

The Witness

Volume 76 • Number 3 • March 1993



"Be ye perfect"

From perfectionism to prophecy

Prince of Peace

A COUPLE YEARS AGO my mother gave me a subscription to *The Witness*. She was hoping I would see there are progressive Episcopalians and a place for me in the church. I had left the church in 1967 because women couldn't be priests. At the time she gave me the magazine, it was still being published out of Philadelphia, the diocese in which I was raised.

I like the magazine. I admire its willingness to take stands on all kinds of issues and I've learned of struggles not covered in the mass media. But after about a year of reading *The Witness* I found myself crying whenever I tried to read the magazine. Sometimes the tears began when I picked up my copy before I even opened its pages. I realized I needed to delve into my feelings about my past relationship with the Episcopal Church.

As a radical I am hard put to find anything wrong with this magazine. I do not cry because it has failed to address controversial issues or held back from taking unpopular stands. I cry because two of the older contributors were early role models for me. The younger ones are who and what I'd wanted to be. I cry because "except for the grace of God, there go I." At these times it does not feel like "grace" to be outside this community of radical Episcopalians.

Mine is an old wound, an old hurt. I mourn for the girl child who wanted to serve in the priesthood, but was told she could not because she was not a man. I mourn for the daughter whose father wanted one of his sons to be a priest.

**Chude Pam
Allen
San Francisco,
CA**

YOUR ATTEMPT TO further the public discourse about the sexual behavior of clergy in your December issue fell flat on its face. Holly Bridges Elliott's "Sexually Assaulted by the Shepherd" [12/92] was silly and propagandistic. The encounter of Miriam with her bishop is the encounter of a socially inept naïf and a grossly incompetent professional. The

selection of such highly peculiar examples only serves to remove the case from the experience of most everyone else.

The purported victim, Miriam, is portrayed as a social retard and an hysteric with a psycho-sexual development level of four to six years old. Her response to the troubling experience of her bishop coming on to her sexually is to "hate the church and all male clergy." Such a response is understandable in a person of stunted emotional development. The alien tongue-thrust which she experienced from the bishop is taken by her as a heinous violation of her integrity. Furthermore it is understood by her as an act fully extraneous to her own being. Anyone knows that without cooperation the feat of inserting a tongue into the mouth of another person borders on the impossible. We are told that the bishop's flirtation with her even to the point of physical contact had been going on for some time. It is quite difficult to flirt with another person over an extended period of time without some degree of cooperation.

In fact Miriam's profound ambivalence is so extreme and so transparent as to be startling, as it must have been to the bishop. After the psychic trauma of the unexpected tongue-thrust Miriam then takes herself to a private meeting in a deserted office with her assailant. When he pointedly locks her in his office, thwarting her attempt to leave, her next move is to respond positively to his request for a hug. Only after he will not loosen his grip on her but fondles, kisses and threatens rape, does she free herself and escape. Miriam's lack of boundaries and lack of awareness of her part in a complex courtship is astonishing.

As for the bishop, it might seem incredible that a man of such interpersonal clumsiness and unawareness could reach such an exalted position of leadership in a respectable church. His interpersonal skills and psycho-sexual development would be considered inadequate even for an unpracticed early adolescent.

We know that such persons actually exist and that they have a special knack for finding each other. Their troubles hardly represent the typical moral problems that sexuality presents to clergy and their parishioners.

Problematic issues in sexual relationships are plentiful these days. Few of such problems lend themselves to simple black and

white resolution. The Elliott article did not deepen or broaden the discussion. It only furthered the worst aspects of feminist propaganda.

The Marie Fortune school of Simplified Sex Ethics, which Elliott follows, is based on two simple principles: (1) Determine which heterosexual possesses the phallus and you have determined the culprit; and (2) relate the story in such a way that the guilty are fully guilty and the innocent are totally innocent. Such propagandistic formulas are a disservice to those seeking clarity and justice in matters of sexual ethics in the religious community.

**Raymond J. Lawrence, Jr.
New York, NY**

OVER THE LAST EIGHT OR MORE years, I have attempted to provide a safer place for reconciliation to begin for people who have been sexually exploited, abused, or harassed by members of the clergy. The first type of reconciliation people are seeking is personal, between themselves and the alleged offender. The second is between themselves and the church, and the third is between themselves and God. The article, "Sexually Assaulted by the Shepherd" by Holly Elliott [12/92] dealt primarily with the first need for reconciliation, although each need does meld into the other.

In her article, Elliott mentioned that there was only one case where the alleged abuser did not admit to the action of which he was accused. Later psychiatric evaluation in that case did show that he could have done what she had said he did to her. And this knowledge did help her reconcile her feelings toward the offender.

But lest your readers are left with the impression that these "meetings" all produce reconciliation just because the alleged abuser admits to the behavior, this is far from true. The most important ingredient, if church reconciliation is to take place in these meetings, is that all those involved in attempting the reconciliation, especially the judicatory head, are not abusers themselves. Reconciliation can not and will not happen within the walls of the church unless the person who has authority and responsibility for discipline and acknowledging truth is also a safe, non-ex-

ploiting person.

Church reconciliation, the ability to embrace the church again as a safe system for the victim, over and against personal reconciliation (between the alleged abuser and victim) is not possible when the judicatory head is exploiting, abusing, and/or harassing. I have no way of knowing ahead of time whether the judicatory head is exploiting, but now, instead of warning the person that the judicatory head might not be able to respond out of shock or ignorance, I warn people asking for these meetings that the judicatory head might not be able to respond appropriately because he or she may also have been an offender.

Margo Maris
Minneapolis, MN

JULIE WORTMAN'S INTERVIEW with the Rev. Marie Fortune on the subject of clergy sexual abuse was timely and superb.

I was disappointed, however, that in Fortune's model of the church intimacy would be banished in favor of an emphasis on mission. This preference entails, in my view, an ethical evasion, a refusal to define what expressions of intimacy are *objectionable* in the Christian context and, more important, why.

At some point, when the church has stopped running scared before the prospect of million-dollar legal judgments, it will have to attend to the question of intimacy. Until it does, subtly anti-sexual strands of feminist thought and the fear of intimacy will combine to dominate the church's discussion of appropriate sexual conduct.

Reginald G. Blaxton
Washington, DC

HOLLY ELLIOTT'S ARTICLE [12/92] is much appreciated by both of us. It does put a different perspective on our criticism of "War Rape" as we are learning so much in "other" countries about its "justification."

Lloyd and Thelma Houser
Columbus, OH

THE DECEMBER ISSUE WAS, in my mind, by far the best since I have been reading *The Witness* over the last several years. It spoke to my major concern more powerfully than anything I have read.

My appreciation for your planned layout,

as well as the stories of wrestling with Christ's ideals in today's world.

Marcia W.A. Dane
Lexington, MA

PAMELA DARLING'S ARTICLE "Critiquing Collegiality" [12/92] has given the church a great prophetic gift! She faithfully and succinctly identified the inconsistency in the actions taken by the House of Bishops for decades. She calls our bishops to a vision of perceiving the blessed opportunity of their diversity "to teach the church and the world something about co-existing with 'the other' in love."

Mary Eunice Oliver
San Diego, CA

HAVEN'T SEEN AN ISSUE of *The Witness* since the early 60s: the December issue was *great*—many vast improvements, or, I should say, expansions. Please sign me up for '93.

Sheldon Flory
Naples, NY

I'VE MANAGED TO LOSE my subscription renewal envelope/form. I'm glad I resubscribed last year, even though I haven't kept up with reading them all. I appreciate your work and the sips of spiritual sustenance I take from your pages. Thanks.

Kurt Klingbeil
Vegreville, Alberta

REGARDING YOUR DECEMBER COVER — I am comforted knowing the child the Savior can be born in the midst of burning cities, troubled times. Would Fritz Eichenberg today have a child of color like Jesus born in Somalia, in El Salvador, in Guatemala, in Germany and elsewhere where there is no room in the inn still? (I realize Eichenberg is deceased.)

I love the new look of *The Witness*. I have for years welcomed each issue; now I can't wait for the next copy.

Cookie Anderson
Milwaukee, WI

Witness Praise

YOUR MAGAZINE TELLS A SIDE I don't usually read about and is exciting to say the

least. I look forward to mature reading and to a long lasting relationship with you.

Jonathan Young
New York, NY

I HAVE SUBSCRIBED to *The Witness* off and on over the years. Often I have been dismayed with what often seemed a scatter-gun and sometimes shallow treatment of issues. Not so the last issue [12/92]. So I need to get a subscription to see what you have done.

David Brower
Southgate, MI

I AM HAPPY TO SUPPORT your excellent publication. Thank you for not bombarding me with renewal notices. You are able to recognize a person's willingness to renew if she feels the need to keep informed.

Carole Jan Lee
San Francisco, CA

Book Appeal

BOOKS ARE URGENTLY NEEDED. Please help us establish a woman's center in the patriarchal wasteland of eastern Montana where shotguns are still mounted in the backseats of pickups and the sodomy law is still in effect. We are creating a resource center and desperately need good solid feminist books for our reading room. It is important work to have feminism filter down and up in the grass roots as well as urban and academic areas. Education is needed in rural America. We don't have a bookstore or adequate library. Help rural women by cleaning out your bookshelves of feminist books, periodicals, and send to Rev. Judith Schenck, S. Star Rt. 289-1, Nashua, Mt. 59248.

Judith Schenck
Nashua, MT

The Witness welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate correspondence of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, Mich. 48226-1868 (fax: 313-962-1012).

THE WITNESS

Since 1917

Editor/publisher Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann
Assistant Editors Marianne Arbogast
Julie A. Wortman
Promotion Manager Marietta Jaeger
Magazine Production Maria Catalfo
Book Review Editor Bill Wylie-Kellermann
Poetry Editor Gloria House
Art Section Editors Virginia Maksymowicz
Blaise Tobia
Accounting Roger Dage

Contributing Editors

Barbara C. Harris H. Coleman McGehee
Carter Heyward J. Antonio Ramos
James Lewis William Rankin
Manning Marable Dorothee Sölle
Walter Wink

Episcopal Church Publishing Co.

Board of Directors

President Douglas Theuner
Chair Andrew McThenia
Vice-Chair Nan Arrington Peete
Secretary Pamela W. Darling
Treasurer Robert Eckersley

Maria Aris-Paul
Mary Alice Bird
Reginald Blaxton
Quentin Kolb
William R. MacKaye
Richard Shimpfky
Seiichi Michael Yasutake

The Witness (ISSNO 197-8896) is published ten times annually with combined issues in June/July and January/February. *The Witness* is indexed in *Religious and Theological Abstracts* and the American Theological Library Association's *Religion Index One Periodicals*. University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Mich., 48106, reproduces this publication in microform: microfiche and 16mm or 35mm film. Printed in U.S.A. Copyright 1993. SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$20 per year, \$2.50 per copy. Foreign subscriptions add \$5 per year.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please advise of changes at least 6 weeks in advance. Include your mailing label from the magazine and send to Marietta Jaeger.

MANUSCRIPTS: *The Witness* welcomes unsolicited manuscripts and artwork, but will return them only if a SASE is enclosed. **N.B.** In the case of poetry, manuscripts will be filed and writers will receive a response only if and when a poem has been accepted for publication. Poets may submit their work to other publications concurrently.

Office: 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, Mich., 48226-1868. Telephone: (313) 962-2650. Fax number: (313) 962-1012.



Table of Contents

Features

8 **Against perfectionism**
Walter Wink

10 **Living into ambiguity
with Verna Dozier**
Julie A. Wortman

13 **Embracing skinheads**
Thurid Pörksen

16 **Stripes of prophecy**
Sam Portaro

20 **The wrath of God**
Abraham Heschel

22 **Definitions of sin**
Conversations with
Trinity School for
Ministry

28 **The Prophet**
Barbara O'Brien

Departments

2 **Letters**

5 **Editorial**
Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

7 **Poetry:**
For Each of You
Audre Lorde

15 **Short Takes**

19 **Vital Signs**

26 **Art & Society:**
Lynn Randolph
Blaise Tobia and Virginia
Maksymowicz

29 **Book review:**
Thinking the faith
by Douglas John Hall

30 **Witness profile:**
Marietta Jaeger
Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Cover: **Liberation** by M.C. Escher, 1955. © M.C. Escher Foundation - Baarn - Holland. All rights reserved.
It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

'Be ye perfect'

Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Measure up. This is the drive that can push us to cruel heights. The self-inflicted lash that goads us past what others say is possible. The familiar prompt for over-achievers.

Underneath it is a dirt bed of coiling worms — the self-doubts that prod or paralyze us.

In the U.S. today, the need to feel justified is a central, compelling need. The concept is theological and most people would find it foreign, but there is no stronger impulse.

We are beset by questions: Am I doing anything worthwhile? Am I physically fit? Am I a graduate of the various self-help books? Am I contributing to anything bigger? Am I over-consuming the world's resources? How many things can I feel guilty about?

The questions change depending on people's values, but the list and intensity rarely varies.

In this culture we are especially vulnerable to the relentless queries, because there is so little community, so little sense of what the common good might be or how we can serve it. The work environment is one of the few arenas where there is oversight, evaluation and incentives. Small wonder so many of us are workaholics.

And there is the commercial assault: isn't there something we can buy that will resolve the anxiety and perfect us?

I know the voices that assess whether I am doing enough and which draw up

lists of the additional things I could do, should do.

I recognize the long fingers of doubt that can work their way through my decisions and hopes.

There are very few sanctuaries from this frenzy.

But I don't associate these voices with God. It is not God who calls us to perfection. As Walter Wink indicates, such a

children of God.)

