

Sept. 5, 1977

I was convinced for a time that the difficulty was with my back, but my back hadn't anything to do with it. However, I had been using a heating pad that relieved my back pain (I used it when I was home). So last nite I asked the nurse for a heating pad, and she turned green. In 30 seconds the Dr. came in and said, "Where is the pain? Give me every detail, describe it, I want to know all about it" I said "forget it, I don't really want a heating pad". The Dr's Asst. then came in, and I said to forget it. But they said, "whatever a patient wants, we do our best to get it for him". Then the nurse came in and said that a heating pad was not an ordinary request so she would have to get one. I said "Please forget it". She said, "Oh no, we will get one for you". Several minutes later she came back with a pad, hooked it up, and said "You are now the proud owner of this pad; this is not a part of our regular service, so you may take it home with you!" You have to learn in every situation to survive.

I haven't had anything to eat since Friday; they are cleaning me out for the surgery on Wednesday, so every day they give me a laxxative pill that causes an explosion when it hits; then they also give me a double enema twice a day. Gilbert says it is like tripe, and if you ever clean tripe, there is always some there. One morning they found tiny black specks, and were aghast to find I had sucked on a piece of hard licorice, so sucking on hard licorice is out. This morning there were about eight of them sitting around their conference table as I walked down the hall; I stopped and said to them, "Well I really played a joke on you. I went to the cafeteria and had a huge breakfast. Their eyes bugged out, and one Dr. blurted out, "We'll have to postpone the surgery". Then they caught on.

This morning they came to look at my incision, and said it looked good. They gave me a two hour pass, and extended it longer if I could stand it. The care is unbelievable. There are many interns there, plus graduate students, and there is one Dr. from another country studying under Dr. Block. All are fine guys. It is a fine place. The research done here on hospitalization and physicians focused on Chicago. As far as I'm concerned I have the right Dr.

You guys think television is best at night, but I tell you it is best in the mornings. On Channel 11 they show classical movies. The other day I saw the Blue Angel, with Marlene Detriech. It was silent, but you really didn't need sound with such fine acting.

Cigarettes are interesting. I decide what I do with my life, and I have decided to smoke. When someone approaches me with moralism, it leaves me cold. But when something authentic enters, I pay attention. Block said that the biggest problem with my surgery will be the post operative development. "A major issue is the possibility of pneumonia; there is a high percentage chance you would have pneumonia. If you stop two days before it will not do you any good. I recommend you stop now!" One colleague asked me if I wanted to relinquish my cigarettes immediately, and I responded by saying that I was capable of handling my life. There is a propensity to check on each other.

One person who had the greatest skill in counseling is Martin Pesek. In semi-depreciation he says that because he is Bohemian he is supposed to make it well. He is an SOB. H&sk&sk finesse in moving in on a situation is shocking. I wished there could have been a mouse in the corner. He said that the issue was not physical; it was spiritual. And that is what we are about.

Letters about this situation should be in the hands of the Order today. It should be addressed to the Religious Houses, not the Priors. We are Religious Houses; we are not Priors.

Wednesday is by big day. I have cancer of the pancreas, and they will perform surgery. The location of the cancer sometimes does not occasion jaundice. One day you just don't wake up. I began to sense that I didn't have hepatitis; for everything I was supposed to be experiencing I was not experiencing to have hepatitis. After a barrage of test they diagnosed it as obstructive jaundice. In the final test which is a long needle, it threw me into shock; the obstruction was related to my pancreas. During the test they pumped out a cup of gall. Normally the spot where the needle goes it closes. But in mine it did not. It leaked, so they had to do emergency surgery. In the emergency situation, they could not do much but they saw a tumor on my pancreas. They assumed it was not resectable. If it is not they would do cobalt and chemotherapy, but locating it for treatment is difficult to reach.

Block is a forthright man. He says that he is betting 6 to 4 they can do surgery, but he won't know until he gets in there. That would mean taking the pancreas out, part of the duodenum, and the small intestine, plus a large duct. They will try to get ahold of the whole vulnerable area. The operation will take 12 hours, and there is good likelihood of coming out of the operation.

He said there was good news about it. They ran a tube up my groin and found branches of my blood flow through my arteries. Fifteen percent of the people are abnormal in arterial development; they have an additional large artery that feeds the liver. And I am one of the fifteen percent, so that means that the other large artery that feeds the rest of my organs in that area may not have to be touched. He said that artery may save my life. So at 8 am I will have surgery.

The physical part of life is tremendously important, but the issue had to do with contingency, and death is a part of that.

