

waterwheel

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

The Feminist Art of Silence

Mary E. Hunt

A feminist theologian friend gave me a Zen gong for a special occasion. It is a small one mounted on a piece of wood, suitable for purse or backpack. When struck by its companion mallet it makes an echoing sound said to calm, clear, and focus the mind. I could not tell if it were a subtle hint to slow down and contemplate, or a response to the fact that I had already begun to do so. In any case, it was a welcome gift and I use it. Contemplative practice is a challenge for activists, but I consider it a feminist life saver and a trustworthy religious practice.

Many religious traditions have a meditative practice of one sort or another. Buddhism is perhaps best known, with its Zen practices. Vedic Hinduism is said to be the source of a great deal of meditation. Merkabah meditation in Judaism is less well known than Kabbalah but practiced. In Islam, especially in Sufism, meditation is a core practice. Christianity has its tradition of contemplatives, both in cloisters and out, who

obvious pair. On reflection, all puns intended, it seems that they are obvious soul mates.

Feminist commitment to the well-being of the world, beginning with the welfare of women and dependent children, requires ceaseless efforts to monitor and redress the countless grievances that add up to an unhealthy planet, an aggrieved people. It also requires a horizon of hope that seems obscure except when we celebrate the small victories over injustice, the periodic successes of hard work. In addition to those rare moments, there is the bottomless well of insight that contemplation taps. I have come to count on it for sustenance.

One effort at communal contemplation and the kind of dialogue that springs from it is "Engaging Impasse," a series of three weekends of meditation and discussion, www.engagingimpasse.org. Those who are involved, founder Nancy Sylvester writes, "believe that God is profoundly present, even if hidden, in the darkness and pain of the impasse. That is why we are engaging in a

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meditate on everything from the rosary to biblical verses. Whatever the form, this interspiritual discipline is a popular way to involve body as well as spirit, to recalibrate one's being in a busy world.

One Buddhist group in Washington, DC, offers several choices—"Simply Meditate," "Losing Control," "Praying for World Peace"—that draw lots of people. So, like most of the rest of religion, meditation is not one-size-fits-all. Feminism and meditation are not an

process that opens ourselves to the divine energy that may spark new imagination and new ways of being and acting." I think she is right.

More than 250 women in groups of 10-20 have completed that process. They, indeed we, are bringing the insights to our respective work places and communities. For example, I find I use silence in my teaching, inviting students to take a few moments of quiet

(Continued on page 2)

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Editorial

Sexism is so yesterday, so 20th century, so over as to seem almost retro when it rears its ugly head. Countless times this season as Hillary Rodham Clinton has sought the Democratic nomination for President of the United States unspeakable misogyny has accompanied her on the campaign trail. Racism follows Barack Obama as well, another disgraceful reminder that we who value equality have work to do. Racism is simply unacceptable with anti-racism work underway in many corporations, non-profits, schools, and religious communities.

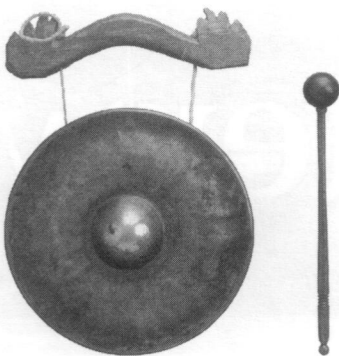
Some young women recently inquired about anti-sexism training. They were pleased to be involved in and serious about anti-racism efforts. In fact, many women's groups are doing the same. But they could not name nor locate an anti-sexism training. Yet they felt the need for it as they began to encounter sexism in the workplace, among even some of their peers, not to mention in institutions as was obvious during the recent visit of Pope Benedict XVI to the United States. Few if any women appeared in his official entourage, on the altar with him even to hold his glasses, much less among the expert commentators. Let anti-sexism trainings begin in earnest.

Nonprofits by law do not engage in party politics nor endorse candidates. What WATER endorses is fair play, just treatment, and evaluating people on their merits. On those grounds, sexism and racism are both losers, and the people who want to eradicate them are the winners.



WATER's Online Library

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Like the small gong that makes the loud, resonant sound, disproportionate to its size and having deep impact, I think all of us—children too, with coaching—will find that a little silence goes a long way toward helping bring about justice.

