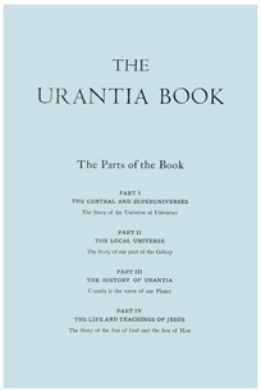
URANTIA ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

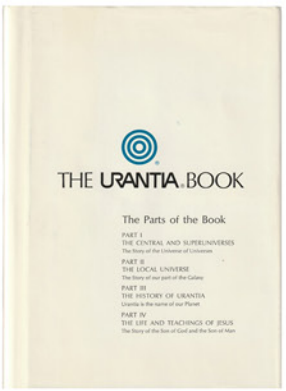
JOURNAL

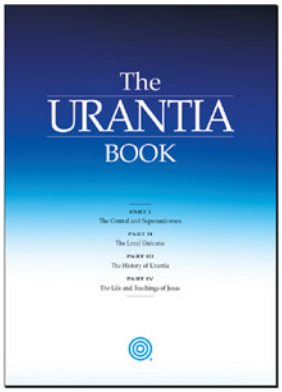
June 2026

Essays by students of *The Urantia Book*

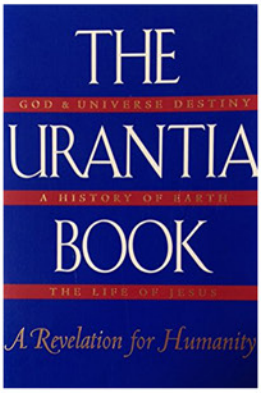
Mark Blackham
Luis Costa
Luis Garcia-Bory
Richard Jernigan
Evette Twyford
Jorge Wilczyk

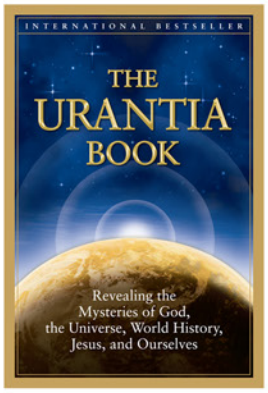


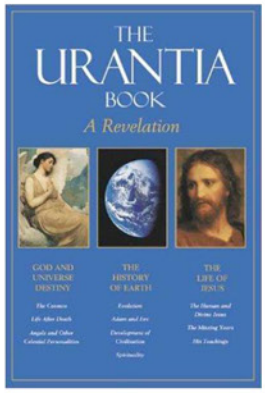




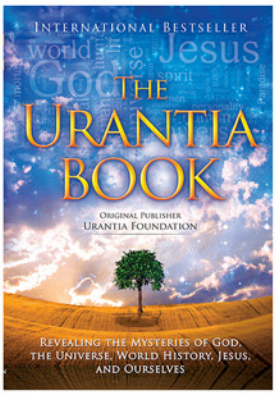
Is There an

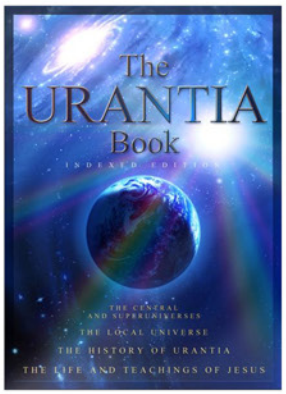


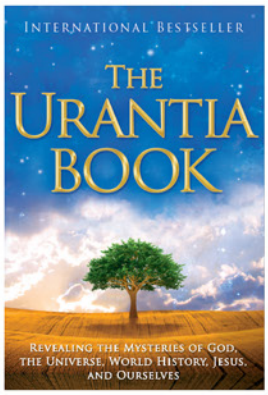




Inviolate Text ?







About the Journal

The Journal is produced twice yearly and contains essays, articles and study aids by readers and for readers of *The Urantia Book*. To read current and past issues see our website.

Any interpretations, opinions, conclusions, or artistic representations, whether stated or implied, are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of Urantia Association International, the National or Local Urantia Associations, or the editorial team of the Association's Journal.

Subscriptions

The Journal is available electronically free of charge for anyone with an email address. Join our mailing list to receive free electronic copies.

To receive hard copies, you may subscribe to the Journal at the annual rate of $15.00 USD via any of the following methods.

To subscribe on-line see our website.

To subscribe by telephone call: +1-773-572-1180

To subscribe by check or money order, please send in $U.S. dollars only and make payable to Urantia Association International. Mail to:

Urantia Association International

4000 W Montrose Avenue #606

Chicago, IL 60641

Journal Team

Chief Editor: Richard Jernigan

Editor: Lisa Crawford

Editor: James Woodward

Communications Director: Myra Hight

French Newsletter: Alain Cyr

Spanish Newsletter: Olga Lopez

Submissions

The Journal editorial team welcomes all submissions for consideration for current or future issues. Personal spiritual experiences, fresh insights, and new perspectives are always of interest, as well as thematic studies and articles that compare, evaluate, or integrate academic research (scientific, social, religious, or otherwise) with the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Send correspondence or article submissions for the Journal to the above Chicago address or email the Chief Editor, Richard Jernigan at richardjernigan@urantia-association.org.

See our website for submissions policy and formatting requirements.

Reader Comments

The Journal editorial team is always interested in your thoughts about articles we publish. Please keep comments under 250 words and understand they may be edited for grammar and length. We look forward to hearing from you. Send your comments to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org

Cover: Multiple covers of *The Urantia Book* from the first printing to the present

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pages 3 and 25

Paintings

Face Toward the Son* and *An Invitation

Evette Twyford, USA

Page 6

The Missing Manger

***The Urantia Book* and the Standard Reference Text Committee**

Richard Jernigan, USA

Page 14

What is Spiritual Faith?

Mark Blackham, Canada

Page 18

When Familiar Words Conceal New Meanings

Revelation, Continuity, and the Conditions of Understanding

Luis Costa, Portugal

Page 26

Did Pope Francis Know The Urantia Book?

Jorge Wilczyk, Argentina

Page 30

An Interview with Jorge Wilczyk

Luis Garcia-Bory, United Kingdom



From the Chief Editor

Richard Jernigan

Boring but Important. For those of you who read the US newsmagazine *The Week*, each issue includes a section with that header. It is always an overlooked policy decision or piece of legislation that most people might ignore, but is of vital importance affecting one's daily life.

So, while "Standard Reference Text Committee" might not scream joyful emotional catharsis, it is something that affects the longevity and integrity of our cherished text. And for the record, I don't find it boring at all.

Many of us recall the years of interorganizational struggles over the copyright of the English text of *The Urantia Book*, and the mix of feelings once the text entered the public domain after the US Supreme Court declined to hear Urantia Foundation's appeal of the lower court's decision against it.

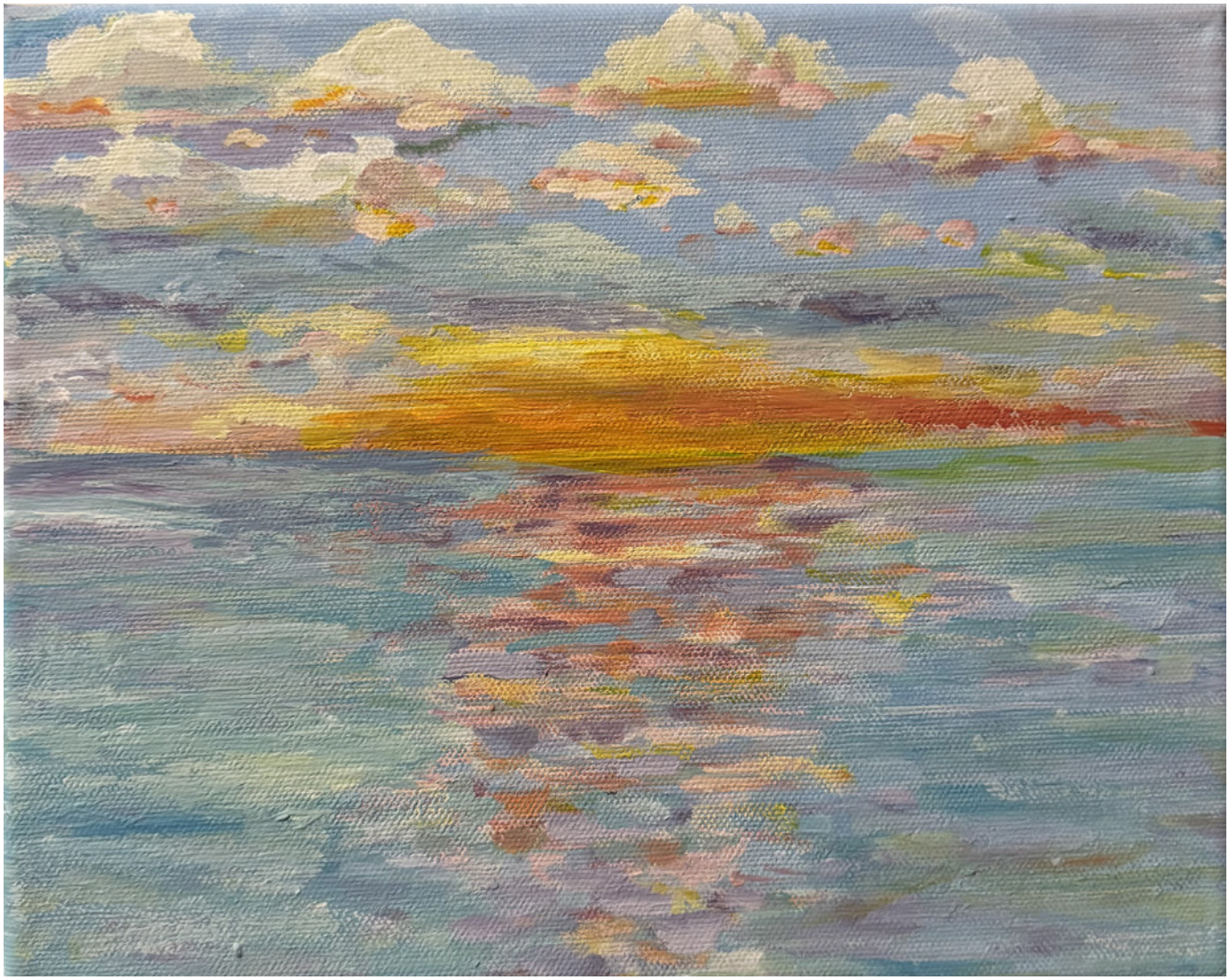
However, as we voyage further into the digital age there now seems to be a far more jarring issue: is the version I hold in my hands—or am reading off a screen—an unadulterated version? Is there an "inviolate" text? This is definitely a concern to ponder when anyone can publish a version of *The Urantia Book*—with the reader unaware of any changes or editorial license produced by the publisher. In addition, corrections have been made to the text ever since the 1967 second printing. How do we know what's different about the various editions, and is anyone on top of that? And why were these corrections made? These questions led me to have multiple, informative interactions with the Standard Reference Text committee for several weeks earlier this year. The former and current committee members I exchanged multiple emails with—Marilyn Kulieke, Marvin Gawryn, Merritt Horn, Jay Peregrine and Ken Keyser—were extremely helpful and candid. Their professionalism and dedication to their effort to "preserve inviolate the text" is honorable. You will see the results of those conversations in the article "The Missing Manger."

On another topic, for several years many of us have probably heard rumors that Pope Francis read and studied *The Urantia Book*. Thanks to Fernando Maldonado, the UAI's Membership Chairperson, the mystery has been resolved. He recently sent UAI Communications Chair Myra Hight Jorge Wilczyk's fascinating account of his series of meetings with Archpriest Jorge Castelli as they both underwent dialysis sessions in Buenos Aires. Myra passed this article to me, and with Luis Garcia-Bory we were able to reach out to Wilczyk and interview him for over an hour via Zoom back in April. During this process we discovered that Wilczyk has been a journalist for over two decades which lends integrity to his intriguing account.

In another article, our former Chief Editor Mark Blackham parses out his understanding of faith in "What is Spiritual Faith?" This is a highly personal, non-institutional faith, subjective yet deeply real to the individual religionist. We're glad to see Mark joining us with this issue.

Luis Costa of Portugal is an exceptional discovery for us. His article "When Familiar Words Conceal New Meaning" is one of the most original and insightful essays relevant to *The Urantia Book* I've read in a long time. It is something of a meditation on how our preconceptions about familiar phrases and words such as "will of God," "worship," and "truth, beauty, and goodness" can actually hamper our understanding of important Urantia Book ideas, concepts, and ideals. This is a very important article for all Urantia Book readers to read and ponder, especially those of us whose religious backgrounds may cause us to take certain terms and words for granted. We look forward to more insights from Luis.

Finally, I want to thank Lisa Crawford for stepping up to help edit the Journal. She discovered *The Urantia Book* in 2020 and has an astute, passionate, yet down to earth understanding of the text. Having been involved with non-profits including the Unitarian Universalist Church, she currently brings her talents to Urantia Foundation as Programs Assistant. Make a point of meeting Lisa if you get the opportunity via Zoom or in person. J



Evette Twyford
Face Toward the Son
Acrylic on stretched canvas
8x10 inches
2026

Evette Twyford is an artist and Urantia Book reader residing in Salidas, Colorado, USA, where she has a working studio and gallery, Flying Red Horse Art Studio and Gallery.

1955

These men of God visited the newborn child in the manger.

1967

These men of God visited the newborn child.

2009

These men of God visited the newborn child in the manger.

The Missing Manger:

The Urantia Book and the Standard Reference Text Committee

Richard Jernigan, USA

In a recent study group we were reading Paper 119, "The Bestowals of Christ Michael," and one of our participants read aloud this paragraph:

> Certain wise men of earth knew of Michael's impending arrival. Through the contacts of one world with another, these wise men of spiritual insight learned of the forthcoming bestowal of Michael on Urantia. And the seraphim did, through the midway creatures, make announcement to a group of Chaldean priests whose leader was Ardnon. These men of God visited the newborn child.
> Paper 119:7.6 (Page 1317.2)

I asked our group member to re-read that last sentence. She read it again, "These men of God visited the newborn child." Period.

