements, required nomination forms and candidate statement template to be filled out, are available on the website at <https://theosophy.nz/about/jobs>

Alternatively, nominees can contact the National President at np@theosophy.org.nz or telephone on (09) 523-1797 during working hours.

Nominations must reach the Returning Officer by 4pm, Thursday 30 September 2021 at 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051.

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY Selected Works of John Sell



Two of John Sell's qualities that come through this book are his sincerity and his ability to engage the reader... This is evident in every chapter, providing uplifting support as the reader delves into what are often difficult and complex issues on the path to self-understanding and personal transformation.

Practical Spirituality also contains a useful article by Elizabeth Sell [who edited the work] titled *Service: A Dynamic Challenge*, that focuses on the importance of committing ourselves to practical activities that are of lasting value to both the local and world communities. In addition to illustrations by John Sell and Lionel Taylor, *Practical Spirituality* contains full-colour reproductions of rare paintings by Elizabeth Sell that are as beautiful as they are inspiring.

Practical Spirituality: Selected Works of John Sell offers a wealth of useful, step-by-step teachings of Theosophy that will challenge, inform and inspire. In addition to being important to the library of every theosophical lodge or study centre, this will be a 'core text' for individual students wishing to expand their insight, compassion and understanding of life's mysteries.

Extracts from review by Nathaniel Altman in the American TS magazine *Quest*, Fall 2019.
See complete book review on line at www.theosophy.nz/

Edited by Elizabeth Sell.
Auckland: Theosophical Publishing House, 2020,
xii + 495 pages, cloth, ISBN 978-0-473-47677-9.
Cost: NZ\$60 + postage (free within New Zealand).
office@theosophy.org.nz or Phone: 09 523 1797
TSNZ National office, 18 Belvedere St., Epsom, Auckland 1051, NZ.

Invocation and Prayer

Two of the great power tools available to us are invocation and prayer. As we learn to use them, we discover that situations and lives can be changed for the better. Writing around the theme in this winter issue of *TheoSophia*, are John Vorstermans (p.4), John Sell (p.8), the editor (p.18), Warwick Keys (p.20) and Sushma Webber (p.24).

Other articles of interest include that of the recently re-elected International President, Tim Boyd, whose piece is set in the context of a visit from His Holiness, The Dalai Lama (p.6), Richard Sell's conclusion to his biographical writing on early New Zealand theosophist, Lilian Florence Edger (p.12), some learned comments by Ravi Ravindra on a new book (p.16) and feedback from inspiring events (pp.26, 27).

As we move into the colder months ahead, may you find wisdom, practical guidance and comfort within these pages.

Pamela Zane Keys
Editor

The First Day of Winter

*Leaves fall and lie in an
Autumnal mosaic,
darker greening grass
as winter's pangs pierce.*

*Light lifts and lingers on.
Nature prepares for rest.
Rejuvenation will follow
winter's sleep.*

*We also return from rest
reborn, for spring,
continuing the cycles
for us as in all Nature.*

*Beyond awareness of time
growth and progression,
development and expansion
seasonal evolution of soul.*

Clive Conland

DIARY DATES

2021

June 06	Waikato National Seminar
July 04	Whanganui National Seminar
July 30	Induction/Orientation Day
July 31-Aug 01	Immersion Weekend: Exploring Reincarnation
Aug 07	Presidents' Forum
Sept 25	Palmerston North National Seminar
Sept 30	Close of nominations for the Governance Board and National Vice-President
Oct 03	Hawke's Bay National Seminar
Oct 23-25	Theosophical Weekend TBA - check website

2022

Jan 13-18	TSNZ Annual Convention – in Auckland
-----------	--------------------------------------

Check for updates and details of these events: www.theosophy.nz

FUTURE ISSUES 2021

Date	Theme	Deadline
2021		
September	<i>The Ancient Wisdom</i>	1 July
December	<i>Unity</i>	1 October
2022		
March	<i>Harmony</i>	1 January

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

INVOCATION AND PRAYER

National President, **John Vorstermans** clarifies the definition and powerful uses of these esoteric techniques.



Invocation and Prayer, the theme of this issue of *TheoSophia*, are worthy of some reflection. The power of affirmation, prayer and invocation has been used for thousands of years in both spiritual and folk rites, by priestesses and priests, and by people trying to bring health, harmony and happiness into their lives. The effect of the spoken word on our consciousness is genuinely profound. It inspires change. Since the dawn of spiritual practices, intentions have been spoken aloud in mantra, invocations, affirmations, prayers and chants. They invoke a deeper connection to our Self, clear energy, centre our being, focus the mind, alter behaviours and manifest positive outcomes. These esoteric techniques are woven into the world's many different religious and spiritual practices.

The difference between an invocation, prayer or affirmation is not always clear. It depends on the intent of the invoker. In Christian churches, *The Lord's Prayer* is used as a prayer as it is a series of requests, but the *23rd Psalm* is more of an invocation. By understanding how to use invocation, prayer or affirmation, we learn of powerful tools at our disposal to transform our lives.

Prayer is the process by which we can attune the human mind and will to God's consciousness and will. It is an invocation to activate a rapport with an object of worship through deliberate communication. It may be an act of appeal or negotiation directed towards a deity (a god) or a deified ancestor. More generally, prayer can also have the purpose of giving thanks or praise.

Affirmation harnesses concentrated thought and the power of words to realise and manifest goals, focusing on a positive outcome rather than a negative situation. For example, a person experiencing illness would focus the prayer on the desired state of perfect health. They affirm this desired intention 'as if already happened'. An example of a positive affirmation is: 'I will be strong, brave, persevering in His service.'

Invocation – the act or instance of invoking, especially an appeal to a higher power for assistance or the prayer or other formula used in invoking, such as the following:

1. There is *the demand of many*, unconsciously appealing to some higher force, such as God, especially during crises such as the present pandemic. Such invocations are addressed to that power outside themselves which they feel can and should come to their help in their moment of extremity.
2. Then there is the invocational spirit, evidenced by sincere people as they participate in the rites of their religion and take advantage of the opportunity of united *worship and*

prayer to lay their demands for help before God. This group, added to the mass of humanity, creates a huge body of invocative applicants.

3. Then, lastly, there are the trained disciples and aspirants of the world who use certain forms of words, certain carefully defined invocations and who focus the invocative appeal to help humanity, individuals or groups in some way.

Affirmations can be used in our spiritual life and as preparation for meditation for example:

More radiant than the sun, purer than the snow,
Subtler than the ether, is the Self, the spirit within my heart.
I am that Self; that Self am I.

Another powerful affirmation is one that helps to reorient us to who we really are. If said regularly, it can help move our conditioned view of who we are: 'I am a Spiritual Being having a Human experience.' From the *Book of Discipline* in the schools of *Dzyan* we have a very powerful affirmation affirming the qualities required to realise Truth:

Behold the truth before you: a clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of TRUTH, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked, and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection which the secret science (Gupta-Vidya) depicts — these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom¹.

The science of invocation is the intelligent organisation of spiritual energy and the forces of love and compassion. When effective, it will evoke the response of divine or spiritual Beings who are willing to work with men and women. When saying an invocation, the person or group will assume the attitude of meditation, that is an attitude of concentration, spiritual direction and receptivity. When in the mindset of meditation, it is easier to unite with the group's higher nature or the recipient of the invocation.

Healing Invocations, developed by Geoffrey Hodson, have been used for many years in the Theosophical Society performed by an individual or a group to help heal those in sickness or suffering. They would be repeated out loud. Below are some useful healing invocations.

INVOCATION TO THE HEALING DEVAS

(The names of individuals for whom healing is intended are placed in the chalice.)

Hail! Devas of the healing art! Come to our aid.
 Pour forth your healing life into this chalice.
 Let every cell be charged anew with vital force.
 To every nerve give peace.
 Let tortured sense be soothed.
 May the rising tide of life set every limb aglow.
 As by your healing power both soul and body are restored,
 Leave with each an angel watcher to comfort and protect,
 Till health returns, or life departs, that he may ward away all ill;
 May hasten the returning strength, or lead to peace when life is done.
 Hail! Devas of the healing art! Come to our aid,
 And share with us the labour of this earth,
 That God may be set free in man. OM

O Mighty Power of Light! Ruler of all worlds! Protector of every form of life! I take refuge in Thee. I know myself to be surrounded and supported by Thy power and illumined by Thy light. Mastery of the lower self is born in me. By Thy power I rule my thoughts, my feelings and my acts. In Thy name I invoke the angels of light and power. I share their fiery strength; I am filled with their dauntless courage. Summoning them to my aid, I drive all darkness from this place. Before my will resistless now that it is one with Thine all evil melts away. Amen.

The *Universal Invocation*, also known as *Universal Prayer*, was written in 1923 by Dr Annie Besant, then president of the Theosophical Society (Adyar). It reads:

O hidden life vibrant in every atom,
 O hidden light, shining in every creature,
 O hidden love, embracing all in oneness,
 May all who feel themselves as one with thee
 Know they are therefore one with every other.

The *Great Invocation* is a prayer published in 1937 by Alice Bailey, and widely used in occult and New Age circles.

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
 Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
 Let LIGHT descend on Earth.
 From the point of love within the Heart of God
 Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
 May CHRIST return to Earth.
 From the centre where the Will of God is known
 Let Purpose guide the little wills of men —
 The PURPOSE which the Masters know and serve.
 From the centre which we call the race of men

Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
 And may it seal the door where evil dwells.
 Let Light and Love and Power
 Restore the Plan on Earth.

Robert Ellwood wrote of this prayer, “Perhaps as well as anything could, the tone and thrust of these simple lines suggest the distinctive ethos of the Bailey work. It clearly shares basic theosophical teaching concerning human nature, Karma and the claimed existence of a hierarchy of generally invisible but transcendent Masters guiding individual spiritual development and the evolution of the planet. But the work also displays a special quality that might be called theosophical eschatologyⁱ.”

In conclusion, the use of prayer, affirmation and invocation is a practical method for one wanting to connect with the source, be it God, the universal intelligence or beingness, their Self or to help others with the aid of the multitude of beings who live in the unseen realms, or as a means of sending uplifting goodwill to those who are in need. It is also a tool to give us strength and power to confront life challenges and transform our way of being. It is not simply a topic to study, it is something to do every day of our lives.

ⁱ From *Collected Writings of H. P. Blavatsky* Vol. XII p.502-503.

ⁱⁱ Robert Ellwood. *Bailey, Alice Ann Latrobe Bateman in Theosophia*.



Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society, shares learnings gained while hosting His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Impractical Wisdom

The great moment
is *this* moment.

There are times in our lives when events move so swiftly that they require us to make our best efforts to merely keep from falling behind. Often, we will later look back on these as times when we learned a great deal, whether or not we met the challenges faced. In these situations, we find the measure of ourselves and discover whether the time spent in inner preparation has prepared us for the rush of outer activity.

In 2011, I found myself at the centre of such a perfect storm of activity. To get ready for my upcoming term as president of the Theosophical Society in America, I moved from my Chicago home of 37 years to the Olcott campus in Wheaton. Simultaneously I began my education into the substantial intricacies of administering the Society. If the Lords of Karma were listening to me, all of this would have been enough, but of course there was more in store. At the very moment when I was struggling to pack up my home and move, the TS got the call that the Dalai Lama had accepted our May 2010 request to allow us to sponsor a visit by him to Chicago. But instead of the 2012 date we had originally discussed, his visit was now to be in July 2011 – less than five months away.

Our initial urge was to beg off and wait for a more opportune time. When it became clear that His Holiness's entire schedule for 2012 had recently been cast into question, we realised that if the TSA was going to host his visit, it would have to be now or never. Still, we were uncertain in the face of the enormousness of the undertaking. Although we knew we would be unwise to pass up this opportunity, Betty Bland and I engaged in a little game listing the reasons why we knew it was impossible. The most obvious was that Summer National Gathering was already scheduled for the week after the potential visit. Next, we reasoned that we had no experience planning an event of this magnitude. And where could we find a suitable venue on such short notice? Obstacle after obstacle was presented and evaporated under our scrutiny, until we reached the final obstacle, the stopper, the great killer of dreams – money – hundreds of thousands of dollars. That one we could not see our way around.

