

waterwheel

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

Time and Again

By Mary E. Hunt

Anyone who runs a household, cares for children and/or elderly ones, holds a job and lives in the general rat race we call civilization knows that what everyone needs more of is time. Yet no one has invented the secret to enhancing it. Ironically, the timesaving devices of our era only seem to ratchet up expectations of productivity, speed and immediacy.

Does it really take less time to rinse the dishes, put them in the dishwasher, let it run, and empty it again than to wash, rinse, dry and put them away? What about that liminal time my mother used to like so much when we did dishes together and talked about the day? Excuse me, but I can't hear you over the hum of the dishwasher that now I can't think of living without.

approach since virtually all the studies show that women have much less free time than men. Justice begins on the hour.

It seems that the ancients had it right: shabbat is not a luxury but a necessity for healthy, effective personal and communal functioning. The point is not to encourage the idle rich, rather to restructure society so that we redistribute work as well as pay. If this seems like another utopian scheme, it is. But Waskow and company, and now some of us who are pondering how to do this with women's well being at the center, offer inviting possibilities.

We begin with religious expressions of time. I think immediately of holy days, rogation days, the times set aside out of Ordinary Time (a Christian liturgical concept for the rest of

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and communal functioning.*

Along comes a new old idea from Rabbi Arthur Waskow and the Committee for Free Time/Free People to rethink time. This inter-religious working group of the Shalom Center in Philadelphia that Rabbi Waskow directs is circulating a position paper to provoke discussion and action on the religious notion of free time tied to social and economic justice. The group sees the use of time - the overwork of some and the sub/unemployment of others, the monstrous salaries for the top echelon and the below-poverty level minimum wage for others - as all of a piece. I am intrigued from a feminist perspective by this

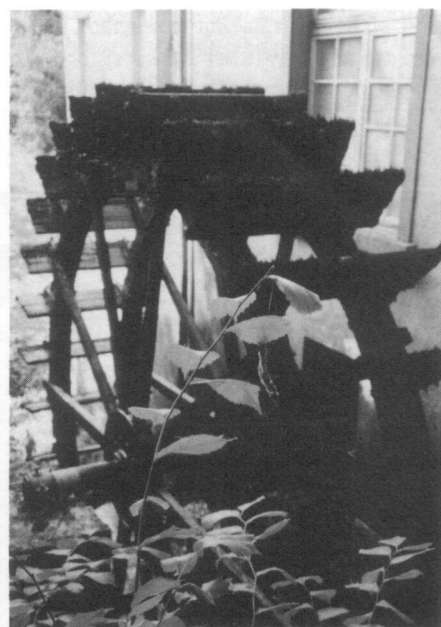
the year) for special occasions. Keeping Shabbat while under public scrutiny will pose a challenge if Joseph Lieberman is elected vice president. But perhaps it will be just the reminder the world needs to see someone with monumental responsibility affirming that he, like the rest of us, is not finally in charge.

Jubilee 2000 is a move to relieve developing countries of the sinister debt with which the wealthiest countries of the world have saddled them. It is no accident that the title comes from a Jewish concept for living

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An old waterwheel near the famous Rhine-fallen waterfall in Germany illustrates timeless wonders and marvelous cycles. Mary and Diann stopped here to rest during their summer work visit to Europe.

Editorial

Election years and Olympics are ways to mark time. Their cycles are predictable even if their outcomes are not. This season we embark on both, proving that some things are as inevitable as death and taxes.

Time itself is an oddity, at once infinite, according to physicists, and at the same time given only in certain measure to each of us. So in this issue we consider how we use it, a spiritual thought for the harried, overscheduled and frantic if they are not too busy to read it.

Religion seems to be on center stage more often than not this election year. Happily, there is some more denominational diversity than before. But why the preposterous statement by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger on salvation (only Catholics need apply; give us a collective break) was not roundly ignored remains mysterious. It proves that what typically passes for religious news is what men do, regardless of how inane. Our job is to educate the media to the reality of women who make religious sense.

We at WATER keep our eyes peeled for women's news, as it tends to be more uplifting. Indeed, this summer we were delighted to learn of the election of the first woman bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the Rev. Vashti McKenzie, a Baltimore neighbor. Health and longevity to her and her sisters, who toil often unrecognized as religious agents when the world so desperately needs their wisdom.

