

Part Six

THE COSMIC CHRIST

One way to arrive at the Cosmic Christ is to begin with the Ascension and the following four images which begin Part Six. After Jesus appeared to his friends numerous times after his death, the Ascension is described like this: “As they were watching, Jesus was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight . . . they were gazing up toward heaven while he was going.”

Is this a “beam me up” episode in Jesus’ life? As Carl Sagan remarked, “If Jesus was physically racing into outer space at the speed of light, he still will not have reached the edge of the known universe!” Or was this a first interpretation of Jesus “leaving” a “three-story universe,” the ancient worldview that heaven is “up above,” earth is in the middle, and Hades/hell is “down below.” With this concept of the universe, it made a lot of sense that if Jesus was to return to God, he would have to ascend from earth through the air towards Heaven.

Today we no longer understand our world that way. We must take what they saw seriously, but not their interpretation of it. What folks seemed to have actually seen was Jesus lifting upward, enveloped by a cloud and then he was gone. They had also seen him appear and disappear numerous times before in different settings such as a room full of his followers, walking along a road with two of them and eating a meal. This time they interpreted Jesus disappearing as Jesus going up to heaven to be with God. *But we can take the same event and interpret it differently.*

Postmodern Jesus scholar Markus Borg writes, “To say that the risen and ascended Jesus is ‘at God's right hand,’ a position of honor and authority, means ‘Jesus is Lord.’ In the first century, when kings and emperors claimed to be lords, this claim had not only religious but also political meaning. To say, ‘Jesus is Lord’ meant, and means, that the Herods and Caesars of this world were not, and are not.”

Second, because the risen and ascended Jesus is “one with God,” he (like God) can be experienced anywhere. Jesus is no longer restricted or confined to time and space, as he was during his historical lifetime. Rather, like the God whom he knew in his own experience, he continues to be known in the experience of his followers.

The meaning of the Cosmic Christ (the remaining seventeen images of Part Six)

The Ascension gets us ready to understand the Cosmic Christ. The Ascension serves as a transition from understanding the Risen Jesus being present with his friends in his spiritual body to the understanding of Christ as the Christian symbol of everything that has ever happened.



Ascension of Christ Salvador Dali in 1958

Dali said that his inspiration for The Ascension of Christ came from a "cosmic dream" that he had in 1950, some eight years before the painting was completed. In the dream, which was in vivid color, he saw the nucleus of an atom, which we see in the background of the painting.

Gala, Dali's wife is above representing God and the dove representing spirit, completing a Trinitarian image.

Dali later realized that this nucleus was the true representation of the unifying spirit of (Cosmic) Christ.

The Resurrected Christ Salvator Rosa

Rosa (1615 –1673) was an Italian Baroque painter, poet, and printmaker, who was active in Naples, Rome, and Florence. As a painter, he is best known as "unorthodox and extravagant."

Although named "the resurrected Christ" this painting also suggests an image of the Ascension — which is why it is placed in this section.



Ascension Catherine Andrews

Andrews was born and raised in England and as a young girl, she had visions of the etheric world around us.

Her painting shows Jesus beginning to move from the personal Jesus to a glorious, expanded understanding of Jesus as the Cosmic Christ, the Christian symbol for everything — the material, human, and divine dimensions of life held in seamless oneness.

It can be helpful to understand that there are *three basic dimensions or faces of God*:

There is the *Infinite Face of God Beyond Us* which God revealed to Moses as I AM — Infinite Being and Infinite Consciousness.

There is the *Intimate Face of God Beside Us* which Jesus revealed to us in his and our close relationship with Abba and his presence personally with us today.

There is the *Inner Face of God Being Us* which is our own deepest Self — our True Self, our Divine Self. This Divine Self is hidden underneath a cloud of ego and mistaken identify. Only as we die to our egoic self is our True Self then revealed.

Using this language, this painting depicts the Intimate Face of God, Jesus, expanding beyond physical boundaries to symbolize the Infinite I AM

Face of God. We can be in touch with this Infinite I AM Face deep within as the Inner Face of God through dying to our lesser identities and embracing our divine Self.

Christ in Ascension John Giuliani



Traditional iconography, depicting the Ascension imaged in the features of America's indigenous peoples, reveals anew that sacred power. It celebrates the soul of the Native American as the original spiritual presence on this continent, and as a prophetic sign, it celebrates the reconciliation of the spiritual vision of Native and Christian peoples of this land.

Moving to the Cosmic Christ

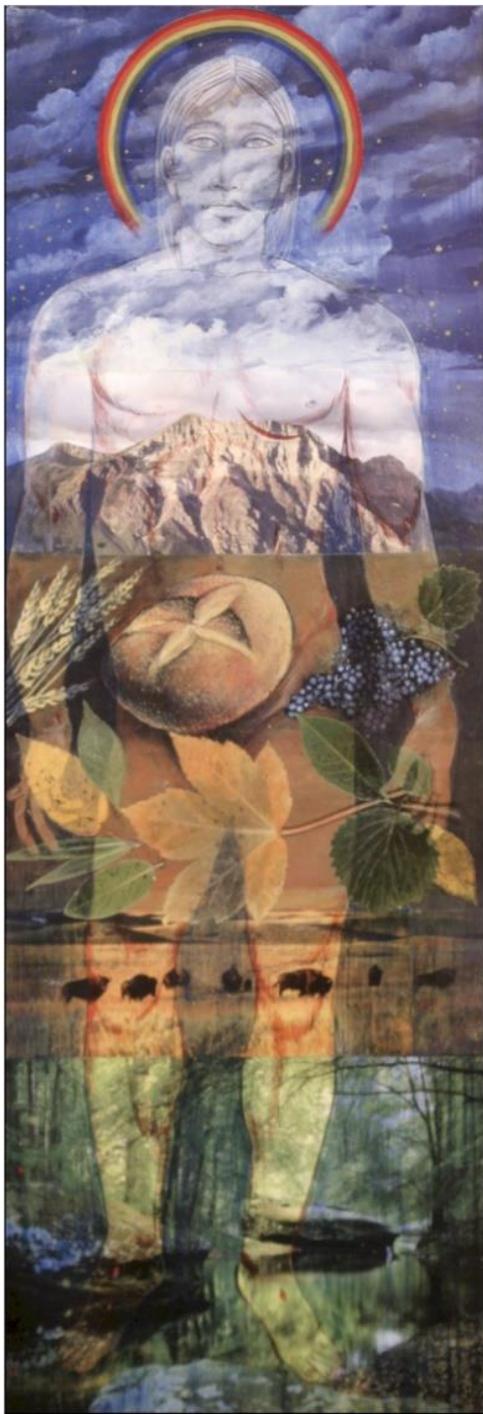
In my understanding of the Apostle Paul's writings in the New Testament, when one looks beyond both the historical Jesus and the risen Jesus who is still with us now in a non-physical energetic body, one finds the Cosmic Christ. The historical Jesus was a conscious, divine, physical, human being. The risen Jesus was and is Jesus himself with us now in his energetic spiritual body and personality.

However, Christ is not Jesus' last name. Rather it is a title that eventually in the writing of the Apostle Paul came to be the symbol for Christians of everything that has every happened held in seamless divine unity. Christianity approaches Christ in a particular and unique way, informed by its own history and spiritual evolution. But Christ vastly transcends Christianity, and touches all loving religions and spiritual paths by whatever name.

For a fuller explanation and description of the Cosmic Christ, see Chapter 2 "Beyond 'the Son' to the Glory of the Cosmic Christ" in *Is Your God Big Enough? Close Enough? You Enough? Jesus and the Three Faces of God by Paul Smith*.

We are all Cosmic Christs in our deepest self. The difference between us and Jesus is that Jesus fully identified with and manifested his divine cosmic self – and we do not. Our True Self is covered over with a load of ego and mistaken identity.

Jesus is a *personal* demonstration of what God is like. Christ is a *transpersonal* demonstration of what God is like. Adding the word "cosmic" to Christ is a way to remind us that the title "Christ" moved from a personal "Messiah" to a Universal Infinite Christ as the symbol for all of reality held in Oneness.



Mystic Christ

John Giuliani

This mystic Christ is a visionary image of the Cosmic Christ, the Christian symbol for everything held in sacred union with God. From earth to sky, this powerful image mystically reveals the universe as the Body of Christ.

