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The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.



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Mysteria Mystica Maxima

Ordo Templi Orientis, U.S.A.



E.G.C.

Agapé

The official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

“...all must be done well and with business way.”
— AL III:41

Welcome to the latest issue of *Agapé*!

First, I’d like to thank Kaosangre Egeira for her service as editor of this publication.

For those that don’t know me, I’m Andrew, I’m the new editor of *Agapé*. I’ve worked on this magazine as the layout artist for the past couple of years, and I’m happily giving that job to Brother Ron Labhart. I’ve been a member of O.T.O. since 2009. I’m a Priest, Initiator, member of Ouarda Chapter, and currently serve as master for Black Sun Lodge in Cleveland, Ohio.

If it looks like this issue of *Agapé* is heavy on policy updates, you’re not mistaken. There’s been a lot of updates and mandates put forward from U.S.G.L. that are important, and being the organ for Grand Lodge, it’s our duty to make sure our members see it. However, we were able to get a great article in this issue as well, so please make sure to check out Frater Porphyrogenitos’s “From Cefalu with Love.”

As I’ve mentioned, *Agapé* is “the official organ of the U.S. Grand Lodge of O.T.O.”, and the U.S. Grand Lodge is all of you. This magazine exists for you and from you. As such, please consider submitting articles, interviews, research papers, photos, poetry, and artwork to *Agapé*! Submissions can be emailed to agape@oto-usa.org.

I look forward to serving you as editor.

Love is the law, love under will.

Andrew
Editor, *Agapé*

FROM THE GRAND MASTER

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Editorial Transition

I’d like to welcome our new editor, Brother Andrew Lent! I’d also like to extend my thanks to Sister Kaosangre Egeira for her service to the Order and to this publication as editor. I wish her the best!

NOTOCON XI

U.S. Grand Lodge’s eleventh national conference was held over the weekend of August 11–13, 2017 ev in Orlando, Florida, with the theme of “For the Chance of Union.” My keynote address from Saturday’s banquet can be found later in this issue. The Gnostic Mass on Sunday was dedicated to the harmonious advancement of U.S. Grand Lodge; and to Chapter I, verse 3 of the Book of the Law: “Every man and every woman is a star.”

Many thanks to Sister Vanessa C., Sister Sherri M., Brother Illia T., and the members of Hidden Spring Oasis, Swirling Star Lodge, Serpent & Lion Camp, the Conference Committee, the speakers, the vendors, the Gnostic Mass crew, the musicians, and everyone else who put in so much excellent work to give us another great conference!

NOTOCON XII is scheduled for August 2019 ev in Cleveland, Ohio, with the theme of “Fear Not at All.”

Security Coordinator

The Executive has created the office of U.S.G.L. Security Coordinator. The Security Coordinator will provide assistance and guidance to local bodies regarding physical security and response to potential threats and disturbances, coordinate security-related policies and activities at national and regional U.S.G.L. events, and assist the Executive in developing and implementing security policies. Brother Marco Rodriguez has been appointed to this office, and he can be reached at security@oto-usa.org.

Annual Report

U.S.G.L.’s Annual Report for FY 2016 ev can be found here: oto-usa.org/static/usgl_annual_report_Vii.pdf.

The Annual Report for FY 2017 ev is now being assembled and will be available shortly.

E.G.C. Clergy as Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect

“Mandated Reporters” are people who have regular vocational contact with vulnerable people, particularly children, and are legally required to ensure a report is made when abuse or neglect is observed or suspected. In many states in the U.S., clergy are among the groups designated as mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect, and this would include ordained E.G.C. clergy.

Mandated reporting requirements vary from state to state. Summaries of the state laws pertaining to mandatory reporting can be found here: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/laws-policies/can/reporting/>

All ordained E.G.C. clergy should familiarize themselves with the materials presented on the above site, particularly with respect to the requirements of the state in which they live and provide services.

O.T.O. does not implement rules for our clergy regarding mandated reporting, nor are we in a position to provide them with individual legal advice. The mandated reporting laws apply to individual clergypersons, by virtue of their acting in that capacity, and not to any organization to which they happen to belong. However, U.S.G.L. does provide an in-depth discussion of these requirements in our Pastoral Counseling Workshops, as a courtesy and a service to our clergy so they are well-informed about the laws that apply to them. Attendance at these workshops is strongly encouraged for all E.G.C. clergy and all O.T.O. local body officers. However, ultimately, the responsibility rests with the individual clergyperson to know, interpret, and follow the laws of the state in which they live.

One point I'd like to emphasize is that O.T.O. is not in a position to dictate whether individual clergy should report or not, or under what specific circumstances they should report. It is important to report real abuse and neglect when it occurs; but it is also important to avoid making unnecessary reports, which can be very damaging and disruptive to the lives of individuals involved. In general, the mandated reporter laws rely on the common-sense judgment of the reporter whether they suspect that actual child abuse or neglect has occurred, rather than making the reporter attempt to interpret and apply state law in making their determination.

Love is the law, love under will.
Sb



UPDATES FROM THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

As we will be reporting on several meetings, we will keep this brief.

Of Note Last Year

Sr. Deborah W. finished her eleven-year term as an Elector at the Winter Meeting held online January 21, 2017 EV. Sr. Leanne B. was seated as an Elector at the Spring Meeting on April 22, 2017 EV at Star of Babalon Camp (Raleigh, NC). Star of Babalon became the third Camp to host an Electoral College meeting and the first since 2009 EV. Well done, comrades!