Pass It On

If you know someone (or have a list of friends and relatives) with whom you'd like to share this issue, send us name and address and we'll 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. Contact WATER, 301-589-2509.

E-mail is a popular way to participate in WATER's work. 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 with the words "subscribe water-l" (that's water-hyphen-letter "l", NOT number 1) in the body of the message.

*The problem comes into sharpest focus
when children have daytimers and families
have to make appointments for dinner.*

Time...

(Continued from page 1)

ecologically. Land left fallow during the jubilee year is usually more productive in the future. Likewise, only countries released from their debts will have a chance to prosper.

What would the world look like, better, what would our days and weeks look like if we worked less, played more, lived less stressful lives with more attention to one another, the earth, the Divine, ourselves? It seems we in the U.S. now work about two weeks more than our Japanese counterparts. I bet that number does not count the time we spend tethered to our beepers and cell phones "just in case," checking our answering machines and popping up our e-mail accounts to keep current. The Dutch, whose yearly workload is more than 500 hours less than ours, live in the world's most productive economy. In many instances professional work has morphed into a lifestyle that permits little respite; hourly wage work is relentless in the hours it takes to make ends meet. Something is wrong.

The appeal of the Free Time/Free People movement is that it is grounded in justice seeking to eradicate this inequity to everyone's benefit. It is linked with the Living Wage Campaign that is long overdue in an economy that is booming for some and busted for others. For example, compulsory overtime for airline employees is one of the issues that tied up the skies this past summer. It is a justice question when the employer can tell the employee what the quantity of her/his free time will be by limiting it at will. Free Time/Free People's kind of time-management, as opposed to the trademarked kind that teaches people to do more and more in less and less time, can really be freeing.

The problem comes into sharpest focus when children have daytimers and families have to make appointments for dinner. No thanks. But where do we start to stem the tide? We have begun at WATER with flexible hours, a late arrival time (10 am) to avoid traffic and accommodate morning exercise, reading and reflection. We build communal lunch and a

late afternoon cup of tea together into our office routine. I know an environmental law firm that has a half-hour of meditation every day for staff members who wish to participate. It is the small stuff that counts, all of it oriented toward a more integrated life and the time to enjoy it.

A challenging move is to build free time into meetings we plan. One AIDS conference I attended actually blocked out the whole day on Sunday for rest. Imagine going to a meeting to rest! Try crossing out whole days in your calendar for family/friends and keep them that way. It is not as easy as it sounds, but the Free Time/Free People movement makes plain that the alternative is so out of sync with nature as to have created the current warped time in which we live.

Don't be surprised if you get WATER's answering machine someday saying we are out enjoying ourselves. We won't apologize.

If you have time, check out www.shalomctr.org, or write to Shalom Center, 6711 Lincoln Drive, Philadelphia, PA 19119 for more information.

Study Questions

1. As you and your community think about time, what are some of the concrete changes you might propose for yourselves and for the rest of us to move toward more humane living?
2. What does your religious tradition teach about time? How is the notion of sacred time redundant?
3. What single thing could you eliminate from your daily schedule and make room for something you would prefer to do?

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

Women Continue to Cross Worlds

Women Crossing Worlds is WATER's longtime commitment to work with Latin American women in theology, ethics and ritual. Its roots precede WATER in that Mary Hunt taught in Argentina where she met her first Latin American colleagues. This year Mary continued the several decades of collaboration in Argentina and Brazil, visiting longtime friends and offering workshops, lectures and classes.

She was in Buenos Aires with Safina Newbery and Estela Furlani, WATER collaborators for many years through the Centro de Estudios Cristianos. She met with Mabel Filippini and the CEASOL group, Protestant and Catholic church women looking at new issues in feminist theology.

At ISEDET, the ecumenical seminary there, she spoke at the Gender Forum on issues in feminist theological education. It was heartening to see so many women - pastors, professors and students - around the table with exciting work in progress. It was a far cry from the early days of this work, when women involved would have had trouble getting a foursome for bridge!

