



waterwheel

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

Editorial

The post-war period finds religious feminists betwixt and between. We make ourselves scarce for the homecoming hoopla. Yet a recessive economy makes most U.S. people too nervous to dare to be different. We give thanks for the courage that our readers instill.

We look abroad for inspiration. Our Latin American sisters provided the WATER delegation (cf. "Southern Exposure" Page 6) with plenty, especially how to maintain hope over the long haul. Our Asian sisters provide new insights like Dr. Chung Hyun-Kyung's now-famous lecture at the assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in Canberra, Australia. She invited delegates to remove their shoes (in plenary, no less!) to "get on the Holy Ground." Our Middle Eastern sisters struggle together—Muslims, Jews and Christians—to find solutions to problems for which men have fought wars. We are inspired.

Would that this post-war period would be the last one, wars in a nuclear age being too dangerous to fight. Hope springs eternal but with women's collaborative efforts growing it seems well placed.



Ecumenism Begins At Home

by Mary E. Hunt

New chapters in the history of ecumenism are being written by women all over the world although scant attention is being paid to this growing phenomenon of feminist ecumenism in the literature and practice of ecumenics. The field is usually defined by what mainline Christian denominations are doing in bi-lateral and multi-lateral efforts to respect one another's beliefs while at the same time granting their own positions a certain special status. What could be called ecumenics in a patriarchal setting is an effort to resolve a dilemma created by the very dynamics of patriarchal faiths themselves, namely, the impossible task of holding together the many and the one, the whole and the parts, while prioritizing one over others.

tions but who find spiritual nourishment beyond those.

Feminism begins with the presumption of ecumenism, of connectedness from house to house (*oikos*) throughout the world. It assumes rather than proves connectedness between humans, animals, the divine and the earth. Particularity is a welcome characteristic of all that is. Race, class, gender, age, sexual preference, national origin are particularities that impinge on ecumenism, on connectedness, that require careful attention as well as respect. A feminist approach takes these elements into account, analyzing each situation according to the power dynamics at play.

*Feminism begins with the presumption
of ecumenism, of connectedness
from house to house.*

Feminist ecumenism is building concrete bonds based on some quite different assumptions and ways of thinking. There are three major currents of religious feminism, all of which are ecumenical, though differently. For sake of clarity I limit my focus to the scene in the United States and to those international bodies to which U.S. women are attached. The three currents overlap, but for heuristic purposes they are: 1) feminists in established ecumenical circles attached to national or international bodies; 2) the women-church movement, a broad-based coalition of feminist base communities that has emerged from efforts to bring feminist values of equality and mutuality to mainline Christian denominations; and 3) the women's spirituality movement that encompasses a vast array of faith groups, from astrology to wicca, tarot to tai chi, made up of many women who have roots in mainstream tradi-

Ecumenical Establishment

The "ecumenical establishment," an umbrella term for those organizations, agencies and desks that find their support and constituencies in the mainline Christian churches, encompassing the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the World Student Christian Federation, the World YWCA, relies on strong feminist leaders. It was not always so. The patriarchal dimensions of Christianity kept women out of significant leadership roles until recent decades. To date, the World Council, for example, has not had a female General Secretary. It has, however, had strong feminist input, especially from recent co-presidents including Dr. Marga Buhrig, Dame Nita Barrow and the Rev. Lois Wilson, as well as from feminist staff members. The programs of the Sub-unit on Women in Church and Society, under the lead-

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Editors: Mary E. Hunt, Diann Neu

Designers: Diann Neu with Beth Wheeler

Editorial Assistant: Carol Scinto

Circulation Manager: Tish Jaccard

Computer Consultant: Jessica Weissman

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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Editors
WATERwheel
8035 13th Street
Silver Spring, MD 20910 USA
Phone (301) 589-2509
FAX (301) 589-3150

Ecumenism...

(continued from page 1)

ership of such women as Madeleine Barot, Brigalia Bam, Barbel von Wartenberg and Anna Karin Hammer, and the Community Study of Women and Men in the Church under the direction of Constance F. Parvey, are signal contributions to lasting bonds among women in churches.

Women ecumenical leaders have used mainline churches and institutions to foster feminist ecumenism. They have provided occasions for women from various countries to share with one another their perspectives, thus avoiding the mistake of universalizing from particular experiences. Women from developing countries have used financial and technical resources to develop important local initiatives such as cooperatives, conferences and study groups. The full impact of these efforts will not be felt for years to come, but the investment in women is always an investment in future generations.

