



The crescent moon passed low to Earth's surface during the 7th Holy Night

The Twelve Holy Nights at Camphill California

By Szilvia Budai

The Twelve Holy Nights, the nights between Christmas Eve (December 24) and the eve of Epiphany (January 6th) from the perspective of Anthroposophy, and some other spiritual worldviews too, are recognized to be a special time. There are 12 days difference between the lunar and the solar years, and as such we can look at this period as a 'time out of time', a certain rest out of our everyday hustle and bustle. It is a contemplative time to reflect on the past year and plant seeds for the year ahead.

This year at Camphill California we chose to explore the theme of Wonder, Compassion and Conscience throughout the Holy Nights. This theme helped us bring focus to our meetings and assist us in our preparation for the upcoming Camphill West Coast Gathering. We gathered around the Christmas Tree at Paloma Hall every day, and shared fairy tales, contemporary stories and events that embodied the theme of this year's Holy Nights.

We also paid attention to the starry sky, following the awesome dance of the Moon, as it journeyed from its meeting with Saturn to the Sun, Mercury and on to Venus and Mars.

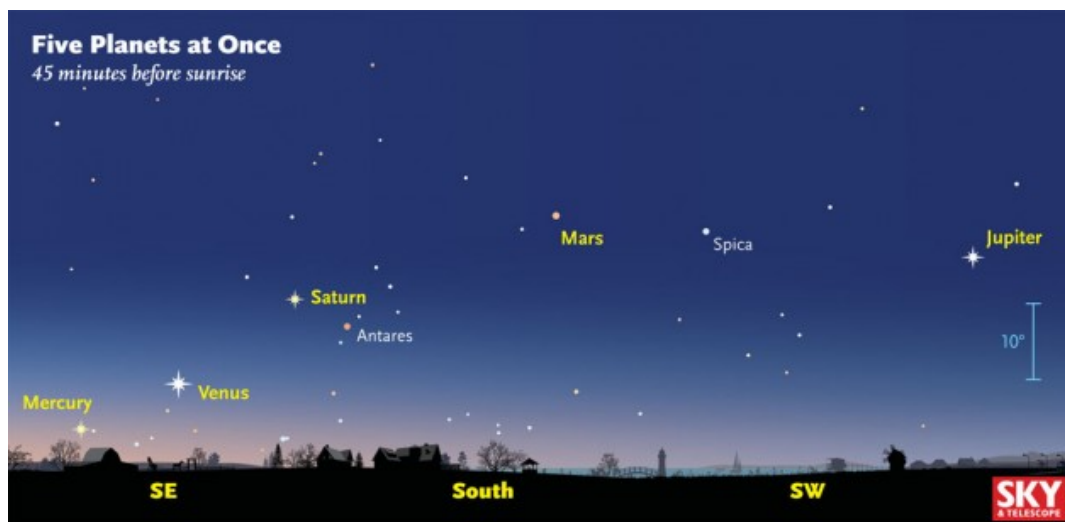


Photo from: SKY & Telescope: The Essential Guide to Astronomy

Day by day more and more people returned from their holiday vacations, and by December 31 we were able to recall the highlights of the year gone by with almost everybody present. New Year's Day has become our tradition to have a lighthearted 'fortune telling', where everyone is handed their fortune for the coming year from a mighty salad spinner.

The second half of the Holy Nights coincided with a retreat for the second year students of the Social Therapy Training. This retreat explored the development of Consciousness through mythology and art, led by Roswitha Imegwu from Camphill Village Copake. Roswitha is a great storyteller and singer, and so during the last three Holy Nights we all enjoyed the stories of the Mahabharata, Isis and Osiris and that of Parsifal. At the end of the Twelve Nights, on Epiphany Day, Gaya treated the whole community to a traditional Armenian Christmas lunch.

If, as some of us believe, it is true that every day of the Twelve Holy Nights corresponds to a month of the year, and that the quality of our consciousness and intentions during this time may have an effect on the coming year, we look forward to an exciting, light-filled 2017.



Sara and Johannes

Friends Spotlight: Welcome Sara!

Camphill California is delighted to introduce Sara Wong, our newest community member, to our E-News readers. Sara moved into Camphill in the middle of December with high spirits and a readiness to join our lifesharing community. She lives in Marimi house where she enjoys the company of her 9 housemates. "I like to sit with all of the people there," Sara says, "They're all very nice." Coleman remarks that it's "very nice living in the home with Sara."