The Feminist Art...

(Continued from page 1)

together before launching into discussion. It makes a positive difference in the quality of our interaction. At a minimum, it gives me time to focus my own thinking.

Fifty of those who "engaged impasse" reconvened on leap year weekend 2008, for a "Quantum Leap." It was an extension of the impasse experience, a way to link people and move forward. The actual "leap" was not like jumping off a building and hoping for a soft landing. That would be the Superman model, too macho, too individual, too glitzy. Instead, it was more like "Thelma and Louise," riding into the future, together.

We did not proclaim a manifesto, create a new organization, or develop a blueprint for solving the world's woes. We did not agree to any least common denominators. Rather, we deepened in connection with one another. We looked at our next steps in light of "we," not just "I." We accompanied one another as we "paid attention" to Earth, the Divine, and the Human Community, something that Simone Weil said in *Waiting On God* could be done by everyone. We prayed and pondered. We sang and danced with abandon. We encountered one another in small groups, at table, in individual conversations out of which the sparks of new connections and rekindled relationships alike lit the way.

We gradually came to realize—as clusters of needs, interests, and commitments began to take shape and conversations became more focused, more intentional, more practical in the best sense—that we were living the leap. When we heard the various reports from working groups, there was nothing earth shattering—thank heavens, as we were there to build up, not shatter, Earth!—but so much that mattered: new insights into spirituality; how to bring meditation and dialogue to our local communities; justice work that responds to the urgencies of our day with calm, sustained, reflective efforts; education of parents and children

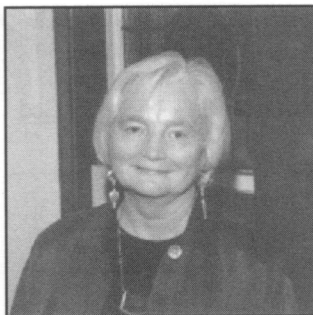
shaped by the realities of poverty and violence yet infused with new images and models for living/learning in right relation; leadership, especially in religious communities, that is grounded in contemplation as a springboard for justice; focusing the intentional energies of our collective, along with those of other groups, to create a new, peaceful context, particularly during the U.S. elections. There is simply a different way we are together and it helps to further a feminist justice agenda. At a minimum it keeps us in the struggle.

I began a monthly meditation group at WATER this year. While not noted for my liturgy and ritual skills (that distinction on our team goes to Diann Neu whose many creative liturgies are used throughout the world), I decided to start the group because I wanted to extend communal meditation and dialogue to my own setting. The group meets for tea and conversation at 7 PM, convenes at 7:30, and is out the door by 8:30. For that hour we ring the gong, listen to music, ponder a short text, and engage in silent contemplation for 25 minutes. When the gong sounds again we turn our attention back to the circle, discuss briefly the fruit of our time, and then go into the night. There is a sense as we leave that we are each refreshed, and, hokey as it sounds, we are connected. It is simple and simply good.

I always feel a bit of an amateur at prayer given the years of experience that so many of my friends, especially those who have been part of religious communities, have spent perfecting their techniques. Like the small gong that makes the loud, resonant sound, disproportionate to its size and having deep impact, I think all of us—children too, perhaps, with coaching—will find that a little silence goes a long way toward helping bring about justice. Feel free to give it a try.

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

WATER Proclaims International Feminist Holiday 17 April 2008



Happy 70th Birthday Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza!

Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, feminist theologian and biblical scholar, celebrates her 70th birthday on April 17, 2008. On this auspicious occasion, the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) proclaims an International Feminist Holiday to be celebrated throughout the world. Let women, men, and children on every continent find special ways to honor Elisabeth's contribution to scholarship in the service of justice.

Let there be feasting and libations — BREAD NOT STONE.
Let there be lively discussion — SHARING HER WORD.
Let there be challenges to kyriarchy — THE POWER OF NAMING.
Let there be diligent study — SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.
Let there be empire collapse — THE POWER OF THE WORD.
Let there be dancing for joy at women's power and love — IN MEMORY OF HER.
Let there be spiritual renewal — WISDOM WAYS.

Join us in celebration.

Treat yourself to some special time.

