

# waterwheel

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual

## Let's Talk— Intergenerational Conversations

By Mary E. Hunt

Picture a room full of women engaged in conversation in small groups. One pours tea for her younger colleagues. Another tells the story of being the only woman in her graduate program to finish her degree. Several express their frustration at going to a seminary where exclusive language still plagues worship. One woman simply listens, amazed by the variety of voices and traditions she experiences, remembering how it used to be.

With input from several young feminists in religion, WATER convened a meeting in the spring of 2004 with seventeen women to discuss intergenerational needs and concerns so that we can shape programs and projects to meet them. This report is a way to share that wisdom and invite others to use it,

have initiated intergenerational conversations so that no one has to reinvent the wheel of feminism and so that new people can participate in shaping the future agenda. We urge our sister groups to do the same lest our history be lost and our future be compromised.

Religions are generational. The stories, insights, and commitments of one generation are passed on to the next in endless succession. Along the way, each generation puts its unique stamp on the tradition and utilizes its moral energy according to the needs of the day. So, too, do religious feminists/womanists/mujeristas learn from and share wisdom with one another. The process is a little like passing the flame of a lit candle, or the last coals of a fire that are used to start the next day's warming. It is not as

*What bonds the generations is the shared commitment to values and actions for social and religious change.*

as we will at WATER, to foster the relationships, support mechanisms, and strategies that will carry our work and ourselves into the future.

WATER is an alliance that values the spectrum of age and experience. We recognize that young women live in a world made new because of the efforts of so many older women, a world in which certain rights and practices are taken for granted and others still need to be won. We affirm that young women are the catalysts and the motor of any successful movement. Thus we

easy as it looks, but it is necessary to keep the energy fresh.

Connections are the key to intergenerational work. I hear young women expressing a desire for relationships with more experienced colleagues. They do not want hierarchical, maternalistic relationships, but friendships and collegial relations. I hear older women bemoaning the graying of our movements for social and religious change. Insofar as they can figure out how to do it respectfully, they enjoy the company

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### In-house Training

If you would like to bring WATER programs to your organization or group, go to [www.hers.com/water](http://www.hers.com/water) or email [water@hers.com](mailto:water@hers.com) or call 301-589-2509 for more information.



Diann Neu of WATER and Christine Mayr-Lumetzberger, a Catholic bishop who ordained Catholic women from France, Switzerland, Austria, the United States, Canada, and Africa met in Salzburg, Austria, where Diann gave a workshop on feminist ritual.

## Editorial

**G**raphic pictures of torture in Iraq add a layer of criminality to an unjust war. Seeing women soldiers participate in such atrocities only reinforces the fact that at issue is never simply a matter of gender, but always a matter of justice. Still, the naïve hope that women might humanize the inhumane was just that, and it is time to look critically at how anyone can mistreat another and call it "following orders." Feminist reflection is needed here to rethink the unthinkable.

The criminal cover-up of the priest pedophilia cases in Boston and elsewhere shows a similar dynamic. For many decades, feminists in religion have known that we disagree with patriarchal leaders. Now we have to confront the fact that some of them, perhaps more than we know, have been engaged in criminal activities to bolster their positions. This puts the whole debate in a different, far more sinister, light. The Vatican's recent appointment of Cardinal Bernard Law to a cushy Roman job complete with a generous salary is enough to generate contempt.

How to remain hopeful in the face of such setbacks for human decency is our biggest challenge. How to change the military and ministerial systems is another. One thing is sure: These are not tasks for one lifetime. Hence, our focus on generations to come is both strategic and sustaining.



### Pass It On

**I**f you know someone (or have a list of friends and relatives) with whom you would like to share this issue, send us the name and address and we will mail a complimentary copy direct. For anyone who would like to receive **WATERwheel** on tape, we can arrange for audio transcription of the desired issue(s) with Volunteers for the Visually Handicapped at \$10 per tape.



Diann L. Neu, Katie Geneva Cannon,  
Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza



Aisha Taylor, Mary E. Hunt,  
Joy Barnes

## Let's Talk...

*(Continued from page 1)*

of younger women whose energy and enthusiasm, ideas and insights carry the values they hold dear.

