Podcast #197 Angels Among Us

Imagine a great composer—let’s say Franz Liszt—wanted to come to you from the afterlife with some lessons and wisdom and some new music he wanted to introduce to the world. And then imagine he wanted to introduce you to some of his friends—Schubert, Chopin, Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and they also wanted to work through you to introduce new music to the world.

Would you make time for them? I hope I would!

Sounds kind of crazy, though, doesn’t it? That’s what I thought when I randomly came across a book written about fifty years ago called Unfinished Symphonies by Rosemary Brown. I found a used copy but you can read it on Internet Archive.

I have to admit, by the end of the book, it didn’t sound crazy at all. She had no desire for fame—in fact, it opened her to ridicule and exploitation

She wrote:
There have been times when I have suffered bitterly, and I have sometimes wondered whether I would still have gone ahead if I’d known just how much disparagement and even denigration there would be. Yet I know that really nothing would have stopped me, because right from the beginning I caught Liszt’s enthusiasm. He has a deep sense of mission, which has become implanted in me. I feel that I am privileged to have been chosen for the work—even if it does at times cause me much heartache.

. She had no desire for riches, although she was a young widow with two little children to raise on her own and was making ends meet by working in a school cafeteria. The composers were anxious to free up some of her time so she had more time for them.

She considered this work a. “’..a gift from God’. She wrote: “The composers themselves have urged me to accept the royalties on the compositions. I am not, and never have been writing the music for money. It is to me a mission, a sacred trust, which the cynics of this world cannot be expected to comprehend. “

She was placed under intense scrutiny by musicians and psychologists and every ologist on the planet who tried to find the explanation for what she was producing—which amounted to more than 400 complex musical compositions and orchestrations which astounded music scholars. She claimed these composers came to her—some would dictate notation that she would write down. Others would gently place their hands on hers and she would write what she played. It was a very long and slow process. She said the simple reason they couldn’t find any other explanation was because what she was saying was true and was actually happening to her.

Whether or not you believe that she is telling the truth, the messages she passed along are filled with hope. And our world needs a bit of hope right now. So let me share a few of her conversations with her disembodied friends.

Sir Henry Wood was their spokesperson who told her:

There are a crowd of souls gathered together, most of us musicians, and we are all most interested in what is transpiring, and we are all working together in a body in the hope that we can make some impact on that world of yours and bring some reality and truth into it.

“It is not only music we are interested in, though music is our life. All of us here are very dedicated to music. We live in a world where music plays a very vital part indeed, and apart from coming through and endeavoring to use you as an instrument to give the world music of the soul, we are anxious to change if we can your world; change the thoughts of man. By the efforts of many souls here, we should be able to bring man to a greater realization and understanding of the purpose of life.”

She said of Beethoven: “He is an awe-inspiring person to look at, and there is no doubt that he was one of the greatest souls to live in this world. ..Of course he is no longer deaf….At first, in those silent meetings, I had a strong sense of this greatness; this real nobility of soul. The room was full of an atmosphere of sanctity….Gradually a bond of sympathy began to spring up between us. I felt that though he was far above me, he did understand me. And I felt tremendously honoured that he would just stand there talking to me.

Sometimes he talks about music, and sometimes he will talk about himself or life—or God. He says now he longs to pour forth great torrents of music which would really stir us into greater understanding; he wants to pour out his music for us in fountains of compassion. And he makes me feel that he aches to reach out to humanity and enfold us in wonderful love. He has an intense devotion to and belief in God with no narrowness in his thinking at all, and one day he was talking to me so gently and quietly that I felt very moved and very humble, and I said to him: “Beethoven—I love you.”

He just looked at me with the suspicion of a smile and said quite seriously: “Of course.”

Just a side note—haha—a note----These musicians said they were quite intrigued with pop music. They think it quite fun for young people, providing the music doesn’t become depraved, and they are a little worried that some of it is going this way.

A lot of pop they say is not music. Just fun. They like and admire quite a lot of modern music, but not all. Some, they say, is no more than noise. Not music at all.