God's touch is more gentle.

God calls us with an insistence, and a jealousy, wanting *us* — not who we might have been or who we could be.

Unlike the myriad voices in the culture, God opens a space in which to rest undefended. This is not to suggest that God is never angry, nor that God will never scald us with righteous anger. As



credit: Elizabeth A. Rogers

call would turn on its head the rest of the Gospel. (See p. 8.)

Insidious criticisms creep, instead, from the haunts of the accuser, the one who argues with Christ-the-advocate before God's throne. If allowed to win his case, the accuser will be only too glad to watch me, and all of us, cast outside the company of God. (Such a fall from grace carries with it the likelihood of addictions and swings from a collapsed ego to delusions of grandeur. All kinds of havoc are possible with this combination — the brutality of skinheads (p. 15), the eruption of massive air wars tied with yellow ribbons by an America that considers itself kinder and gentler, even a pietism that turns an acrid edge against other

Abraham Heschel explains, God does not take human sin lightly. (See p. 20.)

But it is to say that God will approach us with flames proportionate to our recalcitrance, not to our ignorance or naiveté.

editor's note

And, at least as importantly, God's anger will not strike at the core of who we are. We may be asked to act differently — to act justly and walk humbly — but God loves creation and has an investment in

JeanieWylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist Elizabeth A. Rogers lives in New York.

the personality created in us.

We don't have to look farther than Paul to verify this belief. Before his conversion Paul was relentless, self-righteous and pushy in his persecution of Christians. After his conversion, Paul was much the same in temperament, although his work was different.

In our idiosyncratic ways of seeing and engaging the world is hidden the core of who we are called to be. It is in the very areas where we feel passion, temptation and uncertainty that God's leading is likely to be. It can only serve darkness to lock these impulses away. They are a gift. They are a piece of us. They make life worth living.

Is this license?

Not necessarily. God is present in our passion — not always as a cheerleader. These impulses are to be dedicated to God, not trampled, submerged or crucified.

Are we never called to change?

We are. But we can practice discernment in this, lest we substitute the accuser for the advocate. There is a familiarity in God's voice. God's call, unlike the demands of the culture, is not alien and does not denigrate who we are. (See p. 30.)

We can trust that God takes delight in us — even when we fumble, even when we fly in the face of what God asks.

To the extent that we have community, for many of us, it is the church. What if the church preached God's delight in

us? What if the churches proclaimed, in Virginia Mollenkott's words, "God's grace to everyone God created, to everyone without exception"? (See p. 22.) What if the demands of the Law were not allowed to become an idol?

I have friends who adopt a Lenten discipline that's designed to free them from self-destructive voices. Last year, one gave up speeding and the other bought bouquets of fresh flowers every week.

Can we, in community, offer one another sanctuary from self-doubts and the assaults of the culture? A place to practice discernment? A place to celebrate?

Christus victor and us in him. Let us go into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. **TV**

From imperfection to wholeness

by Jane Clough

Change is hard. Years ago, I had a dream in which someone asked my name. "Jane," I said. (It was Lancey at the time.) "Do you spell that J-A-Y-N-E?" they asked. "No, just plain Jane," I replied.

The heart of the dream was about a buried yearning to simplify my life. However, I was busy trying to get ahead, to find happiness. But the simplicity I yearned for was enforced before I chose it.

I have epilepsy. About two years ago, I reached the end of various efforts to control my seizures. Medication provided no guarantee of control. I faced an uncertain future, not knowing where or when I would fall unconscious to the ground. The risks for both myself and my young children terrified me. I was forced to give up driving.

Jane Clough lives in Maplewood, N.J. This piece is adapted from one first published in *The Voice* (Diocese of Newark).

My life ground to a crushing halt. How would I take the kids places they needed to go? What about church? The grocery store? I felt helpless and useless. It was hard to imagine life beyond the fear and frustration that engulfed me.

I had no choice but to change my expectations. It was a wrenching process that turned me inside out, but it has also been a journey filled with God's grace.

My life is simpler now. I am now J-A-N-E. I walk. I feel the earth and the change of seasons. I see what I missed when I was sealed in a car, intent on the road. Walking is good for my body; it is good for the environment. But the part that I never could have imagined is that the better my relationship to the earth, the deeper my relationship with God.

Recently, I dreamed this: my husband and I are trying to get somewhere. Our car breaks down so we hurry to the train station only to find that we have no money for tickets. As I begin to despair, the art teacher from my children's school comes

over and asks what is wrong. When I explain, she says, "I'll take you there. All you have to do is ask." In the end, she takes us back to our house which is now filled with a tribe of Eskimos. The children are playing; food is being prepared; people are talking and combing each other's hair. No one is going anywhere.

It is a dream of primal things. I'm not sure where we needed to go in such a hurry, but don't we all feel like we need to go somewhere in a hurry? The art teacher is a creative force — Jesus, the artist-in-me bringing me home. And the Eskimos? They are people living on the edge but in a culture rich in family and tribal relationships, rich in relationship to the earth and profound in spirit. They are a wonderful metaphor for the reclaiming of my own life.

I invite you to share in my good fortune. Next time you get into your car, ask yourself, "If I had to walk where I'm going would I go?" If the answer is "yes," get out of your car and walk. If the answer is "no," consider what you can do with the time you've gained. Try it! You might find more than you ever imagined. **TV**

For Each of You

by Audre Lorde

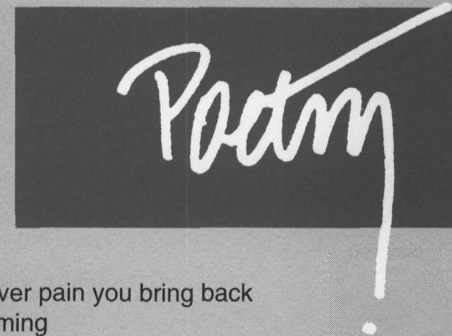
Be who you are and will be
learn to cherish
that boisterous Black Angel that drives you
up one day and down another
protecting the place where your power rises
running like hot blood
from the same source
as your pain.

When you are hungry
learn to eat
whatever sustains you
until morning
but do not be misled by details
simply because you live them.

Do not let your head deny
your hands
any memory of what passes through them
nor your eyes
nor your heart
everything can be used
except what is wasteful...

If you do not learn to hate
you will never be lonely
enough
to love easily
nor will you always be brave
although it does not grow any easier
Do not pretend to convenient beliefs
even when they are righteous
you will never be able to defend your city
while shouting.

Remember our sun
is not the most noteworthy star
only the nearest.



Respect whatever pain you bring back
from your dreaming
but do not look for new gods
in the sea
nor in any part of a rainbow
Each time you love
love as deeply
as if it were
forever
only nothing is
eternal.

Speak proudly to your children
where ever you may find them
tell them
you are the offspring of slaves
and your mother was
a princess
in darkness.

*This poem appears in From a Land Where Other People Live,
Broadside Press, 1973. Feminist Audre Lorde died in 1992.*

Against perfectionism

by Walter Wink

The climactic assertion in Matthew's statement about loving enemies runs, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48). The gospel appears to be saying two opposite things in a single breath: God loves everyone, good and bad alike, unconditionally; and God does not love everyone, but only those who are perfect. This closing line seems to fly in the face of everything Jesus has just taught. If I am not perfect—then what? Rejection, isolation, the fires of hell! Our heavenly Parent no longer seems to be kind to the ungrateful and the wicked, but has now become exceedingly choosy: a God that no sensible person would want as a parent, a God who measures out love on an exact scale of deserving, a God whose love must be earned, whose wrath must be placated, whose tendencies to reject must be mollified, whose incapacity for unconditional love, mercy and grace must be borne as a permanent wound in the Christian's psyche.

It may come as immediate relief to learn that *Jesus could not have said, "Be perfect."* There was no such word, or even concept, in Aramaic or Hebrew. And for good reason. The Second Commandment had forbidden the making of graven images (Exod. 20:4). Israel consequently never developed the visual arts. The word used by Matthew, *teleios*, was, however, a Greek aesthetic term. It described the perfect geometric form, or the

perfect sculpture. It was seldom used in ethical discourse, since moral perfection is not within the grasp of human beings, and would even have been regarded, in Greek piety, as a form of hybris.

Matthew appears to have taken *teleios* over from the Greek translation of Deut. 18:13, where the term was used to render *tamim* ("whole, complete, finished, entire, to have integrity"). The NRSV translates it, "You must remain completely loyal to the Lord your God."

Among the Greeks, perfection did not accrue to people, but only to works of art. ... It was not until the Enlightenment, with its reintroduction of Greek aesthetic norms in neo-classical art and its search for universals, that widespread moralistic perfectionism became really imaginable. The merger of Protestant religious egalitarianism and Enlightenment rational equalitarianism now for the first time made the ideal of sinlessness—a heresy on its face—not only a cultural goal but a profound obsession. The fact that many Protestant churches officially espoused justification by grace alone scarcely checked the advance of perfectionistic moralism. The Enlightenment ideal of humanity perfecting itself had so deeply

penetrated Western culture that deviance was defined as failure to live up to social norms which one now had no excuse (such as human sinfulness) for violating,

and which offered no restitution (such as forgiveness). Thus perfectionism is not simply a characteristic of Protestantism, but an artifact of Western culture generally.

Placed in its context within the rest of the paragraph, Jesus' saying about behaving like God becomes abundantly clear. We are not to be perfect, but, like God, all-encompassing, loving even those who have least claim or right to our love. Even toward enemies we are to be indiscriminate, all-inclusive, forgiving, understanding. We are to regard the enemy as beloved of God every bit as much as we. We are to be compassionate, as God is compassionate.

This saying underscores Jesus' rejection of the holiness code as it was interpreted by his contemporaries. Mercy (God's all-inclusive love) is deliberately contrasted with exclusivity and segregation. His hearers could scarcely miss the echo of Lev. 19:2 here, except that its "Be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" has been altered to headline Jesus' new emphasis: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," as Luke so much more

effectively renders it (6:36). A gesture of embrace makes the point physiologically a thousand times more eloquently than any words. Jesus wants us to behave towards enemies as he has discovered God does.

Jesus does *not* call for "wholeness," though that would have been a

better translation than "perfect." For "wholeness" places all the focus on us, and Jesus points us *away* from ourselves to love our *enemies*. All-inclusive love is

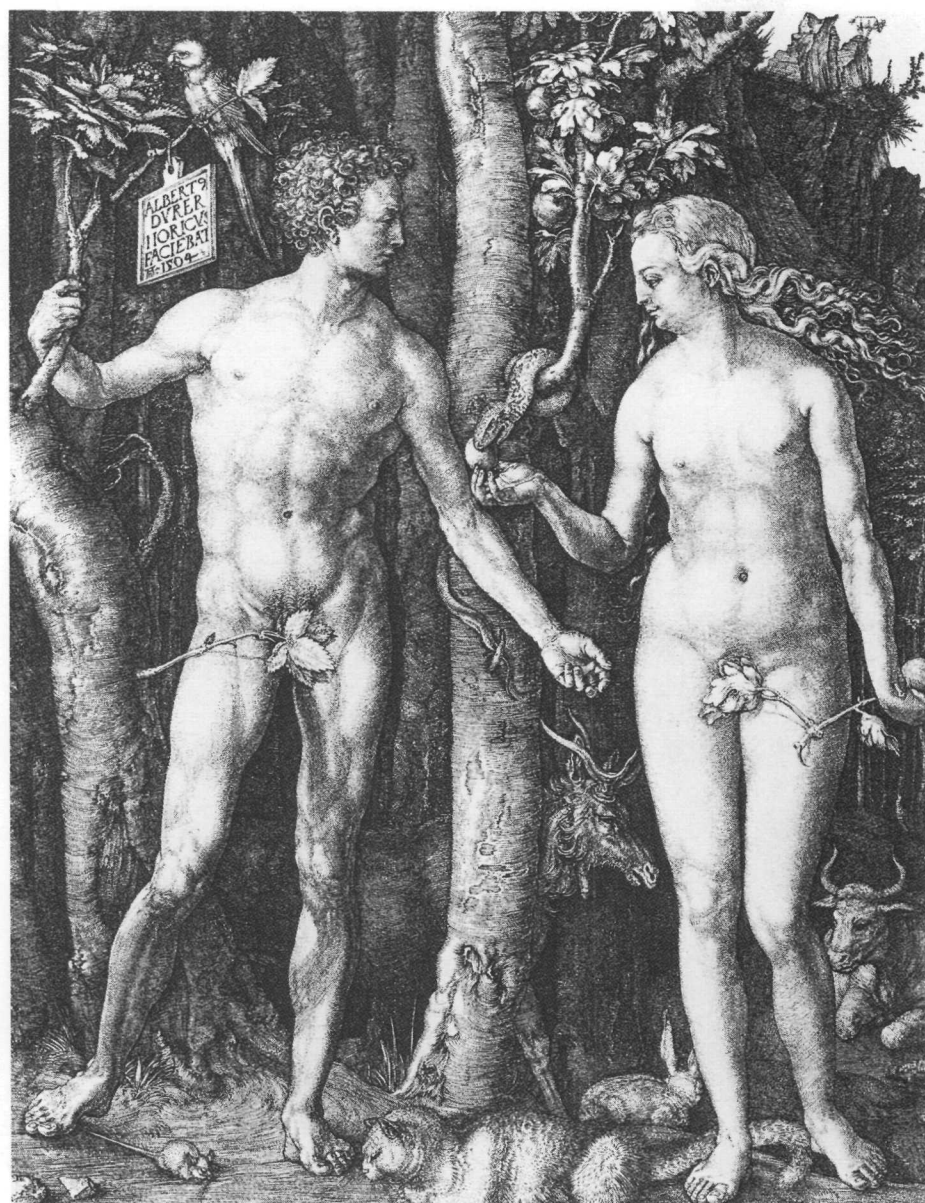
Jesus could not have said, "Be perfect." There was no such word, or even concept, in Aramaic or Hebrew. ... We are not to be perfect, but, like God, all-encompassing, loving even those who have least claim or right to our love.

