

water wheel

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

The Editors Speak

"There's a rumble of war in the air" sang Holy Near after President Reagan invaded Grenada. Now that President Bush has sent U.S. troops to a bloody battle in Panama the rumble has turned into a mighty roar.

Our Latin American friends have reason to be worried. The murder of two women and six Jesuits in El Salvador adds fuel to the fire. Oh, that our pledge to resist such incursions would be enough to calm their well founded fears.

Astonishing new life patterns emerge in Eastern Europe. As we visited our European friends over the holidays, we caught their hopefulness. Check Point Charlie has lost its reason for being; the Brandenburg Gate is open. The thousands dead in Rumania remind us just how costly freedom really is.

The deaths in Montreal of fourteen women gunned down by an anti-feminist murderer alert us to the price of our values. Who would have thought that even we can die for our commitments?

We close and open the decades at WATER with hope, naive perhaps, but genuine hope that something more than war may obtain even as we live with less than peace. This is our wish for our children, but more so for ourselves. May the dove fly freely.

Distracted From Hope

by Mary E. Hunt

Hope and waiting are themes for a new decade because they confound us more than ever in the early darkness and bitter cold that the Northeast experiences in winter. To offer a word of hope in the face of El Salvador, homelessness, and lack of jobs in most cities seems like a theologically pollyanna-ish thing to do. So I will refrain, writing instead about the extent to which we get distracted from hope rather than how we get focused on it.

Two years ago I spent Christmas in Switzerland for the first time. There were real candles on the tree, lovely foods and wines, dear friends, time for prayer and reflection especially on a wooden angel that had been rescued from Germany during World War II.

I have come to understand the paradox of why people dread holidays, why friends become so depressed, why suicides and deaths seem to increase. It has to do with the reversals that are necessary in our economy to make holidays happen. Rather than being a time when we stop and enjoy life together, when we say we love each other right out loud, the holidays have become a rigorous round of shopping, decorating, card mailing, office parties and entertaining. Are we having fun yet, Bertha? Everyday life that is tough enough to face without drugs becomes even more intense. We have been distracted from hope by our own efforts to make something hopeful happen.

Even those of us who have simplified our

*...it is not that we hope too much,
but that we hope too little.*

We celebrated our Christmas liturgy at home with that wooden angel, marveling at her resilience over the years and the symbol that she is of hope in the midst of war. Seeing her again this Christmas with the Berlin Wall down and the remarkable changes in Eastern Europe fulfilled hopes long ago put aside.

How ironic that what has happened in Europe was beyond what anyone dared to hope for in our lifetime. Commentators and professors were caught off guard, evidence that it is not that we hope too much, but that we hope too little. We have been distracted from hope by the demands of power.

Recently as I ran through desolate streets of my neighborhood, lamenting how dreary and dead everything looked, I saw a woman hurrying into the police station with a beautiful wreath in her hands. She was the little sign I needed that beauty rears its head where and when we least expect it... in the police station. We have been distracted from hope by pigeon-holing people, including the police.

lives, who give only politically correct gifts or who donate money to worthy causes still get caught in the rat-race of the holidays. We feel the need to be *more* generous, *more* active, *more* involved, *more* available than ever because we do not dare to hope that some of the horrendous needs of our society's poor and afflicted will be fulfilled by anyone else.

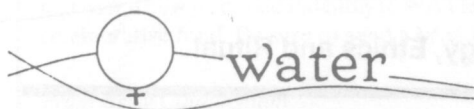
We are right since every jingle of the cash register means money withdrawn from the common pot, greater distance created between those who have all year round and get more, and those who have nothing. We have been distracted from hope by thinking that we alone can make all things right with the world.

Even we who struggle to be just harbor certain unmet expectations. Dare I call them hopes? Maybe this year will be different from every other year; maybe this time the hype will wear off and the authentic sharing of the fruits of the earth will take place. Fat chance, I say.

Yet we fantasize that other people, every-

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WATER is an educational center, a network of justice-seeking people that began in 1983 as a response to the need for serious theological, ethical and liturgical development for and by women. We work locally, nationally and internationally on programs, projects, publications, workshops, retreats and liturgical planning which have helped thousands of people to be part of an inclusive church.