We decided to put a time limit on making a decision. We asked the Office of Tibet to give us a week. During that time, we would explore our options, daunting though they seemed. A few phone calls later, and we were catapulted into meetings with national production companies, representatives for rock stars – even some of Oprah's people wanted to get involved. Quickly we found that the Dalai Lama's name drew a crowd of high-level people who could put together a large-scale event and make it possible for the Chicago community to hear His Holiness's message: *Bridging the Faith Divide*.

Why did we hesitate even then? Over the years I have found that when we are faced with such a dizzying array of choices, there is often the possibility of "paralysis by analysis." At the level of the reasoning mind, an answer is hard to find. At such times a deeper level of perception is needed. One of the best ways to invite such a moment of clarity is to turn back to the basics. The fundamental question around which all of the details of this event had to revolve was "What is our motivation?" In numerous Theosophical writings we run across the idea that motive is everything. Our inner motivation in performing any task colours and determines the real value of the outcome.

So what were our motives? They began with a sense that the Dalai Lama can confer a blessing. His presence and message speak to deep levels inside all people. He brings a message that empowers and cuts through superficial thinking. Our motivation was to create a space for the maximum experience of this presence. To accomplish this, we wanted to work with like-minded people – people for whom the deepening of consciousness and compassion were an important component of their lives. We planned to create an environment for the event that would embrace participants on multiple levels, visual as well as auditory, and leave an impact that would continue beyond the last word spoken on stage. We wanted to include the Tibetan community, who have suffered greatly with the loss of their homeland, and to finish the event with substantial funds that could be given to assist Tibetan refugees. We wanted to reaffirm and re-energise the longtime connection between the Theosophical Society and the Dalai Lama. We wanted our own TS members to be able to share in the responsibility of presenting one of the greatest men on the world stage today. We hoped that the Theosophical Society would be recognised for its contribution in seeding the consciousness of humanity with a vision of unity and cooperation. We also had an intention of modeling right behaviour and right values in all aspects of

the event, so that even the most mundane detail would be infused with spirit. In short, we hoped this event could serve as practice in living the Theosophical lives we have committed ourselves to.

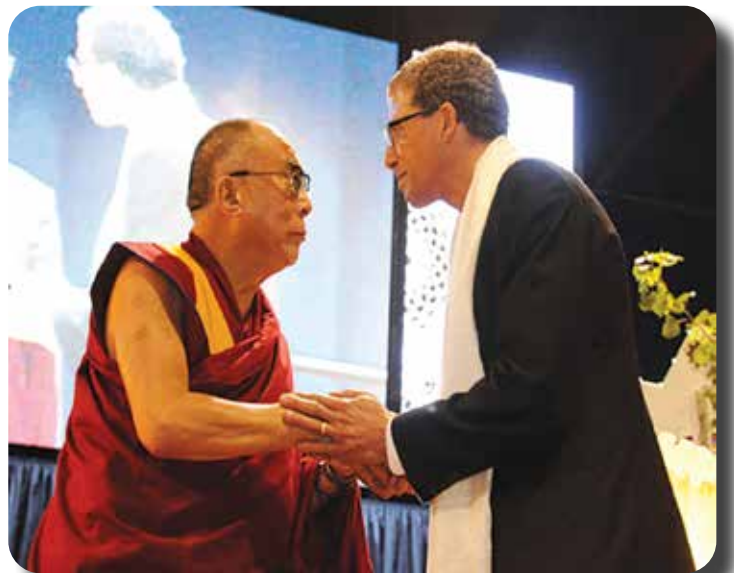
Moving to this simpler point of view brought it all into focus. Quickly the right people either appeared or were identified. With the right people, the doors opened to meet all of the other needs. Even the financing became a non-issue as generous people came forward to commit substantial sums of money.

In some spiritual circles, there is a wish – expressed in numerous prayers such as “Use me, Lord,” “Let your light shine through me,” or “Let the will of the highest be done in me” – that our lives merge with the divine life and will. We want to be used to bring peace to the world, heal the pain of a suffering humanity, and right the countless imbalances inflicted on nature, and we invite some defining moment that will marshal all of the qualities we believe we have cultivated. We want to do great things. But we often forget that greatness is the result of compassionate attention to the infinite number of mundane events and small details that make up our daily lives. The great moment is this moment. The suffering of humanity is lessened by addressing the suffering of the person in front of me right now. The great initiation will one day be presented because of

my attention to the daily initiations I face in getting my daughter off to school, listening to a hurt and complaining friend, or declining to be fearful in the face of the war, turmoil and disaster that occupy the daily news. There is no moment more spiritual than this one. There is no task greater than the one in front of me now. There is no genuine spirituality that ignores the present moment in its longing for some future greatness.

The Theosophical Society was given a great opportunity in the Dalai Lama’s visit. It is the result of countless selfless efforts by our members in the 135 years since the TS’s founding. Our members worldwide have attempted to deepen their understanding of the world’s religions and to establish an awareness of the unity of all life. That is what has brought us to this point. As with all things, this event came and went, but like a lingering fragrance, it has left its imprint in our consciousness. When it had passed, we picked up where we left off. The same work was waiting for us, the same schedule, the same friends, the same world. The challenge before us will also be the same – to see the world with fresh eyes and to treat each moment as precious and extraordinary. May we rise to meet this challenge.

Reprinted, with kind permission, from *Quest* magazine, USA - Summer 2011.



Spiritual Invocation

Inspiring theosophist, teacher and leader, **John Sell** has left us a very practical explanation and guide...

An invocation is a very useful, powerful and effective tool that we can use for Self-Transformation. In invocation we are making an appeal, a Divine appeal. We are asking for and drawing down spiritual energies from higher planes. We are entering into a spiritual relationship with higher powers. The effect, when we are successful, is that the spiritual energies of Love, Joy, Strength and Healing pour down into our consciousness and into the world, and in some cases are projected by us, as in healing or when blessing is given. These invocations are made to different sources such as The Christ, the Hierarchy, The Masters, Angels or to our own Souls.

The energies change our character i.e. the energies of Self-Transformation are at work, for they help eliminate the old and material ways of acting. They thus help others and incidentally they help us to develop a more loving, helpful and spiritual nature. We need to study the invocation carefully beforehand, word by word and if necessary, meditate or ponder on each word. Then the whole sentence must be studied and understood. We must also realise that the effectiveness of the invocation depends upon the amount of knowledge, will and thought-power that we bring to it. This is critical not only for an invocation but for all the techniques I have mentioned.



Here is a general mantram we can use when we are seeking for Spiritual help for ourselves. It is a very, very old and well-known invocation.

From the unreal lead me to the Real
From darkness lead me to Light
From death lead me to Immortality

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

It is brief, to the point and must be made with a heartfelt desire for a new way of living.

Here is another invocation; it is a Healing Invocation. As always you would find a quiet spot if possible and get yourself into the right frame of mind beforehand.

May the healing power of the Lord Christ descend upon (names).
May the healing angels encompass them.

Kingdom of the Gods, G. Hodson, 236

You should remain quiet for a short while as the healing is carried out.

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF AN INVOCATION?

1. Invocation consists of the combining of the energies of the *Mind* as well as the *Heart*. Normal prayer is often only heart energy and can be just repetition. Here we use the energy of *Aspiration and Love* but we then add the element of *thinking and thought-form building*.
2. It consists of *linking through thought* with Energy or Beings who manipulate these energies, Angels, Masters etc. We think of the Source we wish to connect up to and where possible make a picture of the Being we are invoking energy from. There are different types of Invocation. For example: a) Healing, b) Blessing, c) Soul energies.
3. The energy of *Visualisation and Imagination* are then used to direct the energy. What is visualised depends upon the wording of the invocation.
4. The energy of *Will* is used. This takes the form of *your intention, your affirmation and your assertion* as you say the invocation. *We decide* to invoke – *we intend* to invoke – *we maintain concentration* on our image building and *we affirm/assert* our will by the use of the word formula we use.
5. As the energy flows it is radiated out to a person or group or to the world at large. Often the palm chakras are used as we raise our hands and pour out the evoked energy.

You may send the energy from your heart area or from your hands.

Here is an invocation we can use:

In the centre of all Love I stand
From that centre I, the Soul will outward move
From that centre I, the one who serves will work
May the Love of the Divine Self be shed abroad,
In my heart, through my group and throughout the world.

Theosophy in New Zealand, September 1986, p.8.

Let's begin:

- First we study each line of the invocation till it is understood as far as the lower mind can do so.
- It may be said by one person alone or in a group formation where it is more powerful. We can do it in group formation.
- The invocation can be just said, or there may be a preparing of the lower-self beforehand which enhances the results. We can do an invocation with some preparation.
- Normally you would learn the invocation by heart but one way we can say it in a group session is this: say the first line, then all say or mentally affirm the first line together. Then say the second line and again all say or mentally affirm the second line together and so on until we finish.
- We try to realise ourselves as the Soul we really are by affirming these words at the right time:

I AM THE RADIANT, IMMORTAL SOUL, FILLED WITH LIGHT,
LOVE AND POWER.

Now,

1. Let's study the words and each line until we understand them. Do that.
2. Now let's close our eyes, though this is not necessary, relax the body, harmonise the emotions and keep the mental body, that is your mind, very alert.
3. Open the lower personality to the Soul. Say these words:

I AM THE RADIANT, IMMORTAL SOUL, FILLED WITH LIGHT,
LOVE AND POWER.

4. We will now say the invocation. You may send the energy either from your heart or from your hands: In the centre of all Love I stand...

Continue to pour out the love. Do this for about 15-20 seconds. Now open your eyes.

Later you can try this before saying your invocation:

Say the OM internally, while concentrating on its meaning; in this case to purify auras.

INVOCATION

May those who are embodiments of Love Immortal
 Bless with Their help and guidance this Society
 Founded to be a channel for Their work.
 May They inspire it with Their Wisdom
 Strengthen it with Their Power
 And energise it with Their activity.

Annie Besant

INVOCATION TO THE HIERARCHY

May the Holy Ones whose pupils we aspire to become,
 Show us the Light we seek;
 Give us the strong aid of Their Compassion and Their Wisdom.
 There is a peace that passeth understanding;
 It abides in the hearts of those who live in the Eternal.
 There is a power that maketh all things new;
 It lives and moves in those who know the Self as One.
 May that peace brood over us, that power uplift us,
 Till we stand where the One Initiator is invoked,
 Till we see His Star shine forth.

Annie Besant – Liberal Catholic Church Liturgy.

Taken from Practical Spirituality: Selected Works of John Sell compiled and edited by Elizabeth Sell, p. 50-55, Theosophical Publishing House, Auckland 2019.



While John Sell was at boarding school in NZ, his father sent him the *Bhagavad Gita* from India which John thought to be the most wonderful book he had ever read. Later a friend gave him a book on theosophy. John joined the Theosophical Society at 18 years of age and theosophy became a life-long study which he endeavoured to apply to his life in a practical way. John was a trained psychologist and teacher. He developed a four-year study course, ran workshops, gave talks, wrote *Practical Spirituality* and many articles for the Society's magazine. John helped people wherever he went and devoted his life to Theosophy.

The Spiritual Life in Today's World

How do we manage the practicalities of life and follow a spiritual path?

Spirituality comprises discovering and becoming one's higher, nobler self, in accentuating the highest in motive, speech and conduct of life. The discovery and expression of one's highest Self is the immediate, main and true purpose of all spiritual exercises. Especially is it the messages of unhappiness and pain which have so large a part in human experience. Pain itself can be one of the chief agencies which cause us to seek and follow the spiritual life, even whilst fulfilling worldly duties.

The message of pain is at least threefold: to awaken compassion for the pain of others, to be compassionate is in itself to be spiritual; to teach us to live according to the law of love; and to serve as a spur to induce each one of us to rise to those levels of human nature and consciousness where pain is not, which means the level of the permanent realities and of the Spiritual Self. Then each can release into his or her life the power, light and life of that Self and spirituality becomes natural to us. In such ways pain can be turned to very good purposes. How is the spiritual life to be lived amidst the pressures of mundane, earthly life and duties? There are at least two essentials: spiritual awakening and ordered effort.

