



Dear Friends,

This is Joel Matthew Park, writing to you on behalf of the Sophia Foundation. I would like to update everyone on the status of the postponed Meditation Retreat that was originally to take place at Camphill Village Copake last November. It was eventually postponed to St. John's, 2021. Once again, unfortunately, we must postpone this retreat. It will now take place from Thursday, August 19 through Sunday, August 22. We apologize if this inconveniences anyone or disrupts travel plans. I personally want to extend my gratitude to those of you who have committed to coming to this retreat since last year, and stuck with us through all the changes!

It is not only the date of the retreat that has changed; it will now be taking place at Mettabee Farm in Harlemville, NY (<http://www.mettabeefarm.com>). And while originally we were hoping to have contributions from our European friends Harrie Salman, Natalia Haarahiltunen, and Markku Maula, unfortunately they will not be able to travel to the United States for this event.

Nevertheless, we carry on! And the theme has remained unchanged. This year's Annual Meditation Retreat is a celebration of and a deepening into the origins of the Sophia Foundation. At the founding of the Sophia Foundation at New Year's Eve 1994, Robert Powell delivered lectures on the Three Great Teachers of the 20th Century. These lectures are contained in the book *Most Holy Trinosophia*. They describe a process of transition and transmission, from the development of Anthroposophy through Rudolf Steiner, to the Christian Hermeticism of Valentin Tomberg, to the impulse flowing from the reincarnated Novalis individuality from the late 20th century into our own time. Robert's lectures from the founding of the Sophia Foundation in *Most Holy Trinosophia* would be very important to read in preparation for this retreat (see here: <http://shop.steinerbooks.org/Title/9780880104807>).

I have elaborated upon and expanded this picture of the Three Great Teachers in an article called "The Seven Miracles: A Guiding Image for the Future of Our Movement" in the Holy Nights 2019 edition of *Starlight*, the annual journal of the Sophia Foundation (available here: <https://sophiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Starlight-Holy-Nights-2019-20sm.pdf>)

This article would be valuable to read prior to attending this year's retreat. There I describe the successive activities of the different teachers as unfolding the seven archetypal miracles of the Etheric Christ in our time. The Great Teachers of the 20th century have aided the manifestation of the first three archetypal miracles of our time: Anthroposophy as the Changing of Water into Wine; Christian Hermeticism as the Healing of the Nobleman's Son; and the Sophia Foundation as the Healing of the Paralyzed Man.

This year's retreat will take us on a journey through time, and therefore through these miracles—from the past, into the present, and together forming the future. On Thursday evening, we will gather together after supper in order to get to know each other through a discussion of the question: "What has drawn me to this retreat?" On Friday morning, after singing together some songs of Peter Deunov, we will begin to investigate the theme of the Seven Miracles in connection with the Tarot of Marseilles and the Divine Name YHVH. Woven into this will be a discussion of the biographies of both Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg.

On Friday afternoon, we will go on a small pilgrimage to the National Shrine of the Divine Mercy (<https://www.shrineofdivinemeracy.org>). There we will experience the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, recited there daily at 3 P.M., the time of Christ's death on the cross. For more information on the Divine Mercy Christ in connection to His second coming, see here: <https://sophiafoundation.org/a-special-easter-2020-novena/>.

On Saturday we will continue our investigation of the Seven Miracles. In the afternoon, Karen Rivers will share with us biographical themes in Robert Powell's life and the biographical phases of the Sophia Foundation as reflections of the Seven Miracles of Christ. Throughout Friday and Saturday, we will sing together the songs of Peter Deunov, the great Bulgarian spiritual teacher who was contemporaneous with both Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg. On both Friday and Saturday evening, Audrey Wiebe will lead us through the Prayer Sequence in Eurythmy.

Both the singing and the prayer eurythmy will prepare us for a new celebration we will perform together on Sunday morning: the Footwashing Ritual. More precise details on this ritual will be sent out as we come closer to the time of the retreat, so that those who are unable to attend can perform this same ritual with us from a distance, washing the feet of Mother Nature in many places simultaneously.

After some reflection on the Footwashing Ritual, we will look back on our weekend together in order to turn our gaze to the future: what questions did we come with? How did those questions transform over the weekend? What questions do we carry with us as we depart?

In the evening, we hope to be able to invite Ian Clyne to guide us through musical horoscopes of the spiritual teachers we will focus on during the weekend; in the event he is unable to come, we will instead have a celebratory open mic night, inviting participants to share their own songs, poetry, drama, etc.

It is the task of our current generation to engage in new forms of activity on behalf of Christ in His Second Coming—we must find our way to the Fourth Miracle, the Feeding of the Five Thousand. What is being asked of our generation—from nature, from our fellow human beings, from the spiritual world? And what fires our will—what is it that arises within us, from the depths of conscience and creativity, that we can offer enthusiastically to the world? We look forward to seeing many faces, both new and familiar, at this event!

Pax et Bonum,
Joel Matthew Park