



MEMBER STORY

Steven Armstrong, FRC

As a young person growing up in Phoenix Arizona in the 50s, 60s, and 70s, my interest in many forms of spirituality manifested itself. I read every children's and young adult novels I could find that involved magic, fantasy, and science fiction such as the Edward Eager *Half Magic* Series, all of Isaac Asimov, Lord Dunsany, H. P. Lovecraft, the whole Ballantine Adult (Heroic) Fantasy series, Lloyd Alexander's Prydain books, T.H. White's *The Once and Future King* (King Arthur) and, of course, the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams.

After I had read Charles Williams' *The Greater Trumps* (about the Tarot), obtained from an El Paso Public Library while visiting relatives in Texas during the summer, that Christmas I told my mother that the gifts I wanted that year were a Deck of Tarot Cards, and the Roman Catholic Liturgy of the Hours (Breviary). These were to be my tools for meditation. As ever supportive, my mother made sure that Santa brought both that year.

My "Mommy" later told me that the clerk at B. Dalton's at Park Central Mall remarked that it was an unusual combination when she ordered them there – no Internet or Amazon Prime in those days!

Externally, I was a conventional Roman Catholic boy, head of the Altar Servers and deeply involved with the Church. However, I remember sensing that there were deeper dimensions and other manifestations that were available to those who sought them.

Life continued, and education at St. Matthew's, the Jesuit College Prep Brophy, and Yale were given me as wonderful gifts. My mother, Elizabeth, a Postal Worker, put me through all these, together with my work-study program. My father, Jessie James Armstrong, Jr. was gruff but supportive.

After graduating from Silliman College at Yale, I returned to teach at Brophy for the academic year 1976-77, and then entered into the process of joining the Jesuits, an Esoteric Order in Exoteric garb in the Catholic Communion of Churches.

The summer of 1977, before entrance, I traveled across Canada and the U.S. and ended up in San Jose, staying with a high school friend, Greg, who lived on Moorpark. I was a great explorer and walker in those days, and one afternoon, I was walking in the Rose Garden Neighborhood when I turned a corner and—Shazzam!—there was Egypt at Park and Naglee!

Rosicrucian Park stood before me, and I wandered the grounds in awe. What in heaven's name was this? I went into the Museum and spent – I have no idea how

long – exploring and marveling at the collection. At the end of my visit, I picked up the then-current edition of *Mastery of Life*, and read it cover to cover that night at my friend's house.

While I was fascinated, I was on a trajectory – a very good one – and filed this knowledge away.

After almost a quarter century of wonderful experiences and Eastern Christian Ministry, that Path was coming to a close for me. During those years, I had once again been freely gifted to explore and practice Eastern and Western Christian spirituality, Ignatian Spirituality, and increasingly, esoteric and Earth-Based spiritualities, as well as further education at Fordham, and consortia in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Berkeley, California. My parting with my religious Order was cordial and orderly, and deep friendships from these years remain to this day.

One day, Chris – whom I was dating, and who would become my partner and Co-Rosicrucian and Martinist member – and I took a day-trip to San Jose, to visit Rosicrucian Park and the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum which I remembered so fondly. We enjoyed the Museum immensely, and while on the Tomb Tour, had a very interesting experience.

We were in the Burial Chamber when some children were being boisterous, as children will sometimes be. The Docent kindly but firmly admonished their mother, “Ma’am, please keep your children in order.” Mom did so immediately, and the tour continued.

We picked up new copies of *Mastery of Life* when leaving.

As we were driving home, both of us expressed how impressed we were with how this was handled. “These Rosicrucians have their act together,” I remember Chris saying.

It wasn't long before we filled out a joint application and began our studies.

When I began my AMORC studies, I was delighted to find that my progress through the Degrees allowed me to organize and systematize what I had experienced and learned previously with new learning, experience, and work, creating an harmonious and orderly whole. I have never experienced any work more integrating. It is as rewarding for the beginner as it is for experienced hands.

The same is certainly true for my beloved Martinist work and service.

I soon began attending at the Grand Lodge and was enthralled. I have met so many fellow soul-mates who remain firm friends to this very day. Members have been there for me and Chris every time there was need, even unto the horrible process of moving – those are true Fratres and Sorores!

I had returned to a home I know I have experienced in many lifetimes.

What was indeed wonderful was that I had experienced what J.R.R. Tolkien called a “Eucatastrophe”¹ – a happy ending – against all hope! This is what our Rosicrucian journey is all about.