In Cordoba, Argentina, the Centro Ecumenico Cristiano de Cordoba and Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir sponsored Hunt's public lecture on "Feminist Theology and the Body." The Rev. Nelly Ritchie, a longtime WATER friend, pastors the local Methodist church and acts as an effective bridge between groups.

CDD brought together its Latin American regional staff from Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Chile, Argentina and Bolivia, along with other

interested participants, for a weekend on feminist ethics, including matters of sexual variety and diversity. WATER was pleased to provide staffing.

Graduate students at the Lutheran Seminary in Sao Leopoldo, Brazil, joined Mary for an intensive graduate course on Feminist Ethics. So many women students there learn from the excellent work of Professor Wanda Deifelt. Doctoral students with feminist research topics are making a contribution on issues such as blood rituals and textual concerns.

New colleagues in Sao Leopoldo include the staff of the Centro Ecumenico de Evangelizacao, Capacitacao e Assessoria (CECA) discussing practical ways to move toward more progressive religious beliefs. This grassroots group provides education for those who teach and do social change work in neighborhoods.

In Sao Paulo, Mary met with newly graduated theologian Dr. Elizabeth Salazar, who will work in Chile, and with Chilean doctoral student Raquel Rilquelme Martinez whose dissertation is on religion and violence. Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir of Brazil hosted an afternoon discussion on cloning and the Human Genome Project, pushing the envelope on reproductive health issues.

Women Crossing Worlds continues to be a most effective, economical and on-going effort to share resources among feminists in different settings. Future plans include more work in Brazil on the new reproductive technologies, as well as sharing with Cuban colleagues at the ecumenical seminary in Mantanzas this spring.

Feminist Liberation Theologians

The Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network will meet, as it has for the past several years, in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Society of Biblical Literature in Nashville, TN, on Friday November 17, 2000 in the Bayou C Room of the Opryland Hotel from 3:45-6:15 PM.

This year's focus is on linking international groups with one another. Bring your ideas and contacts. All are welcome at this good networking opportunity.

For information on the Network, and to signal that you will be present, please contact Mary E. Hunt and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza at the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER), 8035 13th Street, Silver Spring MD 20910 USA, 301 589-2509; fax 301 589-3150; water@hers.com.

Defining Mothers

By Carol Murdock Scinto

The death of Aunt Carmela on August 18, four months to the day after we celebrated her 97th birthday, brought to an end the Scinto family generation that inspired the Mothers Fund.

Unlike Florence Blythe Murdock and Josephine Gentilesca Scinto, in whose names the fund was started, Carmela Gentilesca never gave birth. No matter. She was as much a mother as many who do. She watched over, supported, nurtured, fussed at and gloried in her family of nieces, nephews, their partners, their offspring, friends, neighbors, unrelated wayfarers who came into her life. Like all mothers, none of whom is perfect, she had her quirks and foibles. And she loved us, as we loved her.

Still sharp of mind though with a failing heart, she was overheard conversing with her own long-dead mother and more recently deceased older sister Josie in the weeks before she died. As Vera, her attentive care-giver, explained, she was obviously "on the road," greeting those who awaited her on a final journey to her beginning.

I think she would be especially pleased to know that the Mothers Fund, a modest "pin money" and "egg money" account designed to give a boost to women who need a hand with a heavy load, is in her name, too.

In Memory of Her

From Ruth Steinert, Cincinnati, OH, Susan O'Brien, Brooklyn, NY, Pat Hussey and Barbara Ferraro, Alum Creek, WV:

In honor of **Francis C. Hunt**, Mary Hunt's father, and in appreciation of his gifts to the world through Mary.

From Bridget Mary Meehan, Falls Church, VA:

In honor of my mother, **Bridie Meehan**, for her courageous spirit as an Irish immigrant who with Dad brought us to the USA in 1956. Her birthday was July 18.

From Betty Jones Sykora, Minneapolis, MN:

In memory of my mother, **Mary Bolger Jones**. She was a feminist before that word was used. She simply stood up quietly and firmly for the right of every woman to be her own person at all times. She died at 90 believing that justice will be done.