Spiritual awakening is as natural as is the appearance of bud and flower on the plant. At a certain stage of evolution there naturally occurs an awakening of the will to attainment. One possible meaning of the Biblical parable of the ten virgins, five wise and five foolish, is that five were spiritually awakened and five were not (Matthew XXV: 1-13). When certain phases of evolution are entered upon, the ego becomes strong enough to send spiritualising influences 'down' to the personality. These strengthen conscience, and arouse the aspirant to make the most of life and to live in the highest possible purity and service. Such experiences are sometimes accompanied by visions of divine perfection and mystical events of various kinds. Three interior experiences are then passed through.

Firstly, mentally awakened, one seeks the answers to the problems of life demanding logic in religion and justice from God. Interest in philosophy and religion deepens and the great search for knowledge begins, often hastened by painful experiences such as worldly failure, bereavement, frustration, and even disaster.

Secondly, one experiences both an awakening of will and a divine discontent. The outer person becomes aware of the "inexpressible longing ... of the inner nature for the infinite." Dissatisfaction, self-shame, sense of failure even amidst material success – these act as spurs. We recognise that selfishness and materialism have ruled our lives and see how harmful they are and how hurtful to others we have been. At this stage help becomes available. The aspirant meets a teacher, either interiorly, externally or both.

The third experience accompanying the awakening of the soul is a diminution of the sense of separateness and an increase in that of kinship and responsibility. There are changes from getting to giving, less focus on the personal and more on the impersonal, from the smaller self to the larger Self.

The second essential is ordered effort. Here, two ideas are met, both somewhat new to Western thought. The first of these is that the spiritual life can be lived whilst in the world, even amidst business and domestic activities; for in them opportunity and guidance can be found for the pursuit of the new interest — the search for truth, understanding, power, reason and beauty in life.

However, one qualification must be made: that the means of livelihood must be neither ignoble nor hurtful to others, animals or human. The second idea is that the practice of the spiritual life is a science, an ordered, carefully organised effort being essential to success. This concerns the daily life of the aspirant which must include regular meditation or prayer, study, character building and self-giving in service without thought of return.

Composed by members of HPB Lodge. Available at: <https://hpb.theosophy.org.nz/>



Lilian Florence Edger - PART TWO

AN INSPIRING TRAILBLAZER

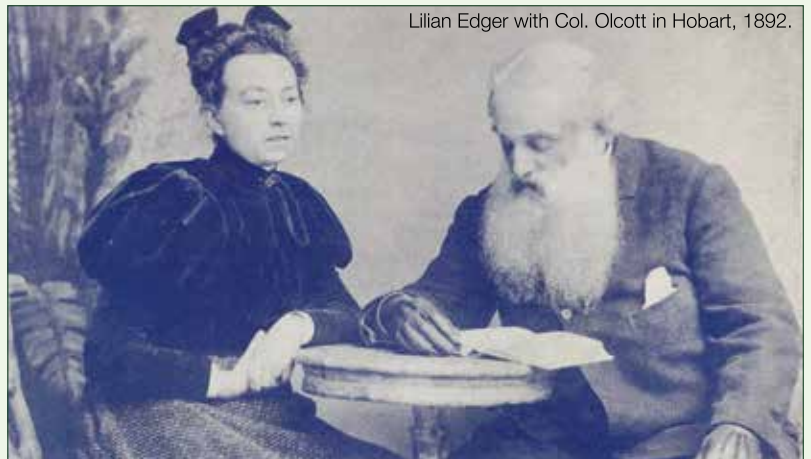
Richard Sell completes his history of a remarkable woman of whom Theosophical Society co-founder, Colonel Olcott said,

“How indefatigably she lectured ... to do her duty by the Society to whose destiny she had linked her own.”



Colonel Henry Steel Olcott had much to say about Lilian Edger in *Old Diary Leaves*. In Vol. IV, Col Olcott reminisces about the early days of the Society in 1887 where he writes, “Our literature was then very scanty, our travelling lecturers few; there was no Annie Besant nor Lilian Edger to fire their hearts with zeal and enrapture their ears with ‘word-perfect’ discourses.”

In *Islands of the Dawn*, Robert Ellwood describes Lilian Edger portrayed by Col Olcott as “a personality more serious and steady than dramatic or charismatic, the ideal second-generation leader or bureaucrat of a movement...” She did, however, have a lighter side as Col Olcott says in *Old Diary Leaves* of an incident on board the ship to India in 1897:



Among other amusement to relieve the tedium of the voyage there was a fancy-dress ball on the evening of the 27th November which Miss Lilian Edger, M.A., etc., attended in the character of ‘Night’. Her black dress besprinkled with stars and a crescent moon on her head, together with the excitement of the ball made her look very well from the human point of view if not from that of the university graduate. I confess that I was very pleased with her dissipation for it showed that there was the usual quota of human nature beneath the shell of collegiate enamel.¹

Edger gave talks to the 1897 convention in Adyar and these were so well received that the *Hindu* wrote a leading article very favourable about the Society describing it as “a worldwide Society with such a growing influence that it may in time rally around it all the Indian nations.”² Of this occasion in Adyar, Col Olcott himself wrote “The notes in my diary show that her audiences were ‘deeply interested’ and ‘enthusiastic’, etc.” She toured India extensively in 1898, visiting most of the Indian lodges with Col Olcott. The Indian Convention was held in Benares on 25-27 October in 1898 and Miss Edger spoke alongside Mrs Besant, Countess Wachtmeister and Dr Pascal (France). Lilian later described in her recollections of travel around India, that year in which she gave over 45 lectures as being often by primitive means in places where Europeans were seldom seen and their requirements poorly understood, but all was lightened by the forethought and good humour of ‘the Colonel’. She spoke on topics such as *The Secret of Death*, *Will Theosophy Help the World*, *Religion*, *Theosophy*, *From Death to Life* and *Female Education*.

Col Olcott spoke finely of her lectures in Adyar and elsewhere saying that as Miss Edger proceeded, her audience was drawn nearer to her and she seemed to communicate to them some of her own depth of earnestness when she strove to impress on their minds that, as religion was of the greatest moment to everyone, they should strive to make their religion purer and broader ... With a clear and well-modulated voice and wonderfully sustained earnestness, she impressed her hearers with the sincerity of her convictions.

Lilian Edger was awarded a special Gold Medal for best theosophical contribution of that year.³ She was by all accounts unpretentious and elaborated on theosophical themes in a common-sense way.

At the end of the arduous 1898 tour, Col Olcott wrote in *Old Diary Leaves*:

Mrs Besant having called Miss Edger to Benares to assist in her work, she left us for that place by the mail train on the 30th of September, taking with her our best wishes for her health and happiness. The narrative of our Southern tour, now brought to a close, shows how indefatigably she had lectured, despite her frail body and the unaccustomed impediments of Indian travel, to do her duty by the Society to whose destiny she had linked her own. It is but justice to say that she had won the respect of her South Indian colleagues and the great audiences before which she had propounded her views. We people at Adyar had enjoyed her company and parted from her with regret.

1899 saw Miss Edger in Australia lecturing and then in January 1900 she was appointed travelling lecturer for the year at the Fourth New Zealand Convention, which was held in Dunedin.³ Later that year she was persuaded by Col Olcott to return to India again where she gave four lectures at Adyar in late December.

Returning to the South Pacific to follow her story, we find in her private correspondence of September 1897 some of her personal thoughts and admiration for Col Olcott when he was in New Zealand. Writing to her sister Eva from Wellington and about to travel up country on the morrow with Col Olcott to Pahiatua and Woodville she writes, "The Colonel is very popular everywhere and does a great deal to break down prejudices [against the Society] – you will all like him very much indeed."⁴ On that journey Miss Edger was made Inspector of Branches.

Living with her sister Mrs Gertrude Evangeline Hemus in Arthur Street, Ponsonby, Auckland, she told a reporter from the *Auckland Star* in 1903 that Benares was the centre from which the Indian work was directed, just as Auckland is for the centre in New Zealand and Sydney is for Australia. "I have just been there" she said, "for just three years. I was there for a year before that, and then I came back and was working in Australia for about 18 months." At a talk on the *Brotherhood of Man* the *Auckland Star* newspaper described her as having "an exceptional command of language, and a faultless delivery" as she gave her lecture to a large audience.⁵ She was indeed still travelling around NZ, giving public talks such as in November at the Metaphysical Club in Christchurch on *The Power of Thought*.⁶ In 1908 she again gave lectures to the Adyar Convention⁷ then we lose sight of her for some time as she lived back in India.

Lilian Edger wrote several books including *Theosophy Applied*, *Gleanings from the Light on the Path*, *Obstacles to Spiritual Progress*, *Studies in the Pedigree of Man* and *The Elements of Theosophy* which "intended to serve as an introduction to the study of Mrs Besant's *Ancient Wisdom*." Miss Edger also wrote various articles including a series of six articles in the *Australian Theosophist* on *The Study of the Secret Doctrine* published in 1894 and 1895.⁸



Theosophist Medal, First Prize 1898, awarded to Lilian Edger, MA, FTS



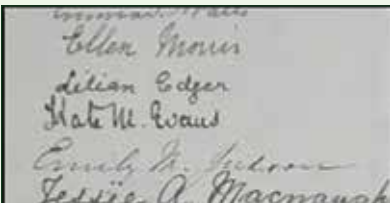
Col. Olcott and Lilian Edger, India

She was by all accounts unpretentious and elaborated on theosophical themes in a common-sense way.

Lilian's sister
Kate Edger was
herself a trailblazer for
women's education
and a role model for
and champion of the
women's suffrage
movement.



Kate Edger



Lilian Edger and her sister Kate Evans (nee Edger) signatures on Suffrage Petition



Lilian Edger

Lilian Edger hailed from a family with some distinction in New Zealand. On 11th February 1903, HPB Lodge in Auckland was chartered and amongst its early members are to be found a Mrs Hemus (later President of the Lodge in 1905) and Mrs Judson, both sisters of Lilian Edger.⁸ Lilian had a brother Herbert Frank Edger,⁹ who was an under-secretary for Native Affairs and became a Judge in the Native Land Court in 1894 until 1909.

Also well known in the family was her sister, Kate Edger (1857-1935) who was the first woman to obtain a B.A. degree in the British Empire in 1877 – see photo here [wrongly captioned as 'Lilian's mother' in the March issue of *TheoSophia* – Ed]. Kate listed down her age, qualifications and first name initial, not giving away her gender on her application and was thereby accepted. She went on to take her M.A. (Hons) at Canterbury in 1881 and graduated with her sister Lilian in 1882.

Kate Edger was herself a trailblazer for women's education and a role model for and champion of the women's suffrage movement. Both she and her sister Lilian signed the Suffrage Petition of 1893 that finally franchised women, alongside Kate Sheppard and 25,500 others. New Zealand became the first self-governing country in the world on 19th September 1893, in which women gained the right to vote in parliamentary elections.¹⁰

Kate believed that the highest aim of education should be to develop the character of each individual "as perfectly as possible so that she may be ready to live her own life as fully as possible and contribute to the community as much as it is possible for her to contribute."¹¹ She said education was not an acquisition of knowledge for knowledge's sake alone but was also intended to build up the moral character of the student.¹¹

It is interesting to note that Lilian's niece, Geraldine Hemus, was a lawyer; the fourth woman admitted to the bar in New Zealand, one of the founders of the Vasanta Garden

School, and later the president of the National Council of Women. Geraldine Hemus also served as treasurer for the New Zealand executive of the Theosophical Society. She often spoke at the Theosophical Society public lectures, on topics such as *The Power of Thought, Justice or Mercy, Which?, The change that we call death*, and *Prohibition: Some points of view*. She was instrumental in the establishment of the Vasanta Garden School which opened in Epsom, Auckland in 1919, and was based on theosophical ideas of education. She continued as President of the Vasanta Garden School Trust Board during the 1930s.¹² This property is now the National Section headquarters of The Theosophical Society in New Zealand Inc. and is still known as Vasanta House.

Spending most of her adult life in India, nearly 40 years, Lilian returned to New Zealand for the last few years of her life. She was interested in advancing women's education and was still lecturing in her 60s and 70s; for example, speaking in 1929 to the University Women's Association where she spoke of:

...the need to develop self-expression side by side with self-effacement. By this means alone could each individual live at his best and in harmony with his fellows, thus making his highest possible contribution to humanity.¹³

She also spoke on world peace at that meeting.