Walter Wink teaches at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York. Reprinted by permission from *Engaging the Powers* by Walter Wink, ©1992 Augsburg Fortress (paper, 1-424, \$18.95).

his goal, even if broken, contaminated by elements of our own unredeemed shadow, intermittent. Again the gesture: embracing *everyone*. To do so is not to be perfect. It is, according to Jesus, an entirely possible human act, because with the command God supplies the power to do it. He is not urging us to a perfection of being-in-ourselves, but to abandon all dreams of perfection and to embrace those we feel are least perfect, least deserving, and most threatening to our lives. "You therefore must be all-inclusive, as your heavenly Abba is all-inclusive."

The perfectionist misreading of Jesus' text about loving enemies leads to a crowning irony: the attempt to will to love enemies in order to become perfect makes the love of enemies a psychological impossibility. If we have to be perfect in order to earn God's grudging love, then what do we do with those aspects of ourselves which are not perfect and which we know will never be? What do we do with our tempers, our lust, our cowardice, our greed, our indifference to the suffering of others? If we wish to continue the game of perfectionism at all (and it is a game, played on us to our detriment by the Great Deluder), we must repress all that evil. Out of sight, out of mind—but not out of the psyche! Then, when we encounter people who remind us of the things we hate about ourselves and have repressed, we will involuntarily project onto them what has been evoked in our own unconscious. We are therefore systematically prevented from loving our enemies because we need them as targets for our projections. By thus discharging our hatred on external enemies, we can achieve a partial release from the pent-up energy festering in the unconscious. The perfectionist reading of this text thus stands Jesus' intention on its head, and makes all-inclusive love of enemies literally impossible.

Perfectionism has a secret and unac-



Adam and Eve, 1504, by Albrecht Dürer

Courtesy of Detroit Institute of Arts

knowledge *need* for enemies. Perfectionists are perfect only by comparison. They must have someone to look down on. ... When we project our evil out on others, we establish a symbiotic relationship with them as our enemies. We *require* enemies, and are secretly fascinated by their evil, which at some level we wish we could do.

This is true on an international scale as

well. Nothing threatens order so much as peace. Peace, as William Graham Sumner once remarked, is the problem that war is required to solve. It will be interesting, with the ending of the Cold War, to see what new parade of scapegoats, enemies and barbarians are invented to carry the national shadow. Saddam Hussein has already performed that role splendidly. Who will be next?

TW

*Since retiring from a career teaching English in the mid-1970s, Verna J. Dozier has become a popular and widely respected lay theologian, biblical scholar and Christian educator. Her books include *The Dream of God* and *The Authority of the Laity*. She is a lifelong resident of Washington, D.C.*

Julie Wortman: You have done a lot of work on the different roles people play, especially the role of the laity in the church. Many people hope that the roles they assume in life will justify their existence. What do you say to people who wonder if they're OK?

Verna Dozier: We're already accepted. That is what baptism means — you're all right, you're OK.

But we have a hard time getting that message because that is not the message that the world gives us. I have been on enough committees with enough big shots and have been diminished because of my sex, my race, and my lack of credentials, so I know what it is to be diminished and how you have to fight [not to be].

J.W.: So what's justification about?

V.D.: It's a theological term that I really don't understand.

J.W.: But you have been working on the topic?

V.D.: I think so, but not in those terms.

When we baptize a little baby it says that God has already accepted this beautiful breath of life and that what we are doing here is just a sign of that and from this day forward you are a child of God — the community is trying to say that the action of God for you is so important that nothing can really destroy that.

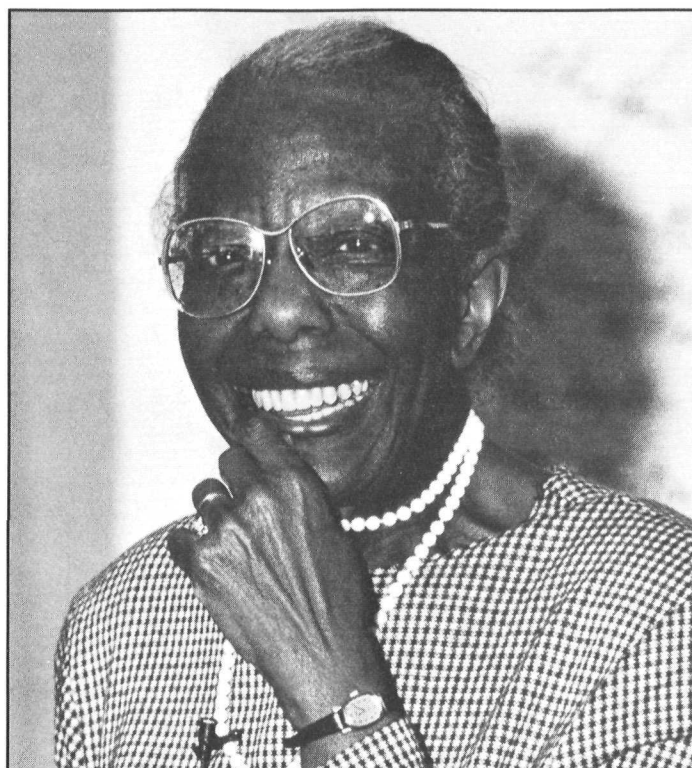
When I hear someone talking about people being damned and going to hell, I feel sorry because they don't know anything about the God that I know something about — because that God is not saving me on the basis of my saying the right thing or doing the right thing or being in the right place or connected to the right group ... I believe God loves me and loves every single creature and that whole creation. I don't know any other way to talk about it. I'm already justified.

J.W.: How do you cultivate that sense of "I'm all right already"?

V.D.: I've had some wonderful experiences in my life of belonging to communities that by their life together will say to each member of the community, "You're all right."

For a time, over 30 years ago, I belonged to the Church of the Saviour here in Washington. I was in a "cell group" of six or seven. We used to meet once a week for prayer in the morning and then we met once a month for study. We developed a great closeness and fellowship. And the interesting thing about it was, we would look around and think there's no way in the world

Julie A. Wortman is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.



Verna Dozier

credit: David Zadig, *Episcopal Times*

Living into ambiguity with Verna Dozier

by Julie A. Wortman

we'd ever be with these women if it weren't for the fact that we came together in church.

We were of different ages, different races — the main thing we had in common was that we were all educated and could read the books. But I experienced acceptance in that group. We used to argue a lot and agreed on very little, but we accepted one another.

I was also really very fortunate I had parents who also gave me that experience of acceptance. My parents were very different from each other — my sister and I used to say we never understood how they ever got married because my mother read the comic pages and my father read the editorials. My mother was very socially minded and my father was solitary by nature. But both of those people gave my sister and me a sense that we were all right — that we were poor and we were black, but that we were all right.

Somewhere you have to have some experience with another human being that has made you know that you're all right. I think that's why we have Jesus. If you can imagine God sitting up in heaven and saying, "I've got to try that over again, because they don't understand that I love them."

J.W.: Some people would say that telling people that they're all right sounds too permissive.

V.D.: I know. We're so afraid of what other people will do with permission! You see, I think people who are so afraid that somebody else is going to abuse things really have a deep mistrust of themselves. They feel that *they* need some rules.

J.W.: At Jane Dixon's consecration as suffragan bishop of

Washington, it was powerful to see Elizabeth Carl at the altar with the others celebrating the eucharist. Accepting an out lesbian, to be affirming of our diversity, is not something we see in our culture very much.

V.D.: And if the church *were* affirming, that would be tremendous. It would be very characteristic of what the early church went through — but you have to mean it. You don't have to say, "Elizabeth Carl is our lesbian priest," but the fact that we know that she is a "practicing" lesbian (I hate the term "practicing") and we do not concern ourselves about it, and we just accept her as one of the community, that fact would be a line of demarcation between the church and the world. But our church is so much like the world that it is a struggle to relate to one another with the acceptance of God.

J.W.: If people were Christian in the deepest sense would it be risky today?

V.D.: Oh yes.

J.W.: Where would it be the riskiest?

V.D.: I think now it would be riskiest in the structures of the world — on your job, for example. If you took a strong stand that you were a pacifist and you didn't believe in war and weren't going to work for anything that contributed to war, you'd have a hard time finding a job. So most of us try not to think about it.

J.W.: A lot of people would like to say no to those jobs.

V.D.: Well, some do. There are some heroes out there. But I think about this — I'm under judgement every time I write a check to the IRS, because with all my heart I oppose the weapons industry. But I know, not just intellectually, that check I send off is going to be used to support the weapons industry. I write that check out in sorrow ... but I write it.

J.W.: But I'm assuming that you might figure out ways to stop cooperating?

V.D.: Yes. All of us find little ways to do it — in the magazines we buy, in the products we buy. And there are whole communities of people who live lives of resistance, so it's not unheard of ... but it's also possible not to do it. It takes a toll on you when you know that your life is marked by ambiguity.

J.W.: So how do you negotiate between what's tolerable and what's intolerable?

V.D.: That's a very good question. I think the only way you can negotiate is to live day by day and see what is the message of each day. I think it makes you much more generous in your judgements of other people.

J.W.: Last October, when *The Witness* celebrated its 75th anniversary with a forum at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pa., I heard people say, over and over again, "I'm a sinner, but here's Scripture and it's 'normative' — it provides the structure we should live by, the recipe for our behavior." The people of Trinity were very hospitable to us, but I found it a very ungenerous place. How is that?

V.D.: Because they were *sure* they were living by Scripture. But the Scripture by which they were living is 2,000 years old. God did not stop working in the first century. God is still working, still revealing to us new possibilities, new challenges — new words. And somehow it's easier to live by what you see as the word for the first-century church than it is to live by the word for the 20th-century church. To be only about what the first century church was about, to me would be saying God stopped at the first century. That attitude for me is the greatest blasphemy.

J.W.: Then how can people say at ordination, "I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation"?

V.D.: I believe the Scriptures contain the record of the action of God that speaks to my life.

J.W.: You mean that we can get the idea from Scripture?

V.D.: Yes, because the minute I hear "the Word of God," I immediately make the translation. The written record is not the Word of God. The written record is the reflection of the action of God. The Word of God is the action of God. And the written record is how the community responded to that action. All you'd have to do, as far as I'm concerned, is to read how the four gossellers responded — they're all very different.

So there isn't any one thing that I'd agree, "This is it." For example, it is so amazing how we have picked up those archaic rules and regulations about homosexuality. God couldn't care less what the ancient Scriptures say about who to have sex with.

*God is not saving me on the basis of my saying
or doing the right thing. God loves me. I don't
know any other way to talk about it. I'm already
justified.*

—Verna Dozier

But that's what we pay attention to. And you know why? It's very easy for us, if we're people attracted to people of the opposite sex, not to be attracted to someone of the same sex. That takes no will power at all. So what we do is to make the way we are "normative" of what God is about. If we happen to be born white, we would make blackness the curse.

J.W.: ... If we have the power to enforce it.

V.D.: That's right, if we have the power to enforce it. So I really consider all that business about "normative" hypocritical.

J.W.: Do you find people looking for places where they can be different from the world? Where they can find a "tribal" connection or a compatible alternative subculture or people who the culture also shuns?

V.D.: For me, that's not being unlike the rest of the world. The rest of the world has all kinds of clubs where you can't get in and places closed to you. I think that's really aping the world. I understand the reason for it, the impulse that makes it necessary. I don't know the answer, because I know that people have been drawn to these sub-communities because they have been so bruised and wounded. But what those communities do is to say we are better than you, we are more sensitive than you ... somehow that misses what I think Jesus of Nazareth was all about.

It's very hard to keep open to all kinds of possibilities. At my church [St. Mark's Episcopal Church] there aren't enough blacks to form a support group, but the homosexual community there is forming. But I don't know how open they are to other people coming into that group — because they have a commonness that nobody else can have. But those things that draw us apart seem to me only to participate in some kind of weakness. What I would hope to see is that we withdraw only in order to return.

J.W.: So what kind of sub-communities would you want to see?

V.D.: Not groups based on uniqueness, but groups based on something that people have in common. Groups based on the fact that, say, all of us in this group really do have a passion that young people in this city not be destroyed. So *that's* our passion and that holds us together. Or, we have a group at St. Mark's that's a drama group. Everybody's in that group because they have a passion for hamming it up on some stage. And nobody says, "Are you gay? Are you lesbian? Are you black? Are you green?"

J.W.: So then how do you get it right?

V.D.: You don't have to get it right.

J.W.: Well, if you don't have to get it right, how do you have to get it?

V.D.: Just going on whatever reasons are given you at the time with enough grace to know that the vision that's given to you

today is not going to be the vision that is given you tomorrow. And if the vision that's given you today would close off the vision of tomorrow something is wrong with the vision — because you won't be open to the new possibilities. God is always doing a new thing. There's no resting place.

J.W.: That sounds so hard.

V.D.: It is, but the exciting thing for me is that I can think of what I thought ten years ago and I don't think that now at all. I remember Howard Thurman (he was the dean of the chapel at Howard University when I was a student), who was a great mentor of my life. Every New Year's Day he wrote down what he believed about God and compared it to what he had written the year before. He said that if the two papers said the same thing he'd know that he had lost a year.