Donate to your favorite feminist charity.

Hug a feminist friend; hold a child's hand.

Write a letter to a newspaper or elected official protesting injustice.

Study, write, and teach feminist issues.

Lift a glass for Elisabeth and all who struggle to live as "a discipleship of equals."

Summer Forum 2008

Thirty doctoral students and junior faculty will gather June 15-20, 2008 at Cathedral College in Washington, DC for a Summer Forum, *Feminist Theologies: Heritage and Future*, co-sponsored by Feminist Studies in Religion and WATER. This year's faculty—Katie Cannon, Mary E. Hunt, Judith Plaskow, Kwok Pui-lan, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, and Deborah Whitehead—will focus "Making the Connections: Claiming Our Past—Envisioning Our Future Together."

An overwhelming response—more than ninety international, interreligious applicants—made clear that more such programs are greatly needed. We envision this program as a pilot for future forums.

On Wednesday, June 18, at 7 PM the Summer Forum will have an open session to which ALL are invited (Cathedral College, 3510 Woodley Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20016). Faculty will speak on religion in the public forum; Mari Castellanos of the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries will respond.

A reception will follow. Please join us!
RSVP by June 11 to annabeth@hers.com
as space is limited.

WATER Internships Summer 2008

*Become part of a community
where feminism, religion,
and social justice intersect.*

WATER is accepting applications for internships this summer. We offer exciting possibilities for college and graduate students, as well as for other qualified applicants. Internships run for a minimum of six weeks, during the period between May 19 and July 25, 2008. Interns work in the WATER office, learn with the WATER staff, and enjoy all that Washington, DC, has to offer, especially during an election year!

For more information and an application, visit WATER's Web site, contact Anna at annabeth@hers.com or 301.589.2509.

In Memory of Her, and Him

From Anna Roeschley of WATER:
In honor of Jenna L. Liechty.

From WATER and Pat Barry, Quincy, MA:
In memory of Dottie Conceison.

From Cecelia A. Loomer, St. Louis, MO:
In honor of Wanelda Martinmaas.

From Pastor Amy Nyman, Rockford, IL:
In honor of R. Kent Walker, Presbyterian pastor
and husband of Pat Walker, Machesney Park, IL.

From Roseanne Shveima, Bartlesville, OK:
In memory of Anne Fitzpatrick.

From Genevieve O'Hara, St. Louis, MO:
In honor of the Ruma O'Hara sisters.

From Madeline Jervis, Arlington, VA:
In honor of Mary Foulke (her daughter) on her
45th birthday (11/26/07).

From Anne Sayre, Tucker, GA:
In honor of Minnie Cathey and Mary Pardu.

From Mary Margaret Flynn and Laurie McLaughlin, Concord, NC: In honor of Mary J. Flynn.

From Sr. Nancy Sylvester, IHM, Detroit, MI:
In honor of Deborah LaFontaine and Carol Reeb, SSND, who faced the impasses of their lives with courage and grace.

From Cynthia Lapp and Eric Stoltzfus, Mt. Rainier, MD; Barbara Steinberg, Owings Mills, MD; Mary Brewster, Laurel, MD:
In memory of Deb LaFontaine.

From Mary Ramey Croft and Alan Croft, Huber Heights, OH: In memory of Lance Corporal Maria Lauterbach and her unborn child, Gabriel Joseph.

From Margee Adams Iddings, Alexandria, VA:
In memory of Mary Florence (Flo) Hill, a dear mentor from the Silver Spring Presbyterian Congregation.

From Laura Bernstein of WATER: In memory of Betty Dent, a warm-hearted friend who for years fed birds and stray cats in her Silver Spring neighborhood. She will be missed.

From WATER: In memory of Kathleen Kennedy of Harrisburg, PA, a strong supporter of WATER.

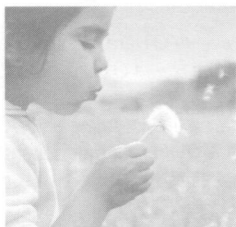
From Joe Scinto, Rockville, MD: In memory of Marcus Benjamin of Melbourne, Australia, a man who had respect for women and believed in the work of WATER. He will be missed by many, and in a special way by me.

