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I. Introduction

The idea of cosmic intimacy came to me in one of my prayer periods during a retreat. I was praying in the chapel when I felt a soft breeze caressing my arm and I spontaneously said to God, “God, I miss this. I miss the romance in our friendship, in our relationship. It has been a long time.” And God seemed to answer me with, “But we have outgrown that; we are passed that stage.” Right away I asked God, “And what do we have now?” God’s reply seemed to be, “Cosmic intimacy!” Since then this phrase “cosmic intimacy” has stayed with me like a mantra.

This essay will explore the interconnectedness of sexuality, intimacy, ecology, cosmology and mysticism. I will use related concepts from psychology in terms of understanding the dynamics of sexuality and the need for human intimacy. I will also touch briefly on mysticism and Saint Ignatius’ “Contemplation to Attain Love” [230-237]; then move to the new cosmology and how it impacts the way we view the human person, especially in the area of sexuality and intimacy, which then flows into cosmic intimacy. From here, I will refer to the Papal encyclical Laudato Si (Praise be) and the call to care for creation. I will use an autoethnographic methodology in this essay that will include personal narratives integrated with a theoretical framework.

A. Statement of Thesis

I believe that cosmic intimacy is something that is innate to each one of us. Just as we are drawn to an intimate relationship with our fellow human beings, we are also fashioned to engage in intimacy with the cosmos “for every reality of the universe is intimately present to every other reality of the universe and finds its fulfillment in mutual presence.” The concept of intimacy, therefore, can be broadened to include intimacy with the cosmos. As Matthew Fox aptly says, “We were made for something cosmic and will not fit peacefully into anything smaller.”

The same sexual energy that is present in human intimacy can also be harnessed and directed towards care for creation which is really the end goal of cosmic intimacy. It is moving toward cosmic intimacy that will usher the human species into a more caring and protective attitude towards planet Earth because “we will only take care of that which we love” and have an intimate relationship with.

Cosmic intimacy has features of panentheism but it definitely does not advocate pantheism and is very different from it. This is further illustrated in the succeeding sections of the essay.

B. Questions

This essay will answer the following questions:
1. Is it really possible to have cosmic intimacy? If yes, how is this achieved?
2. Will cosmic intimacy lead us to prayer and a deep communion with God?
3. What is the role and place of cosmic intimacy in the dynamics of human intimacy?
4. Is cosmic intimacy the bridge that will reconnect humans with creation and draw humankind to protect and care for planet Earth?

C. Definition of Terms

Cosmic intimacy — is a phrase that aims to capture a person’s deep and meaningful connection with the elements of the cosmos like the stars, moon, sun, wind, as well as the mountains, trees, plants, and birds, to name a few, through
the beauty, grandeur, playfulness and deep silence of nature. It is my belief that, in the process of communing with and contemplating these cosmic elements, one may deeply connect with God and be transformed in the depths of one's being. For one cannot be touched by God and remain unchanged, if one is open and docile in spirit. Intuitively, the person also discovers a language that speaks of cosmic intimacy.

Judy Cannato attests to this with her own experience:

I once heard a story from the Native American tradition of the belief that a human being could not reach maturity without making room within herself for the immensities of the universe. That is what watching the stars helps us to do. The universe reveals itself to us, and in the hearing, we are transformed. Radical amazement begins with offering hospitality to the cosmos, hearing her story and intertwining it with our own, and nurturing the most significant relationship we have, our relationship with life itself.4

**Cosmology** — is defined as the way "... human persons experience themselves in relation to the cosmos. It is the lens through which reality is viewed and interpreted. A cosmology tells you how things are in reality, what really matters and provides the foundation for core values, belief systems, and moral norms. A cosmology gives a community meaning and purpose."5

**Ecology** — is a word that originally means "home". Later on, it "came to refer to the study of the complex totality of conditions necessary for the survival of living organisms in a particular environment. These varied forms of life are symbiotically interrelated within the one matrix or web of life on the planet Earth."6

