

Appendix 4 Enlarged

MONTHLY VIRTUES IN RELATION TO THE CALENDAR OF THE SOUL VERSES

The Calendar of the Soul greatly contributes to fleshing out what Steiner very briefly described as the virtues of the month (really the virtues of each zodiacal sign). Below these are shown in figure 2, from a previous, short exploration upon which I will enlarge.¹ Below I intend to look at the basic structure of the Calendar in the two halves of the year, explore the virtues that Steiner outlined, then see how this division of the year helps us see the polarities between virtues at opposite times of the year. To this end we will contrast the time around the summer solstice with the time of the winter solstice, and the time around the spring equinox with the time of the autumn equinox.

Dream and Sleep during the Course of the Year

Two halves of the year form a great contrast in the Calendar of the Soul. The first goes from Easter to Michaelmas, passing through St. John, the second from Michaelmas to Easter, passing through Christmas.

We can characterize them in the language of the Calendar, both in relation to the seasons and to the human being by looking at some significant verses soon after Easter and soon after Michaelmas, keeping in mind that they are part of a continuum, a progression.

The challenge of the spring and summer is summed up in verses 7 and 8:

Verse 7 (May 19-25)

My self is threatening to fly forth,
Lured strongly by the world's
enticing light.
Come forth, prophetic feeling,
Take up with strength your
rightful task:
Replace in me the power of
thought
Which in the senses' glory
Would gladly lose itself

Verse 8 (May 26—June 1)

The senses' might grows strong
United with the gods' creative
work;
It presses down my power of
thinking
Into a dreamlike dullness.
When godly being
Desires union with my soul,
Must human thinking
In quiet dream-life rest content.

¹ Luigi Morelli, *Exploring Themes in the Calendar of the Soul*, Appendix 4.

In between the two verses is captured the challenge of the warm part of the year. It is captured in words like "luring" or "flying forth" but most of all in the problem of the "dreamlike dullness" that envelops us, such that "the power of thinking ... would gladly lose itself."

Because of the lessening of the power of thinking we are enjoined to develop "prophetic feeling", the translation of the German word "ahnung." To this end, many expressions have been used. In an earlier version the Pusch used, with a certain legitimacy, the commonly understood word "intuition." Others have called it: boding, intimation, divining or heart's divining, expectation, feeling dimly hinting, inner voice, presentiment, awareness stirring in the heart, inner prompting, ... For myself I like to add what I find to be a more encompassing expression that covers many of the nuances of the terms above: "sensing of the heart."

To the tendency to lose oneself outwardly we have to react by looking inward, through a faculty that allows us to adjust, to sense and respond to what Nature and the larger cosmos want from the human being upon whom they bestow their gifts. The gifts are the vibrancy of the ethers, expressed in the Calendar as cosmic life (encompassing life and tone/sound ethers), cosmic light and cosmic warmth. Later, to these will be added cosmic Self, cosmic thinking and, most of all, cosmic Word. The sensing of the heart brings our focus inward, it allows us not to disperse our attention and being in the expansion of Nature.

Looking at the opposite time of the year we can bring our attention first to the challenge, then to the offered solution. The first appears quite clearly in verse 25 (September 22-28):

I can belong now to myself
And shining spread my inner light
Into the dark of space and time.
Toward sleep is urging all creation,
But inmost soul must stay awake
And carry wakefully sun's glowing
Into the winter's icy flowing.

The Calendar does not ask us to follow our natural inclinations, our Nature-conditioned tendencies. The winter tendency to retreat in oneself, to sleep, must be countered with a strong activation of the will, such as it is expressed in verse 26 of Michaelmas ("my will's fiery energy shall steel my spirit striving") or in verse 29 ("To fan the spark of thinking into flame by my own strong endeavor"). The will sets the process in motion; thinking takes on the decisive step.

What the human being needs to achieve in this time of the year in order to counter the urge to sleep is best spelled out in verses 29 and 30.

Verse 29 (October 20-26)
 To fan the spark of thinking into
 flame
 By my own strong endeavor,
 To read life's inner meaning
 Out of the cosmic spirit's fount of
 strength:
 This is my summer heritage,
 My autumn solace, and my winter
 hope.

Verse 30 (October 27 —
 November 2)
 There flourish in the sunlight of
 my soul
 The ripened fruits of thinking;
 To conscious self-assurance
 The flow of feeling is transformed.
 I can perceive now joyfully
 The autumn's spirit-waking:
 The winter will arouse in me
 The summer of the soul.

The thinking that is required of us is not the passive thinking we know everywhere around us and in most of modern scientific approaches. It is a thinking permeated by the will, "by my own strong endeavor." It is a thinking which brings the solar qualities of the spring and summer season into the soul. It is a distillation of the gifts of the summer, the "summer heritage" that will become "the summer of the soul" in the heart of winter. It is a spiritualized, redeemed thinking that renders us citizens of the world because it unites us with the cosmos and assures the human being of its important role in the order of creation.