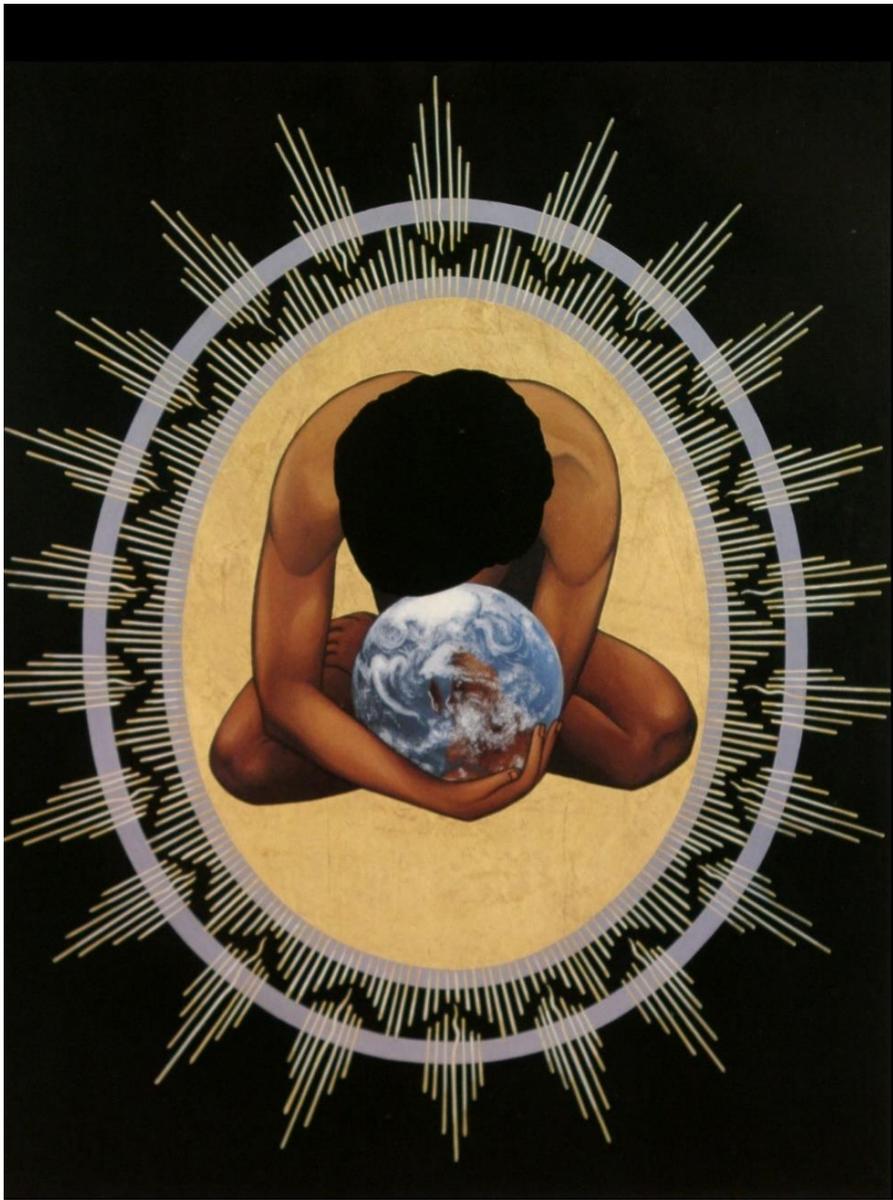
The word Christ is the Greek translation of the word Messiah.

There were several different versions of the Messiah in the Jewish tradition. Jesus redefined all of them, and after the resurrection the meaning of “Christ” as Messiah continued to leave the understanding as Messiah of the Jewish nation and further evolved into a new and radically cosmic dimension.

This can be confusing since the Apostle Paul so associates Jesus with the Cosmic Christ that he often refers to both simply as “Christ” in his writings.

Paul’s use of the title “Christ” reflects a sweeping expansion of the understanding of Jesus that is vastly bigger than history.

- *The historical Jesus was a conscious, divine, physical, human being.*
- The risen Jesus was and is Jesus himself with us now in his energetic spiritual body and personality.
- *The Cosmic Christ looks like a cosmic scale Jesus—infinite consciousness, infinite divinity, and the whole physical universe rolled up into one seamless package of infinite being and finite becoming—all of reality without separation.*
- While “cosmic” and “Christ” are not placed next to each other in the New Testament, they are certainly present in the New Testament descriptions of Christ.



Compassion Mandala

Robert Lentz

Jesus came to replace the abusive religious system taught by the religious leaders of his day with the spiritual path of compassion.

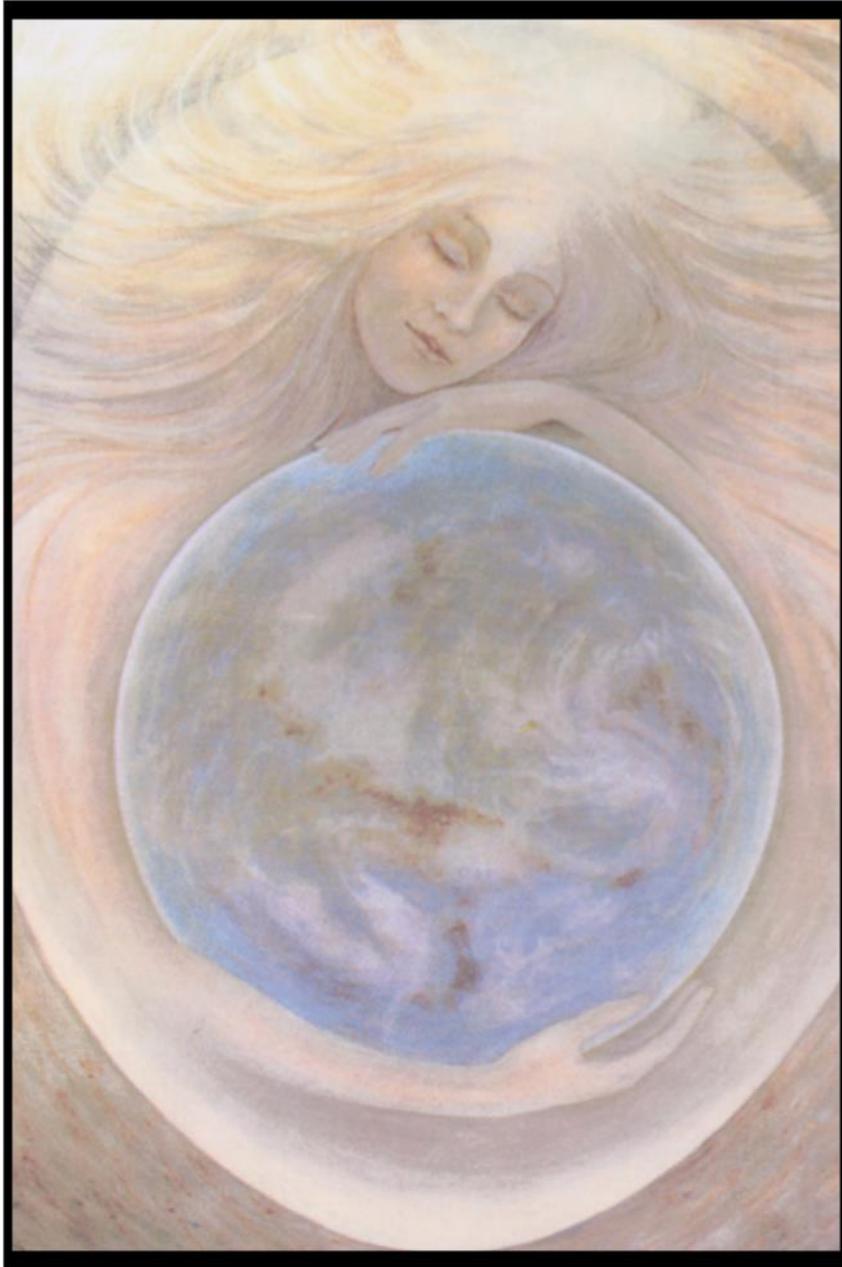
Nothing was more important to Jesus than love and compassion.

In the Compassion Mandala, we see the Cosmic Christ personified as a simple, naked, androgynous form holding the world in loving arms.

The Apostle Paul was taught by his mystical experiences with the risen Jesus to expand Jesus as the Messiah to Jesus as the Cosmic Christ, the blueprint and Christian symbol of the whole of both finite and infinite reality.

“Christ is before all things and in Christ all things hold together.” (Col. 1:17) Christ is the cosmic face of God by which all things are connected and held together in oneness. Christ is the cosmic pattern that holds everything together. Christ, as the symbol for the whole of reality, holds all things together within the infinite space of Infinite Being.

Christ, as the blueprint and pattern that comes first, holds everything together from the very beginning, making it all work. Christ is the web of life pervading all creation, holding everything together in the cosmic force field of ever-creating love.



Sophia

Pamela Matthews

Sophia is another biblical reference to the Cosmic Christ. Pamela Matthews personifies the Cosmic Christ as a cosmic-size loving woman.

Early Christian teachers spoke of Christ as “our mother.” Clement of Alexandria, 2nd century, said, “The Word, Christ, is everything to his little ones both father and mother.”

Saint John Chrysostom in the 4th century wrote, “Just as a woman nurtures her offspring with her own blood and milk, so also Christ continuously nurtures with his own blood those whom he has begotten.”

Anselm in the 11th century stated, “But you also, Jesus, are you not also Mother. Are you not Mother, who as a hen gathers her own chicks under her wings. Truly, Lord, you also are Mother,”

And finally, Julian of Norwich writing in the 14th century said, “But our mother, Jesus alone –carries us with endless loving.”

The Cosmic Christ includes both male and female and transcends them.