The challenge is to create opportunities to develop such relationships because academic, religious, and cultural institutions that are based on patriarchal values are structured to keep us apart, in competition, and/or at odds. In academia, the patriarchal model encourages young women to see the work of their fore Sisters as one-dimensional and theoretically simple. In many religious communities, elders are not given their due. Or, they are revered into oblivion, held up as icons such that one would never dare approach them as equals. In the culture at large, there is age-segregation beyond the nuclear family, so we have few chances to simply develop peers of disparate ages and experiences.

Mentoring is not exactly the relationship many of us envision. Of course there is a dimension of that insofar as senior women in the field can and, in my view, have a responsibility to be helpful to their junior colleagues. But in many instances mentoring has come to reinforce the patriarchal hierarchy that feminists seek to transform into egalitarian ways of being together. We need to start with some fresh language that captures that we were not all born at the same time for a reason and honors our various starting points.

The WATER group identified making connections as the first priority, but it also named support for one another as key. Strategies for doing so include regional gatherings, one-to-one pairings for conversation and correspondence, resource sharing, and perhaps a national conference. Our intention is to facilitate such opportunities as a next step in the work this alliance has been about for two decades. We encourage other groups to do the same lest the larger religiously-connected social

change movement atrophy for lack of new energy.

What bonds the generations is the shared commitment to values and actions for social and religious change. Those include wanting a diverse group of women around the table, and working to build one before moving ahead. Another is rejecting efforts to erase feminist/womanist/mujerista work that would force the next generation to start afresh. Still another is a sense that critical feminist religious insights enhance the struggles for social justice, and that concrete expressions of liturgy and ritual help individuals and groups to express their commitments. Among us, we have the resources to make this work happen. Or, as some Grail friends once put it, "together, we are a genius." The hard part is finding the resources and the models for getting together.

What divides us is more difficult to name—a certain vague sense that things have changed perhaps more than they have; a growing sense that this work has only just begun; backlash against gains women have made in religious traditions; deeply rooted racial, economic, and class divides; and, of course, the cultural differences of experience—like music, clothes, media, and technology—that separate every generation from the one before/after it.

We at WATER delight in our colleagues, especially former WATER interns who are now among the movers and shakers in the field. One is a development director for a women's fund; two others are in seminary; another just finished a Doctorate in Ministry. This summer's intern is already making a contribution through original research. Let's talk, lots of us, and keep this flow of talent and commitment focused on creating a just and inviting world.

Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., is cofounder and codirector of WATER.





Future leaders of feminist/womanist work in religion gathered at WATER for the first meeting of the Intergenerational Project.

Once, in a remote rural parish in India, a Muslim named Ahmed was employed as a cook. The pastor insisted on his baptism as a precondition for employment, and the poor Muslim helplessly agreed. Pouring water on Ahmed's forehead, the pastor said, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Henceforth you are no longer Ahmed but Anthony." Hence, Ahmed was converted to Anthony. The next day a guest was invited for a meal to the rectory. The pastor was visibly upset when he uncovered the main dish as he was about to begin grace before the meal. In a fit of fury he called for Anthony: "Did I not tell you that, being a Friday during Lent, fish should be cooked and no meat should be served? How is it that I see roasted chicken spread out before me?"

Anthony responded without blinking an eye: "Father, I reached the village market too late and, since all the fish was gone, I bought some chicken instead. Then I used the trick I learned from you. I poured some water over the head of the chicken and said, 'I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Henceforth you are no longer chicken but fish.'"

Like Ahmed being converted into Anthony and chicken being transformed into fish, I feel like a new person magically transformed by the dynamic power of Mary Hunt and Diann Neu. Through my experience at WATER, not only my head but also my whole being has been bathed in life-giving streams of feminism.

Sister Maureen, the assistant general of my congregation, miraculously led me to the fountain of WATER. Initially I was not so happy with the internship because it demanded a lot of work and less formation in feminist theology, which was my main purpose for joining WATER. How-

ever, while rearranging the files in the archives, I started taking time to read. I came across material relating to the successes and failures of women in the field of feminism. I became aware of a space where I could breathe freely in the presence of feminists.