After all my reading, journeying and exploration I experienced what the young *Galaxy Quest* fan did when he realized that all of his hopes were indeed true:

Captain Jason Nesmith: “It’s all real.”

Brandon: "I knew it! I knew it! Ha! Ha!"²

Our dreams really do come true, as they must because we manifest them.

In the *Lord of the Rings*, when the Eagles come to save Frodo and Sam³, this is Eucatastrophe.

In *Star Wars*, when Darth Vader seizes the Emperor Palpatine and saves his son Luke⁴, this is victory snatched from the jaws of defeat.

This is the same as when the Paleontologists in *Jurassic Park* first see the herd of Dinosaurs⁵, and even more powerfully, this experience with the Master Yeshua demonstrates Eucatastrophe in the Christian New Testament from Luke 24:13-35 after the Resurrection:

Now on that same day two of them (the disciples) were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing, Yeshua himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?"

He asked them, "What things?"

They replied, "The things about Yeshua of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before the Divine and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there, they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on. But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over."

So he went in to stay with them. When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

They said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together. They were saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!”

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Regardless of how one interprets the Resurrection of the Master Yeshua and the Christ-Consciousness, this story is the Eucatastrophe *par excellence*.⁶

At our California AMORC Convention at Disneyland in 2010, our Most Venerable Grand Master Julie Scott addressed the frequent mention that Walt Disney was a member of AMORC. She told us that all you have to do is listen to the lyrics of the song from Walt Disney’s *Pinochio*, “When you wish upon a Star,” and you will know he was a member⁷:

“When a star is born
They possess a gift or two
One of them is this
They have the power to make a wish come true.

“When you wish upon a star
Makes no difference who you are
Anything your heart desires will come to you.

“If your heart is in your dream
No request is too extreme
When you wish upon a star
As dreamers do
Fate is kind.

“She brings to those who love
The sweet fulfillment of their secret longing.

“Like a bolt out of the blue
Fate steps in and sees you through
When you wish upon a star
Your dreams come true.

“When you wish upon a star
Makes no difference who you are
Anything your heart desires will come to you.

“If your heart is in your dream

No request is too extreme
When you wish upon a star
As dreamers do
Fate is kind.

“She brings to those who love
The sweet fulfillment of their secret longing
Like a bolt out of the blue
Fate steps in and sees you through
When you wish upon a star
Your dreams come true.”⁸

After I began working at the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum and the Grand Lodge – my interview day was September 11, 2001! – and that’s a story in itself – I have had many confirmatory experiences.

One day, I was preparing the Grand Temple for the Council of Solace. As I walked up the Shekinah steps to light the candles and incense, I heard – in my heart, not auditory – a clear voice saying, “You have been doing this for a very long time.”

I earlier had the wonderful opportunity to serve as Chaplain in the First Temple Degree Initiation when my Partner Chris was initiated. Without going into details about the ritual, I can say that he was so overcome with the vibrational nature of the moment, that rather than just kneeling, he fully prostrated himself.

We are a happy Rosicrucian Family, now back in the desert in Las Vegas Nevada, and eager to continue the Great Work here in the Meadows as well as with the Grand Lodge.

I can only express my undying gratitude to our Most Venerable Imperator Christian Bernard (and wishing our incoming Imperator Claudio Mazzuco all my support), our Most Venerable Grand Master (and my boss!) Julie Scott, our Vice President Dr. Lonnie Edwards, our Grand Secretary Karen Wark, Grand Treasurer Julian Johnson, and our Director Marie Shaluly (and her whole family), my fellow Grand Lodge Staff, and all my whole Rosicrucian and Martinist family for welcoming me home!

So Mote it Be!

Endnotes

¹ J.R.R. Tolkien, “On Fairy Stories” in *Tree and Leaf* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1964). Reprinted in *The Tolkien Reader* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966), 33-99.