These leaders focus on women's specific needs within ecumenical circles. Child care, equal pay for equal work, and educational opportunities for women within all segments of the church are part of the notion that ecumenism and justice begin at home. Women's pre-assembly meetings are now normative at major ecumenical gatherings, an acknowledgement of the fact that such assemblies are usually structured in ways that do not reflect women's processes. At

praxis base owes its emphasis to the insistence of women whose survival is at stake. It is the starting point of what Afro-American women have come to name a "womanist" perspective that begins with the survival needs of women and their dependent children.

Denominational groups such as United Methodist Women, and interdenominational organizations such as Church Women United are collaborative efforts to deal with concrete needs as well as the faith needs of the whole church, more than half of which is female.

Collaborative work abounds. For example, several women ministers from different denominations in New York congregations invite their parishioners to joint bible studies. The ministers enjoy working together and the parishioners profit from their collaboration.

Women-Church Movement

The women-church movement is another font of feminist ecumenism. It was sparked in the United States by Catholic women who were scandalized by the refusal to ordain qualified female applicants, and by Protestant women who realized that ordination was but the beginning of women's religious agency. Women-church is not a new sect or denomination, rather a series of house-churches like the Latin American base communities and the early Christian model of worship taking place in the homes of its members.

Women-church is a global ecumenical move-

The investment in women is always an investment in future generations.

these sessions women meet in circles, talking with one another, instead of at the long tables facing a plenary speaker so traditional at assemblies. Translation is often informal, admittedly less sophisticated than the high tech devices used in formal settings, but a gestured, whispered version that gets the message across.

The World Council has established an Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women. This effort raises feminist concerns from the personal level, woman to woman, to the institutional level, churches to women. It is a strategically important shift to assure structural as well as attitudinal change. Feminist ecumenism has always focused on the concrete socio-economic and political situation of women at the base, as well as on their spiritual well being. Issues like sexuality, racism, violence, work, food, children and other concrete dimensions of women's lives have been the subject of consultations, publications, discussions, liturgies and on-going activist-based research. This

ment made up of local feminist base communities of justice-seeking friends who engage in sacrament and solidarity. It has grown in the past ten years as an ecumenical movement of women who are naming, claiming, deciding and presiding as church. Adherents range from an ordained Methodist woman minister who pastors a congregation called "Women-Church" in Korea, to a house-church in Switzerland; from Latin American women who struggle to name their faith experience, to a ten-year old group in Washington, D.C. that meets every other Sunday for dinner and worship.

Two important ecumenical characteristics distinguish women-church from women in the churches. First, women-church pertains to no single denomination. It meets different needs for women from different denominations. For many Catholic women who find current Vatican trends troublesome, the choice is often women-church or no church. For many Protestant women, women-church is a horizon against

which to measure progress in their churches lest they be coopted by and incorporated into ecclesial structures that they have not designed.

Second, women-church models new ways of being church with sacrament taken in the most secular of senses and solidarity taken as sacred. At the "Women-Church: Claiming Our Power" conference in Cincinnati in 1987 the central theme was social change with workshops on violence, poverty and reproductive rights. Women kneaded the bread for their own eucharist, a reminder of the hands-on nature of religious commitment.

Women's Spirituality Movement

A less likely source for ecumenical inspiration is what is broadly termed the women's spirituality movement. It is unlikely because most of the women involved would wonder why ecumenism is necessary, so taking for granted the eclectic yet integrated nature of their move-

literally connected in an increasingly polluted environment. We make humble acknowledgment that the world belongs to *All* and that we inhabit it together, momentarily, doing our individual and collective best to pass it on to our children with a clean ribbon around it. Ecumenical, house to house, connections help.

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

*Ecumenical feminists recognize that
we are neighbors on a small planet,
our houses are literally connected
in an increasingly polluted environment.*

ment that it would seem rather elementary to ponder how they are part of a whole.

"Women's spirituality" encompasses a broad scope. Native American and other indigenous spiritual traditions are represented. Wicca, goddess and pagan experiences are part of the mix. Priestesses and witches, covens and collectives, tribes and solitaires, give voice to the deepest stirrings of the human spirit.