**Panentheism** — is defined as "the view that all is contained within the divine, although God is also more than the world." Therefore, "it is a way to conceive the God-world relation."7 It is also important to note that, "Panentheists hold that creation takes place, and remains, within the being of God. Thus, God does not first create a world separately existing substances and then enter into this world to carry out the divine will."8 Lastly, "Panentheism implies a twofold ‘in’: all created things are in God and God is in all things."9

**Pantheism** — is a term that can be defined "etymologically ... as all [is] God." Although there are many variations in the definition of the word, "A central tenet of pantheism is that there is no absolute distinction between God and the universe ..."10

### II. Literature Review

#### A. Story of the Universe and the Emerging Cosmology

Thomas Berry and Brian Swimme give a comprehensive story of the universe that covers 13.7 billion years since the primordial Flaring Forth or the Big Bang up to the present time. In this section of the essay, I will explore the theme of interconnectedness that directly relates to cosmic intimacy.

The interconnectedness of all things, animate and inanimate, organic and inorganic alike is prominent in the story of the universe. Scientists have discovered that the great Flaring Forth, the event that precipitated the creation of the universe and everything that is in it, comes from one source of energy and the same beginning. Therefore, everything is related and interconnected in its diversity.

Berry and Swimme aptly point out, "We cannot regard the dolphin and the first Flaring Forth as entirely separate events. The universe is a coherent whole, a seamless multileveled creative event. The graceful expansion of the original body is the life blood of all future bodies in the universe."11 They further emphasize, "The story then of a single proton is, in the sense indicated, integral with the story of every other particle in the primeval fireball. To tell the full story of a single particle we must tell the story of the universe, for each particle is in some way intimately present to every other particle in the universe."12

Consequently, even if all of creation, including the human species, have diversified in the long process of evolution, all of these share the same atomic and molecular elements that came from the initial Flaring Forth. The materials that make up the stars, for instance, are the same elements that are found in our bodies. As Denis Edwards illustrates,
We are a carbon-based form of life. The molecules of our bodies are composed of atoms of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, with small amounts of other elements. While the hydrogen atoms come from the early universe, the carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen all come from the stars. The story of the emergence of stars is a central part of the human story.14

Therefore, there is an affinity, a sense of relatedness between the human being and the cosmos. And that is why, as Cannato points out, “Early on, humankind experienced not only a fascination with the celestial bodies that fill the sky by day and by night, but they have known a sense of connection to them as well.”15

Even in the dynamics of predator-prey relationship that initially seems to be merely for survival of the fittest, there is the underlying interconnectedness that is worth noting. Berry and Swimme emphasize that,

While it is true that the various members of the natural community nourish each other, and that the death of one is the life of the other, this is not ultimately an enmity, it is an intimacy. The total balance in this process is preserved. If there is a taking there is a giving. Without reciprocity the Earth could not survive.16

As we continue with our journey in the planet, individually and collectively, it is worth remembering then that,

We are born of the Earth Community and its infinite creativity and delight and adventure. Our natural state is intimacy within the encompassing community. Our natural genetic inheritance presents us with the possibility of forming deeply bonded relationships throughout all ten million species of life as well as throughout the nonliving components of the universe. Any ultimate separation from this larger and enveloping community is impossible, and any ideology that proposes that the universe is nothing but a collection of pre-consumer items is going to be maintained only at a terrible price.17

This underscores the reality of the interconnectedness of the human beings with the rest of creation and the urgent need to sustain this bond.

B. Saint Ignatius’ Contemplation to Attain Love

Saint Ignatius of Loyola, through his Spiritual Exercises, has gifted humanity with a profound insight into our place in creation and creation’s place in our lives; our relationship with God who is infinite, the giver and source of all, and us, the human person, who is finite but loved and cherished in our finiteness. The Exercises culminate in The Contemplation to Attain Love which, according to Michael Ivens, “presents in the form of a contemplative paradigm the spirituality of finding and loving God in all things which is the lasting outcome of the Exercises.”18

The four points of the Contemplation highlight God’s love for the human person manifested both in words and more so in deeds. “That is to say, in and through his gifts we meet God as bestowing his gifts, present in his gifts, working in his gifts, source of his gifts.”19 By “gifts”, we mean everything that we have received from God including our very selves, the people who are significant to us, our personal history and all of creation.