In 1936 and in her 70s she lectured on *Ways to World Peace* in Dunedin for the anti-war movement, tracing the history of various peace movements back to 1747.¹⁴ She was also the leader of *The Peace Study Circle*.¹⁵ At the Auckland Business and Professional Women's Round Table Club she spoke on *Women of India* and in an interesting interview in June 1936, she mentioned having lived with Dr Annie Besant in India for some time. Lilian Edger said Dr Besant lived an exceedingly simple life devoting herself almost entirely to her work and having a large correspondence.

She went on to say that Dr Besant was one of the most sympathetic and understanding women she had ever met.¹⁶

Lilian Edger died on 21st July 1941, aged 79, the last of the daughters of Samuel Edger. She left a financial legacy to both the New Zealand Section and H.P.B Lodge in Auckland. She had been a theosophist longer than anyone else in New Zealand at the time of her death. Her life was one devoted to education and theosophy. She lived a life more akin to our own times than that of 100 years ago, travelling throughout New Zealand, Australia and India, to far flung places where transport was a slow and tortuous process, and she being just five foot and a quarter inch tall.

Lilian Edger served in advancing education for girls throughout her career and bringing the light of religion and the ancient wisdom to those who had an ear to hear. Lilian was a contemporary of theosophical names such as Col H. S. Olcott, Countess Wachtmeister, Dr Besant, Mrs Cooper-Oakley and C. W. Leadbeater et al. She provided an inspiration in her own time, to men and especially to women seeking to likewise achieve higher education, independence and to make their mark in service. She was a determined person, well respected, aptly capable and an avid advocate of the ageless wisdom called Theosophy, to which she dedicated her entire life.

Margaret Lilian Florence Edger was an extraordinary theosophical pioneer and a very remarkable woman. She was an inspiring trail-blazer for future generations.

She lived a life more
akin to our own times
than that of
100 years
ago ...

REFERENCES

1. Robert S. Ellwood, *Islands of the Dawn*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1993
2. H. S. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves*, Vol. 6, Chapter XVIII
3. *Theosophy in New Zealand*, March 1988, p.9
4. Eva Hemus (sister) Wellington letter, September 17th 1897
5. *Auckland Star*, Vol. XXXIV, Issue 243, 12 October 1903
6. *Lyttelton Times*, Vol. CX, Issue 13273, 2 November 1903
7. J. G. Montgomery, Miss Lilian Edger, *Theosophy in New Zealand*, October-November 1941
8. *New Zealand Herald*, Vol XXXI, Issue 9703, 25 December 1894 and <http://www.austheos.org.au/cgi-bin/ui-csvsearch.pl?search=lilian+edger>
9. *Manawatu Standard*, Vol . XLJ, Issue 8859, 29 April 1909
10. 'New Zealand women and the vote', URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/politics/womens-suffrage>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 20-Dec-2018
11. <https://www.academicdresshire.co.nz/About/The+Kate+Edger+Educational+Charitable+Trust.html>
12. Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geraldine_Hemus
13. *Auckland Star*, Vol. LX, Issue 279, 25 November 1929
14. *Otago Daily Times*, Issue 22894, 30 May 1936
15. *New Zealand Herald*, Vol. LXXIII, issue 22490, 6 August 1936
16. *Manawatu Standard*, Vol. LVI, Issue 157, 4 June 1936.



Richard Sell joined the Theosophical Society as a teenager. He is President of the Auckland branch and is Chair of the Governance Board for the New Zealand Section. Richard has presented both throughout New Zealand and internationally and contributes articles to theosophical magazines. He is active in promoting theosophy as a founder of the theosophy.world resource website.

A QUEST FOR WISDOM

Inspiring Purpose on the Path of Life

By David Lorimer

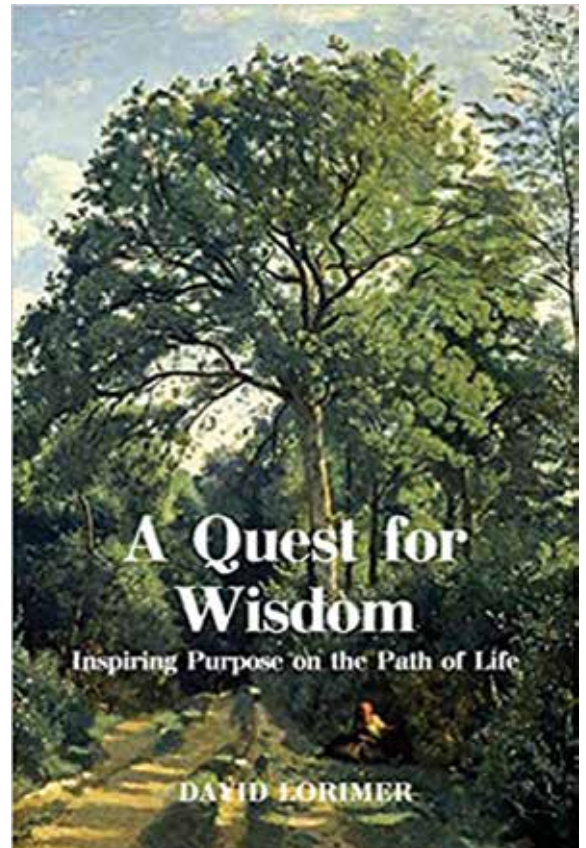
A SPECIAL PRE-PUBLICATION COMMENT
BY SCHOLAR RAVI RAVINDRA

I am delighted to follow David Lorimer’s search over decades for Truth, Love and Beauty – usual epithets of the One which remains a Mystery beyond description – without restrictions of the West or the East, or of science and religion, modern and ancient, or of this and that. It is amazing to learn about the number of books David Lorimer has read, reviewed and assimilated.

Each essay in *A Quest for Wisdom: Inspiring Purpose on the Path of Life* is worth staying with and pondering, questioning and learning from. Every searcher will find this book stimulating, encouraging, delightful and full of insights on their journey towards eternal wisdom which of necessity includes taking care of our world with compassion and kindness.

I highly recommend David’s book *A Quest for Wisdom* but with a caution: find a quiet place and enough time because if you pick up this book you won’t be able to put it down.

First published in 2020 by Aeon Books, London, UK.



Ravi Ravindra PhD, Emeritus Professor of Physics and Comparative Religion at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada, is the author of numerous books, including *The Yoga of the Christ*, which has been translated into many languages. He is a much sought-after speaker at international conferences and has visited New Zealand as an appreciated TSNZ speaker.

Author of *A Quest for Wisdom*, David Lorimer is Programme Director of the Scientific and Medical Network, an international group of academics and professionals dedicated to an open-minded exploration of the boundaries of science. He has also written, among other titles, *Thinking Beyond the Brain*, *Prophet for Our Times*, *The Spirit of Science*, *The Circle of the Sacred Dance*, *Whole in One*, *Science, Consciousness and Ultimate Reality*, *Survival?: Body, Mind and Death in the Light of Psychic Experience*.

Invocation, Prayer and Meditation

SOME TITLES AVAILABLE FROM THE LIBRARY

Prayer is Good Medicine: How to reap the healing benefits of prayer by Larry Dossey.

Dossey answers the question: Can prayer actually help to heal us?

Evelyn Underhill's Prayer Book edited by Robyn Wrigley-Carr, foreword by Eugene Peterson.

This beautiful volume comprises Evelyn Underhill's two personal prayer books, rediscovered 75 years after her death.

Meditation: A practical study with exercises by Adelaide Gardner.

Recommended for its comfortable and easy approach, as a fine guideline to proper meditative procedures.

Gifts of the Lotus: A book of daily meditations compiled by Virginia Hanson.

366 engaging quotations by spiritual philosophers.

Meditations by J. Krishnamurti.

Passages from Krishnamurti's discourses which will be of deep interest to those concerned with meditation.

Superconsciousness through Meditation by Douglas Baker and Celia Hansen.

The authors provide eight progressive yoga routines designed to eliminate mental, emotional and physical disturbances.

Guided Meditations on the Stages of the Path by Bhikshuni Thubten Chodron.

A book and mp3 to guide you through the Lamrim Meditations.

The Genesis Meditations: A shared practice of peace for Christians, Jews and Muslims by Neil Douglas-Klotz; artwork by Fatima Lassar.

This book teaches how early mystics, including Jesus, may have meditated in the three great religions of the Middle East.

Life Streams: Journeys into Meditation and Music by Hal A. Lingeran.

The author blends suggested classical and New Age music with daily meditations, anchored by passages from some of the greatest souls in history.

The Geoffrey Hodson
Library



Membership of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand includes library borrowing privileges (in person or by mail); however, members must register for this benefit with the library.

Non-members may register for library privileges for an annual fee of \$30.

Requests can be posted within New Zealand and must be returned at the borrower's cost.

To register or borrow books:

Phone: 09 523 1797

Email:

library@theosophy.org.nz

Visit the library:

18 Belvedere Street,
Epsom,
Auckland 1051

Visit our website to view our catalogue:

<https://theosophy.nz/>

The Practice of Prayer

As with other new activities we take up,
praying may not seem to work at first, says the editor...

Some people think praying is asking for something and getting it
Like asking Santa for a present
And sometimes it is.
But that's not really the way prayer works.

If you ask for a red 1966 Zephyr 6 convertible
and then you get it
that's great, good on you
but that's something else
not prayer.

Praying can be like getting out of the car and going round to
the passenger side, hopping in and saying (to the Divine): You do the driving
Or handing over the day-to-day management of an intense, potentially productive,
multifaceted business such as your life, or even a bit of your life,
just a little, little bit, such as your success
or the health and wellbeing of those you love
or those who cause you pain.

When we've given up our choices, our will in the matter and our egos
We allow so much scope – infinite possibilities beyond our imagining
We allow a huge and expansive view the size of eternity
Made of love and the peace that passes understanding.

Some boys I was teaching said prayer didn't work.
They had tried it. Nothing.
I reminded them of their first cigarette. Asked how that was?
Not good was it? But heck you kept trying, didn't you?

Prayer feels easier with practice but
Sometimes, we can pray the most pitiful seeming beginner's prayer
That just gets straight through.
It could be about what's going on inside us. How much we mean it.
How much we need it. How willing we are to let go, dive deep.

Desperation definitely helps
And it may be through desperation that you and I learn to pray.
Gratitude can work, too.
Having a grateful heart can lead to a great prayer of peace and blessing.
A grateful heart is a taste of heaven on earth.

Actually, it may not be about how well we pray at all
But rather how generous Divine Love can be.
It can take practice to be able to see or hear the answers to prayer.
It can take a lifetime to spot the blessings.



Pamela Zane Keys, editor of *TheoSophia* has a background in education, dance, drama, art, religious studies, psychology and writing. Pamela is a lifetime member of Theosophy Whanganui.

Bernice Croft

A very special TSNZ member is remembered by many, including **Tim Parry and John Vorstermans**, for her unique contribution to Theosophy.



John Vorstermans writes:

Bernice Croft, a member of the New Zealand Section, is remembered by members worldwide for her service, kindness, encouragement and personal support. Bernice passed on 19 January 2021. Bernice was a long-time Wellington member and supporter of the local branch for over 45 years, working in different capacities and sharing her experience, skills and advice where she could.

During her early days Bernice developed her property management skills through her property portfolio and later worked for the Wellington City Council involved in managing property for them until she retired in 1998 to look after her husband Ken who had cancer and passed away at 61.

Bernice, wishing to serve the TS further, headed to Adyar as a volunteer. It was not long before she became the Secretary of the International President Radha Burnier. What was planned as a five-year role turned into ten years. She accompanied Radha on travels in India, UK, US, Canada and Japan. You can read more of Bernice's time in India in an article written by her good friend Dorothy Bell at: <http://international.theoservice.org/e-news/18/18-06.html>

Tim Parry, a TSNZ member, shares some fond memories of Bernice:

I first met Bernice at the Wellington Branch. She was always immaculately presented, patent leather shoes, and finely dressed. I later learned that she had an apartment on the Terrace in Wellington and a Rover car in the basement garage. Some people would say it was a perfect life. It was a surprise when she told me she was going to India to work for the Theosophical Society.

