

# The Clarion

Easter Issue, April 2020,

We meet at 332 Harbour Way in Richmond, close to 880; just 4 blocks from  
Bart. Parking in back.



## HOW TO GET ON ZOOM ON A COMPUTER

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It will ask you for Meeting ID.  
It is: **397993561**. Click on **"JOIN"**.

Next it will ask for the Password, which is:  
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If you are doing this when your class is in session,  
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## APRIL CLASSES ON ZOOM:

***1st Sunday, April 5, 1:00 PM --  
THE SECRET DOCTRINE Study  
Group: The Secret Doctrine Dialogues***

***2nd Saturday, April 11, 7:00 PM --  
EVOLUTION OF HIGHER  
CONSCIOUSNESS Study Group:  
Review of Ch. 3-The Monad Questions for  
Discussion (from the Study Guide)***

***2nd Sunday, April 12 (Easter), 12:30 PM  
-- FUNDAMENTAL THEOSOPHY:  
Occult View of Healing, Health, and  
Disease***

***3rd Sunday, April 19, 12:30 PM --  
ST. RAPHAEL'S Study Group: Hidden  
Side of Christian Festivals***

***4th Sunday, April 26, 12:30 PM --  
HERMETIC Study Group: The Golden  
Thread***

Happy April Birthdays Mellie & Peggy!



To Deaconess Imelda Brown  
April 18, and Peggy Heubel  
April 7

With Gratitude and  
Wishing you a Happy  
Birthday and a world of  
happiness!





# THE EASTER SEASON

By Deaconess Imelda H. S. Brown, LCC



EASTER is the greatest of Church Festivals – so great that the the celebration lasts longer than others and in its honor we keep the great forty days running on until the time of Ascension. During that period we burn the special Paschal candle for an indication that this is all part of the most splendid festival of the Christian year.

Easter is the great Festival of Light—of the rising again of the Light of the World. All symbology of human evolution centers around the fountain and origin of that evolution—the Solar Deity. It is indeed most true that no man can comprehend God. But in the attempt, the first step is to recognize that He has many manifestations.

This Solar Deity is to His system all that men mean by the title GOD. He permeates it; there is nothing in it which is not He: it is the manifestation of Him in all that is seen and unseen—in matter and in spirit. All the ancient religions have woven beautiful symbols, differing according to the religion, the race, and the people; symbolism which indicates and describes the life of the Initiate in terms of the life of the Sun God, which also exists here in the Christian Church, and is shown throughout the course of the Christian Year (from Advent and Christmas up to Trinity Sunday) is, as it were, the active, eventful part of the Solar Life; and then the next six months are devoted to practicing and preserving what we have learnt.

Every one of us will have, in turn, to undergo the suffering symbolized by the Cross, every one of us must learn how to give himself up utterly for others; but also for every one of us is the Glory of Easter, the RESURRECTION, the victory, the triumph over the world of matter and material things—that victory is for every one of us and, when we thank God for the Easter Festival, we are thanking Him for that magnificent possibility. “If Christ

be risen, then shall we also rise”—the argument of old. Easter is a magnificent reality to every one of us; just as it was then. The possibility is for us, for every one of us and we should feel that with the glory of the resurrection at Easter: the mighty triumph of good over ill is an absolute, an actual reality for each and every individual.

We have, therefore, true joy in exchanging with one another the traditional Easter greeting as when early Christians met one another on Easter Day; one saying to the other: “The Lord has risen,” and the reply given “He is risen, indeed.”

So in His victory we triumph, too, and in the joy of the Lord, His Church rejoices, also.

--Excerpts taken from *C. W. Leadbeater's The Hidden Side of Christian Festivals*



Ceiling Mosaic - Christus helios, the mosaic of Sol in Mausoleum M, which is interpreted as Christ-Sol (Christ as the Sun). Detail of vault mosaic in the Mausoleum of the Julii. This mosaic is of the Vatican grottoes under St. Peter's Basilica, on the ceiling of the tomb of the Julii and is a representation of Christ as the sun-god Helios or Sol Invictus riding in his chariot. Dated to the 3rd century AD.

