

Thomas Berry and My Son Julien

Stefano Panzarasa

Stefano Panzarasa lives in Moricone, a little village (Low Sabina Bioregion, near Rome), in the mountains of the Nature Regional Park of "Monti Lucretili." He works for the protection of the nature and is the coordinator of the Environmental Education Service of the Park of Monti Lucretili. He is a geologist, musician, photographer, ceramist and co-founder of the Italian Bioregional Network and is author of some books and several articles about environmental themes. His blog "Orecchio Verde" (Green Ear) is dedicated to his ecocentric vision and practice based on ecospirituality, deep ecology and bioregionalism.

I met Thomas Berry at the meeting "Spirituality and Sustainability" organized by the Center for Respect of Life and Environment and St. Thomas University in Assisi, July 1996. The organizers wanted to meet members of the Italian Bioregional Web and I am one of the founders.

Seeing, listening and meeting Thomas Berry (I had already read and appreciated his book *The Dream of the Earth*) was a great experience and I found him a wonderful person and I'm really happy about that day. At the meeting my son Julien was with me (he was 8 years old) and at the end of all I talked with Thomas carrying my son with me. I don't know what my son exactly understood about who was this person, but I just thought that it was important for him to meet Thomas, like a positive "imprinting" for a special person. Now Julien is 21 years old and he really seems well shaped by these experiences. By the way, the Italian text of this letter was translated by him.

A few day after the meeting I wrote a letter to Thomas Berry asking him also if he could send to me his report:

*Dear Thomas Berry,
I heard with much interest your relation. Thank you for your words. You gave me a very deep sense of the ecologist's role in Western society and of the work for our planet.
As ecologist and bioregionalist we are often alone and isolated in this society based on the myth of progress and on a desacralized world.
Your words will be very important for me to go on in my ecological life, and the same also I hope for my son Julien.*

So, I was very happy when Thomas Berry answered.

Later on for *AAM Terra Nuova*, an Italian ecological revue, I have translated his article "An Ecologically Sensitive Spirituality" and I've also translated and spread, like a mission, in meetings, conferences, magazines, newsletters, the web and my blog, the "manifesto" in which Thomas Berry has proposed the conditions to entering the "Ecozoic Era."

In all these years the eco-spiritual vision of Thomas Berry has been my guide and I really thank him for having given an ecological sense to my life.

Bye dear Thomas, wherever you are now between Earth and sky.



Paradise, by Julien Panzarasa



Panzarasa at work.



Panzarasa making bread at school.