The edition I was reading was a current Word docx downloaded from Urantia Foundation's website, which read "These men of God visited the newborn **child in the manger**." [emphasis added]

Years ago, I heard this "in the manger" phrasing was in the first printing and removed in the second. I checked my copy of the first printing and there it was: "These men of God visited the newborn child in the manger."

Apparently, the manger got returned sometime after the second printing.

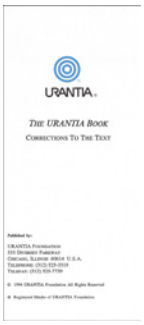
This "in the manger" statement in the first printing is something of a controversy, as we read in Paper 122 "Birth and Infancy of Jesus" that Mary and Joseph only spent a couple of nights in the makeshift stable space and spent the next three weeks in a room provided by an acquaintance's friend. (122:8.3) It appears to be a contradiction, an oversight, or perhaps a figure of speech, as a manger is basically a feed trough the infant Jesus was placed in at birth, so Jesus would not have been "in the manger" when the group of Chaldean priests made their visitation. (I have heard one reader comment that perhaps the feed trough got moved to the inn, but that's a separate conjecture not necessarily relevant to this task at hand).

A History of Corrections

After the initial publication of *The Urantia Book* in 1955, multiple errors were detected and corrected with the 1967 second printing. The majority of these errors were typographical. A publication "Corrections

to the Text," published in 1994, cites 55 corrections appearing in the 2nd printing, the greatest number of corrections of all subsequent printings:

12 in the 3rd printing (1971)
12 in the 4th (1973)
1 in the 5th (1976)
6 in the 6th (1978)
11 in the 7th (1981)
none in the 8th (1984)
2 in the 9th (1986)
32 in the 10th (1990)
10 in the 11th (1993)

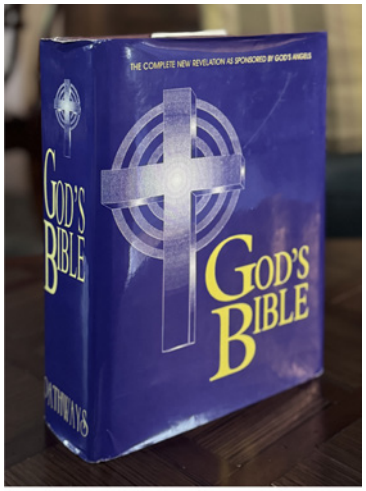

URANTIA
THE URANTIA BOOK
CORRECTIONS TO THE TEXT

This indicates a total of 141 corrections, but it's helpful to note that according to SRT Committee member Ken Keyser:

> The challenge with reporting these numbers is the fact that several of the corrections over the years were actually a reversal of a previous corrections made in an earlier printing. Also, these numbers include items that were corrected in the Table of Contents, which were not corrections to the text of the book. The actual total number of unique items in the text of the book that were handled during the first eleven printings was around 80 items.

Over the years some readers have raised concerns about corrections made after the first 1955 printing. With a text nearly 2100 pages in length composed with over one million words (*The Urantia Book Concordance* published in 1993 states there are 1,120,913 words), the chance of errors is likely. But with a text that was carefully edited and proofed over two decades before publication, and claiming celestial authorship, the idea that the printed version not only contains errors, but that humans have corrected those errors, has been unsettling to some readers.

Two attempts by individual readers to assuage these concerns occurred in 1995 with the publication of *God's Bible* and *The Urantia Papers* by Pathways, Inc. These were both reprints of the first printing with different titles to appeal to different populations. Another reprinting of the 1955 printing occurred in 2017. This was a full replica of the first printing complete with a light blue dust jacket reminiscent of the first printing's cover, but with the statement "The 1955 Inviolate Text" underneath the title.



God's Bible published by Pathways, Inc. in 1995 was a reprint of the original 1955 first printing.

Another conflict in assurances of providing a "text inviolate" was the 1996 publication of *The Urantia Book* by Uversa Press. Printed under the auspices of The Fifth Epochal Fellowship (now The Urantia Book Fellowship), this edition was a complete transcription of the most current printing, and diverged from Foundation printings by featuring a double-column format, an index (in later editions), and because of the alternative formatting of the text, different pagination from the Foundation's single column format. To avoid reference confusion when using both texts in study groups and other circumstances, the page numbering of the 1955 edition was inserted in the Uversa printings wherever those page breaks occurred and the Paper:Section.Paragraph referencing system was introduced, which is still in use today for referencing quotes from *The Urantia Book* (it is the UAI Journal's editorial policy to include the Foundation text page number in parentheses for block quotes, as in the quote at the beginning of this article).

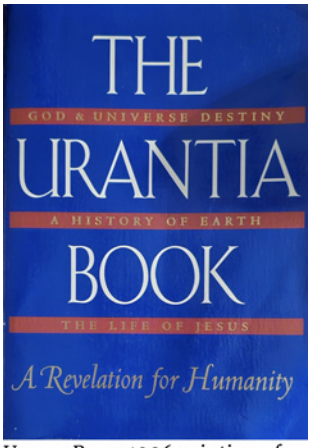
The Uversa Press version went on the market soon after the case Urantia Foundation vs. Maaherra was settled in United States District Court, D. Arizona on February 10, 1995, which ruled that the Foundation's copyright renewal of the text was invalid. Urantia Foundation appealed this decision, and on June 10, 1997 the United States Court of Appeals, Ninth District ruled that Urantia Foundation's renewal copyright was valid, reversing the lower court's decision.[1] Any appeal at this point would need to go before the US Supreme Court, and no further appeal was made by Maaherra.

1 https://caselaw.findlaw.com/court/us-9th-circuit/1433972.html

Uversa Press withheld its publication of *The Urantia Book* for the next few years.

However, another suit was soon filed to contest Urantia Foundation's copyright renewal. According to Urantia Foundation Online Newsletter from June, 2000:

> On May 12, 2000, Michael Foundation, Inc., owned by Harry McMullan, III, filed suit against URANTIA Foundation in the United States District Court for the Western District of Oklahoma challenging the validity of URANTIA Foundation's copyright in The URANTIA Book. The lawsuit alleges that the Foundation's copyright is invalid, or in the alternative, that Michael Foundation's book, Jesus–A New Revelation, does not infringe the copyright. Michael Foundation is seeking to have the case heard in Oklahoma City, where Mr. McMullan resides.[2]



Uversa Press 1996 printing of *The Urantia Book*

Harry McMullen III earnestly pursued this case against Urantia Foundation[3], and two federal courts both ruled that Urantia Foundation was not entitled to a copyright renewal. In August, 2003, Urantia Foundation's appeal to the US Supreme Court was denied.

The English Urantia Book text was now in the public domain.

As seen from this statement in the Foundation's 2003 annual report, the trustees struggled with this conclusion:

> The year was not without its disappointments. In August 2003, the U.S. Supreme Court denied Urantia Foundation's request to review the appellate court's decision in Michael Foundation, Inc. v. Urantia Foundation. We are still assessing the implications of this decision for other publishers and developing strategies to preserve the inviolate text in the future. Urantia Foundation holds international copyrights in the English text as well as copyrights in its many translations, audio recordings, and computer software. Readers can identify the authentic products and services of Urantia Foundation by the concentric-circles symbol.[4]

The Fellowship straightaway began publishing the Uversa Press edition after Urantia Foundation ended its contest to retain the copyright.

Determining a Standard Reference Text

Once it was clear that the Fellowship would continue publishing the now public domain English text, in 2007 an ad hoc committee was established and chaired by then Urantia Foundation president Seppo Kanerva. This group was initially called the Committee on the Inviolate Text. Along with Seppo, two other Foundation representatives Jay Peregrine and Marilynn Kulieke sat on the committee. In a notable act of cooperation, Kanerva requested three members to represent the Fellowship's Uversa Press edition, and Marvin Gawryn, Merritt Horn, and Nancy Johnson were appointed.

The May 2007 edition of Urantia Foundation News Online states:

> The Committee is charged to examine all changes effected in the first printing text and determine whether or not the changes were and continue to be correct. Additionally, the Committee was asked to recommend an appropriate method for indicating the acceptable changes made in all published versions of *The Urantia Book*. At the completion of their work the Committee is to recommend the text that will be defined as the

2 https://www.urantia.org/news/2000-06/michael-foundation-sues-foundation-contesting-validity-copyright

3 https://www.urantia.org/sites/default/files/docs/SJM030101.pdf

4 https://www.urantia.org/annual-report/urantia-foundation-annual-report-2003

Inviolate English text.[5]

"Inviolate" is a strong word, and for some committee members it was possible there might not ever be an "inviolate" English text. In her bio on the Foundation's SRT webpage Marilynn Kulieke offered this caveat:

> Marilynn served on this committee because of her belief that we must no longer argue about the "inviolate text." She feels that readers need to know the changes that have been made in the different editions of *The Urantia Book* over time so that they can evaluate these changes (e.g., text, formatting, and referencing system) without the feeling that there is a hidden agenda or intentional confusion.[6]

By September, 2007 the committee had been renamed the Standard Reference Text (SRT) Committee, and over the next two years the group reviewed and reconsidered all corrections introduced up to the most recent printing. In addition, they reviewed other suggested corrections provided by both readers and committee members. Each of these items were documented with copious notes regarding the committee's decisions to reject or retain both older corrections and current requests.[7] Corrections accepted unanimously by the committee were formally reported to Urantia Foundation Trustees for final approval in 2009.

This substantial first report, with its thorough review of all corrections made from 1967 to 2009, as well as some new corrections, was adopted by both Urantia Foundation and the Urantia Book Fellowship and established the Standard Reference Text.

After the adoption of the Standard Reference Text, the SRT Committee continued meeting to consider corrections offered by readers, as well as items discovered by the committee in the course of their work. Suggestions were gathered and every three years (except 2012) the committee met to consider, debate, and approve or dismiss any requests.

The next SRT report is forecast for early in 2027. Prior to that, the Committee will meet multiple times to discuss various potential corrections before presenting its formal SRT 2027 report at a Urantia Foundation Trustee's quarterly meeting.

So, what happened with "in the manger"? According to Ken Keyser, a current SRT Committee member:

> Jay Peregrine, when speaking of how the SRT Committee's work would be viewed by the readership, said "It will all come down to 'in the manger.' " That phrase, with no known documented explanation, was removed in the second printing and is one of the strongest examples of a modification that required the Committee to adhere to its mission to retain the 1955 text as intact as possible. The corrections made to the early printings had a number of Contact Commissioners approving them. By the seventh printing there was just Emma "Christy" Christensen, the last living Contact Commissioner, approving them. The



Seppo Kanerva, former Urantia Foundation president and founder of the Standard Reference Text Committee

5 Urantia Foundation's News Online, May 2007, Volume 1, Number 1, pp. 3-4

6 https://www.urantia.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/standardized-reference-text-committee-final-report-2009.pdf

7 All reports of the SRT Committee can be found here. https://www.urantia.org/urantia-book/text-standardization-detail

corrections were kept on a list, but again, with little or no correlated explanations.

Peregrine further offers this insight about Christy and her work with corrections:

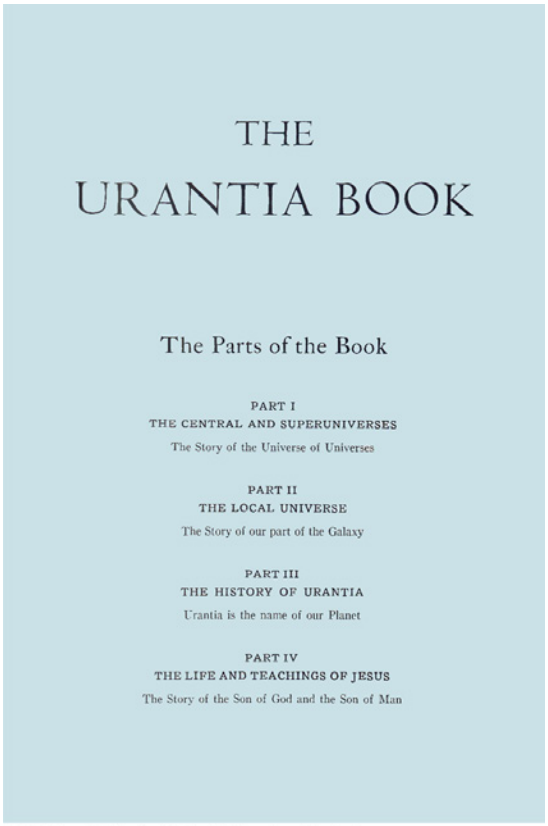
> Christy maintained that all of the earlier corrections of what she called "the gremlins" were presented to the "unseen friends" for review and approval. She died in 1982, and the 8th printing was the last that she corrected. To some older readers it was this 8th printing which was the last to be "approved."

In essence, as the SRT Committee reviewed all the corrections dating back to the 1967 second printing, unless there was a valid, strong, and documentable reason to keep a correction that departed from the original 1955 text, the original 1955 text held.

These corrections first appeared with editions published by Urantia Foundation and Uversa Press after 2009.

