

QUARTERLY

Spiritual Astrology Series: Leo-Sagittarius



FALL 2024
VOLUME 99, ISSUE 4

The Quest of Spirit

Centaurus: Nature's Lessons for Giving and Receiving

Tim Prichard, Hermetician, Order of the Sphinx

Gain gives the Jupiter decanate of the Sun sign Leo the Spiritual message:

"It Is More Blessed to Give Than to Receive, and to Receive in Full Measure We Must First Give of That Which We Already Have."

The blessed Sun gives us everything; there would be no life on Earth without

its glorious light. There would be no photosynthesis upon which everything depends. Similarly, it has been said there would be no life without the effect of water and the top six inches of fertile soil in the recycling process of nutrients and microbes. The Sun's warmth acts with the moisture of Mother Earth. The earthworms are not humble or insignificant,

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Spiritual Astrology: Centaurus—Reformation

By Scenza

Each of the twelve primary signs of the Zodiac is further subdivided into three ten-degree sections called decanates. The decanates enjoy a primary influence from their mother sign, and a secondary influence from each of the signs that shares the same element as that sign. Hence, the second decanate of the fifth sign, Centaurus, is termed *Leo-Sagittarius*, as it is found within the primary sign Leo, and enjoys a secondary influence of the fire sign, Sagittarius. The Keyword for this decanate is "Reformation," and it extends from August 3 to August 13 of each year.



Centaurus, Johannes Hevelius

(Continued on page 12)

Consider that ...

Reformation is the act of making an improvement, especially by changing a person's behavior or the structure of something."

— Dictionary.Cambridge.org

Affirmation: I give and receive freely, generously, with open heart and open mind. When I give good things to myself, my self-confidence and my ability to give good things to others grows. Everything I give to others is a gift to myself. As I give, I receive."

— bmindful.com



The Stellarian Honor Guard

For the period between April 1, and June 30, 2024.

Regular Contributors form the solid foundation from which The Church of Light can grow. This column honors those who financially support the work of spreading the Religion of the Stars. Guardian Angels contribute more than \$500 in a quarter. The Stellarian Honor Guard includes those who contribute between \$100 and \$500 per quarter. We are grateful for your generous contributions to The Church of Light.



*“What you sow, you reap.
What you give, you get.
What you see in others,
exists in you.
Remember, life is an echo.
It always gets back to you.
So give goodness.”*
— Unknown

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FALL ISSUE 2024

ISSN: 009-6520
Vol. 99, No. 4

PUBLISHED BY

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The Church of Light Quarterly is the official publication of the Church of Light. It includes educational and inspirational supplements to The Brotherhood of Light Lessons.

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Editorial

Margaret Joscher, President

*"Everyone thinks of changing the world,
but no one thinks of changing himself."— Leo Tolstoy*

Although I'd love to riff on one of my favorite people, I've decided to save Jolly Old St. Nick for his season. Instead, my attention was captured by centaurs—often depicted as a rowdy bunch, likely a lot of fun at parties. The constellation Centaurus has sometimes been associated with Chiron, the wise and patient healer and teacher. However, I find that the image of a centaur spearing Lupus, the wolf, seems more in line with the unruly nature of most centaurs rather than someone as refined and gentle as Chiron.

In **Delineating the Horoscope** (Course X-I, Serial Lesson 103), Zain describes the Leo-Sagittarius decanate, whose keyword is Reformation. This decanate represents those who recognize the weaknesses in both politics and religion and have the courage to challenge the "wolf," a symbol of those who use their intellects to suppress truth and exploit society through ignorance and superstition. Sometimes, you need to get a little rowdy to take on predators and effect change.

One of the most famous reformers in history, Martin Luther, protested the Catholic Church's corrupt practice of selling indulgences, essentially a "get out of jail" card. If only it were that easy. These indulgences were only available to those who could afford them, excluding many. Perhaps things aren't so different now. Luther's actions sparked the Protestant Reformation, a movement that had a profound impact on religion, culture, and society. The Reformation also emphasized the importance of personal reading and interpretation of the Bible, leading to increased literacy rates.

It's easy, like a grandiose Leo, to dream of vast changes in the world. But true transformation starts with the small, personal steps that are within our immediate control. It is through these individual efforts that meaningful change takes root. When each of us takes responsibility for our own growth, the collective impact can ripple through society, leading to the significant shifts we seek. True reformation begins not with grand gestures, but with the quiet determination to be better, to challenge the status quo, and to inspire others to do the same.