Michael Buckley states that, “The preludes of the Contemplation involve all three unities of love: the internal integrity of affectivity and action; the interpersonal integrity of friendship and communion; the universal integrity of all creation, moving out of God and returning to him in friendship.”20 He underscores that “God is at work within the universe, within all things. It becomes religiously imperative that a man discover and read these labours, that he merge his choices and his actions with the workings of God.”21 This is only possible when one is intimate with the cosmos; if one spends time to contemplate the sky, the clouds, the moon, the stars.

C. Mysticism and the Stages of Cosmic Consciousness

According to Evan Howard, “Christian mysticism involves a divine-human encounter and as such it will reflect God’s infinitely gracious invitations”22 issued not only to a select few but to all. He further adds that, “God may offer the participation of infused contemplation to one, entire
sanctification to another, ordinary obedience to another, and darkness of faith to still another." It is also important to note that in mysticism, "God wants mystical union, yet this mystical union is not merely a felt oneness of interior experience but a real harmony of all experience, every aspect of our lives: personal, doctrinal, social, ecological."  

O'Murchu states that "mystics are precisely the people who were rooted unambiguously in creation and their fascination with the Holy One happens within the enveloping mystery of creation itself." For him, "Mysticism is about immersion in God's world at the service of God's creativity and liberation." He also quotes Evelyn Underhill who identifies "the five stages of mystical development ... (a) the awakening of the self to spiritual life; (b) purgation; (c) illumination; (d) the dark night of the soul; (e) union."  

I will focus first on the fifth stage of Underhill's stages of mystical development, which is union, and correlate it with the stages of cosmic consciousness. "Union" here refers to that stage wherein the mystic experiences a sense of being one with God who is acting in him or her — called deification — but still maintaining the person's endowed capability of consciously willing, thinking and acting. This union can be described as a profound intimacy with God expressed in the image of matrimony or being wedded to God. There is also the union of the lower self, the constant pull towards self-preservation, and higher self, the pull towards self-transcendence, which calls for surrender to God and God's actions and movements in the life of the mystic. It is worth noting that this union with God leads to a marked fecundity of one's life in the service of God's people.  

Following Mary Inglis's three-stage model of evolution of consciousness, Mary Coelho speaks of the Stages of Cosmic Consciousness and invites us to look at these stages in terms of "the interplay between human consciousness and our relationship to the rest of creation—historically and/or personally." According to this model, the first stage is the "unconscious, undifferentiated, pre-conscious oneness [which] precedes polarity in human thought ... " Inglis mentions that this stage "is characterized by an instinctive awareness of the essential unity and interdependence of all creation, and sees humanity as an integral part of nature rather than separate from it, with the resultant correspondence of human rhythms with those of the natural world."  

According to Inglis, "The act of separating from this state of undifferentiated unity is usually the work of the masculine principle ..." and with this "comes the birth of individual or self-consciousness, and the introduction of a polarized vision of the world in which there is a clear distinction between the self and the environment." The second stage then is characterized as having "awareness of separate identities; exploration and deeper understanding of different components of creation; scientific belief that everything is atomic; dualities, dominance, competition." With regard to our history as humanity, Inglis states that, "The second, emphasizing the development of the masculine principle, is what we have been exploring for the last four to six thousand years. The masculine principle has ruled as the dominant consciousness, analysing, classifying, ordering and controlling, seeing the world in terms of differences ... " She further adds that, "In this century... the long-dormant feminine principle is beginning to awaken and assert itself, preparing the way for the third stage, which points to the future."  

