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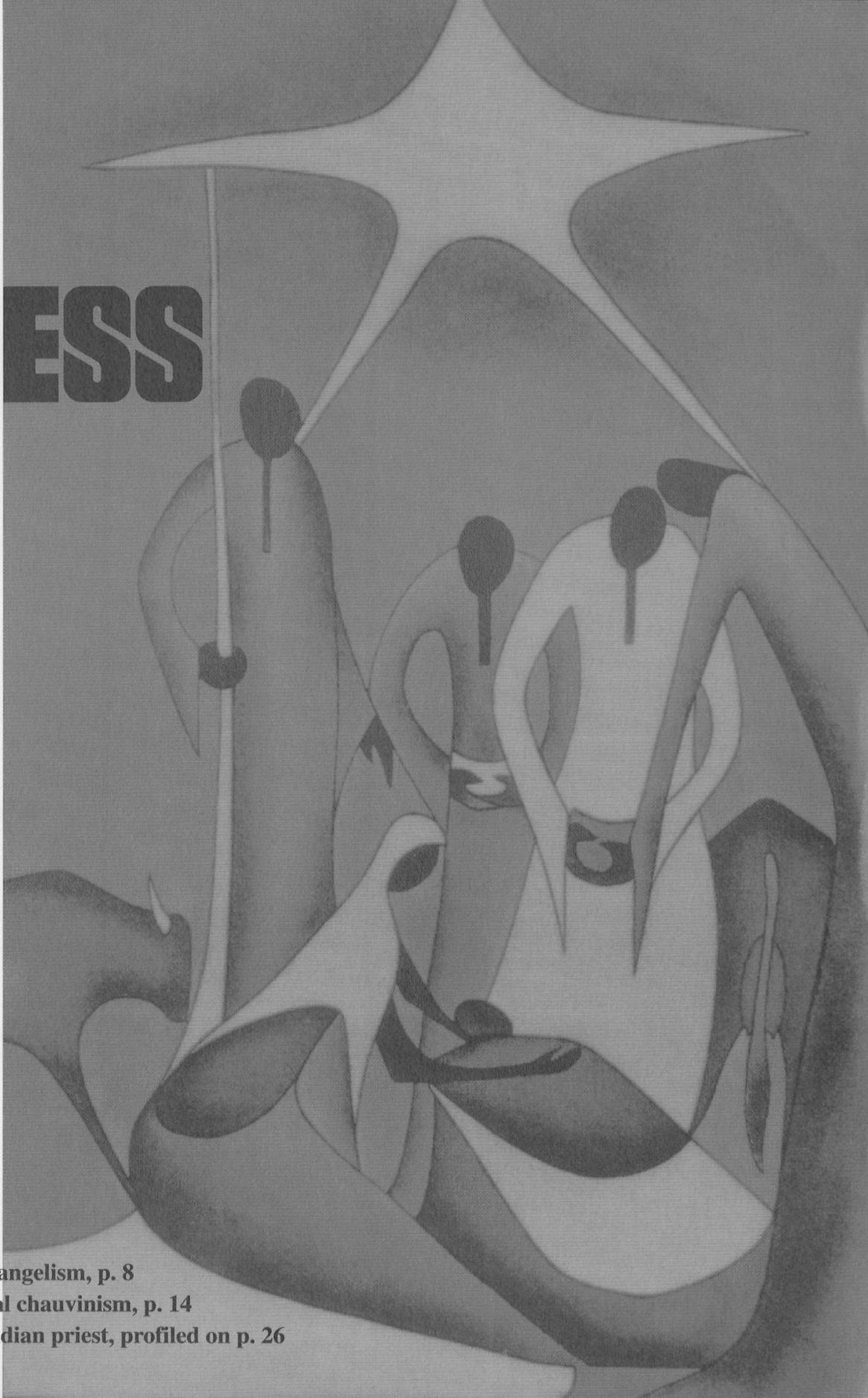
# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75 NUMBER 1

JANUARY 1992

*Epiphany,  
Evangelism  
and the  
Quincentennial*

**Bill Wylie-Kellermann on evangelism, p. 8**  
**Manning Marable on cultural chauvinism, p. 14**  
**Virgil Foote, an American Indian priest, profiled on p. 26**



## December excitement

HOW I LOVED finding *The Witness* in my mailbox this morning. The Black Madonna on the cover is really outstanding! It's worth saving and framing!

I'm so GLAD that someone sent in my name to receive this sample of your magazine! I'd never seen *The Witness* before. I've sure been missing a lot.

The editorial in this issue captures me. It comes amidst my inner discussions on the same topics.

I will be subscribing soon!

**Linda Lilley  
Muncie, IN**

## Language and pain

I MUST OBJECT to Denise Levertov's use of the word "mongoloid" as a synonym for a person with Down's syndrome (Nov. poem). Asians and others have been trying for years to educate the mainstream population, including dictionary writers, that while there is nothing inherently pejorative about suffering

from a disease, there is something pejorative about calling all sufferers of that disease by a name that applies to one race of people. *The*

*Witness* has a grand and glorious history of frontal attacks against racism to uphold. In this time in our country when people such as David Duke are running for high office, we need that counter-offense more than ever.

**Leonora Holder de Avila  
Long Beach, CA**

## Homophobia or valid criticism?

I UNDERSTAND THAT you [Reta Finger, editor of *Daughters of Sarah*, who had a letter published in the November *Witness*] were trying to somehow stop false, or mis-

guided, exegesis regarding the sexuality of Jesus, but what came through to me, as a gay man, is an insidious kind of homophobia, masked in the guise of supposedly good biblical scholarship and self-righteous liberalism which is, after all, not a very good mask at all. Regarding the possibility of Jesus having sexual relationships with men and women, and your refutation of that on the grounds that as a "conscientious first-century Jew, [Jesus] would not have practiced same-sex sex, but would have regarded it as a pagan, Gentile practice," I certainly concede that you may be right. We'll never know, although the fragment of which Morton Smith writes in *The Secret Gospel* does give us reason to at least reflect on the possibility of same-sex activity between Jesus and his disciples. Considering that Jesus did, indeed, break so many of the taboos of his day, that he was not a "marriage/family man" (in fact, he re-defined family from the inside out), and that as a human being he was certainly a sexual being, **it is certainly possible** that he was sexually bonded to a number of people, including John the Beloved. I am sorry if that offends your sensibilities, and I am, frankly, shocked that, as the editor of *Daughters of Sarah*, such sensibilities even reside in you.

Your statement, "I believe that gays and lesbians should be encouraged and affirmed by the church," immediately followed with "(though I have yet to be convinced that promiscuity of **any** kind is healthy)", indicates a clear bias on your part that lesbian/gay people are a promiscuous people, even though you also gratuitously include heterosexuals as well by using the word "any."

Regarding what you call "a disregard for careful hermeneutics," I can only say that the beauty of the hermeneutical art is that it comes directly out of the life/God experiences of the one engaged in that art. If hermeneutical understanding does not stem from one's understanding of justice, revelation, right-relationship, salvific work of the Holy Spirit in one's life, etc., the hermeneutic is merely an exercise in word-games. A lesbian/gay hermeneutic after disciplined exegesis will necessarily, and blessedly, be different from that of a non-gay/lesbian

person. It is such difference which opens up the constant self-revelation of God to humanity. There is no one hermeneutic.

**Roger-Michael Goodman, BSG  
Vice-Convenor, Integrity/Chicago**

UNFORTUNATELY, I DID NOT READ Malcolm Boyd's article, which so annoyed Reta Finger (November). Her certainties about the sexual practices of Jewish men of the first century is surprising. The "laws of Moses" condemn "using men as women," which seems to condemn anal intercourse. Other homosexual practices are neither recommended nor discouraged. The often mistranslated, and for some, embarrassing love passage between David and Jonathan in I Samuel 20:41 tells us they embraced, kissed, and wept together "until David *higdil*," a form of the verb *gadal*. This verb, I believe, is unknown elsewhere in Hebrew. It seems to mean "got big." The King James Bible gives us "exceeded." Anyway, II Samuel 1:26 tells us their love passed the love of women. The Bible *never* mentions sex orientation. We know nothing of Jesus' sex life, except that as a good Jew, he didn't have sex with other men's wives. Fornication was not against the Jewish law. Several quotations pair the whore Rahab and Father Abraham as examples of righteous people.

**Barron E. Wilson  
Cincinnati, Ohio**

## Good reviews

MY CONCERNS ABOUT *The Witness* have been eased. I am happy to send these renewals. God's peace be with you.

**Alleine Walsh  
Binghamton, NY**

BRAVO! A BRAVE BEGINNING, among the best religious progressives. You face power with truth, with good taste and no unnatural sex. The worldwide total war against the poor cannot be underplayed. *Viva el espíritu humano!*

**Rita & Richard Post  
Old Greenwich, CT**

[Ed. Note: Unnatural sex?]



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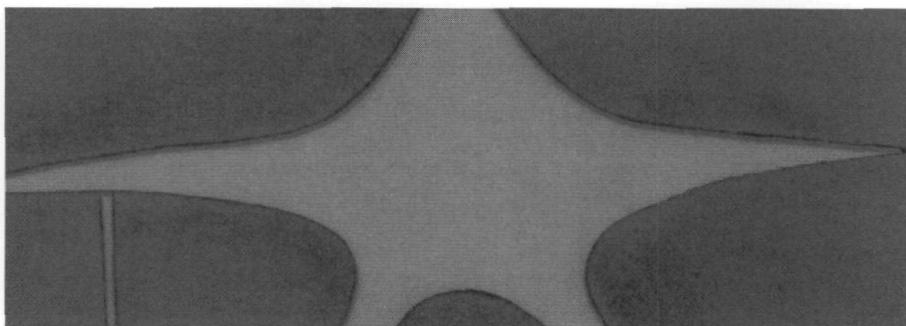
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Cover: Homage to the Firstborn by Nuwa Wamala-Nnyanzi of Uganda. Donated for the well-being of the world's children to the United Nations' Children Fund. It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Barriers to evangelism

**N**early 2,000 years ago, three wisemen made their way to a child they believed would rule. Carrying the trappings of their cultures and their prestige, they offered praise and allegiance to a Jewish child born into poverty.

Epiphany offers an opportunity to discern whether our own hearts offer that allegiance or are held captive by the trappings of our culture or even subculture. Can we say there is no God but Yahweh?

Confronting our own hearts in a spirit of evangelism is, of course, one thing and offering that witness abroad is another. Epiphany offers us an opportunity to consider the meaning of culture and the hazards and strengths of telling the story of our faith to others.

It seems almost providential that the Church is considering evangelism at the same time many are penitentially observing the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival. We have an opportunity, as the Church, to stare in the face the worst applications of evangelism.

In 1492, the Bible travelled in the hands of those pursuing gold and economic dominance (see pages 12 and 14). What must be done to prevent this decade's evangelism from being dominated by the same desires? How does one disentangle the desire to evangelize from the institutional Church's need for

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**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is the editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist **Carl Peterson** was rector of St. James, Wooster, OH before his death in February, 1991.

THE WITNESS



Dancing Angel

credit: Carl Peterson

pledging members? Many people were recently told their jobs at the National Church Center were eliminated. (See page 23 for a list of those losing their jobs.) How and why does one communicate one's faith?

The why must be because we expe-

*There is something as simple as "Jesus loves me this I know" at the root of our faith. And there may come with it a belief in angels. This is not very defensible stuff compared to exercises of power by a liberal Church where the unknown is minimized and cultural humanism may take its place.*

rience our faith as a freedom from bondage -- a freedom that interrupts our lives *now* even before social reality can catch up. It is a faith that carries through the desert, a faith that holds during slavery, a faith that names us and sustains us in the face of influences that daily try to undo us.

So how do we speak? Or are we reticent? Historically, I think we've avoided evangelism. This may be because we've understood the cultural chauvinism that can be implicit in declaring our faith. Or it may have as much to do with an understanding that evangelism means crossing race and class and gender lines -- it means learning to eat at tables with Jews and Gentiles, with those who can bring more food than others. It means learning to repeat or improve on the mistakes made by the early Church.

Ched Myers, in *Binding the Strong Man* (his book on the Gospel of Mark), discusses Christ's passage across the Sea of Galilee as a passage between the Jewish and Gentile communities. Christ's message and his miracles end up being practically mirror images of one another on either side of the lake. What's particularly interesting is the storm that brews *every* time the disciples travel with Jesus toward the Gentiles.

There is a tremendously powerful resistance that precedes the kinds of experiences where you know in your bones that we are "neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female..." There are feelings of fear, inadequacy, unfamiliarity.

Most of us know the joy and the promise of the kingdom that breaks over us when we stand in a church in the South Bronx, in Watts, in Haiti, or in Asia -- we may hear the Creed in a language we can't speak, but our heart rises to the depth of

that Creed's intent. As we experience acceptance at the hands of people who do not compose our own immediate circle, pieces of ourselves that are outside our own acceptance begin to heal.

But for whatever reason, the storm stares us down and we are afraid.

Sometimes I wonder if our reticence is based in the naivete implicit in faith. There is something as simple as "Jesus loves me this I know because the Bible tells me so" at the root of our faith. And there may come with it a belief in angels and perhaps in a heavenly court where an accuser and advocate intercede for us before God. This is not very defensible stuff compared to exercises of power by a liberal Church where the unknown is minimized and cultural humanism may take its place. There is a risk in telling others of those times when you have felt the hand of God in your life and there is a risk in reporting how wholly that touch affected you.

*I don't want to sound like a millennialist, but there can hardly be a time in history when there is a more voracious hunger and frenetic spirit at work in the world. As residents in the ruling empire, there can be no doubt that there is a call to us from God for faithfulness and action.*

There is also a question of for whom we are evangelizing. Are we reaching out on behalf of a denomination that holds a claim, however loose, on presidents and senators? Are we approaching the conversation from a position of affluence?

Or do we carry the promise that God hears the cries of those who suffer and intervenes in history? Can we sing "Amazing Grace," knowing that its au-

thor was converted from slave-trading and that we may be vulnerable to such conversion ourselves?

Our reticence may be rooted in the fact that it is easier to manage a parish if it contains like-minded people. We'll choose the familiar, just as when we are on the road, we will choose fast food, not because we like it, but because we don't know what the local Mom and Pop restaurant will serve us.

I love a high Anglican eucharist with incense and a solemn choreography. Having grown up at the Church of the Advent in Boston and General Seminary, I was immersed in that ethos and a lot of my understanding of worship was formed in it. But I also know what it means to step into a church where the liturgy is perfect but mechanical, where children are not welcome, where strangers are suspect. It seems to me that our salvation is tangled up in our approach to the storm. We may not be able to predict how the Church will be after the rains and winds, but if it is alive and diverse, we *will* know it as home.

The Episcopal Church's task in evangelism seems to me to be remembering our history (both internal and national), hearing the stories of people from other cultures, practicing repentance and celebrating God's victory in history.

I don't want to sound like a millennialist, but there can hardly be a time in history when there is a more voracious hunger and frenetic spirit at work in the world. As residents in the ruling empire, there can be no doubt that there is a call to us from God for faithfulness and action.

The wisemen, who put more credence on a star than on the powers of their age, crossed deserts, crossed class and racial barriers, transgressed a king in order to worship Jesus Christ. For this we give thanks.

-J.W-K.

## Tutu on evangelism

Brimming with excitement, Desmond Tutu explains that when the white missionaries came to Africa, "they had the Bible and we had the land." Then the missionaries said, *Let us pray*. "We closed our eyes to pray and when we looked up, they had the land and we had the Bible." Tutu pauses. "Ahh, but what we gained is of inestimable value." As Tutu laughs, one has the sense that Africa's children may end up with the land *and* the book.



credit: Sister Helen David

# Priest in Alaska: Herring Pits

by William T. Burke, S.J.

I fly over Toksook Bay,  
see large pits at the edge  
of the sea village.  
They look like death, like  
hell,  
contain old logs and driftwood.

I celebrate Mass for the Eskimos  
and talk about death,  
relate the pits I have seen  
from the air.

Later I discover the pits  
are the natives' source of life.  
They catch herring in them  
from the sea.

During the herring season  
the villagers spend  
many hours a day there,  
cleaning herring, drying them  
in the sun on logs  
and driftwood they have  
gathered.

They speak softly  
and are filled with gratitude  
for God's gift of life.  
Sometimes I am dumber than  
dumb.

# Missionaries for the Year 2,000

by Trinidad Sanchez, S.J.

Men and women working with the poor  
for their liberation touching the pain  
in their struggle for freedom.

Prophets sharing their lives and  
denouncing the unjust economic order  
of the rich who exploit the poor.  
Brothers and Sisters standing  
in friendship with the marginated  
of our society to advocate for change  
for justice and those looking toward  
their own empowerment.

Men and women of their word like the Word  
who became human in order for the blind  
to see the poor. Brothers and Sisters  
committed to building communities  
where liberty is proclaimed to captives  
where the rich are sent away empty  
prisoners are set free sharing the good news  
singing songs of justice/peace/love --  
songs of liberation.

Angels without wings -- revolutionaries  
taking up arms which are for loving and  
announcing the good news -- faith begets  
justice begets faith begets justice!

Men and women liberated by their own struggle  
to see the poor touching their pain and  
remaining a sign of hope with those  
whose hope is all but lost,  
while dying a thousand deaths  
with their own pain of lost hope  
and unbelief in a gospel  
which is not easy by human standards  
but rises from the struggle for the resurrection  
of the new world -- where there are no rich  
instead we are all poor -- strong in hope -- full of love  
shouting, crying out songs of justice...

These are the followers of Sojourner Truth/  
Rutilio Grande/ Dorothy Day/ Oscar Romero/  
Fannie Lou Hamer/ Rosa Parks/ Steven Biko/  
Nelson Mandela/ Dr. Martin Luther King Jr./  
Dolores Huerta/ Cesar Chavez and Jesus.

These are the missionaries moving from the now  
toward the future preparing for the new century  
in the year 2000!



*Why Am I So Brown? Detroit, 1991*

*And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal. And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere. (Luke 9:1-7)*

**I**t is a conspicuously neglected matter that the clearest gospel admonition to "voluntary poverty," as it is called today, or "voluntary simplicity" comes in connection with Jesus' instructions for the ministry of evangelism. Outward mobility coincides with a disciplined downward mobility. It is a charge fully in accord with the Sermon on the Mount, or the life-style portrayed of Jesus himself. The scholars and professional evangelists alike manage deft footwork of one variety or another around this buried scandal: it is one-time advice, nothing more, suited for the social milieu of wandering charismatics in first century Palestine. One way or another, we need take things no further.

The checkered history of evangelization is a testimony to the power of these interpretive tacks. Apart from some momentous exceptions (like the mendicant Franciscans, masters of life-style evangelism), the advice goes largely by the wayside. Set beside the history of evangelization in the Americas, for

**Bill Wylie-Kellermann** is a United Methodist pastor and faculty member at the Whitaker School of Theology, Diocese of Michigan. **Robert McGovern** teaches art at the University of the Arts, Philadelphia.



credit: Robert McGovern

## Singing the Lord's song to people *and* powers

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

example, the admonition ought to foster confession and repentance.

There is much written these days about hospitality and evangelism. The idea, a welcome one, is that communities which live and worship in a spirit of hospitality, spreading their life like a table set before the least, set before all, will gather in strangers for the banquet.

And thereby grow. Well and good.

However, notice the relationship between hospitality and evangelism in the admonition of Jesus: it is exactly the opposite! The question here is: does the door open? Notice also who holds the power, the freedom of choice, the social upper hand. It is the one to whom the evangelist comes. The utter

vulnerability of the disciple guarantees it as a matter of practice. The evangelical attitude is that of the guest.

In such a social situation, whose cultural etiquette presides? Again, that of the host. Of course, the interpreters might say, but this is all within the social boundaries of Israel and Judaism. Not so. In Luke, Jesus repeats the evangelical prescription, nearly point for point, in the sending out of the 70 (10:1f.). Here a code of sorts presents itself. In the history and tradition of

Israel, “seventy” is the number of the nations. This mission is the seed and sanction for the continuing evangelism portrayed in Luke’s second narrative, the Book of Acts. And it is undertaken with the same rigor of disciplined vulnerability, the same dependence on hospitality.

Here there is no missionary compound, let alone the armed camp of colonial Christendom. The evangelist carries not even a staff; never mind being accompanied, before or behind, with the security of a military escort. Cultural violation? The most the disciples may offer is this gesture of shaking the dust of the inhospitable from their feet.

The Book of Acts, beginning with Pentecost when representatives of “every nation under heaven” are gathered, is the flourishing of this seed. Indeed the Acts narrative is carried forward on a series of such hospitalities. Paul, notably, or Peter, or the others are regular recipients, often at considerable risk to the host. Think of the jailer who takes

Paul and Silas to his home for a midnight meal, or Jason hauled into court in his guest’s stead. Something of a safehouse network commends itself. And the evangelist is the recipient of this sanctuary.

Just beneath these events, sometimes openly - more often implied, there abides a crisis. Once again: whose cultural etiquette, codes and customs, will preside at table? The bolder among the Gentiles, like Lydia, press the question themselves, prevailing on Paul, putting him on the spot: “If you have judged me faithful to the Lord, come to

my house and stay” (16:15).

For Peter, the crisis precedes the invite. It comes to him in the vision of the

unclean meal descending before him as on a sheet. Here, as on every occasion, indeed as repeatedly for the early Church, the question of whether the evangelists were to keep a kosher table implied the larger questions: Was the Gospel inextricably bound to Jewish culture? Did spreading the good news also imply a necessary cultural imperialism? OR was the community of the

Way to be (in a current phrase) a “multicultural movement?” Put so plainly, we may abruptly see how much of the New Testament is devoted to this question

*It is a conspicuously neglected matter that the clearest gospel admonition to “voluntary poverty,” as it is called today, or “voluntary simplicity” comes in connection with Jesus’ instructions for the ministry of evangelism.*

*The evangelical attitude is that of the guest. The question here is: does the door open? Notice who holds the power, the freedom of choice, the social upper hand. It is the one to whom the evangelist comes. The utter vulnerability of the disciple guarantees it.*

which still exercises the American Church in 1992.

It might also dawn upon us how basic these questions are to Epiphany. Of course the Magi, those cultural outsiders bearing gifts, are emblematic of the issue. But the most intriguing passage among the lections is from Ephesians:

*For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles - assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me ... that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel. Of this Gospel I was made a minister... to preach to the Gentiles the unspeakable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; that through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the prin-*

*icipalities and powers in heavenly places. (3:1-10)*

Here again there is veiled reference to the concrete issue of table fellowship. When Paul calls the Gentiles ‘partakers’ of the promise, he uses a word for sharing at table. Should the ‘dividing wall of hostility’ mentioned elsewhere in Ephesians run down the middle of the table like a legalized apartheid among

them? Good news: no. The truth hidden for ages that comes suddenly to the light of Epiphany is that the Gentiles in their infinite varieties (at least all 70) are

welcomed as they are at the table; they are to be included in the community of faith. Epiphany is a feast of racial and cultural reconciliation.

Clarence Jordan, the Baptist scholar and activist notorious for his own "incarnational evangelism," rendered this passage in his cotton-patch translation of the New Testament, now some 25 years old. There he spells it out racially with bald concreteness: "It is for this reason - my own Christian convictions on race - that I, Paul am now in jail...The secret is that the Negroes are fellow partners and equal members, co-sharers in the privileges of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

What strikes to the heart of the season, not to mention the ministry of evangelism, is the abrupt mention of the principalities and powers. It is Walter Wink who has called attention to this in his now completed trilogy on the "Powers" (Fortress Press). What shall we make of the enigmatic assertion that "through the Church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the **principalities and powers** in heavenly places"(3:10)? To the principalities? By the rights of rhetoric and logic oughtn't it be to the *Gentiles*? Why the seeming switcheroo from one topic to the other?

Wink concludes, in a connection momentous for the New Testament interpretation of the powers, that the reference is first of all to the 'angels of the nations.' The gist of his reading, rooted in a cosmology of the Hebrew Bible (see Deut. 32:89 or Daniel 10) is that to address the *ethne* (the nations, the Gentiles) one must recognize and address the collective spirits which govern them, the "angelic guardians," the actual 'interiorities' of the nations which function to maintain group boundaries and hostile walls. This is not to be thought spooky or weird, merely a recognition

that nations (like all the powers) are two-dimensional entities. They have a visible, material reality (be it land, cultural artifacts, customs and rituals) and, simultaneously, an invisible dimension, a discernable personality, which regulates and legitimates the other. (See Wink, *Unmasking the Pow-*

*Christians certainly address individuals under the sway of nations or corporate cultures or institutions; but, if Ephesians is to be seriously taken, we also address those corporations and institutions themselves. We call them, like the nations, to their true vocation. We call them, before the sovereignty of God, to repentance. That is rudimentary to the work of evangelism.*

ers, pp. 87-108.) For our purposes the question is not only, "Will the door open?" but "Who or what might be holding it shut?"

If Wink is right and all this be so, then the nations as entities must be taken very seriously in the work of evangelism. Nations and cultures are to be regarded as having a life and integrity of their own. Indeed, they also have vocations which need be honored: to praise God (as the Hebrew Bible makes clear) and to serve human beings, bonding them in a sense of collective identity and standing up as required to the onslaughts of certain other powers.

The nations, let it be said quite plainly, remain largely ignorant of this truth. They are confused about their own vocation to service and praise, about the living Word which they regularly obstruct, about the manifold wisdom of God now revealed in the life of the witnessing community. We could certainly give empirical evidence of this confusion in our own situation. Nations and cultures may attach themselves to

the Gospel, confusing their very form and character with its truth. This attachment (be it Jewish, Greek, Roman, European, American, or whatever) readily turns imperial, breaking down the door and taking over the house in the service of its own interests. The evangelization of the Americas is a case history in such confusion. When Jesus in Luke urges empty-handed poverty for evangelists, he effectively commends as well this shedding of cultural baggage. The disciple is to travel light.

But, even short of imperialism, nations draw absolute boundaries, carving up the community, casting out or marginalizing certain groups, and preventing the movement. Either tack is a consequence of idolatry. And in either eventuality, to

be addressed by the Word in the life of the reconciled community is for the nations a gift of grace, a call to their rightful vocation in the order of creation. The reconciled community is one which will honor the nations, but refuses to be either consumed or cut off by them.

There is a further implication. More than nations and cultures are implicated in the evangelical mission. The evangel is directed finally to the principalities and powers in their broader meaning. The jolt of the language in Ephesians underscores it. Christians certainly address individuals under the sway of nations or corporate cultures or institutions; but, if Ephesians is to be seriously taken, we also address those corporations and institutions themselves. We call them, like the nations, to their true vocation. We call them, before the sovereignty of God, to repentance. That is rudimentary to the work of evangelism.

It's probably work more than sufficient for any decade. And more Epiphany light than we likely can bear. **TW**

# Learning from our mistakes

By Marianne Arbogast

**A** Canadian Anglican bishop recently joined leaders of other denominations in apologizing for the harm caused to native people and cultures through misguided methods of evangelism. The apology, issued at a Vancouver conference on native residential schools this summer, followed four days of listening to native people recount their experiences at the Church-run institutions, the *Anglican Journal* of Canada reported. In addition to the suppression of native languages and customs, their stories included accounts of physical and sexual abuse.

"I feel hurt and shame when I hear people tell their stories where they have experienced the Church as an instrument of pain, disease, of stunting growth, of unwholeness, of undermining the identity that God gives to people," Bishop John Hannen of Caledonia told conference participants. "Where the Church has caused you or your community pain and destruction, I ask your forgiveness."

If U.S. Episcopalians approach the "Decade of Evangelism" with some ambivalence, it is largely due to a growing consciousness of the blemished history of the Church's missionary work. Mission efforts once regarded as virtuous and heroic appear in a new light, revealing patterns of gross cultural arrogance and insensitivity. Liberation theologians have denounced the economic exploitation that often arrived hand in hand with the

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**Marianne Arbogast** is assistant editor of *The Witness*. Artist Hodgell lives in Florida.

Gospel message, and third world Christians have challenged the complicity of the first world Church in patterns of injustice.

The 500th anniversary of Christianity on the American continents has dredged up memories that call more for repentance



credit: Robert Hodgell

than celebration.

Orlando E. Costas writes about the "ironic and contradictory history" of evangelism in Latin America:

"Europeans arrived with the cross as well as the sword," he writes. "They enslaved the indigenous and African populations while announcing the message of salvation. They whipped people with their structures of exploitation and at the same time anointed them with the balsam of the Gospel" (*Christ Outside the Gate: Mission Beyond Christendom*, Orbis, 1982).

Presbyterian missionary Randy Jacob tells of the northern tribe of Choctaw Indians, who were forced from their homelands in Mississippi in 1830-31, with the cooperation and approval of white fellow Christians:

"The cost of human life in that re-

moval was as great as any offered by an American Indian group (one-fourth of all who marched died on the way). A man also reported that four years later you could ride through towns in the Choctaw Nation [in Oklahoma] and not see a child playing anywhere...

"The Choctaw Indian experience caused the northern tribe (Ahi Vpvt Oklah) to reject 'white man Christians' while continuing to embrace the Christian religion... It was not until the death of the Chief Moshulatabbi that the northern tribal area was opened to non-Choctaw ministers of the Gospel." In their years of insulation, Jacob writes, the Choctaw Christians "were protected by a culture whose laws and social order was based upon sharing, upon truthfulness and a person living by their word" (*Missionary Messenger*, 10/91).

More often, converts to the faith have been pressured to abandon their own cultural heritage. Little distinction has been made between the Gospel message and European styles of worship, theology and social organization.

Missionaries such as Holy Ghost Father Vincent J. Donovan have significantly influenced the Church's growing recognition that the Gospel cannot be identified with its historical (read European) packaging.

"As I began to ponder the evangelization of the Masai, I had to realize that God enables a people, any people, to reach salvation through their culture and tribal, racial customs and traditions," Donovan wrote (*Christianity Rediscovered*, Fides/Claretian, 1978). "I had no right to disrupt this body of customs, of traditions. It was the way of salvation for these people, their way to God..."

"The incarnation of the Gospel, the flesh and blood which must grow on the Gospel is up to the people of a culture..."

"The Gospel is, after all, not a philosophy or set of doctrines or laws.

That is what a culture is. The Gospel is essentially a history, at whose center is the God-man born in Bethlehem, risen near Golgotha."

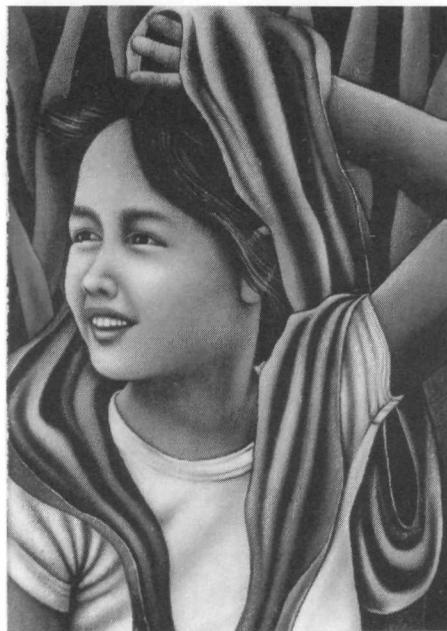
Evangelism is not proselytism, Donovan wrote. It is not an effort to incorporate persons into an institution. It is a message of hope, and a people's response to that message, whatever form it might take, is the Church.

"Proselytism is centripetal," Donovan says. "It is a movement inward. People are invited to come to the center where salvation is localized. In order to become a participant of salvation, they will have to join the group that mediates redemption, i.e., emigrate completely from all other life relationships. Evangelization is centrifugal. It leaves Jerusalem and is on its way to the ends of the earth and the end of time. To join means here: to join the journey away from the center -- a light for the Gentiles, which goes forth towards the people, seeking them out and taking them by surprise in their darkness."

If a changed historical and cultural perspective has led to some misgivings regarding evangelism, another source of hesitation for U.S. Christians is the sad state of the Church at home. Western churches which once dispatched missionaries to third world countries have suffered a significant drain in numbers and influence, while churches in traditional mission territories have flourished. There is no longer a clear answer to the question of who should be evangelizing whom.

"The centers of new vitality in the church are now at what is still (rather patronizingly) called the periphery, while those most in need of the infusions of vitality are those dwelling at what is still (even more patronizingly) called the center," writes Robert McAfee Brown (*Kairos: Three Prophetic Challenges to the Church*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990). "The earlier recipients

of the Gospel are the new givers of the Gospel, while the earlier givers are the new recipients."



credit: Aurelio Flores, Nicaragua Cultural Alliance

*"For oppressed people, the Gospel has liberating meaning," Nan Peete said. "They see the Church as a place of not only spiritual liberation but of spiritual power for actual freedom and liberation."*

The Church in Africa provides a clear illustration.

"If you were to distill all the 80 million Anglicans in the world into one person, that person would be black, would live in Africa, and would not speak English," a Canadian Anglican rector wrote recently. "For generations Anglicans have pursued evangelism 'on every continent and island,' and as a

result, what we are now is not what we were then."

This is as it should be, he went on to say: "We have become, in fact, what we have always claimed to be: not merely Anglo, not merely ethnic, but truly Catholic."

In 1985, Christians in South Africa issued a serious challenge to the Church. In a document signed by more than 150 Church leaders, they declared that a critical "*kairos*" time had arrived, a moment of crisis for South Africa and a moment of truth for the Church. The document critiqued "state theology" and "church theology" that acquiesced in the apartheid system, and called for a "prophetic theology" that would lead to action for liberation.

Since then, two more *kairos* documents have come forth, one from Central America and another born of the collaboration of Central American, African and Asian Christians (*The Road to Damascus: Kairos and Conversion*).

The texts are confessions of faith, denunciations of idolatry, and calls to repentance.

In specific terms, they condemn the oppression of third world nations, denouncing the "web of economic control" that keeps them in poverty, the military force that sustains it, and the co-opting of large sectors of the Church to support the status quo.

"We no longer believe in the God of the powerful and we want no gods except the God who was in Jesus," the signers of *The Road to Damascus* declare. "The true God is the God of the poor who is angry about injustice in the world, vindicates the poor (Ps. 103:6), pulls down the mighty from their thrones and lifts up the lowly (Lk 1:5).

"...What we are dealing with here is not simply a matter of morality or ethics. What is at stake is the true meaning of our Christian faith."

Nan Peete, who visited South Africa

last fall, was struck by the power of the Christian message in the lives of people struggling for liberation.

"For oppressed people, the Gospel has liberating meaning," Peete said. "They see the Church as a place of not only spiritual liberation but of spiritual power for actual freedom and liberation."

The Christians she met there, from Church leader Frank Chikane to a group of elderly women meeting for Bible study in a squatter's hut, found the stories of Scripture vividly descriptive of their own situation.

"The women were reading in the Book of Numbers about the walls of Jericho coming tumbling down," Peete recalls. *Their* walls are tumbling down. They are in a time of despair, but there's a glimmer of hope."

Churches baptize hundreds of new members at a time, Peete said. She met one priest who, with only one assistant, ministers to a congregation of 2500 communicants.

"I don't see here [in the U.S. Church] that sense of urgency for both spiritual and physical liberation from the oppressive elements of our society -- materialism, militarism, racism and sexism," she said.

Peete believes that the Church needs to explore new forms of evangelism at home, by standing with people in the real struggles of their lives.

The Church is evangelizing when it offers a witness of concern and compassion for those afflicted by AIDS, she said. "There are people who are in the Episcopal Church today who are part of it because the Church cared for them and their families when others were rejecting them.

"The evangelism opportunities are ripe in the areas of health care, education, and housing. There are people out there waiting, and I think we have something to offer." T.W.

THE WITNESS

## Understanding Homelessness

Housing, wages and jobs are critical areas requiring vast changes in policy and priorities. But that's not all there is to homelessness. Note something here: The years that saw the deterioration of housing and the growth of homelessness also saw reductions in care for the mentally ill; the appearance on our streets of large numbers of Vietnam vets; huge increases in the use of destructive drugs and in the numbers of children born to young and unmarried women unable to care for them; and an influx of immigrants that changed the nature of neighborhoods in every major American city.

I am troubled by the strategy currently adopted by homeless advocates who narrow the needs of the homeless to one or two things and then try to enlist public sympathy by arguing that the homeless "are just like you and me" or that we are all "one check away from homelessness." That isn't true. Such an approach may muddy rather than clear the waters.

We must go deeper than we have and try -- no matter how hard it is -- to convince Americans to go deeper and allow into their moral frames of reference precisely those they now exclude and who turn up homeless: the different, the supposedly "deviant," the alien, the unfamiliar.

Peter Marin, *The Nation*, 10/21/91

## Toxics on Indian Land?

Native American organizers have engaged in numerous battles in recent years to prevent the construction of toxic waste incinerators and dumps on reservations.

"Nobody else in the country wants it," said James Paddock, a Navajo from Dilkon, Arizona who led a successful fight against an incinerator and dump there in 1989. "The toxic waste company had the idea that because we were minorities, because we are looked on as not being able to defend ourselves,

they thought they could build the incinerator in our community."

Waste company executives say their motive is to help impoverished communities.

"Putting 10, 20, 30 people to work as it gets built will give them a feel of capitalism, and a hope for future opportunity, where there is no hope now," said Maurice Hoben, vice-president of O & G industries.

Native Americans accuse the companies of "using our sovereignty to kill us." To the waste companies, Native American sovereignty means that Indian lands are not covered by state or local permit laws, environmental regulations or health and safety requirements.

Activists also accuse tribal councils of being unresponsive to popular opposition to hazardous waste facilities, and vulnerable to opportunities for graft, corruption and payoffs.

Despite hundreds of attempts, the waste-disposal industry has yet to have a single success in constructing a facility on Native American land, mostly due to grassroots organizing efforts.

*The Minority Trendsletter*,  
Summer 91



## 'Divestment Not Required'

The British High Court ruled that commissioners overseeing the Church of England's investment portfolio need not follow General Synod directives to divest in companies doing business in South Africa. The commissioners defended their investment policy by citing the so-called Charities Law that mandates nonprofit organizations to channel their investment funds into the highest-yielding securities.

ENS

**T**he shadow of Columbus weighs heavily on the descendants of Native American and African people.

From the point of view of American Indians, European "civilization" was essentially "genocide." When Columbus arrived in the Caribbean, Mexico's population was approximately 25 million indigenous people. By the time the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620, Mexico's total indigenous population was one million. It soon became apparent to Europeans that another labor source would be necessary to exploit the natural resources of their new world. And this new source of labor, of course, would come from Africa -- the transatlantic slave trade.

My great-grandmother, who possessed the curious name of Warner Clockster, was a fullblooded Creek Indian. Her people had sought to live unmolested in the pine woods of central Alabama. As white settlers from Georgia and the Carolinas encroached into their territory, the Creeks fought back. But then the ideological descendant of Columbus, a Tennessee slavetrader and plantation owner named Andrew Jackson, decided to "civilize" Creek country.

In the winter of 1814, Jackson led 2,000 well-armed troops deep into the Creek homeland. At the battle of Horse-

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shoe Bend, on 27 March 1814, over 750 Indians were killed and more than 1,000 wounded. Creek Chief Red Eagle was captured and forced to concede 23 million acres to whites. Jackson was awarded three square miles of property to expand his slave holdings.

After his election as President, Jackson refused to honor peace treaties that even he had signed with the Creeks and other Indians. Hundreds of thousands of Indians were forcibly removed from the eastern U.S., pushed 1,000 miles along the "Trail of Tears" into what is today Oklahoma. Many of my Indian ancestors perished along this trail of betrayal and death.

One of the white settlers who took a portion of Creek land was a man named Robinson. He seized and raped one of his household slaves,

extending his domination from the fields into the bed. The product of his brutality was my great-grandfather, Morris.

My grandmother often told me about Morris' early life. When he reached the age of nine, his white father casually sold him on the auction block for \$500, in West Point, Georgia. In family folklore, Morris recalled the tears streaming down his mother's face. Wiping her face with the corner of her apron, she managed to call out a sorrowful goodbye to her son, who had just been purchased by another white slaveholder named Marable. Morris was taken miles away into Alabama, and never saw his mother again.

Morris was trained to become a mechanic on Marable's plantation. He assumed the mask of the loyal slave but stole whites' food from the kitchen and

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tral Alabama.*

## 1492: A personal perspective

by  
Manning  
Marable

*you  
cannot  
come  
with  
a  
conquering  
army  
and  
preach  
the  
authentic  
gospel  
to me.*

SAMUEL  
RAYAN





credit: Sister Helen David

distributed it to the slave quarters.

Blacks engaged in a variety of disruptive activities to retard the production process. Slaves added rocks inside their cotton to wreck the cotton gin; they burned crops and sabotaged farm machinery. Nearly every form of day-to-day resistance was attempted, but always short of open rebellion. Still, slaves constantly heard about conspiracies and even small revolts throughout Alabama.

Sometime during these years Morris met and fell in love with a household slave named Judy Brooks, who lived about eight miles distant on another farm. Such relationships were difficult to maintain; neither Morris nor Judy could know whether they would be sold at any time. But over time Morris had carefully cultivated his master's trust

and was permitted to close the barn and to repair broken tools after dark. Quietly, he made his way into the pine woods, circling down beyond a creek, and after running well over an hour made his way to Judy's cabin. An hour before dawn he returned to his plantation. Morris performed this feat with regularity, dodging night patrols.

Morris' master permitted his slaves to hold regular religious services on Sunday afternoons, and these gatherings often lasted well into the night. The planter may have reasoned to himself that Christianity was good for labor discipline. The Negro spirituals spoke of freedom only in the afterlife, and the Bible taught servants to respect and obey their masters. But for the slaves, the religious meetings were an assertion of their cultural autonomy. Their songs of

praise to the Lord revealed more than accommodation to temporal suffering.

To the slaves the Lord was not an impersonal force. He was real, and he sympathized with them. The Bible was not viewed as a set of rigid doctrines, but as a living, creative work, a set of parables by which people could live a moral life. Black prophetic Christianity gave spiritual freedom to the slaves, and a sense of humanity that transcended the slavery system.

Morris was convinced that the Lord could save him. Providence arrived in the form of the Union army during the Civil War. During the chaos, as the white Marable lay wounded in his mansion, the black Marable saw his opportunity. With a handful of gold dollars seized from the big house, and

*One of the white settlers who took a portion of Creek land was a man named Robinson. He raped one of his household slaves. The product of his brutality was my great-grandfather, Morris.*

two oxen, Morris made his way north with Judy Brooks, into Alabama.

Like many other black freedmen, Morris understood that the best guarantee to freedom was land ownership. He purchased a small section of property near Wedowee, Alabama, and began to cultivate cotton. Through careful savings and backbreaking labor, Morris was able to purchase over 100 acres of farmland in two decades. Black tenant farmers usually occupied less than 20 acres.

When Judy Brooks Marable died in the early 1880s, Morris married Warner Clockster, also a survivor of "white civilization." Among their 13 children, their oldest son was my grandfather, Manning Marable.

Slavery had ended, but freedom never came. Marable and his children

# National Church staff cut dramatically

The current economy and a trend toward voting with checkbooks drastically reduced funding for the National Church. The following people, a handful of whom are retiring, were told they could no longer be employed at 815:

**Terence Adair**, Administrative Services

**William Bailey**, Bookstore -- Administrative Services

**Gwen Buehrens**, Episcopal Migration Ministries

**Noel Channer**, Administrative Services

**Scotland Davis**, Education

**James Dean**, Treasurer's Office

**Sarah Dresser**, Episcopal Migration

**Natalie Elder**, Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries

**Gloria Garcia**, World Mission

**Judith Gillespie** (resigned executive of World Mission)

**Linda Grenz**, World Mission (Overseas Development)

**Tobias Haller**, Communication

**Nancy Hansen**, Presiding Bishop's office

**Barbara Harvey**, Education

**Theresa Healy**, Administrative Services

**Margaret Larom**, World Mission

**Lincoln Lynch**, Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries

**Diana Manister-Morris**, General Convention

**Rita Maroney**, World Mission

**Kathy McKeen**, Communication

**Jeanne McNamara**, Treasurer's Office

**Ruby Miller**, Education

**Earl Neil**, Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries

**Marcia L. Newcombe**, Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries, Social Ministries

**Carolyn Palmer**, Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries

**Richard Rene**, Administrative Services  
**Carolyn Rose-Avila**, World Mission (Overseas Development)

**Sara Saavadra**, World Mission

**Pauline Sowley**, Office of Bishop of Armed Forces (took early retirement)

**Marta Stewart**, World Mission

**William Thompson**, Education, Deployment Office

**Peter Valentine**, Admin. Services

**Alfreda Williams**, Mission Support

**Bruce Woodcock**, Mission Operations

## The 1492 arrival, *continued*

were denied the right to vote, segregated in churches, schools and hotels.

My wife's family, living in Georgia, experienced the same form of racial discrimination and violence. Her brother Michael Etchinson, a police officer in Monroe, Georgia, in rural Walton County, made the mistake of arresting the son of an influential white leader. Thereafter, for several months, he was the target of local racists. His dog was poisoned, his wife received threatening phone calls. Michael understood that he had only days to live and put his affairs in order. In October 1977 he was assassinated by a white man with a hunting rifle.

Four years later my wife's 19-year-old second cousin was lynched by whites, who tied his corpse at the top branches of a tall Georgia pinetree. The coroner claimed it was a suicide.

The legacy of Columbus lives on in the hearts of many white people. There is still a belief that any meager gains achieved by people of color are acquired at the expense of white people.

The myths of discovery, civilization and racism are the direct consequence of Columbus' encounter with the Americas and the Caribbean. The essential cultural justification for all three myths was white Christianity. The image of the humble carpenter of Nazareth was manipulated to rationalize rape, torture, and the seizure of gold. In his ship's diary, on 22 December 1492, Columbus wrote: "Our Lord in his piety, guide me that I may find the gold, I mean their mine, as I have many here who profess to know it." The quest for power and profits demanded the obedience of nonwhites to the icons and idols of Europe.

Europe's dream of economic power, racial privilege and Christian paternalism, which comes together under the

quintessential, has become the historical nightmare of millions of Latinos, Africans, and Native American people. Yet ironically, the quintessential provides us with a rare opportunity to reconstruct the distortions of cultural history. By liberating ourselves from the historical truths of the violent encounter between Europe and people of color, we might begin to write a new type of history, freed from the half-truths, racism and terror.

By recognizing the genocide which occurred in the wake of Columbus' occupation of the Americas, we might appreciate the struggles for self-determination and dignity of Native American people. And by learning from the errors of the past, we might create the foundations of genuine multicultural and interracial dialogue and understanding. In saying goodbye to the myths of Columbus, we may yet discover a common humanity. **TW**



# Epiphany, evangelism and the birth of *The Witness*!

**T**he *Witness* was born in 1917 on Epiphany.

Its stated purpose was to provide a paper that could link parishioners in the Middle West, who were “isolated” by vast distances. The first issue noted that 60 to 70 percent of Midwestern Episcopalians were wage earners.

Its editor, Bishop Irving Peake Johnson, wrote, “We propose to publish a newspaper that the plain man can read and understand. The staff has been told to avoid big words and technical terms. We propose to publish a human newspaper, accounting human touch and human

viewpoints of more value than profound learning or scholastic attainments. We

*In 1917, The Witness intended to be: “instructive and devotional rather than controversial. A plain paper aiming to reach the plain person with plain facts, unbiased by partisan and sectional views.”*

propose to publish a newspaper that shall be instructive and devotional rather than controversial. Now of course this is impossible. For the moment a man

teaches anything definitely somebody denies it and the fight is on. We do not propose to issue a newspaper without teaching definite truth and we hope that we may teach it with some ‘punch’, otherwise we are doomed to failure.”

Johnson promised that the paper would be inexpensive, accessible, faithful to the truths in the Prayer Book and human.

Early issues are a glorious mix of very churchy articles, including sermons, notices about promotions within the clerical ranks and advertisements for parish paraphernalia, and pithy articles advocating the rights of hourly workers and children.

## Joseph Fletcher remembered

by William B. Spofford

Joseph F. Fletcher, well-known ethicist, author of *Situation Ethics*, and a *Witness* columnist for many years, died October 29 in Charlottesville, Virginia at the age of 86. Joe was a teacher, gadfly, and priest of the Church, although he was not active in the latter role.

After my father, long-time editor of *The Witness*, died in 1972, Joe was among a group of bishops, priests, and laity who met in New York to debate the future of the magazine. Obviously, the decision was to reorganize and continue *The Witness*, and Joe’s voice was one of the strongest in favor of it.

In 1931, in the heart of the Depression, I shared a London apartment with Joe. He was attending the London School of Economics and his work there ultimately led to his fine work on Archbishop William Temple. When he returned to the U.S., Dad helped to get

him temporary jobs until he was made the dean of the Graduate School of Applied Religion in Cincinnati. Through that early experiment in extra-seminary education, many later Church leaders received new insights regarding the Church, sociology, economics and human relations.

During World War II, Joe moved to Cambridge. Many of us were intrigued and enriched by his insights in the areas of Church and society. His stress then, as always later, was on love and justice. Although he had not yet written on it, he always used the case method, emphasizing the “situation.”

He explored what it would mean to be a society and culture and world of love and justice. He knew much about post-war communities of renewal, such as Sigtuna and Iona. He was consulted by Fran Ayers and Gibson Winter before they and others founded Parishfield in Brighton, Michigan, a noble experiment.

Twice he was beaten unconscious while lecturing in the South for the Southern Tenant Farmers’ Union. In the 1950s,

Joe McCarthy called him “the red Churchman” (along with others, including my father).

Perhaps the rest is history. When he died, Joe was one of the few “honored Professor Emeriti” of the University of Virginia. Bio-ethicists generally credit him with opening up that field of concern, even as many disagreed with him.

“Joseph Fletcher was a true pioneer in modern bio-medical ethics,” James Childress, Religious Studies professor at the University of Virginia, told *The New York Times*. “And, as the field developed, he challenged all of us through his writings and conversations to think more clearly and deeply about the important ethical issues of our times.”

Joe was always both fun and serious. He had courage and really tried to understand his detractors, never diminishing their humanity. He became more and more a rational humanist, and grew further away from the institutional Church, but as Godfather of our triplet sons, he always knew where they were and what they were about. He was a man of great love and compassion. Thanks, Joe, and if you will allow it, thanks be to God!

**William B. Spofford**, retired bishop assistant of Washington D.C., is the son of long-time *Witness* editor William Spofford.

# The Witness

"Be Shall be Witnesses Unto Me." Acts 1:8  
FOR CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

VOL. II. NO. 75

HOBART, INDIANA, JUNE 8, 1918

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## REPLY OF THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS TO THE DR. NEWMAN SMYTH MEMORIAL

"The House of Bishops has given consideration to the Memorial presented to it, signed by the Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth and the Rev. Dr. Williston Walker on behalf of many others representing several Christian communities.

"While heartily appreciating the earnest plea for the subordination of any partisan or sectarian interests to the cause of a united witness to Christ and His rule, and humbly lamenting the comparative powerlessness at this great world crisis of the Christian Church by reason of its divisions, we cannot perceive in the course suggested by the petition any real remedy for existing evils.

"As in the civil sphere, so in the ecclesiastical, a patched-up peace, not resting on sure foundations, however immediately alluring, would be pro-

We feel convinced that however laudable the intentions of the promoters of this scheme, its execution would have the effect, however far from their design, of adding to rather than diminishing the divisions which we deplore.

The Rev. H. M. Chittenden, Archbishop of the above statement, the appointment of a commission of three Bishops, to be named by the chair, with whom the Bishop of New Jersey can consult in any action that may be called for."

### Death of an Eminent Educator and Priest

## Waterman Hall to Close

War Conditions Compel the Temporary Closing of This Well-known Girls' School, Located in Sycamore, Ill.

A local paper says: Sycamore has met a loss; a real loss. Even though as promised it may be the loss of a small time only, nevertheless it is a big loss to Sycamore. Waterman Hall is to close. Its close makes one of the great disasters of the war.

This war which has been working such destruction to human life, to cities and countries, has sent a message to Sycamore that will be felt in every Sycamore home; every part of our existence. Our social fabric will receive a shock; our stores will feel their losses; to see the beautiful lawns bereft of the young folks who for so many years have made them gay will put a tinge of sadness all about it.

The communication which made

## THE CONVENTION SEASON

### Minnesota

The Annual Council of the Diocese of Minnesota, held at Christ Church, St. Paul, the Rev. Walter S. Howard, Rector, on Wednesday, May 22, was devoted exclusively to business, except the opening service, when the delegates and members of the Diocesan Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary made their corporate communion and listened to Bishop McElwain's address. The Bishop struck a high spiritual note in a brief discussion of the war, and reviewed the activities of the work in the diocese the past year. The work of the Council was completed at an afternoon and evening session. The same officers were re-elected, and few changes were made in the personnel of the principal committees.