From Mary Hunt, Diann Neu and WATER staff: In memory of Marcus Benjamin, a wonderful friend who proved that all feminists are not women.

WATER co-director Diann Neu is working currently on prayers and meditations for "Seasons of Compassion: Resources for Companions of Those in Need of Healing," the third packet of prayers in the "Seasons" series. The following "Prayers of Compassion" have been developed for "Seasons of Compassion."

As we face the grief, pain, and suffering from our own life journey, we are being trained to have more compassion for ourselves, for those we meet each day, and for every corner of the wounded world.

May these prayers call you to compassion.



Listen to Compassionate People

"If you send forth love to others, you will receive in return the reflection of that love; and you will shine a light that will brighten the darkness of the time we live in."

—*Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, USA*

"When you begin to touch your heart or let your heart be touched, you begin to discover that it's bottomless, that it doesn't have any resolution, that this heart is huge, vast, and limitless."

—*Pema Chodron, South Africa*

"If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion."

—*Dalai Lama, Tibet*

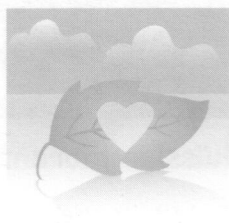
"I have just three things to teach: simplicity, patience, compassion. These three are your greatest treasures."

—*Lao Tzu, China*

"It's compassion that makes gods of us."

—*Dorothy Gilman, The Tightrope Walker*

"The love of our neighbor in all its fullness simply means being able to say, 'What are you going through?'"
—*Simone Weil, Waiting for God*



Breathing Compassion

Pray slowly,
with focused attention
in your heart
as you send forth
love and healing.

Breathe in compassion.
Breathe out mercy and love.

Focus on yourself.

(Repeat this breathing pattern three times.)

Breathe in compassion.
Breathe out mercy and love.

Picture your heart
full of peace and
loving kindness.

Focus on someone for whom you feel
loving kindness.

(Repeat this breathing pattern three times.)

Breathe in compassion.
Breathe out mercy and love.

Picture your loved one
in your heart,
embraced by your peace
and loving kindness.

Focus on the entire world.

(Repeat this breathing pattern three times.)

Breathe in compassion.
Breathe out mercy and love.

Picture the entire world
in your heart,
embraced by your peace
and loving kindness.



A Meditation for Compassion

May love and compassion fill me.

Prayers for Diann

May I share love and compassion
with another person.

May I share love and compassion
with all living beings,

That love and compassion
may increase and bring peace.



The Compassion Circle

Sit quietly,
close your eyes,
and for a minute or two
concentrate on the word
"compassion."

Write the word
"compassion"
in the
center
of the circle above.

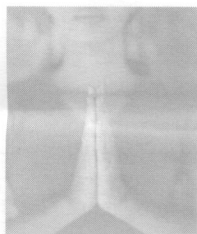
What comes to mind
when you imagine
yourself being
compassionate?

What are your
associations with
compassion?

Write them
in the compassion circle
or around the word
compassion.

Compassion

L. Neu



Breath Prayers

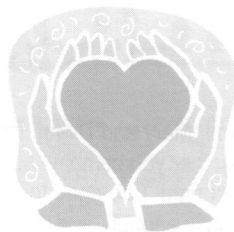
* Choose a beginning and inhale:

Gracious God
Breath of Peace
Holy Spirit
Compassionate One
Divine Wisdom
Ruach Elohim (roo-ahch el-o-heem,
which means "Spirit of God")
Yahweh

* Choose according to your need and exhale:

Fill me with your...
Presence.
Peace.
Love.
Compassion.
Hope.

Cleanse my soul.
Ease my pain.
Lift me up.
Be with me.



Practicing Tonglen

Tonglen is a Buddhist practice of taking on,
through compassion, the sufferings of another
and then giving the other, through compassion,
peace and healing.

Practicing Tonglen for a loved one can open
you to the circle of compassion.

Sit quietly and feel compassion fill your heart.
Imagine someone who is suffering coming
toward you, perhaps a friend who is dying.

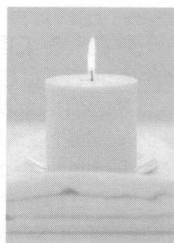
Sit quietly with her/his story.