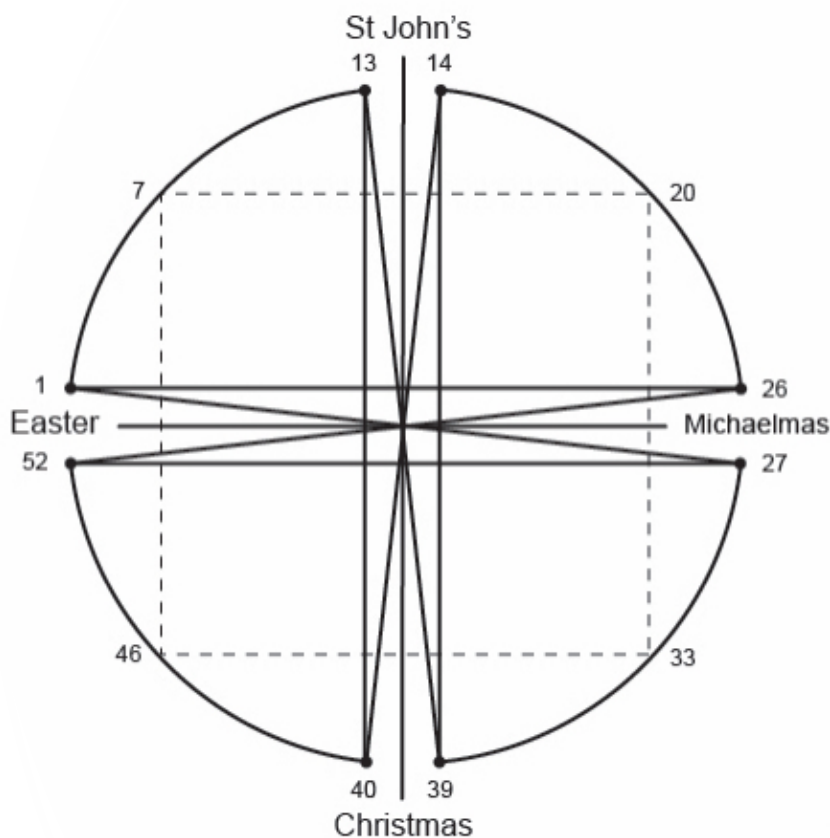


Figure 1: Crosses 1, 7 and 13 of the Calendar of the Soul

To a first approach to the Calendar through polarities we can add an important key of reading which will help us further. This refers to the crucial role of the warning/threshold verses of the so-called "cross 7" (figure 1).

Notice first of all that these verses are equidistant; they are spaced evenly, with 13 verses in between each following one: 7, 20, 33, 46. This is not the case for all other so-called "crosses", two of which appear in the same figure. Cross 1 is that one of the equinoxes and of the Easter and Michaelmas verses: the four are 52 (Holy Week), 1 (Easter), 26 (Michaelmas) and 27. The verses are far from equidistant, considering the distances between subsequent verses in the circle: a distance of 1 between 52 and 1 or 26 and 27, and a distance of 25 between 1 and 26 and 27 and 52. The same relationships are true for cross 13 of the solstices, of Saint John and Christmas: verses 13, 14, 39 and 40.

The verses of cross 7 are the Calendar's mid-season verses, which indicate that something is transitioning in the cosmos and something needs therefore to transition in the human being. These verses form the midpoint between the cardinal festivals; the transitions prepare us to create the right mood for the next festival. That they differ in average two weeks from the true mid-season dates (Candlemas, Beltane, Lughnasa/Lammas, Halloween) is due to the fact that verse 1 of Easter starts in average 2-3 weeks after the spring equinox, therefore the mid-season turning point is pushed this much forward from the natural, seasonal cycle.

The verses of cross 7 will help us heighten the polarities around opposite solstices and equinoxes. To this end we will look at groups of three virtues (12 to 13 verses) at a time: the three virtues around each solstice and those around each equinox. In other words we will look at the virtue that comes before the solstice or equinox, the virtue of the time of solstice or equinox and the virtue that follows either one. Looking at figure 2, these intervals, their virtues and their zodiacal signs will be:

- Solstices
 - o Summer: faithfulness (Gemini), catharsis (Cancer), freedom (Leo)
 - o Winter: feeling for truth (Sagittarius), power to redeem (Capricorn), meditative strength (Aquarius)
- Equinoxes:
 - o Autumn: tactfulness of the heart (Virgo), equanimity (Libra), Insight (Scorpio)
 - o Spring: love (Pisces), force of sacrifice (Aries), progress (Taurus)

The round of the virtues appears in figure 2 in relation to the signs of the zodiac and the verses of the Calendar.