In January 2002, I travelled to Adyar and was pleased that Bernice and her sister Aureen met me at the airport. The traffic on the ride to Adyar is frightening. I thought we were all going to die. However, once we entered the Theosophical Society's gates, we immediately sensed the contrast between the outside road and the estate's tranquility. I had a room in Leadbeater Chambers on the same level as Bernice. Compared with Bernice's luxury apartment in Wellington, Leadbeater Chambers at that time was basic. The next day I had a cup of tea with Bernice in her room and recall her saying the cups were not like her fine china in Wellington. Many other things were a challenge, like when you washed your clothes, anything white came out a light brown.

However, Bernice had embraced India. I watched one morning as Bernice went off on her bicycle to work at HQ and thought 'Wow!' I had joined an organisation in Wellington called the Shri Ram Chandra Mission which had an Ashram in Chennai. I told Bernice I was keen to attend this Ashram. Bernice said she knew of this organisation. They had a local silent meditation meeting the next day and we could go to it together.

When Bernice first arrived at Adyar, she worked proofreading in the publishing department. She said she had made a rule for herself that she would not say 'No' to any request. One of the young Indian TS workers asked her to go to the movies. He took her on his motorbike out into that crazy traffic. Bernice was later to attend the young man's wedding which lasted three days in a remote location in India. He and his wife became good friends of Bernice and a year or two later, she brought them to Wellington to see if they might wish to settle there.

Bernice loved numerology. I found it interesting that Bernice chose to leave her human body on 19 January. I always thought 19 was a very spiritual number given the TS in Wellington (19 Marion St). I am interested in *Tarot Cards* and 19 – *The Sun* – is a very special card with aspects of creativity, spiritual renewal, completion of inner work and triumphant renewal. When I meet Bernice on the other side, I hope that it will not be as scary for me as my arrival in India or crossing that road, but I am sure she will be there saying 'It's OK!'

See more about Bernice in the TOS International Newsletter at: <http://international.theoservice.org/e-news/18/18-06.html>



Can we as theosophists help to bring about positive change in a world troubled by pandemics? asks Warwick Keys...

Using the Wow Factor

Theosophy founder, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) spoke about the three aspects of the quest theosophists need to apply for spiritual growth and understanding; namely: study, meditation and service. Many theosophists are very good at the first aspect – study, some are good at the second aspect – meditation – but perhaps not always on a daily or regular basis, and some quietly go about the third aspect – service.

We are focussing here on the coming together of the second and third aspects – meditation and service, and how, as theosophists, we have the knowledge and understanding through study and practice to bring meditation and service together in a powerful stream, involving invocation, for the Good.

The Theosophical Society and those groups with an understanding of the Ancient Wisdom, of divine purpose, of occult practice and above all with the strong inner urge to put unconditional love into genuine service, have the capacity to unite in an act of service that could literally change the world. How important could this be in this age of pandemics and turmoil?

WOW! YES, WOW!

I want to focus on this available ‘Wow’ factor, and demonstrate the wonderful creative possibility of putting the Wow factor into practice and the enormous responsibility that goes with it. Our starting point is prayer. Then we will move on to meditation, then on to invocation and further on to group meditation and group invocation and the Wow factor.

PRAYER

What is prayer? If you read what the great Master Jesus said about prayer and read how he prayed, it is evident that what he meant by ‘prayer’ was essentially a communing through the Higher Self, with The Divine – an attempt to reach union with the ‘Father which is in heaven’ – which is within each of us. Prayer, according to HPB, has several meanings other than that so often given by Christians and other religious groups. Prayer does not mean only a pleading or a *petition*, it is something far greater. Prayer can be the precursor to invocation and incantation. Prayer is an occult process by which finite and conditioned thoughts and desires are translated into spiritual will, a process HPB called ‘spiritual transmutation.’

...the present-day development of our intellect demands a more mental form of inner action...

Various spiritual teachers including HPB, Alice Bailey, Helena Roerich, Robert Assagioli, Rudolf Steiner, Sri Aurobindo and others have demonstrated how we can reshape ourselves through the power of our will. Never let yourself be degraded by self-will.

The will is the only friend of the Self, and the will is the only enemy of the Self. To those who have conquered themselves, the will is a friend. But it is the enemy of those who have not found the Self within them.

– *The Bhagavad Gita*

Our ‘will-prayer,’ when properly formulated and with true good intent becomes an active or creative force, producing effects according to our desire. Prayer is an occult process bringing about physical results. *Will-Prayer* becomes a living power. HPB also sounded a warning:

Woe unto those would-be Occultists who, instead of crushing out the desires of the lower personal ego or physical man and saying, addressing their Higher Spiritual Ego immersed in Atma-Buddhic light, “Thy will be done, not mine,” etc., send up waves of will-power for selfish or unholy purposes.

The only God we must recognise and pray to, or rather act in harmony with, is that spirit of God of which our body is the temple, and in which it dwells. In the ‘*Padma Purana*’ (ancient Hindu scripture) we read:

The syllable OM is the leader of all prayers; let it therefore be employed in the beginning of all prayers.

Many Theosophists will know about the power and significance of the Sacred Sound OM, the power of the Word, of vibration.

Basically, there are four kinds of prayer: prayer for material benefits and help, prayer for virtues, grace and healing, prayer for others – intercessory prayer, prayer for illumination and divine realisation. Prayer is fundamentally of the heart, as per the first three types above where the ‘feelings’ nature is the main motive force. It is always the heart that pleads, worships, intercedes or gives thanks. The mind normally plays only a minor role in such prayer. But the fourth type of prayer – prayer for illumination and divine realisation – brings us to the point where prayer ends and true meditation begins. Meditation means different things to each of us.

MEDITATION

Most of understandings of meditation are probably valid and work at a simple level. Sometimes contemplation is a better descriptor than meditation. Meditation to me means basically seeking the silence within, aligning with The Higher Self. As Deepak Chopra so adequately says, “Meditation is dropping into the space

between thoughts.”

However, we need to discover and appreciate something about group meditation, about occult meditation, about invocation and also about group invocation.

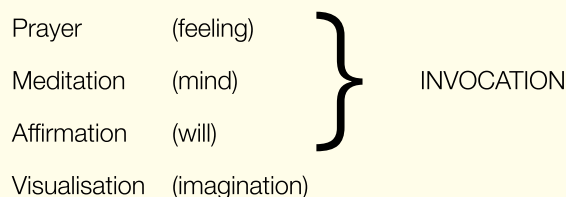
Meditation differs from prayer in that it is primarily an orientation of the mind. Meditation brings about realisations and recognitions that become knowledge. Meditation is not an abstract activity, although it is frequently considered to be such.

While prayer will always be a foundational approach for many of us, the present-day development of our intellect demands a more mental form of inner action: that means meditation of a creative nature which has a positive and scientific method of working with spiritual laws.

AFFIRMATION

Affirmation is a method that includes both prayer and meditation. It is to affirm, uphold, confirm and support.

Invocation is the simultaneous, combined activity of:



The fusion of the above elements: Prayer, Meditation and Affirmation give Invocation a potency as yet unrealised by most people, even occultists. Visualisation assists the process. Invocation means ‘calling down’ or ‘calling into’. Invocation is a demand, an appeal to something higher, asking for help or intervention.

The same can be said of prayer, but there is an important difference between the two. In its specific sense, prayer is the ‘heart’ approach and involves the use of the feeling function. Invocation, on the other hand, is an inner action. It includes and combines the use of all our inner functions. It is a simultaneous activity of feeling (prayer), of the mind (meditation), of the will (affirmation) and of the imagination (visualisation).

Now you can see how this comprehensive and synthesised action of our whole being, when rightly carried out, gives invocation a potency that is far greater and richer than any of the four inner activities can do separately.

Up until recent times, prayer and meditation were more or less individual and private things. But now we are moving from individual effort to an understanding and appreciation of the value of the group dynamic. There is a growing awareness of the

increase in spiritual energy when a group works together in harmony and a shared purpose. A number of spiritual groups and teachers have some understanding of this group dynamic and the awareness of the potential is increasing.

Two groups who know of the potential of the group dynamic are Transcendental Meditation people and Alice Bailey people associated with the Lucis Trust and the Arcane School.

The TM people call what I refer to as the Wow factor, The Maharishi Effect. They know that the effect can be created. They have measured it in a scientific manner and have demonstrated that when one per cent of a population meditate regularly (daily), there is a pronounced and measurable beneficial effect on the wider population. The effects they see and measure, while important, are not, I believe, the full extent of what could happen at a deeper more occult level of understanding.

The Alice Bailey people, who have the knowledge, the will and the intent about what they are doing, know a great deal about invocation and group dynamics. The Will to Good is strong with them.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DYNAMICS OF GROUP MEDITATION?

It is easier to meditate in a group of likeminded people than doing it on your own. The group dynamic starts to kick in when meditating in a group. There is an increased vibration. When more than one person is meditating, perhaps a small group meditating together, the atmosphere created is multiplied.

Let us look a little closer at this. What could happen if we apply the sciences of meditation, affirmation, visualisation and invocation, using occult understanding at the higher levels of being for right purpose, that is for Divine Purpose, and if we do so with total unconditional love?

The late John Sell in his lecture at the TSNZ national convention in 2005 talked about this very important service trained theosophists can provide, both individually but more particularly in group work. We are in the Age where unified group work is to be stressed, more than individual work. A dedicated and focussed group of theosophists who have the right knowledge and understanding, could, through meditation and the positive use of visualisation, affirmation and invocation, literally change the world.

The possible ramifications of this process as a positive and useful approach to the Coronavirus pandemic we are currently experiencing worldwide are enormous. It is a huge subject and is one that trained and focussed occultists working in unison and in the power of love could play a major role in assisting to right the balance and eliminate the pandemic that is ravaging us worldwide. Could we do that? The answer, in the words of Barack Obama, is "Yes we can."

This is a dramatic statement, but it can be justified and proven, as John Sell well understood. If we apply the one per cent rule of the TM people to New Zealand, achieving the 'Maharishi Effect' would require around 50,000 people or one per cent of our population of nearly five million people to meditate every day. However, knowledgeable occultists can

refine this required number further (this is all theoretical of course). These occultists say that if you can get the square root of that one per cent number of meditators to meditate at the same time daily with a themed meditation, the number required to produce a beneficial effect is reduced to only 224, about the square root of 50,000. This means that if just 224 people in New Zealand meditated every day in a united way as a group and focussed on the same subject, say, the well-being of New Zealand itself, the effect could be huge, the national consciousness lifted. A genuine national healing could be initiated (using one focussed affirmation, visualisation and invocation). Wow! This is what I call the Wow factor.

Getting at least 224 dedicated and sufficiently developed and focussed people to do this is a huge ask but a smaller number of dedicated people could still have a noticeable effect on the nation, even if they cannot reach the critical mass required to really move and shake things. I believe that focussed group meditation is the greatest single service that trained theosophists and fellow travellers can carry out.

However, it is a service that can be festooned with hooks and barbs, as you might expect. There has to be an absolute dedication to carry out the Service. It involves an understanding of meditation, visualisation, affirmation and invocation and of energy and how rates of vibration can be altered, sped up or refined. It also requires knowledge of the power of thought and the creation of positive thought forms, all deeper occult subjects. There needs to be the will to do it. There

If just 224 people in New Zealand meditated every day
 ... focussed on the same subject, say, the well-being of
 New Zealand itself, the effect could be huge...

Now could be the time to re-introduce the process of a united and focussed group meditation by dedicated theosophists...

also needs to be harmony within the group, a one-focussed intention, and the ability to hold that focus together as a united group, even if the group is spread nationwide and not meditating together in one place. There needs to be trust both within the group and in the process itself. Little personality egos have to be left behind. Group consciousness needs to be developed and nurtured. Purity of intention is paramount.

It can be done. There are small groups dedicated to this purpose already working around the world. With all of these factors the Wow factor can be unleashed in unconditional love.

Several years ago, a group meditation was introduced by President John Vorstermans and myself and put on the Theosophy NZ website. A number of TS members agreed to participate. Could it be time to resurrect the meditation? There is no better time to introduce a group meditation and invocation than the present. The planet is crying out for help and is a very willing participant in the process.

The group meditation established in 2009 had two invocations in it. If enough of us take up and focus every day on this group meditation and the invocations then positive change will take place in NZ.