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...Hope

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body else's family, are enjoying some Hallmark, Norman Rockwell holiday around a heavily laden table with no alcoholic in-laws, no rejection of same sex lovers, no squabbles over who gets to use the new toys first, no wrestling over the tv remote to switch to another team's football game. These fantasies are what distract us from the real genius of the season, the opportunity to find love where it lurks, namely, within each of us. For when hope is obscured, love is eclipsed.

I ask myself, does the Christian approach to hope have anything to offer? Paradoxically, it too can distract us. The genius of the Christian nativity story lies in the birth of a baby. No one disputes the fact that babies are signs of hope. Most major religious traditions have one somewhere in their lore. The birth of the Buddha is key in Buddhism, myths of miraculous things done by little saviors is stock in trade in religion. Yet we have even scrambled that message in our society.

already been fulfilled when we have loved well and been loved well. It is that simple and it is available to everyone without a price tag or credit card.

Imagine how different things would be if such an attitude prevailed. Imagine the extent to which we would see each one of us, from the smallest, frailest little person to the most powerful among us, as valuable if we simply measured our worth in our capacity to evoke love, as if nothing else mattered. This is a straight line to the hope we need for the new decade, hope in the value of every new life just because it is. We would even have a deeper sense of resurrection if we could focus clearly on what life itself unresurrected means, namely, an excuse to love.

We are skeptical even of the Eastern European developments not because we don't want the East-West axis to warm, but because we know from here in the belly of the beast that no such *perestroika* has taken hold in our country,

...our fondest hopes have already been fulfilled when we have loved well and been loved well.

Maybe the Christian churches get it wrong when they teach that Easter and not Christmas is the high point of the year. We are schooled to look at Jesus for what he was in his death and resurrection, not simply at his birth. This is what I mean by the tendency to obscure hope at every turn because we do it right in the heart of Christianity. Let me explain.

I recently participated in the welcoming and naming of a close friend's child. The message I offered was simple: that on his birth Mimi's new baby, Andrew James Rafael, like every new baby, has fulfilled the highest purpose for which each human being was created, namely, to be the object of love, to be an excuse, a prompting, a clue, a stimulus to love. Having been born and loved, this child fulfilled his highest calling right then and there. Everything else is gravy.

This is not to exempt the new baby from the family's hopes that he might find a cure for cancer, or an end to war, that he may become a great athlete or artist. Nor is it to take away from Jesus the rigorous accomplishment of a brutal death and a long term effect that Christians call the resurrection. But it is to loosen up a bit and shift our focus from the great expectations approach to each other to the simpler, less vaunted sense that our fondest hopes have

no walls have fallen between the races, the classes, the sexes. We wait unhelpful because there are few signs of hope. So it is with many churches as well.

James Carroll observed that when Catholics were kids we ended mass with prayers for the conversion of Russia. Now with the Pope and Mr. Gorbachev meeting, we might ask the Russians to pray for the conversion of the Catholic Church. This is what I mean by hope obscured: the very places where we seek a glimmer of new life often are the places where it is most completely masked. The institutional Catholic Church's recent condemnation of condoms is a case in point. Who can trust a church, that, like our government, seems to get it backwards more often than not? Condoms save lives in a time of AIDS, not end them. Words will help to end the Cold War because they will have to be followed up by deeds. Let's get it right here, folks...

Frankly, I found my hope restored when Raisa Gorbachev wore red (not the traditional black) to visit the Pope, when the weather did not cooperate to allow the hoopla of your boat, then mine, during the summit. I found my hope buoyed by the people who were arrested in front of the White House protesting the

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WATER Gathers Innovators

Women's theological centers have developed to the point that we need a network, a kind of Rotary Club, to connect us for more effective work. WATER responded to this need by convening the first such gathering of representatives of ten feminist/womanist centers from around the country for a weekend of information sharing in mid December.

Centers and their reps included:

Carolyn Farrell, **BVM Women's Office**, St. Paul, MN;
Renee Hill and Cindy Beal, **The Women's Center, Union Theological Seminary**, NY;
Katharina Kellenbach, **Temple University**, Philadelphia, PA;
Elaine Kruse, **Women's Institute for Theology**, Lincoln, NE;
Carolyn McDade and Chris Loughlin, **Womancer at Plainville**, Plainville, MA;
Diann Neu and Mary Hunt, **WATER**, Silver Spring, MD;
Pat Reif, **Immaculate Heart College Center**, Los Angeles, CA;
Nancy Richardson, **Women's Theological Center**, Boston, MA;
Jeanette Stokes, **Resource Center for Women and Ministry in the South**, Durham, NC;
Margaret Stephan, **Center for Women and Religion, GTU**, Berkeley, CA.