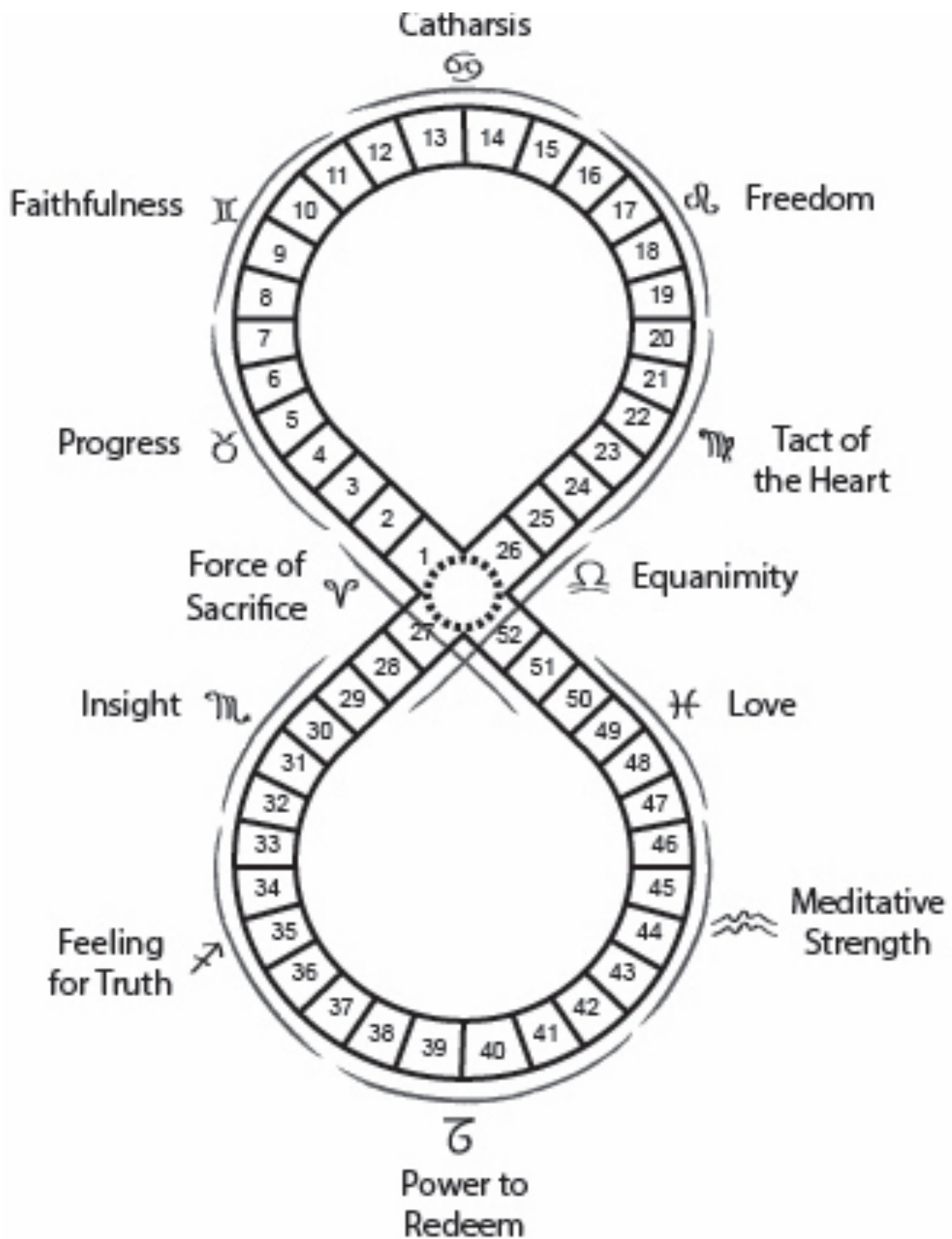


Figure 2: The Calendar of the Soul and the virtues

We will start from the solstices where the qualities of the two parts of the Calendar show up "unsullied," as it were. During the equinoxes we will see how the virtues help us move from one part of the year to the other.

The Soul Virtues at the Solstices

To best cover these two periods we will link each of them with the quadrant marked by the two threshold verses (Cross 7) that mark their beginning and end, starting from the mid-summer time of the year, corresponding to the time of Saint John.

Virtues at the Summer Solstice

The corresponding period goes from verses 7 to 20. As we have seen from verse 7, the three-month period of the Calendar begins at the time in which the Self and the faculty of thinking tend to lose themselves in the call of the senses and the expansion of Nature toward the macrocosm. Verses 7 and 8 denote the descent of thinking and the ascent of that quality that the German language calls "ahnung," and that I have called previously "intuition," or intuition/boding. Though the term is still appropriate, I will turn from here on to "heart sensing" as more encompassing of all the nuances of all shades of "ahnung" and its German derivatives.

As the verses progress after 7 and 8 we receive the blessings of the cosmos and we continue to sense and respond to what comes to us. The whole period culminates in the growth of that presence that is still only called "selfhood power", rather than Self, and which is felt much more than known. With this evolution, at the next threshold verse the attention moves from an inward one—fostering the growth of selfhood power—to an outward one, "the world's reality", as stated in verse 20 (August 18-24):

I feel at last my life's reality
Which, severed from the world's existence,
Would in itself obliterate itself,
And building only on its own foundation,
Would in itself bring death upon itself.

The warning is clear: the soul needs to look at the world; its own growth and health depends on it. Looking closely at the verses we can now follow the three steps, from faithfulness (Gemini) to catharsis (Cancer) and to freedom (Leo).