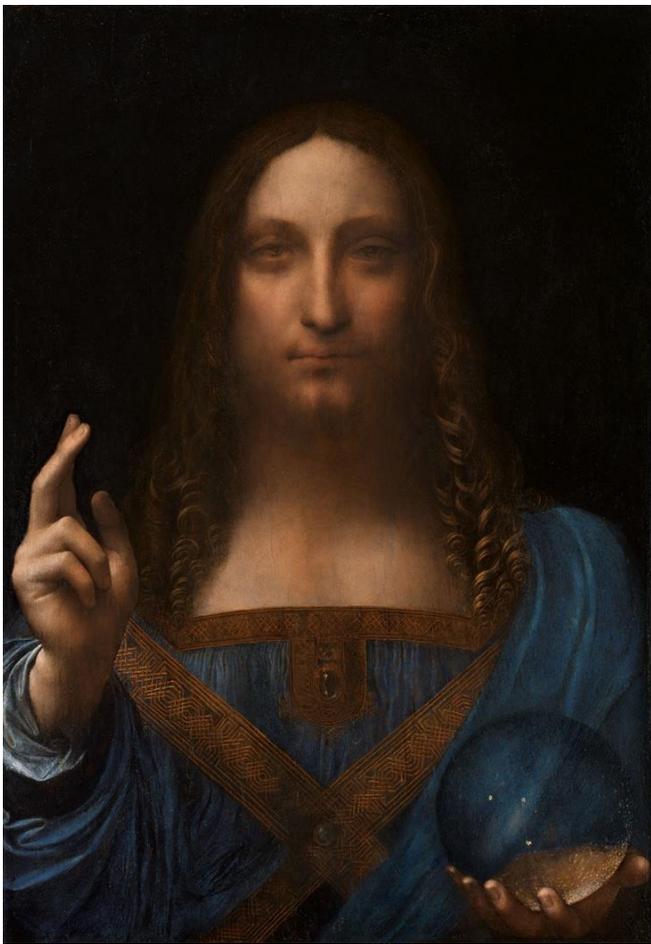
**Ruach
Lucy Sync**

"The Spirit of God swept over the waters" Genesis 1:2.

When Sync discovered that the word "spirit" was feminine in Hebrew, she painted this image of divine feminine spirit breathing on creation.

The feminine dimension of the Cosmic Christ is brought forth here with God/She, Jesus, and/or Spirit being depicted as a personified feminine presence in the cosmic dimension.





Salvator Mundi Leonardo da Vinci

around 1500 — The Louvre Museum, Abu Dhabi

Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1514) was a brilliant Italian Renaissance polymath whose areas of interest included invention, painting, sculpting, architecture, science, music, mathematics, engineering, literature, anatomy, geology, astronomy, botany, writing, history, and cartography. He is widely considered one of the greatest painters of all time.

This breathtaking image is the world's most expensive painting (\$450 million at auction in 2017), one of less than twenty authenticated works by da Vinci. It now hangs in the Paris Louvre museum's first outpost outside France.

This picture is the only one in this collection to appear twice, previously in Part One: The Human Face of God, and here in Part Six: The Cosmic Christ. The oil on panel depicts an ethereal figure of Christ raising his right hand in benediction and holding a crystal orb in his left hand.

Leonardo would have chosen the crystal orb for theological and cosmological reasons as well as its appealing optical characteristics. The crystal sphere, a symbol of the heavens, has three bubbles which are the tiny gaps in crystal known as “inclusions.” In Ptolemaic cosmology the stars were embedded in the fixed crystalline sphere of the “heavens.”

This turns “Savior of the world” into “Savior of the Cosmos.” (The word translated “world” in the Bible is the Greek word *κόσμου* or “cosmos.”) This places it, in addition to being in Part One, also in Part Six — The Cosmic Christ.

In the previous three contemporary paintings of this Part Six, the Cosmic Christ holds the world in his/her/its hands. Da Vinci was always ahead of his time. It appears that he was ahead of our time, too. Here, in a Renaissance painting from five hundred years ago, the Cosmic Christ, holds not just earth, but the entire cosmos in his hand. This moves us to a much larger dimension — a cosmic one, that we are only now beginning to see.

Jesus is a *personal* expression of the Great Mystery. The Cosmic Christ is the *transpersonal* expression of the Great Mystery held in the Oneness of Infinite Being and Infinite Consciousness. The Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for everything — all of divine, human, and material reality held together without separation.

Sophia Alex Grey

Grey is a contemporary sacred artist and mystic visionary.

Sophia is a figure who appears throughout the Christian Scriptures as a female personification of the Wisdom of God/She. To her are attributed the same works of creating and ordering the universe as elsewhere are attributed to Yahweh.

The earliest picture the New Testament gives of Christ's existence from the beginning is that of Wisdom or Sophia, the Greek word for wisdom. The Gospels point to this: "Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, "I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute."

Paul calls Christ the Wisdom of God" (1 Cor 1:24) and that Christ became for us "Wisdom from God" (1 Cor 1:30).

Christ Sophia includes and transcends the historical Jesus. The Cosmic Christ Sophia includes each of us and all Creation – All That Is.

Sophia is shown here as the Mother-Light – the living, guiding presence of wisdom filled with and against a net of an infinite number of eyes representing God that is I AM Mystical Infinite Consciousness.

She is the Goddess as a vessel of rebirth and spiritual transformation. Sophia is revealed here as guide for the times of crisis humanity is not facing, having embraced the entire world in her spirit-nourishing heart.

Her halo, symbolizes wisdom beyond rational understanding. In Sophia, infinite vision and wisdom are united as one level of being. Beneath her hands are the immanent manifestations of the Goddess- the life-giving nurturing mother and Kali, the dark

mother of time, birth, and death.

Holy Wisdom Robert Lentz

The Eastern Orthodox Catholic Church, the third-largest branch of Christianity in the world with over 270 million members, has many churches dedicated to Hagia Sophia — Holy Wisdom.

This depiction of Holy Wisdom refers to the Cosmic Christ, a playful Christ at work in creation. “...when the foundation of the earth was laid out, I (Sophia — Holy Wisdom) was the skilled artisan standing next to the Almighty. I was God’s delight day after day. . . rejoicing in the whole world and delighting in humankind.” Proverbs 8:29-31 (*The Inclusive Bible*)

The Cosmic Christ as Cosmic Wisdom is personified in Jesus who embraces all of material and spiritual reality. A world called to transfiguration is not a world for us to pillage and rape. Waste and pollution are moral issues at the heart of Christian faith.

In this icon, Cosmic Wisdom is personified as an androgynous naked Third World child. The gold sphere represents eternity, and the brightly colored waves crashing wildly below represent the beginning of creation.

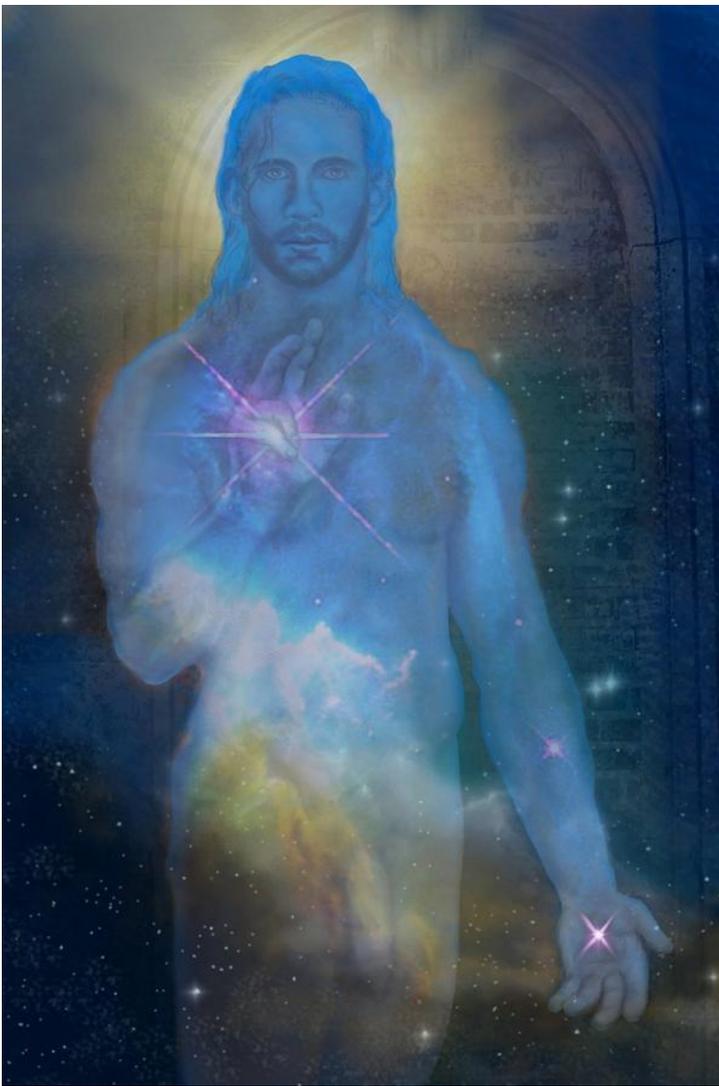
The concept of an androgynous Christ is important as we wrestle with issues of sexuality in our day. The Trinity is an essential part of our Christian faith, but its patriarchal matrix is not. As we begin to appreciate the feminine aspects of God, many of our other attitudes must also change. The image of the



HOLY WISDOM

Cosmic Divine Sophia can assist us as we search.

Cosmic Christ John Lentz



The title “Christ” applied to Jesus is the Christian symbol for all of reality held in Sacred Oneness. Theologian Raimon Panikkar, in affirming this point, says that all of reality includes divine reality, human reality, and material reality.

“Christ” (*Christos*) originally meant “the anointed one” or, in Jesus’ day, the “Messiah.” That meaning expanded to the cosmic dimensions of “*all things*” – meaning *everything that has ever happened or existed held in Oneness with God*. We see this in the New Testament in Colossians 1: (italics mine):

“Christ is the *image of the invisible God*, the firstborn of all creation; for in Christ *all things* in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—*all things* have been created through Christ and for Christ. Christ is before *all things*, and in Christ *all things* hold together. . . . For in Christ *all the fullness of God* was pleased to dwell, and through Christ God was pleased to reconcile to Godself *all things*, whether on earth or in heaven.”