Each group presented a sketch of its history and current work. Discussion focused on fund

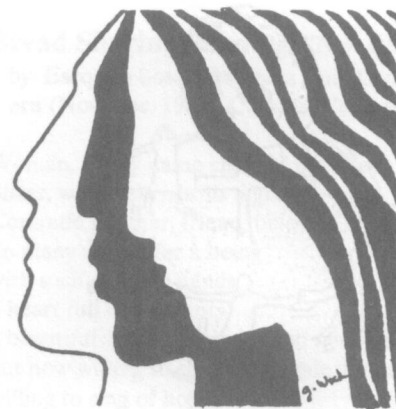
raising, the importance and difficulties of working in a racially inclusive way, a suspected trend toward defunding institutionally-based centers, our various ways of relating to boards, creative options for interns and future staff.

The meeting had the feel of history-making. People who are doing similar work, who had corresponded but never met, had come face to face to learn from one another. There was an air of practicality, the sum of many innovative, entrepreneurial women taking next steps together, thirteen who will become thirty. It had the feeling of a fiesta, the refreshment that comes from standing back from the fray, however briefly but well accompanied, to see that individually and collectively our work is making a real difference.

Next steps remain to be decided. A funded annual consultation would be ideal. More and more people are moving in the direction of innovative work that responds to local needs yet forms part of a much larger network. Seminary students reported that there are plenty of them who would relish such alternatives to traditional parish ministry if funding were available for such centers.

WATER is committed to keeping our loose but lovely alliance in touch periodically so that quality programs and continuing education for staff can strengthen our work.

Brava, sisters, onward.



New Faces At WATER

The WATER office is bustling because...

Barbara Cullom is on board. A biblical scholar (Ph.D. with Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza at Notre Dame) turned M.Div. student at Howard with a young family, Barbara is on top of funding with a successful phone-a-thon under her belt.

Mary Lou Randour joins the crowd. A clinical psychologist (Ph.D. from University of Maryland) with a good book to her credit, Women's Psyche, Women's Spirit, Mary Lou is starting training sessions for counselors on women's issues in religion.

Sally Davis pops in. A sociology graduate student at Catholic University of America, Sally helps to keep the Resource Center tidy and to brainstorm how to share feminist faith with children.

Carol Scinto persists apace. A gifted writer and inveterate editor, Carol steers a steady course when other staffers get distracted by the needs of the moment. She handles all review copies and keeps our lines to reality firmly anchored.

Students from Pathways High School come for job training. Special students, they are becoming expert newsletter stuffers. We are delighted in their youthful energy and grateful for their helping hands.

Welcome, thanks and come join us!

...Hope

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government's AIDS policies, by the nuns in Chicago who put the President on the spot about El Salvador, by the pastor where I preached recently who defied episcopal authority by emphasizing that I was not a speaker but a homilist.

I found hope in the fact that my friend's difficult pregnancy ended with a child, that I can still enjoy Disneyland as a sometimes cynical adult, that people are converting a rectory in Minneapolis into an adult foster care center for people with AIDS. I feel hopeful about the end of the Cold War because those who are supposedly our enemies are really our friends.

Then I begin to feel perverse, as if all that I treasure is somehow beyond the pale for most people, as if my hope is precisely the opposite of what everyone else thinks is valuable. Sometimes I wish it were otherwise, that my hope and the hopes of the world would coincide, that I would not have to live with the spiritual dissonance that comes from being out of step with a sick society. Clearly this is what is meant by

hoping against hope.

Suddenly it dawns on me that this is what it means to live, as Julia Esquivel puts it, "threatened with resurrection," or to seek and expect to find what Jean Donovan found in El Salvador, namely, "roses in December." Then I begin to feel well accompanied. I begin to feel that I have found my people.

I begin to feel that I can even make sense of the senseless martyrdom of our compañeros/companeras in El Salvador because others see it as I do-- the religious message of love and justice is sometimes just a bloody mess that we who struggle together see through to something much more powerful, namely, the dynamic energy of hope. Ah, I sigh, we are not distracted after all. Hope is all that we really need to give each other and, thankfully, it is more than enough.