Giving and Receiving (continued from page 1)

they are valuable workers. Their efforts, like the flower-fertilizing Bees, give benefit to all species. There is a giving to receive; each is playing its part.

The agricultural process upon which civilization depends has governed the religious festivals in our annual Solar calendar since man first developed skills at managing Nature.

The harvest festivals each year are perhaps the best time for our species to give thanks to Nature for our sustenance and sustainability.

The transition to the second, Jupiter decanate of Leo, happens

on, or approximately on, the 1st of August each year. Lammas, or “loaf mass,” is a Christianised version of an ancient Pagan festival to celebrate the first harvest produced in the year, which is grain crops. Nowadays, vast fields are harvested in hours, which would have taken teams of men labouring for days with scythes and sickles.

The Irish version of the same festival Lughnasa, is named after Lugh, similarly powerful and multi-talented like his Greek counterpart Apollo. The Welsh, as Llew Llau Gyffes, the “Lion with the sure

aim,” surely as much a reference to the Sun as Lions are to Leo. Maybe the word origin of Lammas, was “Llew-mass?”

As part of these early harvest festivals, a “corn dolly” was made and carried over winter as a “Spirit” to be ploughed into the fields for the next year's crop as a

form of sympathetic magic. It was a symbolic giving back to Mother Nature, as to receive, hopefully in full harvest measure.

To receive Nature's bounty, we must first give of our efforts. Starting with devotion to receive abundance, should be the philosophical or religious influence of Jupiter for this decanate.

In the next image, the centaur,



Welsh “fan” corn dolly, made and photographed by Tim Prichard

Chiron, holds the boy, Achilles, in one hand and a branch hung with a hare in the other. The centaur is clothed in a chiton and depicted with the full body of a man, including legs and feet, with the torso and rear legs of a horse attached to his rump.

Centaur comes from the Greek word Κένταυρος (Kéntauros). I have this as the constellation of Chiron, the eldest and wisest of the Centaurs.

(Continued on page 5)

“The horseman of Leo is not the gift, but the one who brings it; for it is the Sun at this time of year that ripens the grain in the field and the fruit on the trees. The gifts which the traveler from the north thus brings, while related to the children of Leo, are pictured in the next sign to it, in the harvest sign, Virgo. It is really the Virgin Mother, not Santa Claus, from whom the gifts more directly come.”

— C. C. Zain
CS VII, *Spiritual Astrology*

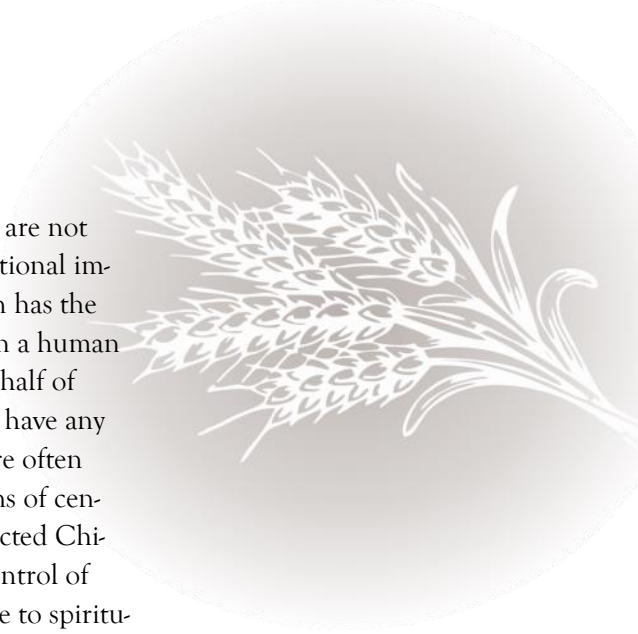
Coming before Sagittarius in the zodiacal year, Centaurus is all things centaur, from which all else by association is derived, but wiser. As the traditional ruler of the fifth house, Leo governs teaching and places of education. Chiron displays all the attributes of his tutor, Apollo, himself. Possessed of Prophecy, Healing, and Music, he could turn his hand to many things. Kheiron (Greek spelling, “kheir” meaning hand) was a renowned teacher who mentored many of the greatest heroes of myth, including the Argonauts Jason and Peleus, the physician Asklepios (Asclepius), the demi-god Aristaos (Aristaeus) the Beekeeper, and Akhilleus (Achilles) of Troy.

