

Dear Friends

Just an update on my recent trip to Slovenia where I attended the Sophia Circle Camp at Smolnik. Altogether, we had a wonderful time, renewing older friendships and beginning new ones.

The venue was idyllic, an old and isolated converted farmhouse high in the mountains (about 1,300 metres above sea level), surrounded by mixed forest and lovely walks. We enjoyed a great variety of workshops and liturgies, both traditional and experimental, as well as happy meals together and in true theosophical tradition, camp-fire singsongs.

Some of the workshops included Diksha (Oneness Consciousness Blessing) led by the Revd Arie and Annette Rozendaal, the philosophy of Waldorf education led by the Revd Deacon Peter Van Alphen, an introduction to Tantra led by Bishop Aristid Havlicek and a couple of sessions ably led by Bishop Markus on identifying and clarifying our vision as a group. I offered workshops in Power Animal Retrieval and Celtic Reiki, did 17 Celtic Reiki attunements and initiated 22 new Bards for the Druidic Order of the Most Holy Trinity. So now we have Trinity Groves in Holland and Slovenia! I also offered a Grove Ritual and the "Mass of the Mother". Bishop Johannes and Revd Jannie Van Alphen offered the "Mass of Isis", Bishops Markus and Tili presided at "A Universal Eucharist" and the Revd Louise Lombard offered a ritual honouring "the World Mother", all of which were very interesting.

The highlight of the week for me was of course participating in the ordinations to the priesthood of the Revds Arie Rozendaal, Brigitte Klein Bog and Louise Lombard from the Netherlands and the Revds Domen Kocevar and Francek Dobovisek from Slovenia. All four Bishops ordained each candidate and for me this was a very great privilege. It was also an unexpected delight to be asked by Bishop Markus on the last day to close our time together by presiding at a traditional celebration of the Holy Eucharist and ordaining two Clerics, Robin Manna and Marida Vermeulen, as well as a Reader, Corelli Meijer. Corelli was our very gifted and dedicated organist for the week with whom we enjoyed some great music.

It was a joy to ordain so many good candidates, but I was perhaps especially pleased to be able to ordain Robin as a Cleric as he is only sixteen years of age. Along with Zander and Marco who are both also 16, the presence of this trio of young men gives us great hope for the long term future of the movement. Marco, incidentally, is the great grandson of Father Conrad, a saintly Slovenian Liberal Catholic priest who went to his eternal reward quite a few years ago now after decades of pastoral service and faithful celebration of the daily Mass.

As a truly spiritual family, a consistent and pervasive harmony characterised all of our activities throughout the week and as always it was heart wrenching to say goodbye "na svidenje", but happily we shall be seeing some of our friends very soon at Sr Magdalena's ordination in Suffolk next month.

A big thank you to my fellow Bishops; +Tili, +Markus and +Johannes and to all those whose dedicated service made this week such a tremendously enjoyable success. Hvala!

Blessings,

+Alistair

P.S. Photos will follow in due course!

Mar Alexei,
Titular Bishop of Hebron,
Liberal Catholic Apostolic Church