Mary E. Hunt, Ph.D., feminist liberation theologian, is co-director of WATER.



Women Crossing Worlds:

by Diann Neu

Song: "Voices" by Holly Near
(words adapted by Diann Neu)

Listen to the voices of suffering women.
Listen to the voices of suffering women.
Calling out the messages of the moon and sea
Telling us what we need to know in order to be
free.
Listen to the voices of suffering women.

Reading 1

Introduction: The Co-Madres of El Salvador and the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina provide strong examples of how women in the most difficult of circumstances remain vigilant. With white handkerchiefs on their heads, they march demanding the return of their "disappeared" loved ones. On the handkerchiefs are written the names of their disappeared loved ones, date of birth, date of disappearance. Often a picture is also attached. One of the mothers wrote these words: "Panuelo Blanco" from Cantos de Vida, Amor y Libertad, Madres de la Plaza de Mayo, Buenos Aires, 1982.

(The reader folds a white handkerchief into a triangle and places it on her head or shows a slide of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo or the Co-Madres marching.)

White handkerchief, White handkerchief,
you go looking and walking.
White handkerchief, like the dove of peace
you represent the dignity of a woman
injured but not overcome...
You are the woman worker, the employee,
the woman student.
You are the one who struggles day and night
the one who laughs and cries.
You are the history of my people who
struggle, who struggled and who will
continue to struggle until love will be true,
until there is liberty for all.

Song

Listen to the voices of the young children.
Listen to the voices of the young children.
Calling out the messages of the earth and sky.
Telling us what we need to know in order to
survive.
Listen to the voices of the young children.

Reading 2

Introduction: Julia Esquivel is an exiled Guatemalan poet. In this poem, "The Wounded Quetzal" from Threatened With Resurrection, she speaks of the children, the hope of the future.

(The reader places a Guatemalan sash around her head or shows a slide of a Guatemalan child.)

Small Indian child, bearing a thousand crosses
on your back, bent from your birth.
Teacher of the earth, of the forest,
of weeping and of laughter.
A fiery coal burns in my heart,
a cry I cannot stifle strikes it.
I hear the flapping wings of the quetzal
struggling to free itself from the bloody claws
of the condor, from the bald eagle.
Indian Guatemala, (Nicaragua, Chile, Brazil,
South Africa, Argentina, El Salvador...) always alive,
struggles to break into flight
toward a land of wide horizon,
a land without owners...
Run, run, Indian child,
run like a deer on the mountains;
there, where the quetzal soars to new flights.

Prayer

O God, Creator and Artist, Mother and Father.
You fill the eyes and hearts of children
with laughter and love,
twinkling mischief and abounding curiosity.
We see them brimming with hope
secure in an unspoken promise
that life is a blessing;
that your world and your people are good.

Forgive us for all the ways in which we have
betrayed the children.
Too many babies die before they are five,
experience hunger, weakness,
avoidable disease and death.
Too many soon look out on the world
with the round bewildered eyes of fear and
disappointment.
Forgive us that we have cared more
about profits than about people,
about gaining gold than guarding the children.

Enable us all to know and use our power;
give us guidance and understanding
to see clearly what we can do to ensure
that no child is hungry or thirsty,
and that fathers and mothers are not forced
to abandon their children
in order to earn their daily bread.

O God, Creator and Artist, Mother and Father,
bless all children with food, shelter, clothing
and love. Amen. Blessed be. So it is.

Background: *Women Crossing Worlds* is a project of WATER that invites women of the Americas to accompany one another on our journey toward liberation. Patriarchy has taught us to separate from one another. Rejecting this division, we promise to work together to re-create society.

This liturgy celebrates the friendship and solidarity of women of the Americas. It has been celebrated, shaped and re-shaped by women's groups of Central, South and North America.

Preparation: Gather a large white handkerchief, a Guatemalan sash, a letter and/or a slide of the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo or the Co-madres marching, a slide of a Guatemalan child and a slide of Salvadoran people. Bake or buy four different kinds of bread: tortillas, matzah, rye bread, wheat bread. Place in the center a small table covered with a colorful cloth.

Call to Celebration

Today we gather to celebrate our friendship and solidarity with women of the Americas, especially women of Latin America. As Women Crossing Worlds, we promise to accompany one another as we work for justice.