J.W.: Why do you think people think you are holy?

V.D.: I have no idea. I think there is something about being older, that's one of the benefits of living so long. And of course I am a very opinionated woman and most people are so wishy washy about their opinions that to have somebody say something with authority, encourages people to think I must know something that they don't know. And there is certainly an allure about the fact that I don't function very well and don't get around physically very well. I'm also demanding — I'm a person who likes creaturely comforts and I demand that; most people wouldn't think of doing that.

J.W.: That sounds like an issue of authority?

V.D.: That's interesting. Well, I think that there aren't many people who have as much respect for themselves as I have for myself. For the most part people will respond to your own estimate of yourself.

J.W.: Is it only a matter of being who you are as honestly as possible or does goodness and badness come into it at all?

V.D.: Well, the moralists have written tomes on goodness. But in the first chapter of Genesis, the refrain "and God saw that it was good" does not come after the creation of human beings. It doesn't come again until the poet is summarizing the whole creation. And I interpret that to mean that "good" means the way God determined it to be. The phrase doesn't come at the end of the creation of human beings because we are not created good, we are created free. So we can choose whether we want to be the way God wants us to be — Adam and Eve said, "No, we're heading out on our own."

J.W.: Does God want us to be something?

V.D.: God wants us to be free beings who respond in freedom to the Creator. I always say I have one question I want to ask God in that great unknown mysterious eternity: Did you ever regret giving humanity its freedom?

TW

Embracing skinheads

by Thurid Pörksen

Can I speak with Rambo? Will he listen? Will he speak to me? Only a few years ago, none of these questions would have come to my mind — there was no reason for any contact.

Now things have changed. I have to recognize young people, boys and a few girls, shouting through the darkness, blaming foreign people for being here. They drink lots of alcohol, rush along in quick cars, waste time and money. They dream of power and lose themselves.

Formerly I used to ask my parents why they could not stop the Nazis in good time. Yesterday my mother reminded me.

I live in Sassnitz, a little town on a lovely island. Effi Briest once came here and compared it with Capri. Lenin passed by on his way to Russia. Fishermen and soldiers, farmers, sailors, travelers and workers live here.

Most of them are now unemployed. Many young people leave and go west. Others stay here and hope for better days. An increasing number of them are waiting for a strong leader and clear commands.

They drink too much and smoke a lot. They cling together, they have weapons and shout “Heil Hitler.” They would like to obey but do not listen. They believe what they are told: that foreigners pick up their work, occupy their houses, take their money and their girls, that black people are wild and cruel and gypsies are thieves.

But one day there was a car accident.

Seven boys in one car. They were all drunk. They had tried to disturb some “Red Socks” (i.e. communists) in the neighboring village, in vain — nobody at home. So they drove back too quickly and rushed off the road. Two of the boys were killed. The others were seriously injured and deeply shocked. So were the parents and many others.

I knew one of the boys and asked whether he and his friends would like to see me in the parish hall and to speak. They would and they came. Twenty boys and two girls, from 15 to 22 years old.

Only little time was spent on the accident: “The dead friends cannot be helped,” they said, and then they told about themselves.

They spoke and shouted like children about their unhappiness: everything changed, parents impatient, teachers nervous, all persons who had formerly preached a better future in a communist society were now helpless cowards in the face of the changing economy.

Many “normal” people too would blame asylum-seekers for all the problems they have to face now; they too would drink and beat their wives, their dogs or their children. None of the adults would ever take care of these sons and daughters. Nobody would spend time on the skin-headed boys and girls.

They told me about the bands they prefer: “The Bad Uncles” is one name I remember. They sing in a hard and cruel manner about loneliness and revenge and a man’s power.

They told about their grandparents and a better past: the Nazi-time, when everybody had work and a powerful future to face. They saw the war as an unfair interruption from outside the Reich, not as its

very own intention and cruel result.

One of them spoke about his feelings when he beats others: a feeling of deep satisfaction, a feeling of joy which he had never had before. Another spoke about his idol, Rudolf Hess.

They all complained about the lack of places to meet, to play, to repair their motorbikes, and about the boring meaninglessness and injustice.

I asked them whether they would like to repair and to use one of the big trawlers, which now get rusty in the docks. They would. But when I later asked the major for one of these ships he only wanted to know the name of the leader of the skinhead group. He takes the view that the asylum-seeking people must be removed from here, that the skinhead leaders must go to jail, and that then the problems would be solved or at least would become solvable.

Many months have passed since we spoke together. The number of skinheads has increased. They still feel bored. They still wait. Sometimes they come and ask how far things have developed concerning “their” trawler. Sometimes they just drop in. In a cruel and (self)destroying manner they cry for help.

As far as I have understood them, they suffer and nobody is able or willing to recognize it. Their narrow world is destroyed. They see no way out. They need information, they need work and satisfaction, and they take it where they can get it. Their everyday experience is that there is no communication, no understanding, no help, except what they learn from Nazi ideology. They watch their comrades in the bigger towns and soon they will stand up and join them.

It is not difficult to come into contact with these boys and girls. If we cannot change their experience, the forbidden past will come back as a gloomy future, their grandparents’ resurrection. **TV**

Thurid Pörksen is a Lutheran pastor in Sassnitz, an island which until recently was part of East Germany.

Robert Williams' legacy

by Edgar Kim Byham

God is unchanging. The church is always changing. Through the ages, however, the church has often appeared to be unreformable. But the church has been reformed by the power of ideas and acts of faith. Saints are those who either change the church through their ideas or actions or live exemplary lives that lead others to change the church.

J. Robert Williams died on Christmas eve. There is little likelihood that anyone will move to add Williams to the calendar of saints, probably not even after the Episcopal Church has welcomed lesbians and gay men to the priesthood on an equal basis with everyone else, blessed their relationships and held those relationships up as exemplars of Christian living, and repented for the sin of heterosexism. In the future only church historians may remember his name. Even today, outside the Diocese of Newark and the circle of involved lesbian and gay Episcopalians, Williams has already slipped into anonymity as "the homosexual priest ordained by Bishop Spong."

That Williams ever got ordained is remarkable. Williams tended to engender intense but short-lived support, not the kind of long-haul patronage that is usually required to get through the ordination process in the Episcopal Church. There was only nominal parish support for his ordination to the diaconate and he transferred to another sponsoring parish only a few months before being ordained a priest. While the Newark Commission

on Ministry spent enormous amounts of time dealing with Williams as an openly gay man, and even asked what the impact on the insurance system would be if he contracted AIDS, they never explored whether he was suited for the ordained ministry by contacting those with whom he had exercised lay ministry. Some would "blame" Bishop Spong for pushing Williams through the process, but the truth is that some of the finest priests in the church are those whose approval by their commissions on ministry were flukes.

Williams' willingness to be public as a sexually active gay man before his ordination has irreversibly changed the Episcopal Church. It has, in Bishop Spong's words, made our church more honest.

The hoopla over Williams' ordination, however, was based on a dishonest premise — that Williams was the first openly gay man to be ordained in the Episcopal Church. This myth (which sometimes even overlooked Ellen Barrett's highly publicized 1977 ordination and proclaimed Williams the first gay *person* to be ordained in the church) continued to be perpetrated in his obituaries by AP and UPI. The *New York Times*' obituary did not make that mistake, but its news summary said: "Robert Williams, gay activist and Episcopal bishop."

In the 12 years following Ellen Barrett's ordination at least 50 other gay men and lesbians were ordained in the Episcopal Church with the full knowledge of their bishops and commissions on ministry. Most bishops and ordinands eschewed publicity and only an occasional story appeared in the gay press about these ordinations. But when Wil-

liams' ordination approached in 1989, a veritable media feeding frenzy occurred, mostly a result of chance and misunderstanding. What made it possible was the unique conjunction of a bishop, an ordinand and the ordinand's life partner who were all anxious to make the ordination a television spectacular.

The tragedy of Robert Williams is that he desperately wanted to change the church with his ideas, not his actions. Although he founded a marvelous pastoral ministry to gay and lesbian Christians in the Diocese of Newark, the Oasis (an enviable legacy from a 40-year ministry, let alone a 40-day one) he said he never felt comfortable in the role of pastor. He wanted to be a "prophet."

It was Williams' failure as a prophet that eventually led to his estrangement from the Episcopal Church and from the lesbian Christian community. Williams' ideas were not profound, as is sadly evidenced in his trite book, *Just As I Am, A Practical Guide to Being Out, Proud and Christian* (Crown, 1992). "There is biblical evidence to suggest that Jesus was a first-century party animal," he opined in the book which was almost universally panned and ignored.

Some in the Diocese of Newark claim that Williams was martyred by the closeted lesbian clergy of that diocese who encouraged him and then ran to hide when he fell. But that is hard to credit. After his infamous remark about Mother Teresa being better off if she "got laid," Williams had a week to retract it before the story appeared in the press. The reporter even called to give him a chance to do so. Williams refused. He never explained why. History won't explain it either. But in the history of the Episcopal Church Williams will rate at least a footnote for his acts of faith in responding to the opportunities God presented, while his failure as a prophet will undoubtedly be forgotten. **TW**

Kim Byham is publisher *The Voice of Integrity*, the magazine of the Episcopal Church's national gay/lesbian ministry. He is a member of Integrity's national board.

GE to Stop Weapons Production

General Electric Corporation, a leader in the nuclear weapons business for many years, announced in November that it is getting rid of its aerospace division. According to INFACT, which has led a GE consumer boycott since 1986, the decision means that "the most powerful corporation in the United States will no longer be wielding its influence over national security decision-making." INFACT intends to continue the boycott until the pull-out is complete.

Mother Jones magazine included GE in a recent "Toxic Ten" list of corporations with exceptionally poor environmental records. (The others are Du Pont, Rockwell, General Motors, Georgia Pacific, Cargill, Maxxam, USX, Exxon, and Ciba-Geigy.)

Hedging Your Bets

Omnim magazine's January announcement of its "Immortality Contest" — with its distinctive prize of cryonic suspension after death — is accompanied by a question-and-answer piece by science-fiction writer Charles Platt. To those with theological reservations, Platt offers this reassurance: "When you are frozen, you are no longer alive. Therefore, if there is an afterlife, you should experience it. You can think of cryonics as hedging your bets just in case an afterlife turns out not to exist."

Reasons for Working

"When career or competition, the desire for a high salary or consumer-demands are your basic reasons for working, you are not far from exploiting other people, or being exploited yourself. Work to earn what you need, never to accumulate more.

"With so many wounds to be healed in the human family, we are always called to work on several levels at once. Accept the fact that others, who have the same aim as you, choose a different path. Some, with fierce determination, set out to change the structures of society through a long-

term political struggle. Others commit themselves in direct actions of immediate solidarity with the victims of society."

— **Brother Roger Schutz-Marsauche, prior of the Taizé community, quoted in *Ministry of Money*, 12/92**

Stringfellow Retreat

A weekend retreat celebrating the life and work of William Stringfellow will be held June 25-27 at Kirkridge Conference Center in Bangor, Pa. The retreat will include presentations and discussion on themes of dissent and resistance, political discernment, law and conscience, biography as theology, and principalities and powers. Time for Bible study, prayer and worship will also be scheduled. The retreat will be led by Daniel Berrigan, Andrew McThenia, Liz McAlister, Jim Wallis, Bill Wylie-Kellermann and Walter Wink. Cost is \$195. For more information call Kirkridge, (215) 588-1793.

No Comment, Seconded

A recent issue of *The Christian Century* includes in its "No comment department" a rationale offered by conservative French writer Andre Frossard for his opposition to women's ordination: "The belief has always been that women found the spilling of blood repugnant — that they would not want to re-enact the Crucifixion, at which they originally, the Scriptures tell us, shed only tears. It is hard to understand why feminists want so badly to associate women with this crime, for which men alone are responsible."

The Christian Century, 1/27/93

Taking time

Morningstar is devoted to being a space where women (especially) can enjoy the gift of time that restores them, yet, all too often, women come, and say "Why don't I do this more often? I know I need to! Why have I allowed my time to be eaten up by all those other things?"

The tragedy is that by neglecting the wisdom of the command to keep Sabbath,

to truly rest in God, we are in danger of losing our very souls. And then what do we have to offer the world and others but the empty husks of our over-loaded and fragmented lives? Perhaps the fasting we need most in this age of time-pressures and multiplied activities and demands is a fast from busyness!

Morningstar Adventure, Summer 1992

Ethnic cleansing

"The cities are terrible. Everything has been destroyed. I did not want to hear confessions. The women did not want to have their babies. They would ask if they could have abortions. What do I say? Am I to decide what they can do?"

"I met a girl who was attractive and so she was repeatedly targeted to be raped by Serbian soldiers. Once in a hotel she was raped ten times. She said many times she wanted to destroy her face with a knife.

"These people are totally destroyed. Some are killing themselves. We are dying."

—**Franjo Rudman, professor at the Franciscan seminary in a suburb of Sarajevo, as quoted in the *National Catholic Reporter*, 1/29/93**

As many as 20,000 women may have been raped by Serbian soldiers, according to a report by an ecumenical group of women who visited Yugoslavia in December.

Ecumenical religious leaders are urging that "the definition of war crimes" be broadened to include rape, like that practiced by the Serbs against Muslim women, as "a weapon of war."

Episcopal News Service



— *Prepared by Marianne Arbogast*

Quentin Crisp has for the better part of his life had the audacity to be himself — a self which meets the world with plucked eyebrows, a jaunty scarf at the throat, and just the merest touch of lipstick. Crisp is not in any respect what one normally would associate with the word *prophet*. But I believe that is simply the first of his several qualifications for nomination to that historic holy order of God's vocal instruments.