As the wheel of the year turns, light declines and darkness increases in the northern hemisphere. Festivals at this time invite us to think about our own mortality. October 31 is Halloween, Samhain, the season of the dead. November 1 celebrates The Feast of the Dead in Mexico and All Saints' Day in the Christian calendar. November 2 memorializes All Souls. This trilogy of feasts honors the ancestors who have gone before us and still live among us.

This liturgy celebrates the closeness of the worlds of the living and dead. Use it for any of the above named feasts or to celebrate the trilogy of the season. It invites participants to remember the dead, take a look at death and focus on what is ending, dying or needs to die in their own lives.

Preparation

Arrange a loaf of bread in a basket with sliced fruits and nuts. Place this basket on a central table, along with a glass of cider, black and white candles, an incensor or smudge stick, a crystal and a bowl.

Call to Gather

This is the time of year for the annual meeting of the many worlds, when past and future are at ease with the present, when those of us with bodies get together with the spirits of those who preceded us. We come to the crossroads between the season of life and the season of death. Halloween, October 31; All Saints' Day, November 1; and All Souls' Day, November 2, are times to remember our ancestors.

During these nights the veil between life and death is thin; the two worlds come close together. There is much movement back and forth through the veil that makes it possible to get in touch with the spirits on either side. Tonight we hallow this turning into darkness and spend time with those who have died. We remember our own mortality.

Naming the Circle

Let us hallow this space by saying our names and smudging one another. Smudging or incensing is a ritual burning of herbs, using the smoke produced to purify a space and the people in it. Ascending smoke symbolically forms a channel connecting us to Great Spirits, Holy Ones who have gone before us, the Communion of Saints.

Let us pass the incensor or smudge stick from person to person and purify one another. Hold the smoking herbs in your non-dominant hand, stay a few feet away from the person, and use gentle, short movements with your dominant hand to direct the smoke toward the person. Go down the front of the body, from head to feet, with the smoke. Then repeat the procedure down the back, from head to feet.

Those receiving the incense cup their hands and bring the smoke in toward their bodies. (Smudging)

Song: "The Power Moves" by Laura Brearley

The power moves through the seasons turning.
The power moves through the earth and the sun
The power moves through the ancient learning.
The power moves through everyone.

Reading: "All Souls" by May Sarton, from *Collected Poems 1930-1973*, c. 1974.

Did someone say that there would be an end,
An end, Oh, an end, to love and mourning?
Such voices speak when sleep and waking blend,
The cold bleak voices of the early morning
When all the birds are dumb in dark November
Remember and forget, forget, remember.

After the false night, warm true voices, wake!
Voice of the dead that touches the cold living,
Through the pale sunlight once more gravely speak.
Tell me again, while the last leaves are falling:
"Dear child, what has been once so interwoven
Cannot be raveled, nor the gift ungiven."

Now the dead move through all of us still glowing,
Mother and child, lover and lover mated,
Are wound and bound together and enflowing.
What has been plaited cannot be unplaited –
Only the strands grow richer with each loss
And memory makes kings and queens of us.

Dark into light, light into darkness, spin.
When all the birds have flown to some real haven,
We who find shelter in the warmth within,
Listen, and feel new-cherished, new-forgiven,
As the lost human voices speak through us and blend
Our complex love, our mourning without end.

Lighting the Candles

Let us light a candle in memory of someone who has died and share something about that person. (*Candle lighting and sharing*)

Halloween Turning in

By Diar

Reading: "Listening" by Margaret Randall, from *Memory Says Yes*, c. 1988.

Listening to Kate Wolf, her Poet's Heart
And she dead of leukemia. Just days.
How powerful a voice becomes
When the woman is no longer.

Listening to Kate, and coming across
Joan's cancer journal
Her last two years gone five, her words
Lost to me until today. Dear Joan.

Where have you been
When I needed you? Where were we, Liz,
When we needed each other
And could not give, nothing to give,
This cruel certainty stubborn like salt
Between us.

No one handed me your death
Four days past my intentional last visit
But I knew. You came gently, the confirmation
Taking no one by surprise.

Last night I dreamt of death.
Sudden, blatant, jarring.
And when I searched for morning's meaning
(sensing it on some other plane)
someone told me "you can't make death
a synonym for anything else."

I can. Yes I can. And I do
Choose to say now

Death builds a bridge, another
And one more.