Summer 2017 EV

Hosts: NOTOCON XI and Hidden Spring Oasis (Orlando, FL)

The US Grand Lodge Electoral College, at its Summer meeting, held on August 11, 2017 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Changes in Local Bodies

Jason S. was confirmed as Master of Serpent and Lion Camp (Tampa Bay, FL). Noah O. was confirmed as Master of Horizon Lodge (Seattle, WA). Holly S. was confirmed as master of Horus Oasis (Salt Lake City, UT). Mastership of Abrahadabra Oasis (Portland, ME) was passed from Colin C. to Cheri G. Mastership of Sekhet-Maat Lodge (Portland, OR) was passed from Clay F. to Elizabeth M.

Other Business

Adopted the EC Standing Rules policy document in support of our Bylaws and abrogating all previous internal policy and procedure documents. Endorsed Kaaba Colloquium as a self-standing U.S.G.L. program of import to the development of the Man of Earth Triad and its leadership. Thanked Hidden Spring Oasis, Serpent and Lion Camp, and Swirling Star Oasis for hosting the regular Summer meeting of the Electoral College and NOTOCON XI.

Of Note

Fr. Eaoa/77 completed an 11-year term as Revolutionary. Kaaba Colloquium began life as an Electoral College program run by Sr. Eliza M. and inspired by a leadership event run in Texas in 2000 EV.

Fall 2017 EV

Host: Thelesis Oasis (Philadelphia, PA)

The US Grand Lodge Electoral College, at its Fall meeting, held on October 21, 2017 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Changes in Local Bodies

None.

Other Business

Appointed Muops to serve as Revolutionary for a period of 11 years. Adopted the new Fire Safety Policy Memorandum. Approved Annual Report Form (revision 2.06) for distribution on January 1, 2018 EV. Renamed the Camp in Formation Organizer Program to Local Organizer Program. Adopted the new Tenure Limit Policy to begin

January 1, 2018 EV with extension application anniversaries to start as of the Winter Meeting 2019 EV. Thanked Thelesis Oasis for hosting the regular Fall meeting of the Electoral College.

Of Note

Br. David Hill served his eighteenth and final meeting as President of the Electoral College. We wish to thank him for his valiant service to the College. He serves as an exemplar of the four year tenure.

Winter 2017 EV

Location: Cyberspace

The US Grand Lodge Electoral College, at its Winter 2017 EV meeting, held on January 6, 2018 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Changes in Local Bodies

Horus Oasis has been rechartered as Horus Camp at the request of the Master. Mastership of ARARITA Camp has passed from Br. Sacha M. to Sr. Katherine Amrita. Mastership of Blazing Star Oasis has passed from Br. Benjamin S. to Br. Neil P. Mastership of Knights Templar Oasis has passed from Br. Joseph S. to Sr. Jennifer P.

Of Note

Sr. Hattie Quinn served her first meeting as President of the Electoral College.

Spring 2018 EV

Host: Star Sapphire Lodge (Los Angeles, CA)

The US Grand Lodge Electoral College, at its Spring 2018 EV meeting, held on April 28, 2018 EV, took the following actions concerning duties in its charge:

Changes in Local Bodies

Rechartered Subtlety or Force Camp as Song of Freedom Oasis under Soror Promethea. Passed the Mastership of 718 Camp from Br. Michael Rogers to Soror Gimel. Passed the Mastership of Bubastis Oasis from Sr. Angela Landrith to Br. Tony G. Passed the Mastership of Obeah and Wanga Camp from Br. Edward E. to Sr. Rebecca P. Passed the Mastership of Mithras Oasis from Br.

Robert (Brett) Sherry to Br. Mychael J. Scribner. Passed the Mastership of Vortex Oasis from Sr. Diana to Sr. Egypt Rose. Thanked Star Sapphire Lodge and its Members for hosting the regular Spring meetings of the Electoral College.

Of Note

The College wishes to express its appreciation to the past and present Masters of each of the above Bodies. We wish each of them the best in their new offices and endeavors.

Upcoming Meetings

The Summer Meeting will be held in conjunction with the Joint Meetings at the EGC Conference and hosted by Leaping Laughter Oasis in Bloomington, MN on August 10, 2018 EV. Deadline for submission of agenda items: July 15, 2018 EV. The Fall Meeting will be held at Alombrados Oasis (New Orleans, LA) on October 20, 2018 EV. Deadline for submission of agenda items: September 15, 2018 EV.

Love is the law, love under will.

Fraternally yours,
Hattie Quinn
President
U.S.G.L. Electoral College

About the Electoral College

Appeals

Those wishing to appeal decisions of the Electoral College may do so in writing to the Supreme Grand Council through the Grand Secretary General (gsg@oto-usa.org).

Those wishing to appeal verdicts of the Grand Tribunal to the Areopagus may do so with the sponsorship of a seated Elector. See our website for contact details of individual electors (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/electors.html>).

While there is no appeal process for Notice of Pending Bad Report at a Local Body, if an initiate feels the notice they have received did not follow the process as outlined in the COLMH for

issuing notice, believes that there was inappropriate motivation behind the notice, or can prove the notice is patently false (through disputation of facts), they may contact the Secretary of the College outlining the manner in which the Notice was deficient or false.

Attending Meetings

Dues Current Members in Good Standing of V° are invited to attend regular meetings of the Electoral College. We request that those planning to attend contact the Master of the hosting body to R.S.V.P. Online regular meetings may be observed by being physically present with a willing Elector. There is a standing invitation to all Lovers to attend this meeting in Dallas-Fort Worth.

Communications

In addition to hosting email lists for masters, mentors, and communication with Grand Lodge, we also maintain a blog of Updates, News, and Transmissions on our website (<http://ec.oto-usa.org/wp>) and are experimenting with a Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ECUSGLOTO/>).