Crisp minces daintily, his outward appearance that of a rather stylish grandmother. His public costume is ambiguously masculine: dark suit, dark fedora, dark leather shoes — but combined with a blouse-like shirt open at the neck, a silk scarf and coordinated pocket square, his white hair touched with blue and swept up beneath the rakishly-tilted hat, the look is reminiscent of Dietrich or Hepburn.

Androgyny and gender confusion are fairly common in the modern American culture, but usually reflect a contrived grasp for attention or an orchestrated outrage. Michael Jackson and friends may be having fun with us; Quentin Crisp is dead earnest.

"In the year 1908 one of the largest meteorites the world has ever known was hurled at the earth. It missed its mark. It hit Siberia. I was born in Sutton, in Surrey. As soon as I stepped out of my mother's womb onto dry land, I realized that I had made a mistake — that I shouldn't have come, but the trouble with children is that they are not returnable ... we by no means lived in poverty. We lived in debt. It looks better, and keeping up with the Joneses was a full-time job with my mother and father. It was not until many years later when I lived alone

that I realized how much cheaper it was to drag the Joneses down to my level."

These recollections are drawn from Crisp's autobiographical book, *The Naked Civil Servant*. In time he would discover those gifts that are uniquely his: "I was at boarding school for four years. During that time I learned only one thing that I was ever able to use in adult life. I discovered that my great gift was for unpopularity. At first I would have done anything to shed it. I tried to develop protective coloring. Then these endeavors became fitful, alternating with essays in deliberate provocation. Finally I mastered my medium ... I had learned consciously to achieve an effect that originally I had produced by accident ... To this day I have a tiny mark on my wrist where boys sawed through the flesh with a jagged ruler. For this and other reasons, I hated school but it was well that I went there. It provided a dress rehearsal for the treatment that I was to receive in the streets of London in a few years' time."

Crisp had eventually to confront that which was apparent to his antagonists. His offense was his homosexuality, which he says is "thought to be Greek in origin, smaller than socialism but more deadly — especially to children." Such revelation is hardly remarkable in our present culture, but pre-war Britain offered little sanctuary; there is room for only one queen in a monarchy.

Then, as now, there were paths of escape: "I asked many people why they drank so much but never received an explanation that I fully understood. It was the tales of their escapades while under the influence of drink that brought me nearest to comprehending their need for it. It seemed to give them a few hours of freedom from rules which, during the rest of their lives, they reluctantly obeyed. If this was true, then in the example of my life lay a cure for drunkenness, though it was hardly an answer which Harley Street



Quentin Crisp

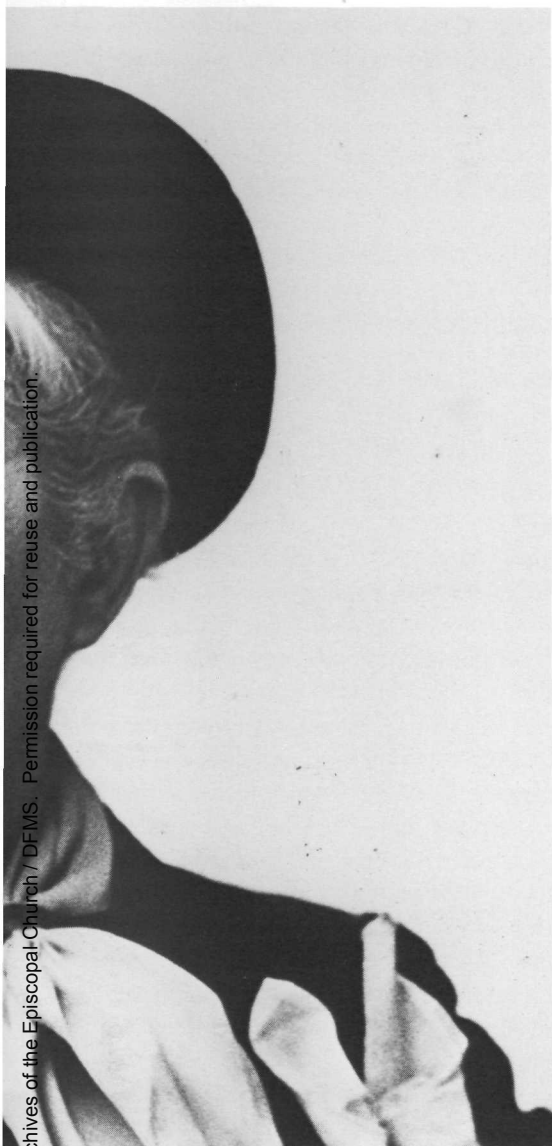
Stripes of prop

by Sam Portaro

would have approved. The prophylactic is never to conform at all."

Entering fully into the reality, Crisp took up the first of several prophetic roles when he discerned that his function in life was "to render what was already clear blindingly obvious."

Sam Portaro is an Episcopal chaplain at the University of Chicago. Quentin Crisp is alive and well, living in New York City.



cy

It was not to be long before the consequences of this call became apparent: "As my appearance progressed from the effeminate to the bizarre, the reaction of strangers passed from startled contempt to outraged hatred. They began to take action. If I was compelled to stand still in

the street in order to wait for a bus or on the platform of an Underground railway station, people would turn without a word and slap my face; if I was wearing sandals, passers-by took care to stamp on my toes; and once a crowd had started to follow me, it grew and grew until no traffic could pass down the road. If I didn't put a stop to this quickly, by getting on a bus or going into a shop, the police had to deal with it."

Any characterization of Quentin Crisp is complicated by the fact that he fits no established category. His behavior is not that of a political lobbyist or activist, nor is it that of a male prostitute. There have been romantic encounters and sexual intimacies in his life. But there came a time when he realized that "to some extent I still lived in the future — a habit which is the death of happiness ... I still hoped to find a tolerance for my kind and love for myself, though I now saw that this would not be reached by means of sex. It ceased to be a door to a sustaining relationship."

Thus it was that Crisp was led to abstinence from sex itself, a decision that ascetic prophets and saints through the ages have willingly made. He discovered a liberty in his newfound chastity: "It became harder and harder to think of places to go and things to do as it slowly dawned on me that sex was definitely out — a realization that usually leaves people with a lot of spare time."

Crisp is unique in his recovery of a lifestyle that once held great sway in faith communities. He considers himself a "stylist." "To be a stylist," says Crisp, "is to be yourself, but on purpose." But there is also something of the *stylite* in this man. The stylites were early religious ascetics who lived without shelter on the tops of pillars. Vulnerable as he

has made himself to the outraged curiosity of his world, Crisp has taken up residency upon a pillar, making his life a public exhibit. That which the secularists call exhibition the faithful call witness.

Being himself on purpose has placed Crisp betwixt and between. He is clearly not of the heterosexual mainstream. But in his sexual abstinence neither is he clearly within the homosexual norm. He lives in that splendid individuality that belonged to the holy ones of Israel and the desert monastics of early Christianity.

Crisp's word and example is an antidote to that blustering boosterism of self-help encouragement and evangelical escapism that passes itself off as religion and spirituality. Honesty and integrity are the stuff of *true* religion. Honesty and integrity are no more difficult to accept from a man wearing eyeshadow than from one who in a former age may have lived in waste places and dined upon locusts. Crisp advocates integrity for everyone, even the lackluster.

"If, when you peer into your soul, you find that you are ordinary, then ordinary is what you must remain, but you must be so ordinary that you can imagine someone saying, 'Come to my party and bring your humdrum friend,' and everyone knowing that he meant you."

But one must seek integrity in relationship to others. Crisp confesses with some poignancy, "I learned very early in life that I was going to need people more

Crisp discerned that his function in life was "to render what was already clear blindingly obvious."

than they needed me." In this realization he reveals that full frontal honesty alone does not suffice to make integrity, a point to be made in a society that

considers the pursuit of happiness an individual sport.

The prophet is neither shaman,

sorcerer, nor wizard. Prophecy is not magic, it is insight. It is the result of looking long and hard and often at everything until truth is discerned. The prophet is a student of human nature, one who understands our nature in self and in society so well as to be able to discern the probable course of our actions, the predictable destinies of our foibles and follies. The prophet need not be humorless. Crisp helps us laugh at ourselves. Those who take him to task serve only to unmask their own lack of humility and good humor. From Crisp's virginal vantage point he spots and speaks to uneasy truths.

"The idea that between a man and woman the sex act can be natural, unnamed, inevitable, and lead to total oneness gives normality the radiance of the Holy Grail. Only a lifetime of receiving the confidences of unhappily married middle-aged women brought me to the realization that in time, even for heterosexuals, sex is reduced to an indoor sport. This was consoling. It is nice to be in the same boat as one's betters, especially if it is sinking."

Demythologizing the romance of sex, Crisp expresses the need to confront the substantive differences between sex and human intimacy. His critique is a reminder that a gay community which has lived in promiscuity while longing for the monogamous ideal and a heterosexual community which has lived in monogamy while longing for the forbidden fun of sexual freedom might well benefit from a good conversation with one another.

As he has pondered the nature of our race Crisp has gathered glimpses into our emotional and spiritual weaknesses. It is true that he neither thinks nor writes in a self-consciously theological posture. He is, in fact, estranged from modern religiosity. But then, neither the prophet nor the saint is cozily ensconced within the established structures of religion.

Like a good cartographer, Crisp has

hiked the hills and valleys. He knows spiritual topography and the lay of the land: "The consuming desire of most human beings is deliberately to plant their entire life in the hands of some other person. For this purpose they frequently choose someone who doesn't even want the beastly thing. I would describe this method of searching for happiness as immature ... I feel that though one must never deny his dependence on others, development of character consists solely in moving toward self-sufficiency."

It was obvious to Crisp that romance lacked honesty when he was not able to find love in those gathering spots which he says are "frequented first by the few, later by the many, and finally by the police." He was not long deceived by the ways of the gay mainstream.

"By heterosexuals the life after death is imagined as a world of light, where there is no parting. If there is a heaven for homosexuals, which doesn't seem very likely, it will be very poorly lit and full of people they can feel pretty confident they will never have to meet again."

It is easy to see why Crisp is not roundly acclaimed in gay circles. He is a true exile, a nomad who is accustomed to pitching his tent on foreign soil, living at the mercy of others. But he is a gracious guest. His is not a despairing word even when it is a disparaging one. He knows that the exile's view of reality is "likely to be as wide of the mark as Browning's idea of an English April."

The prophet watches and warns, observes our lives and shows us the natural consequences of our behavior. Every liberation movement breeds a self-centeredness and exclusivity that left unchecked only deepens the wounds in

the body of the human family. Crisp speaks to the need for the liberating power of disciplined responsibility:

"The ultimate outcome of too much militancy shown by any minority may not be what is hoped. This stridency creates panic in the majority and brings about a fierce confrontation between the

"Anyone who demands acceptance places himself in the same position as a girl who asks, 'Do you really love me?'"

gay people and the sad people. This can only reopen that hideous chasm between them that time and boredom were just beginning so conveniently to fill in. ... I urgently

feel that, if gay people want to be happy, they must vacate their secret world, they must stop frightening not only the horses but also their riders. They must recognize that it is in the very nature of integration that you cannot fight for it. You can only wait ... Anyone who demands acceptance places himself in the same position as a girl who asks, 'Do you really love me?' Every mature woman knows where that gets her. It is more than forty years now since I presumed to think that I represented homosexuality. Since then, I have come to realize that I represent nothing grander than my puny self."

Responding perhaps to those who would have liked of him a more militant stand he wrote, "I will not be nudged into a quarrel with the human race. Now that we've finally met, I love it."

There is a recognizable refrain in his reminder that "you must learn not to value love because it is requited. It makes no difference whether your love is returned. Your love is of value to you because you give it. ... If you have love to give, you give it and you give it where it is needed, but never, never ask for anything in return. Once you've got that in your head, the idea of your heart being broken will disappear."

TW

Bailing out, digging in

Anglicans opposed to women's ordination and what some call the "increasing liberalism and secularism of faith" are busy these days checking out membership in the Church of Rome or some other woman-free ecclesiastical zone. Citing England's vote to approve women's ordination to the priesthood as the last straw, the Episcopal Synod of America's 30-parish missionary diocese has formally separated from the Episcopal Church to form its own Episcopal Missionary Church. The new church is headed by former Episcopal bishop, A. Donald Davies. There are plans for electing new EMC bishops soon.

Not so bothered by women at the altar, conservative groups like the PEWSACTION fellowship, Episcopal Renewal Ministries and Episcopalians United, on the other hand, are organizing to take over the Episcopal Church from within. A big focus is defeating candidates for diocesan committees and General Convention who do not see homosexuality as a sin or as a sufficient reason to deny gay men or lesbian women ordination or affirmation of their committed relationships. Pro-choice advocates are also being targeted.

Institutional racism

Charged with battling the church's less-than-affirmative response to black, Hispanic, Asian and native people who present themselves as possible candidates for ordination as priests and deacons, the Council for the Development of Ministry has produced a "cultural sensitivity" resource for bishops, commissions on ministry and standing committees — the folks who say yea or nay to an aspirant's "call." Let's hope they use it.

"A Resource on Cultural Sensitivity in the Ordination Process," by Jerry Drino, the executive director of Province VIII's Coalition for Cross-Cultural Ministry Development, can be obtained for \$5 from Parish Services at the Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New

York, N.Y., 10017 (800-334-7627).

