

## *The Rosicrucian Brotherhood— Part 2*

**F**ROM THE beginning of the world it has been known that there is a death of the body. And from this it is clear what remarkable power had been given to these men by Christ. The same is true for the one of whom it is said, “I will erect a house to the faithful one, and he will walk before me all the days of his life.” These are the people meant by the prophet Isaiah, when he invites, “O house of Jacob, come, and let us walk in the light of the Lord” (*Isaiah* 2:5), and elsewhere, “Those who receive the true light will receive the power to become the rightful sons of God, even those who believe on His name.”

You can discern from this the point of view and the true character of the inhabitants of that House of Wisdom. In addition, we now must consider how they are named, and the relationship given to them at that time by the Holy Scripture, namely, sons of God, the chosen of the Lord, the chosen generation, prophets, friends of God. Wisdom, not that of the flesh, but the one arising out of pure fire, kindled by



Planet Art

Michelangelo Caravaggio (1573-1610), Confarelli Chapel, S. Luigi dei Francesi, Rome

### *The Calling of St. Matthew*

*“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you”—John 15:16. God calls whom He calls. Bernard Berenson describes the above portrayal as Christ seemingly come to arrest the tax collector. The artist, having killed a man in a brawl, projected his own need for conversion from a violent life style into his conception of Matthew’s summons. Caravaggio also painted the even more dramatic calling of Saul.*

the Spirit, brings it about that the children of the world become the children of God by being chosen, as Peter said, “Who once were not a people, but now are a people of God.” And this seed is that incorruptible spirit which God enclosed within all things, as Christ seems to confirm with the words, “God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham” (*Matthew* 3:9); that is, new sons of Christ, Christians, whose head, according to the Apostle, is Jesus Christ, for he says, “I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ and the head of Christ is God” (*1 Corinthians* 11:95), and further, “You are of Christ, but Christ is of God.”

Christ, who according to the prophets is the light of Israel out of Bethlehem (that is, the House of Bread), speaks in you, and though he does not assume your form, yet he is in you, is “the chief

cornerstone" (*Ephesians* 2:20), whom we—as living stones—should serve to erect the House of Wisdom. This we should do in the same manner as Christ who as the leader of Israel, the chief rock, sends from his never-failing well the water of life. From this it follows that inasmuch as we are living stones, so we are seeds of Abraham; inasmuch as we are seeds of Abraham so we are truly brothers of Christ and true Israelites; and inasmuch as we are true Israelites, we are the Temple of God.

As we are divine seed and also living stones, that is, living stones cut from a single rock, carved out of Christ, so in this faith we have

become one with Christ, having become, as it were, his members, according to the word of the Apostle, "a body which has many members." Therefore we are inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. And what is in us, by which we can be called living stones,

is one truth in us. Thus we may believe that we are sons of God, and what beyond this is the night-side of man is lie and delusion, cannot in truth be called virtue or truth. For truth alone will pass safely through the trial of fire on the day of judgment. In the same manner as we Alchemists seek for that gold of God which emanates from Christ, so there is the perfect truth which alone will pass through each trial of fire in which the true and glowing virtue is purified, glorified and made more radiant, as is clearly evident from the words of the Apostle (*1 Corinthians* 3:13).

Here it must be said explicitly that these Brothers are truly sons of Abraham and Israel, but only spiritually, not in the flesh. Thus also they are living stones whom the Evangelist describes as "born out of God," and not through physical intercourse, of whom he also says that it is possible to awaken sons of Abraham out of stones.

Because these stones have sprung out of one

stone in this manner, they are also inner and spiritual stones. They can be called living stones because they give life and being to stones and all other earthly things which, because of their density are called "earth" and "stones." Because they have been taken as living stones from the general and universal Rock, they make clear that all is in one and one is in all. For it seems to them that according to the word of the Apostle, through Him is everything, and He is in everything, and outside Him all is illusion and untruth, things which seem to be but are not.

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b l e s s e d Alchemists to distinguish illusion from truth, that is, to distinguish the evil from the good. This distinction is necessary to free Christ in the creation where he was, as it were, kept prisoner by unbelief, and to work against

the godless nature of Barabbas, the son of dark confusion. Thus we become creators of the true word and of that wisdom which shines out of darkness, making us friends of God, enriched by every kind of gift.