The Rev. Dr. Kramer, warden of

munton was celebrated. Bishop Perry officiating, the clerical members of the Standing Committee, the secretary of the Convention and the Rector of St. John's assisting.

At the business session following the communion office, a vote of greetings and sympathy was sent to the senior clergyman of the diocese, Dr. George L. Lock of St. Michael's, Bristol, detained at his home on account of sickness.

Routine business occupied the time of the Convention until the noon hour, when Bishop Perry delivered his annual address. He reviewed the hearty response of the Churches to the appeals of the War Work Commission and other similar agencies. He urged that the Churches continue to be a partner of the nation's enterprise and supply the needed spiritual power for winning the war. The War Commission had asked the Churches of RS04

### The front page of the first issue of *The Witness*, dated January 6, 1917

The early *Witness* is anything but boring. Its editors were pleased to tell readers what to think, but their own politics are sufficiently unpredictable that reading is always a delight. The editors express a loyalty to the Church: "We all believe that this Church stands as a witness for definite truth, and that truth may be found in the Prayer Book."

Early columns were titled *Aids and Helps to a Religious Life; The Kingdom Growing -- Church Extension in Our Day; The Church Family at Work, Play and Worship; Christian Faith and Practice; What the Church Teaches and Why We Believe Her*. Issues included poetry and letters to the editor. Editorials often urged reader response.

The editors were willing to celebrate the fact that a huge number of people came to Sunday worship on Easter after war was declared on Good Friday in 1917. "The Cathedral and many parish churches had the national flag dis-

played. At St. Paul's two beautiful silk flags were given, the one by a daughter of the Dean of the U.S. navy the other by two ladies in memory of their husbands, the one an army and the other a navy officer."

But integrated into this less than spectacular reporting were articles calling on Congress to pass an eight-hour work day for women, and critiques of feudalism and the French aristocracy. The economic analysis seems wonderfully incongruous with the rest.

Johnson declares World War I a "calamity," but goes on to suggest that it is very hard to discern what is tribulation and what is blessing.

"Neither would one who sees," he writes, "the terrible slaughter caused by gunpowder dream that the invention of gunpowder freed the world from baronial castles, with their silent dungeons and suits of mail, which protected beasts of oppression and tyranny.

"... If we had stood beneath the guil-

lotine in the French Revolution, and seen the sight of royal blood flowing freely in the streets, we would never have realized that here was the earthquake out of which was to come the right of peasants to be treated as men."

Before the U.S. entered World War I, Johnson called the war "a demonstration of 'efficiency without conscience.'" He adds, "The same elements that brought about the war in Europe are naturally present in America; in many a conscienceless corporation of capital and of labor, looking only to self interest, demanding only its own special privilege."

The yellowed and crumbling pages of *The Witness* hold a wonderful vitality. It is a privilege to trace through its pages the history of at least one strain of independent thought in the Episcopal Church.

[Articles by Susan Pierce prepared for *The Witness*' 70th anniversary were an invaluable resource.] --J.W.-K.

# Native art

by Blaise Tobia & V. Maksymowicz

*"The year 1992 is a significant one for our people because, after 500 years of being silenced, we have reclaimed our voices... We have overcome many wars and guns, the smallpox blankets, the broken promises and treaties, and the assimilation tactics of the residential schools. We're getting stronger. We have strong voices now and we are using them in all forums and fields -- politically, culturally, artistically, economically, environmentally and socially."*

--Tina Louise Bomberry, a performing artist and a Mohawk from the Six Nations Grand River territory, quoted from the 1992 *Everywoman's Almanac: 500 Years of Survival*.



*Native Americans Discover Columbus*, a pencil drawing by Jan Peterson used as the October illustration in the Syracuse Cultural Workers 1992 Peace Calendar, also available as a poster.

many Native Americans, are no exception. Individual artists and artists' collectives are creating images that they hope will balance much of the officially planned hoopla. Galleries and museums are putting together exhibits on the topic, some of which have already taken place or are in progress, such as *1492 -- Images of What Really Happened* at the Brecht Forum in New York City and *Perspectives from the Other Side* at the art gallery of the California State University at Northridge. The Alliance

for Cultural Democracy is acting as a clearinghouse for cultural activities taking place around the country in 1992 and has dedicated a new publication,

*huracan*, to publicizing the events.

One group attempting to raise an alternative vision of the quincentennial is the Syracuse Cultural Workers, who have dedicated the 1992 edition of their annual Peace Calendar to "the

Native Peoples of North and South America whose wisdom, spirit and pride, in the face of overwhelming odds, have inspired us all." As a community

*"Art created with a sense of integrity has a redemptive power, a healing power which helps us transcend the tragic particularities of our culture."*

*Syracuse Cultural Workers*

*art and society*

**T**he Columbus quincentennial is an anniversary that is mobilizing many of those who are committed to social justice issues to present a variety of alternative perspectives on the Europeans' arrival in the Americas. Those working in the visual arts, including

of socially concerned artists who view the arts as “a critical complement to activism,” SCW publishes and distributes a far ranging variety of posters, cards, books, buttons and T-shirts -- all featuring political artwork that they call “visionary,” meaning images that are not merely critical of the status quo but that can inspire societal change.

“Art created with a sense of integrity has a redemptive power,” they state, “a healing power which helps us transcend the tragic particularities of our culture.” This commitment has led the SCW to feature images by artists from many backgrounds -- African, Asian, European and Hispanic as well as Native American. For 1992, they have added items to their catalog such as artwork by American Indian Movement activist and federal penitentiary inmate Leonard Peltier -- regarded by many as a political prisoner of the U.S. Government.

Another new item is the *Everywoman's Almanac*, a desk calendar created by a coalition of Native American women from the U. S. and Canada and published by the Women's Press of Toronto. *The Almanac* contains essays, photographs, drawings, quotations from Native American women, alternative holidays and a listing of Native Women's Centers and Resources. Of special interest to *Witness* readers might be the essay for April, co-authored by Donna Chavis, a Lumbee from Pembroke, North Carolina, who is employed by the National Council of Churches and is a member of her church's racial justice working group. Entitled “Looking for Solutions,” the essay raises the issue of racism within the Church, and calls it to confession because of the way “it has been complicit in the harm done to indigenous people around the world.”

For information about the Syracuse Cultural Workers, contact P.O. Box 6367, Syracuse, NY, 13217; 315/474-1132.



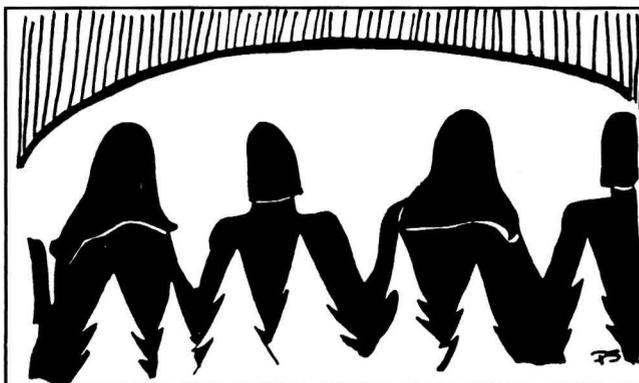
Columbus did not discover this land. Discovery is when you find something new. Yes, this land was new to Europeans but it was not new to the First Nations, who had been living here since the Creator put us here.  
-- Patricia Monture  
Art by Bev Koski



History must be rewritten to tell the truth about who, in fact, were the savages in the history of our contact with the Europeans. It is time to stop teaching the myths.  
-- Sylvia Maracle  
Art by Louanna Harper



Today, they want to terminate our title to the rest of our land, to go in and clear-cut our forests so that they can propose things like a nuclear waste dump for our reservation.  
-- Winona LaDuke  
Art by Mary Anne Barkhouse



We should celebrate every year that we're still here, still alive and that the earth is still surviving even though it's been literally ruined by the greed of the European society.  
-- Phyllis Sewell  
Art by Shirley Bear

# Church unity in suffering

by Barbara Schmitz

**T**he Episcopal Synod of America is creating a non-geographical diocese. People are at odds. In my own diocesan family, we don't agree on everything. Actually, you don't have to look any further than the next pew to know that agreement in the Church is a rare item. Even in a parish, vestries and clergy and people disagree and take sides. Reality these days is that the seams of the Church are getting some heavy tugging.

Now for a little idealism: The Church is meant to be a sign, a sacrament, of unity. The week of January 18-25 is designated as the week of prayer for Christian unity. From the feast of St. Peter (January 18) through the feast of St. Paul (January 25), Christians observe these eight days with special prayers for the Church, that we may be united in one body by the one Spirit.

William Porcher DuBose, an Anglican theologian of this century, wrote: "There is no question that the one thing needed, the one condition of all life, is unity -- unity in itself, and unity with all else; oneness in ourselves and oneness with everything outside us."

Isn't it a little naive, maybe even hypocritical, to have this week of prayer for Christian unity, when our parish, our diocese, our province, our Episcopal Church, even our own families, can't seem to "get it together?"

**Barbara Schmitz** is rector of St. Margaret's, Hazel Park, MI. Artist **Lee Sellick's** work is in *The Every Woman's Almanac*. See p. 20.

Yes, it is, and it will be, as long as we base our unity on issues, position statements, resolutions, persons, or groups.

I used to think our unity was based on having a common liturgy; we were one because we said the same words. But



credit: Lee Sellick

then I went to an ordination service at a Spanish-speaking church, where the bulletin had Spanish on one side and English on the other, and it was one glorious-sounding mess in stereophonic languages. That was an epiphany for

me: our oneness, the sense of unity I felt with those people was not from speaking the same words.

I also used to think that our unity was to be found in our episcopal, hierarchical structure. Seminary destroyed that illusion. Bishops and priests don't see eye to eye any more than laypeople do. Our looking to a person, to an office, for unity, is going to be as futile as the Corinthian church's struggle to find unity by following a certain disciple of Christ's.

I used to think that a common foundation like the Bible or a common confession, like the Nicene Creed, could hold us all together. But they simply don't. People's interpretations differ too widely. What unites us is not a common liturgy, or a bishop, or canons, or Scripture, or creeds; at least not ultimately. Unity does not come about by a bunch of people doing the same thing. Former Archbishop Robert Runcie put it this way: "The fullness of unity for the Christian Church can never be mere bland homogeneity."

Well, then what does make for unity in the Church? Or, for that matter, what makes for unity in a marriage or a friendship? This I know -- that my closest friends are the ones I have suffered with; the ones who have seen me through tough times, the people I have shared my deepest distress with, and the people who have shared their hurts with me.

A while back I attended the ordination service of one of my good friends. Now he and I don't see eye to eye on anything, any issue in the Church. But we've been through a

lot together. We went to theology classes together. We went together to be interviewed for approval to proceed as candidates for the priesthood. We went to seminary together. We've gone through many of the same questions and

struggles. Our friendship was formed by our common call, common journey, common joys and pains.

I had that feeling of oneness again at a service for People who Care about People with AIDS. The oneness arose out of the common suffering of losing someone you love -- your son, your brother, your daughter, your best friend -- to AIDS. What made for the sense of unity? The grief we shared.

Oscar Romero, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of El Salvador dedicated to serving the poor, said: "The union of Christians is obtained not by lips confessing a single faith but by putting that faith into practice: it is achieved around a common effort, a single mission, and it is built upon common suffering." Built upon common suffering -- here is the basis for unity. "What divides the Church is not the actions of the Church, but our lack of compassion. If we want unity, then we must begin by practicing compassion; by responding to another's suffering; to make the cry of the suffering our cry."

In other words, the basis of our unity is our suffering. This is what unites us - our participation in each other's pain, and together our suffering with Christ's suffering.

The communion in which we share, is it not a communion in Christ's broken body and Christ's shed blood? In the eucharist, in every eucharist, we unite ourselves to Christ's sacrifice, his passion, his suffering. When we pray, "Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice," we join our pain with Christ's passion and cross. There is our unity, our oneness: in Christ's suffering which is united to our suffering and pain and which is interwoven with all our suffering, and which is ultimately swallowed up by resurrection, by joy, and by life.

Unity, in Romero's words, is built upon common suffering. Another way of saying that is that it is not our strengths

## Episcopal Synod forms new diocese

Despite warnings and pleas for unity, the Episcopal Synod of America (ESA) initiated its "non-geographical diocese" under the leadership of retired Bishop Donald Davies in Advent.

Earlier, the ESA had circulated surveys asking clergy if they would consider taking early retirement from the Episcopal Church in order to participate in the life of ESA.

Now, clergy and parishioners are invited to withdraw from their current diocese to join ESA's "mission diocese."

Presumably, members of the new diocese will rely on Davies for episcopal functions such as confirmation and will pay their apportionments to the new diocese. In time, it appears, clergy could expect to have their benefits coordinated by the ESA.

Early responses give an unclear impression.

Betsy Rogers of the Diocese of Springfield reports that, when queried, an ESA rector in her diocese said, "I don't know, maybe we'll be members of both dioceses."

David Driver, a Michigan rector and a member of ESA, said "I am very uncertain about the wisdom of it. It seems to me from what I have heard and read so far to be somewhat doomed to failure. If people are in a parish I think they would not want to

make that kind of a break. They call it a missionary diocese, perhaps it's intended to reach those who are unaffiliated."

The ESA says, in its November press release announcing the new diocese, that the purpose of the action is to "spread the Gospel in places where the present Episcopal leadership continues to suppress and persecute biblical Christianity." It says ESA will also "work with other bishops, dioceses, and groups dedicated to the renewal of the Episcopal Church." And it will "pursue reconciliation with the *Continuing* churches."

In the Diocese of Utah, feelings against the new diocese ran so high at a recent Standing Committee meeting that members rejected Bishop Clarence Pope's request for the election of a coadjutor in Fort Worth, because they anticipate, that upon retirement, Pope may take over the new ESA diocese.

Archbishop of Canterbury Carey has said "I urge all Episcopalians to consider very carefully the constitutional implications of this drastic proposal. Any alternative episcopal oversight which is imposed without the good will and cooperation of the entire Province is potentially schismatic."

-- J.W.-K.

that unite us, but our imperfections, our weaknesses.

Healing and reunion are not without pain. But it is only by accepting and embracing the wounds of the other that healing and fusion into the body of Christ take place.

The week of prayer for Christian unity calls us to be idealists. But it also asks us to be realists, to look deeply

into the chalice of wine, to look till we see all our sufferings, there where they become one with Christ's sufferings, where my hurts and your hurts and Christ's suffering and passion become one, and we become one, one body at the altar of God. There we are assured by these holy mysteries that we are living members in the body of God's son and heirs of the eternal kingdom.

# The spirituality of evangelism

by James C. Fenhagen

**O**ne of the earliest accounts we have of the Church's evangelistic ministry is recorded for us in the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. Luke tells us how the apostle Philip encountered an Ethiopian eunuch on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza and, after telling him the story of Jesus, baptized him in some nearby water. As we look at this story, elements emerge that are suggestive of an evangelistic spirituality that were not only reflected in Philip's life but which make sense for us today.

The evangelistic impulse is always a result of God's initiative. Evangelism, in whatever form it takes, comes not from our need to save someone else from the consequences of their life, but out of the gratitude for what God in Christ has given to us. Unless in our inner lives we are in touch with that sense of gratitude, then what we have to give to others is often blunted or distorted by our own need.

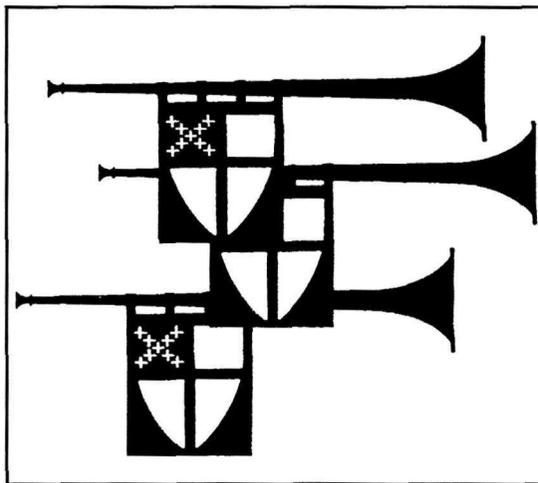
Secondly, evangelistic spirituality involves what I would call a profound sense of spiritual curiosity. Spiritual curiosity is a gift that can be deepened as we learn to talk less and listen more, and we learn this kind of listening by paying attention to the silence of our own hearts. The seed-bed of evangelism is not proclamation, but solitude in which we can learn to listen and connect before we

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**James Fenhagen** is dean of General Theological Seminary. This article is adapted from a recent address. Artist **Rochelle Arthur** works for the National Church.

speak.

Thirdly, when Philip first encountered the Ethiopian eunuch he heard him reading from the prophet Isaiah. Evangelistic spirituality is always rooted in Scripture, but it is rooted in Scripture in



This symbol was designed for the Episcopal Communicators. credit: Rochelle Arthur

a particular way. Kenneth Leech speaks of the need to wrestle, and to brood, and to weed, as we approach the Scriptures. Brooding invites us to use the Scriptures in a contemplative way, not so much to seek answers to the complex ethical problems of our day, but rather to develop a Biblical consciousness that frees us to see contemporary reality from a Kingdom vision. And it is only by constant weeding that we "disentangle the message of the Gospel from the accumulation of cultural baggage with which it has been covered." These are useful images that help us grasp why it is so terribly important for the Word of God to confirm not only what we believe, but

to penetrate those areas of our life where we do not know and do not understand. For it is so often that it is in our unknowing that we share the Word of God with another.

As I look at our world today it seems as if certainty is as much a block to genuine faith as is doubt. For some people, faith cannot deepen because it is so stuck in defending what they know that not knowing is perceived as a threat that must be hidden or denied.

Fourthly, there comes a moment in any relationship when it is appropriate and right to tell the story of what God has done in Jesus Christ. Christian evangelism, therefore, involves discerning the moment -- the fullness of time -- when the name of Jesus can be both proclaimed and heard.

Lastly, the ministry of Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch was brought to fruition through the sacrament of baptism. What makes Philip's ministry of baptism so dramatic is the fact that the person to be baptized seems to take precedence over the need of the Church to preserve its identity or maintain right procedure. The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch was not done "decently and in order." It involved Philip's willingness to risk for the sake of the Gospel and the inclusive invitation that it makes to the world. This would suggest that evangelistic spirituality is concerned more for people than principle.

The spirituality that is called for is not dramatic, or heroic, or burdensome. It is rather a life lived by "the grace of daily obligation" which enables us to build simple patterns of faithfulness and to pay attention to the people and concerns that surround us. This is the kind of sacramental spirituality that prepares us to respond to those moments of grace that God presents to us when inclusion into the Body of Christ is perceived as the incredible gift God intends it to be. **W**

# Two views of Indian mission work

by Tom Trimmer

*Jamestown Commitment -- The Episcopal Church and the American Indian.* Owanah Anderson, Forward Movement Publications, 1988.

*Missionary Conquest and the Cultural Genocide of Native Americans: Case Studies in the Confusion of Gospel and Culture.* George Tinker, Fortress Press, forthcoming, 1992.

Why would a dog bite the hand that feeds it? If the hand also beats the dog in a way that's unmerciful and totally demoralizing, perhaps it would rather get in one good bite and suffer the consequences.

In these two books by Native American authors, both George Tinker, of Illif School of Religion in Denver, and Owanah Anderson, staff officer of the Native American Ministry of the Episcopal Church, have struck out at the hands which feed them. As I read them, however, Anderson's book is only a nip followed by apologies. George Tinker's book, on the other hand, has given his assailant a bite requiring stitches.

In comparing the books, it's only fair to acknowledge that each author carries very different views in mind. *Jamestown Commitment* presents a general overview on Episcopal Church involvement with Indians. *Missionary Conquest*, on the other hand, uses the examples of four men from different denominational structures, to show how they effectively imposed imperial Christianity on a people who already had well-defined religious cultures. I would like to point out that Native Americans never had difficulty in

comprehending or accepting the Gospel as taught by Jesus Christ. Their problem was accepting the gospel of the new Americans. There was *and is now* a striking contradiction between Biblical Christianity and the American gospel.

Anderson's *Jamestown Commitment* ought to be read by every Episcopalian. One can't help but appreciate Anderson's efforts to bring to light the successes of Native American evangelists, both ordained and lay. The names of David Pendleton Oakerhater, Cornelius Hill, Harold Jones, Rising Sun, William S. Cross, Paul Mazakute, Daniel Hemans, Luke Walter, Philip Deloria, and my own relative, Enmegahbowh, are unfamiliar to most white Episcopalians even though one of them is an "official" saint of the American Episcopal Church.

*Jamestown Commitment's* major failing is not detailing the religious genocide supported by well-intentioned missionaries. She mentions that these early missionaries were infected with their own culture, but fails to point out the historical consequences.

Tinker, on the other hand, gives a vivid picture of what good intentions coupled with a sense of cultural superiority can do.

The most vivid point of contact between the two books comes in the treatment of Henry Benjamin Whipple. This Episcopal bishop is considered by many to be the greatest of all North American missionaries. But Tinker states that, while Whipple sympathized with the Indians and attempted to intervene on their behalf, he also required that they cut their hair and give up their traditional ways. Horrified by Army massacres, Whipple eventually -- at the request of the U.S. government -- persuaded the Sioux to forfeit the Black Hills for a reservation.

Tinker writes: "*The story of Henry Benjamin Whipple and Indian people is an example of cultural genocide with*

*clear political and religious aspects. Again we are dealing with a man of the highest moral character who had only the best intention. Not one of his own contemporaries, Indian or white, friend or critic, nor anyone since, has questioned his commitment to the Gospel of his ordination, his love for Indian people, the sincerity with which he argued for Indian people, the sincerity with which he argued for reforms in Federal Indian policy, or his courage and long dedication. Yet it is argued here that modern Indian oppression and dysfunctionality are as much the heritage of Whipple's involvement in the Indian context as the U.S. Calvary or the Federal policies he worked so hard to reform. Whipple engineered the government's theft of the Black Hills from the Sioux people, finally breaking the back of Sioux resistance. Whipple was a man of his own times and especially of his own cultural heritage."*

In her book Anderson mentions the theft of the Black Hills, without mentioning Whipple's involvement. My impression is that Owanah Anderson's apparent timidity may stem from diplomacy in order to keep from jeopardizing her position which has allowed this marvelous lady to make real change in the Episcopal Church.



If you want to know more about Native America, I recommend both books. If you want to understand why Indians are not willing to celebrate 1992, read George Tinker's book first. But it was Owanah Anderson who said, "Asking Native Americans to celebrate 1992 is like asking the Jews to celebrate Auschwitz." 

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**Tom Trimmer**, whose Ojibwe name is Owosh-Keday-So-Quay: (Blackbird), is a deacon in the Diocese of MI.

“**T**he parochial schools I was sent to tried very hard to change me,” says Virgil Foote, rector of Mazakute Episcopal Mission in St. Paul, MN. “They didn’t want me to be an Indian. They thought that if we were to change, and do away with our culture and traditions and live like the whites did, then we would be better Christians. And I tried that. I forgot about my heritage. I almost lost my language. I was always ashamed of myself. Many nights I wished that I hadn’t been born a Lakota. I wished I were like the white people, so that I could be a good person.

“I thought that maybe by going to seminary I would understand how to be a good person, that I would understand God better. But I began to realize that if I was ever to understand God, I would first need to respect the gifts God had already given me in my own traditions. I also realized that, in order to be proud of myself, I couldn’t spend my time looking back on the injuries that had been done to me. Rather, I had to use what happened in a positive way.”

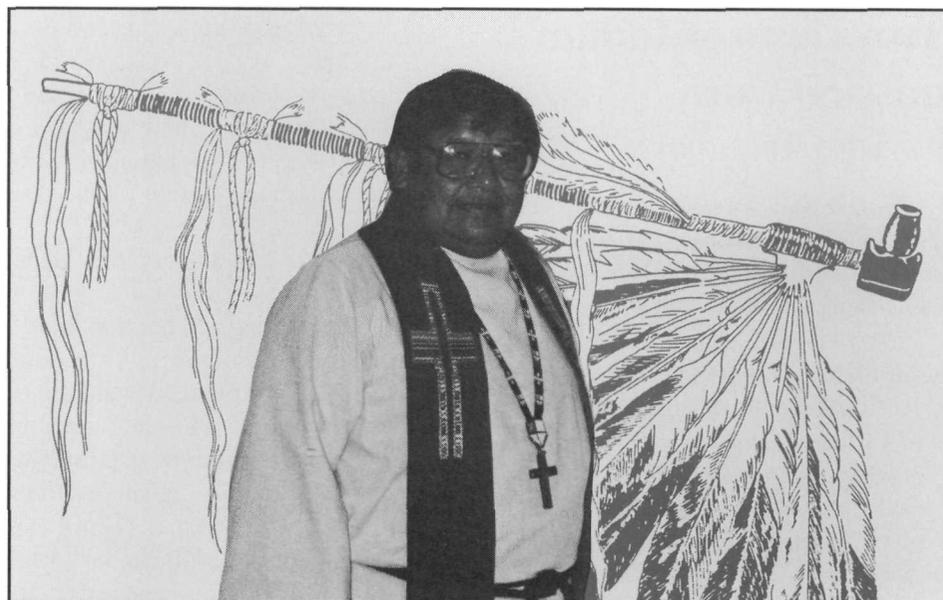
Foote’s ministry was shaped by those experiences. His congregation, which includes Ojibwe, Sioux, Winnibago, black, white and hispanic people, began its life as a house church and now meets in small church building owned by the Diocese of Minnesota.

Named for one of the first Native American priests in the area, the church is small and unimposing in a rather rundown section of the city. But inside, the sanctuary is quietly dramatic, a potent mixture of Christian and Native American symbols.

“Sadly, a lot of our people who have been forced to forget about their culture

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**Craig Smith** of Silver Spring, MD, recently visited Mazakute during a cross-country vision quest of his own. Pipe art from *Native Nations*, 175 5th Ave., NY, NY 10010.



Virgil Foote, a Minnesota priest, integrates Christianity and the traditional way.

## ‘Christianity and Lakota tradition: one and the same’

By Craig R. Smith

are now having a hard time recovering from what was done to them. These are the ones I’m trying to reach out to help, as well the younger ones who are coming up, so that they might not go through the same things I went through.”

The church offers resources. It can help people learn how to fill out job applications, navigate the social welfare bureaucracy, find homes, and survive court appearances which usually result in a disproportionate number of Indians going to jail.

A great deal of the outreach at Mazakute, however, revolves around the liturgy. Foote has integrated symbols of the “Traditional Way” into Rite II Sunday eucharists, burning sweet grass instead of incense and placing medicine flags by the altar. The flags were gifts

from different tribal medicine men, offered so that the spirits from their altars would always be present.

“We have a healing liturgy the first Sunday of the month, and in it we use the ceremonial pipe,” Foote said. “Just as with anointing or the laying-on of hands, we use the pipe to touch people, to pray with them. And there are certain parts of the service where we use the drum.

“But if we’re going to really involve people, we also need to vary our language. In our hymns, we might sing the first verse in Lakota, the second in Ojibwe, the third in English. And in the prayers, sometimes I say *Wakan Tanka*, the Sioux name for God. In Ojibwe, it’s *Giche Manitu*; in Winnibago, it’s *Mauna*; in English, *Heavenly Father*: there’s an immediate connection, and

then people are able to identify with and have ownership in the service. It lets us respect one another's traditions, and helps us hang onto our own.

"We also take off our shoes when we go up onto the altar. That's because it's sacred ground just like when Moses was in the presence of God at that burning bush, and was told to take off his shoes. We show respect for that sacred area."

Mazakute Church offers regular Inipi, or Sweat Lodge, services.

"It's a place of healing. We all go there to pray, to share each other's burdens."

Asked how he integrates aspects of Lakota spirituality which are not normatively Christian with his role as an Episcopal priest, Foote said:

"I try to share the things that are identical. The way the Bible instructs us to love God with all of our mind and body and spirit and strength is the same as in the Traditional Way. The way we prepare ourselves for the Vision Quest or the Sun Dance is the same way we prepare ourselves for Confirmation or Baptism. It's all about linkages. And if

people have any questions about a tradition, whether Christian or Native American, then we sit down together and talk,

using examples from Scripture and our own lives."

Asked why, after reclaiming his

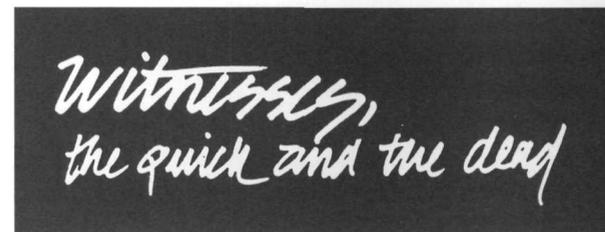
native spirituality, he would continue to embrace something that essentially came to him as "white man's religion," Foote protested, "You don't understand. It's one and the same. What I came to see was that in claiming my culture and tradition, I'm claiming Christ, I'm claiming God. God acts in creation, and is in the things he has created."

"I went to seminary and tried to understand Christ from books, but instead I got more confused. I found that I had to go back into my own culture to understand Christ. It was why I went on a Vision Quest -- in fact, Christ's temptation was the first Vision Quest -- I went up on a hill in the wilderness without food or water and did what he did, fasting and praying. It rained on me for four days and four nights. It hailed, and I was tested: I had to deal with myself, with my sins, with my spirit."

"And there I found myself. I looked

within, I was a Christian. I looked within, I was Lakota. The point is, instead of trying to control people, we need to let them have ownership of themselves and their own culture and tradition. It's the only way we can build a world where each of us can be proud of the gifts God has given us and if we don't, we'll end up destroying the world, and ourselves with it. But we can't see that, we're not listening. Instead, we keep trying to find the answers outside."

"I think we have a big responsibility," Virgil Foote explained, "to get back to the basic things: to treat the things of God, the sacred things, with



respect and everything created by God is sacred; and to treat each other with respect, regardless of skin color or culture or language: this is loving God with all one's mind and body and spirit and strength." TW

### Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. Your name was probably drawn from another publication's mailing list for this one-time offer.

We've sent this issue to you because it deals with questions of evangelism and culture.

For 75 years, *The Witness* has also published articles critiquing economic and foreign policy from a faith perspective.

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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!



credit: Daniel Hall, 9

Jim Hubbard teaches homeless kids to shoot photographs in a project called *Shooting Back*.

**February Issue:**  
Homelessness and the arts!



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*Free Sample Issue!*  
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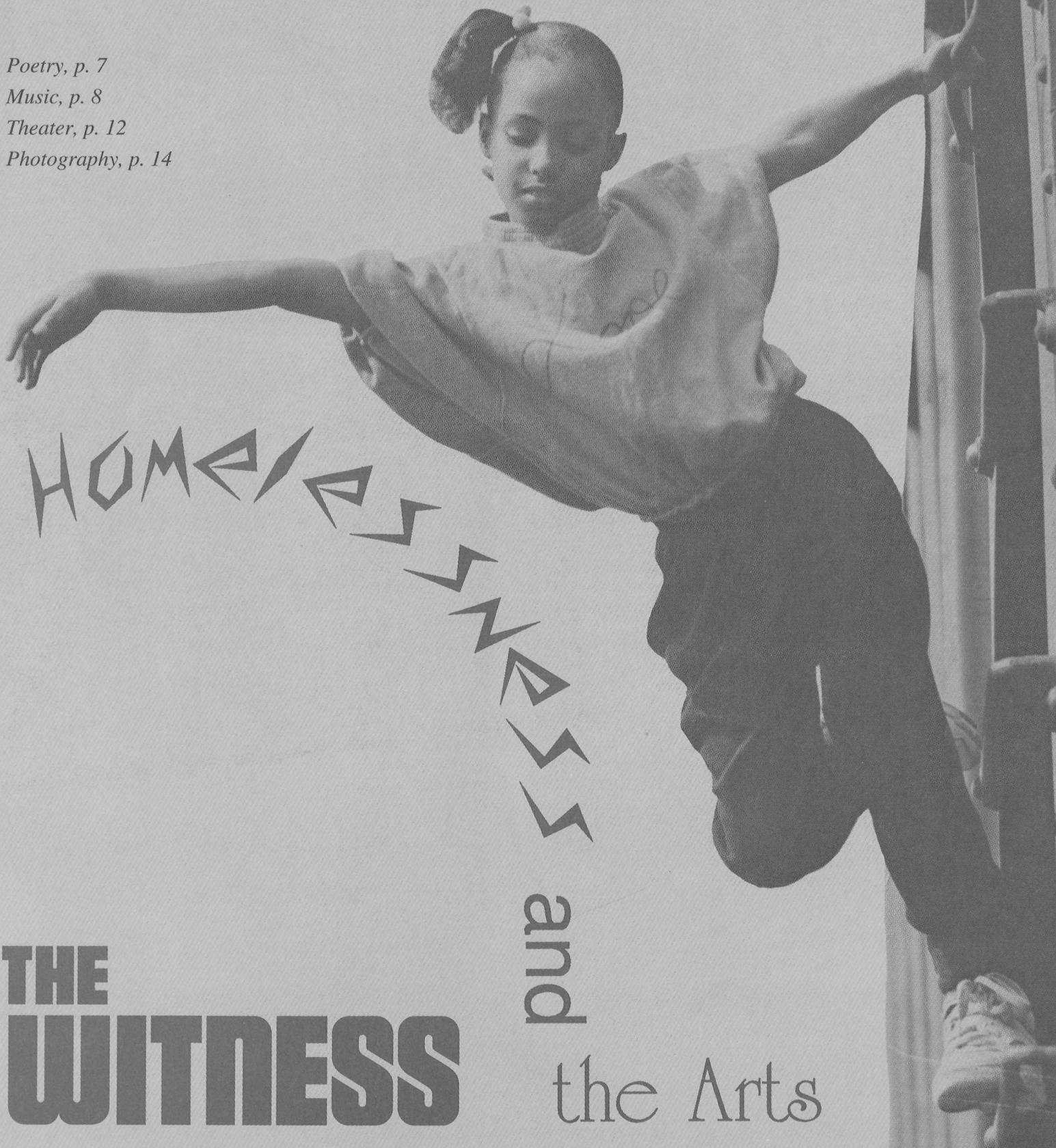
HOMER, ALEXANDER  
AND

and

the Arts

# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75, NUMBER 2 • FEBRUARY 1992



## Delighting in December issue!

THANK YOU for sending me a complimentary copy of *The Witness*. The first item that caught my eye as I puzzled over what I had received was the letter from Fred Blanton [December '91]. I knew I had to read on! Though I do not consider myself either pagan or new age nor do I belong to the Episcopal Church, I knew I was probably among friends. The rest of the magazine did not disappoint me. Enclosed is my \$20. My moratorium on purchasing additional periodicals just ended. Finding time to read this one will not be difficult.

**Carol E. Roth**  
Olathe, Kansas

I CAN'T LET one more minute pass without writing to congratulate you on the December issue of *The Witness*. The artwork is exceptionally beautiful -- from the cover to the Judy Chicago pieces inside.

The articles and poems are excellent. Particularly touching is your piece, "Raising Children." My husband and I have attempted to raise our children in a socially responsible manner, but we don't often get an affirmation in print. Like you, we can "... offer our daughters [and sons] the company of people of great courage." So

thank you for your gift of affirmation at a time when our hearts are focused on the birth of a tiny child in the East who would herald a new world order.

Tonight will be the last meeting of a course I teach at the Hartford Seminary on eco-justice. I intend to take the Jerry Mander quote (from *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Rise of the Indian Nations* in "Short Takes" to read to them. It exactly makes the point I've been trying to make that there is no other way to begin to heal God's creation except through the active engagement (politics, direct action, joining in on the side of those negatively affected, etc.), and that pious or new age

spirituality, or distorting Native American spirituality to our consumption, will not do.

Thanks for everything. Just keep it up!

**Anne Rowthorn**  
Salem, CT

THANK YOU for the sample copy of *The Witness*. I really did feel as though I had found a friend in the mailbox after school today.

Your article on "A woman clothed in the sun and stars" also gave me courage as I read, "And within us something is waiting to be born, something God-given and sacred. Something frail and dependent on us for its very blood and growth." The act of writing, whether for the Portland newspaper or for an academic summer course, is always an act of birthing, and what I have to say is so often "small and frail," but it needs still to be said.

In "Raising children," you wrote of "planting and harvesting." One of the hardest lessons of my life is that we can't protect even the children in our care, but we can't stop trying either. And so for my one son still at home [after a daughter's death], I still get out the Jesse tree each Advent and tell the ancient stories; at school I sponsor the Amnesty International group, even when it dwindles to two students; and I keep on asking God which fields I should be sowing.

Thank you for the rich harvest of *The Witness*.

**Mary Lee Wile**  
Yarmouth, ME

THE NEW LOOK of *The Witness* is striking. I love the way you are using art and color in the layout. It is well integrated into the subject matter and leads the eye all the right places.

The last issue was as lovely as I've ever seen *The Witness* look. A real test, as far as content is concerned, is the fact that daughter Beth read every article of that issue and commented to me on how well it was done.

**Jim Lewis**  
Raleigh, NC

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MAGAZINE to receive just before Christmas! Thank you.

I especially appreciated your article on the

effect Lucy had on the various pained people of the Mideast. (We also did an issue on Women of Israel: Jewish and Arab-Palestinian.) Seems we have values that are congruent.

**Helen E. Hughes**  
Editor, *The Creative Woman*  
University Park, IL

MY SUBSCRIPTION, gifted to me this past year, has been *most stimulating and exciting*, with the December issue bringing me, a Quaker lifetime pacifist and social activist, new insights into Christmas *in re*: Motherhood and parenthood for us all!

**Charlotte Frantz**  
Buffalo, NY

WHAT A PRESENT and controlled passion is your December issue. In the language of a grandson, "Awesome!"

Your orchestration of color, grace, agony of torture and birthing leads through each page of this magnificent tribute to the fortitude, courage and wisdom of women. And through these women, a hope in faith for peace in the world. Many, many thanks.

**Sara Morrison**  
Cedar Rapids, IA

THIS IS A NOTE OF APPRECIATION for *The Witness* in general, and the edition we received yesterday in particular. The stories of mothers and children were very moving and much appreciated.

"Facing the dragon in El Salvador" and "Mother and child team" shared important information on El Salvador in a very sensitive manner. Thank you.

**Interfaith Task Force**  
Central America  
Los Angeles, CA

## Disputing the December issue!

I RECEIVED A SAMPLE copy of your magazine. I would never consider subscribing to such an anti-semitic magazine. First you have an article saying that the Palestinians were driven out of their homeland by the Israelis after the creation of Israel, which is



untrue. The Arab population were told they could stay and have the same rights and privileges as any Jewish citizen but left because their *own* leaders urged them to and because of their fears. Then in another article there were comments about the Israeli "invasion" of Jerusalem in 1967! Look in any history book and you'll read the truth about that! Israel was the country that was invaded by the surrounding Arab countries. It had to fight for its very existence after being invaded without warning on one of the major Jewish holidays, Yom Kippur. Your articles are very inaccurate.

As a Christian, I have never been able to understand the attitude of most churches toward Judaism. It would seem, to me, natural and reasonable that the two religions would be close since the roots of Christianity are in Judaism and the earthly mother of Jesus was Jewish. The religion He was brought up in was Judaism. Yet you have an article in which people write of wearing a goddess pendant and of goddess worship, while you have two anti-Semitic articles. I cannot understand this in a magazine that calls itself Christian.

I don't even want to hear of your magazine again. It's people like you that make it difficult for me to explain why I am a Christian when my friends ask me how I could possibly follow such a bigoted and irrational religion.

**Fiona Bolstod  
Brainerd, MN**

**[Ed. Note: I'd give a lot for your version of history to be accurate. It has been disappointing and confusing for many of us to learn that Israel is not a blameless, holy nation. Perhaps there was a heresy in imagining any state could be. In any event, it is not an attack on Judaism to criticize the actions of Israel any more than it is an attack on Christianity to criticize the U.S. On the contrary, it is consistent with the prayers of the Hebrew prophets to call on all nations to act on behalf of the stranger, the widow and the orphan. The positions taken in *The Witness* are consistent with those held by several Jewish peace groups, including Peace Now, Yesh G'vul and the Women in Black.]**

—J.W-K.

## Considering abortion

HOW REFRESHING! I believe that I read correctly in an Editor's Note within the Letters column in the Advent-Christmas, 1991 issue of *The Witness* that one can be a liberal and at the same time not embrace abortion enthusiastically and wholeheartedly.

It is refreshing to read in *The Witness* that one is not dismissed immediately if she or he objects to the oppression of people of color, the pollution of God's good earth, and the restriction of the legal rights of our citizens and at the same time stands for the defense of the unborn.

**W. Frisby Hendricks, III  
Binghamton, NY**

## Power and abuse

GREAT ISSUE! Especially liked article by Sarah Dunant -- "Holy women don't feel pain?" It fits so well into work I am doing on my D.Min. at Boston University. My focus is on the Church's responsibility to offer ministry to adult female survivors of childhood/adolescent sexual abuse. To date the Church has remained a silent voice -- cautiously denying that some faithful women have been unable to come to the Church for healing because the Church denies the suffering of women.

**Debby Elder  
Associate Rector, Christ Church  
Alexandria, VA**

## Correction

THAT WAS A WONDERFUL ARTICLE you wrote about Josie Beecher in the December, 1991, issue of *The Witness*. It tells a story about her mission that she herself has not been able to express in her newsletters. She is truly a dedicated and courageous young woman, and it is a privilege for me to support her and her work by coordinating the mailing of her newsletters.

I was urged to write you because of an amusing mistake in the article. Josie does come from the State of Washington, but *not*

the Diocese of Washington!! Our Episcopal Diocese in Western Washington is called the Diocese of Olympia, and our Bishop is the Rt. Rev. Vincent W. Warner, Jr.! An easy mistake for those who don't live in the West.

We wish you and your new staff all the best wishes as you pursue your editorial tasks.

**Eleanor T. Hall  
Lopez Island, WA**

**[Ed. Note: Apologies for the the error. One of our board members found it less than amusing.]**

## In response to our Advent letter

FOR MOST OF MY LIFE I've been self-employed as a lawyer and writer. Now I find myself a year away from 60, and for the most part "self-unemployed." So when I got your December 6th letter, I expected it to be a request for a contribution, and thought: "Oh, dear!" Imagine my surprise when I found your Hymn to Peace. The bright, cheerful, positive issues of *The Witness* mean a great deal to me, beginning with their art work.

**Edward Ross  
Houston, TX**

**And in response to our concern in that letter that the U.S. will initiate another war:**

You are 100% nuts!

**[Ed. Note: This was unsigned, but was postmarked Birmingham, AL and came with a pro-life sticker on the envelope.]**

*The Witness* welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate letters of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868.

## THE WITNESS

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# THE WITNESS

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Cover: **Boxcar pose**, Shawn Nixon, 18, *Shooting Back*, 1901 18th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20009; 202-232-5169. (see page 14.)

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Scattered in imagination: moving beyond guilt

And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.'" And he said, "All these I have observed from my youth." And when Jesus heard it, he said to him, "One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." But when he heard this he became sad, for he was very rich. Jesus looking at him said, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" Luke 18:18-24 RSV

**I** hate this Scripture cite. I don't know what to do with it. I feel smug when applying a social critique to the first world, but when I turn it toward myself, as I must, I feel cornered.

I recently changed my route home to avoid the men who jump in front of cars to wash windshields for money. More and more corners in Detroit have such tenants; some carry signs: "Will work for food." Some are women.

I stare at these people's faces trying to discern if they're addicts, if there is some reason why they suffer and I do not.

The suffering here is increasing, as it seems to be throughout the nation. Michigan's Governor Engler recently eliminated all public assistance to able-

---

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Photographer **Shawn Nixon**, 18, is a participant in *Shooting Back*, see article on page 14.

bodied adults without children and coincidentally eliminated a variety of medical benefits to the elderly.

Advocates estimate that 90,000 people are becoming homeless as a result. Single-room occupancy hotels in the Motor City

are closing because the state no longer pays the rent. All sorts of private service agencies (as well as the libraries, the Detroit Institute of Arts and Detroit Science Center) have cut their staffs radically. The governor's sensitivity to his actions is illustrated by the fact that

he recently volunteered his time to star in a series of T.V. commercials making appeals for homeless pets.

Photos of Depression-era food lines



credit: Shawn Nixon

*Visions of today's homeless become nightmarish. They invade the corners of my mind. I do not know these people; I do not want to know them. And I do not know what to do with my sacred text.*

start to haunt me. Visions of today's homeless become nightmarish. They invade the corners of my mind. I do not know these people; I do not want to know them. And I do not know what to do with my sacred text. I can feel guilty. I can

imagine giving away what we own and landing my family on the street. I can write a check to the local shelter. I can rationalize.

This issue of *The Witness* is offered as an alternative to changing the route home.

Many people are discovering, seem-

ingly simultaneously, that the arts offer a way for the homeless, and those who are not, to meet without the spectre of archetypal nightmare visions and self-recrimi-

nations.

Parishioners at Cass United Methodist who stand sock-footed in the gymnasium following the directions of a mime who wants them to use their bodies to express hope or pride or desire feel awkward and intent. It does not matter, for that moment, which of them have shelter for the night. (See page 12.)

The lyrics of the 1970s evoke memories for all of us. Participants in the *Credo* program (which was designed for drug-addicted U.S. sailors) have discovered that recovering and articulating fears and hopes through music can generate a spiritual well-being. The experience crosses class lines. (See page 8.)

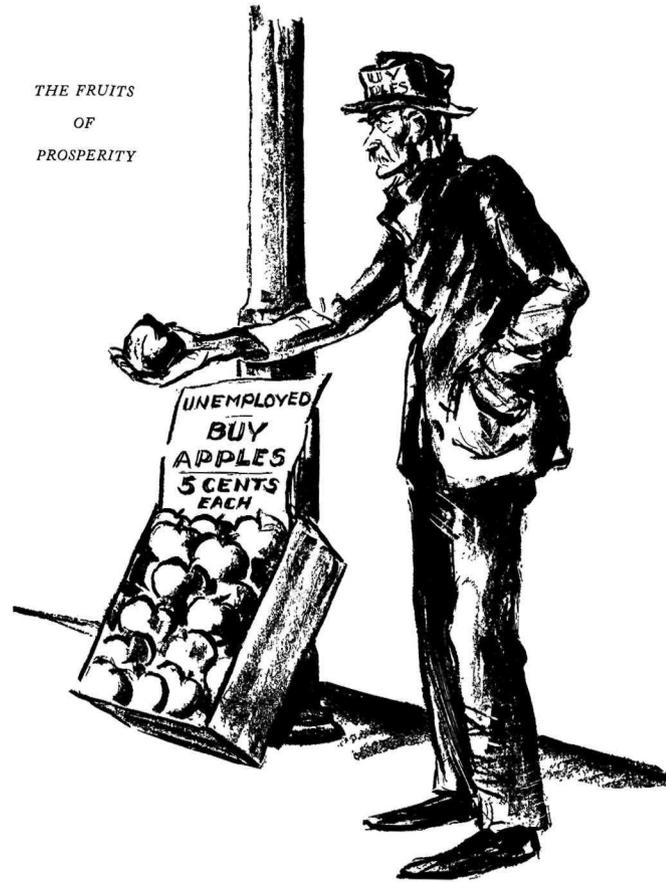
Meanwhile, a Chicago library where the homeless were congregating opened the space for poetry readings, and the work cuts through our defenses and confusion. (See page 10.)

Jim Hubbard, a UPI photographer who decided to teach homeless kids to shoot photos, says they capture images he could never get. They can cross thresholds that we might not be able to and they carry us with them. (See page 14.)

There is something exciting about the fact that when we reach into the core of who we are to produce a work of art, we speak from a center, from a terrain that is familiar to one another. This recognition

*Many people are discovering, seemingly simultaneously, that the arts offer a way for the homeless, and those who are not, to meet without the spectre of archetypal nightmare visions and self-recriminations.*

THE FRUITS  
OF  
PROSPERITY



Those resident on street corners in 1931 in the September 24, 1931 *Witness*. credit: Clive Weed

does not change or simplify Christ's mandate. But, with luck, it may transform the archetypal energy that flows through the crisis.

I went to a service at Cass recently. As has been true for a long time, parishioners were ethnically and economically diverse and perhaps one-quarter developmentally disabled. Now, a large number of homeless people have joined them. They come because the church hosts and supports the *Up and Out of Poverty Campaign* which militantly plants tent cities in Detroit and at the capitol to illustrate the crisis. They are a gutsy, indomitable, irreverent group of people who have been arrested and had their tents destroyed repeatedly by the Detroit police. They are an icon of how one can approach God through anger and disenfranchisement. How one can draw on that terrain we hold in common and

convert addiction and self-abuse into a creative, if hugely confrontational, work.

Marion Kramer, a hard-hitting welfare advocate for years, and her husband General Baker, who helped organize the Black Revolutionary Union Movement in the 1970s, arrived late and sat with their two children in the pew in front of us. When Kramer responded to an altar call and knelt in her military fatigues for prayer, my expectations, the imagination of my heart, somersaulted. *God is at work.* I knew suddenly that Christ presents us with more than a philosophical conundrum. I don't have answers, but I am more able to meet the eyes of the people resident on street corners. There is a tiny well-spring of hope emerging in me and a confidence that God is on the move. By the grace of God, drawing on that deep terrain within, we will be as well.

— J.W-K.

# Laid Off

by Michele Gibbs

empty-handed  
they hurry from habit  
that assembly-line years  
have geared them to  
but now,  
no job in sight  
they fight  
for dimes from passing strangers  
hunt  
for a piece of wood to whittle,  
a body to beat  
till it succumbs  
taking on the shape  
that mates us in defeat.  
anything that comes in reach.  
even yesterday's news, rolled up,  
will do for battle.  
something known, at least  
to mold and hold  
to distinguish us from cattle.  
for hands unused to rest  
toil's test is easy  
compared to this festering frustration  
foisted on them by the factory's production freeze.

*Michele Gibbs is a Chicago-born artist, politically active in Detroit and overseas, who now lives in Mexico.*

"Not much movin' now," says one  
already missing a thumb  
lost in happier days  
when the line he worked would always run.  
"If this was war  
they'd send us home with more than this."

No lie.  
some record that we fought and did not die;  
a discharge with honor meritorious service  
above and beyond all call --

something, minimally,  
for the blankness of the wall we stare at now.  
"We could even celebrate that kind of peace."

As it is, our blood, our sweat,  
the pieces of ourselves that we exchanged for bread  
mean nothing.

"Might as well be dead."

or, as another brother said,  
"Just count us among the missing."

# Bag Woman

by Dudley Randall

Wearing an overcoat in August heat,  
Shawls and scarves, a torn and dirty dress,  
Newspaper shoes, she squats in the Greyhound terminal  
And rummages through two bags, her lifetime treasure.

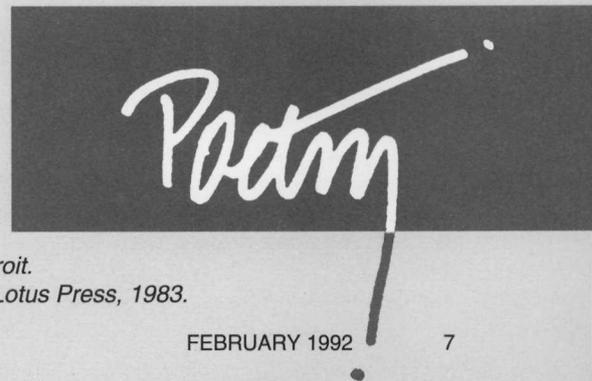
She mines waste baskets for her food and clothes,  
Scavenges in the streets with sparrows, pigeons --  
Isolate, with fewer friends than beggars have --  
Another stray cat or abandoned dog,  
She sleeps where cats and dogs sleep, in the streets.

Sister, once did you suck your mother's milk,  
And laugh as she fondled you? Did Daddy  
Call you his Dumpling, Baby Girl, his Princess?  
And did you flirt with him, bending your head,  
And, giggling, kiss his eyes through your long lashes?  
Did some boy love you once, and hold you tight?  
And hotly know you through a summer night?

Or were you gang-raped, violated early,  
And from that trauma drifted down to this?  
Or, born defective, abandoned to the streets?

Sister, I do not know. But I know that I am you.  
I touch your rags, clasp your dumb eyes,  
Talk with you, and drink your fetid breath.