Death builds bridges
As long as we still hear
The living words, the song.

Crystal Sharing

Crystals are believed to magnify, store and
focus energy. Regarded in Japan as symbols of

'Tis the ancestors' prayer in the voice of the
waters.

Those who have died have never, never left.
The dead are not under the earth.
They are in the rustling leaves,
They are in the growing woods,
They are in the crying babes,
They are in the morning light.
The dead are not under the earth. (*Refrain*)

Those who have died have never, never left.
The dead have a pact with the living.
They are in the woman's breast,
They are in the waiting child,
They are with us in the home,
They are with us in the ground.
The dead have a pact with the living. (*Refrain*)

Spiral Dance Meditation

(One woman starts the group in a spiral dance
in silence. After a minute she says:)

As you spiral, be with death and your own
mortality. Focus on something that is ending,
or dying, or needs to die in you. (*Pause*)

Now go deep into the well of your being and
get in touch with something you would like to
bring into being through the power of your own
intention, through the power of your own will.
This could be a new attitude, a new quality of
being. It could be something concrete that you
would like to manifest in your own life: a
change in relationship or a new understanding
about yourself.

Get in touch with something that through
your own power you can make happen for your-
self... and ask the Wise Woman, Sophia-
Wisdom, the Holy One, to help you. (*Pause*)

Ask her to give you something that will help
you bring this into being. And just allow any
image or imaging to emerge. Accept what she
gives as it is given, without thought. (*Pause*)

And now, allow yourself to return. Return to
consciousness. Be present here with the gift or
gifts that the Wise Woman has given you.
(*Pause*)

Reflection

Power moves through all of us. Endings and
deaths, beginnings and newness mark life's
cycles. Let us share whatever we wish from our
spiral dance. Share what intention you got in
touch with, what gift you received or what
insights you gained. (*Sharing*)

Blessing Food and Drink

(The blessing picks up the basket of bread, fruits

and nuts, and the glass of cider and says:)

Let us bless this food and drink in honor of
our ancestors.

Blessed are you, Holy One of our Ancestors,
For you give us our daily food and drink
To connect us with the Communion of Saints.

Let us eat and drink, remembering our
ancestors.

Blessing One another

As we spiraled into the center of death and
dying, let us now spiral into life and new begin-
nings. (*This time the spiral dance has a lively
feel to it.*)

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

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

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

Sending Forth

As we go home tonight, go carefully and
cautiously. The spirits are with us in a special
way these days. Pay attention to your dreams.
The veil between life and death is very thin.

May your dreams connect you with loved ones.
May your loved ones connect you to your
power.
May your power connect you to your mortality.

Let our circle be open.

Diann L. Neu, M.Div., STM, MSW, feminist
liturgist and psychotherapist, is co-founder and
co-director of WATER.



d Be the a Darkness

a L. Neu

eternity, they are used to transmit and direct
energy. Let us pass this crystal around in
silence and connect with the energy of loved
ones who have gone before us. (*Sharing*)

Reading: "Retrospect in the Kitchen" by
Maxine Kumin, from *Our Ground Time
Here Will Be Brief*, c. 1982.

After the funeral I pick
forty pounds of plums from your tree
Earth Wizard, Limb Lopper
and carry them by DC 10
three thousand miles to my kitchen

and stand at midnight – nine o'clock
your time – on the fourth day of your death
putting some raveled things unsaid between us
into the boiling pot
of cloves, cinnamon, sugar.

Love's royal color
the burst purple fruit bob up.

Song: "Breaths" by Sweet Honey in the Rock,
from *Good News*, c. 1981.

Refrain: Listen more often to things than to
beings (2x)

'Tis the ancestors' prayer when the fire's voice
is heard.

Ritualizing Loss

By Cynthia Lapp

A few years ago, my friend and I were talking about the importance of women friends in our lives. We lamented the lack of significant contact because of our busy schedules. How, we wondered, could we find a way to experience the spiritual support and challenge we were missing? As we talked, we realized we wanted to explore our spiritual lives through the lens of ritual.

Rather quickly we assembled a group of five women who committed to meeting once a month. The format is simple. We rotate leadership. Each month the leader plans a ritual born of her spiritual journey the previous weeks.