Psalm 19:5-6, a verse that was very popular with early Christians, was associated with the ancient Christian custom of praying toward the East, the direction of Christ's Ascension: "...In the sun has He set His tabernacle, and he as a bridegroom going out of his chamber shall rejoice as a giant to run his course." Christ was also associated with "the Sun of justice with its healing rays", a Messianic image from Malachi 3:20.

1. *Ascension* — refers here to Christ's transition from earth to heaven after his life, ministry, death, and resurrection.
2. *Pascal* — of or relating to Easter or to the Jewish Passover
3. *Light of the world* — [see Matthew 5:14 in the Bible] Jesus was speaking to a crowd of ordinary people; yet said to them, “You are the Light of the world.”
4. *Man* — Well into the twentieth century, writers used “he” as a “generic” pronoun, I.e., they used *he* to refer to an individual of unspecified gender — like anyone, somebody, everyone, the reader, a parent, etc; when referring to God and to the Christ, capitalized the seemingly masculine (although generic) pronouns.



# Astarte to Aestre to Easter

## The Mystic Egg of Astarte

by Barbara Penninton, TS

Astarte throughout the ages represents the regenerative power of life, of the natural world. This power is exemplified in the story of the “Mystic Egg of Astarte.”

It was a dark and devastating time on earth after a great global flood. The lands were inundated and the life on the lands destroyed. Suddenly out of the Babylonian skies, a grand fantastic egg emerged and fell in the river Euphrates. Now there were some remarkable fish who had survived the flood and recognized that the marvelous egg was an important gift from spirit and went to work pushing the egg to the banks of the river.

When the glorious egg settled on land, it attracted the attention of two doves. (Perhaps they were from Noah’s Ark.) Even though this was a stupendous object, the doves recognized the egg-shape and following natural instincts, began to incubate the egg.

When the spectacular egg hatched, the goddess Astarte emerged and began the process of restoring life on earth. It is said the stars in the firmament twinkled in delight that the full spectrum of life on earth would emerge anew.

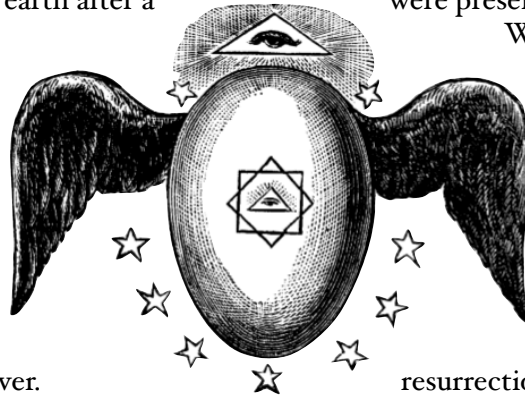
The Mystic Egg of Astarte is a timeless symbol of the regenerative power of life available to humanity. The force of regeneration and resurrection is inherent in the subtle anatomy of each human as the spiritual triad.

The symbol portraying the “Mystic Egg of Astarte” shows an egg uplifted by the “wings of a pure white dove.” Stars surround the egg may represent the influence of the seven sisters of the Pleiades with their parents.

At the center of the egg is a shape resembling a sacred geometry form which portrays a portal into the timeless. In the center of the portal are two-squares in juxtaposition of each other creating eight points,

revealing Astarte as an eight-pointed star. Within the star is the Great Eye of the Divine.

Fast-Forward several thousand years, when women were present to support “resurrection.” In *The Women of Easter*, Liz Curtis Higgs describes the women who stayed closest to Christ during his last days on earth. Mary of Nazareth who as the divine mother was by his side with loving support, Mary of Bethany who assists in sacred burial preparation. Mary Magdalene who was with her teacher through his darkest hours and announced the resurrection to the disciples.



These women were not alone. They were held in the lovingly compassionate field of the forces of eternal life, of regeneration and resurrection.

Fast-Forward a couple of thousand of years to the present time when daffodils bloom and lilies cover the fields. As you bite into an adorned egg, recognize you are ingesting the great Hermetic mysteries of regeneration.

The same principle of the feminine support of regeneration first identified with Astarte continues to this day. It is imbedded in the Golden Thread of the Hermetic Tradition. There were times that the goddess was venerated and times when she was desecrated and trampled. As the “Mystic Egg of Astarte” reassures us, there are powerful principles in Mother Nature that will re-emerge perhaps in even greater glory.