Initiates with specific concerns or questions regarding the operation of the Electoral College are invited to write to either the President or Secretary. See the included U.S.G.L. Officers Directory for contact details.

Revolutionary

Members in Good Standing of the Sovereign Sanctuary of the IX° living within the United States but not currently serving as Officer or Voting Member of any Governing Body of U.S.G.L. are heartily encouraged to volunteer to fill the vacant second post of Revolutionary by contacting the President or Secretary of the Electoral College. Thus may progress be effected.

Website

The official website of the Electoral College can be found here: <http://ec.oto-usa.org>. In addition to the aforementioned resources, one may find information on volunteering to host a meeting or organize a study group in new areas, and other services provided by the College or expected of local bodies within U.S. Grand Lodge.

From the Electoral College Past President

Originally published on the EC Blog on February 14, 2018 EV.

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

It has been an honor to serve as President of the Electoral College for the past four years. I was very young in my term on the College when I was asked to serve as President, and I would like to share that story. I had driven all morning in pouring rain and difficult traffic from Austin to Dallas so that I could serve as Priest in a Gnostic Mass wedding for two dear friends at Bubastis. I arrived frazzled and late. Of course, I had to slide into ritual mode and begin the wedding with very little on site preparation. The wedding went well, and I got to see my dear friends marry in front of the assembled brethren. When the ritual was completed, my predecessor spoke to me privately and offered me the chair of President. At the time I thought that he was joking. I was still new to the College and had just been getting my feet underneath myself as an Elector. Serving as President was a much larger job than I could see myself in at the time. I jokingly told him to get me a job description and walked off (that’s not a bad idea when offered any job in OTO!)

After the next regular meeting of the College, the President approached me again with a job description. I was astonished that he took me seriously, and I quickly and soberly realized that his offer was legitimate. I told him to give me a bit of time to consider it, and I spent several weeks meditating on what it would mean to serve as President. In many ways, the job of President is a life term on the College. Even after the President’s 11-year term is completed on the College, he or she remains on the discussion list to offer institutional memory “from the shades” to the College. It is also a very visible executive position within the most visible governing body of Grand Lodge.

My experiences serving as President were humbling. I endeavored to direct debate within the College fairly and to make hard decisions for what the College and myself believe was the healthiest direction for the Order’s future. The lesson that “Government is Service, and nothing else” was repeatedly driven home. There is no place for ego

in the office of the President of the College. Frankly, my fellow Electors would mirror that directly to me when my ego began to get in the way, and for that I am humbly and eternally grateful. My years as President of the College have been profoundly transformative, and I am eternally appreciative for the difficult challenges that the office provided me with as I was able to develop my character by leaps and bounds.

Serving as President of the College is in many ways acting as the tip of a spear. The College works as a unified body, and the President has to give the good and the bad news to people including appointing body masters in emergency situations and suspending or removing charters of local bodies. That has an emotional cost. That cost takes the form of weeks of nightly phone calls trying to put out metaphorical fires at local bodies across the country. After four years, I am pleased to set down those particular working tools.

In the end, I am very happy to pass on the chair to my very capable successor who is the first woman to serve as President in the United States! Notably, UK Grand Lodge also appointed a woman to serve as President of their Electoral College. I am very pleased at the increase of strong women in leadership positions in the Order, and I fully expect Hattie to do an even better job at directing the Work of the College than I did. No pressure, Hattie! I will always be there to dispense support and encouragement “from the shades,” and the College will have to put up with me until my full term expires in the Fall of 2021. As always, I am profoundly grateful and humbled by this opportunity to serve our Holy Order.

Love is the law, love under will.

In the Bonds of the Order,
Ministerio Caritas aka David Hill
President Emeritus
Electoral College, U.S.G.L.

GRAND LODGE POLICY AND
PROCEDURE UPDATES

New Strategic Planning Cycle

In 2005-2006 EV, the National Grand Master General formed a Strategic Planning Group for the purpose of outlining the vision and goals of our Order in the United States. These Brothers and Sisters undertook the complex task of setting goals Order-wide. Some of the results of this effort can be found in the “Mission & Planning” section on the U.S.G.L. website. Many of these goals of the original strategic plan have been accomplished, but some remain aspirational. We thank the members of the group for their service.

In this new strategic planning cycle, we face challenges that call for a more streamlined and “agile” process than the deliberative process used previously. To that end, we are pleased to announce that on August 22, 2017 EV, the Executive established the office of the U.S.G.L. Strategic Planning Secretary, and appointed Sr. Melissa Holm to that office for a renewable term of five years.

The Strategic Planning Secretary will act as a consultant and facilitator to the governing bodies and leaders of U.S.G.L. in the formulation of strategic plans in their areas of focus, ensuring that these plans are in alignment with U.S.G.L. stated goals and priorities, and tracking incremental project progress toward the fulfillment of these goals.

Sr. Melissa’s plan is to implement the planning process over time, in quarterly increments—contacting U.S.G.L. officers each in their turn to initiate the goal setting process. The first steps are already underway. The membership will be able to follow along with the progress of the strategic planning process via regular reports here and in Agapé.

U.S.G.L. strategic planning activity for the last two quarters (FY17 Q3-Q4, October 2017 to March 2018 EV) is now available for review. It contains information pertaining to strategic planning progress made during the indicated time period,

and does not contain any active goals still pending from previous strategic plans.

As our planning cycle continues, attention will be given to a new group of goals, working through all past strategies and goals and the inception of new ones. At the end of each fiscal year, a full report for that year will be assembled in conjunction with the Annual Report.

The focus of this first round of planning centered on the development of amendments to the Vision and Values Statements, and a review of previous strategic plans focusing on previously set goals and the beginnings of new goals for the Electoral College.

