

# William Stoddart: A Teacher of *Sophia Perennis*

*By Raul Burneo*

**W**illiam Stoddart is well known for his role as a teacher of new postulants in the path of the *Sophia Perennis*. His task is to show newcomers the roots of the spiritual path: knowledge of the essential, and faith. Without both dimensions it is not possible to walk a spiritual path. Knowledge of the essential creates certainty and accuracy; faith creates stability. It was this faith that has led him to write his books and articles, where he shows, thanks to their synthetic character, a constant impact on the essential: under the light of perennialism we discover what is indispensable to know, understand and honor in the various religious traditions.

On one occasion I heard Dr. Stoddart say that his writings were but signposts to the work of Frithjof Schuon. This is because Dr. Stoddart's work is characterized by his vocation to teach, unveiling to the reader with an average education the treasures of the *Sophia Perennis*. This unveiling discloses naturally to the seeker—it has to do so—an underlying reality found universally in all the faith traditions, in Sufism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christian mysticism, etc.

In a certain sense, not only are Dr. Stoddart's writings signposts to the Eternal, as taught in the writings of Frithjof Schuon, but so too is his life, which, in various ways discloses the importance of the Sacred. The beauty of traditional art occupies a prominent place in his life, as does his inclination to teach with spiritual sensitivity through dialogue, or his willingness to offer correction with truthfulness and generosity, and above all, his awareness of the relevance of certain details in speech or conduct that, unnoticed, weave our lives away from the Sacred.

I can only express my gratitude and joy in celebrating the ninetieth birthday of William Stoddart.