Inglis affirms that, "The concept of surrender is a central one in the spiritual path, and it is the key to the passage to the third stage in the evolution of consciousness." She says that, "The way to [the] third level of experience and consciousness lies not in self-assertion or an act of will but rather in surrender—yielding, waiting, trusting and responding, allowing ourselves to be transformed rather than ourselves acting to bring about that transformation." Hence, the third stage "involves a willingness for grace to be active in our lives, for there is an element in it in which we do not choose it; it chooses us, if we are open and ready." Inglis clarifies that, "It does not mean the dissolution of the autonomous self and the release of our capacity to act, but rather it asks that we surrender also, so that our actions and autonomy may reflect and be in the service of a larger whole." In other words, the person or community is open and available to cooperate with God in
God’s ongoing process of creation in the world concretised through the process of discernment. Coelho aptly describes the third stage of cosmic consciousness then as the “conscious return to unity and interdependence, fully honouring variety and complexity and their interconnectedness.”

I propose that cosmic intimacy belongs to the realm of the third stage of “conscious return to unity and interdependence.” This correlates to a sense of being one with God in surrender, a “union” that the mystic experiences as described by Underhill earlier. A closer look at the lives of the mystics reveals their experience of intimacy with the cosmos. Specifically, I will cite the experience of Saint Francis and Saint Ignatius to highlight this point.

Saint Francis of Assisi is famous for his positive regard for creation which is encapsulated in his well-known poem Canticle of the Sun. Fittingly, Pope Francis takes the title of his Encyclical Laudato Si (Praise be) from this beautiful canticle. McGrath notes that in this poem, “[Saint] Francis sets out a vision of the entire creation praising its creator” with “the underlying theology of providence, in which the benefit of each aspect of creation for humanity is identified.” McGrath further directs one’s attention to the “most famous feature of the canticle is its use of the terms ‘brother’ and ‘sister’ to refer to various aspects of the created order” which I believe is a clear indication of Saint Francis’ intimate relationship with the cosmos.

It is my conviction that nature also played a very crucial role in the life of Saint Ignatius. According to William J. Wood, “This is illustrated by his [Ignatius’] account of what he regarded as the most definitive of his mystical experiences, the one that occurred while he was out for a walk from Manresa and stopped to rest by the River Cardoner.” Ignatius wrote in his Autobiography:

One time [Ignatius] was going out of his devotion to a church a little more than a mile from Manresa; I believe it was called St. Paul’s. The road ran next to the river. As he went along occupied with his devotions, he sat down for a little while with his face towards the river which was running deep. While he was seated there, the eyes of his understanding began to be opened; though he did not see any vision, he understood and knew many things both spiritual and matters of faith and of learning, and this was with so great an enlightenment that everything seemed new to him. Though there were many he cannot set forth the details that he understood then, except that he experienced a great clarity in his understanding. This was such that in the whole course of his life, through sixty-two years, even if he gathered up all the many helps he had had from God and all the many things he knew and added them together, he does not think they would amount to as much as he had received at that one time.

It was through nature that God enlightened Saint Ignatius about the profound mysteries of faith. This created a very strong impact on Saint Ignatius that it remained with him all throughout his life.

D. Intimacy and Sexuality

Judy Cannato says, “All of us are fired with love’s urgent longings because we are part of the original flame that brought all life into being.” O’Murchu reiterates, “Not merely are humans programmed for relationship but so is everything in creation. More accurately, humans relate because creation relates!” He further adds, “Our desire to relate, and our capacity to do so, is primordially a sexual endowment always imbued with cosmic yearning.”