Discussions were also begun with the Kaaba Committee, Conference Committee, and GL Initiation Secretaries, related to developing goals related to the new Vision/Values statements.

The process for ongoing strategic planning and reporting is still being developed, with plans in the current quarter to initiate the goal development process in more GL areas.

Strategic Planning Update: Viii Q3-Q4, FY17 EV

(We envision OTO USA as a model religious and fraternal order of occult initiates, and a leading proponent of Thelemic thought and culture within the United States.)

Objective: Fully implement Liber 194 to the extent possible and practicable.
Goal: Fill both Offices of Revolutionary positions (Liber 194: 25-26).

Strategy: Publish a notice in Agapé to encourage eligible IX° to volunteer.
Responsibility: Electoral College President.
Timeframe: Ongoing beginning November 2006 EV.
Status: Notices now will be posted to the blog. Newest inductee seated October 2017 EV shortly after previous seat was vacated. One seat still open.
GOAL STATUS: Ongoing.

Develop and Strengthen Local Operations

(We will maintain a physical presence near every major population center in the country, from which we will offer services in support of our mission to our members and to the public.)

Objective: Support development of Mystic Temples.

Strategy: Establish an additional Mystic Temple facility in the South or Southwest.
Responsibility: Grand Master.
Timeframe: May 2014 EV.
Status: Completed, March 2015 EV.

Objective: Improve communications between Grand Lodge and the membership.
Goal: Facilitate communication between the Electoral College and local body leadership.

Strategy: Create new online discussion forum for local body officers and Electoral College members.
Responsibility: Electoral College President.
Timeframe: Completed March 2007 EV.
Status: Completed.
Update: EC Blog established to augment governing email list.
GOAL STATUS: Completed.

Objective: Strategic planning.
Goal: Review and revise strategic plan on a continuous basis.

Strategy: Appoint a Strategic Planning Secretary.
Responsibility: Executive Council.
Timeframe: September 2017 EV.
Status: Completed, Melissa Holm installed September 2018 EV.

Strategy: Review and revise plan.
Responsibility: Strategic Planning Secretary.
Timeframe: Quarterly.
Status: In process.

Strategy: Communicate pertinent revisions to officers and leadership.
Responsibility: Strategic Planning Secretary, Executive.
Timeframe: Quarterly.
Status: In process.

Strategy: Communicate pertinent revisions to membership via Agapé, Pelican, oto-usa.org website.
Responsibility: Editors.
Timeframe: Upon approval/quarterly.
Status: in process.
GOAL STATUS: Ongoing.

Build a Stronger Fraternal Community

(We will espouse and defend the principle of individual liberty while cultivating strong fraternal bonds within our ranks.)

Objective: To Promote Diversity and Inclusivity.
Goal: Provide clarity into our Vision and Values as they relate to inclusivity.

Strategy: Develop new Vision and Values statements, publish on U.S.G.L. website, and distribute to membership via email lists and social media.
Responsibility: Strategic Planning Secretary, Supreme Grand Council.
Timeframe: Winter 2018 EV.
Status: Complete.

Goal: To understand the current state of our demographic make-up and improve our approach to learning from, attracting, and retaining minority membership.

Strategy: Create and distribute a member survey for the collection of demographic data.
Responsibility: Electoral College, Webmaster.
Timeframe: TBA.
Status: New.

Strategy: To update application for MOE Initiation forms to include demographic data (opt out).
Responsibility: GL Initiation Secretaries.
Timeframe: TBA.
Status: New.

Strategy: To develop events at NOTOCON that support minority membership.
Responsibility: Conference Committee.
Timeframe: NOTOCON XII (2019 EV).
Status: New.

Strategy: To create a Kaaba Colloquium module addressing diversity and inclusivity issues in our local bodies.
Responsibility: Local Leadership Training Program/ Local Leadership Training Coordinator.
Timeframe: November 2017 EV.
Status: Ongoing.

Statement from the Supreme Grand Council

It is no secret that Aleister Crowley’s writings include a number of statements that are demeaning to women and to specific racial or ethnic groups. We make no attempt here to justify or explain away those statements. They are what they are, and they are now part of our history as an organization. However, at this time, we find that ideas of the inherent superiority of one sex over the other, or of the inherent superiority or inferiority of specific “races” or ethnicities of humanity, relative to each other, are not supported by the best science, and are contrary to our stated goals of promulgating the Law of Thelema and realizing the age-old vision of the Universal Brotherhood of Man, which includes all Humankind. Therefore, the U.S. Grand Lodge of Ordo Templi Orientis hereby formally and unequivocally rejects all such ideas. O.T.O. draws strength from diversity; we welcome the participation and friendship of Thelemites of all sexes, genders, “races,” and ethnic groups, and from all cultures; and we are committed to opposing their unfair treatment, within and without the Order. We further remain committed to opposing ideas and doctrines—whether religious, political, philosophical, or pseudo-scientific—that tend toward the enslavement of the human spirit, which indwells “every man, every woman, and every intermediately-sexed individual.”

Adopted unanimously, An. Viii Sol in Leo, Luna in Leo; 20 August 2017 EV.

Formally ratified and endorsed by the Executive and National Grand Master General, same date.

Unanimously endorsed by the Electoral College, 22 August 2017 EV.

Policy Statement about Establishment of Good Report

While the attestation of two sponsors of the requisite degree in good standing is normally considered sufficient to establish the good report of a candidate, the Executive may rule, on a case-by-case basis, that a candidate’s good report has not been established by the attestation of the sponsors. In such a case, the Executive may either reject the application or return it to the local body for reconsideration, with or without a time delay. In addition, the Executive may, at its own discretion, disqualify one or more of the original sponsors from serving again as the sponsor for the same candidate.