Let us stand and begin our celebration with a litany of solidarity and friendship.

Litany of Solidarity and Friendship

Your response to each line is "We stand in solidarity and friendship."

Let us stand in solidarity as we struggle

R: We stand in solidarity and friendship.

From many different journeys. R:

From countryside and city center. R:

Crawling, walking, running. R:

Discovering many dances of life. R:

Affirming differences and similarities. R:

Working to overcome racism, sexism,

heterosexism, classism. R:

Crossing worlds as friends. R:

Working for justice with hands joined. R:

(The leader gestures for all to join hands, pause, then drop hands and be seated.)

In Solidarity and Friendship

Reading 3

Introduction: Karen Jensen, a North American pastor, reflects on her experience in El Salvador. This reflection, excerpted from *Probe*, Vol. xvii, No. 3, 1989, is based on Esther 4:14 "And who knows whether you have not come to the place where you are for such a moment as this?"

(The reader picks up a letter or shows a slide of Salvadoran people.)

I saw Esther today.

I saw Esther in El Salvador.

A child in a refugee camp, swollen stomach from lack of food, infested with parasites. He stood there by my side with love in his eyes, and held out his hand to share all he had, a ripe, old banana. For me! I have enough to eat. My belly is full. He is empty. This is his food for the day. But how could I refuse? He wanted to give to me. We sat on a rock, side by side, amid the mud and dirt. His smile was our Thanksgiving to God. He carefully broke the banana in half, and with his hand said, "Take and eat." I ate my half more quickly than he did his. He noticed. And carefully he broke his remaining piece of banana and gave once again unto me.....

I met Esther today.

I met Esther today in El Salvador.

A young mother, frail and weak. She walked with a limp. The woman beside me saw my gaze. "There was a bomb attack. Everybody ran. She was pregnant. She had to run, too. The baby came. She gave birth on the run. She had to pick up her baby and keep running. She still isn't well."

My eyes met with Esther's. She brought me her child.

I held Esther today.

I held Esther in El Salvador.

A baby. A baby born on the run. Her body long. Her bones bare. Her face alight with love. She gave me all she had. A smile and the joy of holding her. Of feeling her gentle life against my body.

I danced with Esther today.

I danced with Esther in El Salvador.

It was a despedida. A good-bye celebration. Gifts were given. A gourd which serves as a cup. A circle of rope. A petate for sleeping. The music played in that bamboo hut, and I held in my arms the child. Esther, born on the run, as we danced on the dirt floor.

I saw Esther today.

I saw Esther in El Salvador.

Full of laughter and joy. A song in her heart. A commitment on her lips. Singing of the goodness of God.

She opened her arms and said unto me.

"Come! Believe! Build a new society with me!"

We have all we need. God with us.

God's Word. One another.

And our hands and our feet!

Come! Believe! Build a new society with me!"

Meditative Song: Play the tape of "Sing to Me the Dream" by Holly Near from *Sing to Me the Dream*.

Reflection

The Co-Madres, the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, the children, the young mothers, the babies of every country are our friends. From them we hear, "Come! Believe! Build a new society with me!"

How can we build a new society together?

What do we want to create? How will we do it? Whose voices will guide us?

Let's take a few minutes to think about these questions and then share our reflections.

Circle of Solidarity

To rebuild society we need to implement all of these ideas and more. The work is endless, everlasting and life-giving. We need to feel the support of one another to keep us empowered.

So, stand up. Form a circle. Put your arms around one another. Lean back. Feel the strength and support of this community. Remember this feeling when times are tougher.

Blessing of Bread

Remember this feeling as we take, bless, break and eat bread together.

(Four people speak a sentence similar to the following as they each bring bread to the table.)

Voice 1: Daily bread in every land is the bread of necessity, the bread of life.

Voice 2: Women bake bread daily: tortillas, wheat bread, rye bread, matzah.

Voice 3: Women are as common as these common, daily breads.

Voice 4: When you see bread, bake bread, eat bread, remember the women of the world. Let us extend our hands, palms up, and bless these breads. *(silent blessing)* Let us pass these breads around, take pieces of them, and eat as we listen.