Mary provided me with the unique opportunity of being a panelist at the

tutorial on "Introduction to Feminist Theology" under the guidance of Mary Hunt. This tutorial made me aware of the crippling oppression of women and also opened my eyes to my God-given potential as a woman. It will be a bridge for my ongoing formation and future ministry in the church.

While participating in the creative liturgies of SAS (a DC-area women's spiritual community), I could breathe in the refreshing oxygen of women-church—or, rather, the inclusive church of all. The tremendous joy and feeling of solidarity with the group is indescribable. I feel strengthened and fortified to work for the emancipation of women from the clutches of patriarchal and kyriarchal power. In solidarity with renowned feminist theologians, I no longer feel alone in my quest for empowerment of women.

One of the sisters in my community remarked that after going to WATER I was a very different person. When I asked her what she meant, she replied, "You constantly point out the oppressive patriarchal structures of the church which we have become accustomed to. Are you joining the women-church?" I spontaneously responded, "Women are the church; I do not have to join it, I am already in it."

I have begun to realize the radical meaning of baptism and the new way of being church. Nobody has to give me my baptismal dignity, but I have to become aware of it as a blessed woman and exercise my gifts for the transformation of society. It is so important not to get caught up with erecting church building structures but rather to engage in building up liberating communities called church.

Margaret Gonsalves, ccv, is in the Doctor of Ministry program at San Francisco Theological Seminary.

## The Magic of WATER

By Margaret Gonsalves, ccv



Margaret presents Mary Hunt a shawl and water carrier from India in gratitude for the course they shared.

20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of WATER held at Trinity College on September 27, 2003. This was my first exposure to the world of feminist theologians. Though I was quite nervous, I could confidently stand before the crowds, trusting in the solid support of Mary and Diann. On that auspicious occasion, while participating in the feminist rituals recalling the birth as well as the process of death-resurrection of WATER, I experienced a profound transformation. Margaret was transformed into Vedashini (Sanskrit which means "originally blessed").

During the winter semester I was fortunate to arrange for a special

Stories of violence, abuse, war, and terror challenge us to stay in the struggle for peace and healing. Seeing photos of abuse in Iraq, hearing stories of clergy sexual abuse, reading about war, and living in the midst of the war on terror, I ask how can we tap feminist religious wisdom for peace and healing.

Women's wisdom has been represented in many mythologies through serpent imagery. Woman and serpent together were considered holy since both seemed to embody the power of life.

This liturgy looks at the serpent to find some clues for peace and healing. Use it to reignite your sense of creative hope. Use it to pass on feminist religious wisdom to the next generations.

### Preparation

*Place on an altar or table a pitcher of water and a large bowl. Bake or buy a loaf of bread that is shaped like an S or spiral to represent a serpent.*

### Naming the Circle

Welcome to our liturgy, "Women's Wisdom for Peace and Healing." To create our circle, speak your name, and share a phrase that comes to mind when you hear the words "women's wisdom for peace and healing." (*Sharing*)

### Call to Gather

Women's wisdom...peace...healing... serpent...spiral... (*Name other words from the sharing*). We gather now to remember, retell, and reclaim stories of women's wisdom. We gather to remember, retell, and reclaim the story of the much maligned and powerful reptile, the serpent. We gather to bring peace and healing to a world hurting from violence, abuse, war, and terror.

The serpent is one of the oldest symbols of female power. It originally symbolized the mysterious and ambivalent secrets of the Goddess. In mythology the serpent is always a female divinity. The Earth Goddess Gaia, the mother of all gods, inspired the Pythia or divinatory serpent-priestesses. In India, the "Mother of All that Moves" and Goddess of the Earth sometimes bore the title of Sarparajni, "Serpent Queen." The serpent was a key symbol of Brigit, holy woman, goddess, and saint of Ireland.

Some in the Middle East regard the female serpent as the embodiment of enlightenment, or wisdom, because she understands the mysteries of life. In Arabic, the words for "snake," "life," and "teaching" are all related to the name of Eve—the biblical version of the Goddess in her serpent form, who gave the food of

enlightenment to the first person. In the Bible Eve and serpent were diabolized; however, Gnostic sects of the early Christian era honored Eve and the serpent for providing the essential knowledge that made human beings human. In the Christian scriptures, Mary, the mother of Jesus, is shown often with a serpent.