I’ll interject that this was 50 years ago… a lot has changed in the modern music world since then! I wonder what they would say today! I think there’s a lot of noise out there. But to get back to what Rosemary relayed:

A lot of modern music “ is a series of vaguely interesting but rather grotesque sounds. I suppose the result might be called intellectually clever, but it is not music in my opinion. It is not possible to manufacture music. It must come from some source of inspiration. There are composers who can compose direct from their intellect, but the result will be unsatisfactory unless there is some subtle quality of inspiration blended into the music.”

Liszt was the first composer to come to her. She said he was handsome and very, very kind. He first appeared when she was a little girl. He didn’t say anything to her then, but he returned some years later not long after Rosemary’s husband died.

Rosemary wrote:

“The reason for the whole strange phenomenon which puzzles so many people is to try to help us know for sure that there is another life and a purpose behind everything so that things are not as hopeless as they sometimes seem. Liszt feels that the first step is to make people just begin to think about an after-life. His theory is that while people refuse to believe there is anything to come after we have finished with this world, everything will continue to seem meaningless, which may discourage us from putting our best efforts into our life here on earth.”

That was also behind Schubert’s contributions.

Rosemary wrote: I think Schubert wants to give us hope. He seems to be trying to make people realize that perhaps there is something else to look forward to.

These were the words behind one of the compositions he wrote through her:

Softly falls the winter snow;

Bleak blows the blizzard that drives it to and fro.

Can there be hope in a world that’s so cruel?

Can springtime follow? Can flowers blossom?

Can there be life after death’s bitter sorrow?

Wilt thou rewaken in heaven tomorrow?

One day, Rosemary asked Liszt:

“Why me?”

He replied:

“Because you volunteered. Long before you were born.”
I was startled at first, but thinking about what he said, I decided that if one can accept there is a life after death, why should there not be a life before birth?

Liszt continued:
“You agreed to be the link between us and the world when you were in another aspect of your life.”

Rosemary then reflected: There are things that one can never hope to prove, but looking back it does seem as if my whole life has been preparing for what has been happening to me for the last few years, and that every twist and turn has been leading up to my being able to take down this music.

But then she asked Liszt, Why, if they planned for me to be the link and to do this work, they didn’t let me be born into a family where I might have had a better musical training.

His reply:

“You have sufficient training for our purposes. Had you been given a really full musical education it would have been no help to us at all. In the first place a full musical education would have made it much harder for you to prove that you could not be writing our music yourself. Secondly, a musical background would have caused you to acquire too many ideas and theories of your own. These would have been an impediment to us.”

He also pointed out that a highly trained musician would probably be too preoccupied with a musical career to be willing to devote time to work with discarnate musicians.

I also said, perhaps a little crossly, that they might have eased my life a little if they had plans for me. I felt, I said, that it had been so hard that I had become crushed—which seemed likely to hinder the work.

“I know there are people who have suffered far more than me, but I do think I’ve had more than my fair share. Was that necessary?”

He looked at me with those very bright blue eyes of his and said: “Before you were born, and when you agreed to be our link, you also had to agree to a certain amount of suffering in order to be sensitized. Suffering, such as you have had, helps your type of powers to function. People who lead easy, placid lives are not sufficiently sensitized for communication with us to take place easily.”

Perhaps I didn’t look convinced, because he went on to say, quite gently, “Your life hasn’t been easy. You suffer emotionally because it was intended that you should. It was also intended that you would learn to control your feelings of sorrow and rise above all that happens to you. And it is the ability and the willpower to do this which gives you the steadfastness that we need to work through you.”

Let me interject a thought here. The one sacrifice heaven requires of us is to offer a broken heart and a contrite spirit. I’ve always replaced contrite with the word humble in my understanding. But I took the time to look to see what Webster had to say. Contrite literally means worn and bruised. Life has a way of doing that to us, doesn’t it? But rather than being a punishment, it may just be the means to sensitize us to receive the things that heaven wants to send us. When we try and clear the path for our kids and make everything perfect and smooth, are we actually interfering with heaven’s processes? Do we teach them that when life gets hard and messy, they must be doing something wrong? I think we need to be careful about that.