Breathe in her/his suffering and pain.

Try to create openness, softness,
spaciousness or welcome inside yourself
so that you are able to receive
her/his story with your whole self,
not just your mind or heart.

Breathe out a sense of peace, calm, relief for
your friend who is dying.

Breathe in the suffering and pain.
Breathe out peace, calm, relief.



Light a Candle

Lighting a candle is a spiritual practice in many
traditions. The flame is often seen as a sign of
Divine presence. Candles are common at
dinner tables, in places of worship, on special
days like birthdays, and for times of prayer.

As you pray, choose a candle
that matches your feelings.

Think about the meaning of the color and
candle, for example, "As I light this white
candle from Mom's wake, I unite my spirit with
hers," or, "With this blue candle
I bring healing to myself."

Begin or end your day by lighting a candle. The
light can symbolize the strength available to
you in difficult times or your thankfulness for
blessings in your life. It can connect you to
your loved one or friend.

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

Order Form



"Seasons of Healing: Journaling and Resources"

38 prayer cards focusing on
journal writing for healing

And



"Seasons of Survival: Prayers and Rituals for Women with Cancer"

30 prayer cards to aid healing

☐ Send me ____ (no.) packets of
"Seasons of Healing" Prayer Cards
@ \$10 each + \$2 shipping & handling,
or 5 packets for \$45 + \$5 S&H.

☐ Send me ____ (no.) packets of
"Seasons of Survival" Prayer Cards
@ \$10 each + \$2 shipping & handling,
or 5 packets for \$45 + \$5 S&H.

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Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

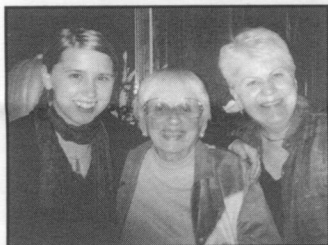
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Save time, energy, postage, and paper—try it out today. Go to www.hers.com/water, click the "Donate" button at the top and then the orange "Donate" button. We hope to have all of our resources available for online purchase soon, so be on the lookout!



Anna Roeschley, Janet Kalven and Diann Neu at Women Church Convergence, '07, Cincinnati OH.



Lucia Ramon Carbonell, Geraldina Cespedes Ulloa and Mary Hunt at the Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network, Nov '07, San Diego, CA.



Liturgical breads and drinks from the workshop "Feminist Ministries that Do Justice" that Mary E. Hunt and Diann L. Neu led for the MCC Women in Ministry Conference, February '08, Sarasota, FL.

Words from the Alliance

Thank you, Mary and Diann, for your latest issue of *Waterwheel*, and all the work you are doing. Together you combine scholarship, enthusiasm and commitment to life—truly a life-giving spring! Bob and I try to do our part by supporting a girls' orphanage in Haiti, which keeps us busy enough, and we rely on your efforts to keep abreast of womens' issues. The insert "Prayers for Living" by Diann is something I will keep.

—Adele DellaValle-Rauth, and Bob, my best feminist friend, concurs, Huddleston, VA

I am thinking of the Network of Women's Networks meeting at WATER in '06, the Feminist Liberation Theologians' Network at the AAR, and being with all those marvelous women from around the world. I will be with you all in spirit this year. Am so glad Coralie Ling will be there to bring home details (and gossip of course!).

You two do such a wonderful job keeping all these movements moving, as well as running WATER, and everything else—and keeping up friendships around the world.

—Gwen Benjamin, Melbourne, Australia

Become a WATERcarrier

WATERcarrier, n., one who gives assistance; an ally, teammate, colleague, supporter, collaborator, benefactor, sustainer; a source of strength; one who empowers

Consider becoming a monthly WATERcarrier donor to celebrate WATER's 25th Anniversary. In addition to providing a steady stream of support to our feminist community working for social and religious change, you also:

- Benefit from the convenience of donating monthly, quarterly, or as you are able.
- Decrease your eco-footprint by minimizing the number of mailings sent.
- Enhance your contribution as more of it goes directly to our programs!
- Remember women who have changed the world with our Calendar.