Serpents were considered immortal and were associated with healing because they were believed to renew themselves indefinitely by shedding their skins. Serpents hibernate in the winter and re-emerge in the spring. They embody renewal and resurrection, enlightenment and wisdom, because they are believed to experience the mysteries of life through shedding their skins and regenerating.

Who or what was the serpent? What can it teach us about women's wisdom for peace and healing? Let us listen to the song, "The Serpent." (*Play the CD.*)

**Songs:** "The Serpent," by Carolyn McDade, from **Sorrow and Healing**, c. 1993.

In the places that reek  
Of impossibility  
The Serpent of Life coils.

She  
Crawls upon the swollen stone  
Crawls upon the swollen stone  
Crawls upon the swollen stone  
And loosens  
Her only garment.

### Invocation of the Spirits

(*Four women stand at the four directions and pour water.*)

**East:** We unite with you, Sisters of the East. Share your wisdom for peace and healing with the world. (*She pours water into the bowl.*)

**South:** We unite with you, Sisters of the South. Share your wisdom for peace and healing with the world. (*She pours water into the bowl.*)

**West:** We unite with you, Sisters of the West. Share your wisdom for peace and healing with the world. (*She pours water into the bowl.*)

**North:** We unite with you, Sisters of the North. Share your wisdom for peace and healing with the world. (*She pours water into the bowl.*)

**Reading:** Quotes taken from **The Beacon Book of Quotations by Women**, ed. Rosalie Maggio, c. 1996.

Listen to women about violence.

America has become numb to violence because it just drowns in it, day in and day out.

- Janet Reno, in **Newsweek** (1993)

**Refrain:** "Paz, Queremos Paz"

Traditional, source unknown.

Paz, queremos paz,  
y libertad en este mundo. (2x)

The practice of violence, like all action, changes the world, but the most probable change is to a more violent world.

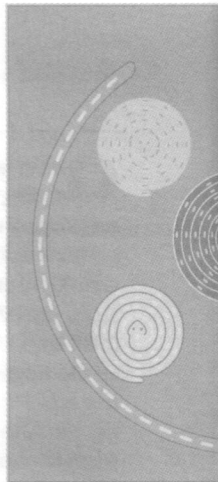
- Hannah Arendt, "On Violence," **Cries of the Republic** (1972)

**Refrain:** "Paz"

No society that feeds its children on tales of successful violence can expect them not to believe that violence in the end is rewarded.

- Margaret Meade, in **Redbook** (1972)

**Refrain:** "Paz"



# Women for Peace

By

Today, together, let us repeat as our slogan that all trace of violence must disappear from this earth, then the sun will be honey-colored and music good to hear.

- Monique Wittig, **Les Guerilleres** (1969)

**Refrain:** "Paz, Queremos Paz"

**Reading:** Mary Condren, from **The Serpent and the Goddess**, c. 1989.

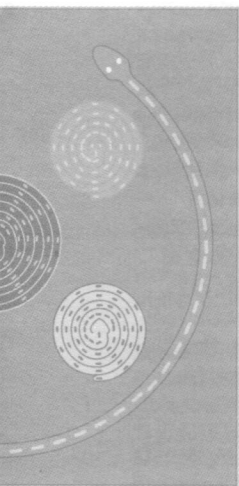
The symbol of the Serpent was the one most widely used to represent or adorn the Goddess of the ancient Near East or to depict, or mediate, the relationship between goddesses and human culture. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, according to the evidence derived from scarabs, scaraboids, and seals, the Serpent was an emblem of life. In Sumerian mythology, the Goddess Ninhursag was the goddess of creation. Known as Nintu, she was "the Lady who gave birth." One of her common images was that of a Serpent. As a symbol of life, the Serpent had connections with both the sun and the moon and was even said to cause the sun to rise.... In Egypt the Serpent



was called "life of the earth," the "life of the gods," and the "life of forms and of nutritious substances."

...In ancient philosophy or mythological systems, creation and wisdom were closely bound together, and the Serpent was a potent symbol of both. It is in this capacity that the Serpent appears in the Babylonian and Sumerian mythologies, which contain elements akin to the Genesis story. The Serpent has the power to bestow immortality but also has the power to cheat humankind.