Leagues and Collectives

In keeping with a tentative announcement made by the National Grand Master General in his NOTOCON X address about “National Guilds,” the Executive has now established a program of member interest groups to be supervised and managed by the Supreme Grand Council, effective immediately. Membership in these groups is limited to O.T.O. initiate members in good standing. These groups will be divided into two classes as follows:

1. “Leagues” are trade, craft, or professional groups within U.S.G.L. corresponding to Guilds as defined in the Blue Equinox; but operating with the approval of, and responsible to, the Supreme Grand Council of U.S.G.L. Applications for League status require the signatures of at least five initiate members in good standing who currently reside within the geographical jurisdiction of U.S.G.L.; must include draft Bylaws and Standing Rules; and are to be submitted to the G.S.G. for approval by the Supreme Grand Council. Leagues are expected to report their membership and activities annually to the G.S.G. in February for the previous calendar year. Any League can be closed at any time and for any reason by the Executive.

2. “Collectives” are informal special interest groups operating with the approval of, and responsible to, the Supreme Grand Council. Collectives operate under guidelines issued by the Executive. Collectives may be formed for study, discussion, and practice of a variety of topics and disciplines of interest to O.T.O. members; such as art, music, history, philosophy, poetry, alchemy, astrology,

tarot, various systems of divination and ceremonial magick, etc. Applications for Collective status require the signatures of at least seven initiate members in good standing who currently reside within the geographical jurisdiction of U.S.G.L., and are to be submitted to the G.S.G. for approval by the Supreme Grand Council. Bylaws and standing rules are optional for Collectives, but if developed, they must be submitted to the G.S.G. for approval by the Supreme Grand Council. Collectives are expected to report their membership and activities annually to the G.S.G. in February for the previous calendar year. Any Collective can be closed at any time and for any reason by the Executive.

Honorific Styles of Address for E.G.C. Clergy

Ecclesia Gnostica Catholica has taken on more and more of a role as the public face of the Order within the U.S.A., and we are often called upon to interact with various public officials, the media, etc. in our official roles as members of the clergy of E.G.C. We continue to use the official Forms of Address document summarized in the COLMH. However, those forms are of little use when interacting with the public as official clerical representatives of the Gnostic Catholic Church. Government officials and the media are accustomed to using certain forms of address, such as “Reverend,” when dealing with clergy of various denominations; and our descent from the French Gnostic Church entitles our ordained clergy to use that style in a manner consistent with both our history and contemporary contexts. Further, it has been noted that E.G.C. clergy have been using a variety of clerical styles of address for many years, in a haphazard manner.

Therefore, the U.S. Supreme Grand Council has adopted the following styles of address for use by ordained E.G.C. clergy within U.S.G.L. when interacting as such with members of the public (the name “Dana Smith” is used as a sample name):

Deacon (not yet K.E.W.): Brother/Sister Dana Smith.
Deacon (K.E.W.), Priest, or Priestess: The Reverend Dana Smith (abbrev. as Rev. Dana Smith), Reverend Smith, or Reverend Brother/Sister Smith.
Bishop: The Very Reverend Dana Smith, Reverend Smith, or Reverend Brother/Sister Smith.
Archbishop: The Right Reverend Dana Smith,

Reverend Smith, or Reverend Brother/Sister Smith.
Primate & Presiding Bishop: The Most Reverend Dana Smith, Reverend Smith, or Reverend Brother/Sister Smith.

Individuals with nonbinary gender identity may substitute Sibling or Sib for Brother/Sister.

The following abbreviations may be appended to the printed name and signature by ordained E.G.C. clergy:

Deacon: Dk. Gn. (Diakonos Gnostikos)
Priest/ess: Pr. Gn. (Presbyteros Gnostikos)
Bishop: Ep. Gn. (Episkopos Gnostikos)

When combining with the M.:M.:M.: degree designation, these abbreviations come after the degree.

Example: The Very Reverend Dana Smith, VII° Ep. Gn.

Crosses placed before the name or signature should be consistent with the individual’s degree in M.:M.:M.:. Bishops may preface their name with Tau or T. When this is done, the cross should be omitted.

For consistency, the S.G.C. discourages the use by clergy of styles other than those specified above.

Changes to Minerval Application Procedure

The Executive has adopted a revised Preliminary Pledge Form and Application For Admission (Minerval Application Form). There are two changes to the form:

- (1) Applicants will now be asked if they have ever been refused initiation at any location. Details are requested if the answer is affirmative.
- (2) The sponsors’ attestation has been modified to affirm that the sponsors have actually met with the applicant in person before deciding to vouch for them.

Cannabis Policy

U.S. Grand Lodge fully supports the legalization of cannabis for use by adults throughout the United States for any purpose they choose, and is encouraged by the increasing number of states removing state prohibitions on cannabis sales and use. However, the U.S. Justice Department under Attorney General Sessions is reversing a past policy directive against enforcement of federal cannabis prohibitions in states where cannabis is legal. Therefore, cannabis must still be considered an illegal substance throughout the United States, subject to enforcement by federal officials, even in states where it is legal according to state law. Consequently, despite recent changes in state laws pertaining to cannabis, there will be NO CHANGE in U.S. O.T.O.’s prohibition of cannabis at official events and venues, as described in detail in the COLMH. This policy will be re-evaluated if and when federal restrictions on cannabis are formally lifted, or the Justice Department’s non-interference directive is reinstated.