Lentz uses the infinite cosmos as the most graphic background to represent the sense of the cosmic. The figure of Jesus is transparent to convey the historical Jesus in a cosmically transpersonal dimension. Jesus was the personal expression of the Cosmic Christ which is beyond the personal.

The nakedness of Jesus emphasizes that human physical material and sexual reality is a part of the everything that is held together by the divine Cosmic Christ.

When a person reaches a very high state of consciousness, that person then looks at the world from the sense of this Cosmic Divine Oneness, seeing everyone and everything held in divine sacred Unity. Some spiritual traditions also call this “nonduality.” Nonduality mean “not two,” but not one either in the sense of being the same.

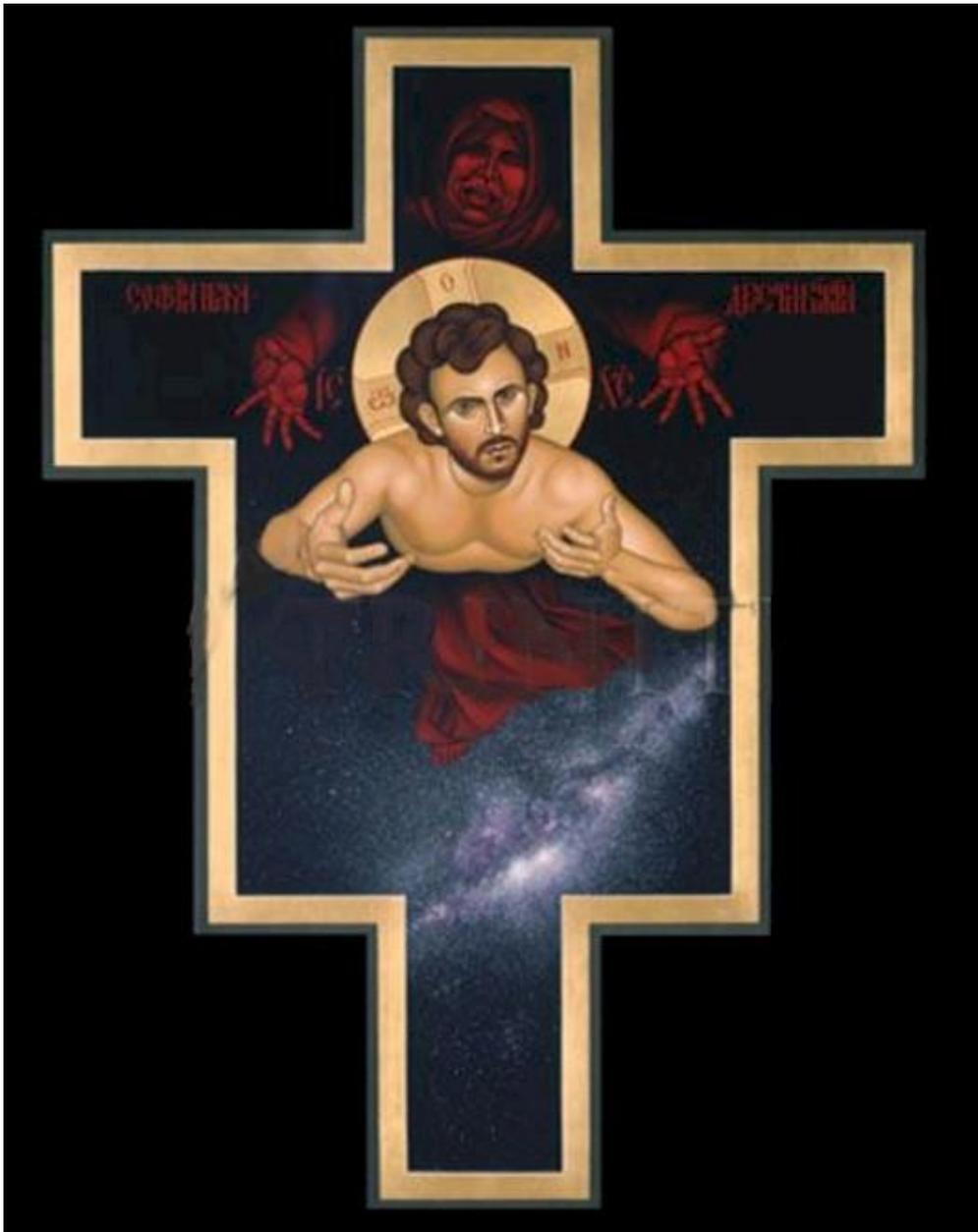


Cosmic Embrace **Melina Del Ma**

Melina is an important visionary artist from Chile whose paintings have been exhibited around the world. Inspired by the natural and spiritual worlds, she has worked with South American Shamans, Indian Mystics, Yogic Masters and lived side by side the indigenous people of ancient lands.

The Universal or Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for Everything. At the heart of all of reality — material, human, and spiritual — is the loving heart of God. Christians see this heart most personally and dynamically revealed in the personal presence of God who comes to Christians primarily in the form of a loving mother and father and the historical Jesus — but may come to us in many forms, both male, female, and beyond.

Here the Cosmic Christ is revealed in transpersonal, loving, feminine form.



deeply in times past.

Dance of Creation

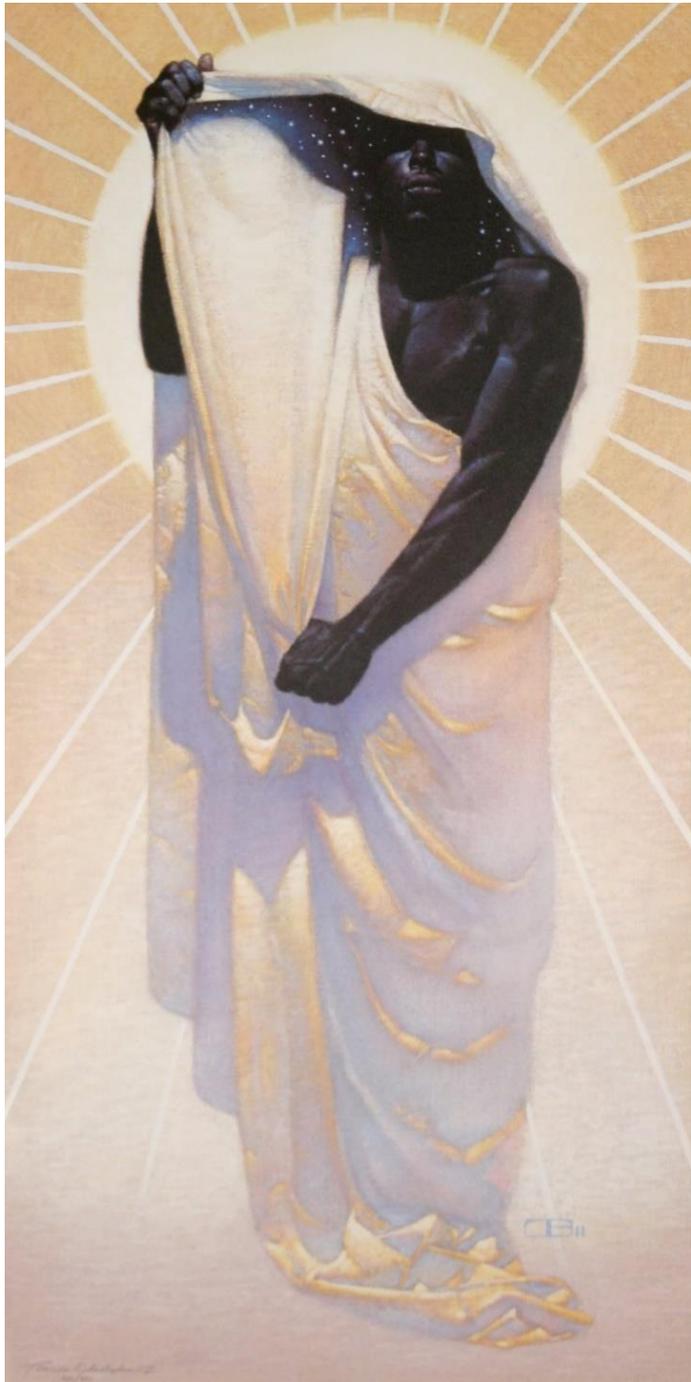
Robert Lentz

Robert Lentz OFM (born 1946), is an American Franciscan friar and religious icon painter. He is particularly known for incorporating contemporary social themes into his icon work.

Icons are a prominent feature in the Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity.

The Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for everything that has ever happened held in seamless unity. Here the Cosmic Christ is personified in Jesus in the dance of creating. This icon celebrates ancient Christian tradition and the most startling contemporary discoveries about the nature of the Cosmos. The transparent figure of Hagia Sophia -- Holy Wisdom -- dances and sings playfully in the background, true to her description in the Book of Proverbs. Her open hands scatter galaxies of stars and all they contain.

In the foreground is the Word, the Logos, Pattern of all Creation, the Cosmic Christ incarnate in Jesus, celebrated in the gospel of John, and embraced by mystics throughout centuries. His extended hands order and gather back to the Mystery all of creation which reaches its completion in him/her/it. The galaxy beneath Sophia's feet is the Milky Way. The inscriptions name Jesus Christ and Sophia, Holy Wisdom of God, written in Church Slavonic, the language of the Russian Church which has pondered these mysteries so



Night in Day

Thomas Blackshear

Blackshear, a contemporary African American Christian artist, is a popular artist whose religious work has been described as “compelling ... in its unabashed eroticism; it aims to turn you on, and then to turn that passion toward Jesus.”