*Dudley Randall is poet laureate of Detroit and founder of Broadside Press, Detroit. A Litany of Friends Lotus Press, 1983.*



# Over troubled waters

by Sarah T. Moore

*Isn't it a pity, isn't it a shame, How we take each other's love/ And cause each other pain. Forgetting to give back/ The love we have received/ Isn't it a pity?*

George Harrison

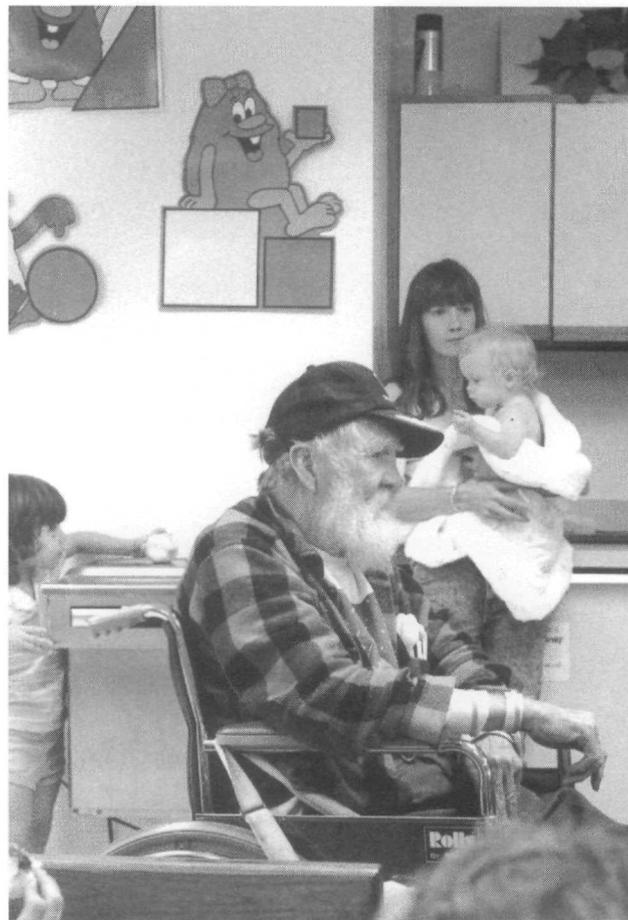
**F**or two-and-a-half months wheelchair-bound Steve Powell slept on a cot alongside hundreds of homeless men in the downtown Salt Lake City shelter. On the other side of the warehouse-size room slept Jim Hunt.

Both saw signs tacked on the shelter walls: "Do you want to spend a weekend listening to music? If so, call this number to attend *Credo*."

Independently, each responded. That fall weekend Powell found himself carried up inaccessible steps by groups of strangers. They created a pallet from concrete blocks and wood so he could easily slip off his wheelchair onto a waist-high sleeping platform. In two days, both men found friends and began their first steps out of the homeless shelter.

*Credo* is a weekend of community-building, spiritual discovery,

and self-renewal. Using contemporary music as a springboard for discussion, people of varied backgrounds, known by first name only, develop relationships that resemble a healthy family.



credit: Jeffrey Turner, 9

*Credo* is "acquainting people with the reality of the love of God through people," said Donald Harris, an Episcopal priest and director of *Credo Institute* in Williamsburg, Va.

As a U.S. Navy chaplain, Harris developed the "people to people" program in 1971 to help young drug and alcohol abusing sailors construct a value system and find direction in life in the chaos of the Vietnam era. Now a well-established Navy chaplaincy program, *Credo* has branched out to help others deal with issues of alienation, displacement, loneliness and spiritual hunger.

Students at the College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Va., explore issues at *Credo* weekends. In April, *Credo* will be used as a spiritual component of a nationwide health care program for "burned out" executives. This winter Grace Cathedral, San Francisco is exploring ways *Credo* can help that city's destitute. Last spring *Credo* launched a pilot program to the homeless in Utah.

Peter Chase, vicar of a church in Bountiful, Utah, suggested to Harris the idea of offering the program to homeless people.

"As good a program as a shelter or food pantry is, it's only a part of the solution," Chase said. "People need a sense of empowerment and self-worth. The *Credo* weekend is a time to capture that sense of dignity.

"Music is a powerful medium," he said. "People listen and say, 'Gee, I really relate'— whether it's a motherless child, a dysfunctional adult, a pregnant mom in poverty. It breaks barriers, inhibitions, and you talk about things you wouldn't usually talk about, because you hear performers talk about it in the lyrics. It generates a common denominator."

"Music enables inarticulate people to articulate," Harris said. "It goes underneath and touches emotions and memories and enables people to talk and be in touch with that experience."

Sarah Moore is editor of the *Diocesan Dialogue*, Utah's diocesan paper. Photographer Jeffrey Turner, 9, is a participant in *Shooting Back* (see page 14) and took this photo at a shelter in Reston, VA.

Opening with messages of interior pain and despair, the weekend begins with music like Leonard Cohen's *Bird on a Wire*, Janis Joplin's *Ball and Chain*, Kris Kristofferson's *Sunday Morning*, and John Lennon's *Nobody Loves You*.

Saturday morning tunes include *Captain Jack* by Billy Joel and *Eleanor Rigby*. By afternoon, selections by the Doors, Harry Chapin, Judy Collins and the Beatles evoke discussions on interpersonal pain. By nightfall social pain is addressed through songs by Simon and Garfunkel, Tracy Chapman and Cohen.

Sunday includes a meditative walk, a eucharist, and music by George Harrison, Bob Dylan, and Jefferson Airplane. By afternoon, the group turns to James Taylor's *You've Got a Friend* and *Bridge Over Troubled Waters* sung by Willie Nelson. Closing is a celebrative atmosphere, with music such as *Circle Be Unbroken* by Joan Baez and *All You Need is Love* by the Beatles.

"It's not a concert," said Chase. "It's very painful and first creates a mood of alienation and anger. But as the weekend progresses the music unravels alienation, despair and unkindness to others and people realize there is a common humanity."

The first Salt Lake City weekend drew a small response from homeless people, but brought together a lawyer, a student, an accountant, an inventor, a sculptor, a day-care director, a psychologist, three priests and a banker. This group helped plan a second weekend in October, which drew 15 people, among them Powell and Hunt.

"Credo weekend provides two principle elements of Christian practice," Carole Merrill, an actress and food bank coordinator who participates in *Credo*, said. "Table and music. You eat together at table and listen to songs, like psalms in church."

"I really believe the Holy Spirit is the ultimate group leader of *Credo*," said Merrill. "You wouldn't sit down and choose those [people] with extreme educational backgrounds unless the Spirit entered in and there was a willingness of people who come from the establishment to be real, honest and repentant."

Powell, paralyzed from the waist down eight years ago from a roll-over car accident during a ski trip in Utah's canyons, found that *Credo* helped him gain focus on life. In the Salt Lake City men's shelter while searching for affordable wheelchair accessible housing,

Powell had been divorced, admitted to four nursing homes over 18 months, maintained little contact with his family in New York and felt abandoned.

"I had a goal while I was at the shelter," Powell stressed. "I wanted to find a place to live. But I made 600 calls and went to 400 places and couldn't find anything."

Hunt, a former professional wallpa-

perer and tile layer, had been through a divorce, lost a job, and moved from Maine to Florida to Las Vegas to Utah. He sought out Salt Lake because of suggestions from a person he'd admired from the Mormon Church.

After *Credo*, Hunt and Powell joined forces to move out of the homeless shelter and find an apartment. Hunt has a job at a local department store and is returning to commu-

nity college in January to study radiology. Powell moved his furniture out of storage where it had been for two-and-a-half years. Having worked in medical support in Vietnam, he hopes to certify as a nurse/anesthetist. Both men will help put on the third *Credo* for homeless people in mid-January.

"It amazes me," said Hunt with calm assurance. "*Credo* works." TW

*Music enables inarticulate people to articulate. It goes underneath and touches emotions and memories and enables people to talk and be in touch with that experience.*

— Donald Harris

*Credo is not a concert. It's very painful and first creates a mood of alienation and anger. It breaks down barriers and you talk about things you wouldn't usually talk about.*

— Peter Chase



### Utah's shelter Benefit

*The Diocese of Utah recently sponsored an art show to benefit homeless shelters. Some of the art exhibited was created by homeless artists. (See Witness profile on page 26.)*

by Edward Lifson

**I**n recent years, public libraries have often become unofficial shelters for the homeless, sometimes to the chagrin of library staff and readers. But in Chicago, one librarian began offering coffee and cake to the homeless who found refuge among the books. Then she issued them library cards, accepting their shelters as home addresses. For Thanksgiving, the Chicago Public Library main branch provided a forum for the voices of a previously unacknowledged source of new literature.

Authors belong in the public library," Ingrid Leslie of the Chicago Public Library, says. "Regardless of your condition, of how you are living, with a home or without a home, your work as an author belongs in the library and the library is that venue for you to read that which you write."

Eileen Winters, who is homeless, offered this poem, called Hickory Street:

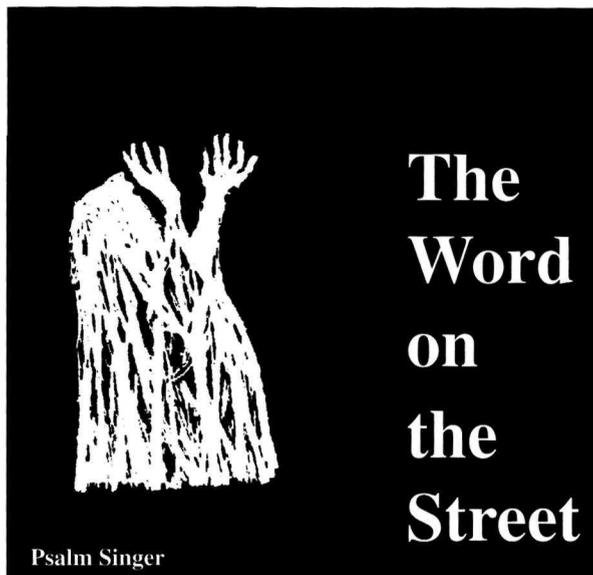
*Oh I'd like to live on Hickory Street,  
where the end of the rainbow and the garbage meet.  
I'd love to live where necessities are free,  
dumped in mountainous piles, conveniently.  
I'd like to live just a dream away  
from the heart of Chicago at the break of day.*

Jackie Townsend, a homeless poet, talks easily about her days with boyfriend and poet, Dino. They lived for a year on the streets of Los Angeles, sleeping in cardboard boxes.

"We'd be in the box and he'd say, 'Jackie, don't throw the box away, because I've got a poem on it.' You know, he'd even scratched out a poem on the box. I'd have to be careful to get the poem off of there and then when we'd get some paper . . . then the typewriter came."

The old Royal manual typewriter ended up in a shopping cart, being shared with other

This article was adapted from a National Public Radio report from Chicago. Artist **Robert Hodgell** lives in Bradenton, FL.



## The Word on the Street

Psalm Singer

homeless writers whom Townsend and Dino tried to convince to share their voices.

"An artist has the edge over most homeless people because they have somebody to appreciate their work," Townsend said. "They get this wind back in their sails that's been taken away for a long time and it's hard to take this away from them, you know. Once they, they get on a roll and people start appreciating their art work, whether they're visual artists or they're poets or writers or even actors, it starts a new person out of them. They want to do more."

Dino, who is now a member of the prestigious writer's organization PEN, Poets, Essayists and Novelists wrote the following poem for Townsend when they got their first hotel room:

*We've come a long way through the pain and the stress,  
heartaches, loneliness, sadness and all that other mess.*

*Yet we walked hand in hand, caring all the way,  
understanding and trusting and loving more each day.*

*I lived a fast life and thought I knew all about love,  
but this time I found an angel straight from heaven above.*

*God had to have sent her. She couldn't have come on her own,  
for I'm a man of the world and I mostly walk alone.*

*But now there's two of us sharing a life meant for one.*

*Loving, caring and sharing, and making life lots of fun.*

*Tomorrow's not promised to me, so today is as precious as gold,  
for this night I know in my arms an angel I will hold.*

Joe Galler, a counselor for homeless people, who spent time

in prison for grand theft and once slept on the streets of Nashville, TN, suggests that homelessness may intensify poetry.

"Being in that environment created certain emotions which allowed me to pen some of this stuff, you know. Depressions, loneliness and the feeling of

*"An artist has the edge over most homeless people because they have somebody to appreciate their work. They get this wind in their sails that's been taken away for a long time." — Jackie Townsend*

being lost, rejected, angry. It brought to the surface a lot of emotions which probably, if you have a normal life, aren't as intense. I'm sure there's a lot of shoeboxes in different places filled with poetry." **TW**

## Vigil for the Environment

Episcopal women's groups are planning a nationwide prayer vigil to coincide with a United Nations committee session which will decide the UN agenda on the environment. The UN committee will meet from March 3 to April 5 in preparation for the UNCED conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro this June.

The vigil will begin on March 8, International Women's Day. Its intent is to pray for the inclusion of the issues raised in the Women's Agenda which emerged from the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet, held in Miami last November. The women's agenda addresses issues of women's empowerment, debt and trade, land rights and food security, biotechnology, militarism, consumer ethics, reproductive freedom, and worldwide commitment to respect and care for the environment.

Different organizations have agreed to sponsor each week of the vigil, and to invite local congregations to participate.

## Gulf War C.O.'s Face Racism

"[The Pentagon's policy on conscientious objection is] rife with bias, racism and violation of due process . . . Perhaps the most eloquent testimony comes from Tahan Jones, a 21-year-old Marine reservist from Oakland now awaiting trial at Camp Lejeune for refusing Persian Gulf orders while his C.O. application was pending. As a African-American with little formal education, Jones came up on the short end of the C.O. application process. Like all C.O. applicants, Jones was assigned an investigating officer: a superior from the same military base. After a single interview Jones's investigating officer, who was white, concluded that Jones was 'of marginal intelligence . . . incapable of articulating any discerning thoughts or perceptions concerning such subjective matters as conscientious objection to war.' Experiences like those of Jones — the presumption that legitimate C.O.s are, as

he says, "white and well-to-do, educated and intellectual" — are common among imprisoned Gulf War resisters. Indeed, much of the political significance of Gulf War objectors resides in their ethnic and class identities. Many, like Jones, are African-Americans. A startling number of the most visible and outspoken objectors, including [Erik] Larsen, [Yolanda] Huet-Vaughn and Sam Lwin . . . are either immigrants or have immigrant parents, from nations like El Salvador, Burma and Poland. For them, the Gulf War evoked historical, family or cultural resonances easily ignored by more insular Americans."

**Bruce Shapiro**  
*The Nation*, 1/20/92

## Boycott Continues

Neighbor to Neighbor, the San Francisco-based peace group which called for the boycott of coffee containing Salvadoran beans, notes that even as negotiators in New York reached an agreement on a cease-fire in El Salvador's civil war, there were signs that many forces within the Central American nation have not yet resigned themselves to peace. El Salvador's National Council of Churches, a strong supporter of the peace process, said an Episcopalian priest captured on January 3 by the National Guard had been pressured by interrogators to implicate the Council's leadership in "subversive" activities. On January 6, the National Council of Churches again came under fire when the "Secret Army of National Salvation," a right-wing death squad, released a letter "condemning to death members of the board of directors of the National Council of Churches."

Neighbor to Neighbor asks Americans to continue the coffee boycott.

**In These Times**  
1/15-21/92

## Episcopalians United

Todd Wetzel, priest and publisher of the magazine for *Episcopalians United*, finds hope in the financial problems of the

National Church and commends financial boycotts: "The national church offices now feel pressure as numerous dioceses begin to cut back their support. As that pressure increases, it will have a dramatic effect."

In a ten point plan, he says: "Withhold from your parish the percentage of your financial support sent to the national church office through the diocese. This is an issue of conscience that you should pursue only after seeking God's will through prayer.

"Hold the funds in escrow to show you are not decreasing your giving to the Lord's work. Notify the parish that you will contribute the money as circumstances in the church change."

**United Voice**  
November, 1991



Short taxes

## Sound Familiar?

In an article titled "Freedom of Speech in the Household of Faith," J. Frederick Voros, Jr. laments a trend toward monolithic thinking in the Mormon Church. "Unfortunately, in Mormonism there seems to have emerged a false dichotomy: there are loyal members, who avoid difficult issues and express only praise of the Church, and there are its enemies." In support of open thinking and debate, Veros points out that Jesus "sat daily teaching in the temple (Matthew 26:55). And as he sat there, he fielded subtle, difficult, even insincere questions. And while the hypocrisy of critics angered him, he never intimated that they should not question or even argue with him. He answered all, and sometimes thunderously."

**Sunstone**  
October, 1991

# Theater and homelessness

by Nichole M. Christian

“**T**hat’s not right,” Gregory “Robo” Jackson says as he paces up and down the aisles of Detroit’s Cass

United Methodist Church, in his tattered sweatshirt, army fatigues and white tube socks. His steps are quick; his eyes are intense.

Only two hours remain before people will file into the church for the premiere of *Dreamlight*, a mime drama about the homeless. Jackson is the lighting and audio technician and he knows that if he fails, so does *Dreamlight*. So he checks the speakers one last time and calls to his assistant to cue the music.

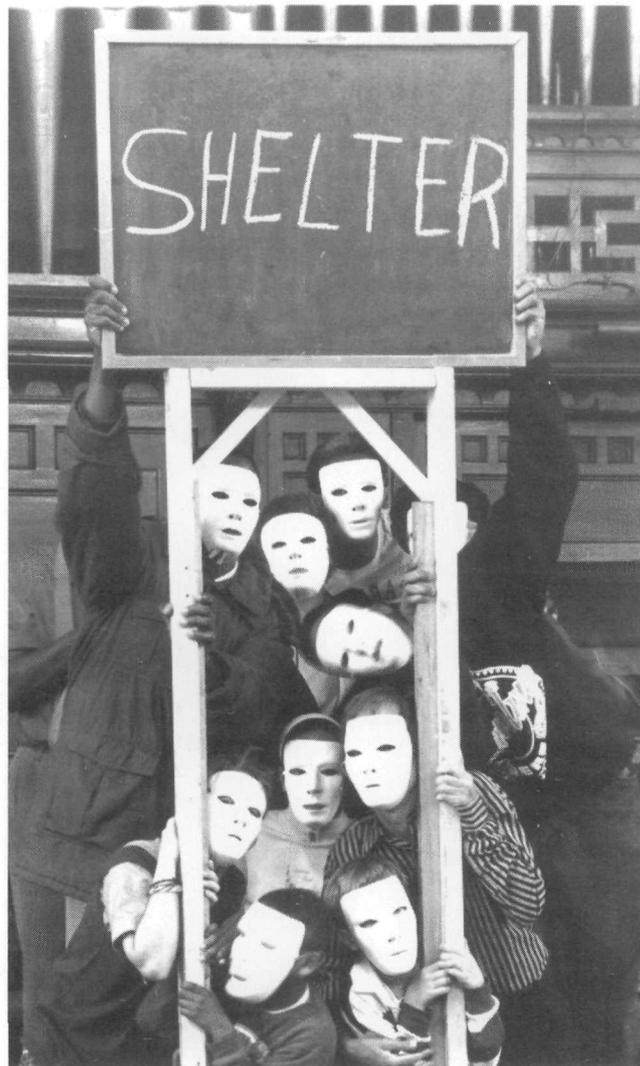
“Perfect,” he says as a blast of music shoots out of one of three speakers surrounding the sanctuary. Jackson isn’t a trained light or sound expert. “It’s just something I learned in high school.”

Jackson may not be one of the 15 characters in the 50-minute play, but he knows the story by heart. It is the story of his life, he says. Jackson has been homeless since last summer, when he lost his General Assistance welfare benefits. At least 90,000 Michigan residents have lost similar benefits since Governor John Engler abolished the program in Michigan last fall.

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**Nichole Christian** is a Wayne State University student and intern at *Newsweek*. Photographer **Greg Reynolds** lives in Ann Arbor, MI

While *Dreamlight* juxtaposes the nation’s homeless epidemic with the story of Mary and Joseph, and the difficulty they faced trying to secure housing, author



The cast of *Dreamlight*, a drama that re-creates the nativity.  
credit: Greg Reynolds

and director Michael Lee says his play doesn’t just compare stories, but also questions whether things are any different than they were 2,000 years ago. “There is a question of faith in both instances. The things that are happening to people are forcing us to ask if there is a God and why so many people are suffering.”

Jackson agrees. “Mary and Joseph’s situation wasn’t that different from what I go through.”

When a homeless character saunters up the aisle collecting pop cans and half-smoked cigarettes, Jackson says he sees a part of himself. When two beggars search for food and money, again Jackson sees himself. And when Mary and Joseph can no longer afford to pay their rent and are forced from their home into a stable, Jackson says that feeling is all too familiar. Except his stable is a modern-day shelter, or any other place he can find on the streets of Detroit.

“Dogs are living better than humans these days,” says Jackson, a 40-year-old Vietnam veteran. “People think that just because the city offers shelters that things aren’t so bad for us. They’re wrong. Those shelters are set up like farms. At 7 a.m. they kick you out until 7 p.m. That’s just like sending a bunch of cows out to pasture. Even a chicken has its own coop. He can come in and go out whenever he wants.”

Lee, a professional mime who studied under Marcel Marceau, first created and produced *Dreamlight* last year with a church youth group in Allen Park, MI. This year, he recruited his cast and crew from the warming center and tent city near Cass Church. Besides Jackson, four

other homeless persons are currently involved with the play. The rest of the cast consists of parishioners with homes. Some have dropped out and others have joined in. Lee double-cast some roles to avoid disaster.

Working with homeless people is “a lot less predictable,” Lee acknowledged. “Just getting people to rehearsals was tough — rehearsals are not the top priority in a homeless person’s life.”

But the struggles were worth it, he said. “The natural abilities in people were incredible. I was doing more coaching than teaching.”

Cast member Marcus Johnson thought he understood the plight of the homeless. He had seen their faces splattered across the pages of newspapers and he heard their tales of despair on the evening news.

But still, he says, “I thought it was their fault. I thought most of them were using drugs or lazy. I couldn’t feel sorry for them.”

When Lee asked him to portray a beggar, to dress in ragged clothes, to act as if he were eating a discarded piece of bread, Johnson says, “I got a chance to feel what it’s like. I really tried to get into it, so that I could know the feeling. The play gives people who don’t have to be homeless a chance to see that they’re human.”

Johnson is not alone. Lee, who lives about 40 minutes outside of Detroit in Ann Arbor, says he also has had to change his mind about a few things. He credits Jackson. “There is a misconception that homeless people are retarded or ignorant. I shared it,” says the 30-year-old. “I was really impressed with the way Robo thinks things through. I’m not sure why I bought into the misconception.”

The play can be educational for both audience and participants, Lee says. “We want to raise consciousness. We want to reach people from the suburbs who don’t think very much about the issue.”

Lee says three more performances of



**The angel Gabriel (an Ann Arbor mime) offers the gift of light to Joseph (Dennis Davis, a homeless Detroit) and to Mary (Evelyn Gray) in a dream.**

credit: Greg Reynolds

*Dreamlight* are scheduled in local suburbs, and a tentative fourth in Chicago this spring.

Cast member Dennis Davis says he’s praying that the show will go on. “It’s a lot more fun playing like I’m homeless than it is being out there,” says Davis, who portrays Joseph and is homeless himself.

Jackson continues to pace the floor. This time he is offering to make last minute adjustments to the props. “Everything is fine,” Lee responds. Jackson

goes back to his makeshift command post.

“This play is a work of art; it’s going to make a difference,” Jackson says of the play. Originally, he said, “I was committed to it because I’m committed to God. I

didn’t care if no one showed up to see it. Then I realized that I can touch people through this play and if I touch just one person, that person will touch another and the truth about what’s really going on out there will begin to spread.” **TW**

*This play is a work of art; it’s going to make a difference. If I touch just one person, that person will touch another and the truth about what’s really going on out there will begin to spread. — Gregory Jackson*



Man and woman in room, Carpenter's Shelter, Alexandria, VA credit: Marvin Edwards, II.



## *Shooting back*

by Jim Hubbard

**I**n the early 1980s, while a staff photographer at UPI in Washington, D.C., I began documenting the life of the homeless. After a few years, I focused on homeless families. Increasing numbers were forced to live in cars, parks and hotels and motels for temporary shelter, and among these shelters was the Capitol City Inn, a Washington welfare motel and hell-hole in the power center of the world. Whenever I took pictures of families there, the children wanted to hold and look through my camera.

Many of my visits to the motel included Dion Johnson's family. In their room, I was struck by the drawings and colorings and other art forms that had been created by the four Johnson children and hung by their mother, Vanessa. Besides the bright spirit coming from within each child, the art was the brightest light in the room.

On one particular afternoon, as I sat with Dion and his mother, he showed me some snapshots he had taken of his family and friends. I offered Dion an opportunity to take pictures and learn more about photography. He accepted and his powerful smile stretched from ear to ear.

Once the idea was born, Dion and I spent several hours each week strolling through the shelter, working to discover and train this child's creative side. As Dion and I walked around looking for pictures, several hundred others who lived at the Capitol City Inn ran up and asked to take pictures with the big professional camera Dion was holding.

Dion and I looked at each other as the little hands grabbed for the camera and knew we needed help. The next week I started a campaign of recruiting staff and freelance photographers.

---

**Jim Hubbard** created the *Shooting Back* project. This article is adapted from text in *Shooting Back*, Chronicle Books, San Francisco, 1991. Photographers **Marvin Edwards**, **Chris Heflin**, **Calvin Stewart**, and **Charlene Williams** work with *Shooting Back*.

My favorite picture that I took: that's me and my brother and my sister with a pigeon. My brother had found a pigeon, and the pigeon had been shot in the wing. My brother was trying to fix it, so I just told my brother to look at it, and I just put the timer on, focused it and I ran over there to get into the picture. I want to be a photographer. Comment to Charlene from a schoolchild: I saw your picture. I saw it from across the room and I felt drawn to it. The girl on the left, her teeth show, like she understood the pain in that instant, experienced it for the bird.



Bird, Washington, D.C.

— Charlene Williams, 11

When I go back into the shelters, you know, I understand what they're feeling. I don't talk to them a lot about the environment because I know it's a low-life situation. They become your friends, so they open up to you more if you talk to them with the sense, like, I've been there before.



Fred, General Scott Hotel, Washington, D.C.

— Calvin Stewart, 17

Shelter life is a journey into despair. It is life on the edge. Many of the shelters I visited were the scenes of round-the-clock violence, drug dealing, abuse and cases of parental neglect, and widespread chaos. They were places not fit for a child. At the Capitol City Inn these horrors to children occurred on a regular basis. This dingy and dilapidated two-story former tourist motel, situated on a major six-lane road, became home for nearly 700 children and their parents. Between 1987 and 1989, five children died there. Two were stabbed to death by their over-burdened father. One was hit by a train behind the shelter while playing the shelter children's favorite game of tag with the train. There wasn't even a playground for these children except on worn-out mattresses that they pulled from the trash. Another child died from a mysterious illness, and yet another burned to death when the mother left the room to find food.

These children were hungry for attention and someone who would help channel their powerful and creative energy. Even though they reside in the U.S., these children had the same look of abandonment in their eyes that we have seen in the Romanian orphans and starving children in Asia and Africa.

Part of the intent in working with the children was to convey to them that they are important, as important as my own children.

There were few rules in this photographic project. The idea was simple: the children would document their world inside the shelter or within one block of the shelter. They used the professional camera after a photographer taught them the basic use of it.

The pictures are as diverse as the children who took them. They are both simple and elegant; they are honest beyond imagination. They capture moments impossible for an outsider to have ever perceived or experienced.



Playing by the tracks, Alexandria, VA

— Chris Heflin, 9

**This is the kids on the train tracks, jumping. They are at the shelter. The best part of the shelter is the train track.**

We learned firsthand not only of the violence the children must cope with but the enormous strengths used to keep families together under some of the most adverse conditions possible.

The title of the project came from the lips of a nine-year-old boy who, while holding a camera almost as big as himself, said, "We're shooting back." This young prophet made the remark while walking past used syringes along the curb

in a neighborhood where shootings are a regular occurrence. I told him he was a genius and he had given us our name.

In 1989, the nonprofit Shooting Back Education and Media Center was established in Washington, D.C. The first media center within a shelter was created at The Carpenter's Shelter in Alexandria, VA. Jim Hubbard is now in Minnesota, beginning the same work among the homeless in the Midwest.

TW

# *The* **WITNESS**

CHICAGO, ILL., SEPTEMBER 24, 1931



THE MACHINE AGE  
*Can the Church Meet the Challenge?*

*Editor*  
IRVING P. JOHNSON  
*Managing Editor*  
WILLIAM B. SPOFFORD

# THE WITNESS

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## *Choose Your God*

*By*

PROFESSOR F. WARD

Professor at Union Seminary

IF WE are to get to the root of our difficulties, and remove the inequality which is the underlying cause of the business cycle we must adopt a method and plan for distributing national income according to the needs of human beings and the need for a continuing economic order. This means that we have not only to build up at the bottom, but also to cut down at the top. It is the unwillingness to face this necessity which is leading us into all the partial plans which are being proposed for the prevention of unemployment. There is no way out until we deflate the fictitious claims on income, which are in reality claims on the lives of others, that are now concentrated in this country in the hands of a few people. We must lower the income of those at the top, and raise the income of those at the bottom. That is the only way to the permanent prevention of our present situation.

But, as religious people, we have a bigger job ahead of us than that. By now we should be well aware of the nature of that god behind our commercial machine, the god whom the poor worker could not understand, a god terribly cruel and altogether false, yet a god who is more worshipped and obeyed in the work and life of the American people, than is the God of their churches and synagogues. The name of that god is Mammon. He has no redeeming quality. He does not require from his worshippers the generosity, the courage, the sacrifice which are at least the redeeming feature of the cult of Mars. It is time now to turn our worship to a God who will not let us throw workers aside, whether technicians or daily laborers, because they cannot keep pace with the belt, a God who will not dwell with any people unless they continually work out justice and righteousness, as well as intelligence. He is the God we must set up. But to set Him up, we must kill this false god who is leading us to destruction. Kill him with the weapons of facts; kill him by analyzing situations and exploding the false beliefs that otherwise will sustain

his power, long after the time when he should have been destroyed; kill him you must if you hope to find a way out of this situation.

## *A Lesson In Economics*

*By*

UPTON SINCLAIR

THERE is nothing about the world we live in so important for us to understand clearly as the secret of the kink in the capitalistic system, which throws people out of jobs and makes unemployment and hard times. It is the cause of poverty; it is the cause of crime; it is the cause of competition for foreign markets, and therefore of armaments, and therefore of war — and if there is anything more horrible than modern war as we saw it some twelve years ago, I don't know what can be. . . .

We have today in America every means and opportunity for the production of plenty and comfort for every person in the country who is willing to work. . . . Only one thing is needed, and that is that we should break the profit system, that we should change our system of production for the benefit of private individuals into a system of production for use and for the common welfare of all. That is the program which lies before the American people at the present day. There is no other program because there is no possible thing that you can do with the machines. You can either keep them for profit and let the great masses of the workers starve, or else you can take them and use them for the benefit of all.

This system of producing the world's goods for private profit cannot continue indefinitely. The crises become more severe, and the only reason why they don't become completely unendurable is because of the fact that in between we have wars. It must be made as plain as possible that the peoples' salvation, their peace, their happiness, their chance in life depend upon understanding the system under which we live and acting in concert, politically, industrially and through educational channels to change from a senseless, dog-eat-dog scramble for private gain into planned production for the social good.

**I**ssues of changing neighborhoods, skyrocketing rents and the subsequent increase in homelessness are ones that are of special concern to many artists — especially those in urban areas like New York, Chicago and Los Angeles, where it has become almost impossible to walk down a street without having to maneuver around someone sleeping on a steam grate or huddled in a cardboard box. In addition, as neighborhoods like NYC's SoHo and East Village show, artists often wind up as pawns in the gentrification game. The scenario goes like this: soon after the artists move into a neighborhood they can afford, art galleries and trendy boutiques follow. Local bodegas close. Apartments go condo. Long-term residents find themselves with no place to go. And the artists move on, searching for another affordable area.

During the last ten years, many artists have been struggling to use their visual skills to put a face on homelessness. Some have become involved with community groups like the “Not For Sale” poster project in 1984; some have organized exhibits around the topic such as the Detroit Institute of Arts Art Foundation’s show in 1989; some have designed posters for New York’s Coalition for the Homeless (Peter Cohen’s image of Jesus appeared on one with the text “How can you worship a homeless man on Sunday and ignore one on Monday?”); and a few, like LA performance artist John Malpede and NYC painter Annie Q., have worked directly with the homeless — making art in a collaborative process.

Still others have felt the need to put their messages out loudly and clearly, and to the broadest audience possible, by using venues usually dedicated to commercial advertising. In 1988, artist Sandy Straus created considerable controversy with a New York City billboard depicting the city’s most notorious “street person,”

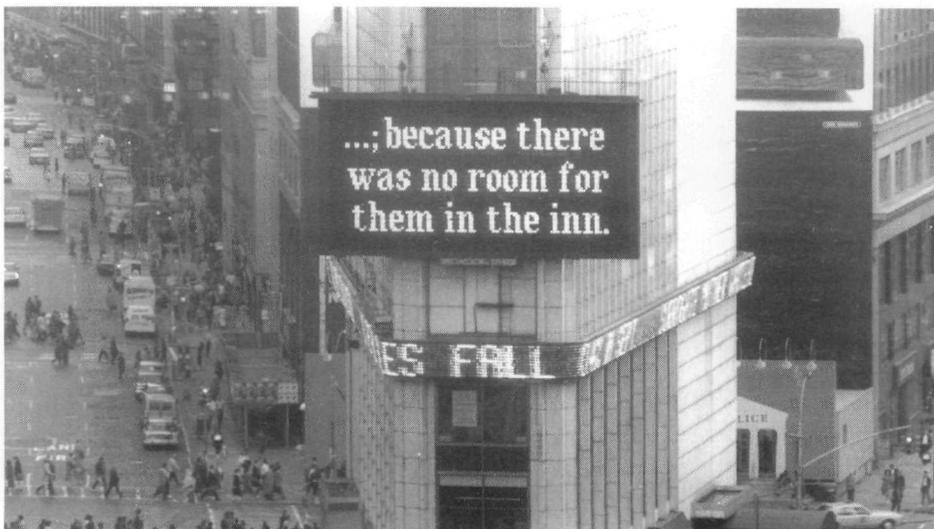
## ‘Messages to the public’

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz



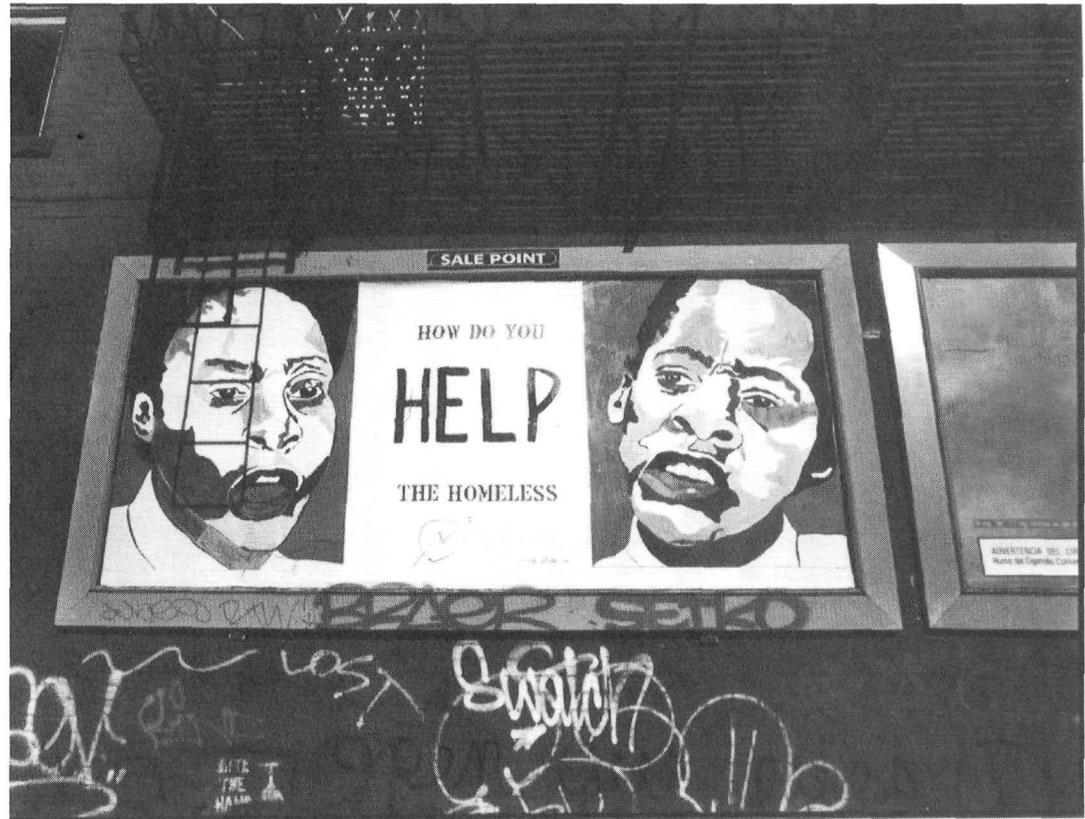
Anton Van Dalen’s ‘Message to the Public’ in Times Square. Sponsored by the Public Art Fund.

Photo: Jenifer Dobbins-Seacor



Billie Boggs, pictured here,  
tried to *reject* social services.  
Billboard by Sandy Strauss.

photo: Blaise Tobia

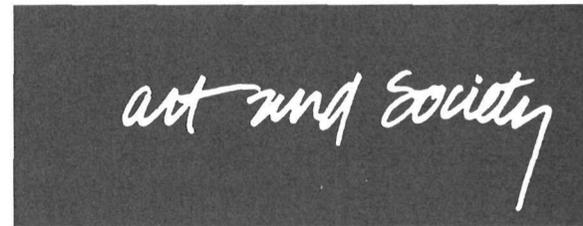


Billie Boggs (a woman who fought for the right *not* to be helped by social service agencies). In asking “How do you help the homeless?” the billboard combined a direct challenge to action with despair at the seeming hopelessness of the problem, and alluded to the very real complexities inherent in helping others without destroying their dignity and self-determination.

Perhaps one of the largest audiences ever made available to artists came through the Public Art Fund’s decade-long project, “Messages to the Public,” wherein visual artists were given time on the giant Spectacolor lightboard in New York City’s Times Square. Each month a different artist produced a 30-second sequential message (animated, in color and sandwiched among standard commercials) that was broadcast 50 times a day and viewed daily by an estimated 1.5

million people. Those people included prosperous businessmen, panhandlers, tourists, prostitutes, runaway children (Covenant House is around the corner), drug dealers, working people, newly arrived immigrants and the homeless — pretty much a full cross-section of urban society. In September of 1988, photographer Anne Turyn’s message asked, “What if everyone had a home?” Martha Rosler’s 1989 sequence of images showed deteriorating public housing and dollar signs, and drew connections between federal budget cuts and real estate speculation. She concluded with the statement, “Housing is a Human Right.” And Anton van Dalen’s lightboard showed a figure huddled on the ground with the Biblical reference, “...; because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Has any of these heartfelt artworks made a difference for the homeless them-



selves? Quite possibly not. In fact, the Spectacolor lightboard is gone, and homelessness seems to grow at a rate beyond our capacity to imagine. But artists have not accepted homelessness as an excuse for inaction, and have recognized that, in making political statements through their art, they must reach out beyond the limitations of the traditional artwork and the traditional exhibition venue. Where they may succeed is in keeping our imaginations from becoming paralyzed by inertia, not allowing us to become blind to homelessness and deaf to the cry for basic human dignity.

...The liberating magic of all serious tales... was a social one, for they sought to celebrate humankind's capacity to transform the mundane into the utopian... The magic in the tales (if magic is what it is) lies in people... being shown what they are really and realistically capable of accomplishing.

Jack Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales*

**O**n November 7 Earvin “Magic” Johnson announced, with indisputable courage and grace, that he had tested HIV- positive and was retiring immediately from professional basketball. This painful and surprising twist in the life of such a celebrated and intensely marketed public *persona* presents us with a “text” that is truly difficult to interpret. I say “us,” and not just Magic’s family and friends, because in the popular culture of modernity — whether or not one thinks it fair— the life-texts of most visible, famous people are in fact matters of civic discourse. And in the flurry of commentaries since Magic’s announcement the pundits have clearly been trying to figure out whether this is a text of— in the classical sense— *tragedy* or *comedy*.

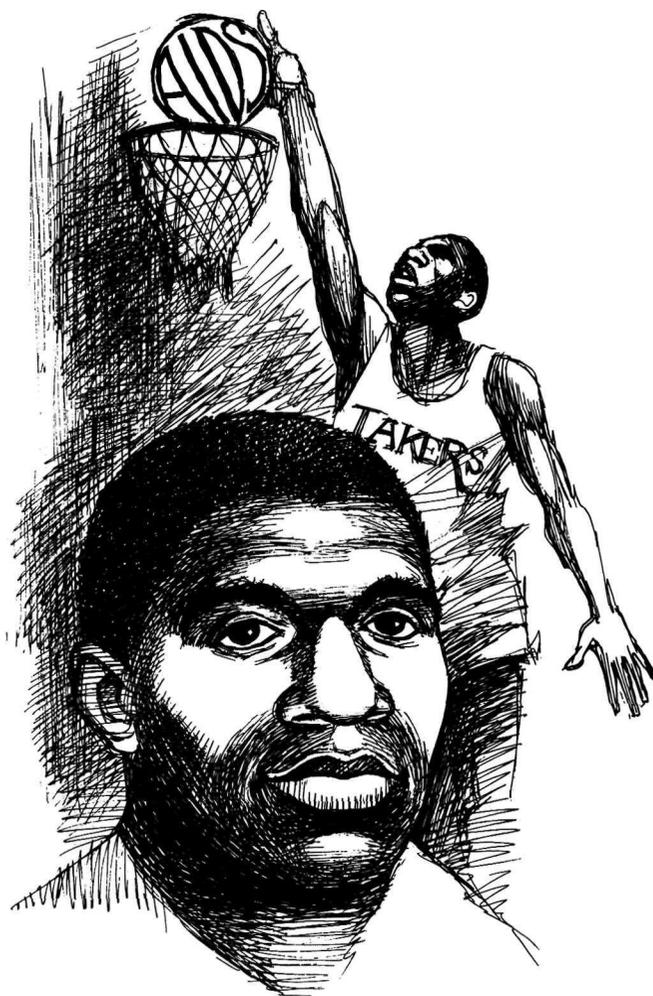
In the glitzy, highly-fabulated world of big-time sports the news was received as unprecedented *tragedy*. This terrible shock, this rude awakening, embodied the literal meaning of the term *dis-aster*: a “reversal of the stars.” “The Day the Magic Stopped” blared banner headlines in the next day’s *Los Angeles Times*. Magic’s basketball colleagues and other sports luminaries wept on national television. They even had a moment of silence in *Boston Gardens!*

This dramatic departure must of course be understood as an irreplaceable loss to basketball. But Magic himself has refused to play the victim. On the contrary: from the outset he signalled his intent to turn this into a *comic* script, in which the fallen hero redeems himself and the city.

“Do not cry for me,” he said; “I’m going to beat this thing.” An overly optimistic prognosis, drawn perhaps too hastily from his competitive worldview? Perhaps; yet what he meant is that the AIDS epidemic itself stands to lose more than Magic the man by this turn of events. This is because he intends to commit himself, as well as his formidable marketing apparati, to the educational fight against the disease. As he put it in *Sports Illustrated*’s “authorized version” of recent events, no matter what people think of him, if they are “getting tested and changing their life-styles and practicing safe sex, I’ll win anyway.”

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**Ched Myers** is West Coast program director for AFSC and author of *Binding the Strong Man*, Orbis Press. Artist **Eleanor Mill** is syndicated from Hartford, CT.



Magic Johnson

credit: Eleanor Mill

## Magic and fairy tales

by Ched Myers

That Magic’s vow is genuine appears to be confirmed by his initial moves. It may well be that his decision to accept Bush’s invitation to join the National Commission on AIDS will serve only to blunt his voice, as Randy Shilts warned in a concluding editorial in the same issue of *Sports Illustrated*. Too, the wisdom of his setting up yet another AIDS foundation could be questioned. But Magic has no history of venturing into controversial politics. He will soon enough learn how different that world is

from the rarefied atmosphere of big-time sports.

Whether or not Magic will become a major force in the long-term struggle around the political epidemiology of AIDS obviously remains to be seen. But as a major cultural figure — whose reach is truly international, as the massive response from Spain to Brazil indicates — he has *already* had an extraordinary impact on AIDS consciousness. Thus to *whatever* degree he lends his voice to educational efforts this fallen hero will surely earn a real measure of redemption.

For those who have long been part of the lonely personal and political struggle against AIDS, meanwhile, Magic's text is neither tragic nor comic — just full of bitter irony. There has been predictable, and not unjustified, resentment of this highrolling jock, heretofore blissfully ignorant (by his own admission) of the epidemic, suddenly becoming a celebrity for the cause.

In an *LA Times* editorial shortly after Magic's announcement, for example, Latino culture critic Richard Rodriguez angrily reminded us that thousands of AIDS victims have faced their fate with equal or greater courage and grace — *without* the benefits of spotlights and public lionizing, indeed often alone and abandoned by all but their similarly-stricken lovers. This is a point surely worth making. Most of us can doubtless think of more compelling "witnesses to the passion" of AIDS than Magic Johnson. A local southern California hero, Father Luis Olivares, who opened up the *placita* at Our Lady Queen of Angels to thousands of Central American refugees and became their public champion, comes immediately to mind. But I'm not sure comparison is the point.

Most critics do not begrudge the exposure given Magic's case, recognizing that the fight against AIDS needs all the help it can get. Rather, their indignation has focused on the fact that it *took someone famous to force the issue onto the public agenda*.

Such anger is understandable; yet why should we expect anything different from contemporary U.S. media culture? This is after all the same journalistic community that became a mouthpiece for the inane politics that brought us the Desert Storm show. The star-system is a legitimate target for criticism, but an easy one.

More annoying are the moralist critics. Take the well-publicized objections of *NY Times* sports writer Dave Anderson, one of the early dissenting opinions, who argued that Magic should be seen as a hedonist, not a hero:

"Say a prayer for him. But since his disclosure a week ago, too many people sound as if they're praying to him. He's not St. Magic of Sunset Boulevard, he's Earvin Johnson of the Fast Lane who finally got caught for speeding."

Well, sure. I'm all for devaluing the inflated currency of the celebrity economy. But would that we could be spared the sermons of sports columnists and vice-presidents. I prefer the much harder lesson in ethical exhortation we find in the Gospel of John 8:1-11.

Whatever the "politically correct" interpretation of Magic's

text, my own vision is surely skewed. I am one of the many who genuinely enjoyed watching the man at his craft. Worse: I'm a diehard Lakers *fan*, since I was old enough to sneak the transistor radio under my pillow so I could listen

to the games after my mom tucked me into bed. I still annoy those around me with my insistence upon listening to every game I can.

I freely concede the high moral ground here to those, including most of my activist colleagues, who eschew the bread and circuses of popular cultural diversions such as professional sports occupy. It is just that they cannot know the pain we admirers of Magic the player feel at the prospect of never again reveling in that no-look pass, that sweet, twisting drive to the hole, that last-second game-winner. And that smile. However highly huckstered by the corporate sponsors, it *was* infectious. I'm not ashamed to admit that Magic provided me — like countless others — many genuinely wonderful, head-shaking, adrenalin-surgingly moments. It's hard to accept that the curtain has rung down on Laker "Showtime" — surely one of the most entertaining contemporary circuses.

I have followed the story closely since November 7, clipping the paper, even watching television news, which I normally shun. Ten days later I had the impossible fortune to be given a ticket to the Lakers' game against the Atlanta Hawks. (It was my first trip to the Forum in three years — seeing the Lakers in person is for those with means.) There was a rumor that Magic might make his first appearance at a game since his announcement. Sure enough he walked out before tip-off to thunderous applause that would not stop, embraced Hawks players, and then assumed his old seat on the bench (where he proceeded to root and coach his teammates through the game as if nothing had changed). And always, that smile. It was a strange, sad, thrilling sensation that perhaps only public spectacle can offer. Yes, I cried.

And no, none of this is comparable to the greater pain of the real world. It is simply the end of a particular era of a particular aspect of North American culture, nothing more or less.

I guess only those who grew up (OK, *were socialized*) as amateur players and fans can understand the *feelings* of loss

*continued on page 25*

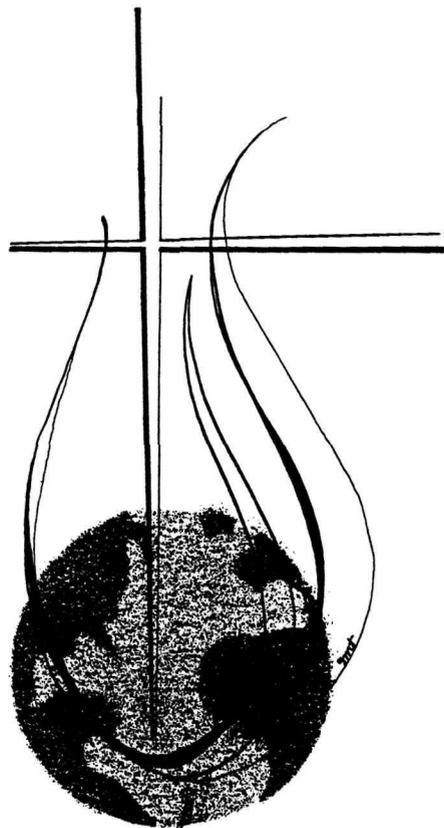
*What if the story of Magic is not tragedy, not comedy, but indeed a fairy tale?*

# What Then Must We Do?

by Jo Clare Hartsig

*What Then Must We Do?*, Leo Tolstoy. Original publication date: 1886. Reissued in 1991, Green Books, Hartland, Devon, UK. (U.S. Distributor: Seven Hills, Cincinnati, OH), pb. \$13.95.

**T**wo years ago, five Americans stood on the doorstep of a third floor apartment tucked behind the stately Hermitage Museum in what was then called Leningrad. All five of us had come from U.S. cities where we work with homeless, isolated, and uprooted people and we were eager to search out and make contact with what we had heard was Leningrad's first unofficial "shelter ministry." When asked if it was true that homeless people could stay there, the woman who had answered the door consulted privately with her husband and then turned to us and said, "Well, we can take three of you, but that is all." One could turn this story into a charming tale of Russian hospitality and mistaken identity, or using a parallel story (Leo Tolstoy's) from a century ago, one could be challenged to understand this one in



*I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already.*

Luke 12:49

credit: Margaret Thompson, SSJ

the context of class barriers and the arrogance of charity work.

Tolstoy, a favorite novelist of many Russian Literature majors and an essayist who has inspired generations of pacifists, is just as descriptive and autobiographically provocative as a person caught up with "humanity's struggle for life." His sensational book *What Then Must We Do?* is permeated with a deeply confessional tone. After a successful career as a writer of fiction and political and spiritual essays, Tolstoy found himself hungering

for more meaning in his life. With every good intention, he decided to serve poor people and then set out to look for some. Over a period of months, Tolstoy accompanied census-takers as they canvassed dark taverns and severely overcrowded boarding houses. He describes his society acquaintances whom he had invited to join the census project as: *dressed specially in shooting jackets and high travelling boots, a costume in which they went on hunting expeditions, and which in their opinion was adapted for a visit to the night-lodging houses. They were in that special state of excitement people are when preparing for a hunt, a duel, or to start for the war.*

The description does not widely differ from the attitude of eager social service providers and volunteers seeking out "the poor" in the backstreets of Leningrad, depressed neighborhoods in Chicago, crackhouses in Denver, residential "hotels" in Louisville, or municipal park areas in cities around the world. The reality that surfaces in Tolstoy's vivid description of his interaction with Moscow's poor is instantly recognizable by all who have been challenged and damaged by class barriers. The conversations recounted between the author and the targets of his charity help us understand (again!) the frustrations of doing good to people. The poor are not a romantic horde who are transformed by the application of alms. Tolstoy's stories are parables about the variety of attitudes people have about money. Money alone will not solve anything and money freely given cannot be monitored, nor should its use be judged. How do we react when the poor are not grateful or are extravagant and unpleasant?

By having made the awkward journey himself, Tolstoy invites us to go beyond pity and superficial acts of charity. Repeatedly, his call is toward truth: *Strange*

book review

**Jo Clare Hartsig**, a UCC minister, is the director of Center City Ministries in Bethlehem, PA. Hartsig is fluent in Russian. Artist **Sister Margaret Thompson** is an assistant professor at Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia and member of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

to say, whereas it seemed to do good — to give money to those in need — was a very good thing and should promote one's love of people, it turned out on the contrary that this business evoked in me ill-will towards people and condemnation of them.