Application Forms for Non-Initiate EGC Baptism and Confirmation

Baptism and confirmation in E.G.C. have long been available to those who have not (yet) taken Minerval initiation. Effective immediately, candidates for non-initiate E.G.C. baptism and/or confirmation must complete and submit an application form/questionnaire prior to scheduling of the ceremony. These forms are available from either the E.G.C. Secretary, the Grand Secretary General, or the Document Control Officer. Approval is tacit unless the candidate has been convicted of a felony. For further information, local body officers and E.G.C. clergy may contact the E.G.C. Secretary or the Grand Secretary General.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY NATIONAL GRAND MASTER GENERAL SABAZIUS X° TO THE
ELEVENTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE U.S. O.T.O. GRAND LODGE
FOR THE CHANCE OF UNION
SATURDAY EVENING, AUGUST 12, 2017 EV, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Brothers and Sisters,

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Welcome to the eleventh biennial conference of the US Grand Lodge of Ordo Templi Orientis, in the great and humid state of Florida. Let me start off by thanking Sister Vanessa, Sister Sherri, Brother Illia, and the members of Hidden Spring Oasis, Swirling Star Lodge, Serpent & Lion Camp, and the Conference Committee for their work putting this conference together for us.

Our theme this year is “For the Chance of Union,” taken from the Book of the Law, Chapter I, verse 29, “For I am divided for love’s sake, for the chance of union.”

The Latin word *ligare* means to tie, bind, or unite; and to reestablish such a bond, to reunite after separation or division, is *re-ligare*, from which we ultimately derive our word *religion*.

Now, there are two topics you customarily don’t talk about in polite company: religion and politics. I talked about politics last time, so... here we go with religion.

But before I get started, I should offer a disclaimer about how difficult it is to definitively pin Thelema down on a lot of specifics, particularly regarding such things as social science, psychology, and other sciences, for several reasons. For one thing, Crowley offered differing models of his vision for an ideal Thelemic society depending on who he was trying to convince at the time.

For another thing, a great deal has happened since Crowley’s death; including many advances in physics, biology, psychology, neurology, communications, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

So you’ll still see a lot of disagreement about how the principles (and prophecies) of Thelema ought to play out in the modern world. There are Thelemites who believe some things along these lines that I pretty strongly disagree with, personally, and I’m sure they just as strongly disagree with me. I don’t think that means they’re not Thelemites. So, as I speak to you, keep in mind that I cannot offer to you any definitive guide as to how you should interpret the principles of Thelema. I can, however, offer what I believe; and the principles and prophecy and poetry of Thelema have certainly been a major influence on my thinking and my aesthetics.

Anyway. Religion.

For my purposes here, I’m going to define religion as that which comprises the various collections of customs, practices, and beliefs that deal with our human relationship with the divine—whatever that may turn out to be.

Interestingly, the question of whether Thelema is or is not a religion has always been pretty controversial among us. There could well be an argument about this going on in some Facebook group right now. Maybe even in one of the back tables there.

But the question of whether Thelema is or is not a religion was pretty thoroughly put to bed by Brother Bill Heidrick in his “From the Outbasket” column in the November 1992 EV issue of the Thelema Lodge Calendar. Short answer: yes, it is.

What I personally find interesting about this, though, is why this question has been so controversial over the years, and why so many Thelemites find the idea that they are participating in a religion to be offensive.

Well, centuries of aiding and abetting—if not instigating—war, genocide, and brutality against

women, children, and dissident minorities may have something to do with it.

And, for some of you, it may be even more personal. A lot of people have had childhood experiences with religion that have left them traumatized and bitter. Some—though not all—of the particular exoteric religious organizations that we have had to deal with while growing up were both authoritarian and corrupt; and they attempted to instil in us toxic, manipulative beliefs about ourselves, and each other, in order to mould us into passive creatures that can be easily controlled.

Just consider, for example, the belief that women are naturally inferior to men and must submit to their authority. Or the one that the only permissible justification for having sex is to produce more sla—hard-working citizens—and it must therefore be smothered in prohibitions, guilt, and shame.

And then there’s the whole idea of original sin—the notion that disobedience to Authority is such a terrible thing that the consequence for it is a curse that can be passed down to every subsequent generation for all time, condemning all human beings to an eternity of post-mortem torture unless they come groveling for forgiveness—to the right religious authorities. And then, when they do give up their own “willfulness” and submit to Authority, they are given a metaphysical rain check!

Religion has notoriously been employed since the time of the Roman Empire, and even before, as a tool to shore up and reinforce existing power structures which would be unable to stand on their own merits—to preserve and magnify the power and wealth of privileged, hypocritical, corrupt elites at the expense of basically everyone else; by exploiting our natural insecurities about life and death. The putative afterlife we are promised is configured to both frighten us into conformity, and console us with vague promises of a remote reward for our putting up with what would otherwise be intolerable circumstances.

As one famous, but failed, anti-corruption activist succinctly put it in 1844: “Die Religion ... ist das

Opium des Volkes.” In essence, religion provides false consolation in the face of real injustice.

[aside] “I hate the consoled and the consoler.”

But is this the fault of religion, per se? The fault of our attempts to understand and deal with the human/divine relationship? Or is it the fault of the corrupt power structures that have abused and twisted religion for their own purposes?

There have been numerous attempts throughout history to free religion from them—to shake the unchecked power of these superstitious, authoritarian institutions; but most such attempts, including the Reformation and Communism, have simply substituted their own, new brands of superstition and oppression for the old—rattling and temporarily loosening the shackles on the human spirit; but ultimately leaving them locked firmly in place. In modern times, here in America especially, the implements of religion, sharpened over the ages, have been stolen from the sacred toolsheds of the old corrupt institutions by enterprising, equally corrupt individuals, who combine them with the scientific techniques of the salesman, the psychologist, and the stage magician to turn basic human insecurities about death, success, and money into vast personal fortunes.