Bishop Jim said, "Joe, you have had your neck out for a long time. You have been lecturing on this. Now your neck is on the line"

I intuited that I was in trouble when the Dr. said he was mystified, and my illness wasn't fitting any pattern. On Monday it became clear to me, and struck me with force. You know how Delhi had named streets after dates of great events? My day is "77 Aug. 15h Monday". That is a crucial day for me. This kind of happening is important.

When I became aware of that I wanted three miracles. There is struggle in each one. It is like gaining consciousness after surgery. The way I came to, after surgery, Marshall Jones played a role. You know how he has three cameras on a slide? There were 20 slides going rapidly, hoping to do with my life. Then one would freeze in my head. Then the acceleration increased, and I had incredible pain in my consciousness. Lyn said, "Joe". Then I went out of consciousness.

The three miracles. They, in themselves, have no meaning, but they will have meaning tomorrow.

1. Direct encounter with my being Father. Indirection was no problem. But the price I paid I do not want to pay again. The Lord decided to grant it but he sent Satan in before. Always the Lord appears as Satan. That is the only bad day I have had.
2. I wanted it not to be directly related to my unintentional or casual or intentional not taking care of myself. Though I am not out to live to be 100. I wanted comfort in my being that it was not that I simply did not take care of myself. These miracles I wanted all at once.
3. Usefulness. That was left open ended. The Lord and I decided that we would think about it. We have Wednesday to make up our minds. I am an eccentric, though I believe that God uses our neurosis. Being nobody is necessary if we want God to share his being with us.

I was pleased with the way Summer 77 went. It was not what you did but you accomplished it as a disciplined people as never before. I was pleased with what you did with Town Meeting, with Social Demonstration, and more than pleased with our understanding. Our Universal spirituality has a chance of becoming a concrete reality. The spirit map of profound humanness could be made available to all of mankind. That third miracle has to do with time. I do not know where I will live two days, two weeks, two months, or two years; it is open ended. With this time I would not be interested in Social Demonstration or Town Meeting, though I think we are about to conclude that Town Meeting is the answer.

Don't let anyone pull you into thinking we should do in other countries what we have done in India. That was ballooning for the sake of coagulating a vision of total force. If he had not seen the possibility in Kenya and elsewhere we could not do it in India. We will find a method in India or we will fail. This will happen in September. This worries me. You will enable people, Those Who Care to do it in the Philippines, etc. Whatever the Grows say about the historical church is true; even more than what they have told you. We need to cultivate the historical church in every nation. If not we are out of our gazukoos. We will see our job is that we do five in the Philippines, close enough geographically so someone could get to one easily. Then do Town Meetings throughout the Island. Then do the school, whatever form.

You will learn to walk with Kings. The key to it is being nobody. Anyone who wants to be someone you keep him a million miles away. Nobodies go and make friends with the economic, social, educational, all structures, so the princes will do the replication for us. With any movement it will get watered down, but you have to live with it. God will raise his people up out of stones.

I'm concerned with What God Hath Wrought. Look at the chart again. It is not difficult to understand it intellectually, but it is difficult to understand it with your being. Be proud that we have a network of Houses, that are disciplined and corporate. Every form we have is first of all a Religious House. Then we are a regional impact course center, then an area maneuver dynamic, then a global nexus, and a social demonstration. Foremost is only we are a Religious House. After the Town Meeting and Social Demonstration is gone, the world will need a nurture station where they will ask God for miracles, and to walk in fellowship with Him.

1. WE ARE HOUSES

1. In one to two years we will need to do the Religious Houses. Watch the kooky SOB's; we need to build the Religious Houses only on the foundation we have had. They will not be build on cute ideas. We have already build the structures. It only needs organizing. It does not need altering. Remember that symbols change the world. We need the Daily Office

2. GRASP PARTICIPATING IN ETERNAL UNITY

2. Unity. I don't mean corporateness. I'd get Chardin's Building the Earth and listen to what he is saying. The grounding of it is God is one. Look at the sermon on the mount: you are to be complete and perfect; as the father is one you are one. I am aware that others enable me to know who I am. Without the Church of Jesus Christ and the repository of self images that enable us to know with full and blaxing consciousness, save Luther was who he was, I would not know who I am. Epps and Duffy touched on this this summer. I no longer experience myself as a man but as a human; not as a Westerner, but as a human; then Weigel reminded me, not as a Christian but as a human. Too frequently we have used scientific iluustrations like as a leaf trembles, everything is different. To embrace Marshall Jones as my friend is the point. I have no choice but to be a friend. I am that which I would not be. I must make it positive. You have forgiven me, not because you are fine. It is because you experience participating in unity as you participate with me. This enables us to get beyond our culture. The Unicorns arent human. There is no brag in this. No matter how meager I am, I am not who I am without the Hindu culture. We are dealing with something profound here.