In the first step (Gemini, verses 7 to 11) we awaken to the need to monitor the condition of our soul so that it does not fall into a state of dream. Surrender is a signature of this time of the year, but this should be a conscious surrender that does not sacrifice self-consciousness. It is in these verses that cosmic Word comes closer to us and, at first, we only sense it as a presence, as a "godly being" which "has touched [us]." (verse 10). With this supporting presence the Self can now "lose itself and find itself within the cosmic I" (verse 11). To listen to the voice of our conscience in faithfulness requires continuous, persevering inner activity and alertness. Faithfulness guides us when we don't truly know, but only intuit.

Under the sign of Cancer (catharsis, verses 12 to 15), surrender takes us to a selflessness through which we can reach purification. The soul continues to seek itself not only in cosmic light but also in cosmic warmth (verse 12). Purification comes from this continuous entrusting to something larger than ourselves, something that gives us "the strength which in its narrow bounds [the] I is powerless to give itself" (verse 15). We meet with a cosmic thinking that, as it were "thinks us through" at a time in which we fear that "dreamlike thinking seemed to daze and rob me of myself" (verse 14). Selflessness and catharsis are generated through the experience of powerlessness in which the cosmic Word draws nearer. As the human being expands toward the cosmos, she does so in a way that preserves self-consciousness and invites the cleansing action of the hierarchies. While we surrender we receive forces that we will later re-elaborate.

Catharsis/purification is therefore the signature of the time of the summer solstice. Surrender has brought us to this and in the state of openness has generated the compassion, which allows us to live in and, if not know, at least experience, the presence of other beings. The inner dialogue of this period (Leo, verses 16 to 19) takes place between the soul and cosmic Word. The period starts with the injunction to "To bear in inward keeping spirit bounty" as "stern command of my prophetic feeling" (verse 16) and ends with an effort of recollection of the experience of the summer: "In secret to encompass now with memory what I've newly got" (verse 19). Treasuring what we have received in an attitude of devotion allows it to grow in our soul; recollecting it awakens us to the self-consciousness that is necessary to get to the threshold of verse 20.

In verse 17 cosmic Word speaks to us because "I by grace through senses' portals have led [it] into my innermost soul." The receiving soul is naturally moved to expand and grow worthy of the experience (verse 18), and from it enhance the presence of "selfhood's forces" that "shall be awakened from within and growing, give me to myself" (verse 19). Freedom during this third period is attained through the establishment of the sovereignty of selfhood power thanks to the working through of the higher spiritual forces, most of all those of cosmic Word. This freedom offers us at the same time the germs of a Self, rooted in compassion for all beings. As mentioned earlier, the growing Self has to turn to the world's reality so that it "would [not] in itself obliterate itself, and "would [not] in itself bring death upon itself" (verse 20).

We should not read this freedom in the sense of what is attained on the path of *The Philosophy of Spiritual Activity*—the transformation and complete recasting of our thinking; rather it is the freedom from the pull of the lower Self, which we have striven to curb all through the spring and summer. This catharsis is expressed at both ends of the solstice journey: at the beginning of the journey as "forget[ting] the narrow will of Self" (verse 9) and later as "the narrow bounds" of "my I." (verse 15). The catharsis attained during the Saint John time precedes the attainment of freedom.

To review this solstice journey we can remember that we started it with a movement of trust and surrender and for that purpose the soul is offered the compass of "sensing of the heart" in order to offer its faithfulness even when it doesn't know and can do no other than sense/intuit. The overarching movement is that of catharsis/purification which is central to this time of the year. It is thus that cosmic Word can cleanse us and later speak to the soul. Finally, the descending part of the journey initiates an assimilation of the gifts of the summer, which will be protracted during the fall, but takes its start with the recognition of and tending to the emergent selfhood power.

While what we do in the summer cannot be done in full Self-consciousness, we will see something equivalent and complementary during the winter time of the year.

Virtues at the Winter Solstice

We will now look at the opposite time of the year. The mid-winter verses—framed by verses 33 and 46—denote the growth in two stages: from the selfhood power to the deepening present in the sense of Self, which recognizes the sovereignty of our higher Self as the "second human being in us" to borrow one of Steiner's expressions; from the sense of Self to the "spirit birth," or birth of our higher Self/Manas in verses 44 and 45.

On this journey of initiation we are met once more by cosmic Word in all His majesty in order to awaken to our full humanity. It is the power of thinking that can render this transformation possible. We will see its growth alternate with and derive strength from, first that quality of will which we could call "Michaelic will," then through the warmth of heart and courage that rises around the time of Christmas.

The journey that is achieved at this time of the year is epitomized by verses 33 and 46.

Verse 33 (November 17-23)

I feel at last the world's reality
Which, lacking the communion of
my soul,
Would in itself be frosty, empty
life,
And showing itself powerless
To recreate itself in souls,
Would in itself find only death.

Verse 46 (February 16-22)

The world is threatening to stun
The inborn forces of my soul;
Now, memory, come forth
From spirit depths, enkindling
light;
Invigorate my inward sight
Which only by the strength of will
Is able to sustain itself.