It is often when night looks darkest, it is often before the fever breaks that one senses the gathering momentum for change, when one feels that resurrection of hope in the midst of despair.

-Hillary Clinton



**ONE** of the greatest universal and esoteric symbols is the **EGG**. The concept is to be envisioned as egg-shaped with all the potentialities of any mundane **egg**, *to wit*: in various cultures worldwide, it “...has always held particular symbolic significance, partly because it is *visual shorthand* (a symbol) for new life and un-hatched potential.” In mundane life, the egg-concept is one of hope and purity. It is a symbol of fertility and the circle of life. The **egg** is a very *ancient* symbol of new life and has always been associated with pagan festivals celebrating spring. But there are deeper meanings... .

ALCHEMICAL  
SNAKE and EGG



**An egg is a womb, primal energy, the place of Origin--the Source of all--and the place of unifying all opposites into Wholeness; the Only and the Perfect.**

THEOSOPHY expands on this concept—the **Egg** is a universal symbol representing the primordial source from which the Deity and the materials for the creation of the cosmos come into existence. It is an image frequently found in the cosmogonies of many cultures and civilizations, including the Hindu, Chinese, Egyptian, Greek, Syrian, Persian, and Finnish.

In Theosophical literature it represents the primordial substance and the germ of consciousness (Logos) in it, in their various stages of development, from the unmanifested and undifferentiated to the fully manifested. To distinguish among the different stages, the egg is qualified with adjectives such as "eternal", "virgin", "mundane", etc.

In reference to this universal symbol, Blavatsky wrote in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol 1:

“The **Egg** was incorporated as a sacred sign in the cosmogony of every people on the Earth, and was revered both on account of its form and its inner mystery. From the earliest mental conceptions of Man, it was known as that which represented most successfully the origin and secret of being. The gradual development of the imperceptible germ within the closed shell; the inward working, without any apparent outward interference of force, which from a latent *nothing* produced an active *something*, needing nought save heat; and which, having gradually evolved into a concrete, living creature, broke its shell, appearing to the outward senses of all a self-generated, and self-created being—must have been a standing miracle from the beginning... . The second reason for its having been chosen as the symbolical representation of the Universe, and of our earth, was its form. It was a *Circle* and a *Sphere*; and the ovi-form shape of our globe must have been known from the beginning of symbology, since it was so universally adopted.”

There are several "eggs" responding to the different stages the primordial substance and the germ of consciousness go through during the reawakening of the cosmos. There are also different "eggs" according to the plane to which they belong. Not only is there the “eternal egg”, i.e., pre-cosmic or undifferentiated matter *before* manifestation, or creation, representing a *laya* or zero condition having neither attributes nor qualities, there are also the esoteric (or metaphysical concepts) of the **Virgin Egg** and the **Mundane Egg**.

“The "Virgin Egg" is the microcosmic symbol of the macrocosmic prototype; the *first* differentiation—Chaos or the Primeval Deep.” (Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol 1)

The "Mundane Egg" is the next stage where “real” manifesting activity begins—cosmic matter in which the *vital creative Germ* receives its first spiritual impulse, and potentiality becomes potency.

“The GERM Within the EGG”—but that’s another story.

# Reflections on Easter

By Odette Lardé, TS

When I was a child I had certain beliefs about Easter. First of all, I was sure the Easter bunny was hatched from an egg. And when he grew up he became pregnant with more eggs and he brought them to us along with jelly beans, chocolate bunnies and marshmallow chicks. As I became still older I decided that the bunny wasn't a he but a she, because only a she could hatch eggs and carry them around in baskets, which I eventually realized, represented a womb.

In Catechism I realized that Easter was celebrated to commemorate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and of His opening the gates of heaven for us.

Eventually I learned that Easter was scheduled over the remains of a pagan holiday on which the Spring Equinox was celebrated along with rituals of fertility symbolized by rabbits as well as eggs.