Focusing on the complexity of human relationships, Stephanie Dowrick explores the delicate balance of our need for intimacy and solitude which can be a determining factor in a satisfying and rewarding relationship with oneself and with our significant others. She says, “Intimacy—closeness to yourself in times of solitude or closeness to others in moments of sharing and connecting—reflects your inner world as almost nothing else does. And intimacy begins from the inside; it begins with your own self.” She also emphasizes that, “That push, that drive towards loving connections is with you through most of your life. Being alone for protracted or involuntary period is likely to be tolerable only for someone of relative maturity, whose sense of self is reasonably reliable; someone who can comfortably hold onto feelings of connection, even when there is no-one else there.”
Harriet Lerner speaks of the dynamics of “pursuer-distancer” in human relationships. The more one pursues the other, the more he or she distances. When two parties are too focused on the relationship, it becomes overloaded with unrealistic demands and expectations. Therefore, she recommends breaking the pursuit cycle by focusing one’s attention on the self, becoming aware of one’s own pattern of unhealthy relating and doing something about it instead of reacting to the other person.64

Our human relating, the joys and the pains that go with it, awakens and invites us to broaden our horizon and perspective to look beyond and discover the world, the cosmos and all of creation around us. The call to solitude, to be alone with oneself and to be at home with it, is a moment to be intimate with the moon and the stars and other cosmic elements that vie for our attention. We take a break from pursuing the distancing human partner in the friendship or relationship and turn our gaze on the beauty and silence of creation that can silence the turmoil within. It is good to recall that, “More than a passing physical urge or a gender category, sexuality can be even more broadly understood as a unique form of the energy of attraction that pulsates at the heart of the universe.”65 Hence, I believe that it is psychologically and spiritually healthy for us to widen our repertoire of intimates by not limiting them to human relationships.

E. Laudato Si

As noted in the introduction, the goal of cosmic intimacy is really to move the human species towards care for creation which is an urgent concern in today’s world. It is therefore imperative to discern what is happening in the world and what the official Church teaching is on this.

Seeing the massive destruction that is taking place in our environment in the different parts of the globe, Pope Francis issued the Encyclical Laudato Si. Referring to planet Earth as our “sister” he states:

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as lords and masters entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts ... is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and all forms of life.66

The Pope further adds that, “Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God.”67 Anthony Kelly notes that, “The breadth of the horizon in which the encyclical is expressed reaches even to the very life of God: ‘Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.’ ”68

The Encyclical gives a comprehensive analysis of the ecological imbalance that is happening in all corners of the world and issues an urgent call to change the manner of our proceeding in the various aspects of our individual and collective lives: political, economic, social, spiritual, academic. It is clear that the problem is massive and it also requires a massive and a long-term solution. And perhaps, the relevant question to ask is how and where do we start?

Kelly offers a starting point when he says:

In the first place, a holistic vision will presume an appreciation of the planetary biosphere, and show the capacity to diagnose how it has been harmed by uncaring exploitation. But it is not enough if such outer, objective ecology is unrelated to the ‘inner ecology’ of culture. Without a conversion of mind and heart, in a both personal and social sense, there can be little hope for any turn-around in our relationship to world of nature and the delicate interrelationships and synergies it discloses.69

Hence, this essay proposes to start this process of conversion by opening ourselves to the cosmic reality and the different forms of creation, and develop a sense of awe and reverence in their unique presence and existence.

III. My Personal Experience

Although the phrase “cosmic intimacy” occurred to me very recently, my experience is that God has drawn me into cosmic intimacy since I was a child. This came very naturally
opportunities to deeply commune with the moon and with the darkness at night when I take my evening walks. Perhaps, the darkness helps me enter into the ambiguity that I experience being in a foreign land. I bathe in the rays of the sun in the refreshing winter morning. I hug my favorite tree and ask for wisdom when I write my essays. I lie down on the grassy open field and allow the solid ground to massage my back as I look at the graceful and slow moving clouds above me. Creation has been my companion most of the time and it has been a very gracious and generous one.

On one occasion, I was so tired after working for several days to finish my paper. On the day of the submission, I finally put the last finishing touches and emailed it to my professor, who resides in Spain, at 1:30 am Melbourne time. I had a desire and, perhaps, need in me to be hugged but everyone was asleep. And so I went to bed without a human hug. When I woke up the following morning, I saw from my window a deep pink sky and so I ran to the park to have a full view of the sky. Lo and behold, everything around me was pink and orange and I just realized that God was giving me a cosmic embrace.