Ecumenism demands diversity whether we like it or not, and diversity is something that these women display. Gatherings of women's spirituality folk are colorful reminders of the many ways of the same spirit. Those engaged in yoga, meditation, reading crystals and the like, are part of, and not marginalized from, the same struggle to survive and make change that motivates other women. They, too, meet in one another's homes and apartments. They worry about one another's children and focus their spiritual as well as political energies on a more just future. They teach the broader ecumenical movement to embrace without prejudice that which is different.

Ecumenical Feminists

Ecumenical feminists recognize that we are neighbors on a small planet, our houses are



Many Thanks

WATER depends on its many volunteers and trainees. This year we had lots of people helping to dispatch the newsletter, update addresses on the computer, organize the resource center and encourage our fund raising efforts. All of them receive our gratitude. Some who are leaving merit our special thanks:

Nicole Gutrick and Alexandra Bise from the Live Experience Activities Program (LEAP), and Jean-Marc Volel and Josh Kulpa from the Pathways School used WATER as their on-the-job training. Good luck to all of them as they seek first-time employment.

Lucy Tatman heads to doctoral work in theology at Claremont Graduate School where her hours of organizing WATER bibliographic resources will stand her in good stead.

Laurel Buck came with LEAP and then continued as a volunteer computer operator. She will take her skills and sense of humor to a certification program in computer programming, their gain, our loss.

Each and every one of our volunteers makes an invaluable contribution to the organization. We are happy to contribute to their development as well, especially as non-profit organizations cooperate with rehabilitation services in empowering the workers of the future. More on our "In A Different Style" project shortly...

Introduction

Many women and children are survivors of domestic violence, rape, date rape, marital rape, incest, sexual abuse. Many have received or are receiving the therapy/counseling they need to cope with this violence in their lives. Many seek a spiritual dimension of support and healing. We need to create rituals and liturgies of support and healing for survivors of abuse.

This ritual of healing can be used in its entirety or in parts. Use it as a guide to help you create the ritual you and others may need.

Instructions to Leaders

1. Gather candles, evergreen boughs, flowers, tree branches or shells, one for each person, and place them on an altar table in the center of the circle.
2. Bring instrumental music, taped or played by someone in the group, which invites reflection.
3. Invite four women to be storytellers.
4. Gather a large rock, pitcher, bowl of water, and towel and place them on the altar table.

Invitation to Gather

From city center and country corner, from business office and home, from different ethnic and class backgrounds, we gather for a ritual of healing. We as individuals have been hurt; we have been betrayed; we have been abused; we have been scared. We as a people have been hurt; we have been betrayed; we have been abused; we have been scared. What happens to one of us affects all of us. We need healing.

Let us be quiet with ourselves and image the healing we need now as we listen to instrumental music. (Play instrumental music and reflect in silence for a few minutes.)

We need healing. We are healers. Let us create a healing circle by saying: "I am (name). I need healing from.... I am a healer."

Creating A Safe Place

Let us create a safe place where we can celebrate a ritual of healing that we need. Why do you need safe places? (pause) Please respond to each phrase with "We need safe places." (Statistics from *The Flyer*, Winter 1990-91)

Because violence exists in the world, we need safe places.

Because women and children have been violated, we need...

Because in the U.S. a woman is battered every 15 seconds, we need...

Because a rape is committed every six minutes, we need...

Because one woman in four will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime, we need...

Because half the victims of sexual abuse are under age 11, we need...

Because one out of every seven married women is the victim of marital rape, we need...

Because 25% of college women experience rape or attempted rape, we need...

Why else do we need safe places? Tell us and we will respond with "we need safe places."



Reading: "Survivor" by Martha Popson from *Daughters of Sarah*, July/Aug. 1987.

God i keep saying God
i can't do it not this time
the pain the pain
sure you can
honey she says
you can i know you can
but God i don't know
this time the pain
the pain can't be hidden
honey i won't leave
God says and wipes
my brow and kisses me
even though she didn't
have to
God i keep saying God
i hurt
and she says oh honey
i know you do

To create a safe place here now let's take a candle, light it, and place it somewhere in the room. (Candles are powerful symbols for an evening ritual. Evergreen boughs are effective for daytime or winter. Use the symbol that is appropriate for your group.)