One item that did depart from the 1955 edition, and to which some readers may object, was the change in Paper 42, section 6 paragraph 7 (42:6.7) regarding the sizes of electrons and protons. By looking at the description of the size of a proton in the next paragraph (42:6.8) the SRT Committee made the decision to rephrase the first paragraph to be consistent with the second, offering this explanation:

> The revised wording is consistent with the paragraph following the subject paragraph (42:6.8), where the author states that a proton is eighteen hundred times as heavy as an electron, and is also in general agreement with current scientific opinion which places the ratio at about 1:1836. The calculation of the relative masses of the electron and the hydrogen atom was undergoing a rapid evolution just prior to the writing of *The Urantia Book*, the ratio was estimated at 1:1700 in 1897, 1:2000 in 1904, and 1:1845 by 1922. This item and the related following item are the only changes recommended by the SRT committee that do not have a straightforward typographical explanation.[8]


THE
URANTIA BOOK

The Parts of the Book

PART I
THE CENTRAL AND SUPERUNIVERSES
The Story of the Universe of Universes

PART II
THE LOCAL UNIVERSE
The Story of our part of the Galaxy

PART III
THE HISTORY OF URANTIA
Urantia is the name of our Planet

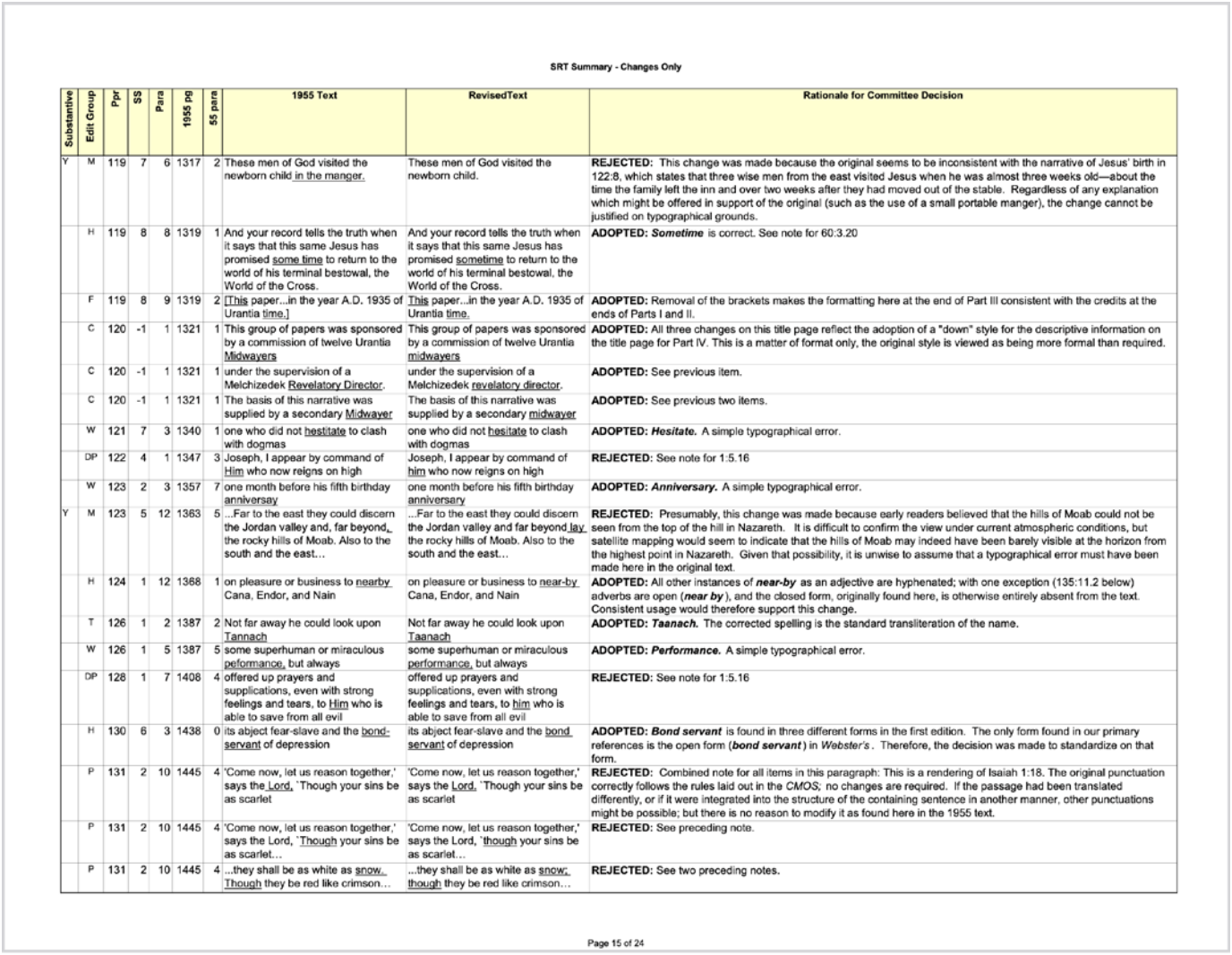
PART IV
THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS
The Story of the Son of God and the Son of Man

1955 Urantia Book first printing dust jacket

SRT Committee member Merritt Horne offered this additional explanation of how the committee struggled with this correction:

> The 1955 text was clearly wrong—it was both internally inconsistent with the following paragraph and scientifically incorrect—so we once again understood why the changes had been made in the second printing, but we could not figure out how any originally correct wording in the manuscript could have devolved into the erroneous and inconsistent wording that appeared in 1955. If we had followed our usual logic, we would have returned this to its original (1955) state, but the original was so glaringly wrong –internally and externally—and the fix had been done so long ago, we decided to leave it as it has been since 1967 in the hope that one day a more brilliant committee member than any of the present company might come up with a more

8 This and all other corrections and notes can be found here. https://www.urantia.org/sites/default/files/docs/standardized-reference-text-committee-summary-report-all-items_v4.pdf



SRT Summary - Changes Only

Substantive	Edit Group	Ppr	SS	Para	1955 pg	55 para	1955 Text	RevisedText	Rationale for Committee Decision
Y	M	119	7	6	1317	2	These men of God visited the newborn child in the manger.	These men of God visited the newborn child.	**REJECTED:** This change was made because the original seems to be inconsistent with the narrative of Jesus' birth in 122:8, which states that three wise men from the east visited Jesus when he was almost three weeks old—about the time the family left the inn and over two weeks after they had moved out of the stable. Regardless of any explanation which might be offered in support of the original (such as the use of a small portable manger), the change cannot be justified on typographical grounds.
	H	119	8	8	1319	1	And your record tells the truth when it says that this same Jesus has promised some time to return to the world of his terminal bestowal, the World of the Cross.	And your record tells the truth when it says that this same Jesus has promised sometime to return to the world of his terminal bestowal, the World of the Cross.	**ADOPTED:** ***Sometime*** is correct. See note for 60:3.20
	F	119	8	9	1319	2	[This paper...in the year A.D. 1935 of Urantia time.]	This paper...in the year A.D. 1935 of Urantia time.	**ADOPTED:** Removal of the brackets makes the formatting here at the end of Part III consistent with the credits at the ends of Parts I and II.
	C	120	-1	1	1321	1	This group of papers was sponsored by a commission of twelve Urantia Midwayers	This group of papers was sponsored by a commission of twelve Urantia midwayers	**ADOPTED:** All three changes on this title page reflect the adoption of a "down" style for the descriptive information on the title page for Part IV. This is a matter of format only, the original style is viewed as being more formal than required.
	C	120	-1	1	1321	1	under the supervision of a Melchizedek Revelatory Director.	under the supervision of a Melchizedek revelatory director.	**ADOPTED:** See previous item.
	C	120	-1	1	1321	1	The basis of this narrative was supplied by a secondary Midwayer	The basis of this narrative was supplied by a secondary midwayer	**ADOPTED:** See previous two items.
	W	121	7	3	1340	1	one who did not hestitate to clash with dogmas	one who did not hesitate to clash with dogmas	**ADOPTED:** ***Hesitate.*** A simple typographical error.
	DP	122	4	1	1347	3	Joseph, I appear by command of Him who now reigns on high	Joseph, I appear by command of him who now reigns on high	**REJECTED:** See note for 1:5.16
	W	123	2	3	1357	7	one month before his fifth birthday anniversay	one month before his fifth birthday anniversary	**ADOPTED:** ***Anniversary.*** A simple typographical error.
Y	M	123	5	12	1363	5	...Far to the east they could discern the Jordan valley and, far beyond, the rocky hills of Moab. Also to the south and the east...	...Far to the east they could discern the Jordan valley and far beyond lay the rocky hills of Moab. Also to the south and the east...	**REJECTED:** Presumably, this change was made because early readers believed that the hills of Moab could not be seen from the top of the hill in Nazareth. It is difficult to confirm the view under current atmospheric conditions, but satellite mapping would seem to indicate that the hills of Moab may indeed have been barely visible at the horizon from the highest point in Nazareth. Given that possibility, it is unwise to assume that a typographical error must have been made here in the original text.
	H	124	1	12	1368	1	on pleasure or business to nearby Cana, Endor, and Nain	on pleasure or business to near-by Cana, Endor, and Nain	**ADOPTED:** All other instances of ***near-by*** as an adjective are hyphenated; with one exception (135:11.2 below) adverbs are open (***near by***), and the closed form, originally found here, is otherwise entirely absent from the text. Consistent usage would therefore support this change.
	T	126	1	2	1387	2	Not far away he could look upon Tannach	Not far away he could look upon Taanach	**ADOPTED:** ***Taanach.*** The corrected spelling is the standard transliteration of the name.
	W	126	1	5	1387	5	some superhuman or miraculous peformance, but always	some superhuman or miraculous performance, but always	**ADOPTED:** ***Performance.*** A simple typographical error.
	DP	128	1	7	1408	4	offered up prayers and supplications, even with strong feelings and tears, to Him who is able to save from all evil	offered up prayers and supplications, even with strong feelings and tears, to him who is able to save from all evil	**REJECTED:** See note for 1:5.16
	H	130	6	3	1438	0	its abject fear-slave and the bond-servant of depression	its abject fear-slave and the bond servant of depression	**ADOPTED:** ***Bond servant*** is found in three different forms in the first edition. The only form found in our primary references is the open form (***bond servant***) in *Webster's*. Therefore, the decision was made to standardize on that form.
	P	131	2	10	1445	4	'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins be as scarlet	'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins be as scarlet	**REJECTED:** Combined note for all items in this paragraph: This is a rendering of Isaiah 1:18. The original punctuation correctly follows the rules laid out in the *CMOS;* no changes are required. If the passage had been translated differently, or if it were integrated into the structure of the containing sentence in another manner, other punctuations might be possible; but there is no reason to modify it as found here in the 1955 text.
	P	131	2	10	1445	4	'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'Though your sins be as scarlet...	'Come now, let us reason together,' says the Lord, 'though your sins be as scarlet...	**REJECTED:** See preceding note.
	P	131	2	10	1445	4	...they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson...	...they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson...	**REJECTED:** See two preceding notes.

Page 15 of 24

Sample of worksheet illustrating the Standard Reference Text Committee's published notes on adopted and rejected corrections to the text

acceptable explanation and resolution. This was not a satisfactory conclusion, but we decided that the best we could do was assume that the revelators would not be intentionally inconsistent, make the change, explain our decision, and move on.

Whether one agrees with this correction or not, the SRT transparently publishes its reasoning behind corrections for future readers and scholars to review.

All Urantia Book editions published by Urantia Foundation and Uversa Press since 2009 state in some manner on the publication information page that the edition is the Standard Reference Text. This is displayed in the 2017 Foundation edition:

> The Standard Reference Text of *The Urantia Book* was developed by a group of scholars to protect the integrity of the original book. This text represents their best efforts to reconcile and correct the small number of typographical errors found in early editions of the book.

Urantia Foundation's online version carries a shortened disclaimer with a link to the SRT information page. These SRT notices are critical for discerning the integrity of an edition. In our highly volatile world of digital publishing this ensures dedicated readers of *The Urantia Book* that the version they are studying has not been compromised.

It is a future task of the SRT Committee to designate when any corrections were made. This was a helpful

feature of the 1994 "Corrections to the Text" pamphlet, and documenting when corrections appear in each version will clarify any irregularities readers may discover between different printings and editions.

It is worth stating here that overall, the number of corrections to *The Urantia Book* have been few and minor. Any English edition one uses in a study group is sufficient to the task of reading aloud and sharing thoughts. For scholarly work and quoting it is ideal to use the most current edition, but in a study group setting any of the previously printed editions are solid, and virtually all corrections have to do with spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

The Future

I recently discovered a "revised" Urantia Book on Amazon that changed "obsolete and outdated concepts and ideas" particularly in areas of race and cosmology, and sells this version divided in three separate volumes. Another version of the book released a few years ago uses gender-neutral language, and removes some of the racial content and other items deemed objectionable. These are two examples of deliberately changing the text, and to their credit, the publishers were up front about the revisions they undertook.

But what prevents anyone from making a few small, less detectable changes—and publishing that altered version without a disclaimer?

This is where Urantia Foundation has a critical role in the future.

Urantia Foundation-published Urantia Books and downloads from urantia.org assure the reader that these versions of *The Urantia Book* are indeed the "inviolate" text, and any corrections from the 1955 first printing are transparently noted on the Foundation and Fellowship's websites.

One of the results of the lawsuits of the 1990's and early 2000's was a re-assessment of the 1950 Declaration of Trust which established the groundwork for Urantia Foundation. Although Urantia Foundation no longer holds the copyright nor can legally contest other versions of the English text, its task is now to be guardian of the "inviolate" text. Urantia Foundation trustees are the guarantors that a reader is in possession of the most authentic version of the original text—with any corrections and the reasoning behind those corrections readily and transparently available. In fact, this assurance is the first duty of trustees in the Declaration of Trust:

> 3.1. PRESERVATION OF TEXT OF *The Urantia Book*: It shall be the primary duty of the Trustees to perpetually preserve inviolate the text of The Urantia Book, and the Trustees shall use and employ such means, methods, and facilities and apply and expend as much of the Trust Estate as in the judgment of the Trustees shall be necessary, proper, or appropriate, for the preserving and the safekeeping of copies of the original text of *The Urantia Book*, duly authenticated by the Trustees, from loss, damage, or destruction and from alteration, modification, revision, or change in any manner or in any particular.[9]

This primary duty is still Urantia Foundation's most important task going forward. And the Standard Reference Text Committee is a crucial gatekeeper in that task.



RICHARD JERNIGAN *has studied* The Urantia Book *since 1977 and is Chief Editor of the UAI Journal.*

9 https://www.urantia.org/urantia-foundation/declaration-trust



What is Spiritual Faith?

Mark Blackham, Canada

We often think of faith as religious doctrine—the beliefs, rules, and rituals associated with an organized religion, such as the Christian faith, the Muslim faith, or the Buddhist faith. The same applies to the many different branches or sects of these religions, such as the Catholic, Sunni, or Theravāda faiths.

When used in this way, faith defines a system of religious rules, ideologies, and traditions. If we wish to affiliate with any particular religious group, we are expected to believe what they believe and to do what they do.