Ancient depictions of Chiron are not exactly the same as the conventional image of a centaur in that Chiron has the front legs of a man, rather than a human torso with the complete lower half of equine form. Chiron does not have any of the potentially violent nature often associated with usual depictions of centaurs. Maybe the ancients depicted Chiron this way to show he has control of the animal Soul—the hindrance to spiritual progress—a spiritual being with horsepower behind him! To give our knowledge like Chiron, not to fight like the other Centaurs, is to receive spiritual progress.

♄♊



Musée du Louvre, Paris
Louvre G3 200435
Attic Red Figure
Amphora attributed to Oltos
ca 520 BCE
Late Archaic period.



IN NATURE

*“All flourishing is mutual.
Soil, fungus, tree, squirrel,
boy—all are the beneficiaries
of reciprocity.”*

— Robin Wall
Kimmerer



Leo-Sagittarius, The Centaurus Decanate

Leo/Sagittarius Decanate



Peḥui-tchat

Ancient Egyptian name for the 2nd Decan of Leo 10° –19°59'59"

Laurie Dixon, Hermetician

Keyword: Reformation

Reformation is the act of improving or amending something resulting in a fundamental and positive change, including the ending of social wrongs.

Herbert Clark Hoover

While researching AA or A Rodden-rated charts for my Decanate articles, I encounter individuals who truly embody their astrological DNA, and Herbert Hoover's chart is a prime example. However, Hoover's chart carries a "C" Rodden

rating, indicating caution due to the lack of a direct source for his birth time. Several astrologers, including Doris Chase Doane, a former ordained minister with the Church of Light, have worked to rectify Hoover's birth chart. Using Doane's rectified birth time of 11:12 p.m. LMT and examining 16 event charts from Hoover's life with Zain's model for progressions, this rectified time has been affirmed, providing a solid basis for analyzing Hoover's Leo/Sagittarius decanate story.

I submit this extraordinary account of a man largely forgotten and overshadowed by the Wall Street Crash of 1929, which marred his presidency shortly after it began in March 1929. As his great-granddaughter, Margaret Hoover, aptly noted, "This man lived for ninety years, and he is judged for four of them."



"Herbert Hoover with his pet Belgian Shepherd dog, King Tut. Wikimedia commons, via Library of Congress website"

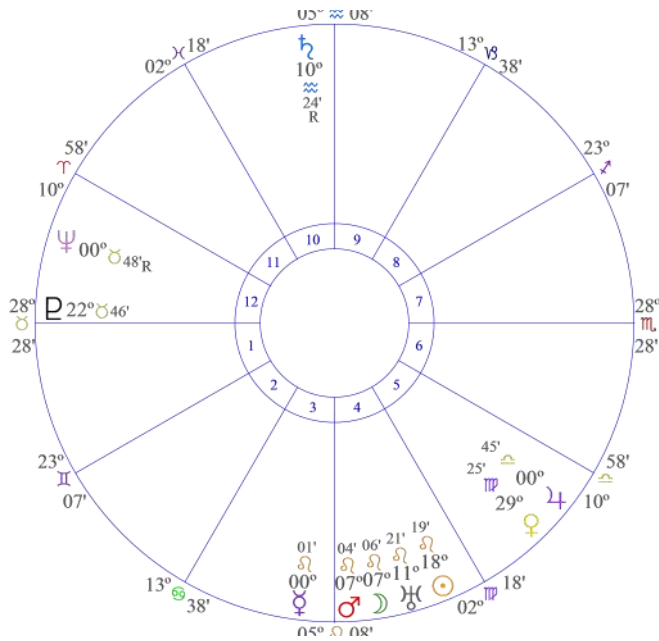
Herbert Clark Hoover was born on Aug. 10, 1874, at 11:12 p.m. LMT (Rodden Rating C), West Branch, Iowa. He was a talented engineer turned business magnate before he focused on politics. He became the 31st president of the USA and was known for his philanthropic and humanitarian efforts.

Hoover's Leo Sun in the Sagittarius decanate enhances his leadership, individuality, confidence, and sense of adventure, with a philosophical outlook and a

(Continued on page 7)

"In the second, or Jupiter, decanate of Leo the inherent quality of dominant control characteristic of Leo is modified by the sub influence of the sign of the higher mind, Sagittarius. The philosophical and religious elements are more in evidence..."