Turning our conscious responsibility toward the fate of the macrocosm means embarking on a journey of spiritual development and initiation (verse 33) and the journey presents challenges even when it seems achieved (verse 46).

In the winter solstice period the soul is prepared through developing a feeling for truth (Sagittarius), it reaches the goal of the power to redeem at solstice time (Capricorn), and this evolves into meditative strength (Aquarius) in the following month.

The tone of the first interval (Sagittarius, verses 33 to 37) is set by the call for the need of a "communion of my soul" with "the world's reality" (verse 33) and followed by the yearning for "true existence" (verse 34), which is deepened when I make myself "at home within the cosmic Self" (verse 35). Finally, it is the human being's task to "carry spirit light into world winter night" (verse 37) through true cognition.

The encounter with cosmic Word, that happened through surrender around the summer solstice, is here experienced in fuller consciousness. For the human being, working alongside the creative beings of the hierarchies means being willing to sacrifice itself through the strength received by cosmic Word (verse 36). Cosmic Word gives us the feeling for truth and the desire to sacrifice makes room for forces of the heart for the first time present in verse 37: "To carry spirit light into world-winter-night my heart is ardently impelled." The truth awakens in the mind but the feeling for truth is rooted in the heart. Together the truth transforms us and offers us a new experience of being, which satisfies the yearning to become more fully ourselves, the desire for true existence announced in verse 34, which is confirmed in the same verse as "new-risen sense of self."

The next virtue—courage becoming power to redeem—of the sign of Capricorn (verses 38 to 42) comes in with an intensification of warmth of heart and the first mention of love—under the form of "human loving"—in the Calendar up to this point. Cosmic Word takes root in the heart in an almost magical way at Christmas and the warmth of heart (verses 38, 40, 41) it fosters is the root of courage (etymologically linked to *cor/cardium*, Latin for heart). The sense of Self is reaffirmed and strengthened by "the power of thinking, growing clearer" which "gains strength to give myself to me." The light of thinking united with the warmth of heart can "kindle and inflame god-given powers" so that the soul "shapes itself in human loving and in human working" (verse 41). The soul enters realms of darkness, while "anticipating ... through warmth of heart the sense-world's revelation." (verse 42). With the light of thought and heart-rooted courage we gain the power to transform and redeem the world.

The third interval of mid-summer is that of Aquarius (meditative strength, verses 43 to 46) leading us to the next threshold verse, and most of all to the "spirit birth," the birth of the higher self in the soul and the fulfillment of the challenge of threshold verse 33. Now heart and head work together so that "soul abundance desir[ing] union with the world's becoming" allows the sense's revelation to "receive the light of thinking." The thinking that emerges at this stage is one that has been tempered and steeled by the forces of the heart of the preceding interval. This is the thinking that has acquired a world-changing power, which we see affirmed twice in the two verses of the so-called "spirit birth."

Verse 44 (February 2-8)

In reaching for new sense
attractions,
Soul-clarity would fill,
Mindful of spirit-birth attained,
The world's bewildering, sprouting
growth
With the creative will of my own
thinking.

Verse 45 (February 9-15)

My power of thought grows firm
United with the spirit's birth.
It lifts the senses' dull attractions
To bright-lit clarity.
When soul-abundance
Desires union with the world's
becoming,
Must senses' revelation
Receive the light of thinking.

Here, as in other places, thinking appears first under its "creative will" aspect, then under its light aspect (as in "light of thinking"). This kind of thinking has a world-shaping impact: it can give "to world appearance, through forces of the heart, the power to be." (verse 43). In approaching verse 46 we recognize the challenge that follows the spirit birth, the danger of the splitting of the soul forces, accentuated by the rising tide of sense impressions. This is countered by a force that now looks inward, strengthens our will and anchors us in the certainty of the continuity of our earthly ego, memory, offering the only point of reference to which the forces of the soul can now look upon.

To summarize the journey from verses 33 to 46, the human soul discovers in potent terms the intimate interdependence between Self and world. The first instance concerns the continuance of Earth's evolution, no less (verse 33). The second one involves the danger presented to the soul forces by the process of initiation that we see at play during mid-winter. It is what we could call the threat of the Ahrimanic temptation to only concern ourselves with externals and/or turn the fruits of self-development to purely egotistical aims, forgetting that without "recreat[ing] itself in [human] souls" the world "would in itself find only death" (verse 33). If we cannot hold the forces of the soul together when they tend to split apart then we would forego the fruit of all the efforts of the mid-winter time. Verse 46 indicates the antidote to the Ahrimanic threat; the living memory of our individuality, which holds the soul forces together and requires a concerted effort of the will.

We can now explore the contrast between the solstice qualities, meaning primarily between Catharsis (Cancer) and Power to Redeem (Capricorn) as polarities. During the time of Saint John the soul lives in the realm of cosmic Word and receives its inspiration, though not fully consciously. Through the sensing of the heart it continuously entrusts itself to the forces of the cosmos. This can be done only when we surrender our lower Self, curb its will impulses. The result of this willed selflessness, is powerlessness as an avenue to true power, not our human power, however. We let go of what

does not serve us; the spirit world fills us so that we can find a new presence to the world.