The rituals vary. One time we danced to recover the zest in our lives. In addition to the movement, our ritual action was to eat a succulent orange and squeeze the peel into a burning candle. The sparks danced in the flame.

Another celebration marked the spring equinox. As we watched ice cubes melt in our goblets, we meditated and shared about the frozen places in our lives, the places that were awaiting the "big thaw." We drank our ice water with new commitment and appreciation.

Loss has been a major theme in my life the past two years. My mother, maternal grandmother and a cousin's two-year-old daughter died within six months of one another. A few months later I had an unexpected pregnancy and miscarriage. I was reeling.

When it was my turn to lead the group, I knew I needed to focus on the deaths. The image that I chose for the ritual was dark, tough bread. I lit two small, orb candles, one for my mother and one for the child I will never know. As we watched the candles slowly burn away, I told my story. We wept together as we relived the journey. Each woman had walked the road with me.

We broke the bread, just as the bodies of my mother and the unborn were broken. I would never have chosen for these two to die and yet in their deaths I was given food for my own journey. The phrase from Jesus' ministry, "this is my body broken for you," suddenly made a great deal of sense to me. Together we ate the bitter, dark bread - a source of sustenance which is, nevertheless, hard to chew and swallow. We cried. We laughed. We wished that my mother could have been there.

One woman asked if she could give me a gift. I stood in the center of the room while the others gathered around me. They touched my body, massaging and blessing me. Then they lifted me heavenward, toward those who were gone. And in that carrying, they were the midwives who brought me into my reclamation of life.

The ritual was not complex in its planning or execution. It was the setting aside of a time and place, and framing my experience in terms of symbols and action that created what became a truly momentous evening. I was connected with my friends, myself, my mother, the unborn and the Holy in a new way. I chose to live despite death and depression. And I was given new life.

(Reprinted with permission from the Mennonite Central Committee Women's Concerns Report, July-August 2000, report number 151)

Cynthia Lapp, MTS, is a staff member at WATER, music director at Hyattsville Mennonite Church and mother of two.

Celebrating Sally

By Ruth McDonough Fitzpatrick

Sally Hanlon is a living legend of Gospel commitment to the poor and oppressed, not only in the Washington DC area, but also in Latin America. She came to Washington DC in the seventies to be part of Tabor House, a dialogue center, hospitality house, base community and hub of activism against repression in Latin America. Whenever, wherever a translation is needed in Spanish or Portuguese, the call still goes out for Sally. Her unique handwriting, "straight to the heart" collages, hand-made cards, flyers, posters, music and songs are credited by some of her *aficionados/as* with helping to lay low powerful human rights violators.

As Sally was about to turn 65, numerous friends and admirers in the Washington area secretly organized a birthday party that will long be remembered by more than 200 friends who gathered to show appreciation for this tiny woman so filled with passion for justice and peace. A sign of the times, the party was organized and planned via email and a website set up especially for it (see www.prop1.org/sally), easily kept from her discovery because everyone knew she did not have the luxury of a computer.



Sally has a word (or many) to say with her usual animation as she translates at WATER's Shared Garden.

As a special surprise, the Festival Community/Church of the Savior in Adams Morgan presented Sally with her own computer. She nearly fell off her chair when told she also had a website waiting for her that was already up and running.

Ruth McDonough Fitzpatrick is a co-member of the Loretto Community and SAS, Sisters Against Sexism.

WATER's Words To A Special Friend

WATER presented Sally with the following declaration:

We salute no military, but we salute you for your justice-seeking work on behalf of peace.

We bow to no patriarchal church, but we bow to your goodness, love and mercy.

We praise no government that exploits its citizens, but we praise you as a model of how good people can make their own models of global community.

We thank no God who is Lord and King, but we thank the Divine Companion on whose life your own is modeled.

The world is so much better for your life, we are so rich to know you and love you. We feel privileged to work with you for the values in which you believe so fervently. May you have a long and healthy life ahead, full of friends and good cheer, justice and love.

Resources

Ackermann, Denise M. and Riet Bons-Storm, eds. **LIBERATING FAITH PRACTICES: FEMINIST PRACTICAL THEOLOGIES IN CONTEXT.** Leuven, Netherlands: Peeters, 1998 (200 pages, 980 BEF/25 Euros).