THE CHALLENGE IS: WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

We come back to where we started, with the three aspects of the quest for spiritual growth and understanding as defined by HPB: study, meditation and service and how we as theosophists have this great opportunity to combine meditation and service into a powerful stream for a special act of service. This is our challenge, right now.

Now could be the time to re-introduce the process of a united and focussed group meditation by dedicated theosophists to help restore balance and health to the planet and its inhabitants. It is a time for co-creation and for positive action based on the sound knowledge and experience of highly motivated occultists working for the common good and the uplifting of our drooping planet. Are we prepared to sacrifice a short period every day in an act of service that could be perhaps the greatest act of service we will undertake in our present incarnations? Can we meet the challenge?



Warwick Keys, TSNZ past National President and lifetime member of Theosophy Wanganui, is a long-time theosophical student, TSNZ national speaker and meditation teacher with a background of research, writing, business, national politics, history study and photography. Warwick has had a deep, lifelong interest in ancient civilisations, especially Egypt.

Theosophical Digest



The Theosophical Digest is a quarterly magazine which condenses wholesome articles on meditation, comparative religion, Ancient Wisdom, art of living, health, science, theosophy, spirituality, philosophy and more.

The compact format of short articles, snippets and humour from authors around the globe makes the *Theosophical Digest* a great read for short relaxing interludes at any time. These books also make great gifts – perhaps as a subscription to an organisation, or someone you know who would appreciate some thoughtful inspiration in a busy world.

Subscriptions in New Zealand are \$25 annually, and the magazine is sent out quarterly. Back copies of individual Digests can also be ordered for \$5 each, and are subject to availability. The *Theosophical Digest* is published by the Theosophical Publishing House in the Philippines and reprinted in India.

To order an annual subscription, or for back copies and internet banking information, email Maureen Paterson with your contact details including address and phone number at thedigests@gmail.com or post a note to Theosophical Digest, Box 183, Kaeo 0448 or phone Maureen on 09 405 1653.

HO'OPONOPONO

SPIRITUAL CLEANSING THROUGH PRAYER AND FORGIVENESS

Sushma Webber claims that the use of a traditional Hawaiian prayer may help to bring about peace and harmony in the world.

Ho'oponopono is an ancient Hawaiian practice of family reconciliation and forgiveness. Similar forgiveness practices are performed on islands throughout the South Pacific, including Hawaii, Samoa, Tahiti and New Zealand. Ho'oponopono is defined in the Hawaiian Dictionary as: 'To put to rights; to put in order or shape, correct, revise, adjust, amend, regulate, arrange, rectify, tidy up, make orderly or neat, administer, superintend, supervise, manage, edit, work carefully or neatly; to make ready, as canoe-men preparing to catch a wave.'

Ho'oponopono is a simple way of arriving at oneness, unity, inner peace, whatever the outer circumstances, by returning to inner harmony with constant practice. It implies solving a problem from within and applying the solution arrived at from a state of unity. *Ho'o* means 'to make' and *pono* is translated 'right' or 'correct' however, not in the context of 'right' or 'wrong'. *Ponopono* would then be 'rightly right'. Hence, Ho'oponopono is 'to make rightly right', 'to correct an error' by correcting anything in oneself that is not in alignment with the Higher Self or Divine Creator.

The roots of Ho'oponopono are said to reach far back into the past, perhaps even to the time of Lemuria, Atlantis and the high Vedic culture.¹ Since there was no written form of Ho'oponopono in Hawaii and throughout the Polynesian region until the 1820s, the procedure was kept secret by healers (mostly *kahunas*) and only transmitted through an oral tradition. Traditionally Ho'oponopono has its origin in indigenous Hawaii and was adapted to modern times by the Hawaiian 'Living

Treasure' of the State of Hawaii, Mornnah Nalamaku Simeona (1913-1992). There is also a New Age practice that goes by the same name and has gained popularity in the last couple of decades. In this article we will examine both practices and it is up to the reader to decide how to use it in their daily life.

ADAPTING TRADITION TO MODERN REALITY – MORRNAH NALAMAKU SIMEONA (1913-1992)

Ho'oponopono was first defined in the 1950s by the Hawaiian Elder Mary Kawena Pukui, as 'A spiritual cleansing in which (wrong) interpersonal relationships are restored through prayer, discussion, confession of guilt, repentance and mutual forgiveness.' It was Mornnah Simeona who developed a 'universal' Ho'oponopono from the traditional Ho'oponopono, creating something fundamentally new, while maintaining a true Ho'oponopono as defined by Kawena.

In 1976 Mornnah Simeona, regarded as a healing priest or *kahuna lapa'au*, adapted the traditional ho'oponopono of family mutual forgiveness to the social realities of the modern day. For this she extended it both to a general problem solving a 14-Step process outside the family and to a psycho-spiritual self-help rather than group process. Simeona's version was influenced by her Christian education and her philosophical studies about India, China and Edgar Cayce. As the Law of Cause and Effect predominates in all of life and lifetimes, the purpose of her version is mainly 'to release unhappy, negative experiences in past reincarnations, and to resolve and remove traumas from the

"memory banks".' Karmic bondages hinder the evolution of mind, so that '[karmic] cleansing is a requisite for the expansion of awareness'.

A 'problem' means the 'effect of a negative cause'. Ho'oponopono does not focus on effects. It is about cleansing the causes. The causes of the problems are dissolved by Divine blessing. In this ho'oponopono is similar to the Theosophic way where we address the cause so as to prevent the manifestation of numerous effects that come out of the one cause. The most important points of Mornnah Simeona's system includeⁱⁱⁱ:

- It can be done privately and unassisted after some short instruction. In Mornnah's system others are spiritually present instead in a special way that is woven throughout the prayers.
- The problems are solved exclusively by the being known as the 'Divine Creator' or 'Dear Lord'. Not by people.
- Every human being has three aspects of consciousness, which, in agreement with each other, appear as delimited, rotating egg-forms, and which penetrate and surround the physical body. Therefore, there clearly exists an inside and an outside to each aspect. (This could be a parallel to the subtle bodies seen as auras in Theosophical literature.)
- The goal of spiritual purification are the release of the negative cause, and in doing so, finding the solution to any given problem. This is achieved only by the altruistic, unselfish concern of mutual exchange; by including all involved in a problem in the cleansing, so they are cleansed too. Only then do the prayers

go to the Divine Creator. Egoistic, self-focussed prayers do not do that, but with great limitations, they may be partly answered by beings of the astral plane.

- Mutuality exists only if the other forgives you too.

This is the original Ho’oponopono prayer, given to us to use freely by Morrnah Simeona. It is simple but very powerful:

Divine creator, father, mother, son as one... If I, my family, relatives, and ancestors have offended you, your family, relatives, and ancestors in thoughts, words, deeds, and actions from the beginning of our creation to the present, we ask your forgiveness... Let this cleanse, purify, release, cut all the negative memories, blocks, energies and vibrations, and transmute these unwanted energies to pure light... And it is done.

According to Morrnah, we have to say the prayer four times every time we want to release something^{iv}:

Spirit, Superconscious, please locate the origin of my feelings, thoughts of
 (fill in the blank with your belief, feeling, or thoughts that you want to erase)
 Take each and every level, layer, area, and aspect of my being to this origin.
 Analyse it and resolve it perfectly with God’s truth.
 Come through all generations of time and eternity.
 Healing every incident and its appendages based on the origin.
 Please do it according to God’s will until I am at the present, Filled with light and truth.
 God’s peace and love, forgiveness of myself for my incorrect perceptions.
 Forgiveness of every person, place, circumstances and events which contributed to this,
 these feelings, thoughts and beliefs.

After Morrnah Simeona’s death in 1992, her former student and administrator, Dr Ihaleakala Hew Len, co-authored a book with Joe Vitale called *Zero Limits* (2007) referring to Simeona’s Ho’oponopono teachings. Dr Hew Len makes no claim to be a kahuna. In contrast to Simeona’s teachings, the book brings the new idea that the main objective of Ho’oponopono is getting to the ‘zero state — it’s where we have zero limits. No memories. No identity.’ To reach this state, which Dr Len called “Self-I-Dentity through Ho’oponopono,” includes using the mantra: I love you/ I’m sorry/ Please forgive me/ Thank you.

This Ho’oponopono mantra consists of four simple steps or phrases. Although the words must be exact, there is no correct order for the four phrases, you can say them in any order you like. You can say: “I’m sorry, please forgive me, thank you, I love you.” Repeating this mantra is a way of ‘cleaning’, a word that is often used in this method. Constant repetition will make it a

habit and eventually your subconscious mind will take over and repeat these phrases for you almost continuously, so you are cleaning all the time.

According to Dr Hew Len, Ho’oponopono is also about taking 100% responsibility for everything going on in your life and whatever you notice going on in the life of others. What happens in your life is not your fault, but it is your responsibility. Which means you cannot blame anyone or anything for your current reality. So taking responsibility for it means accepting it, owning it and loving it, so it can be healed. The reason for taking 100% responsibility emphasises the fact that we are all one and are part of the same unified consciousness. Hence whatever we do within ourselves will affect the whole. This ‘cleaning’ through the four phrases is one of the ways of reducing the heavy karma of the world by cleansing our own self and reaching the Zero state as often as we can. Dr Hew Len and Morrnah Simeona also emphasised the fact that all matter is conscious, that there is no ‘dead matter’ similar to the Theosophical principles, and hence we affect everything around us, both animate and ‘inanimate’ objects. Hence we could pray and do the ‘cleaning’ to persons, places, situations, plants, animals, trees and objects in our space.

I wish you, your family, relatives and ancestors Peace beyond all understanding. The Peace of ‘I’ prayer is given as a gift from The Foundation of I, Inc. Freedom of the Cosmos^v:

THE PEACE OF ‘I’

Peace be with you, All My Peace,
 The Peace that is ‘I’, the Peace that is ‘I am’.
 The Peace for always, now and forever and evermore.
 My Peace ‘I’ give to you, My Peace ‘I’ leave with you,
 Not the world’s Peace, but, only My Peace,
 The Peace of ‘I’.



REFERENCES

- i Ho’oponopono – Wikipedia
- ii Ho’oponopono – *The Hawaiian forgiveness ritual as the key to your life’s fulfillment* by Ulrich E. Duprée
- iii <https://www.pacificaseminars.de>
- iv <https://hooponoponomiracle.com>
- v <https://www.hooponopono.org>



Sushma Webber, current Wellington TS Branch President, has a Master’s degree in Art History. Originally from India, Sushma worked at the International Headquarters in Adyar and at the Editorial Office. Sushma has lived in New Zealand since 2008, facilitated workshops, presented at TSNZ branches and written articles for theosophical journals.

A delightful festival, experienced by a wide range of people, gave incidental exposure and introduction to Theosophy, recounts National Vice-President, Renée Sell.

Earth Beat Aotearoa

Theosophy NZ was well represented in March this year, at the recent Earth Beat Aotearoa Festival at Kaipara, an hour and a half north of Auckland, near Port Albert, the small settlement where well-known theosophist, Lilian Edger grew up in the 1860s. Earth Beat Aotearoa attracted more than 3,000 people with a nice blend of music, workshops, talks, immersive experiences, poetry, comedy, healers, wellness circles, kids' nature and activity zone, market stalls and a special sense of belonging with others also searching for truth. The Theosophical Society was represented by Ben and Kayla Upton from New Plymouth branch, and both Richard Sell and I attended on behalf of TSNZ National Section to support Ben at this public event. Ben shared a presentation called Patterns of Thought, in a tent at the foot of a small hillock where people sat or lounged in the sun on a glorious day, just chilling out, listening and watching. It was an amazing experience.

Kayla handed out theosophical pamphlets and *TheoSophia* magazines which people were reading during the presentation and there were many questions during and after. The pleasant, relaxed atmosphere allowed for personal interaction on theosophy after the talk. It was encouraging to see so many young people interested and attending the Theosophical Society workshop; several enquired where the nearest centre was and how to connect online. In fact, the following week, some people we met at the festival attended the Monday evening exploration series in Auckland at HPB Lodge, to see what it was all about.

Our gratitude goes to Joe Swamy, who organised for TSNZ to have a space at the festival and also ensured there was a projector, sound equipment and directions to our talk. Joe is an enthusiastic member of the Auckland HPB branch and is known to many around the country from the yearly National Conventions that he attends.