At the other time of the year we work to attain a feeling for the truth. This is the other time in which cosmic Word is palpably present. But now it speaks to a soul that has been awakened by the Michaelic will and the rising spiritualization of the power of thinking. Something else is mentioned as a polarity to summer's surrender; sacrifice (verse 36). We no longer open ourselves to receive spirit beings; we begin to offer our soul substance back to our world and to the cosmos. What has been bestowed upon the soul in the summer has been in great part assimilated and transformed. Being full we can now begin to give back. We sacrifice because we realize that all cosmic evolution has been the product of the repeated sacrifices of the hierarchies. The human being who yearns to work in concert with the hierarchies can become a creative force in world transformation through her sacrifice. This is what the Calendar calls "true existence" (verse 34) or "mak[ing] my self, as humble part, at home within the cosmic self" (verse 35)

What is true about these two opposite times of the year can also be said of all other virtues opposite to each other in the Calendar: in the instances we have explored Freedom (Leo) and Meditative Strength (Aquarius) or Faithfulness (Gemini) and Feeling for Truth (Sagittarius).

The Soul Virtues at the Equinoxes: The Transitions

We have looked at the qualities of the first and second halves of the Calendar where they manifest in their purest states, as it were. We can now turn to the transitions from one part of the year to the other, which take place at the spring and fall equinoxes. We will start with the fall equinox.

Virtues at the Autumn Equinox

Verse 20 (August 18-24)

I feel at last my life's reality
Which, severed from the world's
existence,
Would in itself obliterate itself,
And building only on its own
foundation,
Would in itself bring death upon
itself.

Verse 33 (November 17-23)

I feel at last the world's reality
Which, lacking the communion of
my soul,
Would in itself be frosty, empty
life,
And showing itself powerless
To recreate itself in souls,
Would in itself find only death

In autumn the three months interval that transitions through the Michaelmas period from summer into fall (verses 20 to 33) encompasses the three virtues of tactfulness of the heart (Virgo), equanimity (Libra) and

insight (Scorpio). This is the period that is framed by verses 20 and 33. Verse 20 marks the awakening to the rising of selfhood power and turns the human being's attention outwardly to the world's reality, because ignoring it carries the risk of the death of the soul. The transition from 20 to 33 shifts the attention no longer upon the soul and its growth, but upon the world and its future. It is under this lens that we can understand the evolution of the three virtues at the time of the fall equinox.

The tactfulness of the heart is felt from the very beginning in the enveloping gesture of "expectation, light-filled weaving within me on my selfhood's power" (verse 21). Here the macrocosmic light becomes light of soul to bring to maturation the human Self out of the cosmic Self (or Self of Worlds). The external light decreases; the light within educates the will in the urge toward self-cognition ("selbsterkenntnis" of verse 24), the first step of the path of initiation.

Tactfulness of the heart wants nothing for itself; it aims at establishing balance between Self and world and at recognizing what the future wants of us. Acknowledging the need for the ascent of the Self, tied to the power of thinking, it can now recede and sacrifice itself, in a similar way to what is accomplished by thinking at the opposite time of the year, at Easter. It is through the dictate of tactfulness of the heart that we take the first steps and embark on the journey of self-cognition (verse 24).

We now come to the transitional quality of the equinox as we enter the Michaelmas season (Libra, verses 25 to 28) through the key virtue of equanimity, which stems from contentment. At the beginning of this fundamental change the soul knows it finds itself at the threshold of the "dark of space and time" into which it has to "spread its inner light" (verse 25). Here comes an example of a first contrast between light and darkness as the light of the Sun dims and the days get shorter. The broader polarity is that of life/will and light/thinking. The interval moves from the life and will-permeated expression of Michaelmas ("O Nature, your maternal life I bear within the essence of my will and my will's fiery energy shall steel my spirit striving") leading to the yearning to awaken a "sense of Self" from what has emerged as "selfhood power" so far. At the end of the interval emerges the power of thinking closely allied to the light: "The force and radiance of my thought coming from soul's sun power" (verse 28). An additional layer is that of the external sleep—"Toward sleep is urging all creation"—contrasted with the need for "inmost soul [to] stay awake." (verse 25). In essence we witness Nature dying all around us, while experiencing what comes to birth within.

In the midst of external and internal polarities that need to be integrated the "germinating force of the soul" and the "radiance of ... thought" offer a compass. When, with Michaelic courage we overcome the "fear and horror in the face of events which press from the future"—to quote a well-known Michael verse of Steiner—the emerging faculty of thinking offers the serenity we need to develop strength in equanimity. With gratitude for what came as the gift of summer we develop confidence and hope toward the coming of winter and what the future may bring.

The last step of the fall equinox interval is that of patience leading to insight (Scorpio: October 21 to November 21). During this month we unite wisdom and strength; knowledge fulfills itself in the desire for the deed. On one hand we rise to greater clarity of thinking, on the other we gain "clearer insight toward the weaving of life's destiny."