If you are interested in adding to the stream of feminists "carrying" the work of WATER, please call 301.589.2509 or email water@hers.com today, or simply mail in the following reply form. We greatly look forward to hearing from you!

WATERcarrier Monthly Giving Enrollment Form

Dear Mary, Diann, and the WATER community,

✓ Yes! I accept your invitation to become a charter WATERcarrier to celebrate WATER's 25th Anniversary. Here is my tax-deductible monthly gift of:

☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 or ☐ \$_____.

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☐ Credit Card. I prefer to pay by credit card each month. (Go to www.hers.com/water, click the "Donate" button at the top and then the orange "Donate" button.)

☐ Please sign me up for WATER email.

☐ Please send monthly donation envelopes.

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Aldredge-Clanton, Jann. *INCLUSIVE HYMNS FOR LIBERATING CHRISTIANS*. Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 2006 (196 pages, \$21.95).

Many familiar tunes made new with refreshingly inclusive words make this hymnal an easy next step for those who have a healthy allergy to the old "father-lord-ruler-king" language. Now the excuse "But we love the old music" is put to rest.

Baker-Fletcher, Karen. *DANCING WITH GOD: THE TRINITY FROM A WOMANIST PERSPECTIVE*. Danvers, MA: Chalice Press, 2006 (196 pages, \$26.99).

As much a work of spirituality as theology, this womanist approach to the Trinity is grounded in the violence and injustice that permeate society. Finding an incarnate divine and a womanish Mary to counter such oppression is a useful project done with style in this book.

Boucher, Sandy. *DANCING IN THE DHARMA: THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF RUTH DENISON*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2005 (254 pages, \$25.95).

Trusted guide Sandy Boucher offers an insightful and thorough biography of Ruth Denison, the first woman to lead an all-women's retreat in Buddhism in the West. Much of what has become the feminist impact on Buddhism can be traced to Denison's influence.

Bozzuti-Jones, Mark Francisco. *THE MITER FITS JUST FINE: A STORY ABOUT THE RT. REV. BARBARA CLEMENTINE HARRIS*. Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 2003 (86 pages, \$10.95).

The Anglican Communion was lucky to have Barbara Harris as its first woman bishop. Her story, told in this book for young readers as well as for adults, is inspiring and refreshing.

Goldman, Paula, Editor. *IMAGINING OURSELVES: GLOBAL VOICES FROM A NEW GENERATION OF WOMEN*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2006 (239 pages, \$26.95).

The question to hundreds of young women was "What defines your generation of women?" Read this creative, multifaceted book for some answers. It is a new world but with some recognizable problems that this generation is hard at work resolving.

Resources

Guest, Deryn, Robert E. Goss, Mona West, and Thomas Bohache, Editors. *THE QUEER BIBLE COMMENTARY*. London, England: SCM Press, 2006 (859 pages, \$69.99).

Ever wonder what the Bible says about things queer? Top flight scholars take it on chapter and verse, leaving no doubt that queer biblical studies has come into its own. Invest in this book to engage in the scriptural discussions well prepared.

Halteman, Reta Finger and Kari Sandhaas, Editors. *THE WISDOM OF DAUGHTERS: TWO DECADES OF THE VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FEMINISM*. Philadelphia, PA: Innisfree Press, Inc., 2001 (269 pages, \$17.95).

Daughters of Sarah was an invaluable resource for Christian feminism of an evangelical persuasion. This edited collection of some of its highlights is a testament to its power and wisdom.

Hidalgo, Myra L. *SEXUAL ABUSE AND THE CULTURE OF CATHOLICISM: HOW PRIESTS AND NUNS BECAME PERPETRATORS*. New York: The Haworth Maltreatment and Trauma Press, 2007 (136 pages, \$14.95).

An insightful look at the institutional culture of Catholicism that focuses on sexual abuse by nuns and priests. Research on female perpetrators is emerging. That abuse is not of clerical power as such, but the transgression of professional boundaries crossed by those who are in positions of authority such as teachers or therapists, spiritual directors or nurses. As this author makes clear, it all needs to end.

Kaschak, Ellyn, Editor. *THE INVISIBLE ALLIANCE: PSYCHE AND SPIRIT IN FEMINIST THERAPY*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, 2001 (217 pages, \$24.95).