Bread Sharing Reading: "New Dawn,"

by Escqario Sosa Rodriguez from *Companera* (Nov-Dec. 1987), Caracas, Venezuela

Woman, lovely name charged with hope.
Sister, word that instills dignity.
Comrade, mother, friend, beloved.
So many names for a being
with such creative hands,
a heart full of solidarity,
a beautiful voice silenced for so many years
but now willing to shout out against injustice,
willing to sing of hope.

Woman, good friend,
together we dream of a new dawn.
With your experienced hand in my new one,
let us sweep away oppression;
let us lovingly wash our children's hungry faces.
Woman, sister, comrade,
let us together weave a huge coat
to warm our old people.
Together let us weave a patchwork quilt
of love and kindness.
Together, woman, let us, you and me, cook
a huge dinner for all the hungry of the world.
Woman, good friend,
let us dream together of a new tomorrow.

Greeting of Peace

Put your arms around one another again.
Lean back in the circle. Feel the strength and support of this community as we dream of a new tomorrow. Embrace one another with this power. Filled with this power, let us bless one another by speaking aloud a word or phrase of solidarity and friendship.

Closing Song: "Yo Soy Mujer" by Maria Del Valle and Mildred Bonilla from *The Best of Struggle*, Womancenter at Plainville

I am a woman in search of equality.
I will not stand for any abuse or malice.
I am a woman and I have dignity
and soon justice will become a reality.

Diann Neu, feminist liberation liturgist, is co-director of WATER.



New Resources

Alter, Ann, filmmaker, **NO NEED TO REPENT: THE BALLAD OF JAN GRIESINGER**. Athens, OH: Asymmetry Productions, P.O. Box 5657, Athens, OH 45701, 27 minutes, \$75 rental, \$225 VHS.

Jan is an ordained United Church of Christ minister who is honest about being a lesbian. Her wide ranging ministry from campus to the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home (Jan's home that is a women's retreat) is an example of how one feminist stays in but not of the church. Jan's life story, told in film clips from her upper middle class childhood, marriage, civil rights and anti-war work, unfolds naturally into feminist and lesbian/gay activism. She and her friends are having great fun doing good work.

Andrews, Lynn V. **TEACHINGS AROUND THE SACRED WHEEL: FINDING THE SOUL OF THE DREAMTIME**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989 (145 pages, \$9.95).

You will not become an instant shaman, but you will find ways to increase your imaginative powers and to connect with animals, crystals and yourself.

Brown, Joanne Carlson and Carole R. Bohn, editors, **CHRISTIANITY, PATRIARCHY AND ABUSE**. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989 (173 pages, \$11.95).

A book everyone wishes did not have to be written, this vivid collection clarifies the ways in which a religion based on love has become one filled with hatred of women, violence and even theological pornography. Contributors include Joanne Brown and Rebecca Parker (whose article on the doctrine of the atonement legitimizing child abuse is worth the book), Beverly Wildung Harrison and Carter Heyward, Mary Hunt, Rita Brock, Marie Fortune, Rosemary Radford Ruether and others.

Budapest, Zsuzsanna E., **THE GRAND-MOTHER OF TIME: A WOMEN'S BOOK OF CELEBRATIONS, SPELLS, AND SACRED OBJECTS FOR EVERY MONTH OF THE YEAR**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989 (261 pages, \$13.95).

A sparkling collection of celebrations for all occasions conveniently arranged in chronological order for a year full of creative, fanciful, fun times. Enjoy!

Chopp, Rebecca S. **THE POWER TO SPEAK**. New York: Crossroad, 1989 (157 pages, \$17.95).

A provocative treatment of feminist theology's deepest potential to transform the discipline through language. Dr. Chopp stresses a God-language that does justice.

Downing, Christine, **MYTHS AND MYSTERIES OF SAME-SEX LOVE**. New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1989 (306 pages, \$22.95).

A substantial work on the psychological and mythological dimensions of lesbian and gay love that draws on the author's considerable knowledge of Freud and Jung, as well as ancient Greece. In the face of AIDS the treatment of death is especially compelling.

Evans, Sara M. and Barbara J. Nelson, **WAGE JUSTICE: COMPARABLE WORTH AND THE PARADOX OF TECHNOCRATIC REFORM**. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989 (215 pages, \$24.95).

Slightly technical for lay readers but an excellent study of what pay equity can mean if and when it works. Churches take notice!

Fortune, Marie M., **IS NOTHING SACRED: WHEN SEX INVADES THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989 (167 pages, \$14.95).