EWC reinvents itself

Once a group primarily identified with the women's ordination movement, the 21-year-old Episcopal Women's Caucus (EWC) has adopted an expanded commitment to combatting the root causes of women's subordination and marginalization throughout the globe. The group will be building on the developing global solidarity among Anglican women that the women's ordination movement — along with the 1988 women's witnessing presence at the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops and the 1992 Anglican Encounter in Brazil — helped establish.

"We are in the process of organizing ourselves into Mission Groups," EWC vice president Edna M. Brown recently told Caucus supporters. New focus areas will include the fight against all forms of racism, affirming and publishing feminist theological scholarship, and promoting diversity awareness among youth. In recent years the Caucus has also begun working to raise awareness of widespread incidences of clergy sexual misconduct and violence against women and children.

Persons wanting to find or form a Caucus chapter in their locality should write or call EWC president Sally M. Bucklee at PO Box 5172, Laurel, Md. 20726 or 301-725-6369.

APSO relocates to Knoxville

The Appalachian People's Service Organization (APSO) is moving from Blacksburg, Va., to Knoxville, Tenn., now that Knoxville-based Jean Baldwin has taken over as the group's executive coordinator. Baldwin has done work in environmental policy and was a community planner, program analyst and assistant for policy development with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Most recently she taught business and economics at Knoxville College.

Sally Mackie, for 23 years APSO's executive secretary and for this past year the group's interim executive coordinator, will be retiring. Sandy Elledge is staying

on as administrative assistant and communications director. Former leadership development staffer Meredith Dean is the new coordinator of the Appalachian Women's Alliance.

Women-Church III

More than 2,200 women are expected at the third U.S. Women-Church Conference this April 16-18 in Albuquerque, N.M., a gathering designed by a coalition of more than 40 groups. Intended to be a celebration of women's racial, ethnic and religious diversity, the focus will be on new strategies for challenging injustices in both secular and religious institutions. Scheduled to speak are feminist theologians and authors Chung Hyun-Kyung, Rosemary Ruether and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. Also participating will be New Mexico artist and author Meinrad Craighead, sociologist Silvia Cancio, Apache nation community leader Kathy Key and writer/film-maker Nancy Hughes.

"This conference is an attempt to help women of diverse religious, racial-ethnic and sexual orientation cross the barriers which prevent them from seeing, valuing and forming communities of transformative action for the liberation of all people," explains program planner Jamie Phelps, a Roman Catholic theologian and an African American Adrian Dominican Sister.

On the final day women can choose between more than 30 rituals and religious services.

Information on the Women-Church conference can be obtained from Women-Church Weavers of Change Conference at P.O. Box 1025, Melrose, Mass., 02176 (617-662-2102).



— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

Expositors of the teachings of the prophets are prone to dwell upon passages which seem to conform to their views and predilections. The prophets, we are told, spoke of God who stands for all the virtues we should like to see in human beings. The harsh words, the grave threats, the relentless demands, the shrieks of doom, are usually disregarded.

[But] there are hurricanes in the world as well as lilies. The prophets preached justice and celebrated God's eternal love, but they also proclaimed the danger of humanity's presumption, the scandal of idolatry and human ruthlessness, and above all the seriousness of divine wrath.

Who can stand before his indignation?

Who can endure his anger?

His wrath is poured out like fire,

The rocks are broken asunder by him. (Nahum 1:6)

To interpret the wrath of God on allegorical lines or as a mentonymy, and to regard wrath as a synonym for punishment, is to misread the authentic meaning of the word and to misrepresent biblical thought.

The word "anger" is charged with connotations of spite, recklessness, and iniquity. The biblical term, however, denotes what we call righteous indignation, aroused by what is mean, shameful or sinful; it is impatience with evil, "a motion of the soul rousing itself to curb sins."

As a righteous Judge, righteous indignation is part of God. "God is a righteous Judge, a God Who has indignation every

day" (Ps. 7:11). Not to show partiality is an essential attribute of a judge (Exod. 23:3; Deut. 16:19). But to be impartial to people, one cannot be impartial to evil. In the Bible, a judge is not merely a person who has the cognitive faculty to examine a case and to pronounce a sentence; he is also a person who is pained and distressed when injustice is done.



The wrath of God

by Abraham Heschel

God's concern is the prerequisite and source of his anger. It is because he cares for humanity that his anger may be kindled against humanity. Anger and mercy are not opposites but correlatives. Thus Habakkuk prays: "In wrath remember mercy" (3:2). It is inconceivable that his love should ever cease.

For all the terror that the wrath of God

may bring upon humanity, the prophet is not crushed or shaken in his understanding and trust. What is divine is never weird. This is the greatness of the prophet: he [or she] is able to convert terror into a song. For when the Lord smites the Egyptians, he is both "smiting and healing" (Isa. 19:22).

There is an evil which most of us condone and are even guilty of: indifference to evil. We remain neutral, impartial, and not easily moved by the wrongs done unto other people. Indifference to evil is more insidious than evil itself; it is more universal, more contagious, more dangerous. A silent justification, it makes possible an evil erupting as an exception becoming the rule and being in turn accepted.

The prophet is a person who suffers the harms done to others. Wherever a crime is committed, it is as if the prophet were the victim and the prey. The prophet's angry words cry. The wrath of God is a lamentation. All prophecy is one great exclamation; God is not indifferent to evil! He is always concerned, he is personally affected by what humanity does to humanity. He is a God of pathos. This is one meaning of the anger of God: the end of indifference!

The message of wrath is frightful. But for those who have been driven to the brink of despair by the sight of what malice and ruth-

lessness can do, comfort will be found in the thought that evil is not the end, that evil is never the climax of history.

This is the most vexing question in a world where the righteous suffer and the wicked prosper: Does God condone? Does God care for right and wrong? If the agony of humanity were a matter of discomfort, a mild condition — a word of

This article by the scholar and theologian Abraham Heschel was adapted from *The Prophets, Part II*, Harper & Row, 1962.

divine commiseration, a word of reprobation — would have been adequate. To a generation affected by the fury of cruel men, by the outrage of abandoning God, no condemnation is too harrowing.

Humanity's sense of injustice is a poor analogy to God's sense of injustice. The exploitation of the poor is to us a misdemeanor; to God, it is a disaster. Our reaction is disapproval; God's reaction is something no language can convey. Is it a sign of cruelty that God's anger is aroused when the rights of the poor are violated, when widows and orphans are oppressed?

Anger is a reminder that humanity is in need of forgiveness, and that forgiveness must not be taken for granted. The Lord is long-suffering, compassionate, loving, and faithful, but he is also demanding, insistent, terrible, and dangerous.

An essential feature of anger as proclaimed by the prophets is its contingency and nonfinality. It is humans who provoke it, and it is humans who may revoke it. One of the major tasks of the prophet is to call upon the people to repent. "Amend your ways and your doings, and obey... the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent of the evil which he has pronounced against you."

This is the mysterious paradox of Hebrew faith: The All-wise and Almighty may change a word that he proclaims. It is not an expression of irrational, sudden, and instinctive excitement, but a free and deliberate reaction of God's justice to what is wrong and evil. For all its intensity, it may be averted by prayer. There is no divine anger for anger's sake. Its meaning is instrumental: to bring about repentance; its purpose and consummation is its own disappearance.

History would be more intelligible if God's word were the last word, final and unambiguous like a dogma or an unconditional decree. It would be easier if God's anger became effective automatically:

once wickedness had reached its full measure, punishment would destroy it. Yet, beyond justice and anger lies the mystery of compassion.

The ancient conception that the gods are spiteful seems to linger on in the mind of modern humanity, and inevitably the words of the Hebrew Bible are seen in the image of this conception. In gods who are spiteful, anger is a habit or a disposition. The prophets never speak of an angry God as if anger were his disposition. Even those who dwell more on his anger than on his mercy explicitly or implicitly accentuate the contrast.

His anger passes, his love goes on forever. "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3). "I will betroth you to me forever ... in love and in mercy" (Hos. 2:19 [H. 2:21]).

*For I will not contend, forever,
Nor will I always be angry;
For from me proceeds the spirit,
And I have made the breath of life.
Because of the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry,
I smote him, I hid my face and was angry;
But he went on backsliding in the way of his own heart.
I have seen his ways, but I will heal him;
I will lead him and requite him with comfort,
Creating for his mourners the fruit of the lips.
Peace, peace, to the far and to the near, says the Lord;
I will heal him. (Is. 57:16-19)*

The anger of the Lord is a tragic necessity, a calamity for humanity and grief for God. It is not an emotion he delights in,

but an emotion he deplores. "Thus says the Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel: Why do you commit this great evil against yourselves?... Why do you provoke me to anger?" (Jer. 44:7-8).

The anger of God may bring misery and distress. Nevertheless, there is an agony more excruciating, more loathsome: the state of being forsaken by God. The punishment of being discarded, abandoned, rejected, is worse than the punish-

ment of exile. Anger, too, is a form of His presence in history. Anger, too, is an expression of His concern.

Our embarrassment in reading the harsh expressions of divine wrath is also due to the general disposition of modern humanity. We have no sense for spiritual grandeur. Spiritual to us means ethereal, calm, moderate, slight, imperceptible. We respond to beauty; grandeur is unbearable. We are moved by a soft religiosity, and would like to think that God is lovely, tender, and familiar, as if faith were a source of comfort, but not readiness for martyrdom.

To our mind the terrible threats of castigation bespeak a lack of moderation. Is it not because we are only dimly aware of the full gravity of human failure, of the sufferings inflicted by those who revile God's demand for justice? There is a cruelty which pardons, just as there is a pity which punishes. Severity must tame whom love cannot win.

It is divine anger that gives strength to God's truth and justice. There are moments in history when anger alone can conquer evil. It is after mildness and kindness have failed that anger is proclaimed.

W

Definitions of sin

A conversation between Trinity and *The Witness*

[The following exchanges took place during *The Witness*' 75th anniversary forum at the Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry. The Trinity participants were William Frey, dean, the former bishop of Colorado, and Mary Hays, professor of pastoral studies. Speaking for *The Witness* were Virginia Mollenkott, an English professor and feminist/lesbian theologian, and Chester Talton, suffragan bishop of Los Angeles. The order of some remarks has been shifted in the interest of brevity.]

Lou Tiscione: I'm a Trinity middler student. My question is a two-part question and I think the answer can be given in two sentences. The question is this: What is your biblical definition of sin? That's Part A, and Part B is: What was the work of Christ on the cross?

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann: I'm going to interrupt your process. If you have a two-sentence answer, would you give it first?

Tiscione: Well the biblical definition of sin is falling short of the mark of righteousness set by God. The work of Christ on the cross was to be the atonement for all those who believe in him as their Lord and Savior.

Virginia Mollenkott: My biblical understanding of sin is that it is the delusion of separation from God as described in Genesis Chapter 3 — the distrust, the assumption that God is holding out, that there are better things for us if we just disobey God.

I understand the Crucifixion to be a proof to us that death and separation are

ultimately not real because moments after saying "Why have you forsaken me?" Jesus was saying, "Into your hands I commit my spirit." Then Jesus was back again a couple of days later showing everybody life on the other side.

Those are my definitions. I also feel



Bill Frey



Mary Hays



Virginia Mollenkott



Chester Talton

entitled to say, since when we're talking homosexuality we're talking about me, there's a difference between saying, "I have my faults, I have my sins," and saying that somebody's highest and holiest feelings of love are evil. I ask you to imagine, whatever orientation you are, if somebody told you that the highest and holiest, most tender, most caring feelings

you had ever felt in your life were the essence of sinfulness; this would be to destroy you. And I speak for thousands and thousands of gay and lesbian Christians when I tell you that.

Mary Hays: I would probably agree with your definition of sin, Lou. I think sin is falling short of God's dreams, but that's something we need to think more broadly about. What are the ways in which we corporately are making it more difficult for someone else to be obedient to God?

What are the structures that we're part of that keep it impossible for somebody else to be faithful? In the evangelical camp, we tend to be too individualistic in our understanding of sin; it's pretty clear in Scripture that sin is much bigger.

When you look at Jesus on the cross, both individual and corporate sin was involved. Both of those things are the reason that he got there, both in terms of God's idea but also in terms of the actual historic circumstances that brought him to that point. And so both are involved in the atonement.

Chet Talton: When I was a little boy going to church with my grandmother, we attended the True Life Baptist Church where (like my grandmother) most of the people who attended that

church were people who had moved to California from the South. Before I could read, before I could do much of anything but sit and listen to the singing and the preacher, I knew that somehow God was like the people who were around me. I knew that the suffering that I heard them sing about and the deprivation that I could feel was a part of their experience, that

Photographer **Susie Post** lives in Ambridge, Pa. Artist **Steven Ainsworth** lives on death row in San Quentin.

somehow God was tied up in all of that. They saw Jesus as a person who suffered in the way they were suffering, but who was faithful to God to the point that he died. For that community it was as much the death of Jesus as the resurrection of Jesus that drew them to God. What was the other question?

Tiscione: Sin. Your biblical definition of sin.

Talton: We are God's children, but we have not really accepted that. And, because we haven't, we are about the business — out of our fear — of making ourselves gods. Therefore, some people dominate other people. I think racism grows out of that. I think the dominance of men over women grows from that, and all of the other issues of violence.

I would say that to go in a direction which is willfully opposite God's purpose is to sin. And that's why I lifted up the example of racism as an example of sin.

Frey: I was talking with a family therapist a number of years ago and asked him how he counseled married couples who were in deep trouble. He said, "We rarely recommend divorce, Bishop, not because we think it's a sin, but because so many people get hurt in the process." I waited three beats and said, "Bingo, you just described sin." My definition of sin is that which hurts people, despoils, demeans, destroys God's image and likeness in human beings and in the rest of the created order. Anything that spoils that is sin.