I connect deeply with Judy Cannato's sharing and I find in her a kindred spirit:

A life of radical amazement suggests that we live at a slower pace. We spend time doing “nothing.” Learning to sit still, we become aware of all that surrounds us. We pay attention to singing birds and playing children. We notice clouds and the signs of changing seasons. We become friends with trees and neighbors. We begin to relax, and tension starts to melt away as we tune in to the energies of Earth. Slowing down, we notice interior movements. Feelings surface, and sometimes they are not pleasant ones, but as we listen to their message and bring the healing energy of the Spirit through Earth, we hear their message and acknowledge the benefit of being in touch with our truth, even if it is painful.60

I was in the midst of writing this essay when I found myself doubting if cosmic intimacy is possible, if it is real and if it works. At that point, I was filled with uncertainty and I was blocked. Nothing was coming to me, no ideas, and I was stuck. I was also distracted by the thought that I am so unl...
my friend who took more than a week to respond to my viber message and sharing about my homesickness and loneliness. And because I was frustrated with both my paper and the friendship, I found myself crying in front of my desk.

While wiping my tears, I happened to look out of my window and I saw five fluffy white clouds in a row against the blue backdrop of the sky and they seemed to be saying to me, "We love you, Gem. And we are here for you." I asked myself if I was imagining things. But then I remembered that Saint Ignatius put value on the role of imagination in prayer and so I honored what I seemed to hear. I opened my laptop and started writing while telling the clouds, "In response to your love, I will continue to work on this essay on cosmic intimacy." To my great surprise and joy, ideas just started to flow and, in no time, I finished the section on intimacy and sexuality that I was working on.

I realized that I myself was overloading my friend and our friendship with unrealistic demands. I was focusing too much on my need for human intimacy and connection at the height of my loneliness that I was oblivious to creation and the cosmic elements that surround me. But those clouds called my attention and beckoned me to shift my focus and a breakthrough followed. It was a very liberating experience to be freed of one’s neediness and self-absorption and be able to let go, surrendering to the vastness of the universe before me.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the cited review of literature and my own personal experience, I make the following conclusions:

First, cosmic intimacy is real and possible. It is available to us because it is our birthright. The mystics experience this and I am deeply convinced that there is a mystic in each of us. However, it is something that we need to be purposeful and deliberate in our effort to enter into it, especially in a world that is full of distractions and allurements toward materialism and consumerism. “Our ability to be aware,” Cannato says, “to be attentive, to see and to hear, to feel and to intuit—all come more fully alive when they flow out of a quiet, receptive heart.

And so our participation in ongoing creation is predicated on our commitment to silence—to cultivating a listening heart and a peaceful spirit.”

Second, our capacity to connect deeply with the cosmos enhances our experience of the Divine for creation radiates and reflects God’s presence to us. Therefore, cosmic intimacy is a way to deepen our prayer and intensify our connection with God. The silence that is innate in nature reaches out to the depths of our being and draws us into the stillness before God. The beauty and grandeur that abound in creation render us in a prayerful posture and fill our hearts with a sense of gratitude if only we render ourselves open and ready to receive. Even the wrath of nature that comes in the form of super typhoons, earthquakes and other calamities sends us on bended knees imploring God to spare us from destruction and annihilation and, at the same, seeking refuge only in God.

Third, in matters concerning our human relationships, cosmic intimacy has an important role to play. It transforms us and teaches us to be patient. We learn the art of waiting from nature for it has its own slow and unpredictable rhythm and pace. We cannot dictate; we can simply wait and surrender and receive in gratitude what is given to us. There are times when we are invited to assume the same stance in our relationships with our significant others. And since the cosmos is vast and expansive, it also evokes in us a sense of magnanimity in our perspective. It widens our horizon as well as our understanding which includes our intimate human relationships.