The interval started with the stated desire to "fan the spark of thinking into flame by my own strong endeavor, to read life's inner meaning out of the cosmic spirit fount of strength." Insight arises in part through the integration of feeling and thinking of verse 30 in which the "ripened fruits of thinking" appear side by side with the "conscious self-assurance" with which "the flow of feeling is transformed." The latter is the fulfilment of the promise of the opposite verse of the same cross (4), in which feeling wants to offer warmth to clarity of feeling. As the interval starts with the desire to integrate wisdom and strength, so does it end with a stronger presence in the world assured by insight:

I feel my own force, bearing fruit

And gaining strength to give me to the world.

My inmost being I feel charged with power

To turn with clearer insight

Toward the weaving of life's destiny. (verse 32, November 10-16)

Virtues at the Spring Equinox

We can now end this exploration with the opposite time of the year that of the spring equinox and Easter, through the qualities of love (Pisces), force of sacrifice (Aries), progress (Taurus). It is in this part of the year that it is more difficult to find a yearly strict equivalence between determinate verses and the virtues. This is due to the variability of the yearly Easter date. The verses we will refer to indicate an average position.

Just as the summer series ends with tactfulness of the heart, the winter one ends on love. As on one hand we find equanimity, on the other we can speak of magnanimity turning into force for sacrifice. Finally what corresponds to insight on one hand becomes progress on the other.

In the time preceding Easter (Pisces, verses 47 to 50) magnanimity is that force full of interest and respect for the other and what manifests in Nature as "the joy of growth" (47, 50) or "force of cosmic life" (49). The development of the power of thinking has signified a desire to unite with the world's becoming. In fact this is achieved early in the interval in verse 48 (March 2-8):

Within the light that out of world-wide heights

Would stream with power toward the soul,

May certainty of cosmic thinking

Arise to solve the soul's enigmas

And focusing its mighty rays,
Awaken love in human hearts.

The verse seems to capture the ideas of transformed thinking and resulting, objective love. It's as if the process of the whole *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity* were captured in this verse. Once transformed thinking has fully become cosmic thinking the human being can cooperate in freedom with the divine order. In imagination and higher forms of cognition, she has eliminated the barrier between observer and observed. The human being knows the world becoming from inside; she becomes one with it to higher and higher degrees. Love arises likewise when these barriers are crossed. The higher Self which went through the spirit birth (verses 44 and 45) and the subsequent adjustments (verses 46 and 47) has now definitely crossed the threshold and integrated the forces of the soul beyond the Ahrimanic temptation.

It is love of the human being for creation that allows Nature to speak in revelation and to free itself from the maya of matter that clouds human perception and binds the elemental beings in enchantment within matter. The realm of cosmic life from which the human being was estranged with the Fall, opens its doors again. It is no wonder that we are approaching Easter and are experiencing the possibility of the human being becoming a co-creator. Thus "to the new approach of cosmic day [the clarity of thought] can turn its inward rays of hope" (49). We are moving from the realms of the inner light of thinking more and more toward the realms of cosmic life in approaching the experience of Easter.

With the next interval (Aries, verses 51 to 2) we are approaching the time of the Holy Week (52) and Easter (1). This is a real time of transition in which the power of thinking passes the baton to what emerges first through cosmic life, then through cosmic light in the world of the ethers and Nature.

Where is the force for sacrifice during this time of the year? The Calendar does not show sacrifice as we would expect it, but rather in the form of a fading out. At first "rising from the sheath of self, thoughts soar to distances of space" (Easter verse) The process accelerates in verse 2 (April 14-20), where the transition is spelled out in all its consequences:

Out in the sense-world's glory
The power of thought gives up
its separate being,
And spirit worlds discover
Again their human offspring,
Who germinates in them
But in itself must find
The fruit of soul.

It is through thinking that it is possible for "spirit worlds [to] discover again their human offspring, who germinates in them" (verse 2). As thinking dissipates in the world of the senses, the soul is warned that something else needs to take its place in order for the "human offspring" to gain its grounding in spirit worlds. Nothing could show more clearly the threshold nature of the equinox virtue of power for sacrifice.

It is devotion which, at first allows us to make this transition. With it we can first of all welcome "beauty well[ing] from wide expanses" (verse 52) and offering "gladness from the depths of soul" which can unite us with the realm of cosmic light (Easter verse). The ultimate devotion turns us to the deed of Christ at Easter; it is because we unite with its impulse that cosmic life can flow through us.

The next verses (Taurus, verses 3 to 7) guide us fully into a new mode of being: through inner balance we welcome progress. A number of polarities take place within this interval, and a number of soul forces help human progress. We hear first of all the contrast between self-forgetfulness and mindful[ness] of [the human I's] primal state" (verse 3). The soul recovers its original innocence in growing into "the World-all" of its origins. The faint memory motivates it to shed the "fetters of [its present] selfhood." After this the soul's expansion into cosmic light is helped in the realm of a feeling that wants to complement the power of thinking (verse 4).