Blessing of Light (or symbol you choose)

Let us bless this light. Please say after me:
Blessed are you, Holy One of Justice, (echo)
for you empower us to enkindle flames of healing. (echo)

Let us warm our hands over this healing fire.
(pause) Cup your hands over the flame and draw its healing energy to your eyes three times.

Chant: "And She Will Rise" by Dakota

Butterfield from *Fire Within* by Libana,
words adapted by Diann Neu

(To add a circle movement, stand in a circle, on first beat move right foot to side, and on second beat move left foot beside right foot. Repeat until chant ends.)

Like Drops

by Diann Neu

The earth is a woman and she will heal (2x)

We will live in her (2x)

The earth is a woman and she will rise...

The earth is a woman, she will care for us...

Litany of Healing

We begin a litany of healing by saying together the words "in the beginning" and then listening for the response.

All: In the beginning...

L: There was only pain and anger.

All: In the beginning. . .

L: There was only denial and humiliation.

All: In the beginning. . .

L: There was only loneliness and destruction.

All: In the beginning. . .

L: What else was there. Tell us and we will listen.

All: In the beginning. . .

.....
L: Gracious God of Justice, Loving Goddess of Restoration, in the beginning there was all of this and more. You know our hearts and our minds, our feelings and our thoughts. Be with us as we mourn the pain of individuals and community in the face of betrayal and abuse.

Strengthen us as we break silence and confront evil, as we support one another and cry out for justice. We ask this in the name of all women and children. Amen. Blessed Be. Let it be so.

Telling the Stories

Introduction: These are stories of women from the Theatre Group of Casa Sophia in Santiago, Chile. They are stories of women in every city, every country, every ethnic background and every class in the world. (Printed with permission.)

First Woman--Gina

It was Christmas Day.

It was three days since Pedro was home.

I was so frightened of him.

I got some few pesos from a neighbor to celebrate the day with my kids.

I went out into the street.

There were lots of people outside.

There was a bar on the corner;

Pedro was there.

He was with another woman.

I was so frightened of him.

I don't know where I got the strength.

I went into the bar and said, "Pedro, let's go home."

He glared at me and without a word, left and began walking home.

We arrived at the house.

He closed the door. And bolted it, and...

NO! PEDRO, NO! NO!...

of Water

Song Response: "The Rock Will Wear Away" by Holly Near and Meg Christian
Can we be like drops of water
falling on the stone,
splashing, breaking, dispersing in air?
Weaker than the stone by far. But be aware
that as time goes by, the rock will wear away,
And the water comes again.

Second Woman--Maria
He was always right,
Because he was the oldest.
Because he's the man, my mother said.
I couldn't go outside, I couldn't play nor speak.
He could split my head open
And beat me black and blue
Because he was the oldest.
He was the man, my mother said.
I remember when I was twelve years old;
It was my First Communion Day.
I was standing at the gate
Giving a holy card to a friend. I got hit.
I looked behind me
And there stood my brother.
My white dress was blood-stained.
He could split my head open
Because he was the oldest
Because he was the man, my mother said.

Song Response: Can we be like ...

Third Women--Sylvia
I was a very happy child until I was 6 years old.
Then one day my mother said,
"Your sister's getting married
and you have to go with her to Santiago."
I was so small
that I went without saying a word.
My sister gave me a beautiful doll
with a long dress and hair I could comb.
One day when I came home from school
Juan was alone.
Juan is my sister's husband.
I was really frightened of him.
He always bothered me
And gave me such strange looks...
I was really scared when I went in to do my
homework...
Suddenly...
He grabbed me from behind
And started taking my clothes off...
NO! NO! PLEASE! NO! NO! NO!
My hands were all filthy from him...
My mother came in.
Mommy, get me out of here
PLEASE! get me out of here, mommy...mommy...
I stayed in that house until I was 16 years old.

Song Response: Can we be like ...

Fourth Woman--Margarita

I looked so beautiful that day in my white dress
and veil.
I had just turned 17 and was pregnant.
I was so happy and so much in love.
I remember how after the wedding party
I waited for him to come to me.
Hours passed.
I see him, parted out, standing in front of me.
He looked at me and said,
"From this day on I'm going to be miserable
because of you!"
I wept a lot that night
An many times since he has beaten me.
And I have wept.

Song Response: Can we be like...