Fourth, the same sexual energy that enables us to engage with human intimacy can be directed towards care for creation. At the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila, Philippines, where I used to coordinate the Sabbatical Program, Ecospirituality is one of the modules given to the participants who are mostly religious priests, nuns, brothers and lay missionaries coming from the different parts of the world. Although the module is very relevant and well delivered, many of the participants cannot relate to it. However, when we run the module on Sexuality, it is always well received across all ages. It is my conviction that cosmic intimacy is the link
between the two (Ecospirituality and Sexuality). We can begin to care for creation if we have a relationship with it. This is not something alien to us because we started with it; we were one with the natural world as children. It is a matter of going back to where we came from and seeing it for the first time.

The idea of cosmic intimacy challenges us to ask questions which can be explored further later on: How do we communicate this with other people especially those who are deeply entrenched into what is considered to be the materialistic and consumeristic world that we inhabit? How do we live it out given our own context, personality and temperament? How do we teach this to our children at home and in school?

As we reflect and explore the answers to these questions, I suggest that we bear in mind these powerful and insightful words from Denis Edwards:

As called to cultivate and take care of creation, human beings are part of the unfolding creation, called to participate responsibly in the dynamism of ongoing creation. We are intimately linked to the life-forms of our planet, and to the atmosphere, the soil, and the oceans. Our existence is encompassed by the mystery of God revealed in all the variety of creatures that surround us. We are part of them and they are part of us. All of us together reflect the limitless divine love that is our origin. We are born of the universe, made from stardust, part of evolutionary history of life on Earth and, as such, made in the image of God and kin to all of the wonderfully diverse plants, insects, birds, and animals of our beautiful planet, and called to cultivate and care for the Earth and all its creatures.49

Being members of the Earth community, we are hoping that there will be a change of consciousness in each of us as we learn to relate more with the cosmos and enter into intimacy with it. Brian Swimme states that, “Through repetition and through years of deepening, our children or our children’s children will be provided a way to escape the lures of so much deceit, and greed, and hatred, and self-doubt, for they will begin each morning and live each day inside the simple truth: a gorgeous living Earth drifts light as a feather around the great roaring generosity of the Sun.”50

I used to be intimidated by the massive and almost impossible task of restoring ecological balance in my country and in the world. However, Judy Cannato’s words below have inspired me to continue to dream and to do something, even just to write this essay, with the desire to care for this home, the one and only home planet, that we live in.

We tend to believe that most of us cannot and do not make much of a difference in the great scheme of things. The reality is that, noticed or not, every conscious act that gives witness to new possibilities and greater awareness contributes to the transformation of the whole. There is no insignificant thought, word, or action. Each act of courage and strength shifts the energy and increases the potential for others to become aware, too. No matter what we do, we are always affecting the energy around us, either in a negative or positive way.51

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Endnotes:

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9 Ibid., 366.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid., 367.
13 Ibid., 29.
15 Cannato, Radical Amazement, 19.
16 Swimme & Berry, The Universe Story, 244.
18 Michael Ivens, Understanding the Spiritual Exercises (Herefordshire: Gracewing, 1998), 169.
19 Ibid., 179.
21 Ibid.
23 Ibid., 183.
24 Ibid., 183.
26 Ibid., 157.
27 Ibid., 156.
30 In her article, “Journey to Wholeness: The Message in Myths,” which appeared in OneEarth Magazine (1982), Mary Ingls explores the dynamics of the masculine and feminine principles/energies operating in our individual and collective psyches. She says that, “these are two creative forces in the universe which when working together create wholeness.” She traces the evolution of consciousness through three stages: (1) movement away from pre-conscious unified state of the masculine and feminine energies; (2) separation of the energies leading to autonomy but also competitive and dualistic way of looking at reality, (3) reunification of the feminine and masculine principles which brings wholeness.
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