What's the remedy? In opening the Scriptures to his disciples after the Resurrection, Jesus is said to have told them that it was necessary that the Christ should suffer. That's a mystery, but the cross of Jesus seems to be a vital piece in God's beginning to redeem his creation and bring it back to himself. Therefore the cross of Jesus becomes absolutely essen-

tial to me in restoring that relationship. If I'm OK and you're OK, then Jesus died in vain.

Wylie-Kellermann: [In a similar vein] I'd like to ask you to describe the sickness of our culture — the elements of spiritual distress to which the church needs to speak.

Mollenkott: Churches have imbibed many of the dualisms and biases of our culture. And as long as the church (speaking generally of all churches) draws the line someplace and says, "This far and no farther the grace of God goes," we all have discovered (if we were honest with ourselves) that wherever we draw the line saying "not those people" it always tends to reflect something within ourselves that we just can't accept.

I believe that when, finally, the churches are willing to say, "God's grace is to everyone God created, to everyone without exception," that there will be such an outflowing of grace in each individual life that we will be dancing and singing our way through life.

Frey: Let me try that in a different voice.

The major signs of distress in our

My biblical understanding of sin is that it is the delusion of separation from God... As long as the church draws the line and says, "This far and no farther the grace of God goes," we all have discovered it tends to reflect something within ourselves that we just can't accept.

—Virginia Mollenkott



Mirrored Me III

credit: Steve Ainsworth

society are the lack of hope, the incredible rise in depression, suicide, anger, violence, abuse acted out in so many ways on the part of people who don't really see an opportunity for the future, don't really understand that there is a good future. It's a lack of good eschatology. Which leads me to think that maybe one of the signs of our acculturation in the church is to simply try to affirm ourselves without the possibility of being transformed by the very acceptance which we experience from a loving God.

We lived in a household community for 17 years. One of the first members was a young gay man who asked to live with us so that he could work out his sexuality in what he felt was a responsible way instead of in the old neighborhood where he was surrounded by old friends and, in his case, very promiscuous behavior patterns. Not an easy decision to

make — we still had three teenage boys at home — but we did welcome him.

One of the reasons he came was because he saw some hope for transformation. He experienced the love of God accepting him and embracing him. But he also held out hope for something a little bit better for his own life, that he could escape those patterns which for him had been so destructive in his life before.

Mollenkott: Bill, are you implying that homosexual people in general need to be transformed into heterosexuals?

Frey: I was just telling a story.

Mollenkott: Right, but the story...

Frey: A true story.

Mollenkott: Does the story have that implication?

Frey: I suppose some might read into that that implication. That wasn't what I thought about at the time. We had a young man who was in need and asked us to minister to that need. I guess I want to hold out hope for anyone of any sexual orientation who finds his or her behavior harmful to himself, herself, society, other people.

I want to hold out the hope that you're not locked into your past, that to let your past determine your future is to give in again to the forces of oppression, abuse, and all of the rest of them. I would hope that there is a possibility for healing for anyone who finds himself or herself in a destructive pattern.

Wylie-Kellermann: Is what you're saying really reciprocal? I mean, could you imagine yourself praying for, say, a woman who'd been in abusive heterosexual relationships, couldn't find intimacy with a man, would you actually consider praying that she was able to find sexual intimacy with a woman?

Frey: No. I couldn't with — if I can use the word — I couldn't with integrity for myself.

Wylie-Kellermann: So you've said it in a broad-based way, but it's actually one

direction.

Frey: That's right. Yeah.

Larry Harrison: My name's Larry Harrison. I'm a student at Trinity, a junior. One thing I'm disappointed at is the lack of the use of Scripture to guide us today in this panel discussion. I'd like to suggest that we've seen how Scripture has guided many things today. The view of homosexuality, which Scripture clearly defines as being wrong — whether we're going to accept Scripture or not is going to decide where we stand on that. It also provides the hope of transformation which Bill Frey has alluded to. He hands out the hope of "such were some of you, but you have been cleansed, transformed, renewed." It changes our whole image of God.

Whether we like it or not, the Scripture clearly says that Jesus came as a Son of the Father. We need to look at Scripture and we need to know where we stand on this, and I really want to see this addressed today.

Wylie-Kellermann: Mary, do you want to respond to that first? (laughter)

Hays: I might argue with Larry that we've left Scripture out. Talking about your personal experience, you're not going to necessarily give the chapter and verse. I think you've jumped in making that comment that we haven't dealt with Scripture at all.

Harrison: But the authority of Scripture is what I'm talking about, the issue of where we ...

Mollenkott: Well, everything must be put into context. That "such were some of you" passage comes after a whole list of

alienations, including maligning people. "And such were some of you, but you were washed, but you were cleansed, but you were justified through Jesus the Christ." To say that this is aimed at homosexual persons is to deny the meaning of the whole passage which is that everybody needs to come to a recognition that they are in the Christ, that they are God's child.

*One of the signs of our
acculturation in the
church is to simply affirm
ourselves without the
possibility of being trans-
formed by a loving God...
If I'm OK and you're OK,
then Jesus died in vain.*

—Bill Frey

Robin Scroggs' book [*The New Testament and Homosexuality*] points out that the only model of homosexual activity known to the New Testament authors was Greek pederasty. I have recently read some research that made me understand it in a new way. Only citizens of Athens had

a right to sexual pleasure. There was no concern for the partner's pleasure. In other words, the citizen of Athens, who must be an adult and free male, must choose his sexual partners from among several groups: They could be women, they could be slaves, or they could be boys. But he could not have sex with another citizen because the only model known in Athens of sexuality was dominance and submission. So, to go to the Scripture for anything about the homosexual orientation, or homosexual love as we know it today, is completely anachronistic.

Stephen Noll: Stephen Noll from the faculty here. Virginia, I've heard your arguments and I've heard other arguments on the other side, but let's just say for the sake of argument that after a careful analysis of that passage, one was to determine that Paul did condemn a practice equivalent to modern-day ho-

mosexuality. Would that make any difference to you?

Mollenkott: You're saying if Paul knew about the homosexual orientation ...

Noll: If Paul was describing normatively the practice of homosexuality which we know today and was condemning it and forbidding Christians to practice it, would that make any difference to you?

Mollenkott: It would make a big difference. I might ultimately be forced by the conditions of my life — by my yearning for intimacy — I might be forced to act in bad faith. But it would make a tremendous difference to the way I felt.

Noll: To that extent the authority of Scripture, the sense of Scripture is authoritative in that sense for you.

Mollenkott: Yes.

Bill Wylie-Kellermann: My name is Bill Wylie-Kellermann, I'm a United Methodist pastor in Detroit (and married to the editor). I have a question and a couple of comments illustrative of it.

I'm astonished at hearing the Trinity students speak of the Bible as though it were essentially legislative, as though it were a code of righteousness. And that's what I hear. My question is, is that what's taught here?

Hays: I don't teach Biblical Studies. [laughter] I certainly don't think our intention is to teach Scripture as primarily a legislative code. Although I think it's unfair to say that there's no legislative component to Scripture, the primary component is it's one of the places we meet God.

I think part of what you're picking up is a nervousness in the mixture of our two communities; it's at these legislative points where our students are nervous about your community.

If you were here for a week you would hear Scripture talked about in a lot of different ways.

Scripture is lifeblood to us. And when something is lifeblood, and folks feel

threatened, things come out in funny ways.

Ainea Kusenha: My name is Ainea Kusenha from Tanzania in East Africa. It seems that the church here in America, whether it is Pentecostal or Roman Catholic or Episcopalian, you are entertaining sin. I have lived with the Muslims. Their life is much better than Christians. It seems that I don't learn anything from Christianity here. Sometimes I was surprised, why are we coming to study here? If we don't obey God, God will forsake us. He is God.

Susie Post: My name is Susie Post and I live here, I'm not a student, but if you wanted to categorize me, put me as part of the Trinity community. The racial tension in our country is something that sits on my heart so heavy as one of the heaviest sins. I was at a friend's house this morning who had written an overview of a film he was doing. He's a black man that's 30-years-old and he wrote about living in fear. Not in the fear he has but in the fear that others have of him.

In a real practical sense, we're the body of Christ; we're supposedly the hope in the world. What can we do? We're not in L.A. We're in Ambridge. And we're in Richmond. And we're in Syracuse. Individually, I know what I can do in my life, but as the body of Christ,

what can we do?

Talton: You want a short answer to that one?

Post: You don't have to answer it, it's just ...

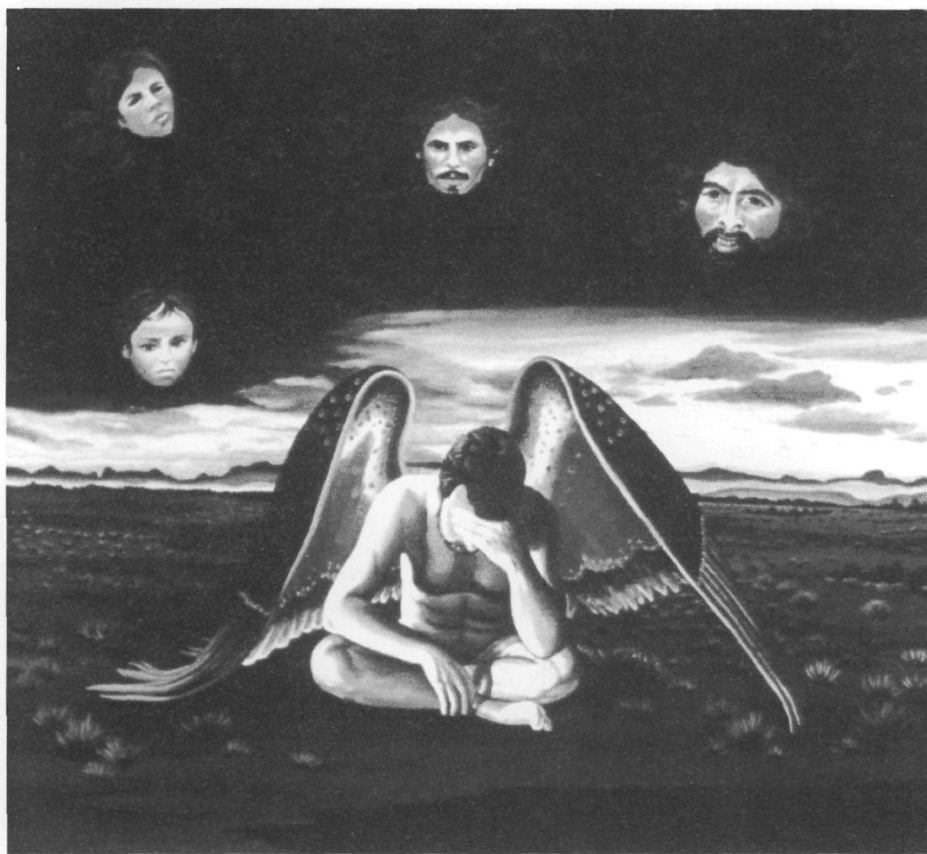
Talton: I understand. It's on my heart as well.

I know that God knows who I am. And God accepts me, but the church has yet to do that altogether. I have had several experiences in which I have been told that the church does not love me. It may seem contradictory that I'm sitting here in a purple shirt and telling you that, but take my word for it. Because I have been told by congregations that they didn't want me, that they would love to have me, but that they couldn't have me because I look the way I do. Episcopal churches. I think we have to come to grips with it. We really need to take seriously this question about how we gather together, and what we look like when we come together. In the church of Jesus Christ when we gather together for worship, it is among the most segregated times in American society. How can we live with that? I think it's a question that we really need to spend some serious time, not calling names at one another, not producing guilt, but really addressing in a serious way from the context of our faith.

TV

Mary Alice Bird, a *Witness* board member, shares a hymnal with Julia Duin, a Trinity graduate and freelance writer. Duin's take on the forum was that participants "left as polarized as ever" and that "the only clear word" came from Ainea Kusenha. Bird, on the other hand, felt people "expressed disagreement with real feeling and made an effort to listen." A highlight, she said, was the way Virginia Mollenkott "listened and spoke from her own spiritual life and heard the Holy Spirit within everyone."





Left: *Inconsolable Angel*, oil on canvas, 20" x 22" by Lynn Randolph.

Right: *Angel of the Mourning Mothers*, oil on canvas, 20" x 22" by Lynn Randolph.

Liberation symbology

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

Perfect: exemplary, ideal, exquisite, flawless, immaculate, irreproachable, pure, supreme, angelic.

What better symbol of perfection than the angel — a heavenly being whose circumstances are light years away from the pain and imperfection of earthly existence? The cherubim and seraphim spend their days singing God's praises in

perfect bliss. For centuries, visual artists have endowed these celestial spirits with hovering wings, so their feet might never be soiled by touching the ground. Through such depictions, artists have sought to tell us that the perfection of heavenly beings and the imperfection of humanity can never meet.

In the contemporary paintings of Lynn Randolph, we instead find angels whose feet do contact the earth. Despite their wings, these angels are grounded, sometimes literally, in the midst of human imperfection.

One angel sits on the ground, wings folded, weeping uncontrollably in soli-

darity with suffering humanity. Another angel does hover, but she is clearly not removed from those she floats above — a group of sad Hispanic women dressed in black, perhaps the mothers of the disappeared.

Unlike the pale blond features of most angels in art, this angel is painted with clearly Hispanic features — perhaps as a sign of identification with the victims she seems to protect and to console. Her brightly colored wings, rather than symbols of superiority, become signs of hope and courage for them.

Randolph's approach to religious symbolism is decidedly nontraditional. In fact, she is interested in distancing such imagery from organized religion.