Getting back to Rosemary’s conversation: I also found it difficult to reconcile a kindly Lifeforce with little thalidomide babies and other suffering children, but Liszt explained that they had chosen to be born in this way because, perhaps, they needed the experience to learn patience or courage. He explained that we all need to learn different kinds of fortitude in our lifetime, and that to enter this world provides the opportunities to learn many things that cannot readily be learned in a state of trouble-free tranquility.

“How can you learn courage without facing danger? How can you learn to be cheerful without cause for sorrow? How can you learn compassion for others without suffering yourself? These are qualities of character which cannot be developed unless there is a challenge to face.”

While having a discussion about God, she “put forward the viewpoint that it seemed unfair that we don’t get the opportunity to know more about God. Millions of people never have the chance, or the intellect to think properly about Him…There are still people who are almost untouched by civilization and seem to have little chance to get to know or understand anything about God…: Somehow it seems unfair, and I said as much to Liszt, adding, though it must have sounded irreverent, that God could perhaps have arranged things so that we knew a little more; so that we could be certain He exists.”

This is me interjecting my own thought again. That made me pause and think. Wouldn’t it seem the most straightforward way is just to show Himself? Or send angels to speak to us? Or let someone go into the afterworld and report back? Well, I think you know how that goes over in the world. Look where it got Joan of Arc. Harriet Tubman told people the reason she wasn’t afraid is because the Lord spoke to her and told her where to go. Of course, the world said it must be that head injury she had as a young girl. A world renowned scientist—Swedenborg—said that he was allowed to freely visit the life hereafter so that he could come back and report what he saw. He offered his writings freely—never charging. People thought he was insane. I can tell you how people respond to the message of my faith—that God has appeared and Jesus Christ—that an angel, Moroni, came back to show where he had hidden a record of his people. You would think the world would be excited at such an event! But the reaction is far from that. We are often mocked and have been persecuted for our beliefs. . And Rosemary Brown? Wikipedia attributes her phenomenon to mental derangement or repressed memory. Others attribute it to it being a con job. So, yeah, the direct revelation to us mortals appears to be a bit problematic for God.

So I liked Liszt’s explanation, when he said:

Perhaps I can explain more simply by an allegory. If you plant a seed in the earth it cannot see where it is going. It is in darkness. It does not know where the light is, or where the air is. But in that seed is the God implanted instinct which will cause it to grow and push its way upwards to the light and the air.

It is the same with the human soul. The soul may be in darkness, but there is within it that divine instinct; an instinct that will lead eventually towards light and understanding. The soul will attain God-consciousness ultimately—though not necessarily during its life on earth.

He said, rather sadly, that while we are on the earth many live believing this is the only life, without realizing that we can go on unfolding spiritually after this life here is ended.

Life on your earth is rather like a nursery school. When people die and it appears that they have lived wasted lives, they still have the chance to go on and to catch up.

He continued: Our purpose, working with you, is an attempt to make people realise this, and therefore give hope. Your lives on earth could become happier if people knew that it is only a preliminary to the wonderful life after death.

If people have lived lives that have been deliberately destructive, or by wilful neglect or action caused suffering to others, when they arrive here on our plane, then they have to face what they have done.

Their conscience can no longer be stifled because there is nothing between them and their conscience as there is on earth.

He explained how on earth people can refuse to listen to conscience, but in the other world, it is impossible to shut out these thoughts and of course this can be a sort of hell. People do then eventually become very regretful and wish they had behaved differently. But providing this feeling acts as a spur for them to try to overcome their past failings, make good and compensate the people to whom they have caused harm—then the regrets can bring eventual happiness.

One of the most marvelous things that Liszt has told me is that when we die and we leave this life for our new home, we are always met on the other side so that we will not be alone and afraid. Usually some of our own dear relatives and close friends are there waiting to greet us and to show us around until we have settled down and understand where we are and feel at home.