Through exposition of popular theories on poverty (with particular venom directed at Malthus and his exponential population growth theory), Tolstoy began to analyze why there were poor people, how division of labor began, and who keeps “the system” in place. Yet, the analysis is not the end of this fascinating book. We are indeed given an answer to the title question which is the same question the multitudes put to Jesus: What are we to do about “the poor” who from every indication will always be with us? Tolstoy, like Jesus, requires a personal and active response. His answer leads us inward — into our own spirit, into repentance. Our responses to our inner truth will become evident in our style of living and the inevitable ripple effect will transform our surroundings.

Several chapters are devoted to describing this process which is one of tak-

ing responsibility for one's basic needs. If exploitation is the root of poverty, then we must cease being exploiters. Poverty continues to grind people up because we fear the truth, accept privileges, deny responsibility, and reject the notion that each person must labor for his or her own well-being. Government, the “entrepreneurial class” (now experiencing a boom in modern Russia), artists, and the Church are described as part of the problem — but *could* be part of the solution.

Sadly, the final chapters regarding men's and women's work are problematic for women who choose not to marry and/or have children. Tolstoy describes feminism as a by-product of classism, and perhaps just as detrimental! It is one segment of the book most closely bound to the era of its original publication in 1886.

*By having made the awkward journey himself, Tolstoy invites us to go beyond pity and superficial acts of charity. Repeatedly, his call is toward truth.*

Tolstoy's solutions are simple, but certainly not easy. He provides a refreshing look into the heart of the poverty puzzle. He encourages us to trust where we are led when we refuse to honor class distinctions. The reward of such action is the power of liv-

ing closer to the truth, closer to one another.

*Not to lie, in that sense, means not to fear the truth, not to invent excuses to hide from myself the conclusions of reason and conscience, and not to accept such excuses when they are invented by others: not to fear to differ from all those around me or to be left alone with reason and conscience, and not to fear the position to which truth will lead me, believing firmly that what truth and conscience will lead me to, however strange it may be, cannot be worse than what is based on falsehood.* **TW**

## Magic, continued from page 23

associated with Magic's retirement. Older people talk about the farewell speeches of Ruth and Gehrig. Maybe the lament of *disaster* is somehow just part of “being American.” Please, say it ain't so, Joe.

But here lament does not have the last word. True, many sportswriters have bemoaned that the game's greatest figure has been cheated of a storybook finish to his career: there will be no farewell pageantry associated with the retirements of Kareem and Dr. J. Ever looking for happy endings, the media has again missed the point. As Magic said: “If I die tomorrow, next year or whenever it might be, I'll know that I've had a great life... It's been a fairytale.” And with these words he has perhaps solved the meaning of his text.

What if the story of Magic is not tragedy, not comedy, but indeed a *fairytale*, also in the classic sense? Such tales, as Jack Zipes argues in his brilliant *Breaking the Magic Spell*, were the popular discourse of social change among the peasant classes in

feudal Europe. They envisioned radical reversal in social fortunes: what is the storyline of Jack and the Beanstalk or Hansel and Gretel if not “the poor being lifted up and the rich sent empty away?” And always through “magical” circumstances, the symbol of political imagination and social transformation. (Zipes also shows how the subversive edge of these stories has for us been blunted by the domesticating editing of Grimm and Disney.)

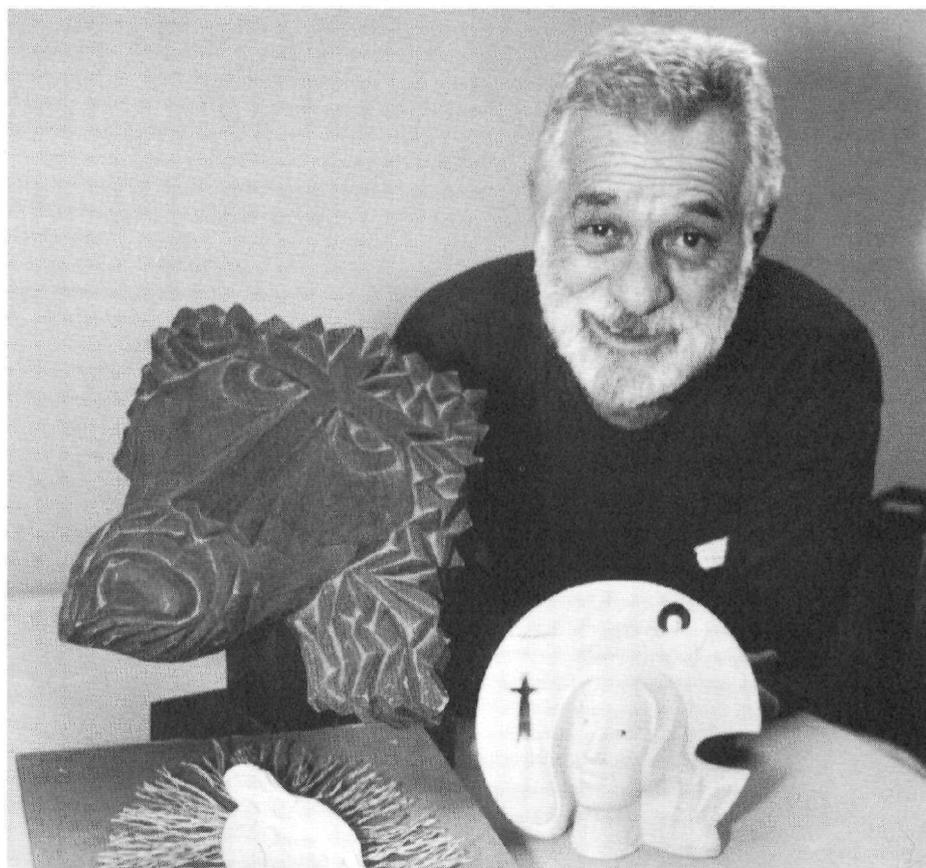
So with Magic: the famed athlete, rich in health and well-being, undergoes a profound reversal of fortune — and countless would-be Magics on backlot courts around the world awaken to reality. By speaking out he has brought crashing down one of the last and strongest bastions where flourished the social taboo about where and when AIDS can be discussed: the institutionalized machismo of professional sports. Insofar as he continues to speak out in the struggle against AIDS, Johnson will truly extend his life as a fairytale. That will be “liberating Magic,” helping to break the evil spell of Silence = Death. **TW**

**T**he doleful face of Christ, with a cross imprinted on his brow, cries the pain of Gethsemane. “I wanted to portray His agony in the garden,” said artist Leandro Della-Piana. “I carved it from sugarpine and stained it with rusty nails which I made by putting the nails in a can with vinegar and water.”

Della-Piana sculpted *Gethsemane* more than 20 years ago when he was struggling to fit his art into a career. He offered it last fall in the first annual art show of the Cathedral Church of St. Mark, Salt Lake City, which displayed the work of the homeless and those living on the edge. For the past year Della-Piana has lived in the apartment of a friend near a Salt Lake City shopping center.

A native of Boston, Mass., Della-Piana served a studio apprenticeship in ecclesiastical sculpture, then worked for ten years on cathedrals in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore. When changes in the Church mandated simpler architectural design, the demand for his skills disappeared, and Della-Piana channeled his energies into an art program for students in ghetto schools. The project spun off nationwide, and Della-Piana was invited to bring his program into prisons and reform schools across the country.

“But it all closed down on me,” he said. “What I was doing was helping youth to express themselves, and it seemed the powers-that-be wanted the opposite. They wanted them to conform.”



Leandro Della-Piana

credit: Judy Kiel

## Art and healing

by Sarah T. Moore

Pressures to conform had already left their mark on Della-Piana. In the 1960s, he did a mural representing Jesus with the children for a church in New Orleans, only to be told to remove the black children from his work. Another church complained that he “made Christ look too Jewish.”

“For awhile, I did away with any images of race, or male or female,” he said. “My work was almost semi-abstract.”

Further pressure came from economic necessity.

“I was lucky to have a landlord who carried me for a long time,” Della-Piana said. “But I was on food stamps and eating in soup kitchens for quite awhile. The more I got behind, the more I thought of art from a commercial point of view. That’s thinking wrong.”

“The economic system we have kind of controls what it’s practical to do,” he said. “I can do a piece of sculpture with great sensitivity that would take me a year’s time, but the chances of getting a year’s pay are pretty slim. The way our

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

**Sarah T. Moore** is editor of Utah’s *Diocesan Dialogue*. Photographer **Judy Kiel** works for the Diocese of Utah.

throw-away society is going, society depends on not quality but quantity and turnover. I hope eventually it will turn around. You have to have faith in people as individuals."

To Della-Piana, fidelity to one's unique personhood and vision is a sacred value.

"All life has a certain lawfulness to it," he says. "If we respect those laws of all living things we are as close to God as we can get. If we are in tune with our own body, who we are as individuals, that's being in tune with God. Unless we're in tune with ourselves, we can't be a vital part of any society," he says. "The more people conform to propaganda coming down from on top, the more chaotic the society. Like politics: Propaganda comes from the nationalistic point of view, saying it's all right to kill someone from another country because we're the good country and they're the bad country. That's a lie."

Della-Piana continues to struggle to make a living. But he has found a way to contribute his skills to a project that expresses his personal vision.

Della-Piana works at the Lotus Project, a ministry which provides jobs for homeless people. Located in a warehouse on the west side of Salt Lake City, it is

directed by Episcopal priest Jerald Merrill. Della-Piana works under the direction of Steve Topaz, a bio-medical engineer who has designed a pillow for exercising muscles of people who are bedridden.

"I feel what I'm doing now is more in tune with what an artist can do in our society," he said. "I'm doing what I enjoy doing. I'm working with steel, wood and plastic, all the materials and processes of sculpture, and it's all having to do with healing people."

Della-Piana was influenced by a book he read which talked about work being done by Russian sculptors as a healing influence on their country.

"I thought about that a lot," he said. "I think it helps to stir people up, but a little of that goes a long way."

Della-Piana's current work offers healing in a very concrete form.

"To me, this is creative," he said. "I'm working with a team of people from different disciplines — engineers, architects — to create a product that's going out into society to help people. Healing is the most important thing to me."

*Marianne Arbogast contributed to this report.*

## The Empty Bowl Project

Michigan potters John Hartom and Lisa Blackburn conceived a project to raise funds for shelters and soup kitchens which has gone international.

During the last year, potters and students have made bowls which people buy, filled with food, at a fundraising dinner. The purchaser then keeps the bowl. Meal prices have varied from \$5 at schools to \$50 for an Oxfam benefit.

Art Park, an art instructor at Wayne State University and member of the Empty Bowl Project, has put a new spin on the project: homeless Detroiters will soon be firing bowls at Cass United Methodist Church to raise funds for food, shelter and advocacy.

### Welcome to The Witness!

If you are not a regular subscriber to *The Witness*, but you received this issue, it is probably because we purchased a mailing list with your name on it. We wanted to send this issue to people who are concerned about how our religious beliefs relate to homelessness.

*The Witness* has a 75-year history of considering issues of justice and faith.

The magazine is an independent journal owned by the Episcopal Church Publishing Company 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!

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Casting out the money changers

credit: Robert McGovern

## March Issue:

### *Choosing between God and Mammon:*

What's a respectable person like you doing with a Gospel like this?

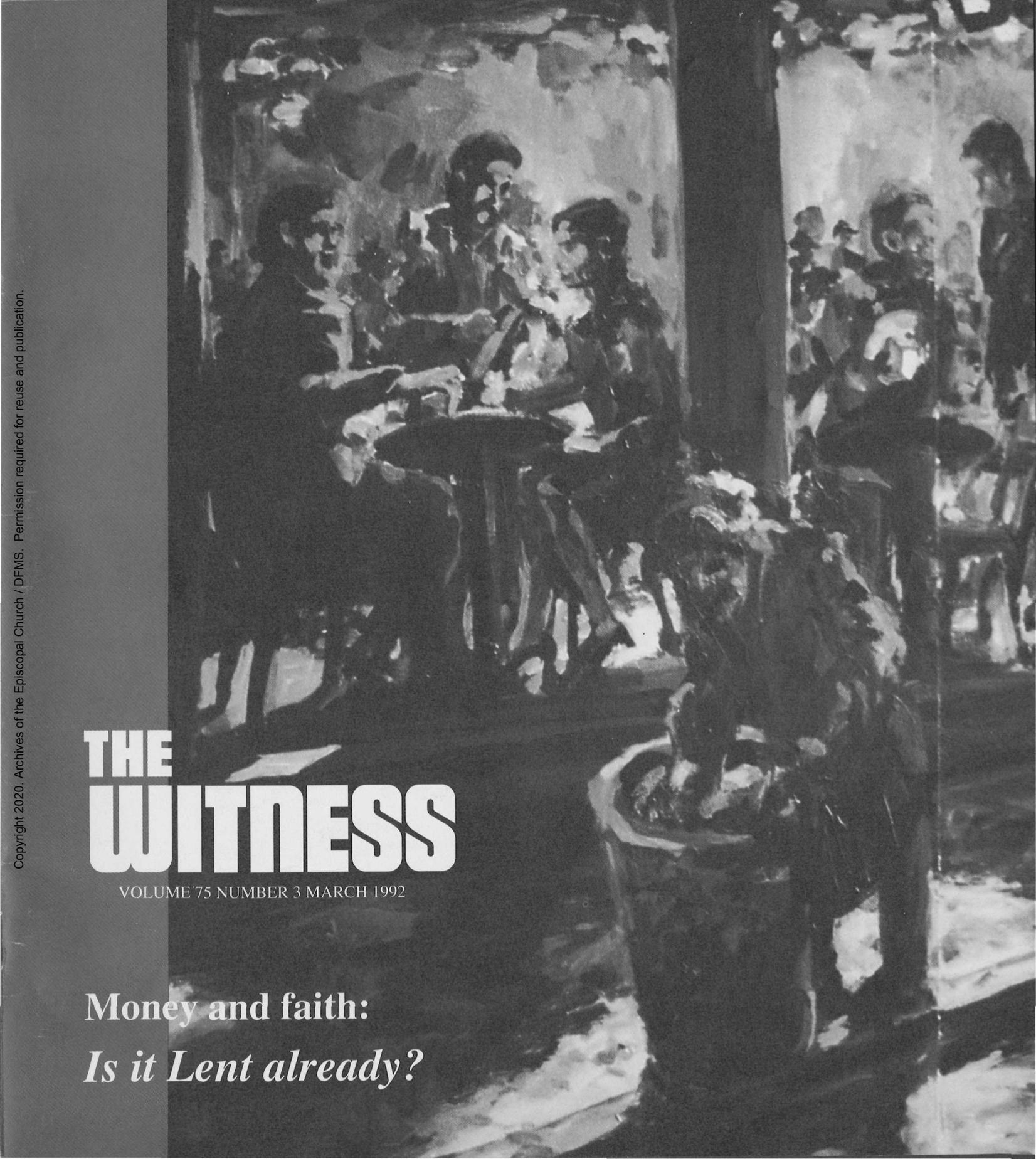


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# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75 NUMBER 3 MARCH 1992

Money and faith:  
*Is it Lent already?*

## Evangelism

THANK YOU SO MUCH for your strong issue on evangelism, in all its many facets. As usual, I plan to preach from it Sunday and continuously integrate these insights into my teaching and preaching in the future. This week I am packing up after twenty-five years teaching the Bible as Literature at Eastern Michigan University and five years of also pastoring the Northside Community Church. I find I am taking all my issues of *The Witness*, even if I have to chuck *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, even *Ms.*!

On January 19th I will become the pastor of the University Baptist Church of Minneapolis. This is newsworthy because it is the first church to call an OUT gay person to become pastor. The congregation voted 56 to 1 to extend the call after I candidated the weekend after Halloween. I had shared my lesbianism with the search committee, and they encouraged me to tell the congregation. The response was enthusiastic. It pleased me that my years as the mother of four and grandmother of one, followed by years as a lesbian caused one young mother to rejoice:

"You can minister to all of us!" The congregation of 160 has 22 gay men and a number of lesbians and is noted for its ministry to that community.

**Nadean Bishop  
Minneapolis, MN**

## Monogamy and Hermeneutics

PRAISE GOD for the new format of the *Witness*! The art, poetry, and book reviews enhance an already great publication. I feel God's Spirit within your own writing, Jeanie, as well.

As with any good journal, my old assumptions find themselves challenged and I'm moved to respond. The issue "Confession" touched me deeply as a recovering co-dependent.

I must agree with Reta Finger (Letters,

11/91) that adequate biblical exegesis when taken in its proper historical context must undergird positions taken. Furthermore, I agree that promiscuity is unhealthy for anyone. Let us not assume that all lesbian persons are promiscuous. Many of us, in fact, have quite stable, faithful, monogamous unions that are in better shape than many heterosexual ones.

In my own life, I've had to face my bad choices of the past, recommit myself to the spiritual life, knowing with God's help, that I would make better choices. I've had to assert myself as a Christian who happens to be gay and strive to follow Christ's call to faithful love. As a result, I've been, for some time, in a marriage with a very spiritual man who also strives to place God's will first. The yield of such a spiritual harvest is a hundredfold what I ever imagined and I thank God for that. The more we all strive to be our truest selves, the more we allow the Spirit to forge genuine community.

**Patrick J. Schwing  
Covington, KY**

AT THE RISK OF PROLONGING the conversation too far, I would like to respond to Roger-Michael Goodman's letter (1/92) replying to my letter (11/91) which critiqued some of the ideas presented in Malcolm Boyd's article, "The Sexuality of Jesus" (7/91). I have three items.

First, if a bias came across that I was assuming lesbians and gays are a promiscuous people, I was misunderstood. I was speaking of homosexuality and promiscuity in the same paragraph because it was in context of the article, which linked them. I would never make such a generalization, especially because the lesbians and gays I know best are not promiscuous. My point was that I am not convinced that promiscuity of **any** kind — same-sex or opposite-sex — is healthy.

Second, I believe the purpose of letters to the editor in a magazine is to interact with *ideas* in previously published material. Yet I was called homophobic and self-righteous, which calls my *character* into question — without the writer having any personal knowledge of my character. Because character evaluation can be hurtful and inaccurate

and tends to polarize, I do not think it is appropriate in a public forum like this. I would rather Mr. Goodman would contact me personally on this matter.

Third — and this is on the idea level — back to hermeneutics. I see the process of biblical interpretation having two parts in constant dialogue with each other. On one hand, we need to understand as well as we can what are the literary and historical contexts of a biblical text. What did the author intend to say? What was the cultural milieu out of which the text was written?

In light of that understanding, we can ask what the text means for us today. Are we called to the same ancient behavior or belief? If not, what has changed? What things may have been unethical then that are ethical today (such as charging interest on loans) and why? What may have been tolerated then which is not acceptable in our culture (such as slavery or polygamy), and why?

As a feminist I must deal with the fact that the biblical writings and the cultures out of which they emerged are primarily androcentric. It is not appropriate to read 20th century feminism into the New Testament, though I can extrapolate radical egalitarian theory from the gospel message. In the same way, though I believe no biblical writer supports homosexual relationships, our increased knowledge of biology, psychology, and sociology means we have to rethink that ancient Jewish taboo.

Mr. Goodman seems to be conflating this two-part process into one, which can result in making the biblical texts say whatever we want them to say, which certainly is not treating texts or their writers with integrity. And that, as I said before, seems to be a problem for both fundamentalists and liberals.

**Reta Finger  
Chicago, IL**

## The Economy

ON LAST NIGHT'S ABC news, Peter Jennings's lead story was about the thousands who had waited for hours in savage wind and brutal cold outside a Chicago hotel offering jobs to a few hundred applicants. He pointed out that many in the crowd had been out of



work as long as three years, and thus were no longer counted among the unemployed; that most were highly overqualified; and that all were desperate — a word so frequently used today as to have become almost a meaningless cliché.

I live in New Jersey in a community far less cold and windy, which nevertheless yesterday had a near-zero windchill. It was a day on which I thought I could barely survive pushing my shopping cart across a parking lot, and before unloading groceries into the trunk I had to sit in the car catching my breath and waiting for my face to stop aching.

Mr. Jennings pointed up his story by ending with a brief reference to Dan Quayle's announced discovery, in California, of a harbinger of better times. The Vice President had seen a hiring sign outside a McDonald's. As Mr. Jennings impassively commented, the opening was for one part-time minimum-wage position. (Incidentally, I don't know where Mr. Quayle gets about, but here in the northeast many a fast-food restaurant has hiring signs. At most of them, the combined salaries of a man and his wife, both working full-time, would not support their family of four.) Mr. Quayle, scion of wealthy parents, gets along on a comparatively maximum-wage salary, with perks exceeding the worth of a McDonald's stipend.

A very recent TV program featured a politician defending Vice President Quayle and speaking admiringly of Quayle's character, abilities, and accomplishments. Nothing, it seems to me, so graphically shows a person's credentials for high office than his touting of the competency and integrity — and sensitivity to desperation — of such of our leaders as Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, Nixon, Reagan, and Quayle.

**Constance Lane  
Flanders, NJ**

***The Witness* welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate letters of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868. It is our policy to edit letters for length when necessary, but not for style.**

### Witness Criticism

I AM NOT RENEWING my subscription as I am disappointed in *The Witness* since it has changed location and editor.

**Mary A. Poor  
Newton Square, PA**

### Witness Praise

I AM VERY IMPRESSED with *The Witness*. Both word and picture keenly explore and address issues that help to demarginalize those being kept at the edges of power, wealth, and acceptance. Thanks for being a voice that reminds us of God's embrace: it is big enough for us all.

**Barbara O'Neill  
Northbrook, IL**

OFTEN I DESPAIR of the church — and then I read *Witness* and my spirit is *again* revived. Thanks! Last issue (Jan. 92) — marvelous.

**Andy Carhartt  
Boulder, CO**

ENCLOSED FIND my check in the amount of \$40 — my payment for a 2-year subscription to *The Witness*. Thank you for my free issue — I read every word of it and can't wait to receive my next copy. Please send info on how to order back copies.

**C. Chenoweth  
Fort Worth, TX**

WE'VE SUBSCRIBED to *The Witness* for many years. Your new style, format and editor are exciting and stimulating. Keep it coming! Especially social justice, women's issues, ecology, anti-racism, anti-homophobia, peace.

**Jade and Greg Dell  
Oak Park, IL**

AS AN IMPOVERISHED female theological student in this oppressive land of Australia (where women *still* cannot be ordained to the Anglican priesthood) I value receiving your magazine more than I can say. Thank you for its faithful entry into my house.

**Diane L. Heath  
Croydon Victoria, Australia**

I AM A WIDOW, living on a limited income but I cannot live without your courageous publication.

**Mrs. Robert P. Moore  
Sewanee, TN**

### Old Witnesses

VERY MANY THANKS for sending me the two "old copies" of the *Witness*, which I'm delighted to have, as I seem not to have saved any myself. I always admired Bill Spofford and his wife, they were a team, and I met them when their daughter, Sue, was a Park College student. I knew Bill Spofford, Jr. (Bishop Spofford) and wife Polly and five sons when they were small, and all lived here. Wonderful people and fearless! I recall when Spofford Sr. was supposed to be a danger to the country, but he could not be intimidated. I've read *The Witness* for many years, and was glad when it was revived a while back.

**Constance Vulliamy  
Parkville, MO**

THANK YOU SO MUCH for the old copies of *The Witness*. It brought back many happy memories. I remember Bill Spofford, Sr. during my days as Rector of Epiphany, Glenburn during the sixties. I spent many a happy hour with Bill and Dottie at their home in Tunkhannock, Penn.

Also, please find enclosed a check in support of *The Witness* for 1992.

**H. Arthur Doersam  
Binghamton, NY**

### Renewal Policy

THIS IS A BELATED RESPONSE to your letter of December 6 letting *Witness* subscribers know of the status of the magazine. I think it was the only piece of year-end mail that did *not* ask for money. It was unique and a breath of fresh air!

Your renewal notice carries the same nonsense, fresh approach! These other renewal letters that we receive with the "more is better" philosophy are getting tiring.

Please know that you are appreciated by those of us "out there!"

**Carole Jan Lee  
San Francisco, CA**

## THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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# THE WITNESS

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Cover: *Dinner* by David Amdur of Brooklyn, NY.

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Choosing kingdoms

**W**hen I was growing up at the Church of the Advent in Boston, my family did not have a lot of money. But on

some level I understood that I would have access. I would have a good education. I would learn which forks to eat with. I would have some parity with the parishioners who invited my family to their elegant summer houses.

My understandings of class were deduced alone, breathed in like the incense on Sunday morning. It almost seemed we had the best of both worlds. We travelled to Europe. We visited museums and attended occasional concerts, but we never even scanned the stock market figures because we had no investments.

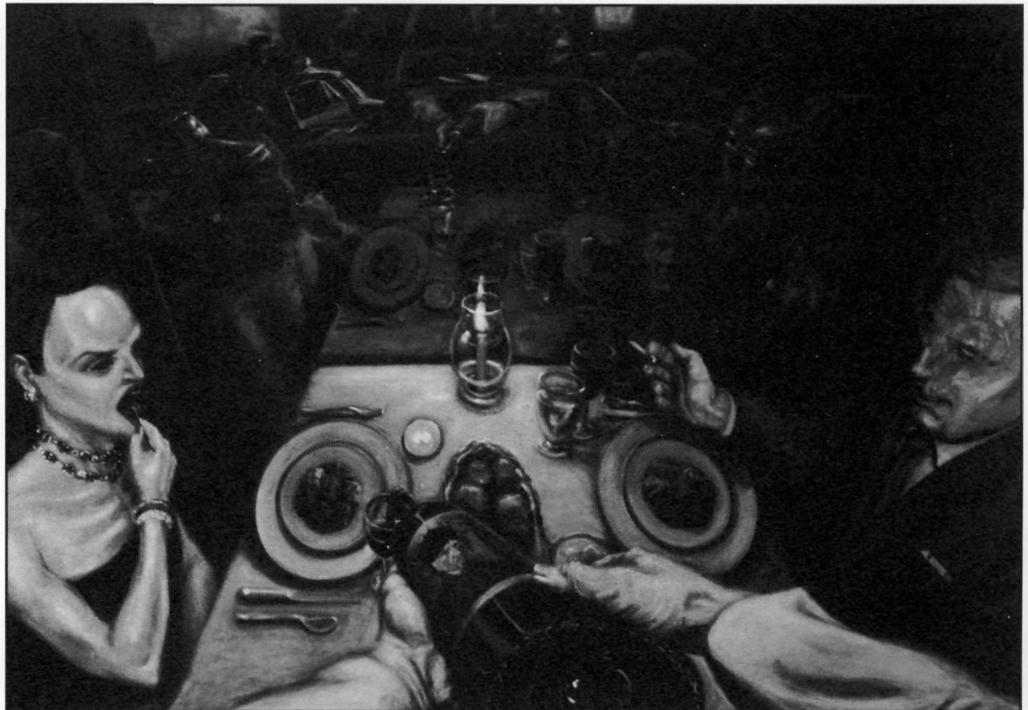
I wonder if a lot of Episcopalians have that relationship to questions of class. For the most part, Episcopalians today are not fabulously wealthy. [Globally, most Anglicans are African.] But somehow we may hang onto a sense that we enjoy the taste and sophistication of those with old wealth. We are not the gauche *nouveaux riches*. We are staid. Our houses are old stone. We have keen intellects and a strong streak of independence. If we are not the decision-makers in government and industry, we at least have the sense that we could be.

Embedded in this myth is something I don't want to cast away. It has to do with

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist **David Amdur** lives and works in Brooklyn, N.Y.

THE WITNESS

the quiet of ancient churches in small cemeteries and with reading the Narnia Chronicles before a fire. It may have to do with being heirs to the kingdom of heaven.



The waiter

credit: David Amdur

But there is, of course, something delusional about the belief that we are, by virtue of being Episcopalian, among the matriarchs and patriarchs of the nation. It's a confusion we can ill afford.

A recent *Detroit Free Press* poll shows that 94 percent of the nation considers itself middle class. No one wants to be identified with the rich or the poor and yet, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening and the middle class is disappearing. Are we, as a nation, in a state of denial? Unconsciously assuming that we are among the elite affects what we tolerate and what we consider the right order

*Episcopal Life* (the newspaper of the Episcopal Church, produced by the national Church) states:

"If you'd like your advertising to be read by... Corporate executives in most of Fortune 500; Partners in some of the nation's leading law firms; A number of

editor's note

ranking members of Congress, the Senate and Judiciary; Surgeons, medical specialists, dentists; University professors, public and private school teachers; Executives in publishing, advertising and television and others like them, along with their families...it will be when it's in *Episcopal Life*."

The ad goes on to state: "While most of our readers are Episcopalians, they are also consumers — and good ones, too!"

We are a Church where Mammon has infiltrated our sanctuaries with singular power and subtlety. We — more than most denominations — must struggle with questions of allegiance. Will the power of the Church be used to buttress the claims of the rich? Will *noblesse oblige* be the word of the Episcopal Church in this day?

— J.W.-K.

## Garrison Keillor's View

To me and my little radio congregation, a Lake Wobegonian moving to Minneapolis and turning Episcopalian was a case of social climbing straight up the hill, no doubt about it. Our clear picture of Episcopalians was of wealthy people, Yale graduates, worshiping God in extremely good taste. Episcopalian was the Church in wingtips, the Church of the Scotch and soda. So, when I moved to New York and walked into Holy Apostles, I was surprised to see no suits. Nobody was well-dressed. A congregation of 100 souls on lower Ninth Avenue, a church with no parking lot, which was in need of paint and the sanctuary ceiling showed water

damage, but which managed (I learned the next week) to support and operate a soup kitchen that fed 1,000 New Yorkers every day, more than one million to date. Black faces in the sanctuary, old people, exiles from the midwest, the lame and the halt, divorced ladies, gay couples; a real good anthology of the faith. I felt glad to be there. When we stood for prayer, bringing slowly to mind the goodness and the poverty of our lives, the lives of others, the life to come, it brought tears to your eyes, the simple way the Episcopalians pray.

— Garrison Keillor  
from *We Are Still Married*,  
Viking, 1989.

## Breaking illusions

by Donna Schaper

**D**espite the fact that I don't respect rich people, I want nothing so much as to be just like them. I am not unlike most Americans. We have been taught well that rich is better.

What other reason can possibly be given for tax structures that disproportionately tax? Or national flood insurance that gets all taxpayers to bail out those who enjoy second homes on ocean sites? We don't have "enough money" for shelter for the homeless or mental health care for the deinstitutionalized but we do have "enough money" for insurance protection for second homes. We have freely elected people who have consolidated the power of the wealthy.

---

**Donna Schaper** is pastor of First Congregational Church, Riverhead, N.Y.

Advertising is the engine of this favoritism. I can't even ride a subway without having my greeds reinforced.

Desire works in such a labyrinthine way that it would be hard to find the first knot it ties around our soul. Is it in grade school, as we dress like each other? Or—as a mother who swore she wasn't going to do these kinds of things—do we begin with Christmas presents equal in sparkle to those of our children's peers? Does anything happen in this culture that ignores money? Perhaps worship? Or birthing a child? Or getting married? Or getting sick?

What I notice most about the generation coming of age in the 1990s is that, to them, money is everything. I get a request for a wedding and all the questions are about costs. I get a request to do marital counseling of non-members and the first

questions are about payment. If I do a baptism, somebody hands me an envelope. Do I remember these things happening all 20 years of my ministry? No. Am I glad to see all those envelopes? Yes. I have a daily feeling that I can hardly get by. Which is to say I live the anxiety of a lie.

The anxiety about recession which has blanketed most people I know is a misplaced anxiety. The recession is an opportunity to think a little differently about the big-ticket items. Like wealth and what it takes away while bringing goods and services much too close to our front doors. Like advertising and the way every time we turn on the television we invite it into our homes to lie to us about what is important. Like children and the kind of depression we have caused in them because we have internalized their greed. Like our own paradoxical selves, people who are afraid because they have been taught to be afraid and not because they have anything genuine to fear.

## *The Consumer*

by Marge Piercy

My eyes catch and stick  
as I wade in bellysoft heat.  
Tree of miniature chocolates filled with liqueur,  
tree of earrings tinkling in the mink wind,  
of Bach oratorios spinning light at 33 1/3,  
tree of Thailand silks murmuring changes.  
Pluck, eat and grow heavy.  
From each hair a wine bottle dangles.  
A toaster is strung through my nose.  
An elevator is installed in my spine.  
The mouth of the empire  
eats onward through the apple of all.

Armies of brown men  
are roasted into coffee beans,  
are melted into chocolate,  
are pounded into copper.  
Their blood is refined into oil,  
black river oozing rainbows  
of affluence.  
Their bodies shrink  
to grains of rice.  
I have lost my knees.  
I am the soft mouth of the caterpillar.  
People and landscapes are my food  
and I grow fat and blind.

from *Circles on the Water*, by Marge Piercy  
New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985

## *When, in Disgrace with Fortune*

by William Shakespeare

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.



Poetry

# Famous Coins of Holy Week

by Bill Wylie Kellermann

**T**here is an axiom of investigative journalism which goes: Follow the money. When it comes to comprehending the public execution of Jesus as portrayed in the gospel narratives, it's not bad advice for the biblical investigator either. The financial intrigues of the Holy Week story so proliferate, that it's astonishing more isn't made of it in our common theological reflection. Money as a power is practically a character, a force and a power, in the Jerusalem drama. Informers are handsomely paid and hush money can be had. At the Roman trial charges of inciting tax resistance are brought along with evidence from provocateurs who had set a political trap. Moreover, for his part, Jesus does make shrewd public proclamations over the tribute coin, undertakes disruptive action at the currency exchange, even occupying the temple court, and he foresees in the widow's copper coin the collapse of the whole system. The story, it seems, is littered with coins. They roll across the temple floor and ring at our feet.

*And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves; and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching and saying, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer for all the nations'?" But you have made*

Bill Wylie-Kellermann is a United Methodist minister, author of *Seasons of Faith and Conscience*, Orbis Press, 1991 and book review editor of *The Witness*. Art from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of The Bible*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1962.

*it a den of robbers."* (Mark 11:15-17)

Jerusalem was a one-industry town. The temple completely generated the city economy. Between the service industry geared to pilgrims (who even had a legal obligation to spend the "second tithe" within its walls) and the artisans engaged

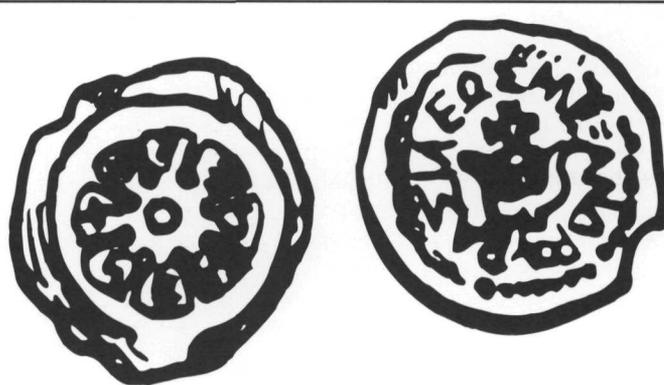
*Money as a power is practically a character, a force and a power, in the Jerusalem drama.*

in the ongoing work of temple rehabilitation, the city had its base. The temple was being completely redeveloped in a longstanding public works project begun by the Roman client king, Herod the Great. Crafty, paranoid, and every bit as repressive as Matthew's birth narrative suggests, Herod had ruled as king of the Jews despite his marginal and dubious claim to the title, simply because he'd proved himself deft at backing the right Roman horses in their shifting power struggles. His own heavy taxes won him

few friends among the commonfolk, so his development project of the temple was a shrewd public relations maneuver to shore up Jewish public opinion.

Herod made the temple stand out on Jerusalem's signature skyline. Frankly, it was beautified and rehabbed at the expense of the poor. It was nonetheless an economic boom for the city. The enlargement went on for decades (it was still in progress when the Zealots took it over in 66 C.E.), and provided jobs for the skilled tradesmen and construction workers. Festival time brought a huge influx of pilgrims. A city with a population of 30,000 people could swell to 180,000. That's a lot of rooms at the inn. And big agricultural business was involved: as many as 18,000 lambs could be sacrificed at Passover. The temple was a huge stockyard and slaughterhouse.

Moreover, it behooves us to understand the extent to which the temple was itself a financial institution. The temple had received a special dispensation from Rome to collect its own tax (a dispensation some have compared to our own churches' tax exemption for its capacity to exact complicity and ecclesiastical quietude). This was the famous half-shekel tax concerning which a Gospel controversy arose: does your teacher pay (Matt 17:24)? In that instance Jesus de-



The Hebrew (bronze) Dilepton, likely the widow's mite. Face: "Jonathon, the king" in rays of a star. Reverse: an anchor, inscribed "King Alexander."



The Roman (silver) Denar, Roman tax coin. Face: "Caesar, son of the divine Augustus." Reverse: Pax seated with branch, inscribed "High Priest."

clares his freedom from the tax and then allows payment as produced from the depths of "chaos," "the sea," from the mouth of a new-caught fish. Pilate himself was able to dip into that half-shekel treasury on occasion without objection of the temple authorities. Indeed, he financed his aqueduct in part with just such funds.

The Sanhedrin, the governing council before whom Jesus (and eventually the disciples) would be tried, was made up substantially of the Sadducean party, landed aristocrats and absentee landlords whose economic interest in the status quo made them collaborationist backers of military rule, *Pax Romana*.

Add to all this that the temple functioned as a bank, being not only a source of loans (for those with proper connections or credit) but also the place where records of indebtedness were kept. In the sense that small farmers had lost their land in a squeeze between incredibly high taxes and runaway interest rates (thereby forcing them into sharecropping and debt slavery), the temple was an instrument in the whole system and cycle of oppression. (No wonder that in the Great Jewish War of 66, the first thing the Zealots did was burn the temple treasury where the records of indebtedness were kept. They "forgave the debts" in some-

thing of a first-century "draft-board raid.")

All in all, here was an institution corrupted (in large part by money) and confused in its purposes. Originally a central storehouse which functioned to redistribute produce through the tithe system, the temple had become a mechanism for consolidating capital, a house of prayer become a den of thieves.

Which is to say that when Jesus goes to the currency exchange in the temple court of the Gentiles, he's not spontaneously miffed at the high price of doves. He's undertaking a strong and well-planned action at the public heart of the system: the very intersection of the imperial economy and the local money market. He's come on behalf of the poor among whom his ministry was based in Galilee.

*The story, it seems, is littered with coins. They roll across the temple floor and ring at our feet.*

*He also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. (Luke 21:2)*

There is virtually an economic analysis in the tight movement of this full passage (20:45-21:5). It is a movement

whose meaning is obscured in part by the "arbitrary" division of chapter breaks. Sometime following the action, Jesus is teaching in the temple. In a dangerously public way he warns the disciples against the Pharisees who "devour widow's houses and for a pretence make long prayers." He looks up and sees the rich putting in their gifts and beside them a widow who has, as he notes, "put in all she had to live on." What do the disciples see? They look up and see how beautifully adorned the temple is.

Jesus replies, the whole filthy rotten system is coming down: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down." He makes connections. Built on the backs of the poor, the den of robbers will be destroyed. Indeed, the testimony at his trial that Jesus threatened the destruction of the temple is no ignorant misconstruing of his words, it goes to the heart of the threat his challenge signified.

*But Jesus aware of their malice, said, "Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the money for the tax." And they brought him the coin, a denarius. And Jesus said to them, "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They said, "Caesar's." (Matt 22:18-21)*

Apart from the political entrapment being set up by the authorities and the gathering of evidence for an indictment, there are several issues pertinent to our topic herein. Jesus underscores a point: money is a realm of authority. It is stamped with the seal of empire and ultimately belongs to and defines imperial dominion. This of course is the hot potato of the political trap. But Jesus pushes the meaning deeper. Images, as we know, were more than troublesome in Israel — they were counted idolatrous. (Jewish coins, from those minted in the Maccabean period to those struck in Jerusalem during the Zealot occupation, 66-70 C.E., employed nationalist symbols like the

palm branch or pictured vessels and artifacts from temple worship. There were no images of kings, even revolutionary ones.) Jesus, however, mentions not only the idolatrous image, but the inscription as well. We best look it up, no? The coin itself is a text in the text. The inscription read, "Tiberius Caesar, Son of the Divine Augustus," which is to say, "Son of God." Most commentary on the tax question

focuses on Jesus' clever render saying, but the debate is done before he utters a single logion. He's rubbing their noses in the image and its claim. Jesus thereby pushes a political question to an issue of spiritual discernment: is the imperial tax idolatrous? The question abides for us even today.

*No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the*

*other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. (Matt 6:24)*

*The oil, says the woman, says Jesus as well, is oil. It is not a commodity. It is neither a medium of exchange, nor a measure of value. It is oil. Her action is not even extravagance, but evinces a freedom beyond that.*

Though this is not a Holy Week utterance, it bears consideration because in it Jesus identifies what money really is: a principality, a spiritual power. This personification, this sense that money demands love and allegiance, that it affects bondage and obedience, this setting of wealth beside God as an autonomous alternative is an insight of Jesus' unique to his cultural milieu. He affirms that money claims divinity for itself! It is, as in the Holy Week drama, an active agent, an invisible hand reaching out to lay spiritual claim to its own.

*"What will you give me if I deliver him to you?" And they paid him thirty pieces of silver. And from that moment he sought an opportunity to betray him.*

*(Matt 26:14-16)*

The motives of Judas are open to intriguing speculation. By John's accounting he kept the community's common purse (John 13:29) and is represented as embezzling over time (12:6). On the other hand his name, at once Maccabean and perhaps Zealot, may suggest a political agenda different from that of Jesus. He may well have suffered frustration or sought to force his teacher's public hand. What is clear by all accounts is that money figures into the deal. It seals the secret bargain and verifies the official claim. By it he becomes their man on the inside. At the most intimate sacramental moment of the community's underground meal, he labors under obligations and allegiances not openly on the table. The silver is in his pocket and he in theirs.

Now Matthew is always thick with echoes from the Hebrew Bible and here is no exception. A prophetic parable from Zechariah (11:4-17), the compensatory price paid for the death of another's slave, that is "blood money" (Ex. 21:32), or even the saleprice of Joseph by Judah to the Ishmaelite traders enroute to Egypt (Gen. 37:25-28) — all these are in the

## In Terror of Hospital Bills by James Wright

I still have some money  
To eat with, alone  
And frightened, knowing how soon  
I will waken a poor man.

It snows freely and freely hardens  
On the lawns of my hope, my secret  
Hounded and flayed. I wonder  
What words to beg money with.

Pardon me, sir, could you?  
Which way is St. Paul?  
I thirst.

I am a full-blooded Sioux Indian.

Soon I am sure to become so hungry  
I will have to leap barefoot through  
gas-fire veils of shame,  
I will have to stalk timid strangers  
On the whorehouse corners.

Oh moon, sow leaves on my hands,  
On my seared face, oh I love you.  
My throat is open, insane,  
Tempting pneumonia.

But my life was never so precious  
To me as now.  
I will have to beg coins  
After dark.

I will learn to scent the police,  
And sit or go blind, stay mute,  
be taken for dead  
For your sake, oh my secret,  
My life.

from *A Geography of Poets*, ed. Edward Field, New York: Bantam Books, 1979.

wind. Still, on narrative face-value the presence of silver coins (presumably Tyrian shekels) in the temple treasury or in the hands of the chief priests is irregular to say the least, for only Jewish coins, all of them coppers, were fit by Torah to be donated in the treasury — hence the money changers in the Gentile court.

The fate of the coins varies in the Gospels. In Matthew Judas flings them in remorse back into the temple where the priests now count them suitably unclean (Matt. 27:3-10). But in Luke, the coins spill over into the Book of Acts. Just as the community revived is about to sell their lands and properties, pooling the income in a common life, there is Judas spending his shekels on a field which will be his deathbed and grave (Acts 1:18-19).

***But there were some who said to themselves indignantly, "Why was the ointment thus wasted? For this ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii, and given to the poor." And they reproached her. (Mark 14:4-5)***

This passage, set as it is close against the betrayal bargain of Judas, is truly a scandal to our sensibilities. We are hard pressed not to join the indignation. It only makes good sense. Then Jesus coins the phrase repeatedly thrown in our faces for centuries to come: "The poor you have always with you." Adding insult to confusion. The monetary value of the oil is so precise; its potential for charity exact. One could practically count the loaves of bread it would buy. (In Mark, the disciples grouse that it would cost two hundred denarii to feed the five thousand.) This, however, is precisely not the point. The oil, says the woman, says Jesus as well, is oil. It is not a commodity. It is neither a medium of exchange, nor a measure of value. It is oil. Her action is not even

extravagance, but evinces a freedom beyond that. Pure and simple and precious. She has done the truth and anointed him, prophet, priest, king, for burial.

The scandal is perhaps that this event breaks the grip of money on the whole story. The free gift (be it oil, or loaves and fishes, or eucharist, or death on a cross) breaks the bondage and logic of exchange. There will be poor aplenty (look around today) for disciples to walk with and attend to. Whatever authorities are rebuked, or idolatries named, whatever systems are challenged on behalf of the poor, whatever charities or communal mechanisms of justice are arranged, at root must be the freedom of grace which undoes the tyranny of exchange. Cost is no object.

***And they crucified him, and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them, to decide what each should take. (Mark 15:24)***

There is a famous photograph of Mohandas Gandhi's possessions at the time of his death. Set out in elegant symmetry are two pair of sandals, his spectacles and a copy of the Gita, an oil lamp, a pocket watch, two rice bowls, little more. It is

striking and powerful for the freedom and simplicity it implies. I believe we have the same sort of snapshot at the foot of the cross. Here are laid out all the worldly possessions of the one who had no place to lay his head. In a footnote to the military ritual they are claimed by the Roman auxiliary.

***And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sum of money to the soldiers and said, "Tell people, 'His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.'***

***And if it comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble." So they took the money and did as they had been directed. (Matt 28: 12-15)***

Against the news of the resurrection, the power of money reasserts itself. In a bitter irony the authorities, privy to the eyewitness reports of the Roman watch, are among the first to hear the glad news. They are neither astonished nor converted, but simply hatch another phase of the program. The truth is a matter of indifference to them. Information is a commodity to be controlled with sufficient financial power. Damage control and coverup are the business of the day. Official sources will have a censored and carefully worded version of events. Confusion will be encouraged. The credibility of the women and the other disciples will be impugned with a campaign of disinformation.

It is implied that the Roman soldiers worry perhaps for their jobs, their records, and their military careers. They are a vulnerable and easy mark for the temple crew. No sweat, say the planners, we can cover your backsides with the governor.

But above all they are bought off, paid handsomely to advertise a lie, to publish abroad the anti-Word, to bury again the truth.

The Big Lie, a bankrolled affair, declares: the resurrection never was.

That, however, is not the last word, either in the Gospels or in our common history. What remains is rendered

a choice. Call it, for our purposes, God and Mammon. And still the allegiances compete.

*The scandal is perhaps that this event breaks the grip of money on the whole story. The free gift (be it oil, or loaves and fishes, or eucharist, or death on a cross) breaks the bondage and logic of exchange.*

# The end of the Age of the U.S.

by Joseph Summers

**I**t is no accident that people in this country are turning to fanatics like David Duke, or “Dr. Feel Goods” like Reagan. Nor that the mass media seems intent on finding a new devil for us to blame all our problems on every six months (liberals, the school system, drugs, Manuel Noriega, Saddam Hussein, leftists in Universities). As the economic foundation of the middle class slips, people are terrified that their world is being destroyed.

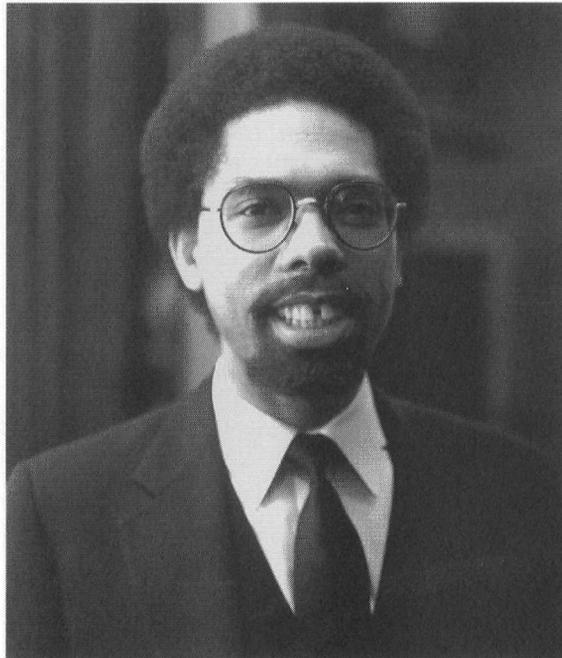
Cornel West, professor of religion and director of Afro-American Studies at Princeton University, recently offered a perspective on the challenges ahead at a day-long workshop at Eastern Michigan University.

West defines the Age of Europe as being from 1492-1945. It was an age marked by discovery, the expansion of the known world, which in turn led to the development of a world market economy. It was an age that saw the birth of industrialism, bringing with it tremendous new productivity and the possibility of overcoming scarcity. It was an age which saw science enshrined as the cornerstone of knowledge.

It was also an age of genocide, the genocide of native American peoples

**Joe Summers** is vicar of Incarnation, Pittsfield Twp, MI, a mission church begun by lay people who wanted a church which would take their ministry seriously and speak out clearly on social issues.

which began with Columbus himself. It was an age of the conquest and enslavement of the peoples of the Third World, with whole civilizations destroyed and their peoples enslaved. The year 1492



Cornel West

credit: Robert Matthews

*Cornel West argues that since 1973, the U.S. has been in a period of civil, political and economic decline and cultural decay. As the economic foundation of the middle class slips, people are terrified that their world is being destroyed.*

also marked Spain's deportation of its Jewish population. This is but one of many actions which testifies to European civilization's fear of peoples who are different. Racism takes on a whole new meaning within this civilization, West says. World War II and the Holocaust appear not as some mindless destruction, but as the logical extension of racism and the drive towards domination that were so central to the age.

West argues that what has been called the century of the United States really lasted from 1945-1973. The Age of the United States began with the Marshall Plan and the reconstruction of Japan and Europe. The first nation to successfully overthrow colonialism now emerged as the world power and the U.S. took the place of European colonial powers throughout the world. The creation of a mass middle class transformed U.S. society from the shape of a pyramid to that of a diamond and promised to fulfill the hopes of working people. The development of mass culture which was exported throughout the world brought the promise of change and movement, symbolized by the automobile, to millions around the world. As aspirations of Third World peoples throughout the world grew, the civil rights movement challenged the structure of internal colonialism which had kept millions of black people living without political and economic rights within the United States.

Since 1973, West argues, the U.S. has been in a period of civil, political and economic decline and cultural decay. One of the most visible signs of this decline was the OPEC oil crisis, which reflected the growing independence of Third World countries. (In 1945 there were 50 independent nations in the United Na-

tions; by 1973 there were 172.) Since 1973 there has been a decline in the real standard of living for a large portion of the U.S. population. The industrial working class, which had been a vital part of the middle class, has been devastated. The middle class dream of economic security, owning your own home, getting a college education, and seeing a better future for your children has faded for a large portion of the population.

In the midst of this economic decline we have witnessed the increasing incapacity of the government to respond to the crises. It cannot raise the resources necessary for the public welfare, whether replacing aging bridges or subways, caring for the de-institutionalized mentally ill, building housing for the homeless, or providing access to basic health care. Instead government officials participated in the decline as policies of de-regulation laid the foundation for the economic cannibalism which is called the economic prosperity of the 1980s.

All this has meant that we have seen the dramatic widening of the gap between the rich and the poor as wealth has been redistributed from the bottom up. This has meant the loss of the most basic forms of livelihood on the part of millions of people. In the U.S. today 21 percent of all children, and 50 percent of all black children, live below the poverty level.

With poverty has come cultural destruction, as many low-income children live uprooted from any broader frame of meaning and purpose and the love and care necessary for any human being to flourish, West points out. Increasingly we see the transformation of America

*With poverty has come cultural destruction, as many low-income children live uprooted from any frame of meaning and purpose.*

into a market culture. Buying and selling have become the primary activity, whether in terms of drugs or bodies. Market-driven hedonism is a concrete form of nihilism,

West says. The pursuit of pleasure is only a thinly veiled mask for meaninglessness, hopelessness and lovelessness.

All of these conditions are heightened for those at the bottom of our soci-

ety. The problems associated with the black community, West argues, are simply an exaggerated expression of the problems in the society at large. Poor and urban areas throughout the U.S. have witnessed the radical erosion of the family and other institutions that nurture the young and transmit love and care. This translates directly into a rise in self-loathing expressed in self-destructive forms of behavior.