...The overthrow of the Serpent represented something fundamental and crucial to the foundation of patriarchal culture. How did it come about that Yahweh was so opposed to the Serpent, and why did the Israelites carry this myth with them in their wanderings? To put it simply and briefly: the form of religion that the serpent represented was a major threat to the new religion of Israel or, indeed, to western civilization. If Israel was to grow as a nation-



# s Wisdom and Healing

Diann L. Neu

state, with all the entailed political and military trappings, goddess religion would have to be overthrown. Allegiance would have to be to one god, Yahweh, and the central symbolism of the new religion would be based on Promise and History rather than on the Life and Cyclical Regeneration represented by the Serpent.

**Song:** "The Serpent"

**Reading:** Starhawk, from **Dreaming the Dark**, c. 1982.

Take, for example, this cluster of things: a naked woman, a snake, a tree, an apple. Let us forget that they are the icons of The Fall, and consider, first, a real snake, perhaps the one that lives with me. I watch her slow movements, feel the strength in her long body, see her skin grow dull, her eyes cloud over until she looks lifeless—and I wake one morning to find her old skin crumpled like a discarded nylon stocking. She has slipped out, her scales iridescent, her eyes bright; she is hungry now, on the prowl, new again. And I could say that to me, the snake as a symbol now means, not

The Fall, but renewal, resurrection....

Perhaps the snake, with her slow cycles, her once-a-month meal, elimination, shedding, would tell you a new story about time—that time flows differently for her than for us, that time is not a thing but a relationship. Or perhaps she will tell you a story I cannot even imagine, because the richness, the mystery of her being is not exhausted by one story, or two stories, or a thousand insights. Revelation is continually happening.

**Song:** "The Serpent"

## Meditation with Water

Women's wisdom...peace...healing...serpent...spiral... (*Leader picks up the bowl of water.*) Take this bowl of water, look into it, and catch a reflection of women's wisdom. (*Pass around the bowl of water.*)

How can women's wisdom bring peace and healing to a world torn by violence, abuse, war, and terror? (*Pause*) Let us share with one another some of our reflections. (*Sharing*)

**Song:** "Sisters' Spiral," by Colleen Fulmer, from **Dancing Sophia's Circle**, c. 1994.

(*This is a two part circular canon.*)

1. Spiraling, Spiraling circle of Wisdom  
Sisters together a body of praise.
2. Born of earth her rhythms, cycles  
Love that's flowing from ancient of days.

## Blessing the Bread and Water

This bread is shaped like a serpent. This water unites us with women around the world. As we eat the Serpent we reclaim women's traditions, reversing the deed of patriarchal religion in vilifying the serpent, associating snakes with women in The Fall, and vilifying both. As we drink from the well, we internalize women's wisdom. We remember.

Raise your hands toward the bread and water and say the blessing after me: Blessed are you, Wisdom-Sophia, Serpent Goddess, Holy Mystery, For you give us memory and knowledge. Nourish us with your gifts that we may know and remember women's wisdom. As we eat and drink, let us remember.

**Reading:** "Woman Remember," by Barbara Walker, from **Women's Rituals**, c. 1990.

Woman, remember. You have the memory living deep in your mind, in your blood, in your life-giving darkness. Reach down to it and bring it forth. Re-member....

Remember when every mother estab-

lished her clan, guided her children, set the standards of behavior for her lovers, and owned the home place to be passed down to her daughters.

Remember when the Mother's laws forbade every man to do violence to others, most especially to women or children.

Remember when rape was unknown because every sexual encounter between woman and man was by woman's choice.

Remember when men dared not claim the right to control any aspect of women's economic, political, sexual, or reproductive activities, but honored all women for bringing forth and nurturing the race.

Remember when every woman unequivocally owned her own body and her body's offspring.

Remember that men stood in awe of women's wise blood, which brought forth all peoples.

Remember that woman alone had the right to approach the Goddess on man's behalf, and the right to decree wise laws for the benefit of future generations.

Remember the shrines established by the primal ancestresses. Remember the great temples where priestesses dwelt in peace, helping their people.

Remember that the world was at peace because men were forbidden to kill. They were forbidden by women, who understood how precious is the life that each mother takes the trouble to nurture in this world, and how sinful is the waste and sorrow of prematurely destroying life.