All this happened through the opening of the earth so that, according to the words of Isaiah, "it may give birth to the Messiah." But this does not take place according to the ways of false Alchemists, but in a divine and mystical manner, which is revealed according to the laws of true Alchemy. And Paul seems to call the true Alchemist, "the true husbandman," saying, "the one who strives will not be crowned unless he strives righteously," for the striving husbandman stands in the first place to harvest the fruits. But Paul censures other philosophers and theologians who do not know the Divine Work, calling them, "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith" (*2 Timothy* 8:8). Thus he describes both the

good laborers, that is, the builders of the House of Wisdom on the Mount of Reason, and also the evil, the false architects. He points to the right way for each man to unite himself with the brotherhood of Christ and the seed of Abraham, to work as the true husbandman and architect.

Now these are also called Apostolic Brothers because they are familiar with those secrets which the Apostle not only knew, but proclaimed courageously to the world. That is, they know that mystical wisdom, the secrets of their relationship to the chief cornerstone. For the Apostles called men brothers who dedicated themselves to the same secrets of God as they did. From this comes that Apostolic Brotherhood of which the Apostle Paul speaks, "The brotherly love remain in you," and Peter, "live of the brotherhood," and elsewhere, "How good and pleasant it is for brothers to live with each other."

Such a common habitation has now been taken up by the Brotherhood of the Rosy Cross, and their strong bond of love and joy lies in their knowledge of that one Christ and that one spiritual rock, upon which foundation everything has been erected. In that Brotherhood of the Rosicrucians the highest and only truth, the greatest good-will, and brotherly love dwells.

In his sermons and letters, Paul calls the most unbelieving heathens, even the servants of idols, his brothers. We read from the Prophet Micah concerning the Lord of Israel, the Saviour from Bethlehem, "Therefore will he rescue them, and the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel." In this passage a dispersed flock is spoken of, and Christ is clearly characterized as

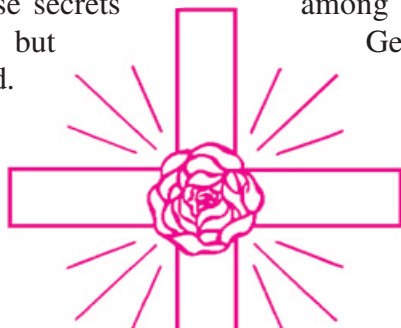
the Saviour of the world, as is said in *Matthew* 23:8, "One is your Master, but you all are brothers." And he continues, "For one is your Father, who is in heaven." With these words Christ does not indicate brothers in the flesh, but brothers in God, and he does not address the disciples alone, but the mixed crowd of listeners as well—and among them were unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

Now we can consider the reasons why that Brotherhood can give itself the name *Rosicrucian*, since we have explained above out of the clear words of the holy Testament why the designations *Apostolic* and *Christian* can rightly be used by those chosen ones. And why not the designation "Rosicrucian?" In the Roman Catholic Church is there not an Order dedicated to the Holy Cross? Is it then such a great offense to concede to this Apostolic Fraternity, to the true chosen ones and Brothers of God, the name *Rosicrucians*? Or is one to believe that the designation *Rosicrucians* in such an important matter means nothing? I shall here show, however, that to the initiate the word *Rosicrucian* or *Rose Cross* reveals the whole secret of the Brotherhood,

however little it seems to mean to the ignorant.

Not without intention was the sign of the Rose Cross carried on English sails, and by Christian heroes on their breasts in the wars against the Saracens and Turks. The more I consider it worthwhile to reveal here before all the mystery of the Rose Cross, the more I recognize the justification of this design for the Brotherhood.