Blackshear, a former Hallmark artist in Kansas City, left commercial art for a year-long spiritual retreat. This was his first work in his new career as a painter after that time of spiritual renewal.

At one level this is humankind experiencing Night wrapped in Day, universal metaphors of suffering and overcoming, which are especially meaningful to the oppressed of humankind.

At another level the Black Man is the transpersonal Cosmic Christ personified, the One of both Suffering and Glory, “man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Now the Cosmic Christ serves to weave together the Night and the Day for each of us as Divine Love patiently heals, guides, and restores us every day.

The Christ Consciousness carries us through both the dark night of the soul and the dazzling brightness of evolving glory.

The Cosmic Christ lifts his hood to give us a glimpse of the stars that appear to shine only in the dark of the night.

Let the Universal Christ, in whatever manifestation, wrap your suffering in His/Her/Its comforting robe of radiant glory.

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Evolution Lucy Sync

“For in [the Cosmic] Christ all things in heaven and earth were created”
(Colossians 1:16).

The Cosmic Christ here is in the process of creating all things. Christ is the Christian icon or likeness of “the all” that we find in:

I am the all; the all came forth from me, and the all attained to me.
Cleave a (piece of) wood; I am there. Raise up a stone, and you will
find me there. (Gospel of Thomas, Saying 77)

The whole of reality consists of three intertwined centers: (1) material reality (visible to the ordinary eye), (2) invisible divine reality (increasingly visible to the awakened eye), and (3) human reality (the eye that does the seeing). These three comprise one seamless, nonseparate whole.

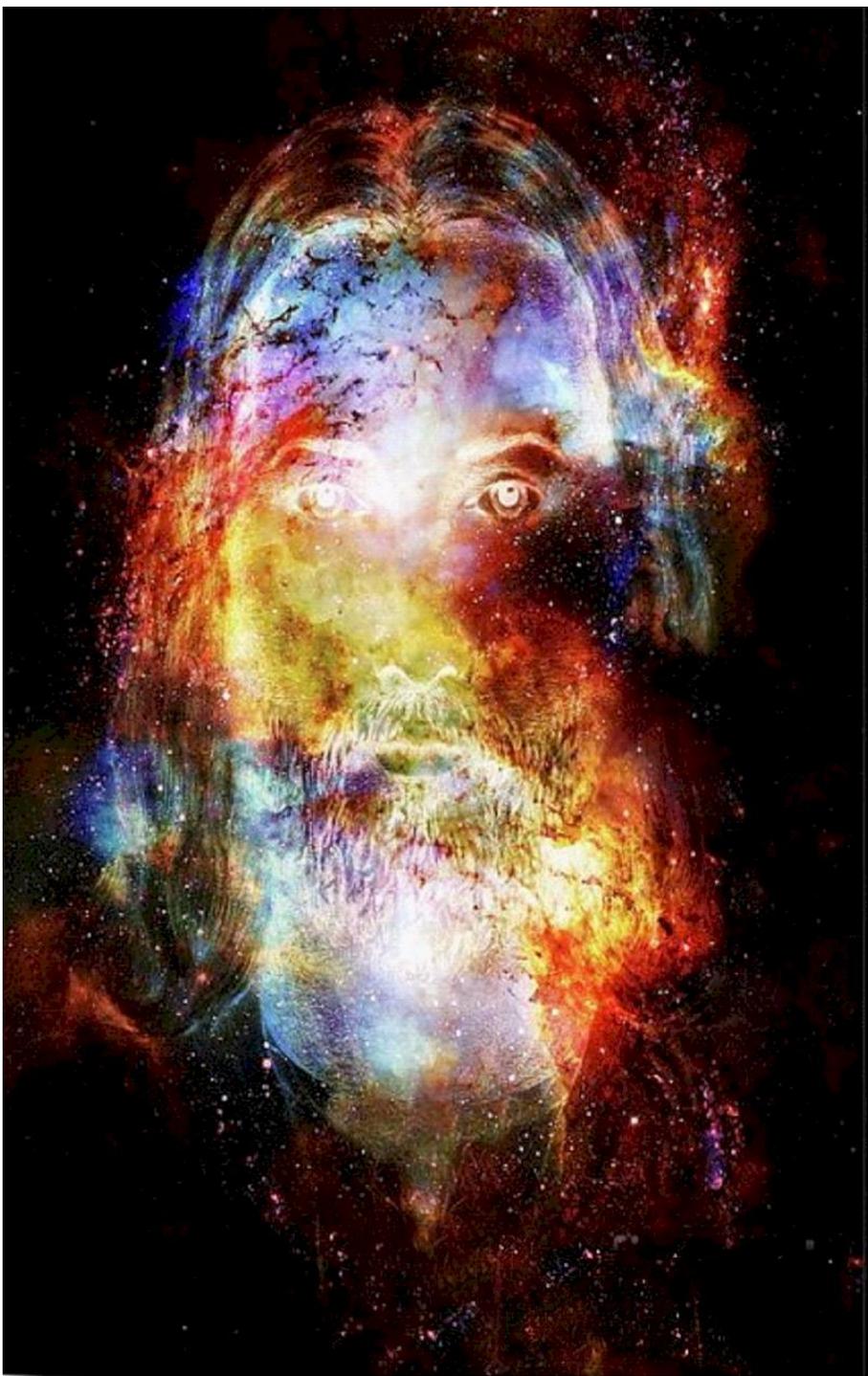
How did a speck of infinitely compressed matter at the Big Bang evolve to roses, giraffes, and the wonder of consciousness in human beings?

Christians understand that it was through the Cosmic Christ who was and is the plan, the vehicle, and the purpose of all created things. The Cosmic Christ is the cosmic matrix, the living web of love from which all things emerge.

The Cosmic Christ is not only everything in all creation, but is the divine evolutionary impulse of creation itself.

Here Lucy Sync personifies an androgynous figure as the Cosmic Christ, the Evolutionary Impulse. The Cosmic Christ originates creation but also continues to mold and shape humankind through the sacred process of evolution.

There is no conflict between the scientific path and the spiritual path understood in an integrated context.



Jesus Christ — Energy of Light in Cosmic Space, Jozef Klopicka

Klopicka is from Slovakia and paints a wide variety of subjects.

Here is his Cosmic Christ with a background of cosmic space, light, and a radiant image of Jesus beyond the historical person to the transcendent transpersonal Christ. The Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for everything held in Divine Oneness.

Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) was a French philosopher and progressive Jesuit priest who trained as a paleontologist and geologist and took part in the discovery of Peking Man. He posited the view that the world as we know it has been, and still is, evolving and expanding onwards, outwards and upwards to the Cosmic Christ. A major result of Jesus expanding to be the Cosmic Christ is that he resides in every human being and through whom he continues his evolving creation and universal redemption. Every person, including you, is thus a cosmic and divine person too – a central and intrinsic part of the whole material universe while throbbing with divine life and the divine energy of the Spirit.

Instead of looking at this image — let it look at you. What do you feel?

Christ and Buddha Paul Ranson in 1890

Born Catholic, Ranson (1864 – 1909), a post-impressionist, studied Buddhism and Theosophy, incorporating various symbols from other mythologies into his paintings. Here he combines the crucifix of his Catholic birth with Buddha. Ranson held to the belief of the divine in humankind and desired to show the unity of various spiritual paths.

The Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for everything that has ever happened — held in the Oneness of God. This image brings together Christianity and Buddhism and their many parallels, differences, and ways they enrich one another.

Christ and Buddha, two manifestations of divinity, based their life upon compassion. The Eastern path, represented by Buddha, brought inner compassion to the forefront as the source of love in the world. The Western path, through Jesus, focused on acts of compassion as Jesus suffered the non-violent way of the cross for speaking up for those oppressed by religious, social and political forces.

Siddhartha is the name of the figure who later became known as Buddha and who today is the center of Buddhism. Jesus is the name of the figure who later became known as Christ and who today is the center of Christianity. Siddhartha became the Awakened, Jesus became the Christ.

To see Jesus as a Buddha figure is to see him as an enlightened teacher and model of one who awakened to his own divinity (but not as a sacrificial victim). To see Buddha as a Christ figure is to see him as one

who experienced the universal awakened mind of Christ Consciousness or Buddha Mind.



Both Jesus and Siddhartha (Buddha) had a royal lineage. Jesus came from the line of David, the greatest king of Israel. Jesus is also described as having given up his place with God, emptying himself to come in human form. Buddha was born into a royal family amongst rich and extravagant circumstances. Yet he gave it up all and became a monk, subsisting on the charity of others. Both Jesus and Siddhartha gave up royalty to serve the world with compassion.

Both Buddha and Christ gave a missionary command. Buddha said: "Go forth in all the world, for the good of the many, for the welfare of the many, in compassion for the world. Preach the teaching, magnificent as it is in the beginning, magnificent as it is at the end."

Jesus also wanted us to also share the way of love with all the world saying, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations." We have thought "disciple" meant believing in various doctrines and rituals. But a disciple in Jesus' understanding was one who lives, as he did, in the presence of God's love and letting that love flow through you to the world.