But when faith is defined (or confined) this way, it is not spiritually productive. Whenever we accept dogmatic teaching as the whole truth, it can inhibit our spiritual sensitivities and restrict our thinking. It shatters any hope of finding enhanced spiritual meanings, and it blinds us to the full sweep of spiritual realities:

> Modern religion finds it difficult to adjust its attitude toward the rapidly shifting social changes only because it has permitted itself to become so thoroughly traditionalized, dogmatized, and institutionalized.
> Paper 99:2.6 (Page 1088.1)

Adobe Stock

Faith Is Confidence

Faith is better defined as simply having complete confidence or trust in someone or something. It is a firm belief in something for which there may be no empirical or objective proof. For instance, we could have resolute faith in the triumph of science, or persistent faith that our sports team will win. We cannot prove an event will occur, or that some spiritual force will act on our behalf, but we have unequivocal faith that it will.

When my son was just a toddler, he wanted to climb onto the mantelpiece above the fireplace (when houses had fireplaces). Cautiously, I stood him up on the shelf. He looked at me with a big smile and then, bursting into a laugh, he jumped from the ledge and flew right at me with his arms wide open. I was stunned for an instant, but caught him midair.

My son's complete trust in me—his unwavering faith that I would catch him in my arms—is the same deep and trusting faith we have in the eternal love and infinite goodness of our heavenly Father. This is the uninhibited and courageous leap of faith, one completely free of religious doctrine.

The faith of a trusting child is an essential attitude of mind simply because it opens our consciousness to receiving the spiritual gifts of God. Accepting and believing that we truly are spiritual sons and daughters of God underscores our sincerity and trust in the loving support and divine guidance of a caring universe. We cannot begin to over-emphasize the spiritual importance of such trusting faith.

> *Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that a man could stake his life on it a thousand times.*
>
> Martin Luther

It is easy to dismiss faith as false hope or a belief in fantasy, but everyone believes in something—everyone has faith in something—otherwise we could not begin to function in the world. We all operate within an ideological framework we accept as true, and we all have strong convictions about the true nature of reality, with or without proof.

If you are an atheist, you have faith there is no Deity, although you cannot prove it. If you are a humanist, you have faith in the inherent goodness of humanity, but you cannot prove it. And if you are a materialist, you have faith that all reality is material in nature, but you cannot prove it. You can have faith in anything you choose, so what will you choose?

Having faith in God means we choose to have faith in the eternal goodness, infinite love, and wise counsel of the holy Presence within us. We have faith that God will always help in the long run, even if it may not appear so from our limited viewpoints, and even if we are not consciously aware of that help. And despite all obstacles and challenges, we persevere with a courageous faith in our divine destiny.

While having faith requires no empirical or objective proof, the outcome of our faith is firmly bolstered with subjective proof. In other words, the evidence of the power of faith is found in our progressive spiritual experiences and in our improving relationships with others. While we can never prove these inner experiences to others, we know them to be true.

> *For those with faith, no evidence is necessary; for those without it, no evidence will suffice.*
>
> Thomas Aquinas

The confidence of spiritual faith is a personal experience best described as a positive and trusting attitude toward divinity. Instead of a creedal formula or a set of principles, faith becomes a frame of mind in which we place enduring trust in the existence of spirit life, one coupled with our strong conviction about the goodness, wisdom, and love of God.

Faith Is a Psychological Technique

Just as there are natural laws of science, there are supernatural laws of the Spirit. One of these immutable laws is that neither God nor any of his

celestial assistants will ever try to change or re-create you without your explicit consent. The Creator of a universe wants you to come to him—but only if you want to come of your own free will.

> The Creator refuses to coerce or compel the submission of the spiritual free wills of his material creatures. 1:1.2 (22.5)

It is therefore almost impossible for spiritual forces to help a doubting and reluctant mind. The crucial point about faith is that God and his angels function more effectively through a believing and willing mind. When we freely believe in the truth about God, when we have complete faith in his love and help, we fully enable spiritual forces to take an active role in our lives.

Imagine, accept, and believe that God is helping you.

A. K. Mozumdar

Faith is a psychological technique that takes us to the border of God consciousness and then empowers us to enter that domain. It's a method used to reach beyond the limitations of reason and logic. More so, it's a way of harmonizing our thoughts and behavior with divine truth even if we cannot fully comprehend that truth.

Spiritual faith extends beyond any belief about the nature of material reality because humanity's ideas about this vast universe are circumscribed and constantly evolving, just as scientific knowledge, social policies, and governments are evolving—they are subject to constant change and renewal.

Faith, therefore, is more reliably based on supreme values and divine ideals rather than religious doctrines or our fixed views about the nature of physical reality. Whenever religious beliefs become grounded in perceived material realities or fixed philosophical ideas, they stagnate, whereas faith in Divine love is alive, vibrant, evolving, and adaptable.

Faith is the complete reliance on the power and goodness of Spirit and the firm belief that you're always connected to this goodness.

Wayne Dyer

The reason faith in the goodness and wisdom of an infinite and eternal Creator works for the better is that, in all reality, God is always good and perfectly wise. For all who have experienced the presence of God in their lives, he is real, even a fact. Although our minds cannot begin to grasp the full magnitude and magnificence of this First Source, we still maintain our steadfast faith in the oversight of a loving, friendly, and caring Creator who always urges us to be the best we can be.

Our spiritual thoughts and ideals cannot rise any higher than that which we can imagine. Such faithful imaginings not only heighten our spiritual awareness but also become our spiritual compass, the inspiration that invariably points us in the right direction, forever enticing us to forge ahead—to achieve more in life. What a tragedy to limit our hopes and dreams to the dark confines of a cold, empty, and godless materialism. It's no wonder so many good people imagine the future as a bleak and hopeless dystopia.

> When you know that you are saved by faith, you have real peace with God. 143:2.6 (1610.1)

Humble and positive faith is a tool of consciousness; a powerful spiritual attitude that is necessary because it's a frame of mind that opens the door to the Divine Presence within you. This, in turn, allows the Spirit to release its beneficial and dynamic superhuman activities into your consciousness. In short, your positive and faithful attitude of mind enables God to spiritually transform you.

Faith Is a Bridge

Faith creates a celestial bridge between the material mind and the spirit phase of existence. This bridge of faith is vital to our spiritual progress because there is so much about spiritual reality and divine nature that

the human mind simply cannot grasp with analytical reason alone. Our material thoughts lead us right up to the door of the spirit dimension, but from that point forward, it's our spiritualized channels of thought, as defined by our faith and as adjusted by our inner Spirit, that lead us Godward.

Faith is a bridge to spiritual insight. We discern outward beauty with the physical senses, and we discern truth with the intellect. But only with spiritual insight can we begin to fully grasp divine realities. Having faith in the goodness of our Creator, which is an absolute truth, allows us to enter the reality of the spirit realm despite the intellectual limitations of the mind. It's our ticket to divinity.

> *Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe.*
>
> Augustine of Hippo

It is what we believe rather than what we know that determines what we can achieve in life. All the knowledge in the universe will not necessarily make us happy or help us to progress in the spirit. But the good news is that faith will make us happy and it will help us to progress because it reaches far beyond knowledge by embracing spiritual realities we may not (as yet) comprehend.

The humble attitude of a faithful mind is at the heart of spiritual progress. It is the supernal approach to the magnificence and glory of an eternal and infinite God.

Living Faith

Faith begins with our unwavering conviction about the goodness, wisdom, and love of God. But genuine faith goes one step further. For faith to reach its full potential of bridging the gap between the material and spiritual worlds and thereby transforming our lives in the process, we must live our faith.

> *However many holy words you read, however many you speak, what good will they do you if you do not act on them?*
>
> Buddha

The spiritual truths gained through faith become a reality in our lives as soon as we begin to practice them. The whole notion of living faith is living a life in the spirit eagerly and happily. It's living a life dedicated to the divine ideals and supreme values we so ardently profess to believe.

It's impossible to achieve spiritual harmony and divine unity through mind alone. Even though meditation and prayer are excellent ways to enhance spiritual perception and contact divinity, they are not enough by themselves. Only by acting out our faith in all sincerity can we coordinate and unite the energies of body, mind, and spirit. By acting out our faith, we actualize it—we make it a reality within ourselves.

> Convictions about God may be arrived at through wise reasoning, but the individual becomes God-knowing only by faith, through personal experience. 102:6.5 (1124.7)

Living our faith is a divine privilege. It's a happy endeavor done with enthusiasm and love; it's meeting daily challenges with vigor and inspiration; it's remaining undaunted in the face of all disappointments and failures; and it's cultivating an indomitable spirit that perseveres regardless of life's difficulties and despite all worldly strife.

> To a God-knowing kingdom believer, what does it matter if all things earthly crash? 100:2.7 (1096.4)



Mark Blackham *has served the UAI in Communications, Publications, and Website Management, and has been a contributor to course development at Urantia University Institute.*


will of God
truth
supreme
goodness
beauty
ultimate
worship
personality

When Familiar Words Conceal New Meanings

Revelation, Continuity, and the Conditions of Understanding

Luis Costa, Portugal

One of the enduring challenges of any revelation is not how it is received by those who reject it, but how it is understood by those who welcome it. When new meaning arrives in familiar language, understanding can feel immediate. Recognition comes quickly. Yet it is precisely this familiarity that can limit what is actually seen.

The Urantia Book uses terms that resonate deeply with established religious meanings—God, faith, truth, love, goodness, purpose, and the will of God. This continuity is not accidental. It reflects both pedagogical wisdom and spiritual compassion: revelation must begin where understanding already exists.

I grew up in a deeply Catholic country, with a couple of churches in every neighborhood, and I was baptized as a baby (there are photos of me crying under the water while everyone around me smiles). Yet I never really adopted a Christian perspective. It only began to make sense to me through the interpretation offered by *The Urantia Book*.

Over time, it has become clear to me that recognizing inherited meanings is not as straightforward as it might seem. These meanings are not limited to personal belief; they are embedded in the language and culture we share. Even those who consider themselves nonreligious often interpret words like "God," "heaven," or "angels" in inherited ways, because those meanings are part of the cultural framework through which understanding takes place.

At the same time, familiarity carries its own risk. When words are recognized too quickly, their meanings are supplied in advance. Concepts are received not as invitations to think differently, but as confirmations of what is already assumed. What occurs is recognition, not realization. A familiar word such as "worship," for example, may already evoke ritual or reverence, making it difficult at first to perceive the book's emphasis on worship as an inner experience of value-response and communion. In such cases, revelation may be affirmed and cherished, while understanding itself remains unchanged.

This essay explores a central dynamic: how established ways of understanding—particularly those shaped by Christianity—can unintentionally absorb meanings in *The Urantia Book* that call for a different way of thinking. The issue is not error, resistance, or lack of devotion, but the subtle persistence of familiar habits of interpretation that continue to guide understanding even as new revelation is embraced.
To examine this clearly, it is helpful to recall how the Urantia revelation itself relates new truth to earlier religious forms.

Adobe Stock

Revelation and Continuity: When Old Forms Strain to Carry New Meaning

In his conversations with the apostles, Jesus offers a clear example of how revelation honors the past while opening the future. He speaks with deep respect for the Hebrew scriptures and for the prophets who shaped Israel's religious life, recognizing their sincerity and genuine insight within the limits of their time—and within the expectations those traditions had formed, including the idea of the Messiah. Far from dismissing them, he places them within a living historical context. At the same time, he quietly indicates that these earlier formulations could not fully convey the meaning of the message he came to reveal, as suggested in his conversation with Nathaniel [Paper 159:4 (Page 1767)], where inherited interpretations are gently set aside in favor of a more direct understanding.

At the same time, his gospel introduces something that cannot be contained within those earlier forms. The kingdom he proclaims is not an extension of doctrine or a refinement of law. It is a lived and experiential revelation of God as Father and humanity as a spiritual family—one that changes what earlier teachings mean by placing them within a more personal and relational understanding. What came before is not rejected, but reinterpreted and lifted into a deeper context.

Revelation does not erase the past; it reshapes it. It preserves what is true while changing how truth is understood and lived.

A similar dynamic is at work in *The Urantia Book*. The revelation draws on Christian language and imagery not to reinforce inherited theology, but to open a broader understanding of reality grounded in growth and experience. Familiar words ease entry and invite trust, but they do not carry the fuller meanings the revelation introduces.

Christian traditions therefore play a genuine preparatory role. They foster moral sensitivity, spiritual aspiration, and a shared religious language. Yet they were not formed to support an understanding in which meaning unfolds through experience and growth occurs over time. When new meanings are read through what those words have always meant, they are understood as if nothing essential has changed.

It is therefore not accidental that Jesus encountered his greatest difficulty not among those indifferent to religion, but among those most deeply formed within religious traditions. Their devotion was genuine, yet the very ideas that shaped their faith also set the limits of what they could readily understand.

The question, then, is not whether these traditions are valuable—they clearly are—but whether they are sufficient to receive a revelation grounded in growth over time. To engage *The Urantia Book* on its own terms requires a willingness not merely to recognize truth, but to let it change how we understand.

The Mechanism of Assimilation:When Familiar Language Neutralizes New Meaning

When a revelation uses unfamiliar terms, it is often resisted. When it speaks in familiar terms, it is welcomed—but it may also be misunderstood. This paradox lies at the heart of the difficulty under consideration.

Understanding does not arise from words alone, but from the assumptions through which they are interpreted. When new meanings are expressed in familiar language, we naturally read them as if they were saying what those words have always meant. What is genuinely new is absorbed into what is already known and, in the process, loses its capacity to transform understanding.