² https://youtu.be/nF_6OfgbF7c

³ <https://youtu.be/dOnhBKPSuWA>

⁴ <https://youtu.be/UhDtFnpNOfE>

⁵ <https://youtu.be/22Ju9XYdT8A>

⁶ 13 Καὶ ἰδοὺ δύο ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἦσαν πορευόμενοι εἰς κώμην ἀπέχουσαν σταδίους ἐξήκοντα ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἧ ὄνομα Ἐμμαοῦς, 14 καὶ αὐτοὶ ὠμίλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους περὶ πάντων τῶν συμβεβηκότων τούτων. 15 καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ὀμιλεῖν αὐτοὺς καὶ συζητεῖν καὶ αὐτὸς Ἰησοῦς ἐγγίσας συνεπορεύετο αὐτοῖς, 16 οἱ δὲ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτῶν ἐκρατοῦντο τοῦ μὴ ἐπιγνῶναι αὐτόν. 17 εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτούς· Τίνες οἱ λόγοι οὗτοι οὓς ἀντιβάλλετε πρὸς ἀλλήλους περιπατοῦντες; καὶ ἐστάθησαν σκυθρωποί. 18 ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ εἰς ὄνοματι Κλεοπάς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν· Σὺ μόνος παροικεῖς Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσ τὰ γενόμενα ἐν αὐτῇ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις; 19 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· Ποῖα; οἱ δὲ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Τὰ περὶ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναζαρηνοῦ, ὃς ἐγένετο ἀνὴρ προφήτης δυνατὸς ἐν ἔργῳ καὶ λόγῳ ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παντὸς τοῦ λαοῦ, 20 ὅπως τε παρέδωκαν αὐτόν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες ἡμῶν εἰς κρίμα θανάτου καὶ ἐσταύρωσαν αὐτόν. 21 ἡμεῖς δὲ ἠλπίζομεν ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐστὶν ὁ μέλλων λυτροῦσθαι τὸν Ἰσραήλ· ἀλλὰ γε καὶ σὺν πᾶσιν τούτοις τρίτην ταύτην ἡμέραν ἄγει ἀφ' οὗ ταῦτα ἐγένετο. 22 ἀλλὰ καὶ γυναῖκες τινες ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐξέστησαν ἡμᾶς, γενόμενα [h]ὄρθριναὶ ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον 23 καὶ μὴ εὑροῦσαι τὸ σῶμα αὐτοῦ ἦλθον λέγουσαι καὶ ὀπτασίαν ἀγγέλων ἑωρακεῖν, οἱ λέγουσιν αὐτόν ζῆν. 24 καὶ ἀπῆλθόν τινες τῶν σὺν ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τὸ μνημεῖον, καὶ εὔρον οὕτως καθὼς καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες εἶπον, αὐτόν δὲ οὐκ εἶδον. 25 καὶ αὐτὸς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς· Ὡ ἀνόητοι καὶ βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεύειν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἐλάλησαν οἱ προφῆται· 26 οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ; 27 καὶ ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ Μωϋσέως καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν προφητῶν διερμήνευσεν αὐτοῖς ἐν πάσαις ταῖς γραφαῖς τὰ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ.

28 Καὶ ἤγγισαν εἰς τὴν κώμην οὗ ἐπορεύοντο, καὶ αὐτὸς προσεποιήσατο πορρώτερον πορεύεσθαι. 29 καὶ παρεβίασαντο αὐτόν λέγοντες· Μεῖνον μεθ' ἡμῶν, ὅτι πρὸς ἐσπέραν ἐστὶν καὶ κέκλικεν ἤδη ἡ ἡμέρα. καὶ εἰσῆλθεν τοῦ μεῖναι σὺν αὐτοῖς. 30 καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ κατακλιθῆναι αὐτόν μετ' αὐτῶν λαβῶν τὸν ἄρτον εὐλόγησεν καὶ κλάσας ἐπέδιδου αὐτοῖς· 31 αὐτῶν δὲ διηνοίχθησαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ καὶ ἐπέγνωσαν αὐτόν· καὶ αὐτὸς ἄφαντος ἐγένετο ἀπ' αὐτῶν. 32 καὶ εἶπαν πρὸς ἀλλήλους· Οὐχὶ ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν καιομένη ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν ὡς ἐλάλει ἡμῖν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ὡς διήνοιγεν ἡμῖν τὰς γραφάς; 33 καὶ ἀναστάντες αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, καὶ εὔρον ἠθροισμένους τοὺς ἕνδεκα καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς, 34 λέγοντας ὅτι [r]ῶντως ἠγέρθη ὁ κύριος καὶ ὤφθη Σίμωνι. 35 καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐξηγοῦντο τὰ ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ καὶ ὡς ἐγνώσθη αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου.

⁷ <https://youtu.be/HKKh6XxYbbIc>

⁸ <https://youtu.be/SdAFbcKfGuQ>