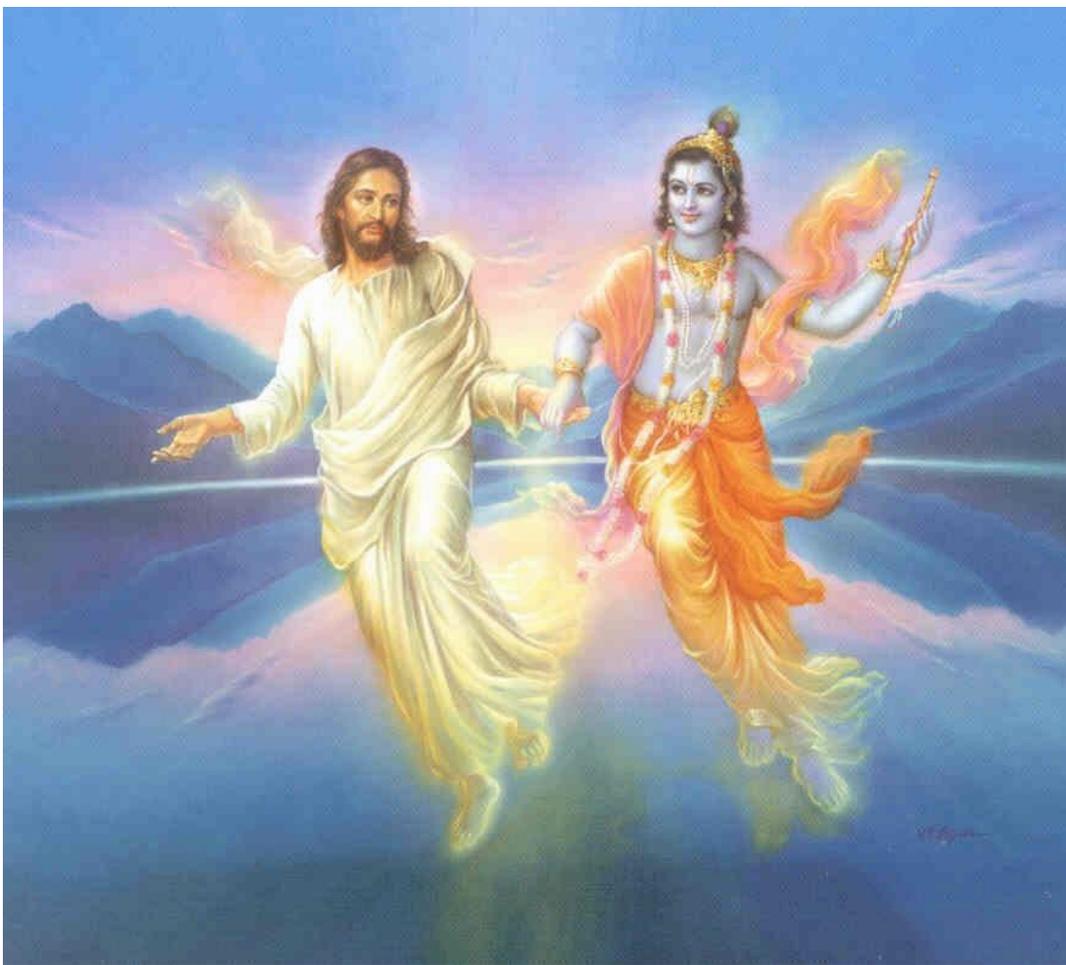
Buddhism, as it has come down to us, emphasizes inner compassion and developed deep inner practices to help with the journey to compassion. Unfortunately, Jesus' inner practices have been mostly lost to us, although one can see elements of them in the Gospels. What was passed down was the emphasis on love – loving God and others, coming from an inner compassion.

Jesus clearest statement of the primary inner spiritual practice was, "Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Go inside yourself and just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God within, and you will begin to sense the love of God." (Matthew 6:6, adopted from *The Message*)

Both manifested expressions of the universal human yearning for mystical harmony with the rhythms of creation. According to Robert Elinor, "Buddha and Christ are but local inflections of a universal archetype, the Cosmic Person imaging wholeness. Beneath the perceived differences underlying these two visionaries, there are subtle unifying attributes which are amply exemplified in the life they led and the message they spread."

Christ Consciousness and the Buddha Mind see the world through and as the heart and mind of Ultimate Reality (God). Therefore, they refrain from all judgments whatsoever, abiding in unconditional love and always choosing love over fear.

Jesus Christ and Lord Krishna Artist Unknown



This is an Hindu painting of Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christianity and Lord Krishna, the most common figure associated with Hinduism. Christianity is monotheistic as is Hinduism which actually quite monotheistic or better said "monistic." The Upanishads assert that there is only one supreme, divine reality.

Despite their differences, Hinduism and Christianity have some similarities. This is particularly prominent in the case of the life and teachings of the two central figures of these world religions — Jesus and Krishna.

Both are believed to be sons of God since they were divinely conceived. The birth of both Jesus of Nazareth and Krishna of Dwarka and their God-designed missions were foretold. Both were born in unusual places — Christ in a lowly manger and Krishna in a prison cell.

Evil forces pursued both Christ and Krishna in vain. Christ is often depicted as a shepherd; Krishna was a cowherd. Both appeared at a critical time when their respective countries were in a torpid state. Both died of wounds caused by sharp weapons — Christ by nails and Krishna by an arrow.

The teachings of both emphasize love and peace. Christ comes from the Greek word 'Christos', which means "the anointed one." Christos is the Greek version of the word Krishna.

The truth and beauty found in both Jesus and Krishna are held in seamless oneness in the Cosmic Christ — the Christian symbol for everything that has ever happened held in the Infinite Being and Consciousness that is God.

Jesus and Lord Rama Alex Donis in 2001



Donis is a visual artist dealing with the boundaries between sexuality, religion and cultural relationships.

The Cosmic Christ brings together all loving spiritual traditions without separation. Donis has painted a sublime interfaith kiss in “Jesus and Lord Rama.” Krishna and Rama are both blue-skinned incarnations of Vishnu.

Lord Rama is one of the most popular figures and deities in Vaishnavism, one of the largest branches of Hinduism. He is an avatar, incarnation, or descent of Vishnu who is worshipped as the Supreme God.

The story of Rama is deeply influential and popular in the societies of the Indian subcontinent and across South East Asia. Rama is revered for his unending compassion, courage, and devotion to religious values and duty.

The Lord Jesus, held by Christians as an incarnation of God and Lord Rama, held by Hindus as an incarnation of their understanding of God, come together in love and divine harmony.

People throughout history have pictured Jesus looking like one of them: black Jesus in Africa, white Jesus in the West, and Jesus who looks Asian or Latin American in those parts of the world. It’s important to add a gay Jesus to the mix because he taught love for all and embodied God’s wildly inclusive love for everyone, including sexual minorities. Gay Jesus images are especially needed now because some Christians still use religious rhetoric to justify

discrimination against gay people.

Jesus welcomed all, and the Cosmic Christ embraces gays and others who seem different in the Universal Oneness of all-inclusive love.



Coat of Many Colors, Lord of All Thomas Blackshear

Modeled after Joseph's coat of many colors from the Old Testament story, the Cosmic Christ here represents all the peoples of the world.

Jesus is stunningly personified as the Cosmic Christ, "who holds all things together" (Col 1:17), and who is bringing together every nation into harmony and wholeness.

On his coat are flags of the nations and fabrics of the cultures of the world.

Jesus predicted that all people would eventually come to the fullness of God in whatever way is meaningful to them. He said, speaking not as the historical Jesus but as the Cosmic Christ, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself." (John 12:32).

The Cosmic Christ, personified here as Jesus is named in various ways in differing spiritual paths. The Cosmic Universal Christ is over all and in all, regardless of how that One is named or imaged.

