

## Cosmic Walk Introduction – Transcript of John Seed August 2023

This process was devised by sister Miriam Therese McGillis, a Catholic nun from a community called Genesis Farm in New Jersey, and she was a colleague and devotee and perhaps disciple of the late father Thomas Berry, the most respected, progressive Catholic theologian of the second half of the 20th century.

And it was quite late in his life that Thomas had this epiphany where he suddenly realized that he was no longer a theologian, but had become a geologist because he understood that the God that he'd been worshipping all of his life at that particular conception of godness was a product of the Earth, just as all the other creation myths of humanity were products of the earth.

He understood that every culture has a creation myth.

Everyone needs to have an answer when the kids sat around the fire and asked: How did all this happen? How did we get here? Everyone comes up with a story. And all of these stories, Thomas said, are utterly beautiful and are an important part of the human heritage. But there are 10,000 of them, each of which thinks that it's the correct story, and each of which is at war with the others. Because the reason that we are "us" and they are "them" is because we've got a different story.

And, it's not just that the Christian story is at war with the Muslims story. But that Protestant story is at war with the Catholic and the Sunni with the Shia, and that these stories are always at war with each other. And it's too late for that. We now need a story that's going to unite humanity rather than divide us. And Thomas thought that the only story that looked like it had any chance of that was the story as revealed by empiricism as revealed by science as revealed by telescopes and microscopes and things like that.

If a Buddhist astronomer reports what he saw, a Hindu astronomer or a Christian astronomer will agree. There's no difficulty in agreeing as to what we're seeing out there.

However, we can't leave it to the scientists to tell the story because they don't know how to tell a story in a way that leaves the listeners utterly transformed and transfixed and stunned with awe and wonder. That's how these stories are correctly told, and that's the role that they play in the different societies.

And so, he called upon the artists and the musicians and the mystics to tell the story correctly, and many have done so. The script we're going to use tonight I got from sister Miriam, and I've made some changes. And you should do the same. When you get this script which I'll send you the link to, if there's a bit where you wonder "how could they possibly have left that out?" Then put it in, just add another candle or remove a candle, make it your own.

The link that I'm going to send you is to a page that includes a dozen different versions of this, including this one we're going to use tonight

I'm not suggesting mine is any better than the other ones. It's just that's the one I've ended up with. And so what Thomas says is that what the story reveals is not just that we live in this incredible universe that somehow flared forth 13.7 billion years ago, but rather that we *are* that universe at the moment when it has become complex enough in the human so that, perhaps for the first time for all we know, the universe is able to slowly turn around and look over its shoulder and the jaw of the universe drops in utter astonishment to see the trail that it has trod.

For the first time it understands how it got here or something like that, you know? And so that's the spirit in which this was written. I've done this with Father Thomas before he died and with sister Miriam at Genesis Farm and I suddenly realized at a certain point that a song that had been part of the hippie festivals back in the early 1970s, the Down to Earth Festivals and the Rainbow Festivals and so on, called Child of the Universe was a perfect fit for this and so I started to include that in in the process that I used and so tonight, Allison is going to read the script and I'm going to teach us the chant and do the song.

\* ["Child of the Universe"](#) youtube clip sung by John Seed in May 2012 at Mooncourt