Must reading for church people, this case study of sexual abuse by clergy shows just how easily it happens and just how rarely it is stopped. Marie Fortune has distinguished herself in the field of prevention. She now brings her experience to bear in protecting the sacred trust that some ministers abuse. Of related interest is **PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE** by Kathryn Goering Reid with Marie M. Fortune, a curriculum for children ages 9-12 available from the United Church Press, 475 Riverside Dr. N.Y., N.Y. 10027. It is "religious education that teaches prevention," a must for our children.



B.E.M. Document Explored

The Rev. Renate A. Rose, pastor in Honolulu, Hawaii and Doctor of Ministry student at San Francisco Theological Seminary, conducted field research at WATER on women's responses to the World Council of Churches' document on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. Seminar participants came from six denominations and included international visitors Denise Peeters from Belgium and Marie Therese van Lunen Chenu from France.

Renate's forthcoming findings of women's experiences of eucharist, as well as her own investigation into early eucharistic texts, promise to enrich our understanding of feminist faith. If the WATER seminar is any indication, women are finding many and varied ways of relating to the tradition as well as creative ways to expand it. Such research is crucial to grounding feminist scholarship in the experience of women, not simply in the wishes of scholars.

New Resources



Gebara, I and M. Bingemer, **MARY MOTHER OF GOD, MOTHER OF THE POOR**. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989 (192 pages, \$13.95).

Female religious figures are ever ambiguous in patriarchal religions. These Latin American authors make a strong cause for Mary as a symbol of overcoming oppression by empowering the poor and marginalized.

Heyward, Carter, **SPEAKING OF CHRIST: A LESBIAN FEMINIST VOICE**. New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989, (93 pages, \$7.95).

Carter Heyward explores what is fully human and fully divine, a creative angle on christology. She points out role models-- Nelle Morton, William Stringfellow, J. Brooke Mosley-- and lifts up oppressed people. She shows how Central American struggles for justice call us to act since "If we burn with passion for human well-being, the spark is God."

Heyward, Carter, **TOUCHING OUR STRENGTH: THE EROTIC POWER AND THE LOVE OF GOD**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989, (195 pages, \$12.95).

Sure to be an enduring contribution to theology, this volume pushes the parameters of sex and God beyond what liberal Christianity can ever imagine. The result is the foundation for feminist sexual ethics and for erotic faith that rests on mutuality in relationship.

McMakin, Jacqueline with Sonya Dyer, **WORKING FROM THE HEART**. San Diego: LuraMedia, 1989, (184 pages, \$11.95).

More than finding the color of your parachute, this innovative approach combines personal, partnered and group exercises to find meaning and purpose in work. Just the thing for our complex times when a job can provide much more than survival, and survival depends on much more than each of us doing a job.



Vamos mujeres. Colombia.

Russell, Diana E., editor, **EXPOSING UNCLEAR PHALLACIES**. New York: Pergamon Press, 1989 (320 pages, \$17.95).

A challenging collection of essays pushing the nuclear question another step. Useful reflections on the impact of peace encampments and on patriarchal propensities toward violence.

Saunders, Gill, **THE NUDE: A NEW PERSPECTIVE**. New York: Harper and Row, 1989 (144 pages, \$16.95).

Feminist theory arising from and applied to art makes this an exciting new look at nudes. Religious ideology added more fig leaves than insights. How will feminist theology respond?

Sleevi, Mary Lou, **WOMEN OF THE WORD**. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press, 1989 (109 pages, \$12.95).

Mary Lou Sleeve's unique art captures biblical women in all of their dynamism. The poetic interpretations of the texts provide readers with an imaginative approach to scripture.

Sontag, Susan, **AIDS AND ITS METAPHORS**. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989 (95 pages, \$14.95).

Susan Sontag extends her analysis in **ILLNESS AS METAPHOR** to argue against the bellicose imagery that surrounds AIDS. While this reviewer would have preferred more concrete data on AIDS to the dazzling show of Sontag's intellectual breadth, this brief treatment provokes new insights.

Spallone, Patricia and Steinberg, Deborah Lynn, editors, **MADE TO ORDER: THE MYTH OF REPRODUCTIVE AND GENETIC PROGRESS**. New York: Pergamon Press, 1987 (230 pages, \$17.95).