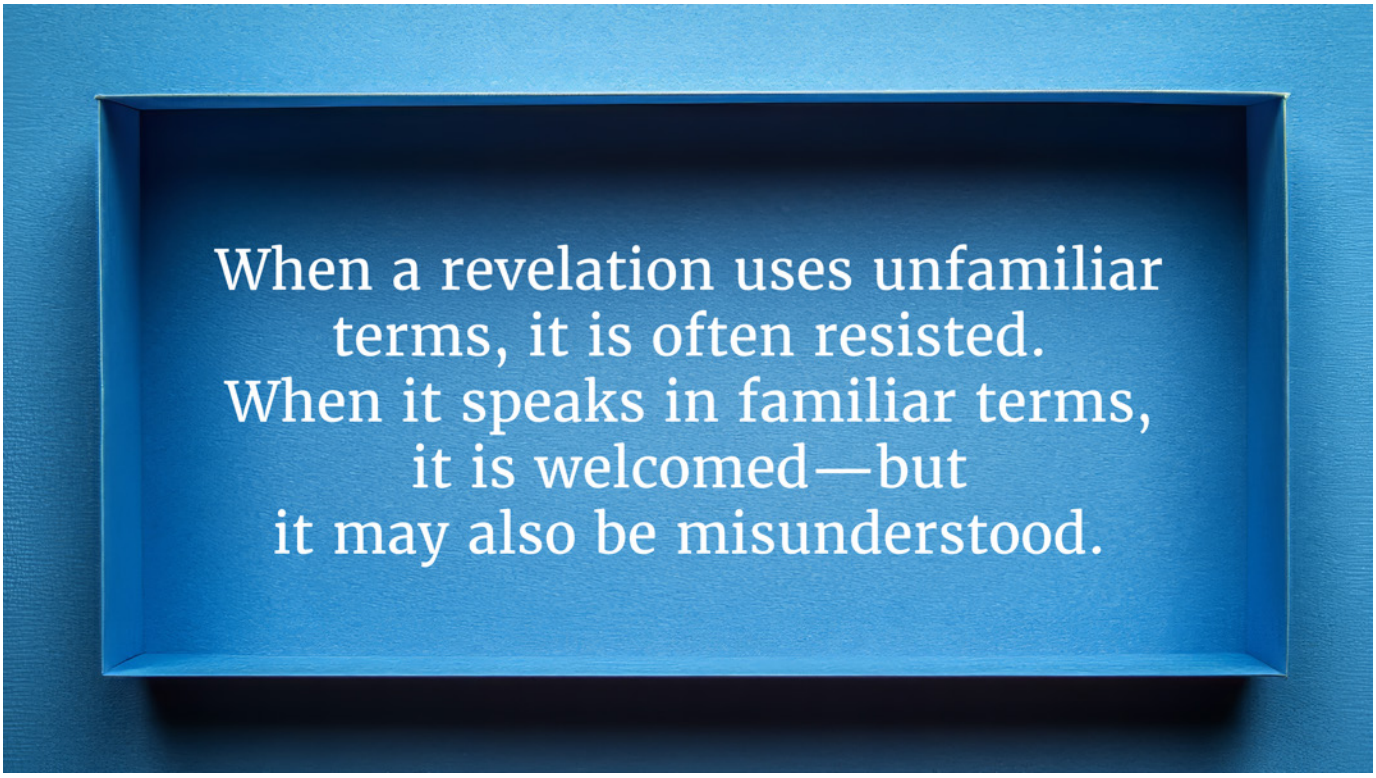
This is not simply a matter of personal belief or explicit religious background. The meanings we bring do not function as optional interpretations, but as structuring assumptions that operate prior to reflection. They shape not only what is understood, but how understanding itself takes place. For this reason, interpretation tends to reproduce its own starting point, even when engaging material that calls that starting point into question.

This kind of assimilation produces continuity without transformation. Revelation is accepted, yet its power to shift perspective remains largely unused. The effect is strongest where devotion and sincerity are greatest: recognition feels like understanding, and agreement feels like insight, even when nothing in one's way of seeing has actually changed.

This helps explain why *The Urantia Book* can be read widely, loved deeply, and shared with enthusiasm, while its most distinctive contributions remain marginal in teaching and communal life. Long-term,

repeated reading—especially when it unfolds within the same habits of understanding—can reinforce settled interpretations, deepening both attachment to and entrenchment in what is already understood while leaving the underlying standpoint unchanged.

The issue is not resistance to new truth, but the subtle influence of familiar ways of understanding that continue to guide interpretation beneath the surface.



Adobe Stock

At this point, the problem is not what is being interpreted, but from where interpretation proceeds. From a fixed standpoint, understanding can expand indefinitely without becoming more integrated. A change in perspective, by contrast, changes what can be seen. Relationships come into view, patterns emerge, and what once appeared fragmented begins to cohere. Integration arises not from more information, but from seeing from a different place.

Only when this dynamic is clearly recognized can particular examples be appreciated in their full significance.

Two such examples are especially revealing: the meaning of the will of God, and the unity of truth, beauty, and goodness.

The Will of God: From Familiar Phrase to Evolutionary Reality

The will of God, as presented in *The Urantia Book*, is indeed personal and experiential—but it is never merely private or indeterminate.

For many readers, the phrase already carries familiar meanings, often associated with obedience or submission. Because it feels known, it is rarely questioned. Yet for this very reason, its distinctive meaning within the revelation is easily overlooked.

In the biblical tradition, the will of God is largely understood in terms of divine intention or command. *The Urantia Book* retains continuity with this heritage but introduces a decisive shift: the will of God is not primarily what God commands, but what the creature chooses.

It becomes a lived reality arising at the intersection of divine purpose and personal freedom.

This is expressed with particular clarity in a statement that has profoundly shaped many readers' understanding:

> "The doing of the will of God is nothing more or less than an exhibition of creature willingness to share the inner life with God—with the very God who has made such a creature life of inner meaning-value possible." 111:5.1 (1221.2)

This formulation is striking in its simplicity and can easily be understood in familiar terms—as if the will of God were primarily a matter of inward openness or personal sincerity. Yet the text itself introduces a decisive qualification: it speaks of inner meaning-value.

This indicates that the "inner life" in question is not merely subjective or undefined. It is already structured by meaning and oriented by value. In the context of *The Urantia Book*, value is not used loosely; it consistently refers to the qualities of truth, beauty, and goodness.

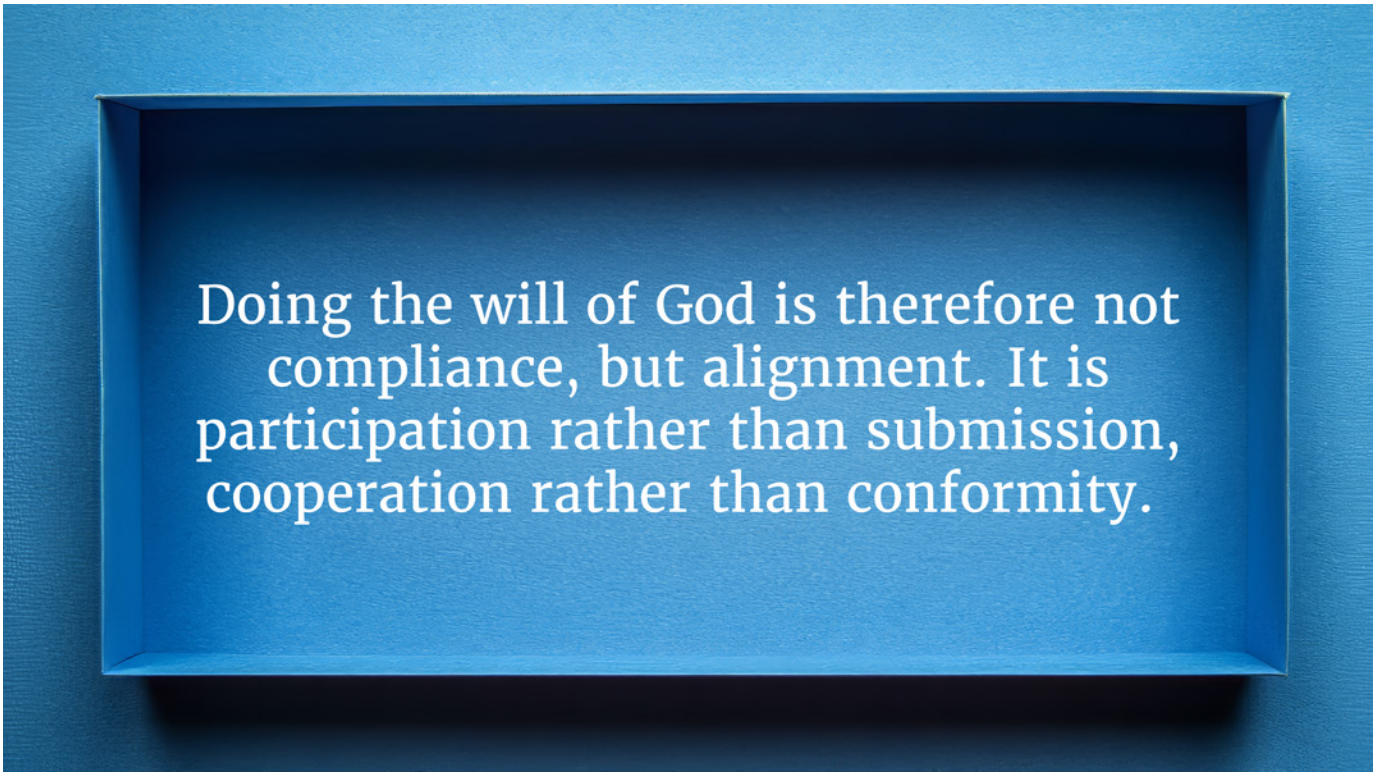
The willingness to share the inner life with God is therefore not a contentless openness, but a growing alignment of the inner life with these values. What is shared is not simply experience, but experience as it becomes meaningful and value-directed.

At this point, a deeper clarification becomes necessary. The revelation consistently emphasizes that divine contact is not primarily made through feeling, but through understanding. As stated, "the divine spirit makes contact with mortal man... in the realm of the highest and most spiritualized thinking." 101:1.3 (1104.6)

This does not exclude emotion or devotion, but places them within a larger order: feeling may accompany spiritual life, but it does not define its direction. It is thought—meaning, discernment, and the recognition of value—that leads Godward.

In this light, the will of God cannot be reduced to sincerity, intensity of feeling, or inward openness alone. It requires orientation. It requires the progressive clarification of what is true, what is beautiful in understanding, and what is good in action. Understanding is not secondary to spiritual life—it is constitutive of it. Without the refinement of understanding, experience remains diffuse, interpretation remains familiar, and the deeper meanings of revelation remain unrealized.

This statement, then, does not relativize the will of God—it grounds it. The personal dimension is affirmed, but the direction is not left undefined. The



Adobe Stock

will of God remains one, while its realization unfolds personally through the progressive recognition and embodiment of truth, beauty, and goodness.

A simple analogy may help clarify this. Imagine several people traveling in the same car. Each looks through a different window and sees a different landscape. From their perspective, the experience is indeed different. Yet the road itself is the same for all of them.

In the same way, each person may experience or understand the will of God differently, depending on their position, their level of understanding, and their development. But what they are relating to is not different in itself. The will of God is personal in how it is lived—but not different in what it is.

In *The Urantia Book*, that "road," so to speak, is not left undefined. It is consistently expressed in terms of truth, beauty, and goodness.

Doing the will of God is therefore not compliance, but alignment. It is participation rather than submission, cooperation rather than conformity. It unfolds through experience, takes shape in decisions, and points toward growth—personal, social, and cosmic. It is lived through truth, beauty, and goodness, and expressed in cooperation with the evolutionary growth of the Supreme.

When this deeper orientation is not entered, the will of God remains inspiring but vague. It motivates devotion, yet lacks coherence. Only when understanding is refined in the light of the revelation's own meanings does the will of God emerge as a lived path of evolutionary responsibility.

Truth, Beauty, and Goodness as the Finite Revelation of God

In *The Urantia Book*, truth, beauty, and goodness are not merely ideals. They are the primary—and indeed the only—means by which finite beings can know and experience God.

This claim may seem too strong. What of prayer, worship, or direct mystical experience? These are not excluded—but they do not themselves constitute knowing. Prayer, however sincere, is a one-sided communication; it orients the soul but does not, in itself, produce understanding. Worship, stripped of its inherited ceremonial associations, is in the revelation's own terms an experience of value-response and communion—genuine and deeply significant, but still an experience. And experience, however profound, cannot be shared or transmitted as understanding can. It remains private, interior, and ultimately incommunicable.

Knowing, by contrast, requires something that can be refined, tested, and progressively deepened. Truth, beauty, and goodness are precisely this: not feelings about God, but the structure through which God becomes intelligible to a finite mind. God, as infinite, cannot be grasped directly. Yet the revelation affirms, consistently and persistently, that God is genuinely knowable through the lived recognition of these values. Truth gives meaning, beauty brings harmony, and goodness directs action. Together, they express the presence of the Father in time and space in the only form a finite being can actually appropriate.

Even the most intimate guidance of the indwelling Thought Adjuster is experienced in this way—not as abstract instruction, but as a steady inner leading toward what is more true, more beautiful in understanding, and more good in action. Only through such progressive experience do these values become real to the soul—and only through their progressive recognition does experience become knowledge.

Truth, Beauty, and Goodness as the Basis of Planetary Unity

If truth, beauty, and goodness are the only means by which God can be known, they are also the only foundation upon which genuine planetary unity can be built.

Unity cannot arise through shared belief or identity. It must arise through shared values.

The revelation does not envision the unification of humanity through a religion or a creed. Where these values are genuinely lived, God is being known.

At the same time, values alone do not organize human life. Throughout history, effective coordination has depended on the unifying power of personality.

In this light, Jesus is not diminished by the universality of the values he revealed; he is elevated. As a Creator Son, his life embodies values universal in scope, integrating all meanings through lived obedience to the Father's will. He stands not as the

founder of a religion, but as the living model of God-conscious life for humanity.

The Supreme and the Evolutionary Orientation of Value

Unlike familiar religious ideas, the Supreme does not correspond to established patterns of thought. It cannot be easily interpreted through inherited meanings, precisely because it introduces something structurally new: a Deity that grows through time and experience.

For this reason, it is often acknowledged without being fully understood. It is treated as an additional concept rather than recognized as the context within which all other meanings acquire direction.

And the difference is not minor. Without the Supreme as framework, truth, beauty, and goodness function as fixed ideals — above reality, looking down. With the Supreme as context, they become active attractors — within reality, pulling forward. One inspires from a distance, the other organizes from within.

Seen from this standpoint, spiritual life is no longer a series of isolated experiences reaching toward distant ideals, but participation in an ongoing process of value-realization that gives coherence to both personal growth and cosmic meaning.

The Final Example—From Feeling to Understanding

A final example may bring this dynamic into its clearest form.