I learned that Easter was the most important day in the liturgical year. Remembering our Christmas tree and gift exchanges it felt that Christmas, and not Easter, was the most important holiday. But on Christmas, I learned, Jesus was born of the flesh, while on Easter He was born of the Spirit, as He fulfilled the purpose of why He had been born, which was to teach us that the Gates of Heaven were open to us. Exoterically speaking, He saved us from eternal damnation by taking on the sins of the world and sparing us.

As I grew in understanding, however, I realized that there was no eternal damnation. We were already "saved." There was nothing to "save."



The story of Jesus was foretold allegorically in many ways in the Bible. The story of Adam and Eve in Genesis depicts the story of mankind's temptation and fall from Paradise and the need of mankind to traverse many experiences and knowledge of Good and Evil before finally attaining the level of the Second Adam, or Jesus Christ.

Along the same lines, the Prodigal Son also falls into temptation and leaves his father's house until, after many experiences, he laments having left his father's house, and returns home where he is welcomed by his father who arranges many festivities to celebrate the return of his son.

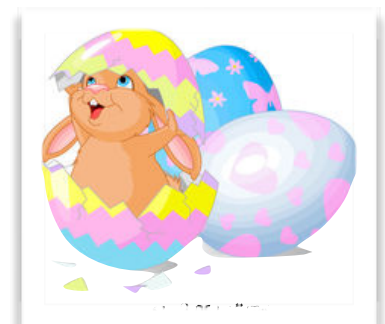
The story of Jesus has inspired countless to ponder the significance. The many miracles, including that of Lazarus who returned from the dead, are those of One who, considering the many

miracles He performed, could have easily avoided His crucifixion. Many have regarded it as a statement of love for mankind and willingness to teach us that there is no death but only eternal life.

The condition of mankind is that of nature reflecting the cycles of nature: birth after death, birth after death, —without escaping the wheel of nature. The story of Jesus reflects the promise that beyond the cycles of the flesh, our spirit transcends matter leading us to flourish into eternal life.

Through the crucifixion and resurrection Jesus Christ sends us a glorious message of the welcome we receive, seated at the right hand of our father and creator. It makes sense that the heartbeat or breath of the cosmos continues with cycles at a higher level.

At this time of pandemic, many people are suffering from coronavirus. As in ages past, the baskets of colorful eggs and chocolate bunnies are here to give us hope and remind us that Easter with its Resurrection and rebirth applies to all mankind.



## How We're Doing At This Time of Coronavirus

The global reactions to COVID-19 have puzzled me; particularly the steps taken to “shelter in place”, “social distancing”, and the near-complete shutdown of our economy causing devastating losses and we have only just begun our fight. I've thought long and hard about this and was forced to the conclusion that the entire world is, at the very least, overreacting. I base my opinion on the following statistics easily found online. Of course, it is important to honor health guidelines but how much danger is really involved? Judge for yourself.

COVID-19 to date

- China has had roughly 81,000 reported cases with 3200 deaths.
- Throughout the rest of the world outside China there have been roughly 52,000 cases with 1775 deaths.
- The United States reports 7,038 cases with 97 deaths; these, of course, will increase over time.

INFLUENZA (FLU) to date

- 2019-2020 flu season: The CDC reported minimum cases at approx...and deaths averaged 22,000 in the United States alone.
- Worldwide, the CDC said between 291,000 and 646,000 people died from seasonal flu-linked respiratory illnesses, while the WHO (World Health Organization) projected 250,000 to 500,000 influenza deaths per year since 2008.

**Peggy Heubel**

### Staying at Home with Wrathful Kali Life amidst the Novel Coronavirus

The great spiritual mystic, Sri Ramakrishna, proclaimed that a spiritual journey requires confronting Kali, the archetypal goddess of rampant destruction. In these months, the devastating force of Kali is transforming reality to most nations of the world.

Staying at home, I have images of Kali in her full regalia of ghastly destruction and at the same time recall she is devotedly worshipped as a passionate lover of all humanity. My inner work these days is to integrate Kali who wreaks extraordinary havoc and Kali who lovingly clears obstacles for emergence of higher consciousness.

In my altar dedicated to global well-being, I invite evolutionary intelligence in the wake of destruction to encourage deep love and healing.