I think this is wonderful. After all, many of us are afraid of going into what we think of as ‘the great unknown’, but once we know and can believe that every single one of us is met by familiar and loving faces, that fear can fade.

Those on the other side often seem to have foreknowledge of accidents, and can organize accordingly so that people are still met no matter how precipitously they leave this world for the other.

This would seem to give the impression that our lives are predetermined, and that the fatalists are right.

Yet Liszt says this is not correct.

He says that we volunteer for our life on this earth, and that before we are born we are given a sort of plan of what our life is likely to be. But it can never be quite determined how we will react to various situations or whether we will follow our appointed course, and therefore our actions can change our lives.

For example, when the music began to come through me Liszt warned me that the work would mean a great deal of suffering for me—from ridicule, from jealousy, and from harsh scepticism. He said that people would try to exploit me, people would try to suppress the music, people would try to take command, and that people would belittle me. All sorts of hurtful things would happen.

He was quite correct. All these things happened to me, but he also said that if I would go through with it, what I was doing could be of value to the world. And for that reason I agreed to undertake the work.

But he did warn me, and I did have the choice.

The conversation continued, but the essence was, as Liszt told her, “This life is preparation for the other life to come.”

She wasn’t visited only by musicians. Another visitor she had was a surgeon named Sir George Scott-Robertson. What he had to teach her should be useful to us in the middle of a pandemic:

After describing a miraculous healing, she wrote:
“I believe that all healing comes from one source; the life force that we call God. And I am certain that this healing power is present in all of us if we can only learn to use it, and draw upon it when it is needed….if the patient has faith in the fact that they can be healed, then half the battle is won. Our old doctor who was a very kindly man and very skilled as both a doctor and a surgeon used to say to me that he could not really help any patient who did not wish to be cured. And he added that sometimes people did not even realise that they had no desire to be made well.

I am certain that the divine power to heal is available all the time. It is all about us and within us, but we don’t know how to tap it. It is rather like electricity. Always there, but you must switch it on, and, in the first place, harness it.

When people do not wish to be well, no power on earth or from the other side can function effectively. For it is only possible to act according to the unwritten law of free will.

Another interjection here. I have been loving all that I am learning in my harp therapy certification training which is all about healing—hearts, souls and bodies. There is massive evidence out there of what relaxation and breathing and calm can do to facilitate healing. We are taught: Be still and know that I am God. Think of the prescriptive plans for people a hundred years ago—they were sent to a countryside where they soaked in the sunshine and relaxed and breathed and started healing. I think there is something here for us to learn in our frantic, fearful pandemic world.

Rosemary continued:

And, of course, we do all have our allotted span. As you can imagine, when my husband was ill I prayed unceasingly. But he went. I realise now it must have been the time for him to go.

At first I was broken-hearted and missing his physical presence greatly, but then one day a friend said to me: “But your prayers were answered. He was healed. He has a new body and he is perfectly well.”

Now I realize that the truth is that his death was the ultimate healing—for he was very very ill indeed—and the final release from all physical suffering.

Let’s turn to a completely different topic, but something we are very interested in here at the Well-Educated Heart—Education.

Albert Einstein was another one of her guests.

He told Rosemary he would like very much to work with children.

He said: “They have a fresh intelligence which is untrammelled by modern systems of education, which are inclined to stifle the individual’s thinking. Present day systems of education aim at inserting quantities of information into the growing mind without allowing adequate time for assimilation and consideration of the facts introduced.”

Rosemary continued: He sounded quite cross about it, but then one of his chief interests is education, and he believes this is where the future of mankind lies. He once said to me that there were only ten people alive who really knew how to think, and how to use the thought processes that are available to those of normal intelligence.

He will not tell me who they are.

Let me insert here that Marie Montessori would have agreed. I was reading one of her books and she said that one of her biggest challenges is that mothers don’t want to think, and in order to do their work, they have to think. I run into the same problem—mothers who just want to be told what to do and not have to think about it. It is true—thinking is a sort of hard work, but also the most satisfying. Allowing and encouraging our children to think is one of the great gifts of education we can give them in the home.