Among the most familiar assumptions in religious life is the idea that the approach to God is grounded primarily in feeling—in what is sensed, intuited, or inwardly experienced. Spirituality is often understood as a matter of devotion, sensitivity, or emotional depth.

And at one level, this is true. The presence of God may indeed be felt.

Yet here again, familiarity can conceal a deeper meaning. *The Urantia Book* introduces a shift that is easy to overlook precisely because it runs against what feels most natural. The recognition of God—the discernment of divine reality—does not occur at the level of feeling, but at the level of meaning. As the revelation states, "it is your thoughts, not your feelings, that lead you Godward" 101:1.3 (1104.6).

This is not a minor clarification. It represents a fundamental reorientation. Feeling may accompany spiritual life, but it does not define its direction. Emotion may respond, but it does not discern. It is thought—meaning, interpretation, and the recognition of value—that allows the divine to be known.

In this sense, the shift is of the same order as the introduction of the Supreme or the evolutionary nature of reality itself. Just as the Supreme reframes Deity as experiential and growing, this emphasis reframes spiritual life as something that must be progressively understood—not merely felt.

Without this shift, experience remains immediate but unformed. Familiar meanings persist. Interpretation stabilizes. The revelation is received, but its transformative power remains largely unrealized.

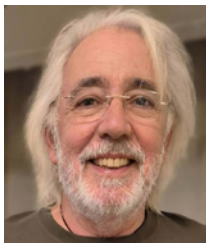
The issue, then, is not sincerity, but clarity. Not devotion alone, but understanding.

This is why the refinement of understanding is not secondary—it is essential. It is the condition under which experience becomes directional, values become coherent, and meaning becomes capable of transformation.

The invitation of *The Urantia Book* is therefore not simply to feel more, but to understand more truly—to allow thought itself to be elevated, clarified, and reorganized in the light of revelation.

We may indeed *feel* more.

But we will only *know* differently when we are willing to *understand* differently.



Luis Costa *is Portuguese and lives mainly in Lisbon, Portugal, spending part of each year in Trancoso, Brazil. After a lifetime of varied occupations and experiences—including ten years in monastic life—he came to view religion as a deeply personal and experiential search for truth, beauty, and goodness. For the past seven years,* The Urantia Book *has been an ongoing source of reflection for him on evolution, consciousness, values, and spiritual growth.*



Evette Twyford
An Invitation
Acrylic on stretched canvas
8x16 inches
2026

See bio information on page 3.



espíritu. Pero hay mucho que ocurre además de este ministerio trascendente y que no se ha revelado jamás a los mortales de Urantia. Tampoco comprendemos plenamente qué es lo que realmente ocurre cuando el Padre Universal da de sí mismo para que sea parte de la personalidad de una criatura temporal. Tampoco ha revelado completamente la progresión ascendente de los finalistas del Paraíso las posibilidades plenas inherentes a esta asociación excelsa de hombre y Dios. En último análisis, los fragmentos Paternales deben ser un don del Dios absoluto a aquellas criaturas cuyo destino abarca la posibilidad del alcance de Dios como absoluto.

Así como el Padre Universal fragmenta su Deidad prepersonal, el espíritu Infinito individualiza porciones de su espíritu premente para residir en las almas evolucionarias de los mortales sobrevivientes que pertenecen a la serie de fusión con el espíritu y realmente fusionarse en ellas. Pero la naturaleza del Hijo Eterno no es fragmentable de esta manera; el espíritu del Hijo Original es difuso o discretamente personal. Las criaturas fusionadas con el Hijo están unidas con dotes individualizadas del espíritu de los Hijos Creadores del Hijo Eterno.

2. LA CLASIFICACIÓN DE LOS AJUSTADORES

Los Ajustadores son individualizados como entidades vírgenes, y todos están destinados a tornarse liberados, fusionados o Monitores Personalizados. Comprendemos que existen siete órdenes de Ajustadores del Pensamiento, aunque no comprendemos totalmente estas categorías. Frecuentemente nos referimos a las diferentes órdenes como sigue:

1. *Ajustadores vírgenes*, los que sirven en su encargo inicial en la mente de los candidatos evolucionarios para la sobrevivencia eterna. Los Monitores Misteriosos son eternamente uniformes en su naturaleza divina. También son uniformes en su naturaleza experiencial cuando salen primeramente de Divinington; la diferenciación experiencial subsiguiente es el resultado de una experiencia actual de ministerio universal.
2. *Ajustadores avanzados*, los que han servido una o más temporadas con criaturas volitivas en los mundos donde la fusión final ocurre entre la identidad de la criatura temporal y una porción individualizada del espíritu de la

6. *Ajustadores fusionados* —finalistas— los que se han hecho uno con las criaturas ascendentes de los superuniversos, los socios en la eternidad de los ascensores del tiempo en el Cuerpo Paradisiaco de la Finalidad. Los Ajustadores del Pensamiento ordinariamente se fusionan con los mortales temporales ascendentes, y con tales mortales sobrevivientes son registrados a su entrada y salida de Ascendington; siguen el curso de los seres ascendentes. Después de fusionarse con el alma ascendente evolucionaria, parecería que el Ajustador se trasladara del nivel existencial absoluto del universo, al nivel existencial finito de la asociación funcional con la personalidad ascendente. Aunque retenga todo el carácter de la naturaleza divina existencial, un Ajustador Fusionado se torna indisolublemente vinculado con la carrera ascendente de un mortal sobreviviente.
7. *Ajustadores Personalizados*, los que han servido con los Hijos del Paraíso encarnados, juntamente con muchos que han alcanzado una distinción poco común durante su residencia en un mortal, pero cuyos sujetos rehusaron la supervivencia. Tenemos razones para creer que dichos Ajustadores son personalizados por recomendación de los Ancianos de los Días del superuniverso de su encargo.

Hay muchas maneras en las cuales estos misteriosos fragmentos de Dios pueden ser clasificados: de acuerdo con el encargo universal, por la medida de éxito en su residencia en un mortal individual, o aun por las raíces raciales del candidato mortal para la fusión.

3. EL HOGAR DE LOS AJUSTADORES EN DIVININGTON

Todas las actividades universales relacionadas con el envío, gestión, dirección y retorno de los Monitores Misteriosos del servicio en los siete superuniversos parecen estar centradas en la esfera sagrada de Divinington. Por lo que yo sé, nadie, excepto los Ajustadores y otras entidades del Padre, ha estado en esa esfera. Parece probable que numerosas entidades prepersonales no reveladas compartan a Divinington como esfera de residencia con los Ajustadores.

Did Pope Francis know *The Urantia Book*?

Jorge Wilczyk, Argentina

I'll start with a spoiler:

the answer is yes, he knew it and studied it.

Confirmed.

Although in order to share how I found out,
I must tell you a story.

For several years I underwent hemodialysis for chronic kidney failure. Sessions can be tedious: four to five hours, three times a week. As everything has its positive side, the passivity of being in comfortable armchairs during that period was an excellent opportunity to read and study my favorite book (you understand what I mean). The dialysis room was a long corridor of about twenty-five meters with six chairs on each side facing each other, something like a hospital inpatient room, but instead of beds, chairs with machines sandwiched between them. At times, that favored talk and exchange between patients, with varied shared bonds more or less as they can occur in a school class. In 2012, a new patient arrived: Jorge Castelli, Archpriest of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, which according to tradition was founded in the first century by Peter and Paul in present-day Antakya, Turkey, and separated from Catholicism in the so-called Eastern Schism of 1054.

Like every new patient/colleague, he was presented with a name, and from his clothing we knew that he was a religious man. In relation to my location, Jorge was just diagonally in front. The proximity did not prevent him from seeing that on the armrest of my chair, a thick blue hardcover book laid. He thought it was a Bible, as he told me some time later. I knew it wouldn't be long before the conversation about my blue book and his curiosity came together. Like a patient fisherman, I waited for his inquiry. It arrived towards the end of his first week (he remained there three years).

He initiated the inquiry by looking from his spot at the front and back covers of my open book (on purpose raised by me, I concede), where he could clearly read the gold letters at the top and see the three concentric circles below.

"That's not a Bible," he stated, looking at me while at the same time answering himself out loud.

"Not exactly, although you could say it's the update," I responded right away.

Jorge shook his head from the side and gestured with his lower lip while throwing a timid:

"Good grief, look at that...."

He didn't speak again. Me neither. I continued reading.

(I have no doubt that our Adjusters had already shared their WhatsApp number with each other).

Seventy-something years old, Jorge Castelli was a serious man, with an almost military voice, who knew how to let humor out without going out of character. A formally trained theologian, with scientific knowledge. An all-rounder, a mix of Jesuit and Salesian. Descendant of a traditional wealthy family, with

Adobe Stock
Wikimedia Commons-Zebra48bo

history in the first national government of 1810, but from a very young age absolutely consecrated to living for and among those most in need. In his community of San Fernando, in Buenos Aires, he went to streets in humble neighborhoods, built and taught how to build; kneaded and taught how to knead bread. He also built classroom by classroom a school that grew to what it is today: a space where 850 students of different levels are trained. A man of Faith, who lived Faith. Doing the will of God in every sense of the expression.

Although I don't remember exactly how it happened, from a comment we began to talk about how life originated. He told me that what the Bible expresses is not literal. That gave me the excuse to launch into a relevant Urantia Book topic:

"Sure, like Adam and Eve with the viper and the apple. In fact, in the book there are entire papers about Adam and Eve."

From that moment on, Jorge hinted that he was a man of firm convictions *and* a broad mind. He didn't respond negatively.

He said, "How interesting, I would like to read it."

And at once, he blurted out, "What is Urantia?"

I gave him the classic "Wikipedia summary" that comes to mind, always trying not to bother or confront, and I closed with something that pleased him:

"I think it's best that I lend you the book for a couple of days. You will find more interesting things in the first pages, because you are a cultivated religious man. Have a look and we'll keep talking."

He spent the entire weekend with the book I gave him.

When I entered the dialysis room on Monday, he was already in his chair.

Before greeting me, eager to share it with me, he told me:

"That book is the most wonderful thing I have ever read in my life!"

He accompanied his words with such a flamboyant movement of his hands that the patients in the back of the room believed he was challenging me.

From that moment on, each dialysis became a permanent exchange between the two of us. Since we both had powerful voices, we often managed, unintentionally, to get those closest to us to end up being listeners of our talks.

The patients' routine joke was:

"What is today's conference about?"

I gave Jorge a copy of the book—if I remember correctly, one of the last ones that Carlos Rubinsky had with a hardcover.

Another patient, in poor health, was inspired to hear us speak, especially by the teaching about the morontia worlds and what follows. He was relieved by so much certainty and precision. He was a reader in his last days.

The conversations with Jorge continued naturally. We learned a lot from each other (I more from him). We became friends.

I learned details of his life; it's a story truly worth telling. The inspiration that *The Urantia Book* gave him reinforced concepts that were floating around in his head and that known theology could not present convincingly.

Thus, he began an activity secondary to his traditional religious work: he used concepts from the Fifth Revelation to give training seminars to new pupils, without revealing the source.

And so this is where we arrive to the part about Pope Francis.

Jorge formed an in-person and epistolary group with other religious people who were already exchanging religious materials. Some were from Argentina, others by mail from Latin American countries: Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.

I don't remember their names, but I do remember that some of them had a prominent position in their country's Catholic Church.

One of the leaders in Argentina who made up his study group—to define it in some way—was a high-ranking clergyman in the Argentinian Catholic Church. I do not mention his first and last name because he is still active.

Upon learning his name, I associated him with his well-known closeness to Jorge Bergoglio. And the question was inevitable:

"Does Francis know The Urantia Book?"

"He knows it and studies it, I know it for a fact from…(he mentioned the other person).

"And there are more, but few who have the guts to say it, because it would be impossible for the curia to handle."

(He didn't say "guts", but something more vulgar that expresses it better).

Jorge Castelli died in 2015, after a domestic accident. That same year, Pope Francis stated before educators around the world:

"Educating in truth, goodness and beauty leads to a full life."[1]

You can no longer doubt the origin of that phrase.

From all that experience I learned that revelation does not seek to impose itself, but rather to share itself.

The book is just a medium; The important thing is what awakens in those who find it, and to know how to give each person what can be useful for them from our beloved text.

Jorge Castelli did not need to change his religion to see more clearly. He was a man of authentic faith.

His Inner Spark confirmed truths that he already knew intuitively. He recognized the truth and was moved by it.

That's life. Sometimes you think you are going to a dialysis session... and you end up going on a date with the Father's will.

What for some could be routine or suffering, turned out to be a setting for service, for friendship and for sharing light.

Over nine years, I learned a lot from those and many other situations that I experienced there.

I thank our Great Father for them.

I learned that there is no time, no place, no condition in which the spirit cannot work through us.

I learned that we should not talk about the book, but from its teachings.

That the truth, when it is real, does not need labels.

And that we are not here to convince anyone, but to live in such a way that others want to find the source, drink from it—and to then bring living water themselves to those who do not yet know that they are thirsty.



Jorge Wilczyk *lives in Argentina and has been active in the Urantia Book community since 1998. A professional journalist since 1994, he is currently president of the Urantia Association of Argentina.*



Jorge Wilczyk with his caregivers during dialysis treatment, 2012.

1 Speech to the World Congress of Catholic Education, November 21, 2015



An Interview with Jorge Wilczyk

Luis Garcia-Bory, Switzerland
Richard Jernigan, USA

Editor's note: the following interview with Jorge Wilzcyk was conducted via Zoom by Luis Garcia-Bory and Richard Jernigan on April 16, 2026. The interview was conducted in Spanish and translated into English under Bory and Jernigan's supervision.

LUIS: Jorge, it is a pleasure to see you and to be with you in this session today to understand something of your Urantia Book story, not only from your own perspective, but also in relation to the broader experience you had with clergyman Jorge Castelli. You mentioned to me earlier that you are a journalist by profession. Could you briefly share your professional background?

JORGE: Certainly. Professionally, I have a bachelor's degree in journalism and later finished studies in radio and television production in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the profession. Around 1995, I began working in local television and transitioned to the channel's news division. I was born in Vicente López, near Buenos Aires, Argentina, and I was able to build a professional career across radio, television, and print media—all the different areas that a journalist typically loves to explore.