Few resources exist that get at the psyche/spirit combination with nuanced feminist understandings. These essays include anti-racism analysis, use of ritual, and other techniques for dealing with issues.

Monda, Barbara J. *REJOICE, BELOVED WOMEN: THE PSALMS REVISIONED*. Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2004 (175 pages, \$12.95).

The female—not feminine—language and imagery used in these

prayers make them wonderfully accessible. Try praying them on a regular basis and appreciate the beauty. This is a ritual resource to share widely.

Ogden, Gina. *THE HEART AND SOUL OF SEX: MAKING THE ISIS CONNECTION*. Boston, MA: Trumpeter Books, 2006 (223 pages, \$22.95).

At last someone actually has reliable data to show what women think about sex and spirit. Gina Ogden is a well respected researcher whose careful, caring approach to women's well-being makes her new ISIS model worthy of attention.

Ress, Mary Judith. *ECOFEMINISM IN LATIN AMERICA: WOMEN FROM THE MARGINS*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006 (243 pages, \$28.00).

Judy Ress catalogues the remarkable development of ecofeminism in Latin America, contending that for many women it is the logical successor to or extension of liberation theology. She brings to print wonderful women, using their words and their lives to make her point that post-patriarchal, eco-sustaining life is emerging.

Shiva, Vandana. *EARTH DEMOCRACY: JUSTICE, SUSTAINABILITY, AND PEACE*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005 (205 pages, \$15.00).

The worsening global situation demands this kind of critical feminist attention. Vandana Shiva's is a trusted, prophetic voice. Her scientific acumen and her fearless analysis warrant attention.

Soelle, Dorothee. *THE MYSTERY OF DEATH*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007 (146 pages, \$15.00).

"I believe in life after death, the life that continues after my individual death. I believe in the peace that will perhaps exist one day when I am long dead; I believe in justice and joy." Dorothee Soelle makes clear that thinking about death in individual terms is pointless, but seeing us connected makes all the sense in the world. A rich read.

Trelstad, Marit, Editor. *CROSS EXAMINATIONS: READINGS ON THE MEANING OF THE CROSS TODAY*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006 (320 pages, \$20.00).

The many ways the cross can be interpreted make for fascinating comparative reading. This is a compendium of contextual theologies.

For Young People

Künzler-Behncke, Rosemarie, with illustrations by Ulises Wensell. *WHERE IN THE WORLD IS GOD?* Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003 (24 pages, \$8.95).

The answer is everywhere, of course. These precious prayers by little ones make a sweet little book to cuddle up with while holding a child. The pictures are wonderful, the diversity of children welcome.

Santucci, Barbara. *ANNA'S CORN*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2002 (32 pages, \$16.00).

How beautiful—a little girl and her farmer grandfather share the corn harvest. He dies and she finally plants the seeds bequeathed to her. A touching tale, good lesson, lovely.

Smith, Maureen Theresa. *FIRST MOON: CELEBRATION & SUPPORT FOR A GIRL'S GROWING-UP JOURNEY*. Novato, CA: New World Library, 2005 (160 pages, \$24.95).

First menstruation is always memorable. Make it more so by preparing with this kit—a book, a journal, a chart, stickers, even a keepsake box to store it all. The moon is a many splendored thing as a girl becomes a woman.

Media

LIGHT OF CHANGE (DVD), United Church of Christ Resources, (\$20 plus S&H).

This DVD captures a historic performance event, the "Mix in '06," starring Carrie Newcomer, Bernice Johnson Reagon, and Holly Near. This concert was given at a first-time gathering of women from the United Church of Christ and Christian Church, June 2006. To order search catalogue www.unitedchurchpress.com.

BIRDPSALMS. \$20. Additional copies \$15. snaparts@aol.com.

Birdpsalms is a collection of about 20 poems written by Rev. Nancy Wilson, moderator (presiding Bishop) of Metropolitan Community Churches. Her partner, Dr. Paula Schoenwether, a wildlife and nature photographer, has put together a book on CD. The poems are narrated by Wilson; Schoenwether's bird photographs complement the presentation.