Maria: Most of us have been punished since we
were children.
Gina: Many of us raped by our husbands.
Sylvia: Many of us violently punished by the
authorities.
Maria: Many of us insulted and humiliated.
Margarita: Many of us subjugated by society.
Gina: We all had the dream of building a home
without violence.
Maria: All of us suffer disillusionment.
Sylvia: We are all working to remake our image
Margarita: ...our couples
Sylvia: our lives.

Reflection

All of what we have named and more happens to women as individuals, and affects us as a community. We need healing. What is your story? How are you working to overcome this violence? Let us share with one another so that we may offer support.

Song Response: Can we be like...

The Stone Ritual

(The leader picks up the rock and shows it to those gathered.)

The stone ritual symbolizes a release from pain and renewal of loving, healing energy. As we sit in this circle together, let us relax and focus on the stone. *(pause)* Let us pass the stone around the circle. As you receive the stone, hold it, imagine that you are pouring your pain into it, and then pass the stone to the next person.

(When each woman has filled the stone with her pain, the leader puts the stone in a bowl of water, washes it, and dries it with a towel.)

Let us pass the stone around the circle again. This time when you receive it, hold it and fill it with loving energy. *(When each person has filled the stone with loving energy, place it in the center of the circle)*

released from pain and filled with loving energy. Please share what you would like to about this experience.

Litany of Healing

All: In the new beginning. . .
L: there is the support of community.
All: In the new beginning. . .
L: there is courage to speak truth to power.
All: In the new beginning. . .
L: there is the compassion of friendship.
All: In the new beginning. . .
L: what else is there? Tell us and we will support you.
All: In the new beginning....
.....

Sending Forth

Let us go forth from this safe place filled with support for one another. When times are tough- and they will be- let us remember that this time we are not alone.

Let us go forth from this safe place committed to working to create a world where abuse is non-existent.

Let us go forth from this safe place remembering we are like drops of water... and the water comes again.



Song: "Blessing Song" by Marsie Silvestro from Circling Free

Bless you my sister...Bless you on your way,
You have roads to roam... before you're home,
And winds to speak your name.
So go gently my sister...
let courage be your song,
you have words to say... in your own way,
And stars to light your night...
And if ever you grow weary,
And your heart's song has no refrain,
Just remember we'll be waiting...
To raise you up again...And we'll
Bless you our sister...Bless you in our way,
And we'll welcome home...
all the life you've known,
And softly speak your name.

Diann Neu, M. Div., STM, co-directs WATER and is a feminist liberation liturgist.

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In Memory of Her

Tell the world how much she means to you. Spell out your tribute, send it to us with your contribution, and we'll print it so she (or the friends and family who cherish her memory, too) will have a loving, lasting remembrance to read and read again.

WATER's litany "In Memory of Her" grows longer, stronger with these added names:

From Gwenyth Lewis, Berwin, PA

Judy Mintier, in celebration of the faithful risk taking modelled by you.

From Jennifer Colby, Aromas, CA

Janet, may your light of friendship shine after you always. Your love of nature and the Creator touched us in your short life.

From Margaret Crow, Oakland, CA

Elizabeth Aldridge and Ann Aldridge Ditto, mother and daughter, my best friends for all my life; always wise, always strong, always encouraging.



Correction: The ritual referred to in WATERwheel Volume 3, No. 4 that took place at the Fifth Encuentro of Latin American and Caribbean Feminists in San Bernardo, Argentina was planned by La Urdimbre de Aquehua, a women-church group in Argentina. Among the members involved with the planning were WATER staff person Sara Newbery, Dr. Zulema Palma and Lynn Fischer. WATER regrets any confusion caused by the error.

Southern Exposure

by Carol Scinto

Travel brochures promise luxurious accommodations, lavish entertainment, haute cuisine, spectacular scenery. Not so, WATER. Its first group study tour to the Southern Cone in April modestly proposed "an empowering exchange of diverse experiences." As one of six (the only grandmother) accompanying Mary and Diann on this initial expansion of their annual "Women Crossing Worlds" exchange, I can attest that WATER-trekking to Chile, Uruguay and Argentina may change one's life, enlarge one's heart, expand one's lung power, replace one's natural reticence with unreserved huggings (and possibly lead to slight dyspepsia from an empanada too many). This visit to women's groups and human rights groups is WATER's living model of solidarity.

