

## *Minister's Message*

Hi Everyone,

Before I begin my "Message" this month, I have to advise of the sad passing of one of our Vice Presidents, Eunice Webster, who passed to spirit on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2010 after a two year battle with cancer. Eunice was 78 years old and had served our church for many years, running circles, working on the platform and acting on the committee. As a token of the respect in which she was held, her funeral at the Albany Creek Crematorium resulted in standing room only and a memorial was held at our church on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan. for those who were unable to attend the funeral service. She will be greatly missed by us all but the knowledge and teachings she gave will continue to enrich many lives for a long time. Our sincere condolences go out to her husband Bill and loving family members and friends.

After the trauma and difficulties our State of Queensland has faced with the flooding crisis, we are gradually moving into the clean up and rebuilding stage and people are beginning to get their lives back on track again. There are, of course, many others who will be unable to move back into their homes for quite some time and some folk who will virtually have to start again. There have been so many opportunities for service within this situation and it has been heart-warming to see that in spite of the negativity that we are constantly confronted with, basically mankind is caring and compassionate. How sad it is that we have to face these difficulties before that loving and caring side of humanity reveals itself.

Silver Birch tells us that, "The soul does not come into its own when the skies are blue, the sun is shining and you are in a bed of roses. The soul comes into its own in difficulty and in hardship. The gold that you value reveals its lustre only after it has been crushed. The diamonds you prize are embedded in clay and dirt when originally found. Their brilliance emerges only after the processes of polishing. So it is with the spirit".

So many have been tested and tried during this period. There have been so many acts of bravery and courage; others have used this time to return to spirit. The emotions have ebbed and flowed as we all moved through this period, as one, and what a learning experience we have seen. So much has been achieved as we all banded together to help each other. We are all one. We are all part of each other. If only we could continue in this vein, how our lives would be enriched. This will be an ongoing situation and there will still be many ways we can offer ourselves in service. Let us not forget the needs of others too quickly. The universe has given us the opportunity to prove that we care about one another.

Sometimes it's very hard to understand why dreadful things happen and those not attuned to our spiritual beliefs will deny the existence of a God, but as spiritualists, we realise that Mother Earth, like us, is also in a state of evolving and changing. Over billions of years there have been many "ages", resulting, in some cases, to complete extinction of certain species and changes in others as they adapt to the altered conditions. With any major event, like we have just witnessed, change must be the result. Many people contemplating making changes in their lives, but not activating those wishes, will find those changes thrust upon them. There will be material changes within occupations, locations, lifestyles etc. but there will also be spiritual changes and inner analysis as people search and seek for their answers.

We all have lessons to learn from life's experiences and some of our sojourns in past incarnations may well influence our outlook in our present life. It is interesting to note that from my own point of view, I've never been drawn to living near the sea and have always loved the mountains. Whether this was a self-preservation aspect from a past life, I don't know, but here we see that even high up in the mountains in an area like Toowoomba, this devastation can still happen. Self-preservation is a powerful force but I am feeling now that it's not **the** only consideration we need to look at. If it is not our time to return to spirit, it won't happen. So much depends on what contract we made in spirit before we came back down to the earth-plane. It is important for us to listen to our feelings and our intuitions. There are so many stories from people who decided at the last moment, not to take a plane trip, car journey or the like, and by making that decision they averted some type of disaster.

Silver Birch tells us that we are all very preoccupied with the material and we should be more concerned with the things of the spirit, as it is the spirit that is eternal. Life is an interlude, an experience to savour, to enrich the needs of the spirit. Shakespeare said once, "All the world's a stage and the men and women in it merely players". We realise that although we are but players, each with our own role to play, this is not our true reality. Whilst we reside in this physical world though, it is difficult at times not to get carried away with its complexities, dramas and problems. We need to constantly remind ourselves that we are here to learn and to grow spiritually through service. We are spirit, here and now, using a physical body in order to achieve these things.

Whatever hardships any of you are enduring at the moment, remember that the power of spirit is strong enough to carry you through this time. Ask for strength and courage to help you and spirit will direct to you what you need. Every test you move through will strengthen you and in time when you are strong again, spirit will send you others who are passing through similar experiences, and you will be able to help them the same way that you were helped. This is all a part of natural law and the opportunity to serve.

Strength, courage and blessings to you all and may 2011 be a special year of joy.

Love, Wendy