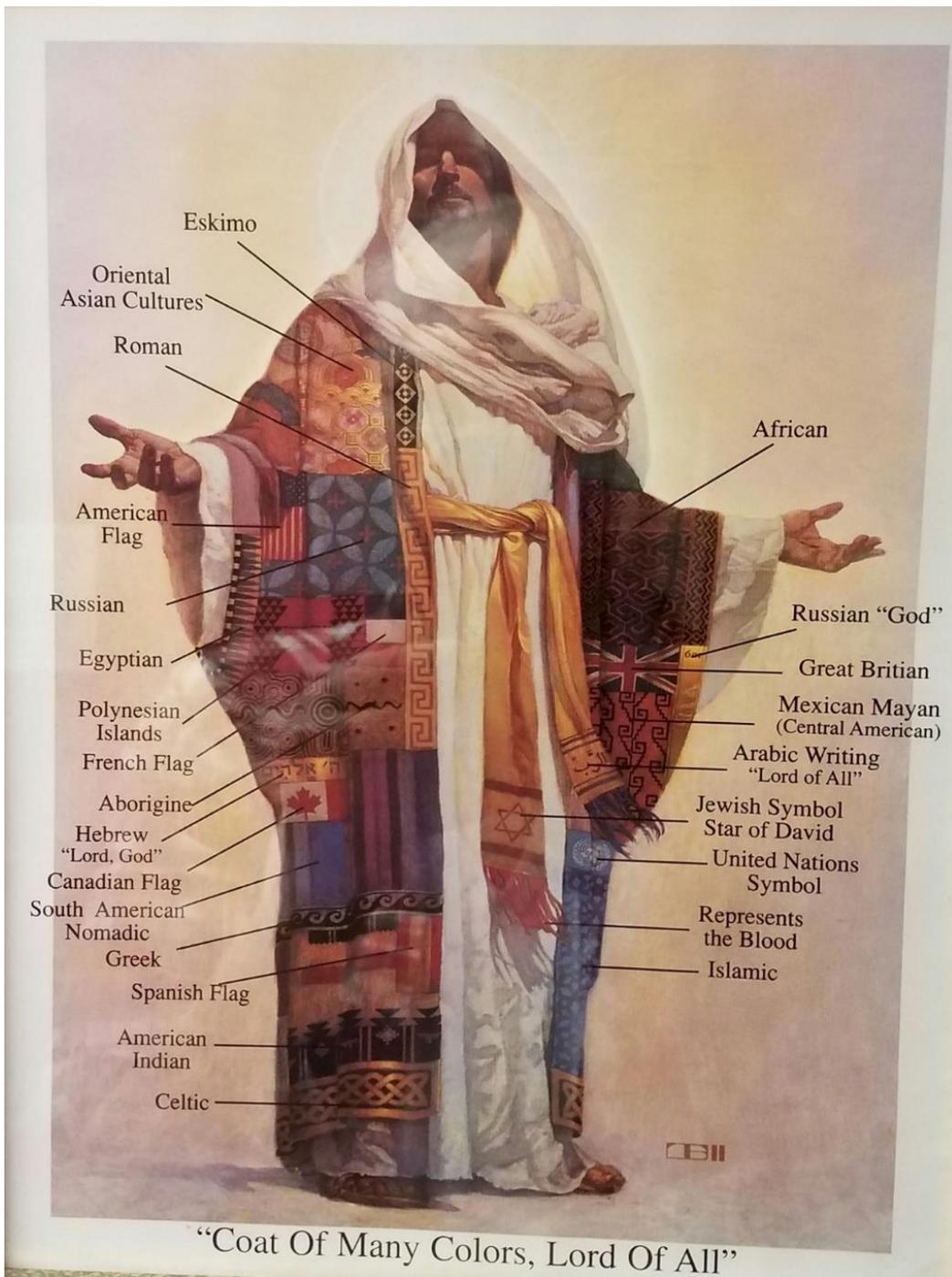


Diagram with colors labeled

"Coat Of Many Colors, Lord Of All"



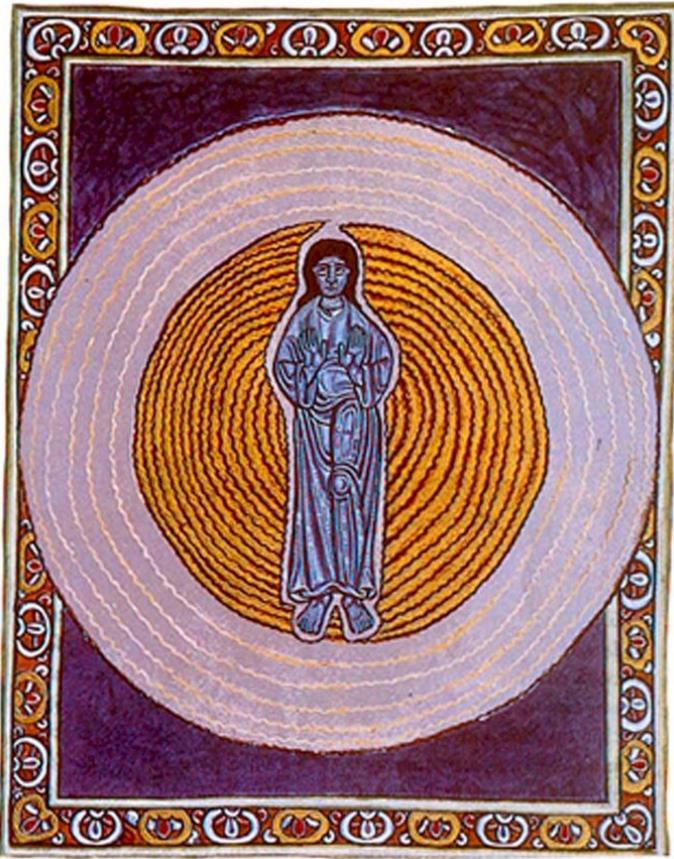
Jesus of the Philosophers Octavio Ocampo

Born in Mexico in 1943, Ocampo works primarily in the metamorphic style – using a technique of superimposing realistic details within the images that he creates. He is one of Mexico's most prolific artists.

Philosophy is the pursuit of wisdom about important questions we have about the world. The Cosmic Christ includes all the various philosophies of the history and the world today.

Here are images of famous philosophers of the world integrated to form the face of the Cosmic Christ personified in Jesus. Wherever truth is found, it is divine truth.

The Man in Sapphire Blue Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen in 1098-1179



Hildegard of Bingen was a twelfth-century artist, author, counselor, dramatist, linguist, naturalist, philosopher, physician, poet, political consultant, prophet, visionary, and a composer of music. She is the first composer for whom a biography exists and one of her works, performed as a play, is considered the precursor that led to opera.

Throughout her life, Hildegard wrote that she experienced visions: "These visions weren't fabricated by my own imagination, nor are they anyone else's. I saw these when I was in the heavenly places. They are God's mysteries. These are God's secrets. I wrote them down because a heavenly voice kept saying to me, 'See and speak! Hear and write!'"

Hildegard wrote and spoke extensively about social justice, about freeing the downtrodden, about the duty of seeing to it that every human being, made in the image of God, has the opportunity to develop and use their God-given talents.

Alex Grey says, "Hildegard had prophetic and cosmologically dense visions. Her art provides some of the best examples of early spiritual visionary art."

The several layers of concentric circles here, emphasize the idea of eternity, infinitude, and completeness that is expressed in the Cosmic Christ, personified as the Blue Man in the center. The square has four corners, and is, therefore, reminiscent of the earth itself. The union of the circle and square, represents the Oneness of heaven and earth. As Christ is in the center, the suggestion here is that the Cosmic Christ unites heaven and earth -- he was fully divine, but also fully human. The use of the color gold in some of the concentric circles, reminds us that love is the most powerful force in the universe.

The opening on the man's head is likened to the crown chakra that connects individual awareness with universal awareness.

If we do not merely glance at this mandala, an ancient circular image of the universe, but gaze at it, it can draw us into the energy of divine compassion and connect us with the Cosmic Christ,



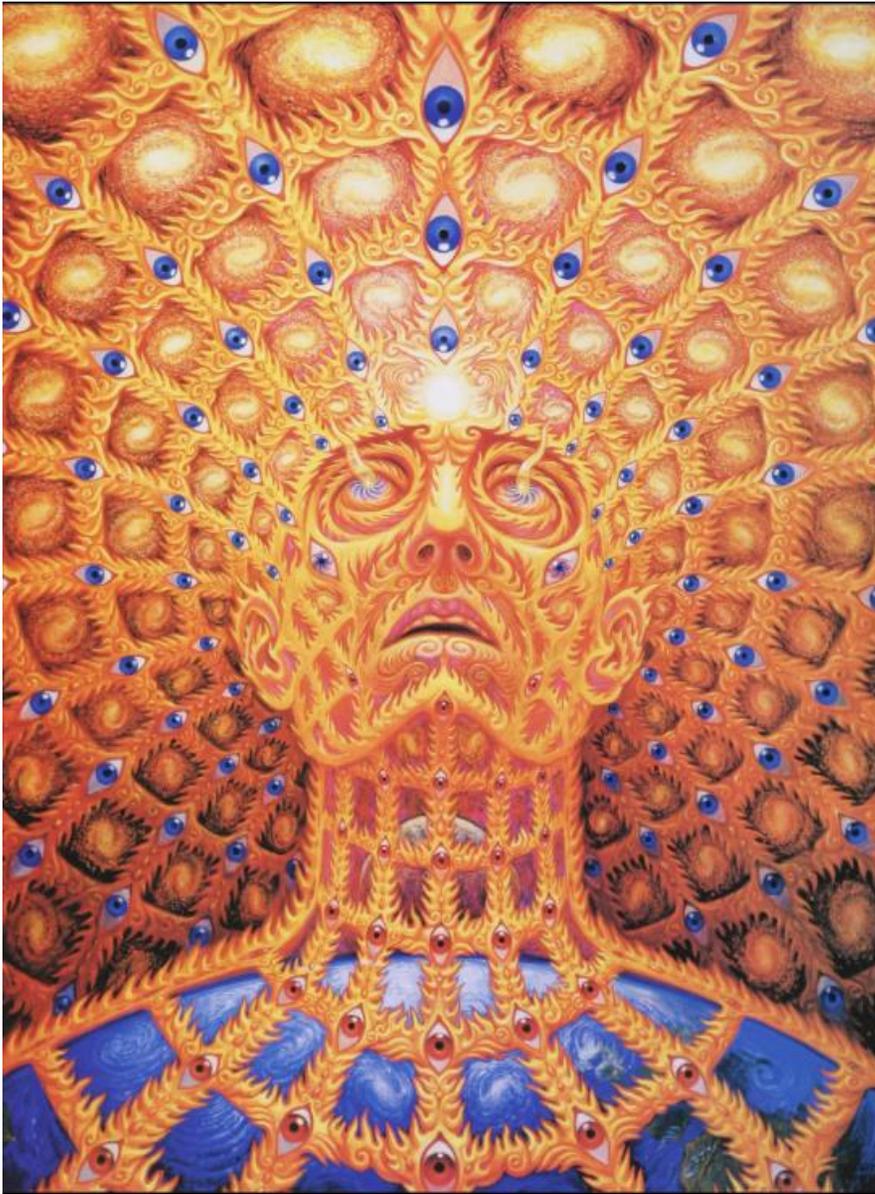
The Cosmic Christ Sister Rebecca Shinas

Sister Rebecca Shinas, OP, is a Dominican sister and an artist, composer, and musician. She says, “I paint and compose music to proclaim God’s infinite, unconditional infinite love for ALL of us joined as ONE.