Now let me get back to Rosemary and Einstein. Einstein had been trying to teach her some pretty complex thoughts, when Sir Donald Rovey picked up the dictation and carried along Einstein’s line of thought. As you listen, --and do the hard work of thinking of what he is saying-- I hope you can see this applies to those of you trying to incorporate a new way of learning which traditionally minded people push back against.

“The growth of understanding will do much to allay bigotry which is often but the defence of the fearful. The unreasoning and the unreasonable will not be able to lend their minds readily to the acceptance of new ideas: they are their own prisoners; but the free-minded (who are, alas and alack, all too few even in this day and age) will be capable of absorbing fresh facts and elaborating on the possibilities laid before them.

“It will mean the advance of some minds as pioneers who will blaze trails for the rest to follow when they perceive that the new paths are satisfactorily established. There are many who will not commit themselves until they are certain that the world in general will concur. Mankind is beset with a brand of pride which causes it to cower from ridicule, and thins the ranks of those who have the moral stamina to endure the derision of the ignorant, the biased, the self-opinionated, and the apprehensive.

“There are always those who scoff at that which they cannot or will not understand, and the threat of these Philistines may induce hesitation in some people to place before the world new or unusual ideas or experiences….

“Those who are most likely to block progress in your world are the inveterate sceptics…

And he gave a reminder that Rome was not built in one day nor Everest climbed in one hour;

I would add-you cannot speed grow a garden. Change and transformation takes time.

This next idea, which was part of the same interchange really resonated with me. I have often talked about the difference between Tower and Temple thinking. In the tower way—which is how most of the world thinks, think of a pyramid shape coming up to a point. We are destination and achievement minded. We have a point of arrival we are striving to reach. And we usually want to arrive at the top—to be number one. Now flip that pyramid over in your mind so that it stands on the point and leave it open at the top. I think that’s how God operates—adding upon forever. See if that picture in mind helps make sense of this next thought:

“As we look back down the ages, we can detect a repetitive pattern in the past of humanity, a recurrence of sequences which may cause us to remark that we seem to be going round in circles, --I’ll add—don’t we always say history repeats itself-- and, moreover, ominously vicious circles. But in view of man’s manifest 20th century achievements, I would suggest that the circles are ever widening ones, expanding into time and space in a similar fashion to the ripples travelling outwards from the impact of an object flung into water. I believe our entire outlook and all that it connotes is constantly stretching to encompass new conceptions and unparalleled experiences; I know that human consciousness is spiralling towards greater heights than it has ever before reached in the whole of its history.”

That’s what I keep trying to say! No generation in the history of the world has access to the knowledge and understanding that this generation has! If we will make good use of what has been given us, we will see greater heights as a civilization than any other that has come before because we have so much more to build from!

Liszt agrees that things are getting better in some ways—in ways that matter. Rosemary wrote:

Liszt really cares about people and if anyone is suffering, he wants to help. He said to me that in his time people suffered a great deal. Hundreds of people could starve to death or be victims of natural disaster, and people in other countries would have no idea that it was happening. But today with the newspapers, with TV and radio we can know much more of what is going on in the world and we can take steps to ease the suffering.

He told me that he believes things are improving all the time in this world. Though there is still misunderstanding and trouble he says we are on the brink of what he calls ‘a dawn of compassion’ when people who perhaps do not bother very much about others will see that it is only common sense to look after those who are less fortunate. Any section of the community that suffers often brings a chain reaction to the rest.

Don’t you see that too? There are forces for good that are moving over the world to alleviate suffering and poverty and lift and help. Our world is becoming more connected. We are able to understand each other more than any other generation that has come before us. There is reason to believe as suffering and sorrow increases, there will be a proportionate rise in compassion as we become more aware and can gain greater understanding in how we can help each other.

Some years ago, the musical group Alabama, sang a song called Angels Among Us and these are the words to the chorus:

Oh, I believe there are angels among us
Sent down to us from somewhere up above
They come to you and me in our darkest hours
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give
To guide us with the light of love

I totally believe there are angels among us who come to us in our darkest hours and show us how to live and how to give and guide us with the light of love. You just might not recognize them as angels.