One of the clearest signs of civil decline and cultural decay is the increasing crime and violence directed against racial minorities, homosexuals, women and children.

The churches have not escaped this transformation as marketplace religion has become increasingly dominant, turning prayer into "let's make a deal" with God, and the Church into an institution meant to promote comfort and convenience.

In the midst of this present crisis, West argues that the Church is called to a prophetic witness which challenges all unnecessary forms of human suffering. Four basic elements are necessary to pur-

sue this vocation:

1) a broad and deep analysis of the present in light of the past, a nuanced historical sense which will allow us to discern the forces fundamentally shaping the present.

2) a clear Love ethic, to attempt to keep track of the humanity of others, to acknowledge every individual as unique and irreplaceable, every life as of equal worth in God's eyes — Jewish or Black, women or men, gay or straight, Iraqi or American. This truth is simple but hard to live.

3) a willingness to point out human hypocrisy. Paul Tillich called this the Protestant Principle. We need to point out the discrepancy between practice and promise, rhetoric and reality. This prophetic task is a moral imperative, as there is no renewal that is not rooted in open and honest critique.

4) and, finally, hope, which West defines as against the odds, rooted in struggle, the audacious attempt to awaken a world-weary people, many of whom are on the edge of misanthropy. Hope does not deny the tragic, but it keeps us from being pathetic as it never gives in to victimization.

If Cornel West is correct in his reading of the signs of the times, then the challenge before us is nothing less than spiritual renewal, political reformation, and cultural reconstruction. The

*In the midst of this present crisis, West argues that the Church is called to a prophetic witness which challenges all unnecessary forms of human suffering.*

Book of Hebrews says those who shrink back are destroyed, but those who live by faith shall live. **TW**

**Cornel West** is the author of *Prophesy Deliverance: An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity, Prophetic Fragments, The American Evasion of Philosophy*, and co-author with Bell Hooks of the recently published *Breaking Bread*.

# Indian wealth transformed Europe

by Jack Weatherford

**I**n the first 50 years of the conquest of America, the amount of silver and gold circulating in Europe trebled, and the annual output from America was ten times the combined output of the rest of the world. Royal customs agents in Seville, Spain's only official port of entry for goods from the New World, recorded 16 thousand tons of silver entering during this time, \$3.3 billion worth in today's silver market; illegal trade and pirating may have brought in another five thousand tons or more.

At the time of the discovery of America, Europe had only about \$200 million worth of gold and silver, approximately \$2 per person. By 1600 the supply of precious metals had increased approximately eightfold. The Mexican mint alone coined \$2 billion worth of silver pieces of eight.

The coins flowing through Europe at first promised to strengthen the feudal order, but in the end they forged whole new classes and changed the fortune of many countries. The new coins helped to wash away the old aristocratic order in which money games could be played only by the privileged few; massively larger amounts of

money opened up new games to new people. Even though all the silver and gold went into Spain, it did not stay there. From Spain the money spread throughout Europe. The Hapsburg monarch

Spaniards."

Precious metals from America superseded land as the basis for wealth, power, and prestige. For the first time there was enough of some commodity other than land to provide a greater and more consistent standard by which wealth might be measured. This easily transported and easily used means of wealth prepared the way for the new merchant and capitalist class that would soon dominate the whole world.

The American silver traveled around

Europe very quickly; and it made a quick and heavy impact on the economy of neighboring parts of the Old World, such as the Ottoman Empire, which controlled Turkey and Greece and most of the Near East, North Africa, and large parts of eastern Europe in the 16th century. The Ottoman silver *akce* coin suddenly fell to half its former value before the end of 1584 in a bout of uncontrolled inflation. The coin lost its important place in world trade and never regained it. After centuries of struggle between the Moslems and the Christians, American silver probably did more to undermine Islamic power for the next half a millennium than did any other single factor.

In *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith discussed at great length the impact of American silver in causing worldwide inflation. He wrote that within a generation of the opening of the mines of Potosi, the silver from them started an inflation that lasted for approximately a century and caused silver to fall to its lowest value in history. The new wealth in the hands of Europeans eroded the wealth of all the other countries in the world and allowed Europe to expand into an international market system.



The Spaniards landing at Chalchicueyechan

credit: Florentine Codex

Charles V occupied his throne both as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and as the king of Spain; this facilitated the spread of money from Spain to the Hapsburg holdings in the Spanish Netherlands and across Germany, Switzerland, Austria, and the Italian states. Three-fifths of the bullion entering Spain from America immediately left Spain to pay debts, mostly those incurred by the profligate monarchy; as Cervantes wrote in *Don Quixote*, Spain had become "a mother of foreigners, a stepmother of

**Jack Weatherford**, is the author of *Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World*, New York: Random House, Ballantine Books, 1988. This article is adapted from pages 14-16 of that book.

## War Tax Refusers Evicted

After a long battle with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Randy Kehler and Betsy Corner were arrested on December 3 by federal marshals for refusing to vacate their Massachusetts home, which was officially seized by the IRS in 1989. The couple has refused to pay federal taxes since 1977, in protest of U.S. military policy, opting instead to pay the equivalent amount to non-profit organizations assisting the poor and victims of war.

Supporters from western Massachusetts — as well as others around the country — have rallied in support of Kehler and Corner and their 12-year-old daughter, Lillian. The day after Kehler and Corner were arrested, nearly 100 neighbors and supporters held a rally in front of the couple's home in rural Colrain, Massachusetts.

Corner was released from jail, but Kehler, who could serve six months in jail, told *Religious News Service* in a phone interview from the Hampshire County Jail that he hopes the resistance will encourage others — especially in the churches — to question the morality of paying taxes that go to the military.

"As the mainline churches increasingly call for acts of conscience, I think eventually that must include the call to refuse to pay taxes for war," he said. "I would like to think Betsy's and my actions will help in some small way to help open that discussion in the churches."

**Sojourners, Feb/March, 1992**

## Women and Poverty

- Women make up the majority of the world's poor. Among the estimated 1.2 billion people living in extreme poverty in the global South, 59 percent are female.

- Two-thirds of the world's citizens who cannot read or write are women; in 17 countries, 90 percent or more of the female population is illiterate. Worldwide, the literacy gap between men and women is widening.

- Eighty percent of all refugees are women and their dependent children.

- Everywhere, women are paid less than men, typically earning half to two-thirds of what men earn, and with fewer benefits and less job security. Women nevertheless are the primary income-earners and household heads in one out of every three households worldwide.

—**Oxfam America News**  
**Winter 1991-92**

## Rally for the Cities

Bishop Paul Moore and Osborne Elliot, former editor of *Newsweek*, are working with the U.S. Congress of Mayors and the National League of Cities to organize a May 16 rally for housing, jobs, education and health care. The rally will follow the May 15 mayoral lobbying day on the Hill. A vigil at the National Cathedral may be held the evening of May 15. Details will be available from the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. Call or write Mary Miller for more information: (202) 783-3380; EPF, Box 28156, Washington, D.C. 20038.

## Union Help Requested

Clark Wills, an Episcopal priest in Chicago reports that the Communication Workers of America are experiencing resistance to their efforts to organize Sprint's customer service agents. The union is asking customers to call Sprint's executive vice president in charge of customer service, Faerie Kizzire (913-624-6501), to ask that the company take a neutral stance, allowing workers to decide for themselves. At present, according to Rick Braswell of CWA, the company is circulating memos, showing videos and complaining during meetings denigrating unions in general and CWA in specific. Asked if this kind of resistance is normal, Braswell said it was, adding, "If it's commonplace that doesn't make it ethical."

## White Privilege

Thinking through unacknowledged male privilege as a phenomenon, I realized that, since hierarchies in our society are interlocking, there was most likely a phenomenon of white privilege that was similarly denied and protected.

I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious.

- I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.

- When I am told about our national heritage or about 'civilization' I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.

- I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

- Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.

- I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.

- I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

- I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.

- I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the 'person in charge' I will be facing a person of my race.

- I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.

**Peggy McIntosh, associate director  
of the Wellesley College Center for  
Research on Women.**

**Creation Spirituality, 1-2, 1992**

*Short taxes*

**F**or most of those who attended the Episcopal Church's 1988 General Convention that summer, the prospect of spending nearly two weeks in Detroit had not been very appealing.

This one-time engine of economic prosperity was just too embarrassingly out of gas, its promised renaissance too impossible a dream.

There hadn't been just a little "white flight" here, but wholesale evacuation. Bulldozers and wrecking balls hadn't wiped out just a few buildings, but entire neighborhoods. What life remained seemed listless, dazed and nodding.

There had been some satisfaction, of course, in knowing that this triennial gathering of the Church would bring a dose of badly needed money to this beleaguered town. Concerned deputies reminded peers to leave tips for hotel housekeeping staff, and complimentary shampoo and soap was collected for redistribution at local homeless shelters.

But the Diocese of Michigan hadn't invited the General Convention here to solicit charitable concern for its ailing see city or to showcase its own extensive direct-service ministries, although it could have. Instead, Michigan intended to use the spectacle of Detroit's economic disease to persuade the Church to commit to a Churchwide ministry of community investment and economic justice.

To that end, the host diocese spent the first few days of the 1988 assembly ferrying busloads of deputies, bishops

*The Michigan plan called for an economic justice ministry, including land trusts, housing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses and community development credit unions.*

**Julie A. Wortman**, is the former staff writer for *Episcopal Life* and is editor of a new *Witness* column, *Vital Signs*, which will appear next month.

and other convention participants around the city for a crash course on urban economics. It used test-tube ministries like Detroit's Church of the Messiah to show that a Judeo-Christian approach to economics is one that puts people and environment ahead of financial profits.

Tour groups learned that, given the chance to participate, people who need housing can build their own, people who need a trade can find one and people who need jobs can create them.

For most, it was an eye-opening — even converting — experience.

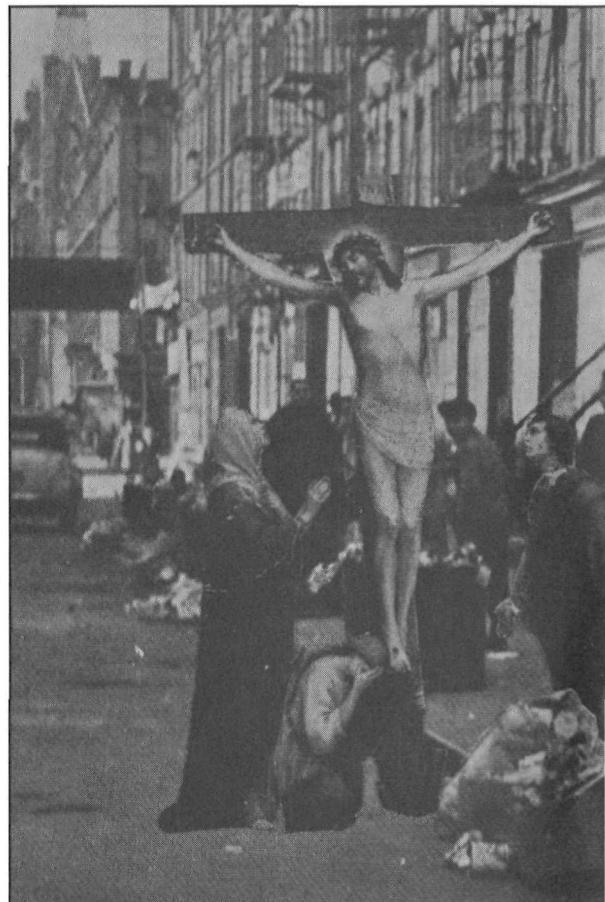
When Michigan's proposal for wider Church involvement in community development was finally put to a vote, an overwhelming majority eagerly said yes.

Knowing it was a pledge to help reform existing economic practices, Michigan's Bishop H. Coleman McGehee, Jr. and the resolution's other proponents hadn't expected easy passage — after all, this was a Church that at this very same convention barely found it possible to boycott Shell Oil Company to protest its business dealings with South Africa. But the General Convention seemed untroubled by the resolution's potential political or social repercussions. The participants had seen a new side to Detroit, and they had been encouraged, even excited, by the view.

"People were impressed," recalls McGehee. "It was a very comprehensive program. The Church hadn't ever done anything so extensive, with so many opportunities for dioceses to be

involved. It was very Biblical and very practical."

The Michigan plan called for an economic justice ministry "directed to community-controlled economic develop-



Crucifixion

## Economic justice

by Julie A.

ment programs of the disadvantaged, with a special focus on land trusts, housing cooperatives, worker-owned businesses and community development credit unions."

"Every level" of the Church was to decide how best to apply resources to this ministry, and to advocate for public policies that support community economic development. Dioceses were urged to get involved by establishing their own economic justice commissions and a Na-



credit: M. Czarnecki

## Or charity?

Comman

tional Episcopal Fund for Community Investment and Economic Justice was to provide a total of \$24 million over six years for “the economic empowerment of the disadvantaged.” An implementation committee would “oversee” these efforts for the coming triennium, with \$200,000 per year being allocated for its work.

Nearly four years later, about a third of the Church’s domestic dioceses are now actively involved in community invest-

ment work, and another third are in various stages of getting started, according to Gloria Brown, the national Church staff person assigned to work with the implementation committee.

Although a sub-committee of the implementation group has not yet gotten very far in raising the \$24 million intended for the national community investment and economic justice fund, it has received \$3.5 million from the Church’s non-designated trust funds to use in making five-year loans of up to \$100,000 to dioceses with projects. The first of these loans, to Pittsburgh’s worker-owned City Pride Bakery, was made this past fall.

But Churchwide implementation has taken longer than most would like, and there are those who argue that more might have been accomplished with less. Investing expert and some-time committee member, Amy Domini, has suggested that a smaller implementation committee — the group reportedly had between 22 and 35 members at different points during the triennium — might have been more effective, and Chuck Matthei, former board chair of the National Association of Community Development Loan Funds and an expert in the field of community economics, believes more staff, with more practical experience, could have helped get more projects going faster.

Still, the methods adopted reflect the national implementation committee’s prime objective, that of widening the circle of those locally who understand what community investment means and how to do it. Much of the committee’s annual budget for this reason went to provide educational, planning and technical as-

sistance as dioceses organized economic justice commissions and began taking on projects.

“You condemn people to continue reinventing the wheel if you don’t share the knowledge — the knowledge base is the power base,” Brown explains. “We want new houses and more jobs, sure, but we’re really in the business of transforming, of changing the system. This Church committed itself to making this economic system more equitably accessible, and that is what we are trying to do.”

As the committee’s 1990 handbook, *Organizing for Economic Justice*, stresses, this requires Church people to move from an approach to social outreach they understand well — that of charity and service — to something less familiar — advocacy and justice.

“In dealing with the economy and how it favors those who have and prohibits those who don’t from participating, you can see the need for a means of equitable distribution, not just so immediate needs can be met, but so people can develop some security in their lives,” says John Hooper, executive director of Michigan’s economic justice commission.

Partnerships between suburban and urban dwellers, between individuals and projects, Hooper also points out, help overcome “the rift and chasm between middle and lower classes.”

But is the Episcopal Church really committed to re-tooling for a ministry of community investment and economic justice? If more and more

dioceses are discovering that McGehee and the other promoters of the 1988 Michigan initiative are right, that using Church resources to promote community - and people-focussed investment is not

*The focus was on getting Church people to move from an approach to social outreach they understand well, that of charity and service, to something less familiar, advocacy and justice.*

only a satisfying, but also a respectful means of aiding the disadvantaged, it is not clear how far national Church administrators have come in accepting that working for justice begins at home.

"You get the impression that this was hot stuff a few years ago, but not now," says Hooper. "Out here it feels like there's an ambiguity or ambivalence about this ministry at the national Church's offices."

On the one hand, there is the impressive witness of the trustees of the Church's trust funds. With little fanfare, this group has quietly gone about finding ways to rechannel Church money to community development — \$3.5 million of non-designated funds, for example, have been invested in intermediaries of intermediaries, like the National Federation of Community Development Credit Unions, to loan out to community development projects; another \$2.5 million from the trustee's 1974 minority bank deposit program has been reinvested for greater effect in community-minded minority- and women-owned banks in poor communities.

But there is also the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief's new major donor fundraising initiative, The Society of the Anchor, to consider. The first founding officers and members are to be invested this May as part of "Celebration '92" festivities honoring the Fund's 50-year history as a major vehicle for charitable giving.

Promotion of the new organization is intended to boost the Fund's annual outlay from \$4 million to \$10 million a year in the near term, and perhaps eventually to as much as \$20 million yearly. To become a member a person must raise or give at least \$10,000 over a two-year period. Those who give or raise \$100,000 are designated Co-chairs, those giving or raising \$50,000 are made Vice-chairs, and those who come up with \$25,000 are designated Executive Committee members.

The funds raised will be granted to projects similar to those already supported by the Fund, including a sprinkling of

*"The time has come to acknowledge that the Episcopal Church is fortunate in having among its congregations people of great influence and power," said Bishop Furman Stough, deputy for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. "We are not hesitant to admit this because many of these people are also great humanitarians and philanthropists."*

"development" projects aimed at combatting the root causes of poverty, but no consideration has been given to investing any of the money in the National Episcopal Fund for Community Investment and Economic Justice. According to the Fund's Bill Caradine, "there is no direct connection" between the two.



But shouldn't there be? Presiding Bishop Edmund Browning indicated in 1987 that the Fund is to become "the primary vehicle for raising funds for new mission initiatives," and Fund officials readily acknowledge that the long-term plan is for the Fund to be responsible for

extra-budgetary efforts like the economic justice ministry. If the Fund is expanding its resources, isn't it time now also to expand its focus? Perhaps it would be if working for change weren't a threat to the Church's *status quo*.

"The time has come to acknowledge that the Episcopal Church is fortunate in having among its congregations people of great influence and power," Bishop Furman Stough, deputy for the Fund, told reporters at a press conference announcing formation of the new Society of the Anchor last December. "We are not hesitant to admit this because many of these people are also great humanitarians and philanthropists."

Among the privileges of membership are participation in an annual "Commissioning and Investiture Service" led by the Presiding Bishop, an annual weekend retreat "where national and international leaders from Church, government, business, politics and academia meet to address global issues," and participation in the Anchor Enterprise and Initiatives Program, an opportunity to "go on-site, around the world, to experience and participate in the work of the Fund first-hand." Members also receive sterling silver "Anchor" crosses on beaded necklaces crafted and designed by Navajo and Lakota Episcopalians.

The Society's membership brochure reads: "As the major donor organization of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, the Society of the Anchor is a group of leaders from throughout the nation who establish new standards of giving" for the Church.

New standards of giving? So much for those who thought that those had been established in Detroit. Economic justice, it would seem, is an acceptable commitment for the Church to make so long as it remains no more than another pleasant, but not too uncomfortable, point of Episcopal light. **TW**

# Money and idolatry

by William Stringfellow

**F**or the Christians of America, money has become a perplexing temptation in the practice of the Gospel: an imposing encumbrance upon the Church in its vocation as an institution and a deceptive stumbling block in the Christian witness within this society.

No attack is made here upon “materialism” in the sense in which that term is so often juxtaposed with “spiritual” values. Neither is it implied that money is intrinsically evil, for nothing at all common to the existence of this world is essentially evil, so far as the Gospel is concerned, though most religions have a contrary view. In the Christian faith, rather, money is one of the institutions of this world which, like all other principalities and powers, is fallen. That means that money has lost its integrity as an institution, exists now in a state of distortion as to its real meaning and function.

By the same token, the owning of money is in and of itself no sin, if that provides any comfort to those who may own some of it. Where sin enters is, instead, in how people and institutions regard money and, hence, in how both use money and how money uses them.

The idolatry of money consists of imputing to the possession or control of money the present moral worth of a person. In this world people live at each other's expense, and the affluence of the few is proximately related to and supported by the poverty of the many. Let

any who would vainly account for American prosperity by simplistic rationalizations about individual ingenuity, free enterprise, the favor of God, or those who credit their wealth merely to their own diligence, remember how dependent, practically, investments are upon labor made cheap and plentiful by the prevalence of poverty in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and, for that matter, Alabama.

Christ offered the rich young man in the parable freedom from idolatry of money. Money is not inherently evil; neither is the possession of money, as such, sin. The issue is only whether a person trusts money more than Christ and thus relies upon money for assurance of their moral significance rather than grace.

The Church nowadays is so much in the position of the rich young man that it seldom has standing to preach to prosperous Americans, not to mention the impecunious.

Freedom from idolatry of money means that money becomes useful as a sacrament, as a sign of the restoration of life wrought in this world by Christ. The sacramental use of money has little to do with supporting the Church after the manner of contributing to conventional charities, and even less with the self-styled stewardship which solicits funds mainly for the maintenance of ecclesiastical salaries and the housekeeping of churchly properties. The Church and its mission do not represent another charity to be subsidized as a convenient benevolence, as a sombre religious obligation, or in order to reassure the prosperous that they are either generous or righteous. And, as the history of the Church has shown, donations for the upkeep of the ecclesiastical establishment too often re-

ally mean the sale of indulgences. Appeals for Church support as either charity or maintenance end up abetting the idolatry of money.

That is weekly dramatized in the offertory when it is regarded as “the collection” and as some intermission in the worship of the congregation. Actually, the offertory is integral to the sacramental existence of the Church, representing the oblation of the totality of life to God....

The sacramental use of money in the formal and gathered worship of the Church is authenticated in the sacramental use of money elsewhere. No end of ways exist in which money can be sacramentally appropriated and spent; but, whatever the concrete circumstances, the consistent mark of such a commitment of money is the freedom of a person from the idolatry of money.

The charity of Christians, in other words, in the use of money sacramentally in both the liturgy and in the world, has no serious similarity to conventional charity, but is always a specific dramatization of the Body of Christ losing its life in order that the world be given life, and, hence, for a member of the Church, always a particular confession that their money is not their own, but belongs to the world.

No doubt, some will think this imprudent, impractical, and, in any event, difficult to practice and apt to be unpopular. But the answer to that is that fidelity to the Gospel is not measured by the affluence of the Church but rather by how the Church loves and serves the world in deploying and spending its wealth. And, for an individual Christian, the answer is that, though money is a beguiling idol which is easy to reverence, money has yet to justify a single human being or secure for him or her the freedom to be a person, while there are many who, having feared that money is a god, have found it worthless except as evidence against themselves. **TW**

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**William Stringfellow**, an attorney and board member of *The Witness* who died in 1985, circulated a longer version of this article through the Associated Church Press in 1966. Art from *The Witness*, Feb. 2, 1975.

*If then you cannot be trusted with money, that tainted thing, who will trust you with genuine riches?...You cannot be the slave of both God and money. (Luke 16:11-18)*

**T**he lure of money is a powerful force. Lust for it has fueled the powerplays of Wall Street. Control of it has caused governments to manipulate world events and sacrifice their youth to war. Lack of it has given birth to revolutions. Money has become the basis for the workings of the material world. Consequently, money has also come to be seen as the antithesis of the transcendent spirit. As Jesus put it most succinctly, one can't have two masters, worshiping both God and money. Nevertheless, even Christian religions have not been immune to the corruptions and the distortions caused by the human affinity for money. From the riches of the Vatican to the bank accounts of Jim and Tammy Bakker, wealth has been hoarded in the name of Christ.

*art and society*

Neither has the world of art — after religion, the domain many would consider the most spiritually oriented — remained apart from the distortions of money. When Van Gogh's paintings sell at auction for tens of millions of dollars and when contemporary investors pay huge sums for contemporary artworks only to lock them up in vaults like gold bullion — it is a clear sign that the strongest spirit around is not that of creativity and the imitation of God, but instead a fascination for, and addiction to, the wealth and power of the here and now.

## Gods of money

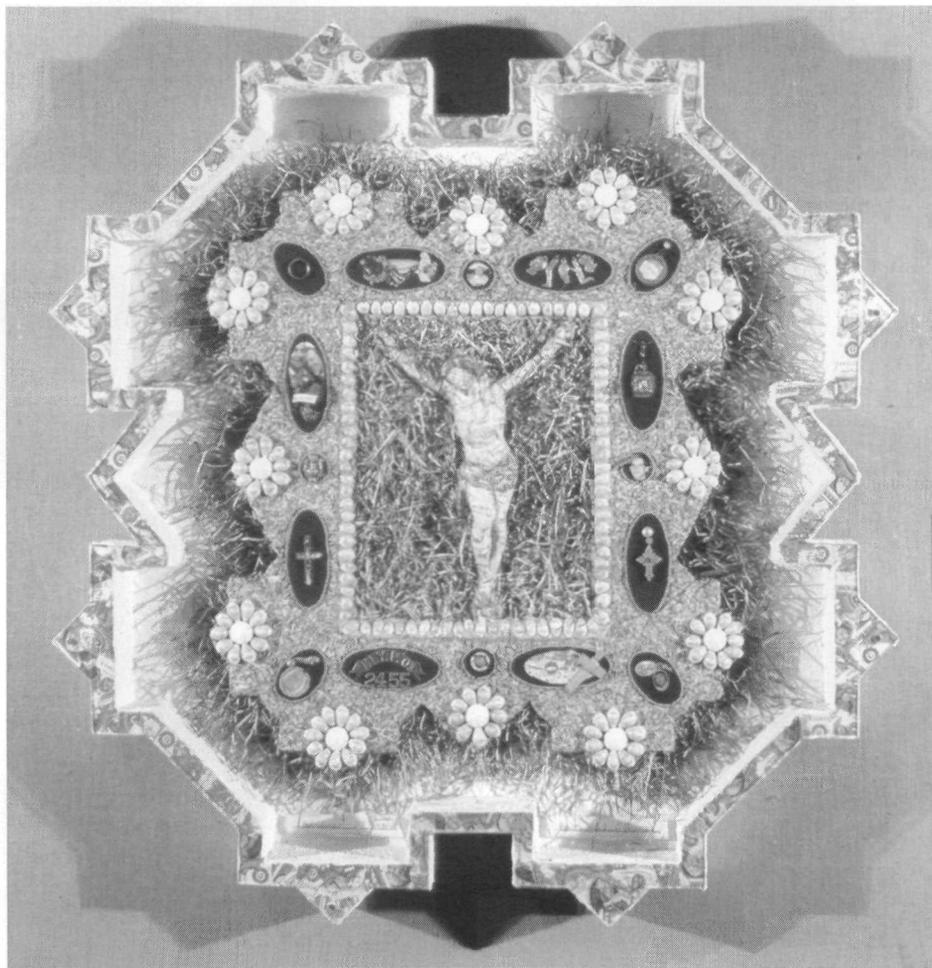
by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

Artists respond, and learn to be more attentive to the bottom line than to their inner voice.

There is, however, at least one artist who can be trusted with money — even huge amounts of it. Barton Lidice Benes has, for the past 15 years, been making artworks out of money — literally. He has gained such a reputation for working in this medium that friends mail him foreign currency whenever they travel. The Federal Reserve Board regularly

gives him cartons full of U.S. dollars — all shredded — which he applies to his works. Benes uses this unusually literal approach to what others often use only symbolically, to make some very telling observations. He has been able to use the taint still adhering to these bills to paint a picture of our money-obsessed western culture.

Benes starts communicating his warnings about money by being funny. He loves to make visual puns (like a wish-



Family Shrine by Barton Lidice Benes

photo: Blaise Tobia

bone wrapped in a dollar bill) and he can't seem to resist verbal puns either. *Laundered Money*, for example, is the title of a sculpture made out of a real washboard and a disintegrating dollar bill. In *Nest Eggs*, strips of money form birds' nests; real eggs laminated with dollars nestle inside. Some in the artworld have in fact criticized him for such easy joking, but Benes' humor becomes quite serious when we realize the meaning of his images: that our society is caught up in a dangerous obsession with consumerism, and money is its most tangible symbol.

Two larger-scale, more intense works strengthen and extend Benes' observations. In *Family Shrine*, personal mementos from Benes' past surround an image of the crucified Christ and the surface is entirely covered with shredded money. The decoration is gaudily beautiful, but it also obscures what should be the most important details. It seems as if the artist is asking: Where do we place our values? What is worth remembering? What is worth dying for? What is worth believing in? Where does religion fit in? *Green Goddess* uses a reproduction of the Venus de Milo. In this case, shredded money turns the familial sculpture into a contemporary version of the golden calf — a symbol of our society's sexual and material idolatry. The collecting of fine art is implicated in this lust for wealth, and by extension the artists who make it. The title is also the name of a popular salad dressing, implying that idolatry has become, perhaps, as American as apple pie.

Where are the "genuine riches" that Jesus speaks of in Luke's gospel? In mocking the facile answers provided by our society, and even in challenging two of its pillars — religion and art — Benes may be inviting us to be very careful about where we invest our hearts. **TW**



**Green Goddess by Barton Lidice Benes**

photo: Blaise Tobia

The owners of the land came onto the land, or more often a spokesman for the owners came....Some of the owner men were kind because they hated what they had to do, and some of them were angry because they hated to be cruel, and some of them were cold because they had long ago found that one could not be an owner unless one were cold. And all of them were caught in something larger than themselves...If a bank or a finance company owned the land, the owner man said, The Bank — or the Company — needs — wants — insists — must have — as though the Bank or the Company were a monster, with thought and feeling, which had ensnared them. These last would take no responsibility for the banks or the companies because they were men and slaves, while the banks were machines and masters all at the same time...The owner men sat in the cars and explained. You know the land is poor. You've scabbled at it long enough, God knows.

The squatting tenant men nodded and wondered and drew figures in the dust, and yes, they knew, God knows. If the dust only wouldn't fly. If the top would only stay on the soil, it might not be so bad....

Well, it's too late. And the owner men explained the workings and the thinkings of the monster that was stronger than they were....You see, a bank or a company...those creatures don't breathe air, don't eat side-meat. They breathe profits; they eat the interest on money. ... We have to do it. We don't like to do it. But the monster's sick....

Sure, cried the tenant men, but it's our land. We measured it and broke it up. We were born on it, and we got killed on it, died on it. Even if it's no good, it's still ours....

We're sorry. It's not us. It's the monster. The bank isn't like a man.

Yes, but the bank is only made of men.

No, you're wrong there--quite wrong there. The bank is something else than men. It happens that every man in a bank hates what the bank does, and yet the bank does it. The bank is something more than men, I tell you. It's the monster. Men made it, but they can't control it.

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

# Rooted in the world, not the system

by Walter Wink

[Ed. Note: Walter Wink suggests that the myth that dominates our society is based on violent domination. The myth is ancient, arising in Ancient Babylon as the story of Marduk. The moral is that violent action yields order and good. Wink suggests that Christ's ministry is a direct confrontation with the *Domination System*.]

**T**he New Testament is thoroughly familiar with the Domination System, and has specific terms for describing it. One, which has sadly been obscured for many readers of the Bible, is the Greek word *kosmos* ("world").... Because the range of meanings assigned to the term "world" is so wide, I suggest that the special New Testament sense of world as an alienating and alienated ethos may be translated more meaningfully as "system."

For example, in South Africa, many blacks are fully aware that they are fighting the apartheid system, not merely white people. They know that they cannot gain freedom simply by changing the color of the people at the top and leaving the system intact. When police are at the door, people inside will warn, "The System is here." When they see propaganda on television, they quip, "The System is lying again." Of a strike: "We're struggling against the System."

In the light of our understanding of the Domination System, the translation of *kosmos* as "system" opens a new dimension of meaning. "The System (*kosmos*) cannot hate you," Jesus is shown as telling his own brothers, who refuse to believe in him; "but it hates me because I testify against it that its works are evil" (John 7:7). Whenever Christians have understood this as meaning that the *physical world* is evil, they have tended to reject the created order, sexuality, and even their own bodies, and to manifest open contempt for efforts at political change. "System" yields an entirely different meaning, however, one far closer to John's intent, which cannot have been to despise the creation that this Gospel itself affirms was created by God through the Word (1:1-5). But the Domination System *does* hate Jesus, regards him as a mortal threat, and sees to his brutal execution: it hates him because he testified against it that its works were evil.

Thus when the Pharisees challenge Jesus' authority to attack their religious order, he responds, "You are of the System, I am not of the System" (John 8:23). Again, as long as *kosmos* in this statement was translated as "world," the impression was given

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Walter Wink teaches at Auburn Seminary, NY and is the author of a trilogy on the powers and principalities. This article is adapted from a section of *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a world of Domination*, Fortress Press, May, 1992. Artist Sister Helen David teaches art at the SE Community Center in Philadelphia, PA.

that Jesus was other-worldly, non-human, a “docetic” (only “seeming”) person: “I am not of this *world*.” With the meaning “system,” however, his statement is literally true. He belonged to God’s system. He was not “of” the Domination System. Rejection of the *kosmos*, as John H. Elliott remarks, is not anti-worldly but anti-establishment.

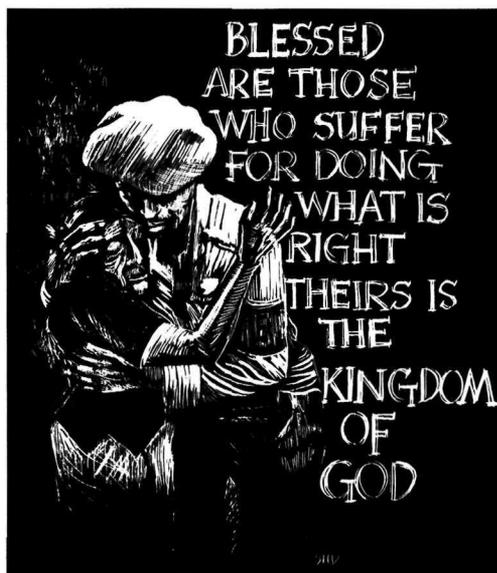
Those who belong to the Domination System cannot comprehend the values displayed by Jesus, or understand why he is turning their world upside down. Theirs is a hermetically sealed language-system: “They belong to the Domination System (*kosmos*); therefore what they say is determined by that System, and that System listens to them” (1 John 4:5). Thus the writer of Ephesians can speak of existence in the System as a living death: You “were spiritually dead all the time that you drifted along on the stream of this world’s ideas of living (*kosmos*) (Eph.2:2).” Literally, the concluding phrase runs, “You walked according to the *aion* of this *kosmos*.” This *kosmos* is the prevailing world-atmosphere that we breathe in like toxic air, often without realizing it.

Nazi Germany provides a striking example. As early as 1923, D. H. Lawrence, with his astonishing capacity to discern developments at their inception, accurately described the new spiritual atmosphere that was possessing Germany: *...at night you feel strange things stirring out of this still, unconquered Black Forest. You stiffen your backbone and you listen to the night. There is a sense of danger. It is not the people. They don’t seem dangerous. Out of the very air comes a sense of danger, a queer, bristling feeling of uncanny danger.*

The “atmosphere” that Lawrence so clairvoyantly discerned in Germany can be detected in any setting within the Domination System, even when it is less

portentous. This spirit-killing atmosphere penetrates everything, teaching us not only what to believe, but what we can value and even what we can see.

It teaches us what to *believe*: it offers us the acceptable beliefs that society at any given time declares to be credible. The current world-atmosphere has decreed that spirits are not real, nor God, nor miracles, nor spiritual healing. Therefore no respectable intellectual discourse is permitted on these themes....



*This kosmos is the prevailing world-atmosphere that we breathe in like toxic air, often without realizing it.*

The world-atmosphere teaches us what we can *value*. In the Domination System generally, it teaches us to value power. In any particular society, however, power is given specific shape by the peculiar conditions of the time. What characterizes our society is the unique value ascribed to money. People in every age have coveted wealth, but few societies have lionized

the entrepreneur as ours does. Aristocratic societies—and most societies have been aristocratic — have tended to look down on acquisitiveness and despised merchants. Modern capitalism, by contrast, has made wealth the highest value.

Our entire social system has become an “economy”; no earlier society would have characterized itself thus. Profit is the highest social good. Consumerism has become the only universally available mode of participation in modern society. The work ethic has been replaced by the consumption ethic, the cathedral by the skyscraper, the hero by the billionaire, the saint by the executive, religion by ideology. The Kingdom of Mammon exercises constraint by invisible chains and drives its slaves with invisible prods. (Have you ever heard of a rich person who said, “I have enough”?) But Mammon is wiser in its way than the dictator, for money enslaves not by force but by love.

The world-atmosphere also teaches us what to *see*.... Whatever the System tells our brains is real is what we are allowed to notice; everything else must be ignored. Thus we are taught to mistrust our own experiences.... The result of this limitation on what we are allowed to see is a miniaturization of our living world.

These limitations of sight are to a degree merely a consequence of finitude. But to some extent they are also the result of a system that is deliberately blinding us to God’s true intent for humanity: “For judgment I came into this System, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see”— here the religious authorities, who believe themselves to be God’s spokesmen, but who have reduced religion to a male club that excludes all but the morally upright and the financially privileged — “may become blind” (John 9:39). “And this is the judgment”— the last Judgment, moved right up to the present moment of encounter with this

truth — “that the light has come into the System, and people loved darkness rather than light” (John 3:19).

Pilate, as Rome’s representative, does not, cannot understand that there is another order of reality breaking in on the hegemony of violence which, under the temporary guise of Rome, now straddles the world. Jesus answers him: “The New Reality (*basileia*) of which I speak is not of this old System of Domination (*kosmos*); if it were, my aides would fight, that I not be delivered to the Jewish authorities. But the New Reality of which I speak does not take its rise from the Domination System (*kosmos*)” (John 18:36). How different that sounds from the usual translation, “My kingdom is not of this world”! The values of the Domination System and those of Jesus are incommensurable. Violence cannot cure violence. The New Reality eschews violence, but it has its own, quite amazing forms of power, which those inured to violence cannot comprehend.

Jesus discovered that there were many, both women and men, ready to be delivered from the Domination System, who longed for the equalitarian, non-hierarchical sufficiency of the reign of God. To these Jesus declares: “What does it profit people, to gain the whole System (*kosmos*) and forfeit their lives?” (Mark 8:36). “Those who hate their life in this System will keep it for *aionic* life” (John 12:25)—not an injunction to self-loathing, but a very down-to-earth observation: only those who find their lives detestable under the Powers That Be will have the courage to reject the latter’s overblown authority.

“Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what appears foolish to the System in order to shame the wise; God

chose what appears weak to the System in order to shame the strong, God chose what appears low and despicable to the System, mere nothings, to reduce to nothing things that are.” (1 Cor. 1:26-28) ....

*Jesus discovered that there were many, both women and men, ready to be delivered from the Domination System, who longed for the equalitarian, non-hierarchical sufficiency of the reign of God. To these Jesus declares: “What does it profit people, to gain the whole System (kosmos) and forfeit their lives?”*

Those liberated from the tyranny of the old order receive a new Holy Spirit —“not the spirit of the Domination System (*kosmos*), but the spirit which is from God” (1 Cor. 2:12); “the Spirit of truth, which the Domination System is not able to receive, because it can neither recognize it nor comprehend it. You know it, because it is already in your midst, and will be inside your very beings” (John 14:17)....

Not only do those liberated from the old System receive a new Spirit, they receive a new world.... What had been invisible—the all-pervasive exploitation of the many by the few — was rendered visible, judged, and found wanting. And those with this new sight needed no longer to subject themselves to the delusions that formerly shaped their alienated picture of “world”....

“In the old System you face persecution. But take courage,” Jesus says; “I have vanquished the Domination System!” (John 16:33). The disciples

are still “in” the System (John 17:11), but not of it: “If the System hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you. If you would collaborate with the System, the System would love you for it; but because you have turned your backs on it (because

I have extricated you from the System!), it hates you” (John 15:18-19). “Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters, that the System hates you” (1 John 3:13). For “the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the System” (1 John 4:4). “For whatever is born of God conquers the Domination System. And this is the victory that overcomes that System: our faith” (1 John 5:4)....

Until the new order of God arrives, believers are “to deal with the old System as though they had no dealings with it. For the basic structure (*schema*) of the dominant System (*kosmos*) is passing away” (1 Cor. 7:31). “I do not pray that you should take them out of the System,” for that is the theater in which God’s sovereignty must be established, “but that you keep them from the Evil One,” that is, from succumbing to its spirituality (John 17:15)....

However it comes, God’s system *will* replace the Domination System, not by violent confrontation, but as increasing numbers of people find themselves drawn toward its values.... The old order begins to lose its intelligibility: “Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the Domination System (*kosmos*)? For since, in the wisdom of God, the System did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe” (1 Cor. 1:20-21).

Only God can bring about a new system in its entirety; a new kind of earthly existence will be given by the selective process itself. And yet, though it cannot be built, it is our task to try to create the conditions that would make that selection possible. Prayer, persuasion, and social struggle thus occupy the community that lives as if God’s reign has already begun. TW

**C**hris Payden-Travers is a priest in the rural southeast and the mother of two daughters. Next year, she and her husband will celebrate 20 years of federal tax resistance.

“When Jack and I got married in 1972 I wasn’t ready to be a tax resister. I was afraid that if we resisted we were going to lose our home the next day; Big Brother would appear on my doorstep like Superman.”

During the year that followed, which included the progression of the Vietnam War, Payden-Travers says she met a number of war tax resisters. “They hadn’t had their lives totally destroyed, so I came to believe it was possible to resist taxes and survive.”

She says she felt called and ultimately willing to refuse to pay her federal income and the federal telephone tax.

“We felt increasingly that the priorities of the government just simply didn’t go along with what we thought the priorities were. If we weren’t willing to let our bodies be used for war, we shouldn’t allow our dollars to be used. If I don’t believe we should be in the Gulf, then I shouldn’t pay for it. There’s a hypocrisy in praying for the U.S. and Iraqi soldiers’ safety, if I’ve paid the airfare and bought the guns they’re using.”

Instead, the Payden-Travers family sends the money it would pay for federal income tax to community groups which they know will meet human needs.

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. **Dierdre Luzwick** is a Wisconsin graphic artist. Her book *Endangered Species* was just released by Harper & Row.

Payden-Travers said that being ordained makes the mechanics of resistance easier, but the decision to resist more difficult for her.

Therefore, a pastor has a better chance at filing below taxable income. Lastly, pastors who live in rectories don’t own their homes and can’t have them seized by the IRS.

“I’m one of the few priests I know who likes a rectory,” Payden-Travers says. “I don’t want to be dumped out of my home. It’s a scary thought — having the girls and not being able to have a home for them.”

All these factors contribute an impetus to resist taxes, Payden-Travers says.

“Because I’m a minister I’m in a position to take some control over how my money is spent. I feel I am answerable to God for what I do with that.”

On the other hand, being a pastor puts Payden-Travers in a dilemma which she takes seriously. While her decision represents her own individual discernment and conviction, it may also reflect back on her worshiping community if it becomes public.

After seminary, Payden-Travers struggled with whether to tell parishes that interviewed her that she was a tax resister. After conversations with many people, including one woman who asserted that “taxes and sex are very private matters,” she decided not to bring it up.

But Payden-Travers felt misgivings during the Pittston coal strike when clergy members were arrested, wearing their

clericals and thereby pulling their congregations into that conflict. Unlike some, Payden-Travers does not see this as necessarily a prophetic opportunity.

“I’m aware that a lot of people cannot understand how you could ever commit



Trinity

credit: Dierdre Luzwick

## Rendering unto Caesar: a story of tax resistance

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

Pastors are considered self-employed by the IRS, consequently their taxes are not automatically withheld and they are better able to refuse to pay. They are also all allowed deductions that others are not: deductions for housing, utilities, etc.

civil disobedience and *break a law*. It's not a case of evasion. It's not a case of keeping money for myself. I have to trust that that congregation would honor my conscience the way we honor any other member's conscience, but it's very hard to keep the boundaries straight between what you do as an individual and what you do as a representative of a church. How do you keep a personal witness from being something that reflects on a community that isn't part of it?"

She adds that tax resistance does not seem to be a universal calling.

"It's clear that God does not seem to call everybody to that absolute position. I have met people who feel as strongly about their call to be peacemakers in the military as I feel. I don't spend energy wondering why that is or if they have misheard their call. I do know this is the witness I'm called to make."

Payden-Travers says that to date her tax resistance has been a pretty private affair. It has stayed that way partly because they rarely owe taxes. When, re-

cently, they did owe and refuse to pay \$100, Payden-Travers felt responsible to inform her bishop, since the IRS might attempt to seize the money from her bank or from the diocese through garnishment of her wages. She asked that the diocese consider refusing to cooperate, saying there was precedence for this in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. (See page 27.) To date, the IRS has made no move to recoup the money.

*But how do you keep a personal witness from being something that reflects on a community that isn't part of it?*

Payden-Travers laughs when she says that tax resistance provides an extra incentive to simple living. The less they possess, the less interest the IRS has in them. On the other hand, they now have a new stationwagon partly because they do not want to live in fear.

Ironically, that self-same car is the thing most likely to cause the Payden-Travers' tax resistance to go public and to draw her congregation into the turmoil that would follow.

"If the IRS tried to seize the car, I know Jack would want to organize a protest. We'd have to wrestle that out, work that out, as a couple."

The Payden-Travers' have been audited by the IRS and a lien was imposed against a house they owned with another family in Michigan. Presumably if that house is sold, the IRS can exercise its claim against the sale price.

Payden-Travers said that sometimes tax resistance seems to have only symbolic value.

"Does it have any effect? On one level, absolutely not. But I know that I wouldn't be faithful if I didn't do it. But perhaps it will have more impact than I'll ever know — maybe some bored IRS agent has read some letters in the file. Some seeds do fall on good soil and the sower may never get to see it." TW

## The Episcopal Church and tax resistance

During the Vietnam War, when the Internal Revenue Service told the Diocese of Pennsylvania to garnish the wages of a diocesan priest, the bishop and diocesan council refused.

"The diocesan council, led by Bishop [Robert] DeWitt said it would not garnish my pay," because it would violate his conscience, David Gracie explains, but if the IRS got a federal court ruling that the diocese *had* to pay, it would comply.

Legal expenses were high and the court ruling predictable, but by the time the decision was made the war was over.

Gracie withdrew the money he had invested with the Philadelphia War Tax Resisters' Fund revolving community

development loan fund, and paid the tax.

The location of the council's decision to resist the IRS pleased Bishop DeWitt, Gracie said. It was made at Old Christ Church, George Washington's parish.

While the Church has no official position on tax resistance, the 1928 General Convention said: "*Warfare as an instrument of national policy or means of settling disputes between nations should be renounced. Such warfare, undertaken to further national policy and without recourse to judicial arbitration or other means of peaceful settlement, is a crime.*"

The registrar who keeps names of conscientious objectors for the national Church, will file the names of tax resisters upon request.

The Episcopal Peace Fellowship, which supports individual decisions not to pay war taxes, has issued a call to tax

resisters to send letters explaining why they are conscientious tax resisters and why they would like to have the legal relief of a peace tax fund to which the taxes could be directed. The EPF can also provide a 1988 pamphlet titled *Cross Before Flag*, which offers Episcopal statements (between 1916-1988) on war and peace.

"We support war tax resistance and war tax resisters," Mary Miller, director of the EPF, says. "We are pushing every way we can for the peace tax fund bill. It has been 12 years of hard work, but a needs assessment hearing on the bill is scheduled for this spring."

Correspondence can be directed to the Registrar for Conscientious Objectors, 815 Second Ave., NY NY 10017 and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Box 28156, Washington DC 20038.

# Capitalism for Latin America

by Gordon Judd

**The Hemisphere of Liberty: A Philosophy of the Americas.** Michael Novak, The AEI Press, 1990; 153 pages, hard cover, \$18.95.

**A** banner sometimes appearing at demonstrations on poverty issues says: *If You Say Capitalism Is Working, Then You Are One of the Working!*

Michael Novak's book, a series of lectures prepared to be given in Latin America (he never indicates whether he actually gave them), is written from the perspective of someone who is working and for whom capitalism is working.

Novak implies that in northern countries poverty has ceased to exist, that in the United States, for instance, capitalism has enabled everyone to attain economic sufficiency and, thereby, liberty. Novak, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., has apparently not seen the thousands of homeless who have taken up permanent residency on Washington's mean streets.

Novak writes that, "The economic desperation of some 200 million persons in Latin America...remains an outrage to our consciences," but implies that this economic desperation arises from too little capitalism. He says, "I have heard some Latin American priests say that Latin America's problem is 'savage capitalism.' In fact, the reality may be savage but it is not capitalist. Most of the nations of Latin America are mercantilist, almost patrimonial in structure; the economic activities of their citizens are heavily abridged, limited, and controlled by state

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**Gordon Judd** is a Basilian priest and staff member of *Groundwork*, a Michigan grassroots lobby for social justice.

officials."

True and false. True, many countries have patrimonial aspects, especially in agricultural production, but false to suggest that because these countries may not operate as classic capitalist economies (what countries do?) that they have not been *savaged* by capitalism's excesses.

*Michael Novak implies that in the United States capitalism has enabled everyone to attain economic sufficiency and, thereby, liberty.*

The practices of Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Germany, and other northern or developed nations ensure that the nations to the south will continue to ship their precious minerals, lumber, and agricultural products that are needed or wanted in the north. The primary Latin American experience of capitalism has been victimization.

Novak elsewhere suggests that the primary reason for human rights abuses and political and economic servitude in Latin America is that capitalism has not been well used. He says that business leaders "must be the architects of liberation, offering a vision of how the poor will be liberated from traditional poverty to become economically creative." Of course, his clarion call rests on two large assumptions: that business leaders are committed to liberation and that *those who have* should be creating a vision for *those who have not*.

If someone reads only one book on capitalism's past and potential contributions to liberty in this hemisphere, this is

the book to read, because if anything else is read, such as the pastoral letters from Latin American bishops' conferences, the economic pastoral of the U.S. Roman Catholic bishops, or even the Scriptures, Novak's thesis quickly unravels.

*The Hemisphere of Liberty* is seriously flawed. What Novak has written is a defense of capitalism grounded neither in truth nor fact. He claims that his is a "practical philosophical" approach in what he calls the *Whig tradition*, a tradition, he says, that emanates from *Genesis*, Aristotle, and Thomas Aquinas. It is not practical, however. More significantly, it is not even honest, implying as it does that capitalism is working for developed countries. It is clearly not working for the millions in the United States who now form a dislocated and homeless population larger than that of the Kurds.

In establishing his credentials as a contemporary Catholic Whig, Novak claims the tradition of *Genesis*. What about the rest of the *Pentateuch*, the prophets, Wisdom literature, the Gospels? It is this selective Scriptural, theological, historical and experiential method that makes his book more a tract than a serious piece of analysis.



The book's flyleaf says, "For almost a decade now, Michael Novak's writings on religion and economics have caused a sensation in Latin America." Obviously.

If any reader is seeking sensation, then *This Hemisphere of Liberty* might qualify for a *must-read*. If the reader desires honest and helpful analysis, however, he or she will do better to look elsewhere. **TV**

# Witnessing and wealth

**T**he *Witness* has, since its inception in 1917, challenged the social orders that create injustice. It has also been mindful that, by virtue of its own assets and the Church to which it belongs, it must be accountable.

Originating in 1917 with no assets, *The Witness* is now a \$300,000-a-year operation with a paid staff and a \$2.5 million endowment.

“How can a publication as adequately financed as *The Witness* by income from investments in ‘the system’ bespeak the cause of the poor and the oppressed without being hypocritical?” asked editor Bob DeWitt (retired bishop of Philadelphia) in 1979.

He responded by saying that the question is as old as the Church: “It goes back as far as ‘the saints which are in Caesar’s household’ to whom St. Paul referred. Those early Christians are in a way the patron saints of privileged Christians in the Western world today. Like us, that was where they were placed, that was their calling, their vocation. We can only wish we knew more of how they lived out that vocation. The question they faced was how could their position of privilege best be used to preach the Gospel and live this life in the power of the life to come.”

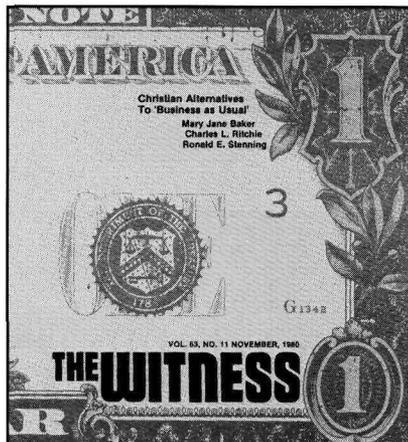
For those new to the history of *The Witness*, it originated as a newsprint tabloid that sold for \$1 a year, explicitly so that wage laborers could afford to subscribe. Production costs were covered by contributors and by editor/owner Irving Peake Johnson, Bishop of Colorado.