Here she uses a cosmic spiral with a transpersonal (beyond the personal) Jesus at the center, radiating the pattern that creates and holds all things together in divine Oneness (Col. 1:15-20).

There is a distinction between Jesus and the Cosmic Christ. They are connected but not the same.

it’s like a man flying a kite. Jesus is the person holding the kite string, keeping it from escaping away into invisibility. Christ is a cosmic banner flying over all as the Christian symbol for all of reality held together in Oneness. From the Christ banner all can draw life—even if they do not see or recognize the one flying the kite. The kite soars into the heights, anchored to the ground by the man holding the kite string. Jesus does not hold the string to keep the kite to himself as much as he wants to keep the kite grounded to the human heart and tethered to earthly reality.



Oversoul Alex Grey in 1997

The title of this visionary image comes from “The Over-Soul,” an acclaimed essay by Ralph Waldo Emerson, published in 1841. Oversoul is the concept that there is a universal spirit that lives in all — the spiritual unity of all being.

“We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within us is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty; to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE.”

The Over-Soul, from *Essays*, Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1841)

“I ask that they may all be ONE even as you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us. I in them and you in me, that they may become completely One.” (Jesus in the Gospel of John 17:21)

This is another way of presenting the Cosmic Christ, the Christian symbol for the whole of reality – material, human, and divine in seamless Oneness.

“All at once, without warning of any kind, I found myself wrapped in a flame-colored cloud . . . I knew that the fire was within myself. Directly afterward there came upon me a sense of exaltation, of immense joyousness accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination impossible to describe . . . I saw that the universe is not composed of dead matter, but is, on the contrary, a

living Presence; I became conscious in myself of eternal life . . . I saw that everyone is immortal; that the cosmic order is such that . . . all things work together for the good of each and all; that the foundation principle of the world, of all the worlds, is what we call love, and that the happiness of each and all is in the long run absolutely certain. – R.M. Bucke: *Cosmic Consciousness*.

Void/Clear Light Alex Grey

Grey is a contemporary sacred artist and mystical visionary

The Cosmic Christ is the Christian symbol for all of reality which includes emptiness itself. Finally, at The End/Beginning, the Face of Jesus is No Face But God. God is All In All. The Void is the absence of everything but God Who Is Pure Light.

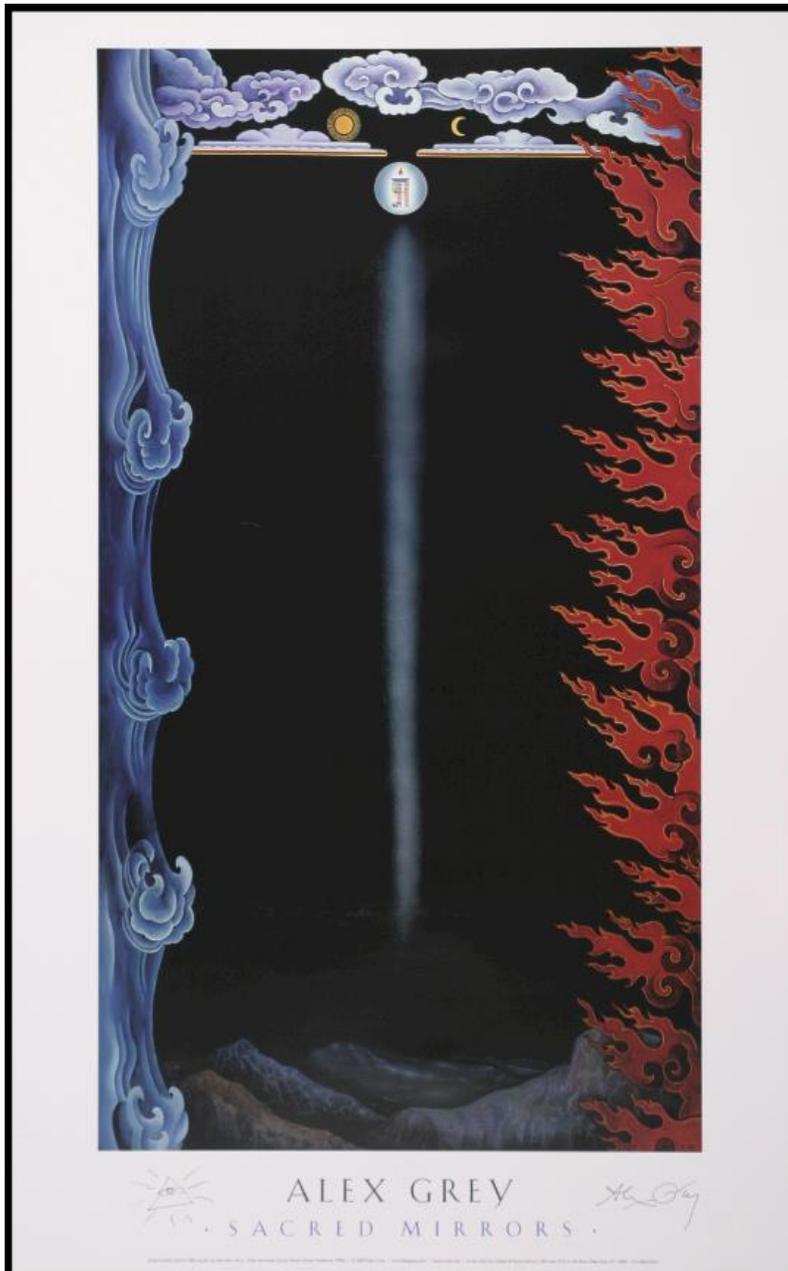
Our essential nature of Divine Clear Light is revealed when all other distractions and identifications of the mind and heart are left behind.

The void is experienced as peace, bliss, and love, not as the result of some outward circumstance, but as the essential qualities of resting in and as I Am — God as Being Itself.

The Void/Clear Light is a nondual perfected state of being which is boundless, ultimate and indescribable. To portray the indescribable, Grey relies on a central ground of blackness infused by a subtle shaft of light, surrounded on the edges by Tibetan-influenced representations of the five elements – fire, water, earth, air, and space.

At the top is the Tibetan Buddhist monogram of enlightenment, the emptiness of all forms. It resembles pi (π), the mathematical symbol for infinity. This is the emptiness that is the Ground of All Being and potential of all worlds.

“For in God we live and move and have our being; as even some of your own poets have said, ‘For we too are God’s offspring.’” Acts 17:28





The Cosmic Christ Alex Grey

This section on the Cosmic Christ ends with this master image — the magnificent, breath-taking, theologically and biblically astute Cosmic Christ by Alex Grey. Christ, in the Apostle Paul’s vivid descriptions, is the Christian symbol for everything that has ever happened—all of reality held in the seamless Oneness God.

From a vision in an altered state of consciousness, Grey painted the Cosmic Christ which is a profound imaging of the Christ of which Paul writes *“in him all things hold together”* (Colossians 1:17).

In Colossians 1:15-20, the Apostle Paul describes Christ as the Christian symbol for everything that has ever happened, using the glorious language of All Things (τὰ πάντα), an almost technical term in Greek meaning everything that is.

Grey says his Cosmic Christ, “correlates images of the evolution of human consciousness.” It begins at the bottom of the painting with the big bang, galaxies, and earth. The soul emerges from the murky waters of the unconscious. Christ represents the potential and the realization of super consciousness, the uplifting power of Spirit. Christ’s transfiguration and ascension moves to aviation and space travel.

There are over 100 smaller images of humankind’s various endeavors in the golden grid demonstrating that “all things have been created through Christ and for Christ” (Col. 16).

In the heart of Cosmic Christ is the planet Earth. A longitude and latitude grid over Earth becomes a planetary crucifixion; everyone is nailed together in collective suffering. The planetary crucifixion transforms into a green Christ child, a planetary child, a green tree of life with all the plants and animals as one being. Not only does Christ transcend, but Christ is also in us, in everything and in every part of nature.

Grey's Cosmic Christ pictures this beautifully as the golden web of life that is Christ flows out and around and through all things, holding them together. There is no action or idea that ever occurs without having been the product in some way of previous reactions. All things work in patterns to create new things and in that process, destroy old things.

Notice that Paul does not say that Jesus does this, but Christ. Christ is not Jesus' last name. The title "Christ" began in the Gospels as description of Jesus as an "anointed one" (Messiah) and evolved in Paul's brilliant writings to Christ as the Christian symbol for all of reality in one seamless web of life.

Below the painting, on the elaborate frame, it reads:

You can never be lost.
When have you ever been apart from me?
You can never depart and never return.
For we are continuous, indistinguishable.

Art comes from the level of consciousness of the artist. What we see or experience in viewing art also depends on our level of consciousness in receiving that artist's intent. Some art is simply the picturing the physical dimension. Other art sends emotional and symbolic signals that move us. The rarest form of art is visionary art that depicts and elicits in viewers an experience of going beyond the merely physical to higher spiritual states.

Sensitive viewing of visionary art can induce an altered state of consciousness and help move us not only to an altered state but help push us to the next stage of spiritual development.

Visionary art such as that by Alex Grey in his twelve images in this collection can be transformative art by helping us glimpse aspects of our own deeper and true nature.