— C. C. Zain
CS X-I, Natal Astrology: Delineating the Horoscope



Herbert Hoover

August 10, 1874; 11:12 p.m. LMT, West Branch, Iowa
 (Rodden Rating: C—rectified by Doris Chase Doane)



“Hoover’s embrace of voluntarism, his faith in social science expertise, and his encouragement of cooperation between and among different segments of the American economic order was rooted not in heartless and reactionary conservatism but in the progressive social thought of his time. Hoover hewed to these approaches during his presidency, especially with commissions like the White House Conference on Health and the Protection of Children and the President’s Committee on Recent Social Trends.”

— The Miller Center, University of Virginia

Leo/Sagittarius Herbert Hoover (cont. from page 6)

quest for truth. This placement draws him to intellectual pursuits, higher education, and spiritual exploration. Jupiter, as the decanate ruler, further amplifies Leo’s traits with expansiveness, optimism, and a love for learning. It instills a generous spirit, grand ambitions, and a strong desire for personal growth and exploration.

Part I

Herbert Hoover’s parents, Jesse Hoover and Hulda Randall Minthorn, were devout Quakers, and his early upbringing was deeply influenced by Quaker values and principles. These values significantly impacted his character and later humanitarian efforts.

He became an orphan at age nine and went to live with two of his uncles. At seventeen, he attended Stanford University as one of their first students and graduated with a degree in geology. He then worked as a mining engineer and consultant for Bewick, Moreing & Co. (BM&Co). In 1897, he

managed their gold fields in Western Australia, developing the largest and most successful mining operations of his time. His introduction of new mining techniques and practices increased productivity and profitability, earning him a reputation as ruthless, tough, and clever.

In 1899 Hoover became a junior partner at BM&Co and married Lou Henry Hoover, a fellow Stanford geology graduate. The day after their wedding, they left for China, where Hoover worked as a chief engineer for the Chinese Bureau of Mines. By 1901, he became a partner at BM&Co and earned the nickname “Doctor of Mines” due to his mining expertise. His success and shrewd business acumen led to substantial wealth, allowing him to retire at the age of 34 in 1908.

His Natal Promise for Success:

Hoover’s five planets in Leo—Mercury, Mars, Moon, Uranus, and Sun—highlight traits like confidence, charisma, and ambi-

(Continued on page 8)



Leo/Sagittarius Herbert Hoover (cont. from page 7)

tion, as well as a love for recognition. His Leo Sun, associated with leadership and vitality, aspects his MC and ASC, as well as every planet except Mercury and Neptune, giving him an exceptionally dynamic and influential personality.

Hoover's birth chart highlights his potential as a mining mogul, with Mars, the Moon, Uranus, and the Sun positioned in his 4th house, which governs mines. Uranus oversees mining, the Leo Sun rules gold, and the Moon represents commodities. Uranus, in the 4th house, suggests innovative wealth generation from land resources, while Mars, which governs the 12th house, pertains to underground enterprises. His Leo planets are opposed by an elevated Saturn in Aquarius, which conjuncts his MC and is associated with mining engineering.

- Saturn, considered a business planet, conjuncts his MC in Aquarius: Saturn's disciplined organizational skills and strategic approach, combined with Aquarius's detachment and vision, contribute to Hoover's pragmatic leadership and lasting success in business and politics.
- Saturn's opposition to Uranus: This aspect creates tension between tradition and innovation, driving progress and inventive approaches while balancing established methods with modern changes.
- Jupiter, also considered a business planet, trines Saturn in Air signs: This aspect combines intellect, communication, and practicality, expanding opportunities and optimism in business, while Saturn provides structure and disciplined long-term planning.
- Venus conjunct Jupiter in the 5th house: This alignment enhances joy,

optimism, and abundance, particularly in investments and creative ventures. It suggests financial gains and pleasure through speculative pursuits. In his leisure time, he was either reading, writing, or fishing.

Overall, these configurations depict someone innovative, strategic, and successful in business, blending tradition with modernity through creativity and ingenuity. Their home life is dynamic and unpredictable. As Mo Rocca noted, "Hoover saw the future as something to be engineered – imagined, planned, and executed, representing the spirit of progress."

Part II

After retiring, Herbert Hoover and his wife, Lou, spent four years translating Georgius Agricola's 1556 mining text *De Re Metallica* from Latin. Published on July 1, 1912, their translation is still a respected scholarly work on early 20th-century engineering.

Georgius Agricola (born Georg Bauer in Saxony, 1494) lived during the early Renaissance, a time of great exploration and scientific awakening. His writings, including the 1545 account of God's Gift Mine, reflect his deep academic and religious convictions: "We, as a shareholder, through the goodness of God, have enjoyed the proceeds of this God's Gift since the very time when the mine began to bestow such riches." Agricola, a distinguished scholar, was entrusted with elective positions in his community for twenty-five years. He possessed the highest sense of integrity, justice, and humanity.