LUIS: Tell us a little background about how you came to find *The Urantia Book*.

JORGE: Yes. It began in a completely informal way and then it just sort of gathered momentum. If I have to describe it, I was not looking for anything. I was

baptised as a baby and at nine years old as a formality, because we were not practicing, I went to catechism classes.

In Vicente López, where I lived, you had to go to the church in your own district; you could not go to another for communion. I went the first time with my brother, who is a year older. The priest giving the introductory talk before the catechism class passed around a little bag on a long pole so that each of us could put in some money. I had no idea how it worked; it was all new to me. None of us had any money. We were just kids. When the class ended, we felt bad because the priest's closing remark was: "And so you know for next time, if you put in less than five pesos before class, God gets angry." Imagine, that was my very first encounter with the Church.

We went home distressed. We came from a very humble family; my father worked two jobs every day except Sundays. My brother and I told our parents. My father was furious. On Sunday morning, he went to the church to speak to the priest after mass. "How can you say something like that to the kids?" The priest was a very arrogant man and said, "I do not know you." My father was already in a bad mood. He is an imposing man, about one meter ninety-five, a former soccer player. He said, "How can you tell the kids that God asks them for money?" The priest began to berate him, saying he had no right to speak to him like that because he was not a Christian, because he did not come to church on Sundays. My father replied, "God is everywhere; you do not need to come to church. I do not come because I work all week and want to spend Sunday with my family." The priest told him he was a bad Christian and did not deserve to have us take communion there. He spoke very harshly to my father. I no longer remember the exact words, but I remember it because we were all there, and a crowd gathered. Eventually, my dad had enough and gave the priest a shove. The man fell down. It was a very tense, terrible moment for us as small children. My dad apologized to us about it eighty times afterward. From then on, we did not take communion, and my relationship with traditional religion became non-existent. And sorry if I went off on a bit of a tangent there, but it is part of my story, after all.

But let me tell you how I came to *The Urantia Book*. Many years later, I think it was 1995 or 1996 I was with a girlfriend who was a physical-education teacher. We



Carlos Rubinsky, Marinette Morales, Adrián Cardi, and Jorge Wilczyk in Carlos' Buenos Aires home where he has hosted gatherings for over 25 years.

were at a party, and I overheard someone talking in a group a few meters away. Even though there were a lot of people, I distinctly heard this person talking about how when Jesus died, a flying saucer came down, and a cousin of his had read about it in a book called *Caballo de Troya* (*Trojan Horse*).

I heard about it and but didn't do anything with that information. Two years later, my girlfriend and I were walking down the street in a terrible storm. We ducked into in a bookstore, and while we were looking around, I saw a pocket edition of *Caballo de Troya 1* by

J.J. Benitez. I began reading it out of curiosity, and soon read all the way to book five. I became captivated by the life of Jesus. It wasn't the *Caballo do Troya* storyline that interested me. I would just flip through the pages, eager to read whatever Jesus had said. I went to a large bookstore in the capital to see if they had *Caballo de Troya 6* in paperback. The salesman said, "No, I do not have that one in a pocket edition, but someone came in a few days ago and told me that *Caballo de Troya* is actually a copy of *The Urantia Book*." That was the first time in my life I had heard the name "The Urantia Book." I asked if they had it. He spoke to the manager. They moved several things behind the counter as if opening a safe and pulled out a corrugated cardboard box. Inside was a single softcover of *The Urantia Book*. I was surprised; it looked like a Bible, as it does to everyone the first time. I opened it at random, read something about Jesus at the back, and was moved and fascinated. The price was far beyond my reach. It took me three months to save the money, but finally I bought a hard cover copy.

From then on, I read it and immediately tried to find other readers in Argentina. The internet was still very new, and the only things that appeared were Urantia Foundation and a link for the "Southern Cone" which gave Carlos Rubinsky's address—no telephone, just the address. So, with the address and knowing it was in Buenos Aires, I looked up the phone number, contacted Carlos Rubinsky, and two days later, went to his house. From then on, I was reading and studying, and that was more than twenty-six years ago.

LUIS: That is a very common experience among those of us who first encounter the book through *Trojan Horse*. But beyond that initial approach to the papers concerning Jesus—how did you tackle the rest of the book?

JORGE: First of all, out of curiosity, one looks for similarities with what one already knows. In my case, what I had read about Jesus and what had moved me. The second thing was the Thought Adjuster. While reading *Caballo de Troya*, Jesus at one point speaks about "the divine spark within each of us." The moment I read that—right in the center of my chest—it was as if something said, "Here I am." It is a personal experience difficult to convey. If I had to express it in images, it would be a beautiful light that I felt. It is indescribable. So the second thing I became deeply involved with in *The Urantia Book* was the concept of the Thought Adjuster, and that drew me closer to the idea of a God who did not ask you for five pesos when you went to catechism class.

LUIS: Several years later you had severe health concerns and had to undergo dialysis. But this also led to your friendship with the Archpriest Jorge Castelli.

JORGE: I had always been a very healthy, athletic person. I ran marathons. Unbeknownst to me, I began experiencing a mild case of kidney failure, a diagnostic error led to me being prescribed the wrong medication. That led me to dialysis in 2011. I had to undergo dialysis for nine years, but I believe that—regardless of the difficult things that happen to us—one must always try to do one's very best. In that spirit, I seized the opportunity to help out whenever possible. To do good, you don't necessarily have to donate to children in Africa, though that is certainly a worthy cause. Instead, I was able to have a profound experience: not only this one with Jorge Castelli, but also the experience of inspiring and supporting others, specifically, people arriving at dialysis with understandable fears.

You see, dialysis is a very invasive process; it can be aggressive for some patients. Three times a week, you spend about five hours hooked up to a machine. They insert two needles into your arm—blood flows out one side and back in through the other—and this entails a series of physical consequences which, combined with people's specific anxieties—the fear, the sheer terror—can cause their blood pressure to spike, or lead them to feel faint or even pass out.

So, in the dialysis center whenever a new patient arrived, they would seat them next to me, and the nurses and technicians would joke, "Go on, give him the technical rundown." What they meant was that it is not the same for a doctor to tell the patient something as for another patient who is also connected with needles to a machine to say it. So I was able to use that time to talk, not only about things from *The Urantia Book* without mentioning the book, but also to help calm those patients' fears. I say "only" nine years because in 2020, in the middle of the COVID pandemic, I received a transplant. That was a true test of faith, but that is another story.

LUIS: In your article, you mention that Jorge Castelli was an archpriest of the Orthodox Church of Antioch. It is Christian, of course, but as an Orthodox body, it



Jorge Castelli in his office in Buenos Aires

has certain distinctions. Did he ever speak to you about this Orthodox denomination?

JORGE: In reality, my relationship with Jorge Castelli was never defined by titles. He was a man of strong character, very practical. As for his educational background, he only mentioned having undertaken in-depth theological studies in Lebanon and at the University of Balamand. It is a regular institution of higher learning with an intense religious component. He never spoke to me about the particularities of the Orthodox Church of Antioch, except to mention the location of the main church in Buenos Aires. What struck me about him was his open mind, especially when it came to the Church. Even though I myself had very little religious tradition before *The Urantia Book*, when I first saw him at the dialysis center, I thought he was an ordinary parish priest. The title "Archpriest" surprised me, but his approach did not align with that of the traditional Church. The school he founded—and the entire institution he built—had a profile that, from what I could see upon visiting it, was indistinguishable from a traditional Catholic church—at least in terms of its structure and outward appearance.

LUIS: It is my assumption that in a place like Argentina, where there are many Catholics, for someone like Jorge Castelli to become a parish priest in an Orthodox church would be extraordinary. So, the very fact that he chose that denomination and that vocation is itself intriguing. Just how much of his personal story did he share with you—specifically, how he came to join that particular denomination?

JORGE: He came from a traditional Argentine family, tracing its roots back to the May Revolution of the early 19th century, with members who had participated in the Primera Junta (First Junta) of that era. He was the rebel of the family, quite apart from his religious calling. I can only surmise that this rebelliousness led him to seek a different view of the traditional religion of early twentieth-century Argentina, which was, of course, Catholicism.

LUIS: You told me a moment ago that what struck you most clearly was his open mind. The rebellious streak partly explains that. Rebellion itself is a way of opening horizons beyond the strict confines of a very conservative, traditional family. But was there anything more that made you realize he was open to hearing about *The Urantia Book*?

JORGE: In practice, the experience left a lasting impression on him—much like the story recounted in the article. Unlike the majority of people who are just discovering the book, he was immediately captivated by it—specifically by the book's first section. This was because of the way it approached the concepts of God—moving beyond mere relativities and the conventions of traditional religion. While theology certainly delves deep, it rarely does so in this specific manner—this method of peeling back the layers of God as revealed in the early papers. This deeply moved him, for it felt as though he had been searching internally for a way to articulate the image of God he held within himself. It was as if he sensed that this text gave form to the very ideas his own mind had struggled to organize or put into words.

LUIS: So, the two of you began a back-and-forth exchange during dialysis sessions. Tell us a little more about that experience.

JORGE: A dialysis session can be rather tedious. We are sitting in armchairs; there are televisions where you can put on earphones and listen. In our case, as both of us had strong voices, we could carry on conversations that others would listen in on. Sometimes another patient would join in and talk. In between what we were talking about, we would make jokes and digress, but generally, it was very interesting. There was excitement about what we would end up talking about. The joke was, "What is the topic of today's lecture going to be?" It was mostly like that. I insist that Jorge was a man of strong character, and sometimes he would arrive—well, a bit pre-occupied shall we say? In fact, he would often ask if he could undergo fewer hours of dialysis because he had so much work to do; he was deeply immersed in his responsibilities—deeply invested in everything he had built and developed over so many years. He had been working within that community since 1962, and he truly acted as a father figure to it. And so, sometimes he would arrive with his head—his mind—completely consumed by all of that.

During the time we were there, we'd talk about the book. Either he'd ask me questions, or I'd ask him: "What did you make of this part? What do you think about this?" Because I don't exactly consider myself an expert, I always say that I have more faith than knowledge. And sometimes it's hard to convey what I feel and what I know, even if—technically speaking—communications *is* my profession. But this kind of information is harder to convey, especially with a person who has theological training. Jorge Castelli, in particular, didn't just know how to listen, he also knew how to express himself. Some very interesting things came up during our talks—like when we discussed Adam and Eve. Sometimes it was very funny



Jorge Castelli with painting he created in 1962.

because those who were listening made jokes, but I think everyone took something away from those conversations. And among those who were listening, there was one patient who actually ended up asking me for a copy of the book.

LUIS: Did you tell other Urantia Book readers about these conversations you had with Castelli?

JORGE: The Buenos Aires study group in Carlos Rubinsky's home would meet weekly in person. And one of the recurring topics of conversation was always:

"What did you guys talk about with Jorge Castelli this week?" In fact, at one point, Carlos Rubinsky and his wife wanted to go meet him, so we went. We visited one Sunday afternoon. He gave us a very inconvenient time slot, but he said it was the only free time he had available all week. He was an incredibly busy man, constantly immersed in his work. I believe the Sunday appointment was sometime after 6:00 PM. It was a very interesting conversation. I tried not to speak much because I always spoke with him, but it was a great meeting with him and Carlos Rubinsky's wife, Maria Inés, who has since passed away, but who was also a reader and student of *The Urantia Book*. She came from a more formal Catholic tradition, so they had much in common. It was a great gathering and a great encounter. They got on very well very quickly.

LUIS: Moving on to the theme of Jorge Castelli's own network, you indicated that it was quite separate from his institutional, ecclesiastical side. Did you ever have the chance to meet other clerics, people from his network of theologians or people of that profile, or was it something very separate?

JORGE: He would say to me, "I am going to share it in the group." "What group?" I asked. He explained, "I belong to a group comprising people from other churches here in Argentina and across Latin America." He would tell me about them, but they were quite discreet, I suppose because, in general, people with religious or theological training tend to be more reserved regarding these types of topics. Although several of them had an open mind like his, they could not express everything openly, because many of those concepts clashed with doctrinal aspects of their own churches. Other religious people were the same. What united them was not their religion but their passion for understanding, for deepening theology.

So, *The Urantia Book* might have been a treasure for many of them. It involved an exchange of written correspondence, but there was also a local group with whom they would meet in person once a month. It was, quite literally, a kind of study group. Within this group they would discuss and grapple with all these various topics. *The Urantia Book* was a revelation for him because it was complementary to what many of them thought but hadn't yet managed to fully articulate or structure. It gave them a much more solid foundation. I know they were from the Catholic Church, and I do not remember others, but none of them were evangelicals, just Catholics, including some from other countries. Venezuela comes to mind—I'm simply relying on my memory here—it's not as if I kept a formal record of it.

Those meetings were dedicated primarily to intensive study, though they maintained a considerable degree of discretion regarding the whole affair. However, I do know that he brought material from *The Urantia Book* to those study sessions, and that he subsequently incorporated some of that material into what I believe was a training curriculum for seminarians, or something along those lines. It went by a different name, though. The Orthodox Church—his own denomination—was in the process of developing a specific educational program intended for implementation throughout Latin America. He didn't tell me much more, but he said [about *The Urantia Book*], "I'm going to use this wherever I can for the seminarians."