Later, when Johnson incorporated the magazine in Illinois, it had four stockholders, Johnson, (long-time editor) Wil-

---

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** became editor/publisher of *The Witness* in September, 1991.

liam Spofford and Benjamin and Frank Clarke. The corporation was nearly bankrupt during the Depression, but generated net assets of \$96,900 by 1937.



The cover from the Nov., 1980 *Witness*. The issue examined “Christian alternatives to business as usual.”

During the subsequent decades, *The Witness* was edited, written, typed, published, addressed, bundled and even delivered by William Spofford, with the help of his wife, Dorothy. Spofford, whom I trust readers will come to know through this 75th anniversary year, was active with the Church League for Industrial Democracy and was listed as a “fellow traveller” in *Life Magazine*. Spofford lived frugally while investing money. At the time of his death in 1972 and his wife’s in 1973, there were \$4.5 million in assets and no records to whom the money belonged.

In an effort to protect the money from possible IRS claims, the Spofford family turned the assets over to the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, according to ECPC treasurer Robert Eckersley. The ECPC board, for similar reasons, was reconstituted with Presiding Bishop John Hines as its chair and Bishops Morris

Arnold, Robert DeWitt, Lloyd Gressle, John Krumm, J. Brooke Mosely and the then Rev. Joseph Fletcher as its members.

When all was said and done, the ECPC ended up with \$3.4 million.

In the years that followed, the ECPC used the interest from the endowment, subscription income and, from time to time, the principal itself to produce the magazine and to support a community for social justice within the Church.

The ECPC board placed ten percent of its assets in socially responsible investments that offered a low yield. They also subjected their investments to the scrutiny of the Institute for Corporate Responsibility.

“We tried to invest socially responsibly,” Mary Lou Suhor, editor from 1981 until 1991, explained. “We monitored our own accounts. We fought against plant closings and called attention to economic problems.”

The ECPC developed a Church and Society Network which gave the Urban Bishops’ Coalition \$100,000 and loaned it two ECPC staffpeople for the 1978 Urban Crisis Conference which yielded *To Hear and to Heed*, written by Joe Pelham. It also supported: the Consultation (which is a network of progressive groups within the Church), the Episcopal Urban Caucus, General Convention forums, a 1976 conference for religion editors, and the Grand Jury Project which publicized the arrest of two Episcopal Church staffers who refused to testify before a Grand Jury investigating the FALN, a militant Puerto Rican group.

The ECPC produced study guides, including *My Story’s On* (a tremendous work by women about class issues and tensions within the feminist community) and *Struggling with the System, Probing Alternatives* (which Ronald Reagan called a “one-sided venture into political indoctrination” and columnist Jeffrey Hart said

was "nothing less than a Marxist handbook for the overthrow of the U.S. political and economic system").

In the mid-1970s, the board voted to change a 1940 by-law that stipulated that *The Witness*' editor must be a bishop or a priest. In time, people of color, women, later ordained women, and gay and lesbian board members helped shape the direction and finances of the ECPC.

From time to time constituencies on the board clashed, sometimes over preferences for the work of the magazine or for the work of the Church and Society programs. Sometimes they clashed over whether race or gender were paramount or even compatible issues.

"Our mission statement was pretty strong in those days," Suhor said. "We were against racism, sexism, classism and against imperialism/U.S. adventurism. Our programs flowed from those.

"People on the board came down on different sides of those four isms," Suhor said. "We were trying to integrate people around these isms. Later we made a statement that we saw the chief problems of the country as economic, fueled by racism and sexism."

Differences of opinion could be heated or paralyzing at times. "Certain people were unhappy at all times with all projects," Suhor laughed. "When you're slicing up the economic pie there are disagreements but that's only natural."

My impression, as a newcomer, is that the ECPC board had a ride-easy attitude toward the endowment, preferring for the money to be faithfully spent than quietly amassed. This attitude is similar to the character of the magazine itself, which I discern to be a preferential option for thought-provoking passion (even when wrong), rather than for tepid thought.

By 1990, the board of ECPC had spent \$1 million of its principal. Robert Eckersley predicted that if the board continued to spend money as it had, the

endowment would be gone in eight years.

The board considered its options.

What was the faithful thing to do with the money? Chris Bugbee proposed dissolving the magazine and using the interest to give grants to investigative journalists. Others preferred to focus the board's



attention on the magazine. Some considered a merger with *Christianity & Crisis*.

A new conservationist mood descended on the board. Many members were new to the ECPC (only five of the current board members have served more than one year on the board) and while they are all Episcopalians with lively and sometimes marginal view points, they seem inclined to scale down spending, to preserve the endowment and to concentrate solely on the work of *The Witness*.

In early 1991, the ECPC decided to relocate *The Witness* to Detroit for reasons of political geography and because it was anticipated that *The Witness* could save money in this depressed area.

"There has been a concerted effort to come to grips with the fact that our vision tended to exceed our financial reach," explains Bill Rankin, ECPC chairperson and rector of All Saints, Belvedere, Calif. "To be a steward means being responsible for not only the present, but for the future. My feeling now is that we have a wonderful coherence on the board."

The current *Witness* staff is following in the footsteps of the previous staff in trying to curtail expenses. We have streamlined tasks and tried to scale back expenses. By the end of the year, accounting functions which have been

handled in Scranton, Penn. will have moved to Detroit.

Last fall, for the first time in many years, the ECPC board passed a budget that would not draw on principal. There's some uncertainty in this, since we are living out the budget for the first time in this location, but there is a feeling that running the magazine like a small business reflects good stewardship.

Magazines like *Sojourners* and *Christianity & Crisis* depend on their fundraising and are forced to dedicate a lot of time and energy to scrambling for literally hundreds of thousands of dollars to subsidize subscriptions.

*The Witness* has been fortunate because it anticipates \$200,000 in interest and dividends annually. Unfortunately, although subscription prices were low (\$20 annually), subscription revenue brought in only about \$10 per subscriber. For this reason, *The Witness* staff recently had to eliminate the 4-for-the-price-of-1 Christmas offer.

Last June, the ECPC dissolved its social justice fund and established a *Friends of The Witness* campaign. The board is committed to raising \$32,000 this year. I am grateful to the board for taking the burden of fundraising off the shoulders of the staff and to those who contribute to *The Witness*. My hope is that subscription revenue will improve and offset some of the fundraising required. In January alone, we added 500 new subscribers.

There is a tension between riding easy with the endowment and trying to conserve it. The worst of the one is throwing money carelessly at projects and pork barrels. The worst of the other is becoming tight-fisted and losing sight of God's ultimate freedom. I'm glad to be working for a board that seems to have an appreciation of both truths. It is also satisfying, as editor, to be a voice for conservation that meets voices on the board that speak for real freedom. — J.W-K.

**R**eform-minded community activists often find it difficult to gain a hearing from those who wield power in financial spheres. Elena Hanggi does not. For the past year, the 50-year-old former national president of ACORN (Associated Community Organizations for Reform Now) has been chairwoman of the Dallas regional federal bank board, which oversees savings and loan institutions in Texas, New Mexico, Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana.

Her appointment, made in January, 1991 by the Federal Housing Finance Board, surprised Hanggi and stunned financial industry members in that region.

"You cannot imagine the hostility directed at me," Hanggi says. "People were just livid."

Hanggi had come on the board 10 months earlier to fill out the remainder of a four-year term. She was appointed as one of the two "community interest" directors whose seats on each of the nation's 12 boards were mandated by the Congressional S&L bailout legislation, in a provision won largely through ACORN's lobbying efforts.

*"I did the typical Southern female thing — got out of high school, got a job, fell in love, got married, quit the job, had babies. I shied away from attention drawn to myself, and was never particularly confident about my ability to do things."*



Elena Hanggi

## Chairing a bank board

by Marianne Arbogast

be reappointed, Hanggi solicited letters of recommendation from other board members, the majority of whom were elected representatives of the S&L industry.

In a move that may have been "some perverse joke on the part of the Finance Board," Hanggi quips, she was not only reappointed to the Dallas board but also named its head.

"I had been fairly quiet during the first year," Hanggi says. "One year barely gives you enough time to understand what is going on. It's not fun. It's very, very frustrating to see the kicking and screaming, the manipulation of procedures, the stacking of the deck that goes on with regard to any issues we raise."

Through the Affordable Housing Pro-

gram — another piece of the bailout legislation won by ACORN — millions of dollars have been loaned to low-income housing developers and first-time buyers. Still, she laments, "a lot more will go into bank presidents' pockets."

Twelve of the board's 15 members can be counted on to vote in a block, she says. "It's always going to be as anti-community as it can be and claim some semblance of following the law."

Though she struggles with discouragement, Hanggi is supported by her faith and a strong sense of vocation.

A parishioner of St. Andrew's Roman Catholic Cathedral in Little Rock, Ark., Hanggi used to be troubled by the idea that "it was vain to think I as a layperson could have a calling from God," till a

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

"The law forced the board to incorporate people like me," Hanggi explained. "Just having to sit at the same table and be confronted with the fact that there are lucid, reasonable, intelligent people, who maybe see the world in a different light" has brought some bank officers to a new understanding, she said.

Concerned about whether she would

**Marianne Arbogast** is assistant editor of *The Witness*.

priest friend in social justice ministry convinced her that she did.

Hanggi's community involvement was sparked 18 years ago, when the highway department decided to build a freeway through her close-knit, predominantly German neighborhood near downtown Little Rock.

When ACORN began organizing, Hanggi was drawn into the campaign. Her family remained in their home until a bulldozer was parked in their yard, then negotiated a deal allowing them to move the house to a location eight blocks away.

"Before ACORN I had never been one to get involved," she says. "I did the typical Southern female thing -- got out of high school, got a job, fell in love, got married, quit the job, had babies. I shied away from attention drawn to myself, and was never particularly confident about my ability to do things.

"ACORN not only gave me the opportunity, but shoved me into doing things I didn't realize I could do. The more self-confidence I gained, the more I wanted. It was an issue of me beginning to feel like I made a difference."

Hanggi went back to school, studying English, sociology, and Urban Affairs. Eventually she earned a law degree.

The process was sometimes painful. Her children were teased by schoolmates about their mother's activism, and her own growth strained family equilibrium.

*As long as good Christians allow people who do not have the same value system to have control over how money is spent, to whom it is lent, what sections of town it goes into, there will continue to be inequity, injustice, and lack of affordable housing.*

"When women, especially, begin to get involved in their communities, I'd like them to understand that there are going to be ups and downs in their work relationships, but also in their personal relationships," she said. "Changes come about in an individual's life as they develop self-confidence and competency. But it is possible to work this through and have mutually supportive relationships with one's spouse and family."

Hanggi was heartened when one of her

daughters, after being excluded from playing basketball, circulated a petition in her third-grade class which affirmed that "girls can do anything boys can do."

"I felt something had rubbed off," she said. "If you feel something about an issue, you should be able to take a stand and take some action."

Hanggi travels frequently to offer leadership training and consultation on banking and housing issues to community groups across the country. She addressed a House of Bishops meeting on the S&L bailout several years ago.

"I think Christians have to remain always alert to business in general and the financial industry in particular," Hanggi says. "There will always be an effort to undercut socially-right legislation. We need to continue to stand up and say, this is not right, we have a proposal to change it, and you need to look at this.

"The bottom line in this world is that good intentions don't build or rehabilitate houses. As long as good Christians allow people who do not have the same value system to have control over how money is spent, to whom it is lent, what sections of town it goes into, there will continue to be inequity, injustice, and lack of affordable housing." **TW**

## Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. Your name was probably drawn from another publication's mailing list for this one-time offer.

We've sent this issue to you because we understand that you have an interest in finance and stewardship.

For 75 years, *The Witness* has published articles critiquing social issues and foreign policy from a faith perspective.

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

THE WITNESS

**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!

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MARCH 1992

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He is risen

credit: Robert Hodgell

## April Issue:

*The resurrection — believe it or not*



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*See page 31*

# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75  
NUMBER 4  
APRIL 1992

*A light in the  
tomb*

credit: Margaret  
Thompson, SSJ

*Resurrection  
survey, p. 8*

*Dan Berrigan,  
p. 16*

*Renewing the  
earth, p. 20*



## Abortion

AT A DINNER MEETING of the clergy who meet monthly to discuss a paper of varying topics, the current approach of the *Witness* was a topic of conversation. A number of members of this group expressed the strong feeling that you are "pro life." Apparently this was suspected by some of the articles recently published in the *Witness*. If this is a fact and you are pro life, the *Witness* is in deep trouble.

I would appreciate it if you would give me a clear answer whether you are pro life or pro choice. This is a critical problem and many of your readers are pro choice and would cancel their subscriptions were this to be a fact that the editor was found to be pro life.

I just hope and pray this isn't the case.

**E. Lawrence Carter**  
Sierra Madre, CA

[Ed. Note: Abortion will be discussed in an upcoming issue of *The Witness*.]

## Gay/Lesbian concerns

IT TROUBLES ME to have to write this letter, but I am saddened at a recent major change in editorial direction at *The Witness* which has become apparent. Specifically, your magazine seems to have dropped coverage altogether of the concerns of gay men and lesbian women in the Church. In reviewing

issues from the last several months I see not one bit of coverage. Why is this? I might remind you that even as I write this

letter, persecution of an openly gay priest in Canada is taking place at the first Bishop's Court trial in 41 years in that country. *The New York Times* has covered this event which is taking place practically in your back yard, yet *The Witness* has had nothing to report. Is it no longer "politically correct" to include the

concerns of gay men and lesbian women in *The Witness*?

The immediate cause of this letter is the article on Magic Johnson and AIDS in the February issue, which does not even use the "g" word. Who does Ched Myers think has been at the forefront of this epidemic from the beginning, and who has contributed more or shown more caring than gay men and their lesbian sisters? After months of silence on gay Christian themes by *The Witness*, it was shocking to find a major article focusing on Magic Johnson which deliberately excluded mention of gay men and lesbian women. Your timing was appalling.

Now is not the time to saw off anybody, least of all gay Christian people who have supported your magazine for years. I have found the articles in *The Witness* consistently challenging, thought-provoking and spiritually nourishing for a long time but I must protest this new editorial direction in the strongest terms. Since when can *The Witness* afford to alienate a huge segment of its readership? Editorial "tolerance" of gay men and lesbian women but deafening silence about their individual issue in the Church is hypocritical, to say the least.

**Frank B. Dowd**  
Washington, D.C.

[Ed. Note: Chris Ambidge called from Toronto as I was reading your letter. He was reporting for us on the Bishop's Court trial, as you will note in this issue. If you look carefully, you'll note that more than half of the last seven issues include gay and lesbian voices. It is not our intention "to saw off anybody." Please feel free to alert us to events that you believe warrant coverage.]

## Witness contributions

THIS OFF-THE-WALL contribution is in response to your Advent letter to *Witness* subscribers, which, as you may recall, did not ask for money.

So, I guess you could say it is my way of shouting from the distance: "Go for it. Persevere in all things. Know that you are speaking for those whose voice is not as clear and whose courage is not as strong. Know too that

you are in redemptive, albeit painful, ways confronting the hell out of many of us who may not want it but need it. Indeed, are famished for it. Again, I say, persevere!"

**Almus Thorpe**  
Bloomfield Hills, MI

HERE'S A LITTLE GIFT to *The Witness* in appreciation for your gift to me and the whole Church. You and the new team are doing beautifully — a new, mid-west, angle of vision on national problems and superb layout and art work. How do you afford that talent?

In substance, there is still too much of the tired predictable liberalism of the past and not enough sense of priority and focus. That's not a complaint. I know it will take time to get there. But we're a small Church who need to rally around two or three carefully chosen goals if we are to have any impact. "Ain't it awful" is not an adequate response.

Right on.

**Charles H. Long**  
Forward Movement  
Cincinnati, OH

## Witness praise

AFTER YEARS OF SUBSCRIBING to *The Witness* but reading it only rarely I have begun to read it regularly — and am being much affected by it.

I have adopted a Sabbath period of reading, prayer and reflection, of which *The Witness* and *Sojourners* are a major part. Between the two I am experiencing consciousness-raising and personal challenge— sometimes coming close to threatening.

I am grateful for your willingness to live on the cutting edge, always from a strong faith perspective.

**Eve Vitaglione**  
Raleigh, NC

*THE WITNESS* LOOKS GOOD. The focus on the city, the play between the now and the 1930's etc. is a real service for the readers. History slips through the fingers too quickly.

**Bob McGovern**  
Narberth, PA

APRIL 1992



AS ONE WHO OFTEN SEEMS TO collect magazines for reading when I finally have the time, your lay-out along with such high-quality art draws me into reading *The Witness* upon receipt, so I can now say your publication no longer is in the pile "for later." Of course, the content is the real treat, challenging, thoughtful, and timely. Thanks!

**Barbara T. Cheney**  
Madison Heights, MI

### A legacy

WHEN I ARRIVED BACK HOME in the Sierra foothills after [the sudden death of her father, Vic Schumacher], I found, in the mail that awaited my return, a gift subscription to *The Witness*. The card that was enclosed with that first issue told me that the subscription was a gift from my beloved "Pop." Each issue of your magazine that I've received during the past year has reminded me both of my father's life and of what are the most important questions to be faced in living in today's world.

Please use the enclosed check to renew my own subscription and to help you subsidize limited income and third world subscriptions. Thank you very much for helping to keep hope alive.

**Yvonne Schumacher Strejcek**  
Nevada City, CA

### Old Witnesses

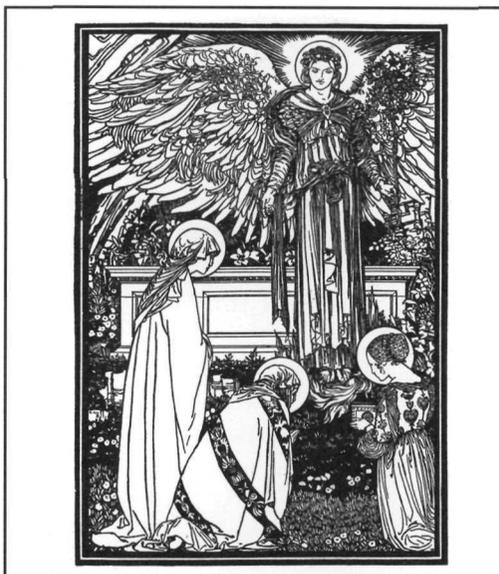
[We sent very old copies of *The Witness* to thank readers who sent financial contributions to *The Witness* in 1991. These letters are in response to those issues.]

THANK YOU VERY MUCH for sending me the two 1926 copies of *The Witness*. I read every word, many of them written by people I once knew — or knew about. My 97-and-a-half-year-old sister enjoyed them too. Her life work was in Christian Education, first at Boston's St. Paul's Cathedral and then at the Diocesan House. But her more important influence was going to parishes all over the Dioceses and running classes for teachers (plus those interested) in evening courses at the Cathedral. Every clergyman in our Dio-

cese knew Lillian Boyd!

As you know, I have been a *Witness* subscriber for years — and loved it — until last year when it seemed to change character. I agreed to take it for one more year and hope for improvement.

When I say I am staying on, you know I find the trend has turned! And I am including my subscription for 1992 with this letter.



From the April 13, 1933 cover of *The Witness*.

You are very wise to seek subjects mentioned which readers may have to offer, such as initiating new ministries in parishes.

[I also enjoy writing] our Parish Letter for over 200 shut-ins, lonely or sick people, called *Lifelines*. I was appointed Editor and Coordinator — had ten writers and 20 "mailers." After 15 years and my 88th birthday, I resigned — but I am still a writer.

**Doris Boyd**  
Beverly, MA

I WANT TO THANK YOU for sending us a couple of copies of the old *Witness* magazine. It was indeed a nostalgia trip to read them.

Names and often faces simply leaped off the pages: Bishop Frank Wilson, who was perhaps the first Bishop I ever saw when he would stop by to visit his brother at the Deerpath Inn in Lake Forest, Illinois, where we also lived at that time. Then there was Bishop Stewart who confirmed me and Bishop

Irving Peake Johnson who handed me my high school diploma in Colorado (Since we were at a girls' boarding school at the foot of Pike's Peak, and we all adored this Bishop full of funny stories, we always referred to him as "Bish I Peake Johnson"); and C. Rankin Barnes who was a neighbor and acquaintance of my family. Then there was mention of Ed Thayer being ordained priest; later to be a Bishop we came to know. (Was he being anointed? There weren't other ordinations mentioned.)

Many other names had less personal contact, but many degrees of awareness and occasional brief contact: Bishop McElwain, whose daughter is still a friend; the Bill Spoffords, senior and junior, Parsons, Hobson, Sherrill, Manning, John Suter, Bernard Iddings Bell, Gardiner Day, James DeWolfe, Kinsolving the senior, even Joe Fletcher and many more.

To my husband the names of Hobson, Manning and many of the Tuckers have close memories. He also was amused to see the same arguments about abolishing "281," and to "discontinue the Departments of the National Council," a mere 68 years ago...to save money in the grim 1930's — and get on with evangelism. Sound familiar?

Today *The Witness* is still a witness to our times, and in our times.

Keep at it.

**Ann Wood**  
Spokane, WA

THANK YOU for sending the old issues of *The Witness* — fun to read! Great idea!

Wish I had such good things in closets around here — I'd distribute them!

**Ann Poole**  
Orchard Lake, MI

*The Witness* welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate letters of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868. It is our policy to edit letters for length when necessary, but not for style.

## THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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# THE WITNESS

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**Cover: A light in the tomb by Margaret Thompson, SSJ, assistant professor of Art and Design at Moore College, Philadelphia.**

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Our triumphant holy day

Some time ago, archeologists uncovered the bones of Jesus Christ. Understanding the enormous theological ramifications this discovery would have, they considered who best to break the news.

They settled on Paul Tillich, thinking (in a narrow-minded, first-world-centric fashion) that he'd be well-suited to speak to both American and European Christians.

They approached him gingerly.

Christ's body had been found, they said.

Tillich leaned back in his chair, raised his hands to his chest.

"So," he said, "he *actually* lived."

**T**he Gospel and the Church have, I think, a hold on us that goes beyond what we can or would articulate.

This must be so.

If you look around on Sunday and consider the people who share your pew, what do they make of the things attested to in the Book of Common Prayer and the hymnal? Do we, as a community, believe in angels, visions, miracles, the resurrection?

So much of this is tacit. It is worked through our hearts, often from childhood when even the meaning of some words was foreign.

The form is familiar. In this season, we know the transition from purple to black to white. We know the readings, the

---

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist Robert Hodgell lives and works in Bradenton, Fla.

hymns, the heartsick moment when the altar is stripped and the piercing contrast of trumpets, lilies and good news.

We also know that, push come to shove, there are some interesting ways of interpreting and reinterpreting the assertion that Jesus Christ walked out of the tomb.



He is risen

credit: Robert Hodgell

Part of our reticence about such things may stem from the fact that push often comes to shove under the hand of Biblical fundamentalists who ask the question because they would like to draw lines around you, fencing you into one camp or another.

In an effort to push from a different direction, *The Witness*' editors took turns calling several *Witness* readers last month. We asked what people made of the Resurrection and the answers were varied (see page 8).

The question for me is prompted partly because I get glimmers of what my own

life and that of the Church might be if we were unambiguous in our answer. *What life might be* is different if we consider the Resurrection a metaphor than if we have confidence that Jesus rose from the dead and ate with the disciples.

The implications are different.

And while fence-sitting is a traditional liberal pose which offends few, we might at least consider stepping down.

The Gospels are remarkably concrete — even inviting us to put our hand in Christ's wounds.

My parents preferred sanctuaries filled with light because they could see the faces of others transfigured with the love for and of God. I preferred the darkness of Taizé where my face did not have to bear testimony, but that's partly because I was working through what the testimony might be.

*editor's note*

I value darkness and “the shadow of this red rock” but I’m increasingly appreciative of the faces of those transfigured in love.

One of those who has affected my relationship to the Resurrection, although I only met him twice, is Dan Corrigan, retired suffragan bishop of Colorado (and then some).

When Corrigan preached at the installation of my father at the Church of the Advent, Boston, he said:

“Sam Wylie is my good friend . . . and I don’t care if he lives or dies.” Corrigan went on to complement the church building and to add that whether it stands or falls is of little consequence. (Elizabeth Corrigan says “Dan would say things that would startle people.” See *Witness* profile on page 26.)

But buildings and people could fall and Corrigan could hang on to a loving and provocative detachment. All this because of the Resurrection. One gets an inkling of what the ramifications of this faith might mean . . .

Thirteen years later, Corrigan led a retreat for college students (and recent graduates) that I attended. He told stories. I began to worry that there was no coherence to them. But toward the end, it crashed over me that he was saying that if all the institutions we rely on fail (and he thought it likely that many of them would), we should have confidence that green

shoots will grow and that we will be needed to nurture them; just because we know the merit of what we have now does not mean that we should even imagine that this way of doing things is the best.

Afterwards I spoke with him because my father *had* died and I found I did care.

*“I look like my father,” he said. “Every time I looked in the mirror to shave, I saw my father’s eyes criticizing me. I was younger then. Now,” he said, “he just winks at me.” — Dan Corrigan*

Corrigan smiled.

“I look like my father,” he said. “Every time I looked in the mirror to shave, I saw my father’s eyes criticizing me. I was younger then. Now,” he said, “he just winks at me.”

From time to time (often during the eucharist), I feel the presence of the communion of saints — a breeze past my shoulders, a ring of golden light above me that seems to be filled with voices of many praising God. (Ask me if I feel silly trying to write this down . . .)

My father wasn’t much for graveyards. I am. He insisted that where we meet after one of us has died is at the communion rail. Wrapped in that confidence is the certainty that the living Church *does* act out the Resurrection and can serve as an example of the continuation of Christ’s effort to praise God and serve creation.

But Sam Wylie wasn’t “a modern variety of liberal pacifist millenarianism” (see book review on page 25). He didn’t hedge his bets on the known over the unknown.

I think he really meant that at the heart of our faith — and in that moment when the Church celebrates (over and over again) the resurrection of Jesus Christ — we can meet. Our hearts and our hopes are joined. Those of us continuing here get a glimpse of the truth of the Resurrection.

A friend of mine says she’s amazed at how often she hangs on to an experience of death, because she has forgotten that throughout her life a Resurrection has followed personal loss. She is speaking metaphorically of resurrection, but I wonder how often the Church (and those of us in it) hang on to death by refusing to even allow questions about the Creed.

In our doubts and our inarticulate longings there may be intimations of a life stronger than death. We’ll only sense whether that’s true if we raise the questions. —J.W.-K.

Will the real savage please stand up.



What happens to a man who murders, enslaves and tortures countless human beings? He's celebrated. At least that's been the case with Christopher Columbus for the past 500 years. It's time to discover the truth about Columbus. For more information write to The Episcopal Council of Indian Ministries, P.O. Box 100, North Platte, Nebraska, Nebraska City, NE 68901.

This graphic is part of a series produced by the Episcopal Ad Project and is described on page 17.

***Vital Signs*, a column devoted to events in the Episcopal Church, is introduced on page 17 of this issue. Julie A. Wortman edits the column and can be reached at *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226; 313-962-2650. Wortman, who was staff writer for *Episcopal Life*, becomes an assistant editor of *The Witness* next month.**

# Mission Street Manifesto

*for all varrios*

by Juan Felipe Herrera

Blow out the jiving smoke the plastik mix the huddling straw of the dying mind  
and rise sisters rise brothers and spill the song and sing the blood that calls  
the heart the flesh that has the eyes and gnaws the chains and blow  
and break through the fuse the military spell the dreams of foam  
make the riff jump the jazz ignite the wheel burn the blade churn rise  
and rise sisters rise brothers and spill the song and sing the blood that calls  
the ancient drums the mineral fists the rattling bones of gold  
on fire the lava flow the infinite stream the razor wave  
through the helmet the holy gun the Junta the seething boot  
shake it do the shing-a-ling the funky dog of sun and moon  
pull out the diamonds from your soul the grip of light the stare of stars  
rip the wires invade the air and twist the scales and tear the night  
go whirling go singeing go shining go rumbling go rhyming  
our handsome jaws of tender truth our shoulders of sweating keys  
to crack the locks the vaults of hands the dome of tabernacle lies  
and rise sisters rise brothers and spill the song and sing the blood that calls  
and spin a flash deep into the sorrow of the silent skull  
the vanquished lips the conquered song the knot in the belly of earth  
break out through the fenders the angel dust kiss the methadone rooms  
go chanting libre chanting libre go chanting libre go  
libre *La Mission* libre *El Salvador* libre *La Mujer*  
the will of the worker now the destiny of children libre  
blow out the jiving smoke the plastic mix the huddling straw of the dying mind  
the patrolling gods the corporate saints the plutonium clouds  
strike the right the new Right to crucify the right to decay  
the triple K the burning cross the territorial rape game  
and stop the neutron man the nuclear dream the assassination line  
the alienation master the well groomed empire the death suit  
and rise and rise libre libre and rise and rise and rise libre  
and rise sisters rise brothers and spill the song and sing the blood that calls  
blow out the jiving smoke the plastik mix the huddling straw of the dying mind  
forever  
forever  
forever.



Poetry

**W**e repeat the Nicene Creed on a regular basis. We know it by heart. Its rhythm runs deep. Central to that creed are the words of the Resurrection. For many the Resurrection is an idea with which they have made peace, sometimes an uneasy peace.

One board member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, Christopher Bugbee, recently converted to Judaism after 20 years of wrestling with Christianity. He waited to see if the service of conversion would cause him confusion. It didn't.

"I had a general feeling that a great burden had been lifted. I would never have imagined this."

He still acknowledges Jesus as prophet and teacher, but no longer feels an obligation to assert that Jesus is the son of God, raised from the dead.

"I always felt my reach exceeded my grasp," he explained. "We need to find ways to honor our doubts."

Now when friends ask him his views on the Resurrection and he explains that the idea is untenable to him, some respond, "Why is that a problem? I don't believe in it either and I consider myself a Christian."

This month we decided to put the question to *Witness* readers. We pulled names from our mailing list — some random, some not — and began conversations that we share with delight.

—J.W-K.

**Marianne Arbogast** is assistant editor of *The Witness*. **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher. Artist **Joan Iverson Goswell** reproduced this 16th century French woodcut for Visminas Co., 812 Ivy St., Pittsburgh, PA 15232.



**JESUS SAID TO HER-MARY  
SHE TURNED ET SAID TO HIM-RABBONI**

French woodcut, circa 1500.

**And on the third day...**

**Saundra Cordingley, Elbridge, N.Y., resident in psychotherapy at Onondaga Pastoral Counseling Center in Syracuse, N.Y., and rector of a small rural parish in Jordan, N.Y.**

The Resurrection and the strength of Christ's presence must have been a great surprise. I think in our lives it is also very surprising; we can't anticipate what the new life will look like. Faith is the thread that keeps us connected to it, when it's not very clear or very certain what the outcome will be.

In my own life, when I went through a divorce, it was a kind of death experience, but my ministry was enriched and myself changed — but it took quite awhile. From what was really a painful ending, there were real gifts. The hope is that we can get through the suffering, despair, and brokenness to a place where we experience joy and new life, and be able to use that to help other people.

The central conviction I have is that there is hope for wholeness and joy through the terrible experiences of life, loss and grief and brokenness. Hope in the historical resurrection faith can really keep us going through the experience.

**Robert Eckersley, a C.P.A. in Scranton, Penn., and treasurer of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.**

Let's see, I have to be very honest, don't I? I think that it's mythology, but it's wonderful mythology. I think it's rooted in truth, but after I get done saying all that, my mind is not sufficiently esoteric to grasp the possibility of actual resurrection. At the same time, I think the

recurrence of the theme is such as to make us all pause. Two thousand years later there is a substantial body of people who literally believe in the Resurrection.

Sometimes I say, "Gee, am I a Christian at all?" And then I flee very quickly to Bishop Spong or Bishop Jenkins; both are Episcopalians and both seem to agree with me.

I'm troubled by the whole question and I keep coming back to it. This bishop in England said that he is too matter-of-fact to believe in miracles if you mean by them something that can't happen — something supernatural.

But if you mean things we can't understand . . . that happens all the time.

I'm not ruling it out, but I'm not saying I believe in it.

The Sermon on the Mount is a miraculous thing to me as the center of our philosophy — that is Resurrection enough for me to make Easter a very important event.

**Lunette Gay, Azle, Texas — a retired professional artist.**

It wasn't necessary for Christ to rise from the dead for me to believe in Jesus' philosophy and love it. What more do we need from Jesus Christ than the teachings — how to live, how to treat each other, how to love our brothers and sisters?

I believe the spirit lives on. I don't know how it does but I trust God for that.

*Jesus came to this earth to teach us and help us understand the Old Testament and what it meant in our lives. That's enough. If there's something else, Hallelujah! But I'm not going to bargain for that.*

—Lunette Gay, Texas

*We need eternal companionship with God. I'm HIV-positive so that makes these issues for me very raw. There's a great immediacy to my search to be whole before God.*

— California

I'm an old lady. I'm not concerned about this old, arthritic body. What we leave behind — with the people we've met and loved and the children in our community — is our resurrection.

It hasn't been an easy life, but it's been wonderful. I'm grateful. I believe it's kind of greedy to want to hold on to what we have forever.

I'm a practicing Methodist. I believe with all my heart in the Christian faith. Jesus came to this earth to teach us and help us understand the Old Testament and what it meant in our lives. That's enough. If there's something else, Hallelujah! But I'm not going to bargain for that.

**Gilbert Prince, Newport Beach, CA, retired priest, age 83.**

My faith in the Resurrection has never varied or wavered. It is substantiated each time I read the beginning of the service of burial: "I am the Resurrection and the Life..."

[Before entering the ministry] I was an engineer studying wavelengths through a spectroscope — infrared, gamma rays, X-rays, ultraviolet rays, and so on. I thought, my goodness, there must be an engineer and architect for all we enjoy in this earth of ours. In seminary, I realized there was much more to it, and basic to this was the Resurrection of Jesus.

**Nan Peete, canon to the ordinary, Atlanta Georgia and**

**ECPC board member.**

Oh Lord. What I do believe is that whether he did or didn't is missing the point. It gets us caught up into the medium and not the message. What's im-

portant is that in some form he was transformed from the earthly Jesus to the risen Christ—that transformation is what we’re about. Asking how it happened gets us away from what it means to be the redeemed people of the risen Christ.

It’s real clear that whatever happened from Good Friday to Easter morning, it wasn’t the same person in the same form; he was not recognized. The other thing that becomes important to me is that while the earthly Jesus is male, the risen Christ is not — we are male and female.

I believe the Resurrection happened but I don’t care about the mechanics of it. I care about the ramifications of it because that’s what we live in.

Life after death? I hope....

I think one of the reasons that Christianity became easily accepted in the continent of Africa, with the American Indians and the Indians in Central and South America has to do with the concept of life after death. We pray to the saints. We pray to the great cloud of witnesses. Each of these cultures has its way of doing that. There is some continuity to life.

If you really believe in the Resurrection, you also have that hope to make the impossible possible.

*A San Francisco librarian, who joined the Episcopal Church because “I could not find within the Roman Catholic communion an honorable reception of me as a gay man.”*

I think we liberals so emphasize the social dimension of the Resurrection that we forget that we worship a transcendent God whom we hope has a personal relationship with each of us as individuals. We couldn’t be happy even after all kingdom aspects were achieved, because we are creatures of infinite yearning. We need eternal companionship with God.

I’m HIV-positive so that makes these issues for me very raw. There’s a great immediacy to my search to be whole before God. Being gay and HIV is an exile experience. I was just reading Isaiah in concert with Walter Brueggemann this morning — when you are marginalized, it’s that constant interplay between judgement and promise, between despair and hope.

Having looked at a variety of other options — secular humanism, agnosticism, Buddhism (and I have a great affection for Buddhism) — I continue to come back to the story of Jesus Christ. If it isn’t true, it ought to be. My faith is a species of my hope. I choose to believe in the Resurrection, and the Incarnation, because this is what God ought to be like.

At the risk of sounding like a fundy, I think we need to keep it in mind that Easter comes after Lent — we are resurrected from our sinfulness.

Sometimes I’m kidded by my friends in the gay community — I have an abiding sense of my own sinfulness and it is not because I’m gay or because I have engaged in sexual activity. It is because I have not always treated people as whole human beings. The sin resides in turning that human being into an object whether that person is someone you’ve met in a bar or a homophobic person who feels justified in persecuting gay and lesbian people. [Joining the communion of saints and being in harmony with] Pat Buchanan, Phyllis Schlafly and Jesse Helms is part of the hope.

TW

## *Amaryllis: Easter Prelude* by Sara Fischer

In the season meant to usher dormancy  
the withered brown bulb holds past and future both, all  
in the heart that pumps, breathes, feeds on loam even  
as leaves fade yellow and droop. I brutally cut  
at the base near the heart where leaves still remember to be fat,  
(this is what the book said to do)  
wrinkled-succulent, they bleed on the scissor  
and nothing is left but the naked heart to promise more, or not.  
Guests who know no better laugh at the empty pot, the naked heart,  
“Isn’t it time to surrender to the back porch? Face reality?”  
they prod and tease, not knowing the promise  
I too begin to forget as a season passes,  
fall into dampest dark winter and forget to even look,  
even I.

Then something in the heart isn’t brown anymore.  
A tip of a shoot, newborn green, emerges like the eye of a barnacle  
Barely visible through the hard dry layers of seasons.  
I, eager midwife, bring water, food, more light.  
Watching, waiting.

All during Lent it shoots forth daily centimeters of hope.  
I open the blinds when I leave in the morning darkness  
enacting still an illusion that light is mine to give,  
and whisper greetings of encouragement as I come and go.

Soon a stalk big and strong enough for sighs of joy;  
I boast to my friends as though my holding on was all,  
when its own twinned power — death and life —  
raised up these shouting red trumpets.

## Give earth a rest

The Indigenous Environmental Network has proposed an Unplug America Day as an alternative response to Quincentennial celebrations.

On October 13, 1992, IEN suggests, we should begin the next 500 years by giving the Earth a day of rest. Those who choose to do so will refuse to use any source of nonrenewable energy for one day, doing nothing that taxes the energy of the Earth.

"We wanted to find a way to express from our point of view something we haven't seen expressed," says Paul Rodarte of IEN. "It won't cost any money and will force people to recognize their dependency" on energy sources that are not sustainable. He points out that counter-Columbus activities next October will use energy just as will the celebratory Columbus parades and festivities.

**Robert Allen Warrior,**  
*The Progressive, March 1992*

## Corporate outlaws

U.S. corporations with plants in Mexico are shown violating environmental, health and safety laws in video footage released by The Coalition for Justice in the Maquiladoras. The video documents corporations, including General Motors, Ford Motor Company, and Stepan Chemical Company, dumping hazardous waste in canals and ditches or employing independent contractors who utilize unsafe methods of waste disposal. It also reveals the practice of obtaining a labor force through a company which warehouses workers in prison-like conditions. One barracks is shown in which 60 women, employed by the New Jersey-based Beckton Dickinson Corporation, sleep in one windowless room in bunk beds spaced about a meter apart.

For information about this video, contact Ed Feigen of the AFL-CIO in Washington, D.C. at (202) 637-5187.

**Voces Unidas, Fourth Quarter,**  
1991

## Bread for the world

Bread for the World is launching an effort to pass legislation to help end childhood hunger in the U.S. The legislation calls for increased funding for three programs: WIC, which provides food to low-income pregnant women and children; Head Start, which offers a preschool program to low-income children; and Job Corps, which provides education and vocational training to youth.

"The knowledge that one in five children lives in poverty is both a tragedy and a judgement on how the goods of this world are distributed," said Bishop Edmond Browning, who encourages churches to hold Offering of Letters services, during which members write their legislators concerning this issue.

For more information, write Bread for the World, Attn. Katherine Smith, 802 Rhode Island Avenue N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018, or call (202) 269-0200. Enclose \$5 to receive an Offering of Letters Kit.

## Give and take

In our society, people with disabilities are often perceived as needing, period. We may be seen as needing someone to take care of us or needing guidance or charity. We may be perceived as patient and good, but we are typically unrecognized as givers.

Sadly, the one who is often wronged the most in this situation is not the potential recipient but the person who is prevented from giving. Giving in our society confers a certain status. Those who give, as well as take, enjoy a position of social respect and opportunities for social gratification.

**Carol Gill,**  
*Mainstream, October 1991*

## Anti-gay violence

"The gay community is under siege in this country. We are fighting an epidemic of violence," says Robert Bray, spokesman for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in Washington. Reported harassment of homosexuals in 1990 rose an average 42 percent over 1989 in six cities, the task force

said. It documented 1,588 anti-gay incidents during 1990 ranging from threats to murder in New York, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

The "increased visibility [as a consequence of AIDS] has garnered us additional power and tolerance in some places," Bray said. "The price we've paid is we've become an easier target for bigots and bashers."

**Outlook, February 1992**

## If your enemy was fasting

I was fasting [in an Israeli prison], and my lawyer came to me and said, "Look, there's an Israeli who is fasting for you outside. If you don't stop fasting, he will die. You are fat. You can handle yourself, but he cannot." I stopped my fast because of an Israeli fellow who was fasting in support of me. Imagine how you would feel if your enemy was fasting for you.

**Mubarak Awad, exiled director of the Palestinian Center for the Study of Nonviolence in East Jerusalem,**  
*Ground Zero, Winter 1992*



## Higher powers

Everyone should "help American Indians secure Federal legislation that will enable us to continue ceremonies and practices," Vine Deloria wrote recently. "We still believe in higher powers and communicate with them in ceremonies and prayers. *Just in case* we are right, it would be a prudent thing to help us."

**Robert Allen Warrior,**  
*The Progressive, March 1992*

[Ed. Note: This article is adapted from an address designed to help lawyers understand how Christians relate to the law, particularly in light of the Resurrection.]

It was edited for a *Witness* readership, rather than a legal one.]

I am part of a community which, in the course of the last 2,000 years, has often found itself at odds with the official policies of the state. That community is the Christian Church. I have spent a good deal of time with smaller groups of Christians who challenge state authority. I have friends who are members of self-described Christian communities of resistance.

There is a very real sense in which the Church as Church, by its very nature, always stands opposed to the state — as well as all other principalities and powers in the world. When it is not in some state of tension with the law — that is, when it does not resist the seduction to violence which is so integral a part of the law — it is in all likelihood failing in its role as the Church.

The resistance of the Church is not based upon a claim to power, but on the invocation of memory. And that memory is of a people whose charge was to be faithful and know that its power is in powerlessness.

**Andrew McThenia** is a professor at Washington and Lee Law School, former chancellor of the Diocese of SW Virginia, and a member of the board of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company. McThenia has been published previously in *The Witness* regarding his decision to risk arrest during the Pittston coal strike. The full version of this address was published in the *Washington and Lee Law Review*, Volume 48, Winter 1991. Artist **Joan Iverson Goswell** reproduced this 16th century French woodcut for Visminas Co., Pittsburgh, Penn.

The story to which we try to be faithful — our generative narrative — is a very specific one. It is that God entered into human history in the person of an itinerant rabbi named Jesus. He spent some time in an occupied territory teaching and associating with all sorts of people, most of whom seem to have been at the margins of society. He preached a message and lived a life which offered a whole

new definition of what it means to be human. His agenda was personal and extremely threatening to the political and religious establishment because almost everything he said and did called into question the administered arrangements of the existing world. The message was so radical and he so threatening that he was tried and killed in the name of the law. If the story ended there, it would be



AND LO a great multitude, which no one could number cried out in a loud voice: Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb.

## The Law and the Resurrection

by Andrew McThenia, Jr.

just one more tragic event in a fallen world. However, it does not end there, because three days later he rose from the dead. The Resurrection is what makes the story unique—and we believe that therein lies God’s ultimate saving power.

Our job is not to establish empires or even to persuade others to change the law. It is instead to try to live out the awesome truth of that simple story: that the suffering of the crucified Christ here and now represents God’s victory over the fear and thrall of death.

A major problem for many of us who seek to follow Jesus is that from the perspective of our own faith, we do not reason correctly. We reason as if everyone, or at least a majority of the world, accepted our story as true. We have forgotten that we are, as were the early Christians, a minority people. The Church lost a critical purchase on its ability to see the world clearly when, at the time of Constantine, the Church and the state united. Ours is a failure of memory. We reason and think as if we were a majority and yet we are, in fact, strangers in a strange land.

In the Christian community, servanthood became less important than the glorification of God’s empire. The form of language had to change to accommodate a people who had come to view themselves as God’s agents in running a government. One would not, in such a newly configured world, ask what Christian conscience demanded. The thought process turned to what was “effective.”

But once the Church starts worrying about “effectiveness,” it has succumbed to the power of death by doubting the power of the Resurrection. If God is in control of history—that is, if the Resurrection is what we claim it to be—then we do not need to worry about success or effectiveness. Our job is to follow the God who is in control of history. To be obedient means not to let other institu-

tions (i.e., the law) claim our primary obligation and subvert that obligation to our neighbor. That means the Christian community must be respectful but wary of the claims of the law.

Realism would seem to counsel that the Christian community should be less interested in urging the creation of a Christian nation or even of “reintegrating law and theology” than in trying to discern what it means to be faithful in a world which increasingly considers its basic story either incredible or irrelevant. But we continue to sponsor symposia on the reintegration of law and theology and to have White House prayer breakfasts attended by many religious leaders who seek to make the United States a Christian nation. All of which goes to show how seductive power is. Even as a minority people we continue to have dreams of imperialism.

While we in the Church did not have much trouble accommodating ourselves to the relationship of power when the Church and Caesar were united, we have had a great deal of difficulty accepting the reality that we are once again a confessing minority.

All too often the Church recites its liturgy and sings its hymns but neglects to remember the transformative stories that give it life. It mouths the words but cannot hear the voice which wants to question and challenge what has been settled by conventional wisdom. The priests of the law talk of its aspirations and point with some justifiable pride to its origins in the Church, and yet never acknowledge that to insure its own survival the law must rely on a willingness to resort to violence.

And that is the divide. The Church, when it challenges the law, if it is to be the Church, cannot resort to violence. The law, on the other hand, to be effective must stand ready to back its pronouncements with force.

No matter how much the law seeks to justify its activities strictly as matters of interpretation, no matter how many levels of bureaucracy separate and isolate the Supreme Court from the executioner who pulls the switch, there should be no mistake—the law is in bondage to violence. It is not that the law is evil, merely that it is fallen. Most of the world knows only two responses to violence—fight or flight—and that version of reality is woven into the fabric of the law.

But there is another way; a third way which is neither fight nor flight. It is the example of Jesus, who overcame the violence of the world by absorbing it himself. The Church, as the body of Christ, has that same fundamental mission to proclaim an alternative to violence.

Resistance to the official law, if it is to capture our imagination and permit the law to grow, must be based on a powerful story. But it cannot be based on power. It must be redemptive. Any story of resistance which deviates from the example of the life and death of Jesus and substitutes violence for the loving resistance and suffering made normative in Jesus is not holy obedience.

Nothing we can do would be more effective than that which God has already done. To act as if our witness, whatever form it takes, is one which would put God’s word in triumph over the power of death is fundamentally to misunderstand the Resurrection. It is to assume that the Resurrection is somehow not yet complete. It is to succumb to all the temptations to power which Jesus wrestled with and defeated in the wilderness.

To live in grace is to live knowing who and *whose* we are. What we do is far less important than that. Our witness for a more just society results from the knowledge that Christ will come again as judge and king, and in the meantime, we are charged with witnessing to the power of the Resurrection. **TW**

**T**he time is 1:30 a.m., Holy Saturday. I am summoned to the intensive care unit of a New York hospital.

Good Friday, April Fools' day, the day of the First Fool of all, had come and gone. We had spent the day miming that foolishness through what might be called aptly, an iron Forest of Fools, Manhattan. But more of this later.

I held the hand of my friend, a hand beautiful, pallid, helpless, a 24-year-old hand, a hand shortly to be unhandled from me, as from all and sundry uses of this world. Handed over to Sheriff Death.

This entity, implacable and inef-fable at once, is, as one comes to learn, professionally un-interested in such items as friendship, tears, reconcilings, memories sweet and vagrant. More, in such places as hospitals he practices his own brands of intensive care. He creates a species of mordant havoc, hustling people of all ages and conditions brusquely through a door — into we know not quite what or where.

Nonetheless, I held this hand in mine. About me I saw row upon row of bodies, each as near as I could judge, in some-what the same condition as my young friend. Each was laboring in a kind of dreadful mimic breathing, a computerized breathing, a unison not of heart and mind, but as though urged by a Central Breather with a circuit for soul.

Up and down, in and out they breathed. Not of their bodies' volition. None of them, for these few dreadful hours, could

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**Daniel Berrigan** is a fellow traveller, a Jesuit, a participant in resistance and a poet.

have requested that their portion of the world's sweet and sour air be increased or withheld.

The surreal switch in me was turned on high. I looked about and thought to myself, maybe those 19th century phi-losophy types were right. Maybe the whole shebang is nothing more than a kind of Machine of Machines. Maybe you and I and all those bodies lying about on Pharmaceutical Death Row, maybe we're no more than machines punched out by the Great Machine in the Sky.

Maybe we're all breathing by hose and circuit, living by switches and currents.

I heard a whis-per; there's a Ma-chine in your future. In point of fact, that Machine is your only future. The Machine will

breathe for you, it will think for you. It will clench and unclench your heart.

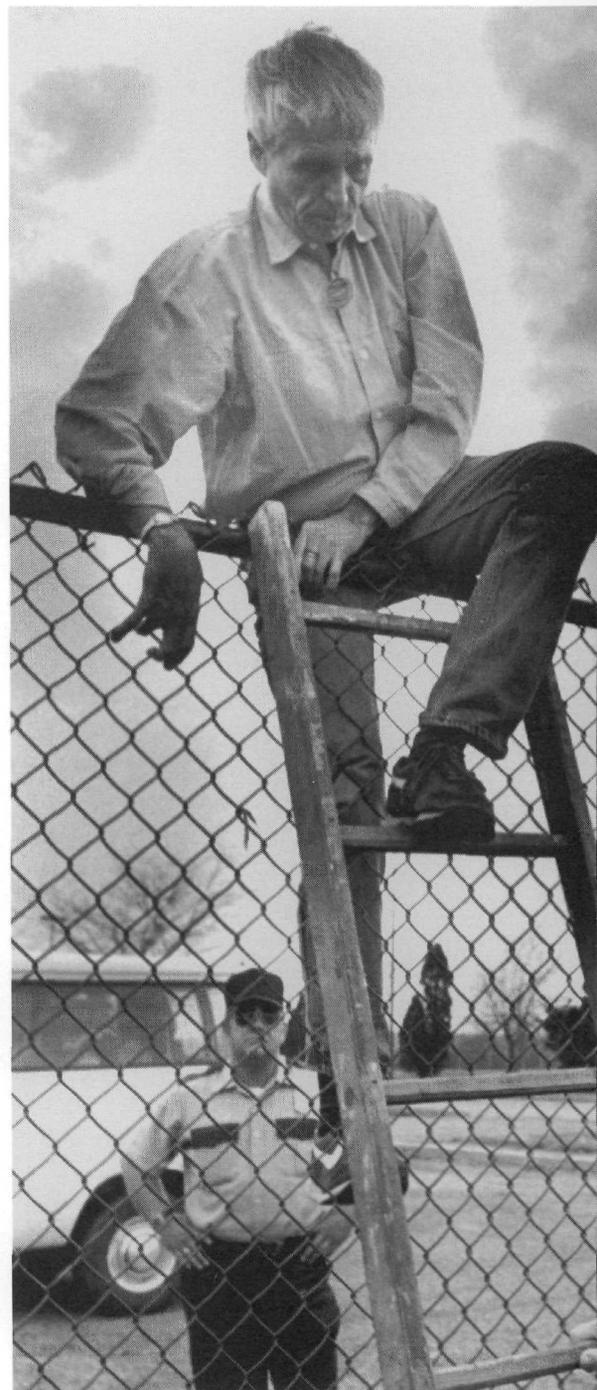
Eventually toward dawn, my head cleared. My hand was holding a hand; David was beyond doubt, dying.

David was Wanted. It made not a whit of difference that his friends, with all our tears and holding on and secret fury and wild will, wanted him too. We said such things in his ear again and again that night, while the machine breathed for him, and his heart strove valiantly to keep him on course. In vain. About 2:30 a.m., a good heart which had borne him steadily through the wobbly world, stalled.

We wept afresh, and held one another. The Sheriff, so to speak, was permitting farewells if not prolonged beyond mea-sure.

The young woman affianced to David ran her hands tenderly over his body, once, in farewell. It was a gesture, if I may be permitted a piety, that called to mind

*David was Wanted. It made not a whit of differ-ence that his friends, with all our tears and holding on and secret fury and wild will, wanted him too.*



**Daniel Berrigan**

# Deterri

by Danie



credit: Linda Dow Hayes

# g Death

## Berrigan

Mary touching the limbs of her son, with death in the air and a tomb in the offing.