As part of the Society's strategic goal to 'create greater public visibility and awareness of Theosophy', The Theosophical Society in New Zealand is looking to become a sponsor of Earth Beat Aotearoa in the future. This not only helps provide greater visibility for Theosophy and the society to a wider audience but targets younger seekers, which we have been discussing over the last few years. As we develop deeper studies at our theosophical centres, we will have a richer experience of Theosophy for newcomers. As we wandered around the festival, we saw a few theosophists and friends there and I loved the shocked look on my eldest daughter's face when she saw her mother and father at the festival. On such beautiful days, in such a delightful location, amongst fields and groves of tall pine trees, it was a remarkable experience. It was definitely worth the trip from Auckland to be a part of the Earth Beat experience, and we are very grateful especially to Ben, Kayla and their friend Aly, for their time and energy spent promoting the Ancient Wisdom. We look forward to doing it all again next year.



SUMMER SEMINAR and UNITY WORKSHOP



A Hamilton event was based on John Algeo's book *The Pilgrim's Journey*, writes Governance Board member, **Chris Hensley**.

Attendees at the Summer Seminar and Unity workshop in February were from six North Island Branches. Two TSNZ Governance Board members also attended. After attunement, Prayers of the Major Religions and recitation of *Oh Hidden Light*, the programme was introduced by Vicki Pennington with a presentation, *The Path of Attunement to the Cycles of Life*. Tim Wilmot-Sitwell gave an in-depth presentation on *Great Cosmic Cycles: Yugas, Manvantaras and Pralayas*, referencing Theosophical literature and

esoteric knowledge. Guest speaker, Sushma Webber led an interactive workshop, *You are the only Thinker in your Mind* and spoke on *The Path to Perfection and Practices on the Pilgrim's Journey*. On Saturday evening, Gong Master/Sound Healer Maureen McKain gave a Gong Concert with Himalayan Healing Bowls, Rain Sticks, Tibetan Singing Bowls and Swasangam. This sonic symphony immersed us in a journey of harmonics, overtones and sound. On Sunday morning, we experienced a deep

and insightful journey through esoteric Tarot and Sacred Astrology with Mike Dunn. Palmerston North TS member Becky played remarkably on a 'Southern Cross' flute made from native wood by Todd Chaplin, her teacher. A wonderful weekend of camaraderie, local and guest presenters, billets and delicious food, closed with a Meditation for Unity.

Editor's note: Bill Keidan's presentation and the Southern Region's Gathering will be featured in the next issue of *TheoSophia*.

International Women's Day - 8 March 2021

The year 2021 is unforgettable,
Human beings worldwide are screaming for equality
The world is breaking under the burden of greed,
power and materialism
Equality is essential for every human being to flourish in the
world

Women and girls before us,
Women and girls who are around us now,
Women and girls yet to come in the future
are all candles of hope for humanity!
We all want to be heard and feel valued
Can you imagine a world where Respect for all
is at the basis of action?

ONE HEART!

No matter our gender, no matter where we are born
We all want Hope, Freedom, Equal Rights, Opportunities
and in our hearts, we yearn for Peace
Peace in our homes, in our communities, in our countries,
and in our World
Do you hear the call: EQUALITY FOR ALL?

When women rise, families rise
When women rise, communities rise
When women rise, we all rise!
When women are included at the table in decision making
they bring with them inclusive qualities of:
Compassion, love, sharing, caring, equality, listening, empathy,
Valuing of relationships, enabling others to thrive,
The building of inclusive environments,
and a Balance that cannot be found without
the full contribution of all in society
To have EQUALITY
there must be RESPECT for all
in the way we talk, in the way we think, and in the way we act
Actively working towards a more equal and sustainable world
Leading by example in creating a better world
A World for All
and not just for a part!

By Renée Sell and dedicated to her mother Patricia.

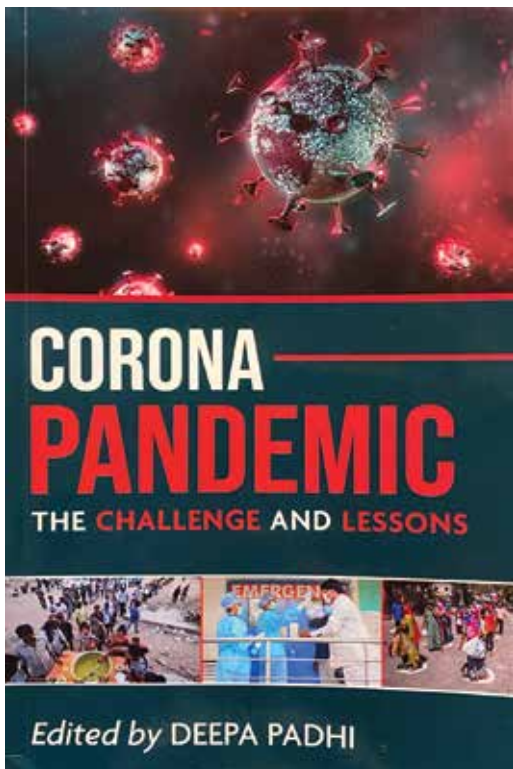


Renée Sell, National Coordinator for the Theosophical Order of Service in New Zealand, considers the Covid pandemic and more...



Recently I was invited to write for *Empowered Woman of Odisha-2021* awards by TOS worker and International Vice-President of the Theosophical Society, Dr Deepa Padhi from India, who many will remember was our special guest at the National Convention last year. I sent a poem written for *International Women's Day 2021* and our warmest congratulations and blessings to Pramila, an underprivileged woman from Odisha who was the recipient of the award. Despite challenges, she became a social activist and convener of Odisha chapter of the National Association of Women in India. It is encouraging to hear Pramila's story. I feel privileged to hear from our sister and friend Dr Deepa Padhi about the projects she is initiating and supporting, particularly for *Women's Empowerment* under the TOS umbrella.

Most recently Deepa launched a project to bring personal stories and reflections on the Covid-19 pandemic in a book, *Corona Pandemic, the Challenge and Lessons*. Deepa wanted thoughts and experiences from people living through it, in order not only to hear their stories today but also for future generations to understand the challenges and lessons of our time. TS members around the world were invited to contribute articles and more than 50 responded including some from New Zealand. If you are interested in purchasing a copy please email me for details.



The theme '*Invocation and Prayer*' in this current issue invites us to reflect upon the topic in today's challenging world. This aspect of the spiritual life reverberates around the world through spiritual teachers, saints, seers and seekers alike. We have been gifted a simple but most powerful universal prayer/invocation from Dr Annie Besant which could be repeated daily as part of a spiritual practice. With the Covid-19 Pandemic rife in the world there is no better time to start:

O Hidden Life, vibrant in every atom;
 O Hidden Light, shining in every creature;
 O Hidden Love, embracing all in Oneness;
 May all who feel themselves as one with Thee,
 Know they are therefore one with every other.

During spiritual practice, it helps to sit quietly, sending from the heart, light and healing energy into the world to the many thousands of sick people, the wonderful warriors working at the front lines of hospitals and borders, those struggling at this time of great change and the many who have passed over during this pandemic. The choice here is ours: healing and love from our hearts, choosing to be calm, positive, active and engaged to support a world in need. All are welcome to join us in this effort!

Remember, if you would like to discuss ideas for a TOS activity at your branch or group, you are most welcome to call or email me at: tos@theosophy.org.nz

LOCAL HAWKE'S BAY CHILDREN'S PROJECT



Sue Harrison writes: At a chance meeting at the 2020 Convention held in Hamilton, a door opened to a new form of sponsorship for the TOS (nothing is by chance!). The idea was about funds being

donated for and used in New Zealand for our children. This has developed into a breakfast and lunch program for ten children at Waipukurau Primary school. We also donated school fees, stationery and swim-suits and towels so all could participate in swimming this term. We gave a donation to *Hawkes Bay Jammies* which provides pyjamas for those in need. This project is still in its early stage, but the funds have been donated. A huge thank you for all who helped with this. If anyone would like to add funds to this developing project please do and put in the reference *NZ kids*. There is a space to tick and donate to this project at the bottom of page 29.



THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY PINS

The swastika as pictured on these Theosophical Society pins is an ancient symbol of blessing used as part of the iconography associated with the Society. It was unfortunately appropriated in an inverted form by the Nazi party. The original emblem, as seen here, represents good fortune.

SILENT AUCTION: TS EMBLEM BADGE AND PIN

Regularly we are donated gifts from the past to raise funds for TOS projects. We have decided to hold a silent auction for two Theosophical Society emblems. One is a badge and the other a pin (see photo). If you are interested in one of these, email me with your preference and bid to 'tos@theosophy.org.nz Attention: Renée' and on 31 July the highest bid will receive the items. All funds raised go to the projects TOS New Zealand supports.

Each must discover their own way in life,
and that way lies in their heart.

Let them delve deeply into the depths
of their being;

Their true centre is not far from there.

Gender adapted from N. Sri Ram

To help contact:
RENÉE SELL
Phone: **021 1755 170** or
email **tos@theosophy.org.nz**
WebSite
tos.theosophy.org.nz

Or write to
TOS New Zealand,
18 Belvedere Street,
Epsom, Auckland 1051,
New Zealand

Please donate to help the work:

Name:..... Email:.....

Address:
.....

Donations

- Donation for TOS General Projects \$.....
- NZ Kids Fund Project (new) \$.....
- Empowerment of Women Project, India \$.....
- Individual child sponsorship \$150 per child India/Pakistan (circle preference) \$.....
- Pakistan Schools (Literacy Centres) \$.....
- Golden Link School, Philippines Donation \$.....
- Individual child sponsorship, Philippines \$.....
- Auckland City Mission Donation \$.....
- Direct credit to a/c 'TOS New Zealand'

Bank account number: 03-0104-0088756-03, e-mail tos@theosophy.org.nz

Vegetarians Today



From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, Margaret Johns reminds us that healthy eating strengthens our resistance.

We are nearly half way through 2021 already and the world is still suffering from the global corona virus pandemic. Vaccinations are taking place but one of the best defences against illness of any sort is to make sure the body and its immune system is strong and healthy, in fact we could say bodies to include the mental and emotional as well as the physical. This may not stop you becoming infected, but it will certainly lessen the severity of any illness. The physical body takes its nutrition from the food we eat but is also affected by how we think, feel and act – also, to some degree, by what we believe.

People all over the world are discovering for themselves the wonderful qualities of local herbs and other plants, information that has always been available but has mostly been overlooked in the hustle and bustle (and commercialism) of life today. Researchers are making new discoveries about the human body and the psyche and it is interesting to see that much of what they

are ‘discovering’ has already been put forward and discussed in early theosophical and/or vegetarian literature.

If you or your friends have discussed or thought about taking up a plant-based, more compassionate and environmentally friendly way of life, the NZ Vegetarian Society offers a 21-day plant-based challenge which includes recipes, inspiration and all the nutritional information you need to know, along with the support of the Society and its staff. It also helps to know that Auckland has been rated the 13th most veg~n friendly city in the world (just behind New York and ahead of both Melbourne and Sydney) and Wellington is rated 14th. The rating is based on the affordability and quality of the city’s veg~n offerings. Good news indeed and leads to the assumption that New Zealand must be one of the easiest places to follow a plant-based diet, despite years of relying on the meat and dairy trade for its income. Here’s a healthy recipe for you to try:

NUT ROAST

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 cup walnuts | 1 cup celery, grated (or finely chopped) |
| 1 cup almonds or hazelnuts | 2 tsp soya sauce |
| 1 cup cashew nuts | 3 tsp dried herbs |
| 1/2 cup wholemeal flour | 1 cup wholegrain rice, cooked |
| 1/4 cup gluten flour | 1 tsp sea salt |
| (or soaked chia seeds or 2 eggs) | 1 tsp kelp |
| 1 cup wholemeal breadcrumbs | 2 tsp savoury yeast |
| 1 tsp Marmite | 6 sprigs parsley, chopped |
| 1 cup tomato puree | |



1. Chop walnuts finely and grind cashew nuts and almonds/hazelnuts; add to the wholemeal flour, gluten flour and breadcrumbs, and stir.
2. Dissolve marmite in 1/2 cup hot water.
3. Place tomato puree in separate bowl, add to it the dissolved marmite, soya sauce, grated celery, chopped parsley and remaining ingredients. Stir together and then add this mixture to the dry ingredients and mix well.
4. Place in greased oven dish, dot with margarine and bake 45 minutes in hot oven (around 180°C).
5. Serve with veg~n gravy and lightly steamed or roasted vegetables, or with a mixed green salad.