3. UNTO DEATH

3. The Gilberts came with silver rings into my bedchamber. We had a ceremony. Some can be in the order 40 years and not decide to be the religious. Others can be here 40 days. Furthermore, you cannot say for another when that time comes. We are talking about integrity. Our classes like novitiate are beside the point. The important thing is the day you decide. One day you will sort out ~~the divorce~~ divorce. It will be based on being called. God does not call us as couples. The value of marriage is not the excuse to rebel against God if we want a way out. If the marriage is missional, together they lay down their lives for his honor and the well being of humanity.

The Gilberts exchanged rings as members of the Order. I would like to see it done again

I have a talk on crucifixion. It needs more thinking. I am trying to figure it out--after John's death, it was no longer than six months that Jesus was killed. The day he was crucified--no such thing as a cross--they could have stoned him or torn him to pieces. The church made a big thing of the cross. I, one time, said the barefoot Jesus say that the mystery sired him. At that time he was a resurrected man. When he set his foot toward Jerusalem, he was a resurrected man, for that was his crucifixion. The big question was Who Am I? He answered, not in word or deed, but turned his face toward Jerusalem.

The business of renewing the church, which history will remember--When you are as close to renewing the church as Augustine was during the time of the Fall of the Roman Empire. It is hard to see. In renewal it has to do with laymen recovering the meaning of vocation. The vocation of the religious is for those who have concrete tasks. The church made a mistake when they had people care only for the church. The church as the church had great scribes, builders, farmers, etc. The religious vocation is transparentized vocation. It would be impossible in a "secular vocation" It is hard for me, for I was brought up in a time who cared for the congregation. My problem had a secular vocation; that is to develop skills to be adept at experimentation in the capacity to perceive, plot the Other World in the midst of This World. It is as important in life as Dr. Block's work. That means a transparentized vocation is as open to Wanda Lee as it is to Gilbert. I would go to Temple's Gifford Lectures, like Nature man and God. In the religious there has to be the aristocracy. Temple was pointing to something. Wanda Lee would be capable of understanding what I have said. Wanda Lee would be capable of saying no to it. Wanda Lee would be capable as a wife saying no to it. This is a possibility for all men. Read Harry Bliss' letter on this.

ON THE MISSION AHEAD, two young Doctors came to see me. They want me to marry them next June. He was intrigued with our three circles. He asked, "Where is God/? I told him that tiny space in the middle--that is the mystery. It is the symbol that none of these exist without that relationship. God is reality, whose reality these participate in. We spent time in the Other World. In the Land of Mystery it is created like the Aquinas form. When you break into the dynamics you have the river of consciousness, the mountain of care which is engagement and the sea of tranquility. I think if I were doing it again I would name them awakenment, engagement, and humanness. The top circle does not exist except in the intensification of doing. You need to see the one great life is to live and die.

Bliss' letter talks about the day he took kRSI. Zahrt gave him RSI. He was the guy who was his salvific agent. After he had been to El Bayad and Kawangware there was a strange kind of tranquility that has entered his life and underscored his life and meaningfilled his life. The sea of tranquility is the top circle.
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Humanness is all three, but because the top circle is the intensification, it is humanness. In the midst of the anxiety, despair, sorrow, and tragedy, all this becomes intensified. The young Dr said that the new edge of medicine has to do with images. This will affect psychiatry. The fundamental source of the healing power is in the the images the person operates out of. The thing at the top is a "campaign" to jar our memory.

There is a three fold job to do in that. We have gone a long way. It won't be all accomplished next summer. There are too many political factors in it. If we get thrown out of one village in India we will get set back.

1. Intellectual

2. Sociological

3. Spiritual This is the hardest but it will be the easiest for us. The most important is the Achilles Heel paper I wrote in Bombay. Then the methodology of radical empiricism I am afraid of the word "Phenemena". Then I would scream at the ex hippies. They are the most destructive of liberals. I would make a secret list of hippies. It is a rare person in our midst who is not one. We are not after a huge mistake of the nineteenth century. It's not eclectic theology. It is not synthetic theology. Not like Huxley, not perennial. It is not a negation of the Christian symbols, not a negation of Sun Tzu's symbols. You will find cherished meaning in the great Christian symbols.