Remember what the sacred serpents taught, they who lived in the womb of Goddess Earth and knew her secrets.

Remember that those secrets are your secrets, have always been your secrets, will always be your secrets. Take your power from the teachings of the Serpent. Realize that the claims of men's gods are mostly empty, and that the real foundation of human life is Woman. Remember your Goddess. Woman, remember.

**Closing Song:** "Sisters' Spira," by Colleen Fulmer, from **Dancing Sophia's Circle**, 1994. (*A dancer leads all in a spiral dance.*)

## Sending Forth

The serpent weaves her wisdom deep within. We dance a spiral path all through our lives. We come, we pause, we go, and we return. Let us go forth remembering our wisdom. Let us go forth to work for peace and healing. The end and the beginning meet in us.

Diann L. Neu, D.Min, MSW, is cofounder and codirector of WATER.

# Women-Church Speaks

The following media releases were made by Women-Church Convergence at its semiannual meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio, in May 2004. W-CC is a coalition of over thirty-three Catholic-rooted feminist groups working for recognition and empowerment of women in church and society. WATER is a founding member.

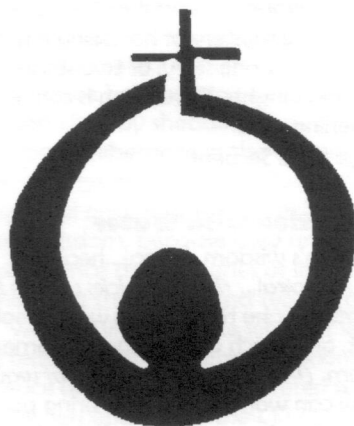
## ... IN SUPPORT OF SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

Women-Church Convergence celebrates the landmark civil rights achievement of same-sex marriage. Like the Brown decision fifty years before that signaled a new era for racial justice, the first legal same-sex marriages in Massachusetts are a step in the right direction for relational justice. "Separate but equal" did not work then and will not work now.

The joy of same-sex marriages reminds us how much more needs to be done to achieve a society in which all persons can make responsible, legal relational choices without discrimination. To that end, we urge that civil unions become the legal norm for all covenants, heterosexual and homosexual, with spiritual blessings the exclusive concern of religious groups. This approach respects the separation of religion and the state. We support the equalization of all relational rights so as not to privilege those who are married and penalize those who are not.

We encourage all who seek justice to celebrate this victory in Massachusetts as an occasion to further discussion of and work toward a society in which the range of ways people love can be supported and nurtured.

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## ... LAUNCHING "OPEN CONCLAVE" PROJECT

[www.women-churchconvergence.org/conclave/](http://www.women-churchconvergence.org/conclave/)

"We inaugurate with this website a completely new way of operating as church, namely, an open conclave. On the face of it, this is a contradiction of terms. But the keys, in our case, are not the kind that lock us in, but that open the many and varied doors of our religious community to hear and invite the participation of the many and varied people around the world who are its members. Welcome to a new model that is at work creating a new way of being church."

###

## ... CALLING FOR "VIOLENCE REDUCTION" IN WAR AND PRISON ABUSE

When will we as a country learn that violence begets violence in a never-ending cycle? This new wave of violence which started with pre-emptive war brings the horror of prisoner abuse as its logical consequence. Saying this is the logical consequence in no way condones these horrific acts.

We of the Women-Church Convergence grieve for the prisoners, the guards, the captured, the captives, the dead and injured on both sides of the war, for their families and loved ones and for our world.

We call on people of faith to return to the roots of nonviolence which are core to their beliefs. Rejecting the rationalizations of those who choose to dominate others, we choose to use the standard of "violence reduction" as the basis for decisions where there are disagreements. Violence reduction criteria and standards like those of the Geneva Convention give us some hope not only for a renewed world but for any world at all.

###

## IN MEMORY OF HER

From WATER:

In loving memory of **Beatriz Melano Couch**, pioneer feminist theologian in Latin America. Beatriz taught and wrote at ISEDET, the ecumenical seminary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where Mary Hunt began her Latin American connection thanks to her. She was a feminist liberation theologian before the term was coined.

