

Syllabus of Faith/ Evolution Study

"Sylvester Steffen seeks to have the realm of religion and the world of science dialogue with one another. Obviously comfortable with the language of both cultures, he weaves together poems that are both gentle and convicting. His broad grasp of vocabulary brings a richness to each of his offerings, and where a word does not quite fit, he invents new combinations.

"The poems are powerfully revelatory. Following in the train of Teilhard de Chardin, to whom he pays tribute in several offerings, the author calls us to be responsible stewards of this biosphere. Several references are made to Thomas Berry, author of the provocative and well-regarded book 'The DREAM of the EARTH', who has communicated affirmation and encouragement to Mr. Steffen. Surely, no issue is of greater urgency in our time than that we preserve our fragile planet from destruction by greed and ignorance. Whether calling us to cherish the Earth, or to contemplate the undisturbed paradise of Eden, or decrying the arrogance of those who deny the rest of Creation, with both beauty and conviction the author edges us toward loving and caring for the beautiful Creation in which we live.

"Another prevailing theme is the celebration of women who suffer patronization or oppression. He dedicates a section to his wife with the words "as you affirm me by your presence, my words affirm you in my absence", and to his daughters, "six festive water vessels, original miracles".

"Mr. Steffen does not eschew tradition except when it rigidifies and stifles life, but would have tradition informed by the new, fresh learnings that modernity unveils for us. We must not ignore the goodness of past cultures, but apply the trinity of communication, consciousness and conscience. These latter headings are the subject matters of the three trilogies.

"A manuscript of "New Genesis Poems" rested on my desk by my right hand for several weeks and I would open it up to read and reflect. Sometimes shrouded in mystery, it always called me to think, and yes, pray, and left me with a strong desire to want to talk with someone else about the meanings of these engaging poems. It is the hope of the author that this book might be the syllabus of an interdisciplinary study in colleges and universities to stimulate wholeness in learning and living. Our specialized, fragmented and truncated approach to many disciplines cries out for a more comprehensive view of the learning enterprise; we might be relieved of "Patchwork Learning" as the title of one poem puts it.

"Creativity we are discovering has not so much to do with novelty as it does with expressing our inner passions. Whether the person be a sculptor, novelist, coach, preacher or poet, there is a strong urge seeking invention. So, whether the form be that of a sculpt, short story, athletic play, sermon or poem, it demands execution. One can see how Mr. Steffen is an inventor as this publication is full of new and urgent ideas.

"The New Genesis Poems range from various takes on the worldview to the specificity of one oak tree in a small Iowa town. They include contemporary references to a thousand points of light and to the disasters of Tiananmen Square and Chernobyl. The subject matter is significant. The form of communication is creative. The books are worthy of study. Science and religion are far too important realms to leave only to scientists and theologians.

March 31, 1992

Bishop L. David Brown, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Northeastern Iowa Synod
Waverly, Iowa

"[Once] the truth has made its presence felt in a single soul, nothing can stop it from reaching out everywhere and setting everything free" Pierre Teilhard deChardin. (Claude Cuénot, Teilhard de Chardin, 1965, Helicon Press, Baltimore, MD, from inside the cover jacket)

COSMIC POESIS

Quantum Poesis in all its content and form is cosmic expression of quantum-electric resonance. Poesis derives its root energy (what is resonance) from/ in the “**psychic precondition**” of the deep cosmos, the infinite well of “**superstring**” energy. The “**music of the spheres**” is orchestrated in the deep well of psychic precondition — what is **Mind Energy** of the conscious and unconscious, of transformational substance, of Divine Instance, of **Eucharist**. Psychic Precondition is the unqualified cosmic potential of all being/becoming; the personal expression of the psychic precondition is human divine consciousness, the **Person of the COSMIC CHRIST**”.

Life comes to us in quantum bits and pieces, usually not more at a time than one can handle **in the moment**. This Earth moment, **The Now**, is all that we have at arms length, at our control, for the next moment, the next, and for the future.

Acquiring the habit of making moral decisions “in the moment” makes it easier for us to make the moral decision required when we are confronted with issues that seem too big for the moment.

Life is a mystery of harmonies; soul and body we are harmonic constructs even as poetry/poetree together is a harmonic structure of conscious creation. When we find the rhythms of life, our consciousness picks up on their joys and uplift that ride the waves of consilience and make the mind dance. The particular personal benefit of moral choosing and affirmative thinking is coincidentally the uplift of personal morale and betterment.

The conscious construct that is the uplifted heart, the joyous soul, is a patiently assembled complex of affirmative habits practiced in interpersonal relationships that make for communal harmony. In my life I’ve tried to pursue the consciousness of the moment and the right decisions of mind, also in the pursuit of my lifetime objectives. In my intentional study to link faith and evolution, and my purpose to formulate a syllabus of study, I proceeded with the moment-at-a-time principle, not expecting to accomplish more than my insights of the moment allowed.

My mode of approaching the enterprise was to analogize how I understand evolution to have happened and use this as the model for me to mimic. I imagined intuitional wisdom as remembering lessons of experience, making them accessible for dealing with ongoing real life experience/ understanding, and capable of redirecting memory and directing thought and action toward new experiences, even as conscious reflection is open to new lessons of experience. I choose to keep my reason and my actions rationally consistent but open to new conclusions, to change.

In keeping with this strategy I passively chose to let my intuitional imagination interact with remembered experiences and new ones, and to allow the logic of correlation to seep in and interact with intuition, allowing intuition to propose outcomes of thought and action.

This same rationale well applies to all creativity, whether, music, painting, designing, writing prose or poetry. My intuitions drove my poetry more than any literary or intellectual talent. As I acquired piecemeal information in my reading, I reflectively and unreflectively entered it into my intuitional imagination and allowed connections to flow

spontaneously. And they did come seemingly spontaneously, and as they came I wrote them down. The duration of the creative poem-writing time was only a few years.

After I had acquired a stack of written insights and poetic outputs, a new phase of correlation occurred to me, that is of making sense of how the poems related to each other and how a sensible arrangement might pick up on the logic of their content and correspond with the religious, moral understandings that came to be deeply implicated in my habits of my practiced “spiritual” living.

In the **Joined Faith Evolution/ Syllabus**, still a work in process, I depend even now on intuitional promptings for directing my way forward. I really never knew, or attempted to preconceive how to design and arrange the syllabus, or what content should be in it. I let the content come into existence by its own dynamic, and I continue to allow subsequent developments to come about in the same way. My willfulness involves my commitment of purpose to consign insights dutifully and immediately to paper as they occur to me, so they can find their place in my consciousness and then correlate with other insights and open the way forward. (If I don’t respond immediately to new insights of the moment and write them down in the moment, I lose them.)

I would suggest that others, you also, might well mimic this approach to stimulate their (your) own creativity. But, a **personal precondition** has to be put in place for it to work, namely, to dispose one’s own consciousness to **harmonize with the psychic precondition of paradigmatic nature**, what is the serious pursuit of informed consciousness/ conscience. In Natural Sacrament the grace-way of personal/ social fulfillment is a given of cosmic continuity, and is proven by experience to be effective. Learn the way of natural sacrament from which grace flows and feel the tide of **personal coming to the Mind of the Cosmic Christ**.

<http://ncrcafe.org/node/689>

<http://www.gather.com/viewArticle.jsp?articleId=281474976850793>