Do you remember when we did the Ur Courses? It saved our lives 1000 times. It saved the ITI. "There are arenas of culture I know more about than the participants," was the point. In those days I had wanted 3 x 3's on this. The Barefoot Jesus will carry this for us. This has nothing to do with historical religions. It saw truly a crucial dynamic of profound humanness.

1. With Hindu it is the illumination. M u may have to see Guatama. Buddha may have brought the key to Hinduism. It is insight into selfhood
2. The wise one. We must define wisdom. It is a practical category. It means effectivity. Think of primal community as family, dynasty as family, the family as family. It is action or doing things. Confucious did harm to these fundamental insights.
3. I am afraid of getting this at the top. Hope is not to be paraded up in the top. Dieing is being carried on a shield for the one Lord. I did not live my life for my children or spouse, or the white man, or the U.S. or the Western World, or Development. I am the subject of one sovereign Lord, eternal God. I lived my life and died my death for God. That is the word.

The easiest is spiritual. The Hardest is intellectual. The crux is in the Christ happening. I have a strange feeling we will get it done. The Christ event doesn't have to do with the Other World. Christianity has to do with the Other World. Christianity

is not the gospel and the gospel is not Christianity. We dare not have Christian bigotry. The most important will be in the categories of Knowing, Doing, Being. You won't go far astray if you use these categories. We we are right we cannot take on the whole task. We will live our theology and let the church the next 100 years spell this out. Far more important to the world in the next 10 to 20 years you intentionally act out what you know about the Christ happening, the love of God, and laying down your life, every single minute. Let nothing throw you. You act out the divine gifts you have been given. We have adequate images in our being that breathe health. B.S. on those who say we smoke, drink, don't sleep enough. No one outside tells us how to live.

The third is the sociological that I want to talk about, although it is # 2 in our list. I believe any historical religion has an intellectual frame, a social form and a spiritual mode. Go back and look at our hourglass of the NRM and NSV. There is a new kind of religious order coming into being. We may not be it. But my being would not be behind this one if there were anything else right now. We don't need a religious order in order to be a religious order. It came clear that care is at the heart of it all. The key to this is nurture. In the 40's when everyone was starting community groups, it was a psychological device. It was a part of counseling device.

In Texas we spent the first year in worship, second study third ~~mission~~ and fourth was mission. We got clear our life had to do with mission. To train you don't go to an Academy. Sitting under JWM would enable you to grasp what is going on is BS. Training in the profound deeps is indirect. It doesn't mean that education is not a part of it. We know the way stations must be nurture centers, but not where the big course is going on. It is not Loyola's exercises. Our houses must be gracious, simple, ghetto placed, neat, programmatic, discipline (invisibly). The running of a house no one sees. The Daily Office, not prayers where 1 or 2 pray for us; we will learn more about fasting, watching, and waiting. We will become as invisible things in life, like going to the toilet.

Crucial is symbol. We need some Gilberts, or else other Gilberts will not have possibilities. They are signs, symbols, invisible nurturers. This social thing must work as well for Bliss as anyone else. I can see Nasution coming for the weekend. No novelty, no cute idea. Ask them to explain the foundation of Sufi. Transpose it into Christian poetry. Whether he uses Sufi or Christian, if he sees through it to humanness, then that is what we are after.

The social form is the third campaign. We are the prototype of what we will set up. Intimately related to this is the new form of the local church. It will be a form of the world wide religious order you are bringing into being. BS on the hippes, liberals, hierarchical structure, empty rituals, meaningless dogma. Use B.S. on the other side of love.

As revolutionaries we have to invent words constantly, and to reinvent words. In S.D. we need ones responsible for educ, for health. For the moment we call them guilds. No church of Jesus Christ exists save the people are laying down their lives for all mankind. If they are not giving their life for suffering huamans, they are not the church. Those concerned for their families, for health are not them. Before we get the nexxt loud noise we have to have structures so people can act. Make sure you know how to do TM and S D and nurture people. Then maybe the hour in throwing yourself against the establishment will be there. The year we have to die in is 2007, if necessary..

We have one body. There is not such thing as teams to Latin American, or trek team. You are part of operations. The key to the repository is not in the national level. It must be solved internationally in USA. Make use of Owens, Schools, Professors. If in December, operations relative to TM and SD does not show it is off in a new orbit I would start worrying. Watch to see how long you can wit for miracles. For reseach the word is patiente. You big job will come the year after that.