New reproductive technologies come under feminist scrutiny by the Feminist International Network of Resistance to Reproductive and Genetic Engineering (FINRRAGE). Critical and controversial denunciations of in vitro fertilization and related technologies make stimulating reading.

Stroud, Rev. Louise, **A BLACK MOTHER TALKS TO GOD**. Milpitas, CA, 1853 Conway St.: 1988 (66 pages, \$9).

Poetry and prayers, written while the author was in seminary, representing her "struggles with life issues as a black woman."

Tamez, Elsa, **THROUGH HER EYES**. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989 (168 pages).

This collection of essays presented by Latin American women theologians gives English readers a glimpse of the rich work being done by our sisters. Work by Alideda Verhoeven, Nelly Ritchie, Maria Clara Bingemer weave together ideas of God, Jesus and the Trinity from Latin American perspectives as unique as each author. Highly recommended as a resource for classes and research on the development of feminist theology around the world.

Thurston, Bonnie Bowman, **THE WIDOWS: A WOMEN'S MINISTRY IN THE EARLY CHURCH**. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989 (141 pages, \$9.95).

A scholarly treatment of the ways in which widows functioned as part of the early church. This reviewer wonders if the perspective is not slightly romanticized over against the Jewish origins. Nevertheless, the information is helpful for those who seek to understand women's ministry in historical progression.

Topping, Eva Catafygiotu, **HOLY MOTHERS OF ORTHODOXY**. Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Co., 1987 (146 pages, N.P.).

This courageous, clearly written book brings "Holy Mother" alive for contemporary readers. Challenges to Orthodoxy cannot be far behind with this kind of feminist leadership.

Waring, Marilyn, **IF WOMEN COUNTED: A NEW FEMINIST ECONOMICS**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988 (386 pages, \$19.95).

For those who shy away from macro/micro economics this critique of patriarchal economics and creative look at new possibilities is a must. Production and reproduction cost money and women need to know and shape how it works.

Weber, Christin Lore, **BLESSINGS: A WOMANCHRIST REFLECTION ON THE BEATITUDES**. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989 (199 pages, \$13.95).

A unique approach to the Beatitudes that provides insightful clues to new forms of feminist spirituality.

In Memory of Her

The outpouring of tributes to inspiring, inspired women has overflowed our initial bounds to encompass feminists of either gender. These names are now inscribed indelibly in WATER's memory. To include a loved one, make a contribution "in memory of her" to WATER's special commemorative fund. Be sure to send a brief expression of your special regard of the person you honor.

From Betsy Cunningham:

Jack Leslie Willents, the father of my friend for all places and seasons - Susan Kendall.
Jack, we give thanks for you.

From Catherine Bevanda:

Elaine Williams, your presence on earth made a difference. I didn't know you well but was so struck by your gentle strength that cut through darkness. I am a dancer. You have taught me a new step.
Elaine, we give thanks for you.

From Patrish Kaspar:

Dorothy Ann Passmore Junge, mother and grandmother, an example of love and warm generosity for all of us to follow.
Mom, we give thanks for you

From Mary E. Hunt and Diann Neu:

Kevin Gordon, you were a pioneer in gay Catholic theology, a religious brother turned feminist brother, a supporter of women's right to choose. You proclaimed that "Silence equals death."
Kevin, we give thanks for you.

From Paula Fangman:

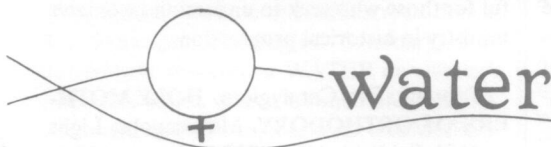
Dr. Myra Zinke, you introduced me to WATER. I have been blessed by your friendship. A great lady who touched many lives, you were a leader in bringing feminist concerns to a male orientated group.
Myra, we give thanks for you.

From Liane Rozzell:

Charlotte Rogers, friend and spiritual guide, you seek and you reflect God's wisdom and love with humor and grace.
Charlotte, we give thanks for you.

From Lucia Geniesse:

Judy Marcy, you were honest to a fault but you never knew how valuable your life was, nor how deeply you deserved to be church. Your ashes are cast upon the Pacific, yet you live in the memories of those of us whom you helped to value ourselves and our being church.
Judy, we give thanks for you.



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