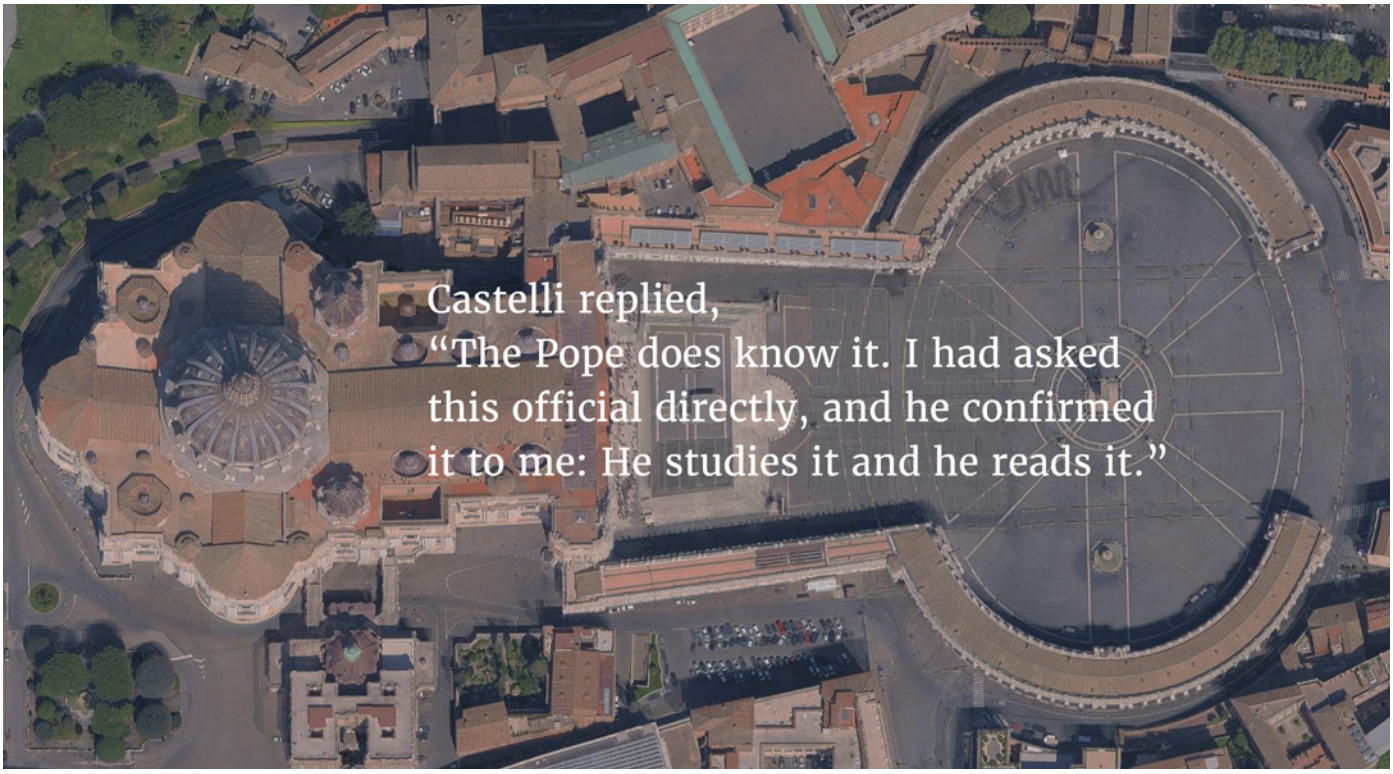
LUIS: Were you able to gain access to any of those specific educational materials he might have prepared or shared?

JORGE: I suppose it would be a matter of finding which materials they were, because it was something new they were about to implement here throughout Latin America between 2012 and 2014 or thereabouts.

LUIS: It would be very interesting to investigate. Now, returning to Jorge Castelli and the person who was the connection to Pope Francis, how much were you able to learn about all those matters? Could you elaborate a little on that?

JORGE: Regarding this high-ranking Church official, and knowing the close relationship he had with the then-Pope, I asked Jorge Castelli the question directly, based on something that caught my attention when he told me about the interfaith discussion group he was participating in. Upon learning that one of its members was *that* religious figure close to Jorge Bergoglio, I asked him if that person knew whether Pope Francis read *The Urantia Book*. "Does he actually study the book? Is he familiar with it?"

Castelli replied, "The Pope does know it. I had asked this official directly, and he confirmed it to me:



Adobe Stock

He studies it and he reads it." Castelli's response was immediate and affirmative: that the Pope read and studied it.

I was pleasantly surprised. It was the greatest confirmation I received. While it is obvious that the Vatican would possess copies of *The Urantia Book*, the fact that the Pope read and studied it is something else entirely.

LUIS: That is why it was so very important for us to hear from you firsthand. We certainly understand that you cannot share the name of the high-ranking cleric within the Argentine Catholic Church, but what convinced you Jorge Castelli's story was true?

JORGE: From a journalistic standpoint, this is indirect testimony that cannot be verified by multiple sources. However, my conviction is not based on that criterion, but on my personal knowledge of Jorge Castelli. Although I did not mention it in the article because it was irrelevant, I had the opportunity to work with Jorge on a documentary project about the development of his community, which allowed me to get to know his background, his way of thinking, and his integrity as a person firsthand. That direct knowledge is what leads me to consider his testimony reliable. Based on my experience, I have no reason to doubt that what he told me was true.

But beyond this particular episode, I actually made an attempt to ensure—firsthand—that a specific book reached Francisco's hands. Let me tell you how it came about: when I was a journalism student, my Creative Writing Workshop class was taught by Alicia Barrios, a renowned journalist. She had maintained a close personal friendship with Jorge Bergoglio long before his papacy. You can find many photos of the two of them together on in a Google search.

Since she traveled to Rome constantly, it occurred to me—after many years had passed—to reach out to her in hopes of achieving my goal. We spoke on one occasion; later, she was recovering from an oncological illness. We reconnected in April 2024, and she mentioned that as soon as she was well enough to travel, she would head to Rome and carry out my request. Unfortunately, it never came to fruition. We were so close!

I still have the conversation saved. And I really would have loved to pull it off, because I would have included a personal note or something along those lines. That was my plan, at least: to slip something inside. And I suppose we would have received some

kind of response, because—in that regard—Francisco had those unofficial habits of his, where he might simply pick up the phone and call someone out of the blue. At first, people thought it was a prank, until they realized it really was Francisco. That happened in many situations involving people here in Argentina, regarding various matters. So, I really would have loved to make it happen. It remains unfinished business—but oh well; ultimately, it wasn't up to me.

LUIS: And that is wonderful because it speaks of his humility, inspired by the divine spark. It has been a genuine pleasure, Jorge, to have the opportunity to talk. Is there anything you would like to end the session with you think we should know, that we did not ask, or something you would like to include?

JORGE: Perhaps what motivated my article, this specific and concrete piece of information, was the knowledge that Pope Francis actually read and studied *The Urantia Book*, and the realization of how deeply his words regarding truth, beauty, and goodness resonated with us. That was, perhaps, the very first thing that caught our attention here in Argentina when we heard his speech. The connection we drew was immediate. And although we do not know how much more of *The Urantia Book* he may have absorbed, learned, or utilized, the message I would like to convey regarding this is that we must return to a fundamental idea: what matters is the content of the book, not the book itself. Sometimes those two things don't seem like the same thing, do they?

In my own experience, I have always focused on discussing what elements within the book might be of service to the individual I am speaking with. I never frame it as, "In *The Urantia* Book it says such and such." Instead, I might share something I learned from *The Urantia Book*—something I felt could be of use to that specific person—and if I succeeded in truly reaching them, the person themselves would often say: "Interesting. Where did you get that? Where does it come from?" "Well, that is a topic for another time." But the point is, I don't go around talking about the book; I speak about the content. And yes, Francis utilized that content, finding it useful for the message he, too, wished to convey at that particular moment. It is the same path—and I hope this can serve as a method for dissemination: sharing these ideas without attaching labels. I believe that makes it much easier for the message to truly reach people.

Ultimately, I myself discovered *The Urantia Book* through Benítez's *Caballo de Troya*, and I did so in my own way. I do not know if that was Benítez's specific intention, but I believe the *Caballo de Troya* series bears that title precisely because it presents one thing on the surface, while concealing something else entirely within its depths: *The Urantia Book*.

LUIS: A great allegory to close today's session, Jorge! Thank you. It has been a genuine pleasure, Jorge, to have the opportunity to talk.

JORGE: Thank you, too.



Luis Garcia-Bory *has studied* The Urantia Book *since 1993, beginning his discovery of the Fifth Epochal Revelation in his native Mexico. For over a decade, he has moderated a pan-European Zoom study group and meditation sessions in English from his home in Geneva, Switzerland.*

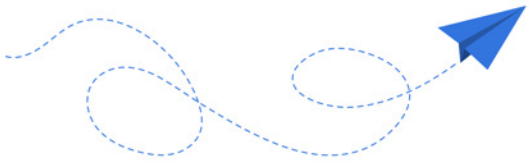
We want to hear from you

Beginning with our November 2024 issue, we began publishing reader comments on UAI Journal articles. We look forward to hearing from you. Send your responses to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org



Do you have an article to share?



The Journal editorial team welcomes all submissions for consideration for future issues. Personal spiritual experiences, fresh insights, and new perspectives are always of interest, as well as thematic studies and articles that compare, evaluate, or integrate academic research (scientific, social, religious, or otherwise) with the teachings of *The Urantia Book*. Send correspondence or article submissions for the Journal to:

richardjernigan@urantia-association.org.

See our website for submissions policy and formatting requirements.

Ways to Contribute to Urantia Association International

The world is changing fast and Urantia Association International is in a unique position to foster the Urantia revelation in so many ways. With localized teams in the form of associations springing up across the globe, we are ready to help anyone, anywhere, to study and spread the teachings that we all hold so dear.

With the beneficial changes that technology brings, more and more organizations are switching to a subscription model as a way of making donations. Urantia Association has launched the Global Urantia Perspective for those who share a dynamic world vision for *The Urantia Book*. We are looking for supporters to subscribe for a minimum donation of $15 per month to support programs that work to spread the teachings.

The Association has only one paid staff member to manage and coordinate our worldwide activities. All other services are rendered by devoted students who donate their time (and often their treasure) to the projects that help bring us closer to our heavenly Father. Thank you to our faithful volunteers and donors!

There are a number of ways to donate to Urantia Association International:

Online by Credit Card or PayPal

Visit our website to access our secure online donation form at: https://urantia-association.org/donate

Unrestricted Giving: Choose General Fund on the online donation form for unrestricted donations that can be used for any purpose, including all administrative costs.

Restricted Giving: Choose one of the Program Funds on the online donation form for restricted donations. Your contribution will be used only for the purpose of that fund. (More details on the Program funds can be found at: https://urantia-association.org/program-funds.)

Check or Money Order

Send your contribution to:

Urantia Association International
4000 W. Montrose Ave. #606
Chicago, IL 60641 USA

By Telephone or Email:

Phone: +1-773-572-1180

Email: centraloffice@urantia-association.org

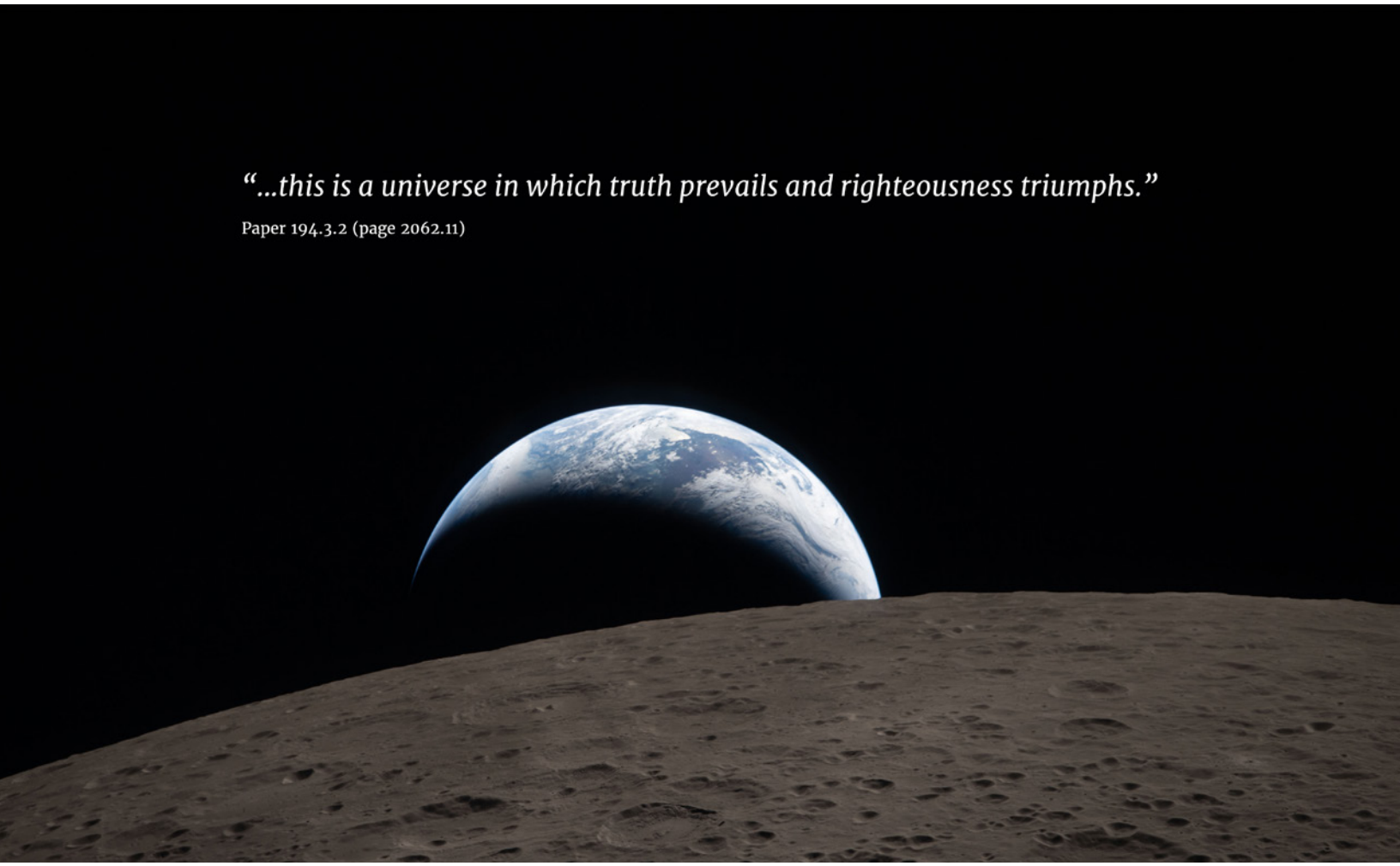
Planned Giving

See our website for more information about planned giving and tax exemptions for donations and gifts.

Urantia Association International

4000 W Montrose Avenue #606

Chicago, IL 60641



NASA

Fostering study of *The Urantia Book* and dissemination of its teachings