**Barbara Penninton**

When I wake up in the morning, I have gratitude for all my caring family and friends, as well as for the necessities that I need. I know that this crisis too, will pass, as well as the great many changes that will occur because of it. We are so blessed to have the ancient teachings available for guidance. My heart-felt thoughts of hope and for provision go out to the many that have real concerns and those who are fearful of the unknown, as well as those who may act wisely.

Now, a little on the mundane side. I am deeply moved by the many helpful responses by both individuals as well as retail stores (necessity), from Stacy's 15 min. yoga on the internet to Walgreen's special opening for seniors every Tuesday from 8 AM to 9 AM and YES a 30% discount on their purchases.

However, sheltering in place and the need of wearing a mask is an experience that takes a bit of adapting too. I took off my mask in the car after finishing an errand and heard something light hitting a surface. I thought that I had dislodged an earring. It turned out to be my hearing aid which I have yet to find. Fortunately, I can use my old one until the new one in the car reveals itself.

I wish the very best to all of you...stay well...miss you,

**Mellie Brown**

I'm doing pretty much OK. I'll be working fewer hours and doing so from home. So, there will be extra non-work time, but that will be balanced out by the need for doing some extra babysitting. I've made several trips to the grocery store, stocking up on frozen and canned food. It's a negative thing, not going out anymore. On the positive side, I'll be learning more about remote-conferencing software like Zoom and Slack.

**David Rames**

During this pandemic I've experienced two big anxieties, regarding two of my kids. (I have three kids, but my third one, Sophie, who lectures all over the world, seems to be safe, sheltering in place in Long Beach.)

In Berkeley, we've been having a shortage of food due to widespread hoarding and to our avoiding shopping during our having to shelter in place. I'm 81 and both my youngest daughter, Amie, and I have underlying health conditions and shouldn't be going out. It's been a challenge getting enough food for us and supporting Amie's need to exercise while sheltering in place. I've been trying to get grocery delivery for quite a while now, to no avail. Instacart and Amazon Prime didn't have any delivery windows available. Berkeley Bowl was a madhouse with too many people grasping at almost empty shelves so that I couldn't even get my cart through. Earlier I was sending our cleaning lady to buy us bananas, bread and milk. Today I finally went to Senior Hour at Whole Foods, which happens everyday from 8-9 am. The outdoor line wound around the building with everyone 6' apart. Thank God it wasn't raining. Indoors the check-out line wound around the inside of the building, and people there were also 6' apart. The lines didn't take as much time as you'd think, and the store was relatively well stocked.

Meanwhile, I found out that my son, who lives in Rhode Island, was in his sail boat in the Bahamas with his wife, daughter, and his daughter's friend, when the news of the coronavirus hit. It was something more for me to worry about.

It's a bitter-sweet trip to be on lock-down in the Bahamas during a pandemic. Since John and party were already in the Bahamas they could just stay there. Furthermore John didn't want to leave his boat moored so far from home, which is very costly. I worried that they wouldn't let him back into the U.S. at this time, but he said they would; as long as he was a citizen, which all of them are. When they got back to Rhode Island, they would then all just have to self-quarantine for 14 days.

So now the plan is for them to stay on their boat in the Bahamas for a bit longer, and then to take four days to sail to Florida, and then about a month to sail back up the coast to Rhode Island. They have enough food, he said. They barbecue on deck every morning; the waters are warm and clear; they swim among exotic tropical fish; and there's no rush since he's sort of retired and they can be isolated, sheltering in place on the boat.

At this time these are my two main types of anxieties: 1) worry that one kid be healthy, well-fed and getting enough exercise; and 2), worry that the other kid is stuck out in the open seas, far from home, during a pandemic, with the possibility of a national lock-down or even a quarantine. I wouldn't know where he would be safer, but on the mainland we have medical help as well as medical dangers.

When I messaged my family about this, my daughter Sophie wrote back, "Oh don't worry, Mom; Johnny is now going through the Bermuda Triangle but he'll come out fine; and though there's a gale approaching, I'm sure his sails will hold out. True his sailboat has sprung a leak, but it's very small. If the three cans of baked beans they have on their boat don't last they can just hitch a ride with a cruise ship." When I asked her if she'd be giving any more lectures abroad, she said, "I'll be going to Wuhan soon, but don't worry, Mom, I'll swing by Berkeley on my way back and give you a kiss." This happened a bit earlier when Wuhan had worse numbers of Covid-19 than we did, and people were still traveling.