But there is a different way to challenge the power of the ossified, oppressive structures of the old times—because religious beliefs themselves are a two-edged sword. The other edge of the sword is esotericism—including occultism, mysticism, and magick—from which our religion of Thelema derives. This is where religion recognizes that its core consists of the ecstatic religious experience—the experience of divine union—which ultimately must be sought out and achieved by the individual—with or without help from others.

We of Thelema desire to seize the tools of religion and employ them to liberate, awaken, and challenge the human spirit by appealing to its nobility, its curiosity, its desire to understand itself, its sense of adventure, as well as its sense of humor. We want you to pursue and experience religious ecstasy. We are, therefore, committed to a spiritual struggle against those entrenched ideas and beliefs that have

been spread to enslave, oppress, exploit, and divide the human spirit—against those characteristic aspects of religion that make the very word religion repulsive to many.

But while it can be said that we are at war with toxic beliefs, we have no enmity towards people who hold those beliefs—if they mind their own business. There will always be those who prefer to remain comfortably enslaved and consoled. It is not within our purview to convert them or to take further advantage of them. We do not wish to see them oppressed or treated cruelly or unfairly. They can keep their opium and go about their dull business, as long as they don’t impose their banality and passive cruelty on us and our friends. The flock of sheep may safely graze, as our flock of birds flies overhead.

[aside] Take this quiz to find out which bird you are.

Do not clip the wings of those who desire to fly, and we will not disturb your troubled dreaming.

Every religion—every identifiable group and class and race and culture of people—contains bright sparks of those who cherish self-discovery, who value human rights, who recognize and perhaps embody creative genius, and who long for the liberty of the human spirit. We may rightly consider these our friends—in some cases even brothers, or perhaps, more appropriately, cousins. But, considering this, there is ultimately no group or class of people that can be identified with a label that deserves to be coerced or oppressed—other than that class of people that seeks to oppress.

As I mentioned before, religion, at its core, comprises the various collections of customs, rituals, practices, stories, and beliefs that deal with our human relationship with the divine, centered around the ecstatic religious experience—the experience of divine union made possible by division: which some call Gnosis. True religion is this personal experience, and the community and culture that naturally develops around it.

And this brings us back to our theme: “For the Chance of Union.” The NOTOCON webpage

states, “This theme reflects the desire of individual magicians to work with others within the O.T.O.”

I believe that O.T.O. constitutes such an intentional community of religious culture. But one of the fundamental ideas that we as a community hold especially sacred is the idea that the religious experience is ultimately an individual one, and thus we place a high value on individual will and individual rights. Despite our cohesion and common characteristics as a group, we insist on maintaining a recognition of each individual as having their own agency, their own autonomy, their own rights of expression and creation, and their own right to be themselves and live according to their uniqueness, rather than conforming to an arbitrary standard imposed on them. Paradoxically, one such arbitrary standard is that of the independent individual who stands apart and is responsible only for and to himself. Even though we recognize the absolute rights of the individual, we, as members of a sodality, still pledge each other our appropriate aid, honest discourse, and reasonable cooperation. We believe in the rights of the individual, but we also believe in the value of community.

For one thing, humans are, by and large, naturally gregarious. We evolved under environmental pressures which gave survival advantages to those who lived in groups. There’s an added degree of safety, and strength, in numbers. Obviously, some things are nearly impossible to do by independent, unaided individuals. Moving a piano, for example. But it isn’t enough to have raw numbers—the numbers have to act together in a coordinated manner. It is much easier to fight 1,000 independent individuals than it is to fight a coordinated battalion of 1,000 disciplined soldiers. So, if you happen to be an entrenched power structure of the sort I mentioned before, trying to maintain control in the face of rising awareness of the fragility of your claims, there are several pernicious ideas that you could inject into society as effective psychological weapons to diffuse the cohesiveness of hostile forces and break down their ability to successfully coordinate their activities. These include the idealized vision of the Rugged, Independent, Self-Sufficient Individual as a model to be emulated by all; and the idea that certain easily-identifiable groups are biologically or morally superior to others. Divide and conquer.

Furthermore, there is something to be said for a kind of synergistic, spiritual enthusiasm that comes from working within a religious community. For a species that has evolved with a gregarious nature, what really constitutes the spirit of an individual? How did you become the unique individual that you are now? Even if we accept the doctrine of reincarnation, we cannot deny that our individual identity has been shaped by our heredity and genetics; our gender and sexuality; our appearance, our health issues; our family’s ethnicity, nationality, language, and class status; our upbringing; our family’s traditions, stories, assumptions, expectations, and rules; our wealth or poverty; our childhood nurturing or the lack thereof; our relationships, good and bad; our education; our friends and mentors and enemies; our allies and our oppressors. All these things and more contribute to the conditioning and development of our mature individual personas, and will influence how we choose to pursue religious experience, as well as how we choose our friends and fellow-travelers.

But, ultimately, all these things that make us unique are things that take us further from the Unconditioned Essence of Self that we were before we incarnated in these bodies. Even if we accept the doctrine of reincarnation, all the lives that we experienced before simply added more experience and knowledge and conditioning and limitation and restriction to that Nameless Essence—to the You that is beyond all you are. You have become a living, sentient work of art, beautiful and joyful and tragic in your uniqueness, sculpted with Love by Life from formless Chaos. One way to look at the religious experience, the experience of union with the divine, is to see it as a conscious, inspired journey of return to the understanding of—and reunion with—this primordial Self; the Center and Secret of the Sun, the Most Holy Mystery of which you are the vehicle. Look around you and see, in their glorious diversity, the other vehicles of that identical Mystery—which is beyond death and life. And security.