See www.vegetarian.org.nz for a variety of recipes, including immune booster recipes from Anna Valentine (*The Veggie Tree*), which have appeared in *Vegetarian Living NZ*.

More recipes, information and the NZVS revised and updated *Home Tried Favourites* recipe book, are now available from www.vegetarian.org.nz



Vasanta House Library



Books can be ordered from the library at TSNZ national headquarters by using the postal facility available and contacting the librarian at email: library@theosophy.org.nz or 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, or telephone 09 523 1797 (Saturday afternoons).

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$10.

Vasanta House Accommodation

Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements.

For bookings and more information please contact the office 09 523-1797.

Theosophical Bookmarks – Order Form

Code	Description	Quantity	Code	Description	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/>	A1 To live to benefit mankind – H.P. Blavatsky.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	B4 Peace – A. Besant.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	A2 Invocation – A. Besant.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	B5 Rainbow – C. Jinarajadasa	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	A3 The Gayatri.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C1 The Holy Ones Invocation – A. Besant	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	A4 The first step – H.S. Olcott.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C2 The Dew is on the Lotus – Sir Edwin Arnold	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	A5 Only as we go out (blue font) – N. Sri Ram.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C3 The Golden Stairs – H. P. Blavatsky	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B1 The World Mother – A. Besant.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C4 The Rainbow Bridge	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B2 Only as we go out (white font) – N. Sri Ram.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C5 Unity – A. Besant.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B3 O Hidden Life – A. Besant	___			

Cost: \$2.50 each or \$2.00 if bought in quantity

Name:..... Total amount:

Address:.....

Send to: Theosophical Order of Service, c/o Richard and Renée Sell, HPB Lodge, Theosophical Society, 4 Warborough Avenue, Epsom, Auckland 1051. (Please refer to issue *TheoSophia* JUNE 2007, Vol. 68 No. 1 inside back cover for samples.)

TheoSophia Magazine Subscription form

Name..... Email.....

Phone..... Fax.....

Postal address.....

Please tick the appropriate order box(es) below.

Annual Subscription (Four issues): NZ \$20.00 (including GST)

Please send the above subscription starting from the next issue (cheque enclosed).

Back issues available

Please send the following back issues:
(Cheque enclosed).

June 2020 September 2020

December 2020 March 2021

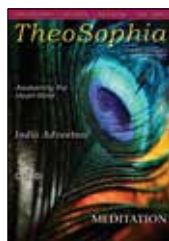
\$5.00 NZ per back issue, includes postage

Subscription: \$.....:.....

Back issues: \$.....:.....

Total: \$.....:.....

Signature:



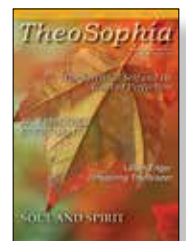
TS June 2020



TS September 2020



TS December 2020



TS March 2021

Send this form with payment to: Magazine Subscriptions, Theosophical Society, 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, New Zealand.

Theosophy

Theosophy is the body of truths which form the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guides its evolution.

Theosophy puts death in its rightful place as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching one to know the spirit as oneself and the mind and the body as one's servants.

Theosophy literally means divine wisdom: *theosophia*. Theosophy illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions, by unveiling their hidden meanings; thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone who is willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high and to work perseveringly, is welcome as a member and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

From *Exploring the Mysteries of Existence* published by The Theosophical Society - <http://theosophy.nz>

DIRECTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

Venue: 4 Warborough Ave, Epsom
Meetings: Theosophy Exploration - Mondays 7.30pm
Members Meeting: 4th Wednesday of month 7.30pm
Contact: Ph 09 524 7994/hpbpres@theosophy.org.nz
Website: <https://hpb.theosophy.org.nz>

CANTERBURY

Venue: WEA Canterbury
59 Gloucester Street, Christchurch
Public Talks: 1st Thursday of month 7.30pm
Contact: theosophycanterbury@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/canterbury>

DUNEDIN

Venue: 469 Hillside Road, Caversham
Meetings: Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: Marie 027 499 1770 /
theosophy.dn@actrix.co.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/dunedin-lodge>

FAR NORTH

Venue: Theosophy Centre, Waikare Ave, Kaeo
Contact: Maureen Paterson (09) 405 0707 /
farnorththeosophy.president@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/far-north>

HAMILTON

Venue: 73 Anglesea Street
Meetings: Sundays 7.30 pm
Contact: hamiltontheosophy@gmail.com
Website: <https://hamiltontheosophy.weebly.com>

HAWKE'S BAY

Venue: Cedric Alexander Hall, 5 Devonshire Place, Taradale, Napier
Meetings: 2nd & 4th Thursday 7.00 pm
Contact: Don Harrison 021 532 050 /
hawkesbayts@gmail.com

NEW PLYMOUTH

Venue: 30 Hine Street, New Plymouth 4310
Meetings: Public - see newsletter on website
Members - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: Jim Scrivener 021 251 1011 /
tsnewplymouth@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/new-plymouth>

OREWA

Venue: 9E Forest Glen, Orewa 0931
Meetings: Varying
Contact: Heather Bell (09) 427 0149 /
palumbo@xtra.co.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/orewa>

PALMERSTON NORTH

Venue: 304 Church Street, Palmerston North Central 4410
Meetings: See website
Contact: Anthea Clement (06) 353 6221 or 027 240 2069 /
pn@theosophy.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/pn>

WELLINGTON

Venue: 19 Marion Street, Te Aro, Wellington 6011
Meetings: Public - Tuesdays 7-8pm
Members - Some Sundays 2-4pm (see programme)
Contact: Sushma Webber 022 626 8381 /
tswlgt@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wellington>

WHANGANUI

Venue: Community Arts Centre, Taupo Quay
Meetings: Usually 2nd Sunday of month 2.00pm
Contact: Kirsty TXT to 021 212 3819 /
theosophywhanganui@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wanganui>

WHANGAREI

Venue: 110 Handforth Street, Onerahi, Whangarei
Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month 11:00am
Contact: Paul Henderson (09) 436 2661 /
mjclose2014@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/whangarei>

STUDY CENTRES

DANNEVIRKE

Contact: Daphne Miller (06) 374 7492 /
daphnemiller@slingshot.co.nz

INVERCARGILL

Contact: David Simpson (03) 213 0424

NELSON

Contact: Jan Lowe 022 123 4920 /
momentumsigns@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/nelson-study-centre>

TAKAKA

Venue: Members' homes
Meetings: Usually alternate Tuesdays
Contact: Murray Rogers 022 072 4569 /
jmrwordplay@gmail.com

WAIKATO THEOSOPHICAL STUDY CENTRE

Venue: 40 Marama Street, Frankton, Hamilton 3204
Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month 7-9 pm
Contact: Carol Collier 027 668 4554
or Sue Mitchell 027 636 6435
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/waikato-theosophical-study-centre>

NATIONAL OFFICERS

President John Vorstermans
Vice-President Renée Sell
Treasurer Graham Eden

NATIONAL OFFICE

Office/Membership Secretary... Marilyn Dale
18 Belvedere St, Epsom
Auckland 1051, New Zealand
Telephone: +64 9 523 1797
Email: office@theosophy.org.nz

EDITOR OF *THEOSOPHIA* email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND website: www.theosophy.nz/

VASANTA GARDEN SCHOOL website: www.vasantagardenschool.weebly.com

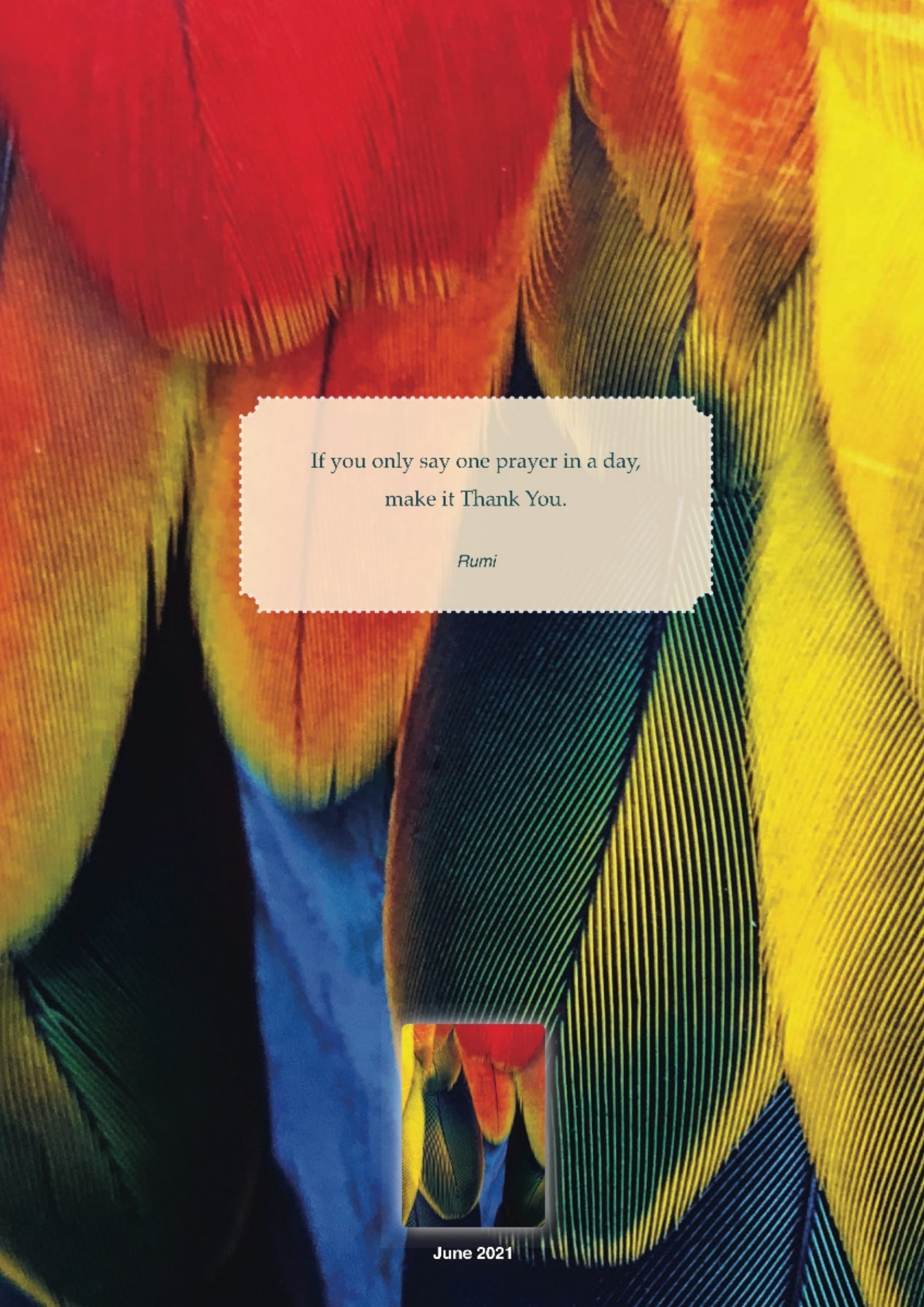
Invocation for Freedom

*Great Master, Inspirer and Teacher
As I leave this body in which I have given service
I eagerly look forward to further service
in Your name and for Humanity.*

*May the warmth of Your love enfold and uplift me.
May the radiant Light of Your Wisdom illumine
my Journey of Return
and Your Power support and strengthen me.*

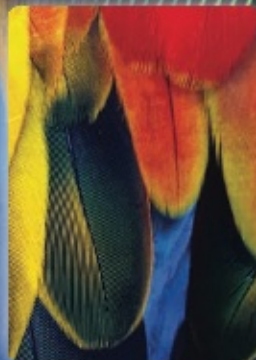
*As I entrust myself into Your Loving Care,
May Your Peace and Love and Blessings
be upon me and flow through me
to all Beings.*

John Sell



If you only say one prayer in a day,
make it Thank You.

Rumi



June 2021