Spanish phrases, South American faces now crowd my dreams. Waking, I relive deeply etched memories:

In Chile, a powerful drama in a small room at the Casa Sophia, where women re-enact their own painful true stories of abuse, and audience and performers cry together; shining young girls in a crowded workshop/clinic/center in La Pincoya barrio, voicing their aspirations—to

economic chaos—sharing their stories, struggles, hopes...

In Argentina, marching with the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, then hearing face to face the personal stories, wrenching facts of their long search for their children, for accountability and justice; a crowded visit to the only (recently instituted) public service for battered women—a two-phone "hotline" (ringing constantly) on a small table in a noisy locker room at the main fire/rescue center; the long trip to outlying Villa Hidalgo, a destitute barrio where women are building, stone by stick by scrap, a place to gather, store, share, teach and renew their own strengths and abilities, and those of their families.

More faces, more vignettes flood my mind, more than I can tell. Common threads of each country include hospitable WATER friends who welcomed us into their lives as "amigas," and showed us their country through women's eyes. One central recurring vision needs underscoring: "Help us make known these truths, these problems, the violence," say the women we met in South America. "These are the truths, the violation of women everywhere."

*"Help us make known these truths,
these problems, the violence."*

be doctors, lawyers, engineers (hoping they can overcome their poverty); an "uptown" gathering of accomplished, professional women determined to break the information barrier with the launch of an all-women radio station, first in the Western Hemisphere if not the world; a cramped corner at the Vicariate of Solidarity where worn, gray women doggedly persist in the search for their detained, disappeared family members.

In Uruguay, our once-grand hotel hunkering down behind its impressive, now peeling facade, not unlike the battered body politic of a proud country no longer the "Switzerland of South America"; the day care center on the outskirts of the city crammed with infants crying out for arms, hands, hearts to help (we fed and rocked as many as we could); a closet-size clinic tucked away behind debris at a dumpsite reclaimed by unauthorized squatters (the first baby was delivered there the night before); a first-ever large-scale gathering of lesbians, some too terrified to speak, at terrible risk in an intensely macho society; survivors of domestic violence—violence fueled to added fury by

Besides co-founders and co-directors Mary Hunt and Diann Neu, the WATER delegation included: Kathleen Erickson, RSM, former provincial, Omaha, NE; Irma Levesque, student at Union Theological Seminary, New York; Marie Therese Martin, CSJ, former director of Worcester Connection; Sheila O'Brien, BVM, Spanish Professor at Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa; Beth Wheeler, WATER intern; and the abuela (grandmother), Carol Scinto.

Overflowing schedules and comfortable accommodations were arranged by our hostesses from each country. Thank you Peg Moran and Monica Hingston from Chile; Christina Grella from Uruguay; Mabel Filippini, Alicia D'Amico, and Sara Newbery from Argentina.

WATER uses and recommends Passport Executive Travel. Call Jay Ashton 1-800-344-7794 or 703-549-5559. She coordinated the travel.

Carol Scinto is WATER's Editorial Assistant.





Recent Resources

Anderson, Vienna Cobb. **PRAYERS OF OUR HEARTS IN WORD AND ACTION.** New York: Crossroad, 1991 (216 pages, \$13.95).

A Christian prayer book written in inclusive, poetic language for common experiences, including hysterectomy, divorce, abortion, in cases of fear and suicide, for commitment and a house blessing. Lovely for mainstream churches.

Bass, Ellen and Laura Davis. **THE COURAGE TO HEAL: A GUIDE FOR WOMEN SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE.** New York: Harper and Row, 1988 (486 pages, \$32.95).

This is a must for helping professionals as well as for women who survive and want to thrive.

Daly, Mary. **GYN/ECOLOGY: THE META-ETHICS OF RADICAL FEMINISM WITH A NEW INTERGALACTIC INTRODUCTION BY THE AUTHOR.** Boston: Beacon Press, 1978, 1990 (484 pages, \$14.95).

This classic text is reissued with the author's considered reflections and an activist's explanation of how useful it really is in the field.

Harris, Marguerite Tjader, editor. **BIRGITTA OF SWEDEN.** Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990 (341 pages, \$15.95).

Sweden's famous saint is made accessible to a U.S. audience. Her public life and her commitment to prayer were a unique contribution.

Kyung, Chung Hyun. **STRUGGLE TO BE THE SUN AGAIN: INTRODUCING ASIAN WOMEN'S THEOLOGY.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990 (142 pages, \$14.95).