Love is the law, love under will.



FROM CEFALU WITH LOVE

by Frater Porphyrogenitos

Since variety is the spice of life, every year my partner and I travel somewhere new for a short while in the spring. Last year, we spent a week on the Yucatan Peninsula, exploring Mayan ruins and underwater caves, and this year we took two weeks to become acquainted with Italian culture. Our first week was spent in Northern Italian cities, such as Milan, after which we headed south to the Island of Sicily, where we explored Palermo, Cinisi, and, of course, Cefalu.

As you can imagine, the interest of two Thelemites in spending a few days in Cefalu lay predominantly in a visit to the Abbey of Thelema, where Crowley, Leah Hirsig, and others lived and did ritual in the early 1920s. Unfortunately, the weather was not as cooperative as we had hoped. After a pre-dawn train ride on three hours of sleep, we were stuck hauling all of our luggage up several miles of steep hills through the heavy rain. We might have purchased umbrellas, were any stores open, but we happened to arrive during some sort of local holiday. Luckily, a Brother from Golden Lotus Lodge had supplied us with the GPS coordinates of the Abbey, saving us a good bit of extra wandering.

There are a few ways of accessing the Abbey. One is by taking a driveway from the north and walking through an overgrown path that eventually leads to it. The other, which we accidentally ended up taking, thanks to the limitations of our phones’ navigational software, involves an approach from a stadium to the south. This approach used to involve scaling a wall, but fortunately we found a path around a fence and down a steep hill that provided relatively easy access.

We were a bit surprised to find that the roof of the Abbey was visible from the road near the stadium. There was a moment of excitement when we first saw it—the building wasn’t labeled, but these were the right coordinates. Could that really be the Abbey, and if so, how many people walk by this building each day without realizing its significance?

Upon reaching the base of the hill, we saw an open window into which was engraved: “Thelema Abbey

– Fa cio che vuoi...” I wasted no time in climbing inside, eager to see what remained of the art Crowley had painted on its walls. There was a definite “holy shit!” moment when I realized that I was, in fact, at the Abbey and that my partner and I had the whole place to ourselves.

After taking a number of photos of each room, we took turns doing ritual. She opted for a variant of the Great Invocation, and I performed Samekh, which I later learned was written by Crowley for Frank Bennett at the Abbey. We both performed Resh as well. It was an absolutely incredible occasion for us, and we were relieved the Abbey was still intact, as some brethren had heard it had already been torn down. Rumor has it, it may be torn down within a

year, and we knew going into it that this might be a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Contrary to our expectations, we didn’t get the feeling that the Abbey was in such bad shape that it might collapse at any minute, but it was definitely in rough shape. It’s a shame that it can’t be renovated and preserved for future generations of Thelemites to experience. In any case, the time we spent there was extraordinary and we would recommend the trip to any Thelemites who may be thinking about traveling in the near future. Cefalu is a beautiful city and you may not have another chance. Visit while you can!



IN MEMORIAM



outlets in multiple businesses, notably the Urban Tea Lounge and Not-for-Prophet Industries. Recently, he was on the verge of a new independent enterprise rooted in his body-piercing career, but that effort was interrupted.

Henry had a heart attack on September 17, 2017 and did not regain consciousness during his two weeks of hospitalization. On October 2, 2017 he left the weight of incarnation behind to pursue work not known to us. He is survived by his wife CeCe, three children, a grandchild, and an uncountable number of friends, collaborators, and admirers.

A GoFundMe account for the benefit of Henry’s family is at <https://www.gofundme.com/henry-hank-needs-your-help>.

I give unimaginable joys on earth: certainty, not faith, while in life, upon death; peace unutterable, rest, ecstasy; nor do I demand aught in sacrifice. (CCXX I:58)

Love is the law, love under will.

Flamma sanguineque,
T Polyphilus

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.

Many of you have shared with me the privilege of knowing Henry Anderson of Chicago. Henry was one of the first O.T.O. members I ever met; I’m pretty sure he was present the first time I attended a Kollegium 93 Camp meeting in 1991. He was the co-proprietor of the Chicago Thelemic Temple in support of multiple chartered O.T.O. bodies in Chicago, and he was the third Master of Aum. Ha. Camp, presiding over its growth into the Second City’s first Lodge. He was a diligent, mischievous, creative, and caring man who was a cornerstone of O.T.O. in Chicago, and well-known and loved by brethren across the country.

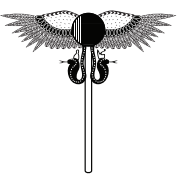
He was a graphic artist with a canny sense of humor and iconography. His creative impulses found their

Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.


I’d like to personally acknowledge the loss of Matthew Lyons, a former I° initiate from New Jersey, who died at the age of 23 this past February from drug-related issues. While he and I had little in common politically, it’s always sad when a young person dies before achieving their full potential. My sincere condolences to his friends and family.

Love is the law, love under will.
Sb




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O.T.O. "does not include the A.:A.:, with which august body it is, however, in close alliance."
— Liber LII

O.T.O. has long worked in close alliance with the A.:A.:, which first proclaimed the Law of Thelema to the world. The A.:A.: is a teaching, testing and initiatory system dedicated to the personal spiritual advancement of its individual members. Within A.:A.: all services are rendered free of charge, and no social activities are held. O.T.O. and A.:A.: have jointly issued the journal The Equinox since 1912 EV, now in its fourth volume. Although they are distinctly separate organizations, neither including nor subordinate to the other, O.T.O. has historically assisted A.:A.: with practical matters that lie outside the latter's primary mission, which is purely spiritual in nature. Aspirants to the A.:A.: may write to:

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