One must certainly know that the teaching of salvation has placed before us a twofold cross in



#### *The Crucified Rose*

*The original symbol of the Rosicrucian Fraternity was a hieroglyphic rose crucified upon a cross. The cross was often raised upon a three-stepped Calvary. Occasionally a cross within a rose was used in connection with their activities. The Rosicrucian rose was drawn upon the Round Table of King Arthur. Rich in associations, the rose in this context symbolizes purification of the blood, spiritual unfoldment, and regeneration of the heart (Christing of the love nature).*

the sense of a twofold law or twofold sense of the Holy Scriptures, a twofold wisdom, namely, an outer and an inner, whereof the outer is the sheath of the inner. Thus, under the outer law is hidden in Holy Scripture the spirit within the letter, the divine and mystical wisdom within the seemingly confused meaning of the external words.

After Adam had tasted of the Tree of Good and Evil, confusion arose, clear wisdom was veiled by the darkness of illusion, and error was brought into the world. Thus, in place of pure and simple unity of unities arose confusion, namely that duality, that two-headed monster which looks at good and evil at the same time.

In a similar manner developed the relationship between the inner and outer, the mixture of virtue and vice, the pollution of the mystical wisdom by the human, the darkening of light through darkness, and, to say it briefly, the veiling of the spirit by the letter. But why use further words? Suffice it to say that the same relationship that exists between human wisdom and divine Wisdom also rules between the physical and outer and that inner, spiritual cross. “For,” says the Apostle, “the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,” and in another place, “God has made it into foolishness.” (See *1 Corinthians* 1:18 and *James* 1:22.) “Thy wisdom and thy knowledge deceives thee.”

However, the divine and mystical Wisdom is that which is “the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory” (*1 Corinthians* 2:7), as testified by the Apostle Paul. James speaks of the other wisdom: “This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish” (*James* 3:15). This is what one can also say of the cross, for the real and true being of mystical Wisdom is an inner Wisdom, while the external wisdom is only an illusion, a false image of the true.

The Apostle Paul seems to point to this when he says: “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others” (*Hebrews* 9:24-25). Throughout the whole chapter, the Apostle seems to prove that parables and “fig-

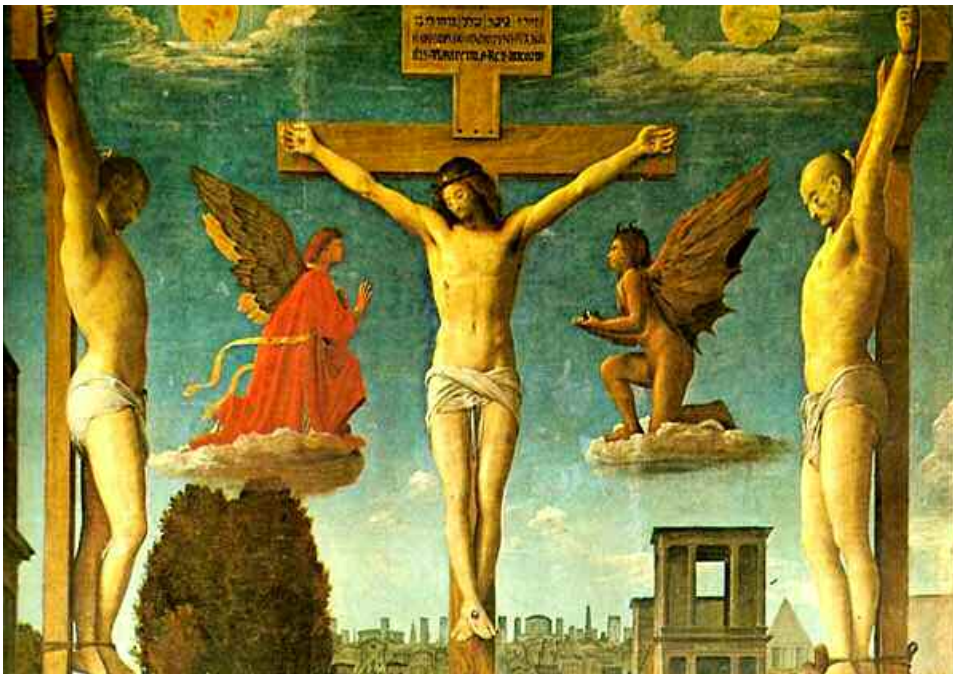
ures” are all those acts which took place by sprinkling with “blood of others” in the Tabernacle with that cross, in which the brazen serpent had been placed. The corresponding truth was only to reveal itself in a future century, as clearly foretold by his words: “The Holy Ghost signified that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was yet standing” (*Hebrews* 9:8). In addition, we find written elsewhere that the All-Highest does not dwell in habitations made with hands (*Acts* 7:48).