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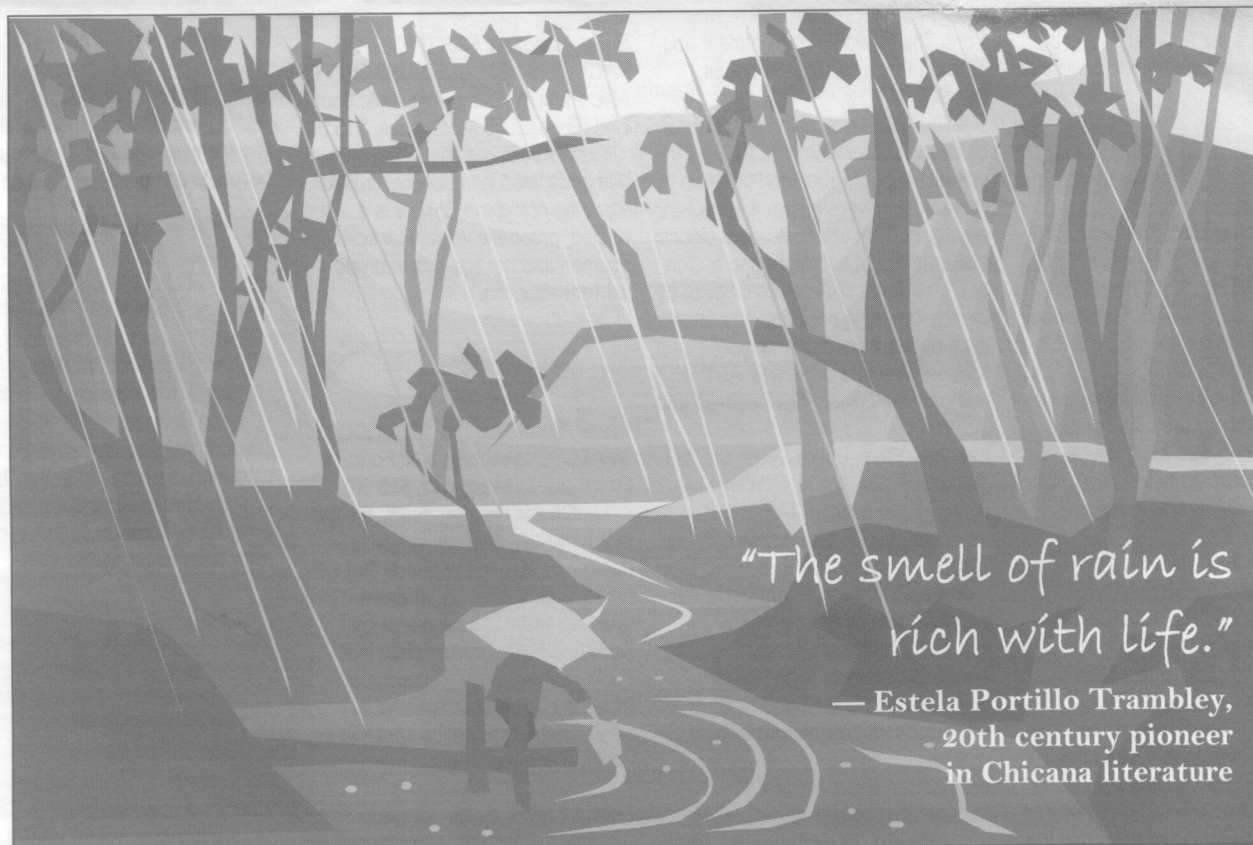
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The Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual (WATER) is a unique educational center in the Washington, DC, area that focuses on feminist work in religion. Since our founding in 1983, WATER has built a growing network of colleagues around the world who bring feminist insights to religious practice in the service of social change. WATER has a national and international reputation for quality research, publications, conferences, and direct services related to feminist issues in religion. Through workshops, rituals, seminars, retreats, and classes designed to promote women as religious and moral agents, WATER staff help many women, men, and children actualize feminist religious values and bring about social change. If you would like to subscribe for updates from the office and occasional news from colleagues in the field, go to www.hers.com/water. Under "Join," click the listserve link on the right-hand side.

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*"The smell of rain is
rich with life."*

— Estela Portillo Trambley,
20th century pioneer
in Chicana literature

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