Strong insights, powerful words from an often overlooked field.

Alpert, Rebecca. **LIKE BREAD ON THE SEDER PLATE: JEWISH LESBIANS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF TRADITION.** New York: Columbia University Press, 1997 (214 pages, \$24.50).

How do Jewish lesbians find a place of welcome in their tradition? Feminist Rabbi Rebecca Alpert leads the way with keen awareness and concrete suggestions.

Arditti, Rita. **SEARCHING FOR LIFE: THE GRANDMOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO AND THE DISAPPEARED CHILDREN OF ARGENTINA.** Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (270 pages, \$17.95).

As if losing children were not bad enough, the loss of grandchildren deepens the horrors of the "dirty war" in Argentina. But there is hope as survivors bond for solidarity and change.

Beaman, Lori G. **SHARED BELIEFS, DIFFERENT LIVES: WOMEN'S IDENTITIES IN EVANGELICAL CONTEXT.** St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1999 (161 pages, \$21.99).

This volume undermines the mistaken notion that evangelical women are all of a stripe, and explains their complex, sometimes surprising ways.

Boys, Mary C. **HAS GOD ONLY ONE BLESSING? JUDAISM AS A SOURCE OF CHRISTIAN SELF-UNDERSTANDING.** Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000 (393 pages, \$29.95).

Written that Christians might reject anti-Judaism, this book is a good primer on the topic for those seeking to do interfaith work.

Camp, Rafael. **DIVA.** Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999 (98 pages, \$14.95).

Powerful poetry from a gay doctor who heals with words.

Douglas, Kelly Brown. **SEXUALITY AND THE BLACK CHURCH: A WOMANIST PERSPECTIVE.** Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999 (162 pages, \$14).

A courageous book written from and for the Black Church experience with helpful insights for all who seek to know more about sexuality. Emphasis on the way white racism constructs black sexuality is a welcome challenge.

Flinders, Carol Lee. **AT THE ROOT OF THIS LONGING: RECONCILING A SPIRITUAL HUNGER AND A FEMINIST THIRST.** New York: Harper-Collins, 1998 (369 pages, \$13).

An engaging study of spiritual options written by a trustworthy woman. Much food for the soul here, and some water!

Fuchs-Kreimer, Rabbi Nancy. **PAR-ENTING AS A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: DEEPENING ORDINARY & EXTRA-ORDINARY EVENTS INTO SACRED OCCASIONS.** Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Publishing, 1996 (183 pages, \$16.95).

Parenting is a many splendored thing, but a spiritual journey? Yes, according to this author, who instructs on how to make it so and how to make it a pleasure at the same time.

Geoffrion, Jill Kimberly Hartwell. **PRAYING THE LABYRINTH: A JOURNAL FOR SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION.** Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 1999 (112 pages, \$14.95).

Just the companion one needs for walking/praying the labyrinth. A lovely gift for friends who are just meeting this powerful prayer form.

Jantzen, Grace M. **BECOMING DIVINE: TOWARDS A FEMINIST PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.** Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1998 (296 pages, \$24.95).

A "big book" on an important topic, this comprehensive overview will invite new readers into a growing field. Philosophy of religion, like its theological counterpart, is disputed territory made accessible through this learned volume.

Johnson, Elizabeth A. **FRIENDS OF GOD AND PROPHETS: A FEMINIST THEOLOGICAL READING OF THE**

COMMUNION OF SAINTS. New York: Continuum, 1998 (299 pages, \$24.50).

If feminists are to re-imagine the divine and everything else, new models are needed. Elizabeth Johnson renews old models of friendship and companionship to ground her image of the communion of saints as a circular model of community, living and dead.

Kalven, Janet. **WOMEN BREAKING BOUNDARIES: A GRAIL JOURNEY, 1940-1995.** Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1999 (347 pages, \$19.95).

The Grail story, as told by Janet Kalven, is an inspiration and an education to all who seek to create international, justice-oriented lives and communities. This book shows how "fast women in a slow church" make all the difference. A great read about a great group!

Kolodny, Debra R., ed. **BLESSED BI SPIRIT: BISEXUAL PEOPLE OF FAITH.** New York: Continuum, 2000 (280 pages, \$24.95).