From this it is clear that the cross created by the human spirit means little, that the worldly wisdom means little, compared with the divine, mystical Wisdom, which is the power of God. Human wisdom is pure foolishness, as is also said by the Apostle, “The cross of Christ is a stumblingblock to the Jews, foolishness to the Greeks” (*1 Corinthians* 1:23). With “stumblingblock” he refers to the hatred which they harbored against Christ, for they expected only miracles from him. With the word “foolishness” he means not only those who mocked the cross, but also those who accepted the worldly and visible cross instead of the spiritual cross, that spiritual Wisdom which is the power of God, the outer instead of the inner.

In the world, therefore, we see two strong opposites from which arise so much strife, such monstrous discord in worldly affairs, namely, the light and the darkness. The light is Christ, the darkness is the prince of the letter—the devil. In the same manner we see both crosses—the one which is the power of God, true Wisdom, the pure and clear light; the other is devilish, for the Godhead is not in it, and because it is external, it misguides according to the foolishness of the Gentiles, misleading people into worshiping idols; i. e., to a veneration of things which cannot be called divine. And thus through ignorance the cross of the thief is venerated instead of the living cross.

It was in this sense that a venerable Church Father wrote that the cross of Christ consisted of two woods, upon which the devil and our Saviour Jesus Christ were crucified at the same time. Had he said, however, that Christ was crucified on the dead wood, and the other on the living wood, he would not have spoken in the sense of the Apostle





Oil on canvas, circa 1515, Bramantino (Bartolomeo Suardi), 1465-1530, Brera Gallery, Milan

### **Crucifixion**

*The Crucified is flanked by the repentant and unrepentant thieves and their spirit world counterparts, an angel and a devil. Though kneeling in apparent reverence, the devil's open-handed gesture suggests that Christ Jesus is being urged to forswear his faith at what seems a God-forsaken moment. The very cosmos laments the Passion as the sun and moon assume mourning visages, emblematic of the crucifixion of the world's soul.*

who says, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world" (*Galatians* 6:14). What he meant by the expression that "the world is crucified" is explained by the words, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus," (*Ibid.* 6:17) which is the same as though he said Christ's true and spiritual cross I bear within me, compared with which worldly things are crucified and dead, and therefore I am dead for the world. Elsewhere he says, "I am crucified with Christ so that I may live unto God" (*Ibid* 2:19).

We therefore may not worship the outer, satanic, worldly part of the cross, nor are we to surround it with divers testimonies and veneration. For it is the cross of death, not of life, fashioned out of earthly timber or some other corruptible material. But we must venerate only that true, genuine, living cross of Christ, that is, the mystical Wisdom which is called by the Holy Scriptures the wood of the Tree of Life, the fountain or root of which is the enlightened Word. To this is related the saying, "The holy form

of the cross shines out of its venerated sheath."

This "holy form of the cross" is the true inward, central cross of Christ, from which the Brotherhood takes its name. They richly deserve to be called Brothers of the Cross, for to this Order not only belonged the holy Prophets, but all Apostles, and also the true Disciples, as the Re-deemer said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (*Matthew* 16:24)

By this he seems to indicate that above all the true Christian must seek the spiritual cross, and that through the denial of self he is to crucify himself for the world and the world for

himself. Peter requires similarly that "As newborn babes desire the milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, to whom coming, as unto a living stone, chosen of God and precious . . . etc." (*I Peter* 2:2-4).

Likewise is said elsewhere, "He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me," (*Matthew* 10:38) and further, "He who does not take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."

In these words, therefore, lies the secret, the greatest mystery, and from them it follows that no man can be a true disciple of Christ who does not "ask" and "knock," and thus find and recognize within himself that secret cross, and then follows worthily the chief of all mankind and leader of Israel from Bethlehem, carrying Christ Jesus within himself consciously. From this can be clearly seen that the true disciple of Christ must be a Brother of the Rosy Cross. (Continued) □

Robert Fludd