We collected David's possessions and left. We walked the dead streets awhile, stilled after the tumult of events that day, our Stations of the Cross through Manhattan, our arrest and jailing.

No street is so chillingly dead as one that shortly before was so madly alive. We walked and walked, friends bereft of our friend, a woman and her doubled grief, bereft of her bridegroom. I said to her, What hurts and hurts, is the utter clarity of that life of his.

What a curriculum, that short life. Twenty-four years old, graduate in architecture, Columbia. He turned down classy jobs that would have gotten him safely on the down escalator to hell. "One of the companies," he told me, "was awarded a fat contract to design a chemical warfare lab; another, to remodel a national guard base." Thank you but no thank you. He began as a tenant organizer in New York, for something called "The Single Room Occupants' Legal Services." Full time there, part time sheltering and feeding the poor. Part time being added in his case to full time, and subtracted from such irrelevancies as food and sleep.

David worked out of the cardinal's building. Two years before, the cardinal, as military vicar, had penned a letter to Catholic military chaplains. It stated, in effect, that from a Christian (sic) point of view, nuclear weapons were a regrettable but tolerable phenomenon.

The letter went beyond its intended addressees. It landed, so to speak, in David's lap. The season was midwinter, bitterly cold. David took to the street,

alone. He set up a small table borrowed from the cardinal's building, and stood there in the outer doorway day after day, fasting in the cold, during the noon hour. On the table before him were pamphlets and leaflets concerning nuclear weaponry, offering a message far different than the cardinal's.

He studied scripture with us and was arrested with us. He and his friends of Pax Christi moved into an old brownstone on West 114th Street, and a community got underway. They found space in the Cathedral of St. John

the Divine for a night shelter for the homeless. A church on Broadway donated a room and they opened a soup kitchen and fed street people. Sunday mornings they brought a Coxie's army of neighbor-

hood kids into their house for breakfast and talk, sometimes about Christianity.

One year, it transpired that every Friday night a group of us gathered in the front room of the brownstone, from 8 o'clock until God knew when. The subject was that nightmare of God's and ours, the Book of Revelation. For 16 weeks we dissected the nightmare; beasts, seals unsealed, trumpets, battlefields, the banquet of damnation, a lion become a lamb, martyrs under an altar. Together we made some sense of that sublime and holy nonsense.

Sense also of the dark side of America, a bestial psyche that, light lacking us, would lead us into irremediable darkness.

And during those same weeks it came to us, a predawn chill. Something was happening in our midst that had happened also, according to the book, to the early community. Which is to say, putting matters simply, death.

*Together we made some sense of the dark side of America, a bestial psyche that, light lacking us, would lead us into irremediable darkness.*

David was slowing down, he was ill. Then he was in the hospital. The medicos zigzagged toward a diagnosis, something about a virus of the heart, something about heart surgery in the offing.

David had good days and bad; he raged against his wasting body, his weakness, against the rites and spells and incantations and gaucheries of something wretched, known as ‘medical protocol.’

On Good Friday of that year, the community took on Manhattan. Some 800 people marched in the Stations of the Cross through the heart of the city; from the U.N. on the East River, to the S.S. Intrepid, a mothballed mausoleum of world violence, moored in the Hudson like a foul embolism in a fair stream.

We took it all on; the noise and traffic and crowds, the sleek world headquarters of this or that multicorporate ripoff, the false fronts behind which murder proceeded on schedule, so clean, so legitimate. We took on the sleazy porno of Times Square. And finally, the notorious Riverside Research Institute, where the star wars scenario of Reagan (and Bush) proceeds apace. There some 60 marchers were arrested.

It was April 1, All Fools’ Day, Good Friday. As we walked, we passed hand to hand a large folio inscribed with Buddhist texts. On it the pilgrims wrote a message to David, who but for his illness would have been with us.

And that afternoon, duly booked and briefly held and summarily released with a court date, I delivered the message to David. He was cheerful and alert, had had a good day. He scanned the greetings of his friends with relish, heard our report of the march and its aftermath. And before dawn he was dead.

Easter dawned. Strange, I recalled, Christians were celebrating an illegal event, an event that marked their beginnings, like a birth mark on the newborn; illegal. Our birth was illegal. Christianity

erupted from a tomb, sealed and guarded by order of Caesar. Christianity is an illegal entity, in principle. The tomb was sealed; it was off limits. No one was to enter. No one, it goes without saying, was to come out.

*Friends east coast to west are in jail. Their acts of resurrection — planting trees, casting blood about, climbing fences, sitting in.*

The death that preceded all this, the event of Good Friday, was quite another matter. The trial and execution of Jesus were at every point legal, sanctioned by Church and state, carried out with a fine eye to punctilio and dispatch. Pilate and Caiphas were at one in righteous effort. More, on occasion they even exchanged roles, Caiphas donning the executioner’s cap, all expedience and finesse, Pilate doleful and soulful and false, inquiring after the truth he despised. It was as though the two would display before the world the fine meshing of twin gears; worldly religion, religious worldliness.

An arrangement that perdures.

For me, such thoughts bear on the life and death of my friend. In the world, an errant and lethal nonsense is being huckstered by those whom Brecht called, in a like context, “a race of inventive dwarfs.” The death of Jesus, that monstrous “legality,” takes form today in the threatened crucifixion of humanity. Every step of the rake’s progress toward a universal Hill of Skulls is legal. So is the neutron bomb. So are the Cruise and Pershing missiles. The MX is legal. So is the Trident fleet. A fictional cynical “step by step disarmament” masks the intent; to get rid of obsolete weapons, to proceed with deployment of ever more lethal ones.

All nicely legal. So will the end of the world be — legal.

On the other hand, every attempt, even the most modest or maladroit, to interfere with the lemming rush to oblivion, is branded as criminal. The least hint and symbol and start of resurrection — raising a cry, crossing a line, kneeling and praying in forbidden places, pitting our blood against the nuclear hammers of hell — these are condemned as criminal acts. We are criminals; surrounded as such, dragged away as such, charged as such, tried as such, convicted as such, punished as such.

This is our story.

I set these words down, friends east coast to west are in jail. Their acts of resurrection, their passionate gift of life — planting trees, casting blood about, climbing fences, sitting in; these are criminal acts.

Their crime, the deterrence of death. Take them away!

But such friends, such fools, will not go away.

Not even Sheriff Death shall take them away.

Death itself shall be taken away.

This we are told.

At the tenth Station of the Cross, amid the folly and fury of a great city, on Good Friday, the reading thundered; from the letter of Paul to the Christians of Corinth:

“Sisters and brothers, consider your calling. Not many of you are wise with the wisdom of this world, not many high and mighty. Rather, God has chosen the fools of this world to confound the wise, the weak to shame the strong. The despised and outcast God has chosen, those who hardly claim existence at all, those on the edge, those at the bottom. This God did, in order to declare null and void the inflated pomp of the world...

“Now we live in Christ Jesus, who is God’s very wisdom, and our own.”

This, dear friend David, dear fool, I believe.

Rest in peace. Amen, Alleluia. **TW**

## Just what is collegiality?

The Church's bishops spent five days at western North Carolina's Kanuga Conference Center last month trying to stare down their confusion over what to do when individual episcopal authority and conscience comes into conflict with the so-called "mind" of the house.

It's a tough question, as the convener of the special meeting, Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, knows too well. At a press conference simmering with questions about why the bishops kept going into closed session during General Convention last summer, he was asked which was more important, maintaining the "collegiality" of the House of Bishops or individual diocesan authority.

"As Bishop of Hawaii I would have said individual authority," he acknowledged. "As Presiding Bishop, I'd have to say collegiality."

## Speak out on violence

The first of a series of regional hearings on violence towards women is scheduled to be held in Boston on April 25. Sponsored by the Executive Council's Committee on the Status of Women, the hearings are intended to help the Church listen "to the voices of those whose lives have been affected, to encourage theological reflection about the connections between violence and sexism in our society, and to promote appropriate educational and direct-service programs in response."

The next hearing is tentatively scheduled for Los Angeles next January. If you want to find out how to participate, contact one of the committee's co-chairs, either Carolyn M. Wilson, who is executive director of Episcopal Outreach Ministries and director of the Diocesan Human Resources for the Diocese of Milwaukee, or Diana Akiyama, associate dean of Stanford University's Memorial Chapel.

## Discovering Columbus

The truth is what you'll get in these four posters created for the Episcopal Council of Indian Ministries by the Episcopal Ad Project. The medium is provocative, the messages hard-hitting. "Like any tourist, Columbus brought home a few souvenirs," runs the head of one that shows a ship carrying human cargo from the New World back to Spain.

The Church's Executive Council has called upon Episcopalians "to analyze and reflect upon differing effects that Colonialism has brought to our various people — colonizer and colonized — and to act faithfully and prophetically on that reflection as the Church in 1992 observes the 500th anniversary of the voyage of Christopher Columbus."

These posters will help. Write to the Episcopal Council of Indian Ministries' Oklahoma Field Office, 924 North Robinson, Oklahoma City, Okla., 73102 to get ordering information. Each poster is \$10, and "reflection" packets are available for \$7.

## Empowerment has a future

"Empowerment ministry is clearly one of our priorities," Diane Porter, executive of Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries at the Church center, assured members of the Episcopal Urban Caucus at their 1992 assembly in Cincinnati, Ohio, as she announced new dramatic cutbacks in National Church program budgets. "Lobby for principles, but not individual programs."

Only 65 percent of the funds originally budgeted for church programs this year will be available, Porter said. The shortfall is blamed on the recession, cutbacks in the national apportionment aimed at leaving more money with local ministries and retaliatory action by some congregations and dioceses who disagree with the Church's apparently liberal line on homosexuality and sexual morality.

At 65 percent funding some programs may no longer be viable. Caucus members

would not like to lose either Jubilee Ministries, one of the most notable — and popular — of the Church's empowerment programs, or the Coalition for Human Needs (CHN), what staff officer Gloria Brown has called "the hard money source for [empowerment] program funding."

But Porter was making no promises. "There will be a restructuring of the empowerment ministries," she told the group.

Executive Council will review the recommendations for restructuring at its June 15-19 meeting in Albuquerque, N.M. Council has already acted to protect the budgets of the Church's overseas and Central American dioceses, along with funds for Indian work, by keeping them at the 95-percent level.

Unfortunately for those who have withheld funds from dioceses and the National Church as a means of forcing liberal leaders to their knees, sexual ethics are unlikely to change because of the dramatic decrease of funds for Church programs.

## Executive Council vacancy

David Booth Beers, who has recently become Presiding Bishop Browning's chancellor, has resigned his membership on Executive Council. A lay person will be elected to serve the remainder of his term (which runs until 1994) at the council's June 15-19 meeting in Albuquerque, N.M.

Names, along with a brief listing of the nominee's qualifications, should be sent c/o Secretary of the General Convention, to: The Nominating Committee of the Executive Council, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y., 10017.

The logo for "Vital Signs" features a stylized white cross with a small flag-like design in the upper left quadrant, set against a black background. To the right of the cross, the words "Vital Signs" are written in a white, flowing, cursive script.

# On trial for sexuality

by Chris Ambidge

**I**t all began innocently enough. Jim Ferry, a parish priest in Toronto, met and fell in love with someone. The two decided that this was not a flash-in-the-pan, but a relationship for the rest of their lives. They were happy for three and a half years. The problems started when it came to the bishop's attention — because both of them are men. Bishop Terence Finlay of Toronto asked Ferry to resign from St. Philip's parish in suburban Unionville. When he refused, the bishop summarily removed Ferry from St. Philip's and placed him under inhibition (meaning that Ferry cannot exercise his priesthood anywhere in the Anglican communion). On February 3, the matter moved to the rarely-convoked Bishop's Court, where Ferry is standing trial for refusing to obey his bishop. In the wider sense, the Anglican Church of Canada is also on trial, both in the Court and in the secular media. At issue is how the Church treats its gay and lesbian sons and daughters, both lay and ordained.

In late spring of 1991, Ferry received a message from a handful of people that if he did not resign quietly, the bishop would be told of his sexual orientation. In the face of what was essentially blackmail, Jim went to his bishop and said that there was trouble brewing in the parish, and what it was. In the course of that interview, he told Bishop Finlay both

about his sexual orientation, and about his partner. The bishop asked for time to think and pray about the situation.



James Ferry

credit: Bill Glisky, Anglican Journal

Two weeks later, Finlay asked for Ferry's resignation. When Ferry refused, he was inhibited, and one of the suffragan bishops took services at St. Philip's the next Sunday. At this time, a letter from Bishop Finlay was read which "outed" Ferry. It announced that Ferry had been removed "because of his decision to remain in a relationship with another man." The congregation were surprised by the revelation, and angry at his removal.

The bishop said that his actions were forced by the standards adopted by the national House of Bishops on homosexuals in the Church. In 1979, the House issued a set of Pastoral Guidelines that recognized homosexuals as "brothers and sisters for whom Christ died," who should

have full civil rights and full call on the pastoral resources of the Church. The bishop went on to say, however, that this was not an acceptance of homosexual activity, that they could not accept blessing of homosexual unions, and that candidates for ordination were required to abstain from same-sex activity. In the absence of legislation from General Synod on these issues, Bishop Finlay contends that the guidelines are binding in order to preserve the bishops' collegiality.

As a gay person, I find the acceptance offered by the 1979 Pastoral Guidelines to be, at best, qualified. They can be paraphrased as "it's OK to be a bird, as long as you don't fly." The being/doing split is anti-incarnational. Like many other lesbian/gay people, I have found a powerful dissonance between, on the one hand, the 1979 Guidelines, and how they were applied to Ferry; and, on the other hand, the acceptance of Jesus that I find in the Gospel.

On the surface, the charges laid against Ferry deal not with the morality of his homosexuality, but rather with the "legal and honest demands" and "godly admonitions" of the bishop. Ferry, like all priests, promised to follow these at his ordination. In actuality, the trial *does* deal with morality, morality as determined by the bishop and then imposed through the promise of obedience.

It is Ferry's contention that the bishop could not demand that the relationship be terminated, any more than the bishop could prohibit a priest from marrying someone from Asia, or an atheist, or from marrying at all.

The five judges are being asked to consider whether or not the Pastoral Guidelines are binding on bishops. The diocesan lawyer has said that Finlay was compelled by them to act as he did. Other bishops have apparently not felt so compelled. The Court heard from an-

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Chris Ambidge is editor of *Integrator*, the newsletter of Integrity/Toronto, and a lay member of the Toronto diocesan synod.

other priest who told his bishop that he was gay, but who explicitly made no promise to remain sexually abstinent.

On the witness stand, Ferry's lawyer asked him why he didn't simply choose, as the bishop had implicitly asked: Either continue as a priest, or continue the relationship. He replied, "How can I choose between my two loves? I love the Church, and I love my partner. Either of those choices is like asking me to cut off my arm."

The Court has received huge amounts of media attention. It has been covered on a daily basis by television networks and major newspapers from coast to coast, and even abroad. Cynics may say that this is because sex sells newspapers. While that is true, newspapers are not the only ones to benefit.

One of the other reporters said to me at the trial that he thought the process was pretty healthy. At first I thought he was wrong. The trial process itself is medieval, and thousands of people have been voyeurs into Ferry's private life. The

*In late spring of 1991, Ferry received a message from a handful of people that if he did not resign quietly, the bishop would be told of his sexual orientation. In the face of what was essentially blackmail, Ferry went to his bishop. Two weeks later, Finlay asked for Ferry's resignation.*

Church has been presented as prurient and intolerant, damning one man's career and vocation for something over which he had no more control than his eye colour. The blaze of publicity has focused for lesbians how un-welcomed they are by parts of their Church. Lesbian/gay

clergy are running for cover in fear of an oncoming witch-hunt. It has cost Ferry himself dearly: his partner, who is an even more private person than Ferry, could not tolerate the publicity, and the relationship has burst under the strain. It has been a dark and enervating time for those of us who are lesbian and in the Church.

On further reflection, though, the process is healthy. As Christians, we have been promised that there will be a resurrection, though we know not what form it may take. Anglicans tend to be polite to a fault, and papering over cracks is one of our favourite approaches to conflict. Many would rather ignore the entire issue of lesbians. The media coverage, and indeed the trial itself, have stripped the paper away. People have been forced to consider the homosexuals who are sitting beside them in the pew. The debate continues. The outcome for Jim Ferry is now in the hands of five judges. The outcome for the Anglican Church of Canada is in the hands of God. **TW**

## **Welcome to *The Witness*!**

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**O**ver and over again, artists Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison have made the journey to Calvary. They have witnessed countless crucifixions and mourned a myriad of agonizing deaths, but the callous destruction of life they repeatedly encounter has not caused them to despair. On the contrary, the Harrisons adamantly maintain their hope in resurrection — specifically, the return to vitality of our dying planet.

Via a combination of photography, drawing, painting, poetry, creative thinking and hard-nosed scientific inquiry, these two artists (a married couple) have spent the past 20 years offering alternatives to the death sentence that humanity has levied on much of the earth's natural environment. Their proposals for the restoration of ecologically damaged areas not only find their ways into art galleries and museums, but onto the desks of urban planners and into the texts of environmental impact reports. Their artistic — sometimes whimsical — approach to questioning the way human beings interact with their surroundings is being taken seriously by researchers and government officials around the globe.

Professors of art at the University of California, San Diego (a school noted for its pioneering scientific research and for the Scripps Institute of Oceanography), the Harrisons began working with issues of life and death in the early 1970s when they created a series of self-sustaining ecological systems that could maintain life in an art-gallery setting (a metaphor criticizing the “lifelessness” that characterized much of the artworld at that time). They raised brine shrimp at a museum in Los Angeles, grew oranges in another museum in Orange County, California, and bred catfish in a gallery in London, England. The practical value of their artistic forays into biology started to become apparent when they succeeded in mating

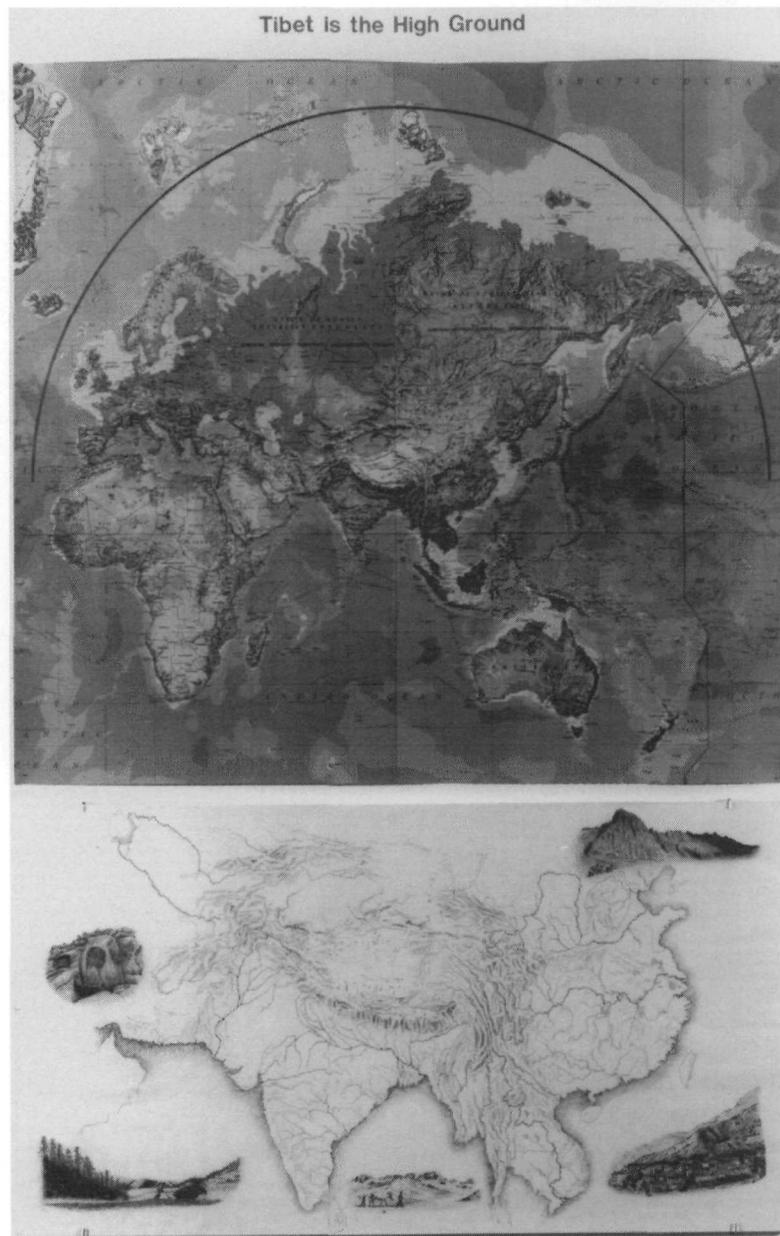
# Renewing the earth

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

a certain rare species of crab in captivity — in a makeshift habitat they had constructed at their studio — while marine biologists had failed.

This last experience led the Harrisons

to what was to be a decade-long series of artworks called *The Lagoon Cycle*, which considered the delicate balances necessary to maintain plant and animal life, and ultimately human life. One part of the

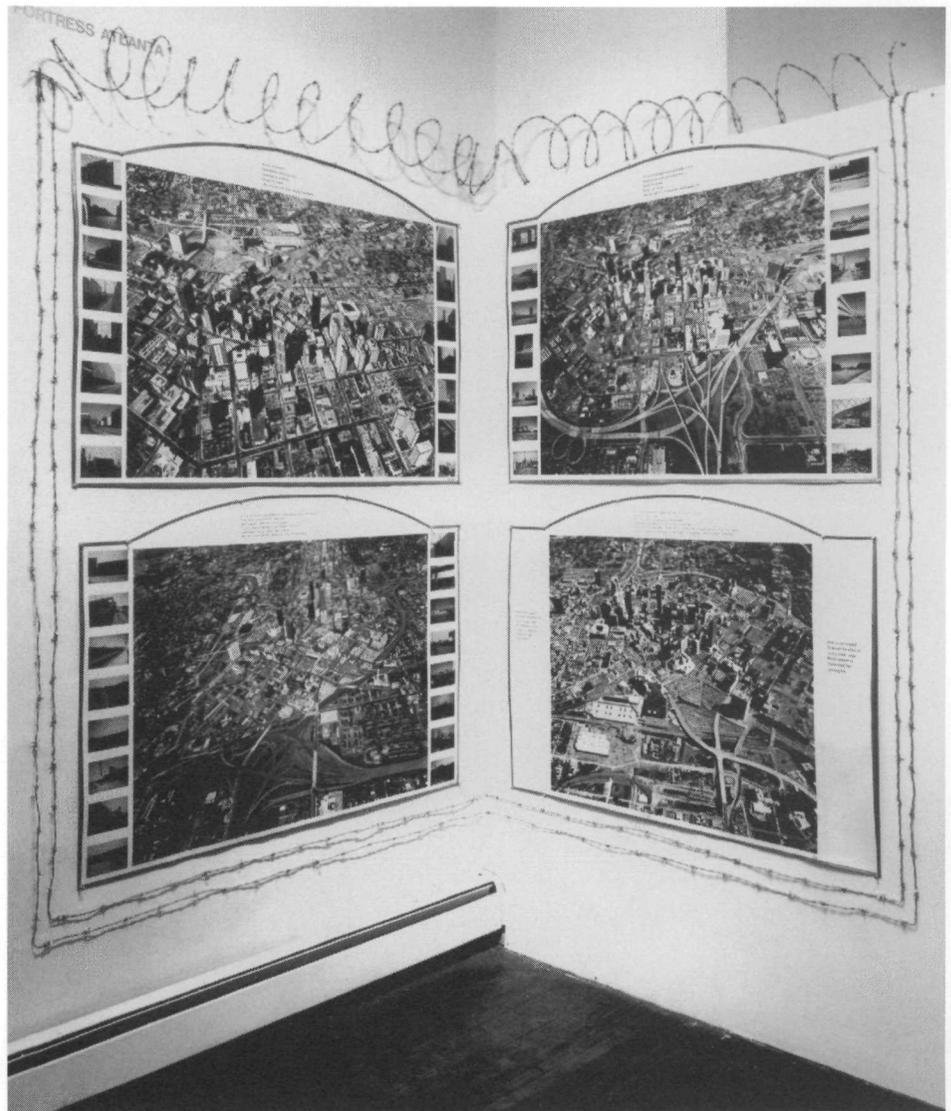


*Tibet is the high ground*  
by Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison.  
photo: D. James Dee  
credit: courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, N.Y.

series focused on California's Salton Sea, a landlocked body of salt water, created by human error. This manufactured "sea" becomes increasingly more saline due to evaporation in the desert climate and increasingly more polluted as agricultural runoff from the Imperial Valley fills it with pesticides and fertilizers. Their proposal, complete with meticulously handpainted aerial photographs and images of local flora and fauna, suggested digging a channel to the Gulf of Mexico to allow a natural, gradual cleansing of the water.

The Harrisons have since made artistic proposals for a range of waterways, from the Great Lakes of this continent to the Sava River in Yugoslavia. They have also taken on a variety of other types of environmental problems including those of urban areas. During the 1980s, they were invited by combinations of arts and governmental administrators to make proposals for the cities of Baltimore and Atlanta. They are currently working in conjunction with the city of San Diego and the architectural firm of Martinez, Cutri and McArdle on a proposal for the rejuvenation of a 1540-acre landfill site. The eyes of the artist and the environmentalist can be seen in the Harrisons' insistence that the original contours of the local terrain be restored — a point they argue both aesthetically and for reasons of animal and plant survival, since frogs, mice, rabbits, coyotes, foxes, bobcats and mule deer have still been observed in San Diego's canyons and could flourish in such a restored natural environment.

If the Harrisons' commitment to the future of our ecosystem has led them beyond the artworld into the world of scientific research, government bureaucracies and urban planning, it has now begun to lead them into even more unexpected alliances. In 1991, they began *Tibet is the High Ground*: a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. It centers around the Dalai



**Fortress Atlanta by Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison.** photo: D. James Dee credit: courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, N.Y.

Lama's dream of preserving the Tibetan Plateau as a biospheric sanctuary (in his words, a "Peace Park") and the Harrisons' interest in linking world climactic changes to atmospheric disturbances over Tibet.

In part due to the efforts of Father Matthew Fox and his Institute for Culture and Creation Spirituality, there has recently been a surge of interest among religious progressives in the interrelationships between ecological issues, religion, and the arts. However, unlike the introspective, self-searching approach

taken by Fox's circle, Newton and Helen Mayer Harrisons' quest is taking them outward in directions far and wide — seeking the spirit and substance of a planetary resurrection as they journey.

TV



# The WITNESS

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APRIL 3, 1947

## Mary Sees The Angels

BY  
ALLAN ROHAN CRITE

## *The Resurrection Faith*

**I**T OUGHT to be quite evident at Easter that Christianity proclaims a gospel: that it is good news, not good advice. Christianity does not point us to Christ and say, "There is a great and noble man. His teachings will help you, his graciousness will make you all friends; follow him as best you can." That is no gospel. It is difficult to understand how anyone who looks at life with open eyes, who knows what people are like, who is aware of our precarious situation at this point in history can still believe that good advice, even Christ's good advice, can save us. The word of Christianity is not, "follow this teacher and do your best," but "Jesus Christ, the power of God unto salvation."

One of the greatest New Testament scholars, Johannes Weiss, becomes poetic when he describes the transformation that Easter made in the lives of the disciples: "The dying and rising Son of Man was for them no longer a doctrine, a matter of speculation, a novel addition to the hope of the good time to come; it was an actual experience, a prototype and pledge of their own patient endurance and of its reward."

We stand today in desperate need of that transforming power. We need it in our lives to give us faith and patience and courage. We need it working through us to bring unity and order and justice to our world. And this gift of God to us is like all his gifts, we cannot have it for ourselves until we have given it away. The Church must always make it clear that the resurrection faith can only maintain itself when men accept the burden of their humanity and their solidarity with their fellows. Sometimes this faith is presented as a recipe for security from the tensions and responsibilities of the human situation; but that is to deny the crucified and risen Lord. The power that Christ promised his first disciples, the power he gave them, carried a condition: they must be witnesses for him. That witness takes different forms in different ages.

In every age the same qualities of personal life are required, but the changing social conditions of the world call for a new witness for a new age. What sort of things are required of us, then, at this precise moment? These three primarily.

First, we are to be active living members of the Church, worshipping in it, supporting it, helping to make the Church more effective. Bishop Bergraav of Norway has described the need: "Let the Church of Christ be the fire in the forge of the world, for it is cold now in the world. Even you his potential instruments are cold and therefore cannot be shaped to his will. Come! Pray! Be one in Christ and penetrated through and through with his fire."

Next we must do all we can to relieve the hunger and want of millions of starving people in Europe and Asia and throughout the world. There are many opportunities for us to share in this relief work. Our own Church has promised to raise one million dollars this year through the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. And after we give generously to that fund as an expression of our Christian faith we must go much further to work in all ways to bring the "good news" to bear on the insidious sin of poverty.

The third required witness is this: to be servants of the cause of unity among the nations of the world. That cause is becoming increasingly popular in this country, for it is now understood that if there is to be unity and peace there must be a working agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union and great numbers of our people do not want such a working agreement. It is in this difficult area that we are called to witness the power which comes to us through the resurrection of our Lord. What are the conditions of peace? None of us can be satisfied with facile answers to that question. Perhaps we cannot know the answers, but at least we can make every effort to see that we do not put our efforts and our influence on the side of those who spread disunity and prepare the way to war.

### "Quotes"

The first Easter changed defeat into victory, despair into the proclamation of good news — cowardice into heroism. This is not a matter of opinion, even of faith. It is an historic fact. The disciples, by their own account, at the time of the Crucifixion held that all was lost. Discouraged, saddened, they were on their way to take up life as best they could, when they had the overwhelming experience of the living Christ. His transforming power sent them out into the ancient world as indomitable apostles of his kind.

— Henry K. Sherrill, the P.B.

*Celebrating*  
— 75 —  
*years*



*The ubiquitous  
apocalypse:  
"Alas, for the  
day of the Lord  
is at hand..."*

credit: Dierdre Luzwick,  
a Wisconsin artist  
recently published by  
Harper and Row.

# New Humanity Arising

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

## The Nonviolent Coming of God

James W. Douglass (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991), \$13.95 paper.

**T**he point here is similar to one that was made by William Stringfellow, when he was pressed by a friend to declare whether he really believed in the Resurrection. Stringfellow paused and said, “Phil Berrigan going to jail.”

Though it may not exhaust the meaning of the Resurrection for Stringfellow, this vignette does go to the incarnational heart of the Second Coming as described by Jim Douglass in this remarkable book. The essence of his argument includes a thoughtful and sophisticated Biblical analysis. He reads the “Human Being” (that apocalyptic and messianic title of the Gospels so mistranslated from Aramaic through Greek to English as “Son of Man”) to be both a personal and *collective* name for the new humanity. This is no tag for a single male individual. It is simultaneously a name for the humanity of Jesus and a name for the “beloved community” (to employ Martin King’s phrase). He argues that Jesus uses the term in this very way. Hence the new humanity, as the Gospels attest, is given authority to forgive sins, must suffer and die for the sake of transformation and will come again in fullness.

Douglass further contends that we might look about empirically and find that new Human Being coming in this historical moment as the phenomenal rise

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**Bill Wylie-Kellermann** is a United Methodist pastor, faculty member of the Whitaker School of Theology and author of *Seasons of Faith and Conscience: Kairos, Confession and Liturgy*, Orbis Press, 1991.

of non-violent movements in unexpected places around the world, from Burma to the Baltic States, to Tiananmen Square.

This fusion of Biblical analysis and embodied movement is characterized in the life of Jim Douglass. He and his wife Shelley, founders of the Ground Zero Community of resistance to the Trident submarine in Washington state, are among the leading practitioners of nonviolence in North America. They now live on the other side of the “nuclear train” tracks in the African American community of Birmingham, Alabama.

Why is it such a rare and astonishing fact that a New Testament scholar should be found doing primary research during a long jail sentence, sharing a home with a family of Palestinian tax resisters during the Intifada, or walking a pilgrimage of repentance to Baghdad in the wake of the Gulf War? His writing is a rare genre which seamlessly weaves these experiences in and out of his exegesis. The dusty feet of the pilgrim can do fancy hermeneutical footwork. The analyst of scripture writes full of heart because he has staked his life upon it.

And the Biblical insights are flashes of brilliance. For example, Douglass reconsiders the baptism of Jesus after closely reading the texts on John the Baptist and considering the variety of people who came out to him for baptism, including prostitutes and soldiers and tax collectors and even perhaps Samaritans. It was as though Christ rose from the waters, took a look around at the motley company he’d joined, and was granted in that moment a vision — of the reign and realm of God.

Or again, he unearths the revolt of Judas the Galilean who led a tax rebellion

about the time of Jesus’ birth, raising a guerilla army and taking Herod’s garrison at Sepphoris, just outside of Nazareth. The Romans in turn, brought down the troops from Syria, made slaves of the rebels and burned the city to the ground. Jesus grew in wisdom and stature just walking distance of a burned city, monument to Roman power. Douglass, who walked the distance himself, ingeniously suggests that thereby Jesus glimpsed the scenario and fate of Jerusalem in the Jewish War of 66-70 C.E. His prophecies of destruction accurately read the times, but with a contingency, a freedom to choose a different outcome. Was not the Realm of God his alternative to the cycle of institutionalized violence or abject oppression and the violence of revolt? Was not the “kingdom” Jesus’ attempt to save Jerusalem in a concrete historical sense?

## book review

If Douglass’ book has an obvious shortcoming, it is a temptation to a modern variety of liberal pacifist millenarianism, as if a progressive evolution of consciousness will transform humanity. Though it can hardly be counted naive in assaying the powers or anything less than radical in its demands, this book remains long on imminence and short on transcendence. Still, for those of us who live at the “end of the world” (in the face of a global order built on violence and annihilation) there is a yearning for a Second Coming. We pray for it. *The Nonviolent Coming of God* truly invokes it, and calls us all to the incarnation of the One who was dead and yet lives. **TW**

**“W**e need to turn a cold and fishy eye on all that we do as Church work, our programs, meetings, rummage sales, bazaars, and ask ourselves whether anything that we are doing helps anyone remember that God made this world, God loves this world and God is here in his world.”

—Daniel Corrigan, *The Witness*, 1961.

Daniel Corrigan's health is frail, so Elizabeth, who shared his ministry, is now the one who often holds together their life and the telling of that life. She offers a personal fabric for a ministry that quite publicly advocated for women, for African Americans, and for peace.

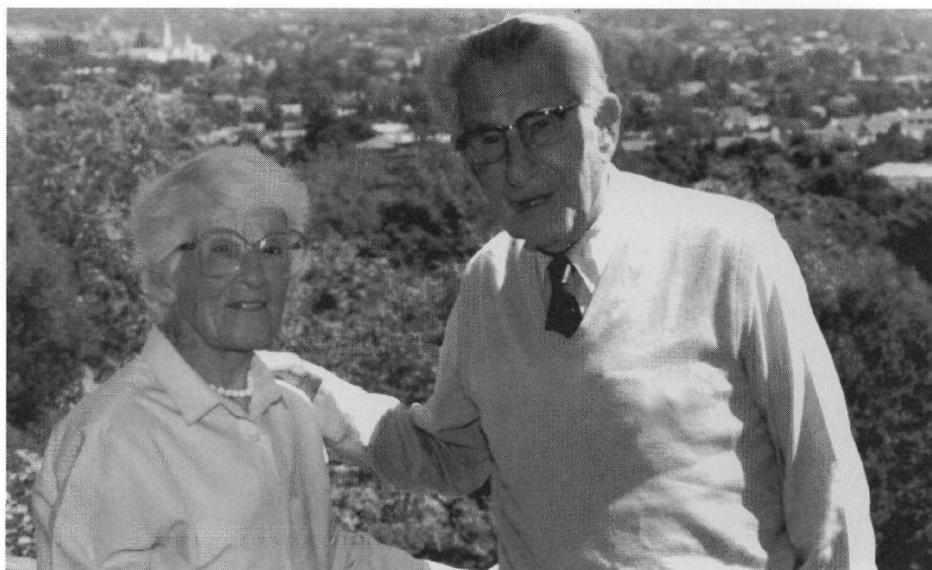
Daniel Corrigan, who was born in 1900, is well-known in the Church. When he worked for the Home Department of the National Church he was the liaison to African American colleges. When white trustees held meetings at which black faculty were not allowed to sit, Corrigan halted the meetings.

When an East Coast amusement park excluded African Americans in 1963, Corrigan and the head of the Presbyterian Church purchased tickets for themselves and two black friends. They spent the night in jail.

When the Vietnam War was raging, Corrigan celebrated the eucharist in the Pentagon.

When women — who had only been allowed to be seated at the 1970 General Convention — were denied ordination in 1973, Corrigan joined Bishops Bob DeWitt and Edward Welles in ordaining the Philadelphia 11.

These are stories we know. They are part of our heritage. Elizabeth Corrigan is proud of her husband, whom she says “was always disrupting things if he saw



Elizabeth and Daniel Corrigan at home in Santa Barbara, California.

## Transfigured in love

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

things wrong. He had a way of saying things that would startle people.” But she wishes she had been more assertive; there were times when she needed him home — “it wasn’t done in those days. We didn’t tell men what we expected of them.”

Elizabeth Waters grew up in Milwaukee. She was adopted by an Episcopalian when her mother died in childbirth. In many ways the Episcopal Church became her home, connecting her to her extended birth family in England.

Dan Corrigan was raised by a traveling engineer — in Michigan, in Mexico, in California. His mother died after a long illness when he was 12. His first wife died in childbirth when he was 24. Their son, David, was sent to live with his maternal grandparents.

“Dan’s life had fallen apart,” Elizabeth says, so the Cowley Fathers of Massachusetts fulfilled a life-time dream by arranging for him to study for the priest-

hood at Nashota House.

In 1926, Corrigan met Elizabeth Waters during a eucharist at the cathedral in Milwaukee.

“Daniel says he fell in love with me that day. I had other beaux at the time, but he made himself available even when they were *there*. We were married the following September.”

They brought David to their home and had four more sons. Over the next 19 years, the Corrigans served several Wisconsin parishes. Corrigan’s work in parish reconciliation was well-received. Elizabeth Corrigan says the family thrived. “We ice-skated and we swam and the boys sailed. We really got to know everybody.” But in 1944, Corrigan chose to serve a downtown parish in Baltimore.

“It was a period of great darkness and struggle and defeat in many ways,” Elizabeth Corrigan says. The vestry was not

ected; it was “perpetuated.” It included businessmen who did not attend the parish, but had control of the endowment.

When Corrigan offered daycare at the parish house to working World War II mothers, the vestry was angry. Steps to integrate a Chinese congregation, which shared the building, into the life of the parish were also resisted.

“He had to learn so much about how to work very differently with people. They were — what would you say — more sophisticated.” Elizabeth Corrigan started to define the attitude of members of their Wisconsin parishes as “simple,” then paused and said “I don’t mean simple; I mean teaching the Gospel . . .”

Word that David Corrigan had been killed in World War II arrived in Baltimore and six months later the birth of their last son sent Elizabeth Corrigan into shock.

“I was very, very sick. I was 43. During the war they didn’t have nurses, so no one knew about it. They found me and gave me blood.”

After rectifying surgery, Elizabeth Corrigan went into a seven month convalescence, leaving her husband and sons in the care of a nurse.

The Corrigans moved to Minnesota in 1948 to serve St. Paul’s, St. Paul. At first, “I was in bad condition,” she adds. “I was so nervous, I had skin problems. I didn’t want to be in public at all. But that left me, dear, and I became very, very happy. These were great years for Daniel,” she adds. “He made a strong wonderful parish out of a struggling Anglo-Catholic parish.” Parishioners who had been isolated from the diocese, were “no longer on a fringe.” They also got involved in work at mental institutions and prisons.

In 1958, Corrigan was consecrated suffragan in Colorado.

But, according to Elizabeth Corrigan, the relationship between diocesan and suffragan was difficult and it was a relief when, two years later, the presiding bishop

[Arthur Lichtenberger] asked Corrigan to serve as head of the Home Department of the National Church.

“The New York years were the happiest years of my life. Dan travelled a lot and I was alone, but I felt perfectly secure. I went to every art place I could find. When Dan was home it was priority time. We didn’t have a listed phone number. He had no parish to take care of. We met such wonderful people at the United Nations, from Churches overseas . . .”

In the early 1960s, at a gathering of the World Council of Churches, Corrigan was able to receive communion with members of other denominations. “Something changed in his life. He knew then that all of us belong to the same Lord.”

Elizabeth Corrigan felt keenly the rejection sent their way by some bishops after her husband was arrested on July 4, 1963 trying to integrate the amusement park. And she remembers those who spoke up for them.

Corrigan served a variety of colleges, seminaries and parishes after his official retirement in 1968.

While at Amherst, he invited Saul Alinsky, a dramatic community organizer, to the campus because African American students were struggling against discrimination.

When the Vietnam War was raging in 1970, Corrigan was arrested, with students from Bexley Hall where he was then dean, for celebrating the eucharist in the Pentagon.

Three years later when Corrigan joined Bishops Bob DeWitt (retired, Diocese of Pennsylvania) and Edward Welles (retired, Diocese of Western Missouri) in planning the Philadelphia ordination, “he was told, ‘If you do this, you’ll probably be deposed.’ I was so frightened by that. I thought, ‘The Church is all my life.’ But I could see that Dan was determined to do it, whatever the outcome. I came to see it

his way.

“The presiding bishop [John Allin] called a meeting in the Chicago Airport tower. No one would speak to us. When they took us into the tower — it literally felt like the Tower of London — I remember the presiding bishop saying they had broken the canons of the Church; they would be tried.”

When the 1976 General Convention accepted the ordination of women, those ordained in Philadelphia had their orders recognized; the bishops who ordained them were not deposed.

“I’ve always been deeply moved when Dan preached. He preached without notes, out of his own faith, always strong,” she added. Despite the price exacted from her for her husband’s ministry, there is a tenderness in Elizabeth Corrigan’s voice as she recalls the things that were important to him.



When Elizabeth Corrigan mentioned her husband’s confidence that “we are continually being resurrected,” Daniel Corrigan joined the conversation.

“Our living proves it,” he said. “Over and over again, you say, ‘This is dead.’ And then suddenly it’s alive. Or ‘My job is dead — I killed it’ and then there’s more to do. We have so many experiences of resurrection. People who believe in the Resurrection — who can stop them?”

Perhaps our inheritance from the Corrigans is a willingness to do the *real* work of the Church — to practice resurrection — while also turning a cold and fishy eye on the price that clergy families often pay for ministry. **TW**

# *Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front*

by Wendell Berry

Love the quick profit, the annual raise,  
vacation with pay. Want more  
of everything ready made. Be afraid  
to know your neighbors and to die.  
And you will have a window in your head.  
Not even your future will be a mystery  
any more. Your mind will be punched in a  
card  
and shut away in a little drawer.  
When they want you to buy something  
they will call you. When they want you  
to die for profit they will let you know.  
So, friends, every day do something  
that won't compute. Love the Lord.  
Love the world. Work for nothing.  
Take all that you have and be poor.  
Love someone who does not deserve it.  
Denounce the government and embrace  
the flag. Hope to live in that free  
republic for which it stands.  
Give your approval to all you cannot  
understand. Praise ignorance, for what man  
has not encountered he has not destroyed.  
Ask the questions that have no answers.  
Invest in the millennium. Plant sequoias.  
Say that your main crop is the forest  
that you did not plant,  
that you will not live to harvest.

Say that the leaves are harvested  
when they have rotted into the mold.  
Call that profit. Prophesy such returns.  
Put your faith in the two inches of humus  
that will build under the trees  
every thousand years.  
Listen to carrion — put your ear  
close, and hear the faint chattering  
of the songs that are to come.  
Expect the end of the world. Laugh.  
Laughter is immeasurable. Be joyful  
though you have considered all the facts.  
So long as women do not go cheap  
for power, please women more than men.  
Ask yourself: Will this satisfy  
a woman satisfied to bear a child?  
Will this disturb the sleep  
of a woman near to giving birth?  
Go with your love to the fields.  
Lie easy in the shade. Rest your head  
in her lap. Swear allegiance  
to what is highest your thoughts.  
As soon as the generals and the politicos  
can predict the motions of your mind,  
lose it. Leave it as a sign  
to mark the false trail, the way  
you didn't go. Be like the fox  
who makes more tracks than necessary,  
some in the wrong direction.  
Practice resurrection.

— from *A Country of Marriage*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973



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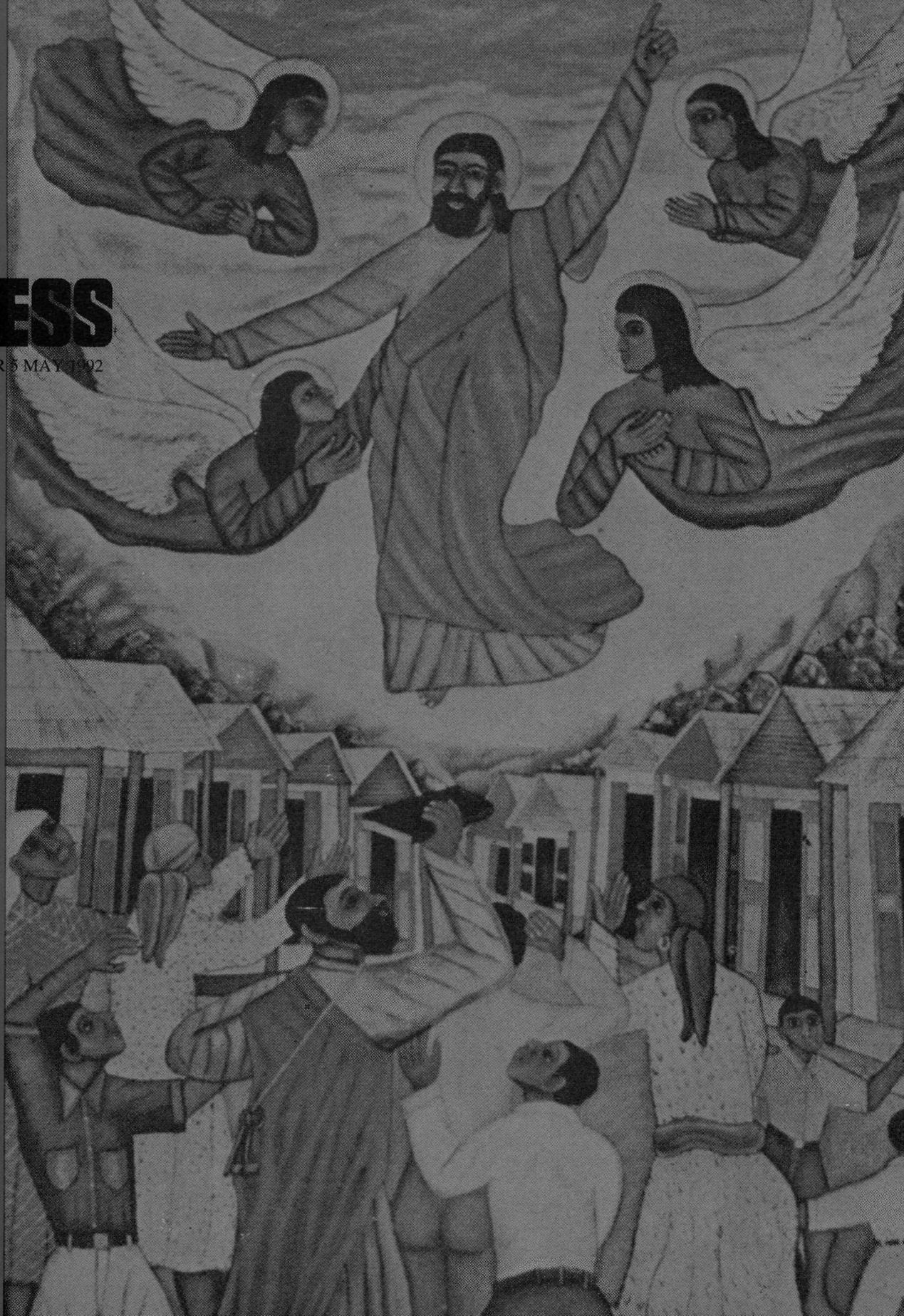
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*See page 19.*

# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75 NUMBER 5 MAY 1992



**Ordination:**  
*In pursuit  
of a multi-  
cultural  
priesthood*

## Questions of faith and money

YOUR REPRINT of articles from the 1931 issue of *The Witness* was great [February, 1992]. The two criticisms of capitalism made so much sense to those engulfed in the Great Depression. It is tragic that today Christians do not look to a democratic socialist system that stresses service rather than profits as the primary motivating factor.

Just yesterday I saw the classic picture of "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler" in a suburban church parlor.

In my sociology of religion class I have Cherie Bandrowski speak. She tells how she was a well-off and contented suburbanite until she read Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*. Then she felt that she must express her Christian faith by joining a church interested in the poor and working among them in a depressed city area. And she did it.

I trust *The Witness* will touch many lives with what it really means to be a Christian.

**John M. McCartney**  
**Nonviolent Action for National**  
**Defense Institute**  
**Detroit, MI**

YOUR FEBRUARY ISSUE reminded me that something has been bothering me for most of my life.

I remember when my parents received a "missionary box" when I was a young child. Daddy counted as a "missionary" because he served small Methodist and United churches in rural Vermont. While he and Mama had no objection to receiving the boxes of clothing from her college friends who had children a little older than we were, they were distressed to be the recipients of a "missionary box" which as I recall was a blanket or two. I remember how they labored over the thank-you letter which had to express gratitude and a request not to do it again ... They didn't mind getting the Christmas box from the church, however, since a dozen or more boxes were filled at our house and distributed by Daddy to members demonstrably poorer than we. Our box came from somewhere else. I never knew

where, but doubtless my parents knew.

When my husband and I served a small inner-city church in Chicago in the early '60s, we were supposedly "on the cutting edge" following the suburban new church development of the '50s. Later my husband moved on to serving the elderly and infirm. Throughout these experiences there was a sense that God loves the poor, the sick, the elderly, the disenfranchised, the minority more than He loves other people.

I have often wondered what happens when a poor person manages to get his/her life back together, gets a good job and becomes middle class (whatever that means). Does that person then lose God's love and attention because he/she (with God's help) has prospered?

We are back in the inner city and we love it as always. Our church is poor. We are not subsidized by our denomination, so the members have to raise the money by having fundraising events throughout the year. This supplements the non-pledged envelope gifts which are usually about \$1 per week, appropriate in relation to the income of the givers. Fundraisers are for the whole community and thus bring in money from non-members. Suddenly we find ourselves feeling defensive: why isn't our church mounting programs for the poor? the homeless? the elderly?

Because more and more of our members are entering the ranks of the unemployed. More and more are coming closer and closer to being homeless. Our food pantry is busy and we also participate in other neighborhood community pantries. We have cooperative programs with other neighborhood churches. This is all we can do. Our people are stretched meeting their own employment needs, the needs of their families and the needs of the church for fuel, repairs, paint and keeping outdated furnaces working.

Again I find that there is an attitude that God loves only the poor. We are not poor enough to be among those God loves and not rich enough to work off our guilt with patronizing gifts to "those less fortunate."

In the intervening years while my husband was serving the elderly in various capacities in church-sponsored institutions I have had the opportunity to belong to a number of different churches, some of which can be classified as "big rich churches." I have found

members of these churches as broken and wounded as any in the inner city. They are in even more desperate need of the Gospel of Christ than their poorer brothers and sisters. Not, as one might think, so they will share their plenty with those in want: most of them do so in their own way, but so they can find relief in Christ for the burdens they bear, healing for their inner wounds and above all a healing of attitude, so they can hear and share with their brothers and sisters the Message. So they can recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives and in the lives of the poor and accept this as Gift. To get beyond the grammar and lifestyles to the commonality as Children of God together.

Soup kitchen, shelters, yes, and art of all kinds (look at what the WPA arts programs achieved!) and education and social action are all important. But remember, we are us, it's not them-us, as it was with the blanket for the rural missionaries or the government surplus for the poor pastor. We receive with gratitude the clothing from our friends because we know it comes from love, caring and a sense of being with us, being us. We receive with joy the Christmas box from our own church, because it is for us from those who care and who are also us.

**Priscilla W. Armstrong**  
**Baltimore, MD**

I FOUND YOUR "Money and Faith" issue as good as any issue of any magazine I've read. Indeed, depressingly so. My greatest fear may be that we humans will fail to make adequate changes to our structure to correct our flaw. I was especially impressed by Walter Wink's article on the Domination System until its end where I felt Mr. Wink fizzled out rather than

***The Witness* welcomes letters to the editor. We are most able to accommodate letters of 200 words or less. Please send comments to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226-1868. It is our policy to edit letters for length when necessary, but not for style.**



take the next logical step.