In memory of **Sister Marie Augusta Neal, SSND**, sociologist and activist. Marie Augusta did the signal study of U.S. nuns, "The Sister Survey," in 1966.

She wrote convincingly that First World citizens must relinquish privilege so that others may live, what she called a "socio-theology of letting go."

In honor of **Margaret Flory**, Presbyterian innovator, on the occasion of her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Margaret founded the Frontier Internship in Mission Program and the Bi-National Servants Program, wonderful ways for people around the world to connect in egalitarian, supportive ways. Friends from many countries gathered for two days of celebration and planning

focused on the new frontiers of global sharing. She continues to inspire and connect people. *Ad multos anos!*

From Margee Iddings:

To celebrate **Flo Hill's** 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, giving thanks for this wise woman's life.

From Barbara Pfarr, SSND:

In memory of **Maureen Kelleher, RSHM**, on her birthday, in honor of the twenty years she has lived with and served migrant farmworkers in Southwest Florida.



Eisenstein, Zillah. **MANMADE BREAST CANCERS.** Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001 (189 pages, \$18.95).

Environmental, racial, and economic dimensions of the disease are not trivial. This author looks critically, and hopefully, at what needs to be done.



Fallon, Michael, ed. **LLWELLYN'S 2004 WICCA ALMANAC – SPRING 2004 TO SPRING 2005.** St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Worldwide, 2003 (287 pages, \$7.95).

A useful compendium of Wiccan materials, this book functions both as a calendar and as a text. Geared to young people but helpful for all, one can read it to learn, practice, and enjoy the magic of Pagans and Witches.

Fernandes, Leela. **TRANSFORMING FEMINIST PRACTICE: NON-VIOLENCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF A SPIRITUALIZED FEMINISM.** San Francisco, CA: Aunt Lute Books, 2003 (146 pages, \$15.95).

Interesting to read how one who does not handle the literature of feminist work in religion sees these questions. "Spiritualized" is a misnomer if understood in a privatized way because this author means spirituality as part of revolutionary work.

Gonzales, Michelle A. **SOR JUANA: BEAUTY AND JUSTICE IN THE AMERICAS.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003 (218 pages, \$20).

A careful, liberation theological view of the seventeenth century saint whose influence continues to be felt in the cosmos she explored.

Hope, Barbara. **BODY SCRIPTURE: A THERAPIST'S JOURNAL OF RECOVERY FROM MULTIPLE PERSONALITY.** Bristol, IN: Wyndham Hall Press, 2000 (225 pages, \$40).

A challenging book to read but a serious matter treated with remarkable skill and insight.

Horsley, Richard and James Tracy, eds. **CHRISTMAS UNWRAPPED: CONSUMERISM, CHRIST AND CULTURE.** Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001 (240 pages, \$20).

Give it as a gift to raise questions and seek communal consensus on appropriate holiday celebrations.

# Resources

Karaban, Roslyn A. **COMPLICATED LOSSES, DIFFICULT DEATHS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR MINISTERING TO GRIEVERS.** San Jose, CA: Resource Publications, Inc., 2000 (134 pages, \$17.95).

Very helpful overview of grief and loss. Practical and easy to apply without being simplistic.

Kirk-Duggan, Cheryl. **MISBEGOTTEN ANGUISH: A THEOLOGY AND ETHICS OF VIOLENCE.** St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2001 (224 pages, \$29.99).

This cultural criticism of violence helps to illuminate the problems using biblical sources and popular culture. Womanist in its outlook, this work lifts up the oppressive elements that make for social unrest.

Klein, Kim. **ASK AND YOU SHALL RECEIVE: A FUNDRAISING TRAINING PROGRAM FOR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS AND PROJECTS – LEADER MANUAL.** San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000 (159 pages, \$19.95) and **FUNDRAISING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE**, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001 (403 pages, \$35); **FUNDRAISING FOR THE LONG HAUL.** Oakland, CA: Chardon Press, 2000 (161 pages, \$20); **RAISE MORE MONEY: THE BEST OF THE GRASSROOTS FUNDRAISING JOURNAL**, eds. Kim Klein and Stephanie Roth, Oakland, CA: GFJ Publications, 2001 (200 pages, \$28).