The first of its kind, this anthology spans a wide spectrum of experiences and perspectives. It is informative about a life style so often overlooked. A must for any collection on religion and sexuality. Mary Hunt's foreword, "Conjectures of a Supportive Bi-Stander," makes the link with other struggles.

Kvam, Kristen E., Linda S. Schearing and Valarie H. Ziegler, eds. **EVE & ADAM: JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND MUSLIM READINGS ON GENESIS AND GENDER.** Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999 (515 pages, \$24.95).

Myths of origin typically look backwards from where we are now to how we might have arrived here. This collection includes the many ways one story has explained a whole lot of "nows" from a range of perspectives.

Magnegold, Catherine S. **IN GLORY'S SHADOW: SHANNON FAULKNER, THE CITADEL AND A CHANGING AMERICA.** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999 (330 pages, \$26.95).

A gripping account of the unbelievably oppressive environment that has

long been a male-only bastion. What is striking is just how much the entrance of women stands to upgrade test scores and overall academic performance of a school that has created its own myths.

Mananzan, Sr. Mary John. **CHALLENGES TO THE INNER ROOM: SELECTED ESSAYS AND SPEECHES ON WOMEN.** Manila, the Philippines: Institute of Women's Studies, St. Scholastica's College, 1998 (232 pages, price not listed).

One of feminist theology's best activist scholars shares her wisdom in a variety of settings. Her insights are grounded in Asia and helpful around the world.

Meehan, Bridget Mary. **PRAYING WITH VISIONARY WOMEN.**

Franklin, WI: Sheed & Ward, 1999 (231 Pages, \$12.95).

A good, steady companion for those who seek to pray. Bridget Mary captures the essence of visionary women before her in an effective format.

Randour, Mary Lou. **ANIMAL GRACE: ENTERING A SPIRITUAL RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR FELLOW CREATURES.** Novato, CA: New World Library, 2000 (167 pages, \$20).

A must read to inform a positive, creature-affirming spirituality for ourselves and our animals. A gently persuasive volume destined to spur many people to deeper relationships with all creatures.

Ringe, Sharon H. **WISDOM'S FRIENDS: COMMUNITY AND CHRISTOLOGY IN THE FOURTH GOSPEL.** Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999 (122 pages, \$15.95).

What better images, what richer models than friendship to ground an exploration of a classic text and encourage a deeper relational life among readers?

Schneiders, Sandra M. **WITH OIL IN THEIR LAMPS: FAITH, FEMINISM, AND THE FUTURE.** Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000 (143 pages, \$7.95).

A sweeping history of the women's movements and the Catholic Church written to inform and encourage. This essay proves that the Church ignores feminism at its peril, feminism is dampened by the Church at its peril!



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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.

Mary E. Hunt and Diann L. Neu, co-founders and co-directors;
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Summertime...



...and WATER staff enjoyed it with these colleagues. Clockwise from top left: **Lanell Dike**, former WATER intern now of the Global Fund for Women, returned to work on "cultivating" WATER as well as our photo project; **Maricel Mena Lopez** from Colombia, a student from Sao Paulo, Brazil, living in Gehhausen, Germany, and **Ute Knie** of the Burckhardt Haus in Gehhausen, shared an evening with WATER staff; in Cordoba, Argentina, **Dr. Zulema Palma** and **Rev. Nellie Ritchie** attended Mary Hunt's workshop on feminist ethics sponsored by *Catolicas por el Derecho a Decidir*; **Anna Mae Mayer**, long-time WATER colleague, returned to the office for a week of work, deft pruning and good fun; **Safina Newbery** and **Estrella Furlani** hosted Mary Hunt in Buenos Aires, Argentina; **Wanda Deifelt**, WATER colleague at Escola Superior de Teologia, Sao Leopoldo, Brazil, invited Mary there to teach; center: **Diann** and **Mary** joined the stars in this closing scene, filmed in Solothurn, Switzerland, of a documentary, "Sottosopra (Upside Down)", featuring **Christiane Brunner**, **Heidi Ensner**, **Luisa Muraro** and **Marga Buhlig**, four key women in the 20th century feminist movement in Europe.