

Commentaries on Silo's Message (2)

These Commentaries do not cover all of the topics in Silo's Message, but only those that seem necessary for a better understanding of this writing.

*We will approach Silo's Message respecting the order of that exposition. Therefore, the first part will be devoted to the chapters and paragraphs of the book, *The Inner Look*; the second part will consider "The Experience;" and the third, "The Path."*

Second Part of Silo's Message

In this second part, called "The Experience," we consider eight ceremonies that are provided for different cases and situations of personal and social life. In almost all of these ceremonies there are two realities present that, whether treated explicitly or not, show their importance through the profound significance that they have for life. We know these realities, which allow for different interpretations, by the designations "Immortality" and "the Sacred." The Message gives the greatest importance to these themes, and explains that one must have the full right to believe or not to believe in immortality and the Sacred, because the orientation of a person's life will depend on how they place themselves in relation to these themes. The Message acknowledges the difficulties of openly examining these fundamental beliefs, confronting the censorship and self-censorship that inhibit free thought and good conscience. In the context of free interpretation that The Message favors, it is accepted that for some, immortality refers to actions carried out in life, but whose effects continue in the physical world despite physical death. For others, it is the memories retained by loved ones, by groups, or even society, that ensure continuation after physical death. For still others, immortality is accepted as personal continuity on another level, in another "landscape" of existence.

Continuing with the subject of freedom of interpretation, some sense the Sacred as the engine of their deepest affection. For them, their children or other loved ones represent the Sacred and bear the highest value, something that should not be disparaged for any reason. Some consider human beings and their universal rights as Sacred. Others experience divinity as the essence of the Sacred. In the communities that are formed around the Message, it is assumed that the different positions in facing Immortality and the Sacred should not merely be "tolerated," but genuinely respected.

The sacred manifests from the depths of the human being, hence the importance of the experience of the Force, as an extraordinary phenomenon that we can cause to erupt into the everyday world. Without experience everything is doubtful; with the experience of the Force we have profound evidence. We do not need faith to recognize the Sacred. The Force is obtained in ceremonies such as the Service and Laying on of Hands, and in the ceremonies of Well-being and Assistance we can also perceive the effects of the Force. Contact with the Force causes an acceleration of and increase in psychophysical energy; this is especially true if coherent acts are realized daily, something which on the other hand creates internal unity oriented towards spiritual growth.

The first experience is known as the "Service". This is a social ceremony that is performed at the request of a group of people. Two participants, referred to as the "Officiant" and the "Assistant," establish a kind of dialogue, which allows everyone to follow the same steps

from beginning to end. This is an experience that makes use of particular forms of relaxation, that in a short while give way to a set of visual and coenesthetic images that ultimately take the form of a moving “spherical shape,” capable of unleashing the Force. At one point, the Assistant reads a Principle or a thought from *The Inner Look* as a theme for meditation. Finally, the participants make an Asking in the direction of what each one experiences as their deepest “need.”

Another social ceremony is known as the “Laying on of Hands”. It works with the register of the Force more directly than in the Service. Here we do not make use of the evocation or the register of the sphere. Neither do we read a Principle or suggest a theme for meditation. The same mechanism of the Asking is maintained as in the ceremony of the Service.

A third ceremony is known as “Well-Being”. It is carried out at the request of the participants. This ceremony involves adopting a mental position in which participants evoke one or more people, trying to remember as vividly as possible their presence and their most characteristic affective tone. We seek to comprehend, in the most intense possible way, the difficulties they may be experiencing at this moment. We then go on to focus on an improvement in their situation in order that a corresponding register of relief is experienced.

This ceremony highlights a mechanism of “best wishes” or “good intentions,” with which we frequently express ourselves almost spontaneously. We say, “Have a good day,” “Happy birthday to you, and many more,” “I hope your test goes well,” or “I hope everything turns out well,” etc. It is clear that in this ceremony the “Asking” is done with a good mental disposition, where the emphasis is on intense affective registers. This “Asking” of benefit for others, performed in the best conditions, puts us in a mental position where we are predisposed to give the necessary help; it also improves our mental direction and increases the possibilities of communication with others.

A very important point to consider in relation to the “Askings” is to carry them out so that others can overcome their difficulties and reestablish their best possibilities. There should be no confusion about this. Let us consider an example. One might assume that in the case of someone who is dying, an Asking for the recovery of their health is the most appropriate thing, since we are trying to diminish the person’s pain and suffering. But we must be careful how we focus the Asking, because it is not a question of asking for what is best for ourselves, who want to keep that person in good health and close to us. The correct Asking should aim at what is best for the dying person and not what is best for us. In this situation, where we are emotionally attached to that person who is suffering and dying, perhaps we should also consider that the person may wish to leave that situation, reconciled and at peace with him or herself. In this case, the Asking is for “the best for the affected person” and not what is best for me, who wants to hold on to that person at all costs. So, in Asking for others I must consider what is best for them, and not for me.

This ceremony ends with the opportunity, for those present who so wish, to feel the presence of loved ones who, “although not present here, in our time and in our space,” are related to us, or have related to us, in an experience of love, peace, and warm joy.

Finally, this ceremony attempts to create a current of well-being for all those present, who are oriented in the same direction.

The fourth ceremony is called “Protection”. For this ceremony the Officiant and Assistant gather with the relatives and friends of the children to whom it is dedicated. Explanations

about formalities and meanings are given throughout the course of this ceremony of change of state.

The fifth ceremony is that of “Marriage”. Also social in nature, this ceremony is usually celebrated with the participation of many couples who wish to join together and give public testimony of their change of status. As in the ceremony Protection, throughout the ceremony there are explanations about formalities and meanings.

The sixth ceremony is called “Assistance”. it is carried out for an individual. As explained in the preamble to the words of the Officiant: *“This is a ceremony of great affection. It requires the person performing it to give the best of him or herself. The ceremony may be repeated at the request of the person receiving it or those caring for him or her. The officiant is alone with the dying person. Regardless of whether person who is dying appears lucid or unconscious, the Officiant comes close to them and speaks slowly in a voice that is soft and clear.”* Many of the phrases read by the Officiant are from chapter XIV of The Inner Look, “Guide to the Inner Road.” The sequences, images, and allegories that are presented have the structure of a profound guided experience. The seventh ceremony is that of “Death.” As in the ceremony of Assistance, it is carried out by the Officiant. However, it is a social ceremony for family, friends, and acquaintances of the deceased.

The eighth and final ceremony is called “Recognition”. It is carried out by an Officiant and an Assistant. The preamble to the ceremony explains that it is a ceremony of inclusion in the Community... *Inclusion through common experiences, through shared ideals, attitudes, and procedures. It is performed at the request of a group of people and follows a Service. The participants should have the previously distributed text.* This ceremony has the structure of a collective testimony.