



MR. BEHIND THE SISTER

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence's Sister Krissy Fiction takes his vows and spiritual practice seriously.

You've probably seen him/her/them in drag religious garb at various community events. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence are a spectacle wherever they go. But at least one of the flock comes to his Sisterhood through a spiritual history as colorful as his costume.

Kurt Granzow, Sister Krissy Fiction, says that he grew up without any spiritual tradition, with no religious practice whatsoever, "but in college two things happened. I came out as a gay man and started attending a conservative evangelical church. Obviously, there was a conflict."

Granzow says that he chose the evangelical route, participating in ex-gay ministries and eventually going into professional ministry with his church until he was 30. But then his life took another leap when he moved to Oregon.

"The religious system I was in said that total acceptance of every jot and tittle [tiny mark] of the Bible was necessary or you had to throw out the whole thing. I was fine with most of it, but there were a few things I started to question. So I tossed it," Granzow said.

But he didn't toss the idea of faith altogether. Granzow became interested in Gnosticism, a "heretical" branch of the early Christian tradition. He describes Gnosticism as follows, "You don't find salvation in belief but in gnosis [knowledge/experience/transformation]. It's an intimate kind of knowledge."

But Kurt the Gnostic Christian is only one role. He's also a neo-pagan. Granzow's been in a coven of the Alexandrian Wiccan tradition since 2002. He describes Wicca as a belief system that sees the Divine expressed in masculine and feminine energies as expressed in nature.

Granzow says his Wiccan path, "involves the practice of magic, bringing your will into reality. You use a physical focus, like a candle, to focus on changing your reality. Magic may involve saying a spell but also doing the physical things necessary to achieve the end you want. Like if you want a job, you say a spell but you also fill out a resume and do a good interview."

Granzow says that magic has to be mindful, "In Wiccan theology, energy always comes back to you. Generally in Wiccan practice, people don't do curses or hexes. You have to be careful what you ask for! In my experience people are into improving themselves, changing circumstances of their own lives."

Kurt the Ex ex-gay minister. Kurt the Gnostic Christian. Kurt the Neo-Pagan. And Sister Krissy Fiction!

The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence perform to raise money for various charitable organizations, but Granzow says that for him, being a Sister has a deeper meaning. "Some of the other Sisters just want to have fun and make money, but Sisters take a vow to 'promulgate universal joy and expiate stigmatic guilt.' For me, that's been a really significant part of my spiritual practice."

And as a man with no shortage of spiritual practices, this Sister works it right. §



Photo courtesy of Krissy Fiction

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