"To me," she writes, "the history of religions is largely one of domination and

Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz, Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society Section of *The Witness*.



repression; from the threats to Galileo which forced him to renounce the evidence of his own eyes to Salman Rushdie's fugitive life, from 200 years of the horrors of the Inquisition to the current indifference of many churches to the continuing tragedies of AIDS. It is less than 500 years since the Council of Trent finally declared that women have souls.

"I see little reason to hand over rich and powerful images to those who stand for all that threatens to make religions

instruments of oppression and destruction."

In a kind of "liberation symbology," Randolph has tried to reclaim these images for the cause of social justice by linking them to contemporary concerns like war and environmental destruction.

Lynn Randolph's angels point us heavenward, but they also spread their wings horizontally to bring together those of us on earth. In this way, her artwork invites us to consider perfection in new terms:

not as some elusive state achieved only by pure spirits, but as the completeness of the human family manifest in our compassion for one another.

TW

art and society

The Prophet Explains Religion

by Barbara O'Brien

OK so he don't look like a prophet but he's
a real smart old guy. Got a place
over a Chinese restaurant on Broadway
& you got something you want to ask
just take him some chateau la hooch & go up the back way.
Says PROPHET IS IN on the door.

Like last night I went he was watching some cop show
on tv I ask him man
my old lady wants me to get religion. Whadda
ya think & he laughs.

Religion's like getting yourself lost in New Jersey
he says, & shakes his head, like,
man, how dumb can you get?

I think about that. We watch tv a while.

Then I say I don't get it & he says

OK let me explain it like this.

Let's say you got a nice place on the west side —

Where I say & he says nineties — nice place by the park
& I say how about east nineties & he says

OK it don't matter. Anyhow you get in your car & cross
the George Washington Bridge & drive over to Paramus.

Man I wouldn't have no car in this city I say

He says never mind, you're rich, you got a car.

You stay in Paramus a long time,

& it's time to go home, so you

start to drive but you get turned around

& you don't remember how you came.

So you drive around, days & days,

all over Jersey looking for a way to come back.

He stops & watches a Buick

get blown up on tv. The room was real dark —

just one yellow 40-watt bulb & the tube

& the wallpaper greasy &

the place smelled like burnt won ton.

I still didn't get it & I said is that it &

He says what? Oh yeah — well

after a while you're about to give up

& quit — maybe just stay in Jersey

but then you see a road sign that says

I-95 EAST GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE

So then I go home I say

& he says No, you stop the car & get out

& bow down to that sign.

You light candles & pray to it &

stick some flowers on it.

You notice other people praying to other signs

like ones that say ROUTE 4 EAST NEW YORK

& you think they're screwed up.

You hear about people looking for the Lincoln Tunnel

& you think they're more screwed up.

So when do I go home I ask

& he says you don't so long as you got religion.

You stay by that road sign & talk

about how it saved your ass.

That's dumb I say & he laughs

real funny — kind of giggles.

Yeah, he says, I don't know why

You'd want a damn fool thing like that.

My old lady says it'd be good for me I tell him

Keeps some people out of trouble he says,

Makes 'em feel good for awhile, but then

A lot get too stuck & it makes 'em ugly.

So Jesus wasn't for real I say

Oh yeah Jesus was for real all right says the old man.

But he wasn't no god any more than you are —

He was just a man who saw the plain truth,

saw heaven & earth & everything else

as clear as I'm seeing you.

But he tried to tell people how they should go,

you know, to get back home themselves.

Tried to show 'em that the way

was right under their noses

& nobody got it. They thought he meant

they was supposed to just wait around until he comes

to take 'em across the river

like he was a Jersey Transit bus.

Then they nailed him on a cross. Made

another fucking road sign out of him.

The prophet finished off the bottle.

It was getting late the local news was on the tube.

Does go home mean going to heaven I ask

Sort of he says but you don't have to be dead

to get there. Go any time. You just gotta get going

& you gotta want to go more than anything else.

But nobody's gonna take ya, not even Jesus.

So why don't you go I say & he

booms out a big laugh deeper than earth.

Shit I'm there right now he laughs

& I laugh too, cause I like the old guy.

I leave some cash on top of the tv

before I go out. I still don't know

what he meant about going home but I decided to

forget about religion.

Copyright 1992 by Barbara O'Brien. This poem originally appeared in *The Sun*, Issue 195 (February 1992), pages 12-13. (*The Sun*, 107 North Robertson Street, Chapel Hill NC 27516.)

Putting faith in context

by John L. Kater, Jr.

***Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* by Douglas John Hall. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989. Pp. 456.**

I have no idea why this book is not a best-seller among North American Christians interested in serious theology. It is the first (indeed, the only) book I know which attempts to articulate Christian faith in terms clearly derived from the dominant culture of the North American continent, and intentional about the appropriateness of such contextual theological reflection.

It is not that other theologians have not done their theology using the assumptions and pre-suppositions of the Euro-American culture that now plays a global role. Indeed, the "greats" who dominated the theological scene for most of this century — pre-eminently Barth and Tillich — did so. The difference is that they thought they were doing "universal" theology, while Hall insists that *all* theology is contextual: It depends upon the culture in which it participates.

Hall, a Canadian and professor at Montreal's McGill University, has listened and learned from those whose setting is radically different than his — the liberation theologians of Latin America, Africa and Asia; the "other voices" traditionally omitted from the mainstream's consciousness; and the theologians of past ages.

He has appropriated from them the realization that theology is ultimately not

about what we think but about how we live and their awareness that authentic theology is always rooted in a specific context.

How are Christians, he then asks, whose situation places them in the mainstream of North American culture, called to practice their faith? The answer to this question lies in the encounter between the Gospel story and culture's "ever-changing account of itself and all things." *Theology*, says Hall, "is what happens when the two stories meet." [p. 91]

Of course the chief danger to such an understanding of faith is that it might simply accept the assumptions of the culture uncritically. Hall calls that attitude *localism*, and places over against it a theological stance which is *prophetically contextual*. "Contextuality," he writes, "by no means implies accommodation to the main cultural trends. It may in fact mean the most persistent struggle against those trends. ... *The normal mood of contextual theology would be one which is inherently suspicious of dominant values and trends.*"

Furthermore, this means genuinely ecumenical contact, not only between communions but "between 'regions' or spheres (East/West; North/South; the three 'worlds,' etc.) and movements (women, blacks, economically depressed minorities, environmentalists, antinuclear groups, homophile organizations, etc.)." [p. 125]

This understanding of theology makes "signs of the times" both urgent and crucial. The authenticity of the reading, says Hall, depends on hearing and honoring

the testimony of society's victims, its more reflective members, the images of the human in "our most authoritative sources," as well as the "corporate dialogue" of Christians. [p. 134] Another criterion, he proposes, is to examine "shared crises," a process which calls into question society's goals and values. [pp. 151,157]

Such an examination of the dominant culture of North America exposes the failure of the "modern vision," our society's inability to use its remarkable scientific and technological expertise to produce the "good life" (or indeed a bearable life) for many of its own people, even while doing terrible damage to the rest of the world and its peoples.

Authentically North American theology, done in the midst of this dominating culture, would keep its believers both honest and hopeful. It would get beyond the traditional division between theology and ethics, and be a project in which *all* Christians, not just a professional academic elite, participate.

Suffice it to say that in spelling out a theology which seriously addresses the context in which most of us, like it or not,

This understanding of theology makes "signs of the times" both urgent and crucial.

live, Hall has proposed a new way of thinking about faith, called Christians to join him in doing so, and at least begun to look at the style of be-

lieving that might emerge. All three tasks deserve our attention. Hall's work shows him to be a valuable companion and ally as we undertake to address them. **TAV**

John L. Kater, Jr. is Associate Professor of Ministry Development at The Church Divinity School of the Pacific, Berkeley, Calif.

book review

Marietta Coy Jaeger is someone people are quick to sanctify. They admire her, bring her their problems, count on her prayers. At one time Jaeger was more interested in being a saint than in being human. These days recognizing her own anger in time to express it is a high goal.

As a child, Jaeger was fully invested in being perfect. It was a role that was required of her.

"My mother has a list of 200 nursery rhymes and songs that I could say or sing by the time I was two," says Jaeger, an anti-death penalty speaker for Amnesty International and promotion manager for *The Witness*. "By that time, I had already learned to play by myself and not to cry."

As a Detroit school child, Jaeger acted out her need to be perfect by deferring to the needs of others, caring for her younger sisters and getting excellent grades.

This balance was upset — but not destroyed — when, after high school graduation, Jaeger's father died suddenly and within two weeks Jaeger was pregnant.

"I became pregnant by what today would be called date rape, but in those days it was labelled the woman's fault. I took all the responsibility.

"It was a horrible time in my life. My father had just died. My mother collapsed for a year. We were poor; the family was dependent on my income from Ford Motor

"I've learned that God isn't a giant puppeteer in the sky. God gives us the freedom to make choices we believe are best and God will be with us and will bless them."



Marietta Jaeger

credit: Joe Jaeger

In perfect freedom

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Company."

The perfect child was abruptly subject to gossip and scorn. She was an unwed mother. She made it to daily mass, lest anyone else think she was "the spoiled goods" that she believed she was.

The whole situation was devastating for a rising star, but it seemed to Jaeger that the remedy was clear.

When the father of her child presented himself a year later, apologized and asked her to marry him, she consented. Her hopes for the marriage were not high, she says, but she believed it would be an appropriate penance and a way of showing she forgave him.

She settled into her new life intent on being the perfect wife and mother. And in her view then, she succeeded in a way that should demonstrate to everyone, and to God, that she was above reproach.

"My whole life focussed on my husband — his needs, his desires, his choices. It's what the culture had taught me: a wife simply laid down her life without any expectation of reciprocity."

But in 1973, Jaeger's life was turned upside down again and this time there were no predictable solutions. As was true the first time, the trouble was not caused by any failings in Jaeger. But this time, Jaeger was unwilling to take the blame.

On a "dream vacation" to Montana, the Jaegers' youngest child was kidnapped. A young man slit the children's tent and pulled seven-year-old Susie from her brothers and sisters. It would be 15 months before the family would learn that this local man raped and killed Susie shortly after he took her.

Through the months of offering re-

*Witnesses,
the quick and the dead*

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Photographer Joe Jaeger is Marietta Jaeger's youngest son.

wards and jumping when the telephone rang, Jaeger re-examined the order of events. There were any number of safeguards in place which should have protected her daughter.

Jaeger had two spectres that would not leave her alone: the first was Susie's killer; the second was God.

In time, Jaeger was able to forgive David (Jaeger does not use David's last name in order to protect the privacy of his family).

But the wrestling with God was harder. Losing Susie was a brutal punishment. Yet, Jaeger's conduct had been flawless. There appeared to be no justice, and certainly no compassion, in God.

"I felt set up. I had to decide if there really was a God. (It's amazing to me that I recognized that I was free to do that.) Maybe all those years of not rebelling suddenly raised up in me an energy that enabled me to get eye-to-eye with God to demand some understanding of what had happened. We had a real wrestling match.

"Finally I chose to believe in God, because I couldn't bear to live in a world without the hope that God gives. Once I made that decision, God gave me an extraordinary experience: I felt like I was

a little girl being lifted into the arms of a Being who loved me beyond my wildest dream."

In that moment, Jaeger says, the need to be perfect melted; she was loved already, as is, with a force that made her understand that every hair on her head was counted.

Jaeger's life would never be the same. "I've come to understand that it's okay to take care of myself. It's okay to say no. I've learned to forgive myself when I'm not behaving in ways that I have idealized."

Ten years after Susie's disappearance, Jaeger left her marriage.

"Susie's death was not the cause of this, but it did exacerbate the distance that had always been there."

Jaeger agonized about the pain her decision to leave would cause her children, husband and friends. She also wondered how the decision would affect her growing ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation, a ministry that continues today.

"But for me it was an act of forgiveness and reconciliation with myself. I had to forgive the 'sexual sins' I had convicted myself of and I had to rescind the punishment I had imposed on myself by entering a marriage I did not want."

Jaeger moved from the suburbs into Detroit and joined an anarchic Christian community that was committed to liturgical direct action against U.S. militarism. (In time, she would testify before judges and sleep in jail.) She has lived within that circle of friends for more than ten years.

Do Jaeger's new commitments indicate a continuing drive to be perfect?

"I don't think so," laughed Jaeger. "I still believe in service, but I'm struggling for balance. And I've given myself permission to do things I'd never have dreamed of. "One thing I've learned is that God is not a giant puppeteer in the sky.

God gives us the freedom to make choices we believe are best and God will be with us and will bless them."

TW

"I've learned to forgive myself when I'm not behaving in a way that I have idealized."

Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. *The Witness* addresses different themes each month, but always includes provocative art, book reviews and profiles.

For 75 years *The Witness* has published articles addressing theological concerns as well as critiquing social issues from a faith perspective.

The magazine is owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company but is an independent journal with an ecumenical readership.

If you are interested in subscribing, please send a check for \$20 to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Boulevard, Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868. (You can use the postage-free envelope enclosed with this issue.) You are welcome to add the name of anyone you think would enjoy a four-month trial subscription, too!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

☐ Check if this is a renewal

With my paid subscription, please add the name below for a free trial subscription.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

By clipping and returning this coupon to us, you also return the mailing label which got the magazine to you, which is helpful for our records!



Right of survivorship

credit: Lynd Ward

April issue:

Caesar and the widows and orphans



The Episcopal Church Publishing Company

1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115

Detroit, Michigan 48226-1868

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

PAID

Detroit, MI

Permit No. 2966