In Hoover's story, a critical turning point occurs when his focus shifts from magnate to humanitarian. After studying Agricola for four years, Hoover develops a deep appreciation for the courage of one's convic-

(Continued on page 9)

Hoover's dominant planet:
"SATURN:
In method he depends upon foresight, system, economy, management and persistent labor. He predisposes to sedentary employment and to laborious work. Mining and agriculture are in his line, as is business management in general. He has not the personality to make a good direct-contact salesman, but he can buy to advantage and is a shrewd trader."

— C. C. Zain

CS X-I, *Natal Astrology: Delineating the Horoscope*

tions and the value of giving. This experience ignites his philanthropic spirit and shapes his altruistic nature.

In 1914, as World War I erupted, 120,000 Americans were stranded in Europe. Herbert Hoover, then a private citizen in London, organized ships to bring them home and raised billions of dollars to deliver 11 million metric tons of food, feeding starving Belgians and others in war-torn regions, an impressive diplomatic and operational triumph. After the war, he continued to aid Europe's recovery. Hoover's humanitarian efforts during and after both World Wars are credited with saving tens of millions of lives, *marking him as a significant figure in global humanitarian history.*

World War I Relief Efforts:

- Nov. 5, 1914 – Commission for Relief in Belgium: Hoover led this effort, securing enough grain worldwide to sustain 8 million Belgians and millions in northern France throughout the war—a monumental humanitarian endeavor.
- May 19, 1917 – Appointed Head of the U.S. Food Administration: Hoover organized domestic food conservation to ensure American soldiers and allies were well-supplied, delivering \$363 million in relief to 21 European countries and earning him the nickname “Food Czar.”
- Nov. 12, 1918 – American Relief Administration (ARA): After the war, Hoover headed the ARA, providing food to millions in war-torn Europe.

Post-War Contributions:

- Jul. 19, 1919 – European Children’s Emergency Fund (ECEP): Established by Hoover in 1919, the ECEP fed ap-

proximately 12-14 million children in post-war Europe.

- Mar. 5, 1921 – Secretary of Commerce (1921-1928): Serving under Presidents Harding and Coolidge, Hoover promoted economic development and advancements in aviation, telecommunications, and regulatory functions in the U.S. He laid the foundation for the radio and television broadcast industries, organized national traffic systems, and administered suburban growth, earning him the nickname “Secretary of Commerce and Under Secretary of Everything Else.” He was the first person to appear on TV, making the front page 15 to 20 years before public TV.
- Spring 1927 – Great Mississippi Flood: As Secretary of Commerce, Hoover managed the response to the flood that displaced 600,000 people. He coordinated federal relief efforts involving the Red Cross, military, and private organizations and used media to raise awareness and funds. He organized resources for distributing food, medical supplies, and temporary housing, highlighting the need for better flood control policies and paving the way for the Flood Control Act of 1928.

Presidency and Beyond:

Nov. 6, 1928 – Elected as the 31st President of the United States in 1928, Hoover faced the Great Depression shortly after. He played a significant role in the construction of the Hoover Dam, which began in 1931 and was completed in 1936, supporting infrastructure to boost the economy. The Hoover Dam stands as a lasting reminder of the strength and resilience that emerged from the Great Depression, showcasing innovative engineering solutions and cutting-edge techniques. After his presiden-

(Continued on page 10)



“One civilization after another has been wrecked upon the attempt to secure sufficient leadership from a single group or class.”

— Herbert Hoover



cy, Hoover founded the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University, dedicated to research and education on social, political, and economic issues.

His Humanitarian Natal Promise:

Uranus and Aquarius rule humanitarianism, Hoover's Aquarian 10th house highlights social goals and innovative qualities in his career. Seen as a progressive thinker ahead of his time, Hoover excelled in teamwork, using pioneering technology to impact society positively. His leadership focused on improving the world. Under Leo's influence, Uranus brings a passionate approach to humanitarian efforts, emphasizing empowerment and self-expression. The 4th house placement suggests these efforts are deeply personal and tied to identity and home. The Uranus-Saturn opposition indicates a destiny involving unique talents contributing to societal progress and reform.