Prior to coming to Camphill California Sara was part of the Ala Costa Adult Transition Center in Berkeley.

Although she lived at home, she went to the day program 5 days a week and enjoyed the company of six to eight female peers. She considers them to be "her buddies" and still a part of her community.

Sara is independent and a quick learner who slid right in to the swing of Camphill life. Having her in the community has been a joy and her bright, funny, outgoing personality has been a gift to Camphill. She participates in the herb, weaving, and cleaning crews. "Her weaving skills blew us all away," says Jen, "You show her something once and she's got it! It's really impressive." Sara's favorite item to make on the loom are tote bags. On Thursdays during cleaning crew, Eddie says "Her good sense of humor makes the day go by quickly. She's very productive and active and has adjusted to Camphill quite nicely."

Sara spends her Friday mornings in herb workshop, where she gets to sit peacefully around a table with the relaxing smell of herbs from the Camphill garden and the company of her friends. "My favorite smelling herb is lavender," she says as she picks dried lavender flowers from its stem. Sarah VE says "Having Sara in herb workshop has been good because we get along very well together." Sarita and Carmen, the coworkers who lead the Friday morning herb workshop, both share how dedicated and concentrated Sara is. "It's amazing to see her work. She gets things done very fast and effectively," Carmen remarks.

Welcoming Sara's family to the community has also been a pleasant experience for Camphill California. Eddie, Sara's father, has this to add about Sara:

"Sara is one of the bravest people I have ever encountered. She was diagnosed with pediatric cancer in her abdomen at 18 months and underwent surgery and chemotherapy. Then at age 2, the cancer returned in her lungs. She underwent more intensive chemo. I don't know how she withstood the pain, but she is one mighty determined young lady and we are blessed that she is with us today.

After she recovered from treatment, we noticed that she was not playing with other children and this led to her diagnosis of autism. Sara has said, "I was born different," and she faces numerous challenges. In moving out of her comfortable home to a new home at Camphill, Sara tells herself, "I will face up to my fears." And thus, she will become a vital member of this loving community known as Camphill."

Welcome to Camphill California, Wong family! We are so happy to have you here. "I like Camphill," Sara says, "It's a great place to be!"

Gathering of Pacific West Coast Camphills

By Kathryn Rycroft

We hosted a very nice retreat here in Paloma Hall, which was open to all and included Beverly, Johannes, Anya, Claudia, Sarah W and Sarah V. E., Rose, Philipp, David, and Kathryn from here, plus Glendora Farm founding members Martha and Olaf Lampson, and Monique Walsh and Clara, who are coworkers from Cascadia Society. Our theme was "Wonder, Compassion, and Conscience" and the study portion was based on Rudolf Steiner's writing from the book titled Earthly and Cosmic Man.



Participants gather for a selfie in Paloma Hall

Each community worked on one of these three aspects, and prepared a presentation to share, and our theme was Conscience, which we shared in eurythmy, led by Szilvia. Our guests were from Glendora Farm, which is in Duncan, Vancouver Island, and from Cascadia in North Vancouver. All three places are very different and unique, but the common thread of Camphill unites us.

We had thoughtful conversations on the theme as well as general sharing from our communities, deepening our connections as the West Coast representatives of Camphill. Philipp led us in a group rhythm experience which had us rubbing our hands together then clapping, followed by slapping our thighs and stamping our feet. It sounded exactly like rain and thunder!

These annual meetings rotate through each of the places, and are a valuable means of inspiration and support for us all. A group forms newly each year, and together they plan the theme and content via conference calls prior to the annual gathering.

Next year the gathering will be in Vancouver, Canada, at the Cascadia Center in North Vancouver.

Please Join Us...
as we travel back 50 YEARS to



Camphill California's Benefit Gala
Sat, February 25, 2017 at 6pm
Hillsborough Racquet Club
252 El Cerrito Avenue, Hillsborough

[PURCHASE TICKETS HERE](#)

Camphill California is thriving especially due to the continuous interest and support from you all.
Thank you so much, we couldn't do it without you!

We have added new items to our [Wishlist!](#) Check it out below



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