I think one reason these experiences Rosemary related resonated so much with me is I have felt mentored and taught similarly. Not in a weird way. I have never seen a spirit being from the other side with my eyes. But they are as real to me as any of you—maybe even more so.

When you think about it, how do we get to know anyone? Isn’t it when they share with us the thoughts and desires of their hearts? Their dreams? Their wisdom and insights? And especially the stories and experiences of their lives? Without those things, we can live in the same house with somebody and that person will forever remain a stranger.

I frequently get letters from moms who I have never met in person, but they begin with, “I feel like I know you…” “I feel like you are my friend.” That makes me happy—it’s based on this same idea. You know me because I share things that are in my heart and we don’t ever have to meet in person to be connected.

So when you pick up a book or look at a piece of fine art or listen to inspired music, , all that is missing is the body part. What you are taking in are the longings of someone’s heart, a culmination of their thoughts and experiences and desires. When you learn more of the story of that person’s life, it is like that person comes to life. With that personal connection, these unseen friends exert a tremendous influence on our thoughts and actions.

Think of what that means.

It means we can have personal and intimate association with and can learn from the greatest souls of all time, if we make time for them. They can become our friends and our associates. Are they not like angels—messengers of glad tidings?

As we begin to think their higher thoughts and act in their nobler ways, we enter into a sort of fellowship with them, working together towards the uplift of humanity.

But that will only happen if we take the time and learn to enter into the spirit of their art, their music, their poetry, their great literature-- the messages these angels have left behind for us to learn from.

At the beginning of this podcast, I asked if you were told that Liszt wanted to come be a guest in your home, would you have time for him?

I would say there are many angels among us anxious to lift and teach us.

When I reprinted the Mother’s Learning Library, it was because I wanted you to get to know these teachers directly and personally,

Just like Rosemary’s composers, I believe the heart educators I talk about are still anxious to guide us with their love. They loved young people ---it’s woven everywhere in their work. They wanted to help them to learn to live happy lives. I feel surrounded by them constantly—I have almost felt their giddiness that a mortal is willing to dust off their books and bring them back out into the light so they can be put to use in a generation that desperately needs their help. I have felt their help. I have no other way to explain how I have found obscure passages in obscure books at precisely the time I needed to know something. I am frequently asked how I could have found all these stories for you by myself. The answer is it would have been impossible by myself. I have had lots of help— which the world would scoff at, but is very real to me.

Now I don’t expect you to accept everything I just shared with you as true. There are other things in Rosemary’s book that I don’t accept as true. Every one of us has to go through the weighing out and sifting and trying and proving process to discern the true from the false.

But this is a method that has worked for me. I learned it from a book I hold as sacred. It compares truths or ideas as seeds to be planted. If it is a good seed, it will enlarge my soul, enlighten my understanding, it will taste delicious, and it will sprout and begin to grow. If I continue to nourish it, it will eventually bear fruit. A good seed will bear good fruit.

And what is good fruit to me? If it brings increased Joy, Light, Love, Faith to my life, it was a good seed. If it inspires me to do more good, to love more, to have more faith in God, it was a good seed. These are the fruits of heaven’s bounteous harvest.

On the other hand, if something grows stale or darkens my mind or causes me to be depressed or hopeless or unkind or to lose my faith, it needs to be tossed aside. It’s a bad seed.

As I was finishing up this podcast, the thought occurred to me—didn’t these composers fail in their mission? Who has heard any of their music or even heard of Rosemary Brown?

And immediately the thought came that I have heard and now I have shared it with you. If anything that you heard gave you a little hope or made you feel a little more that life has a purpose and a meaning, then I think Liszt and friends will celebrate. In Heaven’s company, one soul is always cause for celebration.

We are not alone. Death is not to be feared. There are angels among us, sent down from heaven above—just open your eyes and more importantly, your hearts, and invite them to come and dwell with you in your home.

They will help guide you through the days ahead.