

“The Metaphor of the Caterpillar and Butterfly”

At our recent June 21st 2016 Midsummer Convocation meeting held in Glastonbury, our Supreme Magus Father Stephen made a very important announcement.

He announced that the Brotherhood of the Essenes will no longer be admitting new membership requests as from the end of 2016, and will function thereafter as a Closed Order for the foreseeable future.

As some of our members may know, the Essenes functioned as a Closed Order for many years, and only began admitting new members from 1987 onwards. Their work was conducted and developed in private, except for once a year when the public meeting was held in Glastonbury on June 21st.

Father Stephen's decision to once again stop admitting new members for an undisclosed period, was to allow for a process of change and transformation to take place within our Order.

Shortly after the announcement was made, I happened to mention that this reminded me of the following metaphorical example of a similar process within the Animal Kingdom...And I have been asked to share this with you.

When we look at the caterpillar, who lives for a certain period of time experiencing its' life crawling around on the ground and gathering nourishment from the plants and leaves in its' local habitat, we notice that it is, by its' nature, limited to an earth-based existence in a relatively small location.

However, at a certain time it feels a strong and undeniable impulse to wrap itself up in a cocoon, essentially sealing itself in, protected from all outside influences for a then-unknown period of time.

In order that we may gain a deeper understanding of this process, I refer to the following text below from an article quoted from the Scientific American website:

“Within its protective casing, the caterpillar radically transforms its body, eventually emerging as a butterfly or moth.

But what does that radical transformation entail? How does a caterpillar rearrange itself into a butterfly? What happens inside a chrysalis or cocoon?

First, the caterpillar digests itself, releasing enzymes to dissolve all of its tissues. If you were to cut open a cocoon or chrysalis at just the right time, caterpillar soup would ooze out. But the contents of the pupa are not entirely an amorphous mess. Certain highly organized groups of cells known as imaginal discs survive the digestive process. Before hatching, when a caterpillar is still developing inside its egg, it grows an imaginal disc for each of the adult body parts it will need as a mature butterfly or moth—discs for its eyes, for its wings, its legs and so on.

In some species, these imaginal discs remain dormant throughout the caterpillar's life; in other species, the discs begin to take the shape of adult body parts even before the caterpillar forms a chrysalis or cocoon. Some caterpillars walk around with tiny rudimentary wings tucked inside their bodies, though you would never know it by looking at them.

Once a caterpillar has disintegrated all of its tissues except for the imaginal discs, those discs use the protein-rich soup all around them to fuel the rapid cell division required to form the wings, antennae, legs, eyes, genitals and all the other features of an adult butterfly or moth. The imaginal disc for a fruit fly's wing, for example, might begin with only 50 cells and increase to more than

50,000 cells by the end of metamorphosis.

Depending on the species, certain caterpillar muscles and sections of the nervous system are largely preserved in the adult butterfly. One study even suggests that moths remember what they learned in later stages of their lives as caterpillars.”

As you can see from this description, the process of transformation which takes place is quite incredible, yet this can only happen once the caterpillar has wrapped itself up in its' cocoon.

Once this transformation has been completed the newly formed Butterfly emerges, allows its' new wings to unfurl and dry in the sunlight and then takes flight, travelling thousands of miles born upwards on the rising air currents.

In a similar manner our world is undergoing a period of transformation, as we gradually see the old Piscean-Age frameworks and forms give way to the new and emerging Spiritual influences of the Age of Aquarius...and so it is within the Brotherhood of the Essenes.

This process of change is occurring all around us, and, if we are to learn and grow we must all be prepared to adapt ourselves appropriately and relevantly to the world in which we live.

Having considered all of the above, I would like to finish by asking the following question:

Do you think the Butterfly, who travels such vast distances via the air, would ever mourn for the loss of the cocoon?

With Love and Light,

Father Cheyne.