Neptune's Influence: In Hoover's chart, Neptune rules the 11th house of humanity and is placed in the 12th house, which governs institutions, hidden matters, and selfless service. This placement suggests deep compassion and a drive toward humanitarian work, enhancing his involvement in large-scale relief efforts and behind-the-scenes activities. Neptune at 0 degrees Taurus square to Mercury at 0 degrees Leo in the 3rd house indicates a strong focus on communication, with tension between practicality (Taurus) and idealism (Neptune). This may have led Hoover to balance practical business strategies with humanitarian ideals, giving rise to challenges in execution and public communication.

Pluto's Impact: Pluto on Hoover's Ascendant in Taurus suggests a strong, magnetic presence and an ability to influence others. Its 12th house placement indicates hidden

depths, resilience, and the capacity to transform challenges into personal strength, with a focus on practical solutions to improve stability. As the ruler of his 7th house, Hoover's relationships were intense and transformative, involving subtle power dynamics and a focus on material and emotional security. Pluto in Taurus signifies a powerful drive for stability and security, creating tension that leads to gradual yet profound transformations in values and material circumstances over time.

Synthesis: Hoover's chart reflects the interplay between his humanitarian inclinations, communication style, and financial management. The tension between idealism and practical reasoning, indicated by the Neptune-Mercury square, shaped his approach to business and public service. Though a successful and ruthless businessman, Hoover sought more than wealth. Influenced by his Leo/Sagittarius decanate, he embraced philosophical and idealistic values. Seen as a force for progress and modernization, he presented innovative ideas to the American people.

Legacy and Later Years:

Herbert Hoover served under Presidents Wilson, Harding, Coolidge, Truman, and Eisenhower, leaving a legacy of political and humanitarian impact. The Hoover Institute in California displays gifts of gratitude, including embroidered grain sacks for his wartime efforts. In his later years, Hoover advocated for limited government, individual liberty, and free-market economics, leading the "Hoover Commission" to improve federal efficiency. His memoirs and public statements emphasized American values, and his posthumously published book *Freedom Betrayed* critiqued U.S. foreign policy and warned against totalitarianism and communism. Maurice "Mo" Rocca

(Continued on page 11)

*"Freedom is the open window
through which pours the
sunlight of the human spirit
and human dignity."*

— Herbert Hoover

described him as “an engineer, an innovator, and an apostle of the future,” capturing how Hoover embodied the spirit of progress.

Herbert Hoover Quotes:

“Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one.”

“My country owes me nothing. It gave me, as it gives every boy and girl, a chance. It gave me schooling, independence of action, opportunity for service and honor.”

“Our strength lies in spiritual concepts. It lies in public sensitivities to evil. Our greatest danger is not from invading armies. Our dangers are that we may commit suicide from within by complaisance with evil, or by public tolerance of scandalous behavior.”

Space constraints limit this submission to one chart. However, you can analyze other famous Leo/Sagittarius personalities with AA-rated charts:

- James Hetfield, Aug 3, 1963, 6:16 p.m. Los Angeles, 10° Leo (Lead singer/songwriter for Metallica).
- Barack Obama, Aug 4, 1961, 7:24 p.m. Honolulu, 12° Leo (44th President).
- Lucille Ball, Aug 6, 1911, 5:00 p.m. Jamestown, NY, 13° Leo (Actress, comedian, producer).

- Mata Hari, Aug 7, 1876, 1:00 p.m. LMT, Leeuwarden, Netherlands, 15° Leo (Spy or not a spy?).
- Steve (Woz) Wozniak, Aug 11, 1950, 9:45 p.m., San Jose, CA 18° Leo (Co-founder of Apple).

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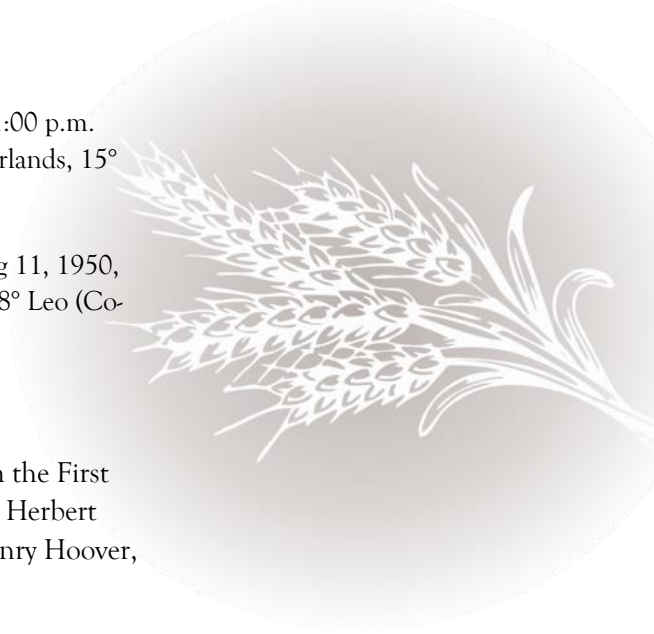
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“So be wise, because the world needs more wisdom, and if you cannot be wise, pretend to be someone who is wise, and then just behave like they would.”