The soul continues to grow into and experiences a resurrection in the realms of cosmic life and cosmic light. (verse 5). In verse 6 the Self appears as a prophetic perception, an intuition of what is to come, since, after this verse and the next we will not hear about it until selfhood power appears toward the end of summer. The perception comes together with the danger of too fast an expansion, what we can call the Luciferic temptation indicated in verse 7: "My Self is threatening to fly forth, lured strongly by the world's enticing light." Together with this is announced what will serve as counterweight and anchor, also expressed in the same verse: "come forth, prophetic feeling." What we have called the sensing of the heart will offer the soul the needed inner balance and a way to progress.

We can now contrast more fully the two equinox periods by looking at the central virtues, those of equanimity at Michaelmas on one hand, and the force of sacrifice during Easter time. These are two moments of change, the inversions that we see at the crossings of the lemniscate. In the fall we must develop courage to face inner and outer darkness; in the spring we must let go of what we have conquered for ourselves in the surging of cosmic life and cosmic light. There is a symmetry visible in what the predominant forces of the two times of the year accomplish at their respective time.

At the end of summer, intuition has accomplished its goal of interiorizing all that it receives from the summer. It has to make way to what calls forth from the future. With equanimity it passes on the baton to the power of thinking. This is particularly visible because when intuition expresses itself

last it is in verse 27, just before the rising of the power of thinking in 28. What guides the movement from one to the other is the Self which is observed "As gift of summer sun, a seed that warming lives in autumn mood as germinating force of soul." (27)

At the other time of the year the soul has to offer up all it has built up of its inner strength in a way and for reasons that may seem hard to fathom. The hard earned treasures of spiritual striving are placed on hold in order for us to become, as it were, beggars for the spirit. This time it is thinking that sacrifices itself first of all in verse 2. This is emphasized again in verses 7 and 8. We hear in verse 7: "Come forth, prophetic feeling, take up with strength your rightful task: replace in me the power of thought which in the senses' glory would gladly lose itself." This is restated in verse 8: "When godly being desires union with my soul, must human thinking in quiet dream-life rest content."

In Conclusion

We can now rearrange the sequence of virtues temporally, rather than thematically, to get a sense of evolution and continuity from one cardinal holiday to the other, starting from the lead up to Easter.

In the weeks before Easter the human being has fathomed with some degree of consciousness the evolutionary future of humanity, the path of initiation which leads to the attainment of the birth of the Self, and of imaginative knowledge. Through sense-free thinking the human being reaches the stage of freedom that is indicated in *The Philosophy of Freedom*. From this standpoint can true love be known and free deeds be accomplished. It is thus that the virtue indicated as "force of sacrifice" (Easter, verses 51 to 2) leads the fully conquered faculty of thinking to sacrifice itself and renders possible human resurrection in the realm of cosmic life, the sphere of the Tree of Life and the consequent expansion into the realms of cosmic light, cosmic warmth and cosmic Word. The sacrifice constitutes an act of humility in relation to the spiritual world, one that renders us beggars for the spirit after apparently achieving so much during the winter. However, it is also necessary simply because at this time of the year "out in the sense-world's glory the power of thought gives up its separate being" (verse 2).

The way to Saint John is paved first by the desire to "free [ourselves] from fetters of [our] selfhood" (verse 3), then by feeling (verse 4), but most of all by the sensing of the heart called for in verses 7 and 8. At Saint John the soul can surrender precisely because it has found a firm compass in the soul. And it can surrender most of all when it wishes in selflessness to purify itself (catharsis). It can thus entrust itself to the forces of the cosmos without losing itself in a movement of ecstasy that would no longer correspond to the needs of modern time. The attitude of the beggar for the spirit opens us to the blessings of the cosmos and the hierarchies bestowing their gifts to the human soul, provided the soul listens to and discern among

its inner intimations and promptings. It can take a lot of trust and courage to surrender and let ourselves be purified.

Come Michaelmas time we face another challenge. The soul's open window over the cosmos, as it were, is clouded over by the dimming of light and senses, by the experience of the "the dark of space and time" which wants to put us to sleep (verse 25). The healthy reaction consists in stirring the will, in facing the challenges in contentment, in gaining perspective and developing equanimity. Through the Michaelic will we realize that while things in Nature move toward sleep, we need to stir ourselves, remain awake and strengthen anew the "force and radiance of my thought, coming from soul's sun power" (verse 28).

During Advent and Christmas time and until after Epiphany the soul is spurred by the active presence of cosmic Word. Warmth of heart and newly-won courage help us face the outer darkness. The "heavenly fruit of hope" (verse 38 of Christmas) lends strength to our soul so that "there frees itself from thinker's energy [our] sense of Self" (verse 39) and we can "anticipate ... through warmth of heart the sense-world's revelation (verse 42). The result is that "true spirit life with glowing warmth ... gives to world appearance, through forces of the heart, the power to be..." Herein is expressed the power to redeem what has fallen.

In conclusion, we can fathom that the Calendar of the Soul can be one way of fleshing out the little that Steiner has said about the virtues. As has been done in this article we can recognize cardinal virtues that define either time of the year, or those virtues that help the transition from one time to the other. The same approach can be extended to each pair of polar virtues, any of those that are placed six months apart from each other.