Exciting new material written by a clear-thinking, insightful woman. Excellent overview of Asian women's theological work to date as well as delightful images for understanding the divine and the created order.

May, Melanie, editor. **WOMEN AND CHURCH: THE CHALLENGE OF ECUMENICAL SOLIDARITY IN AN AGE OF ALIENATION.** New York: Friendship Press, 1991 (197 pages, \$10.95).

A good cross section of current ecumenical efforts, from Southern Baptist to women-church, from Malawi and Korea to the search for a "round table" big enough for all. Includes Rita Nakashima Brock, Joan Campbell, Mary E. Hunt, Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz, Sun Ai Lee Park,

Jamie Phelps, Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Letty Russell, among others.

Monaghan, Patricia. **THE BOOK OF GODDESSES AND HEROINES.** St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn, 1990 (1981) (421 pages, \$17.95).

An indispensable resource for locating and becoming acquainted with Goddesses. Clearly written with excellent photographs.

Oduyoye, Mercy. **WHO WILL ROLL THE STONE AWAY? THE ECUMENICAL DECADE OF THE CHURCHES IN SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN.** Geneva, Switzerland: World Council of Churches Publications, 1990 (70 pages, \$6.50).

Fifty years of ecumenical work later, women's issues remain peripheral in many parts of the world. Hopefully, the Decade, culminating in 1998, will hasten the change.

Schaper, Donna. **COMMON SENSE ABOUT MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY.** Washington, DC: The Alban Institute, 1990 (145 pages, \$11.95).

Just what the title says...useful for negotiating what can be troubled waters.

Stein, Diane. **CASTING THE CIRCLE: A WOMEN'S BOOK OF RITUAL.** Freedom, CA: The Crossing Press, 1990 (260 pages, \$12.95).

A primer for Goddess worship and other woman-affirming rituals.

Thistlethwaite, Susan. **SEX, RACE, AND GOD.** New York: Crossroad, 1989 (171 pages, \$19.95).

Racism is a central question for feminist/womanist theologies. This volume begins the necessary critical reflection especially by white women if we are to move on together.

Van Wijk-Bos, Johanna W.H. **REFORMED AND FEMINIST: A CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH.** Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991 (132 pages, \$10.95).

Biblical interpretation plays a key role in Christian feminist analysis. Reformed Christians will find this a useful path to feminism.

Weber, Alison. **THERESA OF AVILA AND THE RHETORIC OF FEMININITY.** Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990 (178 pages, \$22.50).

A bold woman's story that is sure to undo some of the sugary treatments that distorted her personality and eclipsed her power.

Winter, Miriam Therese. **WOMANWORD: A FEMINIST LECTIONARY AND PSALTER,**

WOMEN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. New York: Crossroad, 1990 (319 pages, \$16.95).

Ways to celebrate the lives and stories of women in scripture; prayers aplenty for women's groups.

Wolf, Naomi. **THE BEAUTY MYTH: HOW IMAGES OF BEAUTY ARE USED AGAINST WOMEN.** New York: William Morrow and Co., 1991 (335 pages, \$22).

A controversial volume of 1990's feminism. Women's social and economic gains are still quite modest, but Wolf argues that we have made almost no progress away from the imperative to be slim, young and blond.



Especially For Children

Smith, Dorothy. **SAINT JOAN THE GIRL IN ARMOUR.** Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1988 (61 pages, \$2.95).

Jeanne d'Arc has inspired many girls to "faith, endurance, courage and confidence" as the prayer goes. It is never too early for strong role models.

Martinia, Teri. **FELIZ NAVIDAD, PABLO.** Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1990 (illustrated, \$2.95).

Another "true meaning of Christmas" story but well done and up to date about an immigrant family in California.

Audios

THE PIMSLEUR TAPES, both **SPEAK AND READ ESSENTIAL SPANISH** and **SPEAK AND READ ESSENTIAL GERMAN.** Language study takes time and discipline. An excellent tape system can help. These courses are first rate. Heinle and Heinle Enterprises, Inc., 29 Lexington Rd., Concord, MA. 01742, (800) 628-2597 (16 cassettes, 32 lessons, \$249.95).

Ysaye Barnwell with George Brandon. **SINGING IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN TRADITION.** Homespun Tapes, Ltd., Box 694, Woodstock, NY 12498, (6 tapes, book, \$59.95).

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