— Neil Gaiman

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As explained on page 1, the decanates are subordinate in their influence to the signs themselves. Similarly, in interpreting and explaining the symbolism of each decanate, they nearly always relate back to their mother sign in terms of their overarching value and meaning. If you will recall, as the fifth sign of the Zodiac and as the second fire sign, Leo is archetypically the sign of power, prestige, and prominence. The tale that Zain (1997) most completely analyzes as a metaphor for the message and meaning of the heavenly lion is The Story of Samson, which is depicted over the course of four chapters in the Book of Judges (*King James Version, 2024, Judges 13-16*). Samson is an Israelite of peerless physical prowess. He defeats a lion with his bare hands, single-handedly overwhelms entire enemy forces, and ultimately topples the pillars of a prominent Philistine’s house in a final act of vengeance, while also effecting his own demise in the process. At the same time, Samson wantonly abuses his power on multiple occasions, marries outside of his faith (in those days, a serious infraction of Moses’ instructions to the Israelites), lays with a harlot, is guilty of gambling, acts out of terrible rage and wrath, slays innocents, and behaves in vicious and vengeful ways. In essence, then, Samson represents the archetypal Leo, who like the Sun or a mighty lion is powerful and prodigious, but whose supernal strength must be tethered to spiritual aspirations if it is to effect constructive growth as opposed to destructive devastation.

“You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.”

— Khalil Gibran



The Sign of the Religion of the Stars

In a similar fashion, all three of the decanates found within Leo elucidate important aspects of the right use of power. The second decanate of Leo is called Centaurus, which derives from the Latin word “centaur,” a mythical creature having the upper body of a human and the lower body of a horse (Dictionary, 2024). In the case of Centaurus, this mythical creature is armed with a spear in his right hand, and a shield in his left hand. A similar symbolism is invoked during the Opening Ritual of a Church of Light convocation, when faithful attendants make the symbol of The Religion of the Stars. Specifically, congregants first stand in order to indicate active volition. The right hand is then pointed upwards to Heaven in aspiration to divine knowledge and power, while the left hand is pointed downwards to Earth, indicating a pledge to use such knowledge and power only for the protection and benefit of humanity. Likewise, Centaurus represents the intention to utilize spiritual gifts in the name and service of others, thereby paradoxically permitting personal spiritual growth.

The character that Zain (1997) most fully analyzes in relation to the mythological messaging of Centaurus is one that will be well known to many readers from the time of their infancy. Zain (1997) forms a link between the two centaurs of the zodiac, Centaurus and Sagittarius, thereby tapping into the mythological symbolism of Christmas, and in particular, Santa Claus.

(Continued on page 13)

The development of the Santa Claus myth (don't worry; I know he's real!) is a fascinating tale spanning not only centuries, but millennia. According to editors of History.com (2023), the original inspiration for Santa Claus can be found in the personage of Saint Nicholas, a monk born around 280 CE near Myra in modern-day Turkey. St. Nicholas was revered as a kind, pious man who used his inherited wealth to travel the countryside, helping the poor and sick. One of the best-known legends involving St. Nicholas is when he saved three poor sisters from the dismal fate of prostitution by gifting their desperate father three bags of gold. All of these selfless actions, especially those undertaken with an eye towards defending innocent, vulnerable children, earned him the epithet of the patron saint of children and gift-giving. In Western Christian countries, The Feast of St. Nicholas is still celebrated on December 6 each year (Bevis, 2024). It is considered a propitious day to make large purchases or even get married.