Kim Klein's work is considered the gold standard for grassroots fundraising. She combines solid social justice values with appropriate strategies that make donors partners in the work. **WATER** staff read her like scripture. She has our highest recommendation.



Martin, Joan M. **MORE THAN CHAINS AND TOIL: A CHRISTIAN WORK ETHIC OF ENSLAVED WOMEN.** Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000 (190 pages, \$24.95).

African American women define work out of a history of oppression. In this insightful analysis, vocation is power. Well written, instructive, and strategically helpful.

Mathews, Alice P. **PREACHING THAT SPEAKS TO WOMEN.** Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003 (188 pages, \$14.99).

A well-focused look at the importance of taking women seriously when preparing and delivering a sermon. Simple things—like excluding single women, assuming every woman is a mother — that can turn women off are highlighted.

Poling, James Newton. **UNDERSTANDING MALE VIOLENCE: PASTORAL CARE ISSUES.** New York, NY: Chalice Press, 2003 (208 pages, \$29.99).

Literature about domestic violence abounds, but this is a unique resource that deals with the cause of most of it. James Poling is a consistent, clear, and trustworthy voice for men who need to take responsibility for their actions. A must for every pastoral care professional.



Robert, Dana L., ed. **GOSPEL BEARERS, GENDER BARRIERS: MISSIONARY WOMEN IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002 (249 pages, \$25).

Remarkable women carried their faith to the far corners of the world. While colonial ideologies were rampant, so, too, were genuine efforts to share the earth's goods. Many of these Protestant and Catholic stories provide insight into the ways women negotiated the gender barriers and found creative ways to be with and for one another.

Ryan, Maura A. **ETHICS AND ECONOMICS OF ASSISTED REPRODUCTION: THE COST OF LONGING.** Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001 (183 pages, \$24.95).

"...I can only conclude that reproductive technologies are a genuinely mixed blessing" (p. vi) is as honest an appraisal as one can imagine. Feminist concerns about the health industry, Catholic concern for the common good, and personal commitment to broadening the framework in which we ask such tough questions make this a useful volume on a timely topic.

Schneiders, Sandra M. **WRITTEN THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE: ENCOUNTERING JESUS IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.** New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Co., 1999 (258 pages, \$24.95).

A popular teacher and scholar explores women in the Fourth Gospel, including questions of authorship.

Segrest, Mab. **BORN TO BELONGING: WRITINGS ON SPIRIT AND JUSTICE.** New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002 (263 pages, \$22).

This writer/activist has a voice that echoes with powerful insights. In essays that capture her travels and her commitments, Mab Segrest chronicles a progressive's view of the increasingly globalized and increasingly unjust world she works to change.

Sharma, Arvind, ed. **WOMEN SAINTS IN WORLD RELIGIONS.** Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000 (244 pages, \$21.95).

A wide variety of saints from an equally wide variety of traditions make up this unique collection.

Thistlethwaite, Susan Brooks, ed. **ADAM, EVE, AND THE GENOME: THE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT AND THEOLOGY.** Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003 (200 pages, \$20).

Susan Thistlethwaite and the authors in this collection begin to unpack the hard questions that arise when science provides us with the genetic keys that unlock secrets of life heretofore unseen. They provide scientific information, religious questions, and the social analysis to ground a just and healthy way forward.



Thomas, Linda E., ed. **LIVING STONES IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD: THE LEGACY AND FUTURE OF BLACK THEOLOGY.** Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004 (234 pages, \$19).

Read this and catch up on what Black theology has been about and what its impact is on the larger theological project. The central role of James Cone is highlighted. Future directions include the womanist agenda front and center, issues of sexual orientation, and a preferential option for children. This is exciting work!



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**WATER** is a feminist educational center, a network of justice-seeking people that began in 1983 in response to the need for theological, ethical, and liturgical development for and by women. We work locally, nationally, and internationally doing programs and projects, publications and workshops, counseling, spiritual direction, and liturgical planning which help people actualize feminist religious values and bring about social change. If you would like to subscribe for weekly updates from the office and occasional news from colleagues in the field, send a message to [majordomo@hers.com](mailto:majordomo@hers.com) with the words "subscribe water-l" (that's water-hypen-letter "l", NOT number 1) in the body of the message.

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