**Odette Lardé**

# St. Raphael's Gets a Sign

By David Rames, LCC

Great news! The new “shingle” sign has been completed and installed on the front of the church—a church that will now be easier for first-time visitors to find.

Such a sign was a dream of Father Ed Gonzales and his wife Treasurer Tami, Father Mathias, Deaconess Mellie Brown and all the members, since the church located on Harbour Way about 5 years ago. According to Peggy Heubel, President of the local Theosophical Society and member of our Building Committee, “For several years, St. Raphael's (Liberal Catholic Church) discussed and discussed, and discussed putting up a sign announcing our presence on Harbour Way, Richmond, CA. Various suggestions were made but no action was taken in that direction.”

I understand that one thing discussed was a preliminary design for a sign 6 square feet in size, for which they got a bid from a contractor—a bid that was discouragingly high. So the sign became a lesser priority than some other things. But, in the past year, the Building Committee (consisting of the above named members, plus Odette Larde and myself, in addition to ex officio members Bishop William Downey, Father James Voirol and Father Richard Ellwood) put that dream on the front burner again, and now everyone's efforts have paid off.

Larry Pinero the Sign Maker, whom the Committee had selected as sign contractor, arrived with the sign on Sunday, March 1. Built on sign board, it has 2 coats of primer and 4 coats of paint. The letters and their shadows are made of vinyl.

The first picture shows him laying out the sign on the church floor. In addition to the large, main sign, there's a smaller sign on chains below it, stating the time of services. That smaller sign can be switched out when needed with one for Easter or one for Christmas. (He also made a blank sign for our use.)

Starting with a figure for the desired height to the bottom of the sign, he calculated what the height of the support bracket had to be. After adjustment for site conditions, the sign was to be installed so that there would be 8'-10" clearance beneath it. Such a height, greater than the 8' minimum required by the City of

Richmond, would allow for the installation of yet another small sign at the bottom, if we so desire in the future.

The second picture shows Larry carefully attaching a template to the wall, getting it centered and level. Then he uses the template as a guide to drill 4 holes, as shown in the third picture. He's bolting the bracket to the wall in the fourth picture.

The installed bracket is shown in the fifth picture. At 50" in length, it is bigger than the usual bracket that Larry installs. He tells us that our sign, almost 12 square feet in size, is larger than most shingle signs.

In the sixth picture, he is installing and leveling the main sign on chains from the bracket. Then comes the hanging of the small sign in the seventh picture. And in the eighth picture is the completed sign (beautiful, IMHP) along with Larry and myself, as photographed by Mellie (ninth picture).



Kudos to the members of the Building Committee for their efforts, which included finalizing the design of the sign, getting city approval, and getting bids. And many thanks to Larry Pinero. I've known him for 4 decades: he's always been creative in his designs, ethical in his business dealings, and very reasonable in his prices. Committee member Peggy Heubel has posted a 5-star review of his work, which can be viewed on Yelp.

A Final Thought: It's been a long wait to get the sign. And yet, perhaps the length of that wait has been a blessing in disguise. In its preliminary design, the sign was only 6 square feet in size, because the City of Richmond exempted Building Department fees for signs of up to that size. (However, based on my dealings with the city, I suspect there still would have been a fee for Planning Department review, even if they haven't made that clear in their Code.) But, by the time the Building Committee began its work in earnest last year, that exemption had ended. So, we re-designed the sign from 6 square feet (which was pretty limited) to almost 12 square feet in size, just short of the maximum allowed. Result: a sign that's not only handsome, but also very informative and eminently readable.



*Continued from previous page:*



*Hanging up our glorious sign*



Fr. James Voirol gives a healing to Fr. Mattias Van Thiel. Everybody got a healing.



David Rames, Fr. Voirol, Julie Petchey after Mass. Julie is the step-daughter of the late Bishop Beusekom.



Julie Petchey and Peggy Heubel having refreshments after Mass. We always have refreshments after Mass.