The popularity of St. Nicholas continued to grow over the millennia. However, it was not until the end of the 18th century that popular conceptions of St. Nick first made their way across the Atlantic to the United States of America. Derived from the Dutch nickname for St. Nicholas, Sinter Klaas, the popularized image of Santa Claus grew and developed over the course of a couple hundred years into the jolly, rotund, jovial character who annually amazes and astounds children with his kindness, generosity, and gift-giving, all of which is congruent with the celebration of Christmas itself. For

Christians, one of the core messages of Christmas is that in an act of the greatest goodwill, God sent Jesus Christ into the world as an example of how human beings might live for and give for each other. Christian theology teaches that in the same way that God committed the ultimate sacrifice by sending his son into the world, Christ further evinces a message of sacrifice through his birth, life, death, and resurrection. Indeed, the very notion of sacrifice is the idea of giving a gift so precious and dear that the act of giving is in some manner experienced as a loss by the giver (Merriam-Webster, 2024).

Hence, while Christmas has been heavily commercialized in the United States very nearly since Santa's first arrival in the late 1700s (History.com, 2023), the true and spiritual focus of Christmas is not on receiving, but rather on giving. For many Christians, the principle of Christmas is to give unto others as God and Christ gave unto the world itself. Similarly, the Leading Text of the second decanate of Leo, Centaurus, states that, "It Is More Blessed to Give Than to Receive, and to Receive In Full Measure We Must First Give of That Which We Already Have." This teaching places a discrete focus on giving as opposed to receiving, and fur-



*"It is in giving
that we receive."*

— Francis of Assisi



Portrait of Santa Claus by Thomas Nast, *Harper's Weekly*, 1881
Source: The Public Domain Review

(Continued on page 14)



Leo Sagittarius—Reformation (continued from page 13)

ther emphasizes that there is no amount too small to begin the blessed practice of giving. Interestingly, we can also see a model for the message of this decanate in the Sun itself which, though the largest, most massive, and most powerful celestial object in the solar system (NASA, 2024), gives selflessly of all Life, Love, and Light as we know it here on Earth. Indeed, as its Keyword informs us, Centaurus is the decanate of “Reformation,” in that we can only be spiritually reformed when we shift from selfish taking to selfless giving. Paradoxically, then, it is in the act of giving that we receive. And it further follows logically that the greater we give of ourselves, the more we stand to receive.

“I’ve learned that you shouldn’t go through life with a catcher’s mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw something back.”

— Maya Angelou

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Stellarian Astrological Zeitgeist: Fall 2024

The Spring Quarterly, [Sun Cycle Review](#), suggested that 2024 is shaping up to be a fascinating election year. The T-square involving Mars in the 4th house (party out of power), the Leo Midheaven (party in power), and Uranus in the 7th house (disruptive activity from foreign partners and enemies, also opposing the ASC - US citizens) indicated the current administration would face significant challenges from an angry homeland (Mars in the 4th) and unsettling disruptions abroad (Uranus in the 7th).

Harmony? The Sun in the 5th house (ruling the 10th) is positioned to ease the tension of the Pluto-Moon opposition through supportive aspects (Sun trine Moon and sextile Pluto). When writing for the Spring Quarterly, it was unclear how the President (Sun in a succedent house) could activate this harmony from two cadent houses and shift the prevailing anger and disruptive rhetoric coming from the noisy angular house discord.

Stellarians are trained not to be mere spectators to astrological events. With the tools of Directed Thinking and Induced Emotion, we can influence outcomes by aligning with the harmony indicated in the chart. The Lessons teach us to “Be alert, to be aware of the approach of discordant thoughts and emotions.” In our current social environment that means to be aware of fear-producing, “Otherizing” thinking. Instead of seeing enemies everywhere, keep the focus on lifting your neighbor. Take ad-

vantage of the principles of Universal Welfare (Pluto) and caring for one another (Moon).

We can probably all agree that since March, the environment has been angry, unsettled, and disruptive on many fronts. However, it has also shifted in dramatic and surprising ways. First, after a disastrous debate with the opposing party, the current President, sensing the political landscape, voluntarily stepped aside and passed the baton to his Vice President in a gesture of harmony. This simple yet painful act seems to have unified the party in power, turning disparate voices into a call for empowerment through community and unity rather than division. Next, the world at large tapped into the joy of global unity and competition during the Paris Olympics. France, ruled by Leo, embraced joy, fun, and drama, putting on a fantastic show! For two brief weeks, we were reminded that we can come together as a global community and that we genuinely enjoy feeling united and celebrating together. Thank you, Paris!

There are still two months before the election, and anything can happen. Mars is still in the 4th house, Uranus is still in the 7th, and the American people remain divided. The Sun trine Moon and sextile Pluto aspects are still active: the high ideals of joy, brotherhood, and community-building are still within reach. Evolution teaches us that strength lies in diversity, not similarities. High ideals alone don't necessarily lead to action. Without them, the next step never comes!





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