To me, what we need to do is go back a couple of issues to your "Confession" issue and admit that the Domination System simply does not — cannot — work. And, then to go on and make the political changes necessary.

Mr. Wink's argument that "only God can bring about a new system . . ." is hogwash. Human history is especially a story of changing political structures to take into account groups that have been excluded.

**John Kavanaugh  
Detroit, MI**

[Ed. Note: Walter Wink is not at odds with you. You need to read the subsequent chapters of his book: *Engaging the Powers*, Fortress Press, 1992.]

### Not renewing

I WOULD LIKE TO LET YOU KNOW that I will not be renewing at this stage for a few different reasons. Since my initial receipt of the magazine my involvement in the church has become much less — I'm sure you have heard how bad the Anglican church in Australia is regarding the ordination of women issue. I am now marginally involved with the Uniting Church (Presbyterian/Methodist/Unitarian) here but really I have left the Anglican church.

*A luta continua.* Best wishes for 1992 and for the magazine in the future.

**Christina Green  
Victoria, Australia**

### Abortion

The irony of it all: That the yearly estimate of two million abortions in Italy dropped to 224,000 after abortion and contraceptives were legalized! That Romania in the 1980s, where contraceptives and abortions were both outlawed, had an abortion rate 17 times that of the Netherlands, where abortion was legal and publicly funded!

Not a bit ironical is the fact that the Netherlands has the developed world's lowest abortion rate because it has very comprehensive community and school health programs and easily accessible contraceptive services.

We thank Pasedena (Calif.) Planned Parenthood for giving us this information. Could

it be that IF we really wish and WILL to minimize abortions, we had better take note of what has happened in Italy and the Netherlands? All in favor, pass the hat for our beleaguered clinics, and pass the word to every editor, church leader and politician!

**Andrew B. Smither  
Duarte, CA**

### Old Witnesses

[Ed. Note: People who sent financial contributions to *The Witness* in 1991 received copies of the magazine as old as the 1930s.]

MANY THANKS for sending the copies of back issues of *The Witness*. They bring back many wonderful memories of people, issues and friendships.

You seem to be off to a fine start in this new stage in the life of the magazine.

While I of course respect your right to raise any theological or pastoral questions you wish around the issue of abortion, I hope that there will be no retreat from *The Witness'* stand for free choice in the legal and political areas. This would represent a tragic equivocation on one of the most crucial issues facing our society.

**George W. Barrett  
Santa Barbara, CA**

THANK YOU for the two copies of *The Witness* from 1932 which you sent. The Holy Spirit must have led you to send a copy with Bishop Johnson on the cover. He confirmed me! I wish I had a tape of the sermon — probably the shortest and most pointed ever given, but entirely lost from memory.

And it was because we knew he was involved with *The Witness* that we subscribed, sometime in the late 1940s, and thereby became acquainted with Bill Spofford, Sr., through his writing. As you said in the transmittal, it is great to get a flavor of the time by reading these old issues.

**Oliver C. (Cal) Reedy  
Ann Arbor, MI**

### Witness praise

I ENJOY *THE WITNESS* so much. It hits me where I live theologically speaking. My new position is that of Priest-In-Charge of the

English-speaking congregations in Guatemala City. Ministry among the Quiche Indians as well as marginal groups in the cities is incredible.

**Joseph F. Rider  
Vero Beach, FL**

I'VE BEEN A SUBSCRIBER to *The Witness* for several years. I'm a member of St. John's Cathedral here in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I subscribe to many magazines and after I've read them I pass them on to other persons at the Cathedral. I live in a one-bedroom apartment — so don't have much room for magazines I've already read.

My subscription would have come due in May — but here is a check for \$40 for two years.

Best wishes for your work. I am 83 years old — quite active yet.

**Ruth Lackey  
Albuquerque, NM**



### Corrections

The April book review began with an excerpt from Jim Douglas' book *The Nonviolent Coming of God*. We neglected to italicize the following paragraph:

*The point here is similar to one that was made by William Stringfellow, when he was pressed by a friend to declare whether he really believed in the Resurrection. Stringfellow paused and said, "Phil Berrigan going to jail."*

Also, contrary to appearances on page 18 of the March issue, we *do* know how to spell Edmond Browning's name!

## THE WITNESS

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**Cover:** *The Ascension*, by Castera Bazile of Haiti. Reprinted from May 4, 1961 *Witness*. It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# The captivity of sacraments

by Wesley Frensdorff

**T**he sacraments are the lifeblood of the Church, but the present system gives their control to **potential** leaders rather than to established leaders. It is [also] largely true that the availability of money controls the availability of eucharistic and sacramental leadership for most local congregations.

## The captivity of sacraments

In my mind, there are two basic systemic problems, which are interrelated. One of these deals with our ministry delivery system, and the other with our system of leadership and governance.

Our ministry delivery system, the delivery of service in the name of Christ, is basically the English village model, but in overload. That model is centered and heavily dependent on the “cleric,” who at one time was the most educated person in the village and thus also the primary teacher. This model tends to create vicarious religion, centered on the priest as the holy person, in whom is focused the religious power and knowledge. It also tends to create dependence, rather than interdependence. If the priest is “father,” church members are children,

---

**Wesley Frensdorff** was consecrated in 1972, serving as bishop of the Diocese of Nevada, and later as interim of Native American Mission and assistant in Arizona. He died in 1988. This article is adapted from a 1985 essay entitled **Ministry and Orders: A Tangled Skein**. Artist **Lavrans Nielsen**, who died in 1976, was a Trappist monk at Gethsemani in Kentucky.

who never reach sufficient adulthood in Christ to exercise much of their ministries. If the priest is pastor, members are always sheep intended to follow, not lead.



“Come, follow me.”

credit: Lavrans Nielsen

Furthermore, this ministry delivery system is highly professionalized; at the center stands a professional with professional training. The model is highly hierarchical, and economically dependent in that it cannot function in its presently accepted traditional form without money. Furthermore, as a result of setting priesthood in a professionalized and economically dependent ministerial system, we have created a “sacramental captivity.” Sacraments are primarily available where

a professional, stipendiary priest is available. This clerically-centered model of congregational life and mission increasingly limits both ministry delivery and the sacramental life of the Church.

## Importing leadership

But this system is also tied up with our governance system. It has separated, or at least created a distance between, the Church’s primary leadership and the community of faith. As far as the local congregation is concerned, the primary leadership, by design, is **imported**.... The exercise of leadership takes second place to that of the imported leadership of the priest. Both systemic problems — leadership and ministry delivery — create much discomfort because they are basically inconsistent with our faith convictions. As Christians we are committed to a basic view of life that has interdependence at its heart.

In order to understand these systemic problems more clearly, it might be helpful to look at a bit of history.

## From itinerancy to cures

Bernard Cooke, in 1983, pointed to three major shifts or movements that occurred in the first two centuries of the present era. These shifts so far have not been reversed, but in some cases heightened as the centuries progressed.

First, he pointed to the shift from itinerant ministry and leadership to resident ministry and leadership. Jesus was itinerant, and he demanded the same from his followers. In the early Church, leadership ministries were also itinerant but many soon settled down. While there has always been some itinerant ministry, for example through missionaries, most primary leadership in the Church has been

“settled” since those early centuries.

### From gifts to sanction

The second shift to which Bernard Cooke points is one from charismatic to official leadership. The early leadership patterns were based on gifts given to individuals, because of which they were then called to carry on certain functions. Paul has a number of these lists. But soon the needs of the institutional leadership tended to shape these functions into offices. This shift, Cooke points out, was heightened by the second-century gnostic crisis. In the face of these challenges, both the ministry of prophesy and the ministry of teaching had their autonomy diminished, almost eliminated.

### Setting the Church apart

The third shift, from “secular to sacred,” is “the key element in the process towards attributing sacrality to official Church leadership; the shift towards contributing to such leaders sacred power by virtue of which their ministerial activity is salvifically effective.” Here are sown the seeds of what later developed into a view of actual superiority of the clergy by virtue of ordination.

In contrast, Cooke points out, primitive Christianity “really saw its own existence with that of Jesus as ‘secular.’ They believed that a radically new form of sacrality had entered the picture with the advent of Jesus, and above all with his death and resurrection. This new sacrality had nothing to do with some special realm of sacred religious activity. It dealt with the sanctifying presence of God’s spirit in Jesus and thereafter in the Church. It was this Holy Spirit that made Jesus the new and definite “holy of holies” and the Christian community the temple in which God dwelt....The entire community was believed to be empowered by Christ’s spirit and empowered to share in the ongoing mission of the risen one.”

By the end of the first century, all of

this was beginning to change. There was a shift to the sanctuary with images of priesthood praising God on behalf of the people. In the second century “the sacred character of the **Episcopos** and the sacred nature of his role are explicitly and consistently mentioned.” This appears to reverse earliest Christianity’s reluctance to apply sacred terms to any individual in the Church. “From the third century onward we can speak of holy orders in the life of the Church.”

*If we are going to free the life and mission of the Church from clerical and sacramental captivities, we must understand our history, disentangle the issues, and reform the systems.*

### Priests as first-class Christians

Edward Schillebeeckx points out that the trends Cooke identifies reached new heights in the Middle Ages and that we are still stuck with them. Schillebeeckx goes on to point out that at that time the shift from leadership rooted in community to leadership with “private” power came to new fulfillment.

Our theology and tradition still claim the first picture while our practice and ecclesial culture point in many ways to the second. While the Reformation sought to make basic changes in some of these areas, it was largely unsuccessful. Aidan Kavanagh puts the matter as follows:

*The upshot of all this is that the Western Churches in the first half of this present and perhaps most egalitarian of centuries found themselves with a highly undiversified ministerial structure focused on a...group of people who were*

*now regarded by many as ‘first-class Christians,’ a church of the chosen **within** a far larger church of the unchosen who constituted a baptized proletariat of Christians of the second, third, or even fourth kind. The effects of this are presently all around us.*

*The other Christian ministries, where they survived, have been presbyteralized, and the rest of the Church has been deministerialized. Charisms have not been restricted by this situation, for the Spirit persists in blowing, disconcertingly, where it will. But there can be no doubt that this constricted ministerial situation has made it all the more difficult to discern diaconic (i.e., service) charisms when they occur, and made it all but impossible to recognize them publicly and employ them effectively to the Churches’ good.*

The most significant thing to recognize is that in this process the ordained offices have been uprooted from the community. They are privatized and clericalized. Equally important, sacramental power now leads to leadership. In the earliest Church tradition, a leader was identified, called, and then given sacramental responsibility. Now, because of these shifts, in our practice, someone offers himself or herself to the Church and, if affirmed, is trained. Then, through ordination, sacramental authority is given; only after this comes the call to specific leadership. The primary criteria are leadership **potential** and intellectual ability, rather than **already established** leadership in the community of faith.

If we are going to free the life and mission of the Church from clerical and sacramental captivities, we must understand our history, disentangle the issues, and “reform” the systems, in order that every community of laity, in Schillebeeckx’s words, “may have a full ecclesial life.” Only then is the Church truly empowered for mission. **TW**

## Psalm 62: I Put My Trust in Thee

by Benjamin Chavis, Jr.

O God my God, my soul longs for thee;  
my heart beats to thy will.  
I put my trust in thee, O God;  
I yearn to celebrate thy love.

O God, thou art my confidence;  
thou art my only ray of hope.  
Before the dangers of society  
thou art my security.

O God, I do accept thy call;  
I shall preach thy word.  
In constant struggle for thy kingdom  
I put my trust in thee.

*Benjamin Chavis, Jr. wrote these psalms while jailed from 1975 to 1979. Chavis, a United Church of Christ minister, had been organizing blacks to fight for civil rights in North Carolina when he and nine others were arrested and charged with arson. The convictions were overturned in 1981. During his time in prison, Chavis led a Bible-study group for fellow prisoners, an experience he wrote about in a February, 1982 **Witness** article entitled *Freeing Prisoners with the Bible*.*

## Psalm 38: Give Me the Courage

Give me the courage, O God;  
provide my spirit with thy strength.  
Come unto me, O God,  
and enter my heart with thy love.

Grant me the moral fiber to speak out, O God,  
that I may take a vocal stand for justice.  
Let me be thy instrument, O God,  
that I may do thy will.

In the face of intimidation, O God,  
help me to be brave.  
Where there is injustice, O God,  
in thy name give me the courage to challenge it.

Make me whole, O God;  
let my personhood be active and upright.  
Give me the courage, O God,  
that I may involve my total existence  
in thy liberation of humanity from sin.



Poetry

from **Psalms from Prison**, NY: The Pilgrim Press, 1983.

# Australian women ordained

by Sue Pierce

**L**ess than a month after plans to ordain 11 women to the priesthood were blocked by a last-minute civil court injunction in the Diocese of Canberra-Goulburn, Archbishop Peter Carnley ordained 10 women deacons to the priesthood in Perth's St. George's Cathedral in the state of Western Australia, making them the first women priests in this province of the Anglican communion.

One of the Perth ordinands, Kay Goldsworthy, said the emotional March 7 service in St. George's Cathedral before a weeping and cheering overflow congregation felt "good, in the sense that the seven days of creation in Genesis were 'good.'"

Goldsworthy was made a deacon in 1986, and is now chaplain at an Anglican girls' school, Perth College.

"I'm still a bit stunned," she said. "We'd been hopeful so many times, it's like a tradition. I didn't think I'd be a deacon this long.

"As a woman who believes she is called to be a priest and has been stopped only by the fact that ... 'you've got ovaries,' I'm still very critical of the Church, but there was still a sense of something very powerful in the service, a sense of people unleashing stuff held at bay because for so long the Church wouldn't say 'women are good, women are equal.'"

Goldsworthy said she was encouraged by the grassroots support for the ordinations, noting, "People who weren't Anglican told me how wonderful they

thought it was and Anglicans who felt for years they couldn't go to Church have come back now. When I go to parishes people are realizing, 'Well, we could have a woman rector here'."

Pam Albany, Perth spokesperson for Australia's Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), confirmed that support.

"We showed that working within the structure wasn't working. We used the media, we demonstrated, and put it on the table as a justice issue," she said.

*The service felt "good, in the sense that the seven days of creation in Genesis were 'good.'"*

— Kay Goldsworthy

Because of the toll exacted by the struggle, for many women the sense of victory and celebration over the Perth ordinations was mixed with heartache, anger and weariness.

The blocking of the Canberra ordinations, scheduled for February 2, had been the most recent defeat. The question of women's ordination, which had been voted down time and time again in the General Synod, had been taken to the Church's highest ecclesial court, the Appellate Tribunal, for a decision on whether the matter should be handled by the dioceses or only the General Synod. In December 1991, the Tribunal handed down an opinion stating it could not find an answer. Encouraged by this decision, and the fact that the Church's constitution does not prohibit the ordination of women,

Canberra's Bishop Owen Dowling made plans for the Canberra ordinations.

However, the opposition acted quickly. Three men from the Diocese of Sydney went to the Appeals Court in the State of New South Wales and won an injunction blocking the ordinations until their legality could be determined. Sydney is the largest and wealthiest diocese in the country and routinely uses its majority in Synod to vote down women's ordination.

According to Alison Cheek, an Australian who was priested with the first women to be ordained in the U.S. Church in Philadelphia in 1974, winning the injunction was possible because the Church of Australia's constitution is tied to that of the state, civil courts having legal jurisdiction over matters of Church law.

Cheek, who is now director of feminist liberation theology studies at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., had journeyed to Australia for the Canberra ordinations. But because of the injunction her hopes of finally seeing her Australian sisters ordained were destroyed—the long-anticipated day of celebration became one of shock, sadness and anger.

"It was so hard when I went to Canberra, because the 11 women really thought they would be ordained," Cheek said. But despite strong sentiment among many Australian Anglicans, including conservatives, that Church matters should not be decided in civil court, Dowling honored the injunction, passing over the women to lay hands on the male ordinands present.

Cheek and Caroline Pearce, another Australian ordained a priest in the U.S., were unable to stand by and watch the women being ignored. "When the Bishop passed over the women, Caroline and I went and laid hands on them," said Cheek.

While having no illusions about the Church, many Australian women feel that the Perth ordinations are a sign that transformations are taking place.

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**Sue Pierce**, a free-lance writer based in Philadelphia, was an editor of *The Witness* from 1988 until 1991. She is production editor for *American Writing: A Magazine*.

“The great thing about Perth is that it happened,” said Patricia Brennan, a physician and former national convener of Australia’s MOW. “It broke a terrible deadlock.”

Brennan said she found the Canberra non-ordinations painful but instructive. “The Christian Gospel sits happiest in disappointment—Anglicans are so arrogant when they win. Canberra was a strange sort of celebration. People were horrified, it was looking like domestic violence. There was an atmosphere of defiance and joy, tension and rage—it set the stage for [Archbishop] Carnley,” said Brennan.

Another reason Perth may have succeeded where Canberra failed is geography. Perth, separated from eastern Australia by hundreds of miles of desert, faces the Indian Ocean to the west and actually is closer to Jakarta, Indonesia than to Sydney. Western Australians feel little allegiance to the regions in the east.

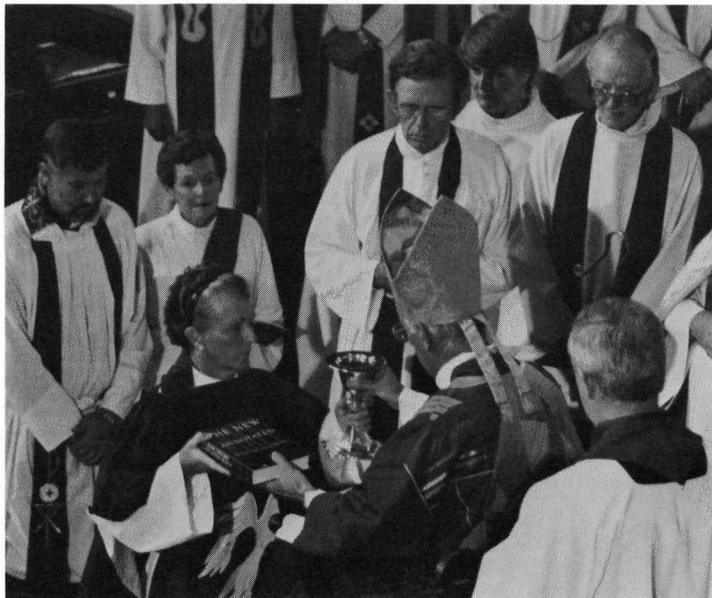
When the opponents to the Canberra ordinations filed suit to block the ones in Perth, they asked the judge in Western Australia to “maintain the status quo” by upholding the New South Wales injunction. The judge replied, “It is not part of my job to adopt the safe course; my duty is to dispense justice.”

Waiting for the judge’s decision was a nerve-wracking time for all, according to Albany, because of the power of civil law.

“If there had been an injunction and the Archbishop had gone ahead, he could have been held in contempt of court. If the ordinations had gone ahead and been declared illegal, opponents could have declared themselves the *true* Anglican

Church, and taken all the property. As someone said, ‘How many women priests is St. George’s Cathedral worth?’”

The evening before the scheduled ordination, the court’s decision affirming the ordination was handed down. According to Goldsworthy, there was a “fabulous sense of celebration” at the



The Perth ordination

credit: Anglican Messenger, Diocese of Perth

service. At Perth College where she is chaplain, she saw the effect of the ordinations on the next generation through her young women students. When the students heard of the favorable court decision, they ran to the chapel and began ringing the bell.

“It had been deeply frustrating to work with 700 girls and to tell them God says you are great and good, except that within this structure, as a woman, you can’t be totally a part of it,” she said. “They have lots of wonderful anger—it’s nice when girls of 15 and 16 can’t believe that anyone could stand in their way.”

The Australian ordinations are also of great importance to women in England, although Caroline Davis, a spokesperson for MOW in London who was in Perth for

the ordinations, doesn’t feel that they will directly affect the situation in the Church of England, where changing the canons in favor of women’s ordination requires approval from both the General Synod and the British Parliament.

But Davis hopes that the pro-women stance of Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey, plus the Australian ordinations, may persuade the Church of England’s November General Synod to approve women’s ordination.

If the English Church rejects women’s ordination to the priesthood in November, the issue cannot be reconsidered for another five years.

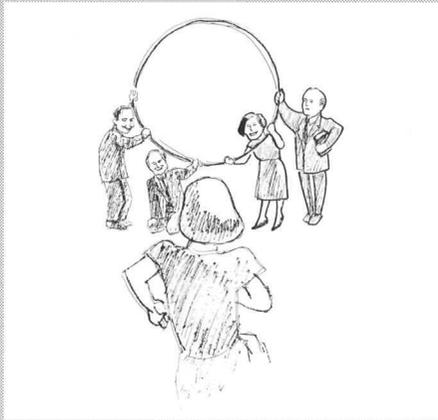
As for whether Australia’s upcoming General Synod in July will uphold the Perth ordinations, MOW’s Brennan, for one, is optimistic. She noted that the Church is becoming increasingly congregational and fragmented. Many of the anti-women conservatives, she thinks, will be

willing to trade off letting bishops in each diocese have the episcopal authority to choose to ordain women or not in order to avoid further splitting the Church.

“The goal posts have been moved and people are going to have to get used to it,” Goldsworthy says.

“For myself, I need to keep exploring what priesthood as a woman means for me. I can’t forget those women in Canberra. We all pay a price. But we go through this so that the ones that come after us won’t have to.”

[**Ed. Note:** In addition to Goldsworthy, those ordained in Perth were Elizabeth Couche, Constance Halbert, Jennifer Hall, Teresa Milne, Catherine Pinner, Judith Peterkin, Joyce Polson and Robin Tandy.]



### HOOP ONE:

#### *Admission to postulancy*

1. Would-be priest or aspirant discusses matter with rector of “home” congregation, who advises him/her whether to let the diocesan bishop know he/she wants to be ordained.
2. If bishop believes aspirant might have vocation to ordained ministry, invites aspirant to apply for acceptance as postulant — in some dioceses, applicant is required to participate in process of “vocational discernment” first.
3. Diocesan commission on ministry assists bishop in interviewing applicant and evaluating application materials, including results of physical and psychological examinations.
4. If accepted as postulant, aspirant begins approved program of preparation (theological, practical, emotional and spiritual formation).
5. Postulant communicates progress to bishop four times a year, during Ember Days.



### HOOP TWO:

#### *Acceptance as candidate for holy orders.*

1. After six months as postulant and nine months of theological study, postulant can apply to become candidate.
2. Commission on ministry, diocesan standing committee, academic supervisors and postulant’s home rector/vestry must indicate to bishop whether postulant seems qualified.

## *To become a priest*



### HOOP THREE:

#### *Ordination to transitional diaconate*

1. Candidate for holy orders not eligible for ordination to diaconate until at least 21 years of age; must have been candidate no fewer than six months.
2. Candidate must pass examination covering Holy Scriptures; Church history; Christian theology and Church teaching; Christian ethics and moral theology; studies in contemporary society, including racial and other minority groups; liturgics; theory and practice of ministry. [At minimum, most dioceses require standardized General Ordination Examination prepared by General Board of Examining Chaplains.]
3. Candidate’s qualifications for ordination again evaluated and diocesan standing committee provides bishop with testimonial.



### HOOP FOUR:

#### *Ordination to the priesthood*

1. Transitional deacon must be at least 24 years of age and have been deacon for no fewer than six months.
2. Deacon must have served in an acceptable cure.
3. Standing committee again provides bishop with testimonial as to deacon’s qualifications.

The diocesan bishop can eliminate a person from consideration at any point in ordination process (although not without giving reasons).



**I** hate to sound age-ist and sexist, but it seems like all we're seeing lately is white, middle-aged, divorced women, often in A.A.," a diocesan commission-on-ministry member observed in confidence.

She admitted that she and the others who evaluate persons seeking ordination in her diocese are disinclined to approve such applicants for postulancy — especially with a deployment-minded bishop breathing down their necks.

"It is really hard — it is so painful [deciding who should be approved]," she continued. "It's wonderful when someone great comes through."

But just what are the criteria for someone "great"? This is an intelligent and sensitive white woman priest talking, someone approved for ordination when diocesan commissions on ministry were regularly dismissing others of her gender from consideration without a second thought. This is a woman who tells of a fellow priest, gay, who suffered an ironic injustice when he was rejected twice for postulancy — the first time because he was outed during the application process, and the second time, in another diocese, when his guarded references to his personal life were taken as evidence that he was "too closed down emotionally."

He's "a wonderful priest" now, she says. But what of those white, middle-aged, divorced women her commission on ministry is tired of seeing and feels disinclined to approve for postulancy?

Stories abound about bids for ordination to the Episcopal priesthood that "went wrong," a virtually unavoidable by-product when something as delicate as "vocational discernment" and God's "call" are involved. Both the individual and the Church must participate and either one

**Julie A. Wortman** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*. Artist **Tana Moore** works for the Lawrence Institute of Technology in Mich.

can be mistaken about whether the person should be ordained.

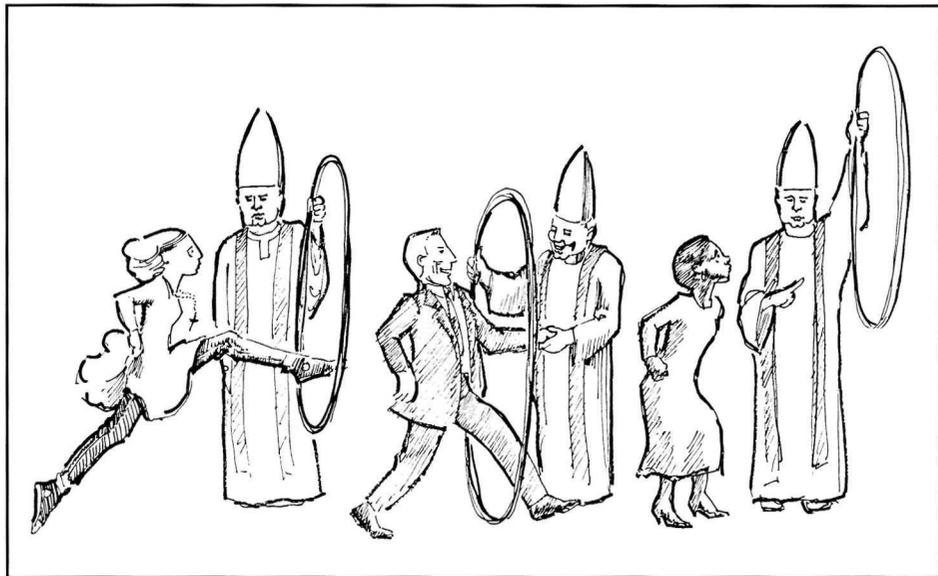
But there are also those conspicuous—and all too frequent — instances where the institutional bias in favor of young, married, "normal" white males stops someone else from being ordained. This is so much a problem that last year's General Convention directed the Church's own Council for the Development of Ministry to help eliminate "stereotypical biases" in both the ordination screening process and deployment throughout the Church—biases involving gender, class, ethnicity, culture and disabilities.

up in the unwillingness of the [members of the] standing committee to be direct in asking the questions on their minds," she recalled of her own ordination process.

"People make assumptions: 'This person is blind, therefore she can't do what we want someone to be able to do.'"

Ramnerain wasn't rejected for ordination, partly because she anticipated the biases and met them head-on, something she urges others from marginalized groups to do if they want to work toward breaking down the stereotypes that handicap them throughout the Church.

"You know, [marginalized] people are



credit: Tana Moore

## Barriers to ordination

by Julie A. Wortman

"I don't think we should let everyone pass [through to postulancy]," says Barbara Ramnerain, a deacon in the Diocese of Minnesota who also sits on the diocese's commission on ministry. "We should just apply the same rules to everyone."

Being blind, Ramnerain has long experienced biased stereotyping not only in society, but also in the Church. "It showed

tired of it— they're tired of the assumptions people have."

But applying the same rules to everyone is more difficult than it looks, as most everyone involved in screening applicants for ordination agrees. Strongly influenced by the attitudes and concerns of their bishops, each diocesan commission on ministry responds to people who

present themselves with a call to ordained ministry differently.

Some commissions gear their screening to deployment, looking for the specific gifts needed for cures in their diocese or limiting the numbers accepted. The late Bishop of Tennessee, George Reynolds, for example, reportedly made a practice of accepting only one postulant a year because that was the rate at which he thought he could support their seminary education and find them jobs. Other commissions discount deployment, believing that whether a person can actually find a cure is less important than affirming a valid call.

Evidence of emotional problems or incompatible ideological stands can also be key considerations — prospective applicants in conservative dioceses frequently migrate to liberal dioceses and, according to ESA spokesperson Brien Koehler, negative responses to theological conservatism have sent some aspirants to Fort Worth.

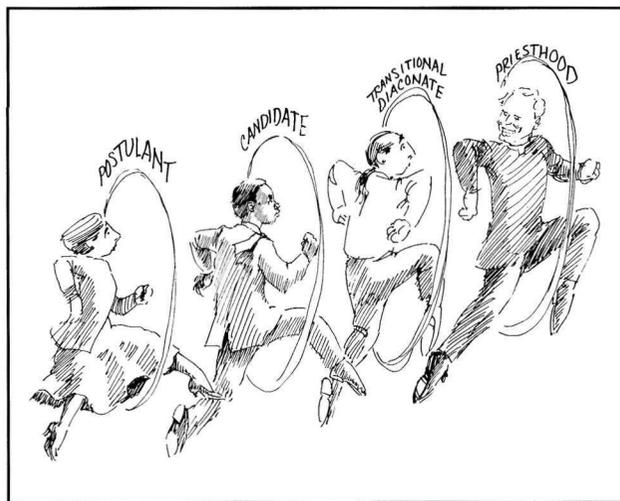
There are dioceses, like Newark, that do not even consider applicants who feel called to the vocational diaconate, and others, like Eau Claire, who will not consider women applicants unless the vocational diaconate is what they're after.

But despite the problems an applicant might face because of diocesan idiosyncracies and common stereotypical biases, the intense personal scrutiny the process can entail has for many applicants proven an unexpected and sometimes uncomfortable invasion of privacy.

Sarah Bailey, a 49-year-old from the Diocese of Southern Ohio, was told to wait before pursuing postulancy when it came out that an incident of sexual abuse from her childhood was beginning to trouble her.

"They advised that I get counseling,

even though I didn't want to postpone postulancy," Bailey said, recalling that painful period. She no longer regrets that advice or the postponement — she continued her theological studies at a nearby



credit: Tana Moore

United Methodist seminary in preparation for a final year at an Episcopal seminary — but for other applicants, the decision to divulge certain aspects of their personal history has had a negative effect.

Minnesota's Ramnerain tells of a congregational committee that decided an applicant was too emotionally scarred to continue with the process, evidence from psychiatrists to the contrary.

"She had chosen to tell them she had been a victim of incest," Ramnerain recalls. "They didn't need to know that."

Unsettled issues may need to be resolved, Ramnerain agrees, but Minnesota's commission, under the leadership of sexual exploitation expert Sue Moss, has tried to help applicants understand that there are boundaries, even in the screening process — some commission members even serve as applicant advocates to help aspirants determine where those boundaries are.

"You don't have to spill your guts," Ramnerain says.

Still, it is hard to know what is too much guts-spilling and what is too little. From the vantage of his position as provost of Austin's Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest, Bill Bennett notes that while it may be possible to know everyone pretty well in a small seminary community, that does not necessarily mean that faculty and administrators would be able to pick up on problems that could blossom into disastrous misconduct once a postulant is ordained.

"There are subtle pressures not to drop out or not to reconsider the ordination goal," Bennett says. "The pressure to get through the process keeps folks from admitting to problems."

For too many, it is too often a question of all or nothing.

"When a person experiences a sense of vocation to Church leadership, ordination usually seems to be the only suitable mode of actualizing the call ... those whose vocation to ordination is not ratified by the commission's discernment feel themselves devalued and rejected," the Board for Theological Education told the General Convention last year.

That observation has been leading people like Lucinda Laird, a priest serving on Newark's ministry commission, to ask an important question.

"When we talk about this as a 'discernment' process, do we really mean that?" Laird wonders as Newark's commission wrestles with a major revamping of its approach to screening.

"If we do, there has to be more education about vocations, both lay and ordained," Laird adds.

That would be a blow against clericalism, for sure. But would it help the Church see that some white, middle-aged divorced women — and those in other marginalized groups — might really have a vocation to be ordained? **TW**

## Native Women's History

Those who control the land, control history and control reality. Since it was primarily women who were the keepers of knowledge, the people who carried the stories, who carried 10,000 years of history, they were targeted by the colonizers in a unique way. Women and women's authority had to be challenged in order to bring Native peoples "under control." Thus young boys were kidnapped and sent to England where they were socialized in another way.

Native cultures offer a radical concept related to women. In the gathering of women, all were involved to the extent possible and decisions were made by consensus. Decisions were made in the light of seven generations ahead. The question was always asked: What will this do to the generations to come? As women, we have a special connection to the spiritual, especially to the Creator. It is why we are able to see ahead.

Native women are trying hard to combat sexism by reclaiming our authentic traditions. It shows the effectiveness of colonization when traditions have been altered to make invisible women's significance in tribal life. We are in the process of reclaiming "dangerous memories." What we have come to understand is that sexism is not traditional; domestic violence is not traditional.

**Justine Smith of WARN  
(Women of All Red Nations)  
NARW Probe, March 1992**

## Religious Addiction

Symptoms of religious addiction include: the inability to think, doubt, or question information or authority; placing your beliefs, finances, relationship and destiny in the hands of a clergy person; and thinking that it is a sign of faith to not think, doubt or question...to obediently become a slave to the opinions, wishes and interpretations of those representing the church.

Another symptom is black and white, simplistic thinking. Seeing life in terms of

right or wrong, good or bad, saved or sinner — never seeing the gray areas. Real life is seldom black-and-white, and the inability to cope with gray areas leaves a person feeling out of control, leaving them forever at the mercy of those who will give the black-and-white answers. These people limit and stunt their lives by rejecting anyone or anything that does not fit into their narrow frame of reference, and they become abusive of others who do not share their views. Difference, variety and change all fall into the ambiguous gray areas.

**Michael Blankenship in an  
article on Leo Booth, author of  
*When God Becomes a Drug*,  
from *Second Stone*, 3-4/92**

## Black Activist Faces Execution

The case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been on Pennsylvania's Death Row since 1982 and has now exhausted all procedural appeals, "symbolizes both the racist nature of the death penalty and the State's attempt to silence Black political activists by any means," Paul Magno writes.

Abu-Jamal was arrested in 1981 after intervening to stop a policeman from beating his brother, who had been stopped for a traffic violation. The policeman was shot and killed. Although witnesses described the gunman as a short, heavyset man with an Afro, and Abu-Jamal was 6'1", 170 lbs. and wore dreadlocks, he was charged with capital murder.

"It soon became apparent that the prosecution of Jamal was being pursued for political reasons," Magno writes. "Abu-Jamal had become a member of the Black Panther Party at age 16." Later "he emerged as a widely known and respected journalist committed to reporting on racism and oppression in the U.S. *The Philadelphia Tribune* called him the 'Voice of the Voiceless' in 1980, and in the same year he was elected president of the Association of Black Journalists of Philadelphia....He also reported on the state's repression against MOVE, a Black nationalist organization destroyed by the

Philadelphia police....The prosecution...argued for his death solely on the basis of his political history and beliefs, maintaining on that basis that he was 'a potential cop killer all along.'"

Equal Justice U.S.A. in Hyattsville, MD, has a Legal Defense Fund for him, in the hope that he can mount an appeal based upon discrediting the factual basis for the conviction. Contributions can be sent to P.O. Box 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Abu-Jamal can be written at AM-835, Drawer R, Huntingdon SCI, Huntingdon, PA 16652. Also, appeals can be sent to Governor Robert Casey, Main Capitol Building, Rm. 225, Harrisburg, Pa., 17120.  
***The Catholic Worker*, 3-4/92**



— Prepared by Marianne Arbogast

## Stop Nuclear Testing

Nevada Desert Experience, a movement which organizes ongoing prayer and civil disobedience at the Nevada nuclear weapons test site, has released a *Call to the Churches* which asks Churches to call for fasting and prayer, to support those who participate in nonviolent civil resistance, and to urge their congregations to challenge Congress to adopt a test ban. Legislation calling for a one-year moratorium on U.S. testing has been introduced in both the House (HR 3636) and the Senate (S2064).

For more information contact: Nevada Desert Experience, P.O. Box 4487, Las Vegas, Nev., 89127.

## Volunteer Openings

*Invest Yourself*, a catalog listing more than 40,000 volunteer positions in non-profit, non-governmental organizations, is available from The Commission on Voluntary Service and Action, P.O. Box 117, New York, N.Y.

**Q: What was your own experience of ordination?**

A: "There was something about that ordination to the diaconate that I will never forget," Barbara Harris said recently. "God was placing my feet on a path over which, from then on, I did not have full control. It wasn't like being on a career path.

"At the moment of ordination, I felt quite humble but I felt the rightness of it. God was moving me to a place in which I could do some things that needed to be done out of that serving office of deacon. Your first ordination is so awe-inspiring. Although I don't mean to sound casual about ordination to the priesthood or consecration to the episcopate."

**Q: When and how did you decide to pursue ordination?**

A: "It was some time after the Philadelphia ordination and I was not convinced fully that this was what I was called to do. I wrestled with it for a long time, all that time trying to test this with Paul Washington. I think initially Paul was not convinced either. We went back and forth on this for a year or more.

"Finally one evening we had a marathon conversation. It began at 7:15 in the evening and at ten minutes past 3 we stood up to pray together in my den. In this conversation I think we explored every possible area of strengths and weaknesses, vocation, call rightness...

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**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Interviewee **Barbara Harris** is suffragan bishop of Massachusetts and former executive director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

When we finished praying Paul said to me, 'When shall we go to the bishop?'

"I did the first alternative program of study in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. I was advised not to go to seminary. It wasn't that I wasn't ready for seminary, but that seminary wasn't ready for me. And the Diocese of Pennsylvania was anxious to test an alternative program of study."

Harris continued her work with Sun Oil, where she was in charge of public relations. She took classes when she could

and participated in independent studies. At the end she took her exams at the Episcopal Divinity School, enjoying, for the first time, access to libraries and faculty.

*I'm learning a self-discipline that I have not had to exercise heretofore. [As bishop] You begin to choose your words very carefully.*

**Q: What's the appropriate role of a priest?**

A: "I see the priest as an instrument to be used by God as an expression of God's love — as teacher, as proclaimer and by proclamation, not only by word, but living out the proclamation. A vessel from which God's unconditional love is poured out."

**Q: How can the role be abused or confused?**

A: "I think it's misunderstood when people feel that we have the right to determine whom God can use as instrument and therefore try to set boundaries and be the gatekeepers of who shall serve in this role and who shall not."

**Q: Is it ever appropriate to refuse candidates for ordination?**

A: "I think we all have to test our vocations. I don't think people ought to go into ministry as an escape from painful



Barbara Harris

# Learning self-discipline interview with Barbara Harris

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

situations, which a lot of people do — as in other helping professions many come from backgrounds of abuse and dysfunctional family situations. I think people have to be very careful about that.

"But I don't think we can try to proscribe or limit the operation of the Holy Spirit by determining whom God can call.

"I think there are ways to help people discern whether they are called. In that discernment there needs to be an openness so that we don't see ministry as if all priests come out of the same cookie cutter mold. I think we have to recognize that



credit: Wendy Maeda, *The Boston Globe*

# Discipline: an Barbara Harris

Paul's references to diversity of gifts is not to be taken lightly.

"In recent years the ordination process in many places has been designed to screen people out. In some instances this has been dictated more by economics — by what has often been referred to as a clergy glut and a concern as to whether or not there is a job for that person at the end of the process.

"That's a wrong attitude as far as I'm concerned. I don't think you can have too many people doing ministry. Not all have to be ordained, but where there is a valid call, there does not have to be the promise

of a position.

"I spoke to a group at seminary many years ago. The class was primarily women. I said that a lot of women were going to have to carve out their own ministry. I think this is now true of men as well. They need to find ways of supporting themselves as they do creative ministries that need to be exercised; these probably would not be parish ministries.

"There are so many people to minister to who will never come within the orbit of the parish. Even where parishes are involved in outreach there are people who would never be touched."

**Q: Is there a political aspect to serving as a priest?**

A: "If a priest is going to be true to the proclamation of the Gospel, the politics of the culture cannot be avoided. We cannot divorce ourselves from the world around us. The Church must be in the world and to be in the world requires that we address the same kinds of issues that Jesus addressed. These have to do with justice, with peace, with oppression, with equity, with inclusiveness, all of which are related to the politics of the culture.

"If you are prophetic, you are being pastoral in the best sense of that word."

**Q: How do you find the role of bishop?**

A: "Little in one's previous ministry truly prepares you for being a bishop. I don't think you can study to be a bishop. There is the opportunity to use your pastoral gifts, teaching gifts, preaching gifts, to stand as a unifying presence. I don't mean a unifying presence in trying to placate all sides of opinion. I think to exercise that role faithfully means to be a maker of consensus."

*I guess if I've discovered a new gift, it is to be in dialogue with people with whom I drastically disagree.*

**Q: How does it feel to attempt to be a symbol of unity?**

A: "Oh it's scary," Harris said, laughing. "I doubt if anybody who is honest would say they don't have some apprehension and anxiety about that. I'm a little wary of those who feel that they have cornered the market on revealed truth and righteousness."

**Q: Is that a feeling to which bishops are particularly susceptible?**

A: "I think some are. Fortunately more are not.

"It's an awesome responsibility. People tend to look to bishops for answers. I think we have to be honest enough to say that we don't have all the answers, but

there are ways that we can explore things together and try to arrive at answers.

"But where issues are clear, issues of justice for example, then I think it is incumbent upon a bishop to exercise authority in lifting those up and using the office as a teaching role.

"There are other demands of the office that do not allow for all of the kinds of involvement that you could engage in in another role. When I was at ECPC (the Episcopal Church Publishing Company) I had more freedom of movement in terms of time and schedule to be on the front line. I had a forum in *The Witness* to say some things. Now I don't have that particular forum."

**Q: I don't know you well but my sense from reading the column you wrote for *The Witness* [1984 – 1988] is that part of what you were striving to do was to clear away distractions and confusions so that readers could not possibly miss the justice issues that you were raising.**

**You were honing the point so that it could not be ignored. It seems to me that trying to move people to consensus must draw on very different skills.**

A: "I think that's a fair assessment. It's different and at times I guess it's somewhat constricting, particularly if you're a suffragan bishop. There is an authority inherent in the role of diocesan bishop that is not present to the same degree.

"But I'm not so much constricted by being a suffragan bishop as I am constricted by serving a different constituency [ECPC vs. the Diocese of Mass.] People have to be met where they are."

**Q: You have made this change and yet it doesn't sound as though anyone said,**

**"You must not be political..."**

A: "That's never been said. It's something you discover as you move into the role. I'm learning a self-discipline that I have not had to exercise heretofore. You cannot always respond to situations as you would like to. You can't always say what you would like to say. I have some corking good responses, but they are in my journal.

"You choose your words carefully because you want to be understood and many are quick to misunderstand."

**Q: Any surprises or gifts in the role of bishop?**

A: "I guess perhaps I did not anticipate the openness of older people — people

who have seen a lot of life and know who they are. I think people tend to think of older people as set in their ways, but in many instances I find them much more flexible than people in my own age group who are still searching for their identities and wrestling with so many insecurities. The latter group are frequently those who want to shut people out.

"I guess if I've discovered a new gift, it is to be in dialogue with people with whom I drastically disagree. Some years ago that was not really possible for me because I was convicted of the rightness of the cause I was pursuing. It's a gift that has developed over time," Harris said laughing. "I count it as a gift because it wasn't something I set out to do." **TW**

## *Alternative routes*

Although most of those ordained to the priesthood get their theological education in a three-year Masters of Divinity program at an accredited seminary and are ordained under the "regular" ordination canons, not everyone becomes a priest that way.

### **Education**

A little more than ten percent of those ordained study in a diocesan school or program, read for orders on their own or pursue some other program of study. Such alternative educational programs, in fact, are becoming more and more popular as the Church realizes that seminaries do not always supply the training a priest needs to be effective.

### **The Instituto**

*The Instituto Pastoral Hispano* is one of the most praised alternative programs.

The Instituto originated in the Diocese of Connecticut in 1977, as a program to train lay leaders within a fast-growing Hispanic population, but is now an independent program based at General Theological Seminary in New York. The four-year program offers a holistic ap-

proach to theological education for Spanish-speaking men and women. The students meet one evening a week and Saturdays to explore ways that their experiences are related to theology.

A heavy emphasis is put on their work in the community and in churches. The structure is deliberately designed to accommodate students' work schedules, since it is understood that most of these students are not financially able to suspend their work lives for a three-year seminary hiatus.

Maria Aris-Paul, director of the *Instituto*, runs the program using a Paulo Freire method, where course work is conducted on a discussion model so that everyone can learn from each other. Particular attention is paid to vocational discernment, Aris-Paul says, because students can easily seize on ordination as a substitute for developing a strong, integrated sense of self-esteem.

Graduates of the *Instituto* are now exploring new "shared-ministry" models in New York — the priests at about half the Hispanic parishes are working together in yoked ministries. At their urging, the Hispanic Commission of the Diocese of New York has been reconstituted by Bishop Richard Grein. The Hispanic pastors proposed that the commission be composed of

lay delegates from every Hispanic parish and a few elected clergy representatives.

### **Local ordination**

The Church first legislated a way to ordain "local" priests and deacons to minister in particular communities and congregations in 1970. Canon 9 has been used more and more in recent years, particularly where congregations are in isolated areas or where the members are distinct with respect to ethnic composition, language, or culture and where no *regular* priest is available, such as on Indian reservations, in rural areas and in places with dense concentrations of immigrant people.

The focus is on raising up persons from within the worshipping community to minister there, among friends and neighbors — something many Church observers feel should happen more routinely anyway. Provisions are made for alternative forms of education and evaluation, with a strong emphasis on continuing supervision and education. Persons ordained under the canon are not mercenaries, free to apply for positions throughout the Church. Their ministry is confined to the community and congregation to which they have been ordained.

## Pushing for a real peace dividend

Joining more than 20 religious orders and denominations in filing a resolution at the annual shareholders' meeting of General Electric (GE), the Episcopal Church has asked for that company's "orderly withdrawal from the nuclear weapons business."

Although this is the first time the Church has protested GE's defense contracts — it has 40,500 shares of GE stock in its portfolio — a similar resolution has been filed with Westinghouse for three successive years.

In a letter to General Electric chairman John F. Welch, Jr., the Church's treasurer, Ellen F. Cooke, wrote that the Church "has long been concerned with the moral and ethical implications of its investments and with the social responsibility of the corporation in which it holds investments."

If the government were spending less money on arms there might be more for U.S. cities which, by anyone's standard, are in big financial trouble due to federal spending cuts that affect provision of decent housing, health care, education, job training and other critical public services. Recognizing this, the Episcopal Church and the Episcopal Peace Fellowship are endorsing this month's Save Our Cities! Save Our Children! march on Washington.

Among other things, Save Our Cities! march participants are calling for "elimination of the walls between domestic and military spending" and "a program for planned economic conversion that creates jobs in the cities, retrains former military personnel and defense workers and guarantees economic justice, full employment and job security for all Americans."

Our fellow Anglicans in Britain, it should be noted, are equally concerned about their government's continuing focus on arms upgrades. Sixteen Church of England bishops and two bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church are among 100 British Church leaders who have protested Britain's decision to replace its Polaris missiles with Trident missiles.

Said Bishop Stanley Booth-Clibborn of Manchester: "Britain [is] proposing an escalation at a time when we should be trying to ensure a reduction in the number of such weapons,"

## Florence Tim Oi Li, 84

The first woman in the Anglican communion to be ordained a priest, Florence Tim Oi Li, died in Toronto on February 26 at the age of 84.

Born in Hong Kong, Li studied theology in Canton and was ordained a deacon in the Portuguese colony of Macau during the Japanese occupation of China during World War II. Her work with refugees fleeing Hong Kong captured the attention of Bishop R.O. Hall in 1944, who decided to ordain her a priest. Hall was censured for performing the ordination and Li was told not to function as a priest, but she did not resign her orders.

Archbishops of Canterbury Temple and Fisher refused to recognize her orders and so did the Lambeth Conference of 1948. But 40 years later, in a special service at Westminster Abbey, she was hailed by Archbishop Robert Runcie for her "selfless ministry."

During the Cultural Revolution in China Li worked on a chicken farm. She participated in the renewal of the Church in China when the revolution collapsed, ministering to a congregation of about 1,000 in Guangzhou. She joined members of her family in Canada when she retired.

"History will judge that her ministry, her humility and courage, played a major part in the acceptance of the ordination of women to the priesthood as part of the Anglican tradition," Runcie said in a message read at her funeral. (See photo on page 18.)

## Inciting riot?

It isn't really news that Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning and his executive staff at the National Church's headquarters in New York are scratching their heads these days over how to reallocate

program budgets in light of this year's shortfall in diocesan apportionment income. It's a tough job -- new initiatives established by last year's General Convention must be weighed against ongoing programs and commitments to local groups and organizations. The final decisions will be made by the Executive Council at its June meeting in Albuquerque, N.M.

In a March 20 work-in-progress memorandum to all her staff, Diane Porter, the executive of Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries unit, included these remarks about the role of Executive Council-chartered committees and commissions in the reallocation decision-making:

"The committees/commissions are important to the ministry of this office but they are not in the decision stream on this process. The budget will be the budget of the Presiding Bishop that has been informed by the work of the Senior Executives and Unit Executives. Any committee/commission chair person that would like to have a discussion about the reallocated money should be forwarded to me. The Presiding Bishop, Barry [Menuetz] and I will meet or talk with any chairperson that has concerns. Let me warn you that using the committees/commissions as a pressure group or inciting the group to riot over the recast budget, will be considered grounds for termination."

Advocacy, Witness and Justice Ministries includes the various ethnic-focused ministries, the Coalition for Human Needs, Jubilee Ministries, AIDS ministries, rural and small town ministries, anti-racism and environmental programs and Episcopal Church efforts to influence public policy.

— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman



Vital Signs

# Toward a multi-cultural priesthood

by Julie A. Wortman

**T**hree years ago, Rafaela Moquete, a native of the Dominican Republic who was born a Roman Catholic but confirmed in the Dominican Episcopal Church, approached the Diocese of New York with her desire to be ordained a priest in the U.S. Episcopal Church.

She had studied theology at New York City's *Instituto Pastoral Hispano*, been a lay preacher, worked with Hispanic prisoners, received clinical pastoral education at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital and was now into her third year of working at St. Mary's, N.Y.

"My life experience with the community [at St. Mary's] has been revealing and alarming for me," she wrote. "I have seen the pain of my people and have identified myself with that pain. I have felt more and more the necessity to do ministry for and with Hispanic people because I have seen my people in exile with the need for guidance from priests who understand their culture, language, idiosyncracies. Priests who can celebrate the eucharist, do baptisms, marriages, pronounce absolution — who understand the [ordained] ministry as a real and serious commitment to God and to them."

In December, 1991, Moquete became the first Dominican woman to be ordained to the priesthood by the U.S. Church. She is now priest-in-charge of the Hispanic congregation at St. Mary's

and the associate priest at San Martin de Porres Episcopal Mission.

Her ordination, unlike so many ordinations of those with strong ethnic identification, is recognized throughout the



Florence Tim Oi Li, the first ordained woman in the Anglican Communion, with Barbara Harris, the first woman bishop.

credit: Mark Ellidge/The London Times, 1988.

Church; she is not leashed to a specific geography by a "local" or Canon 9 ordination. But today's Anglo church leaders, not to mention the predominantly Anglo membership they serve, are unlikely to call Moquete beyond the confines of Hispanic ministry. If Moquete's experience is similar to the Asian- and African-American priests who have preceded her, her ministry will in all likelihood be relegated to an ethnic-specific congregation, whether she chooses this or not.

"It is easier for a black to be elected bishop than it is to get elected a rector of an all-white congregation or a deputy to General Convention," says Nan Arrington Peete, Atlanta's canon to the ordinary

and diocesan deployment officer.

"Search committees will even write that they want a 'caucasian male, married' or a 'young, caucasian male, married,'" Peete said. "If I suggest a black candidate for a job with a white congregation, I'm told: 'They wouldn't want to come here.' But that is not what they are really saying. There is a mindset that black folk can't lead white folk."

"The Church runs a two-tiered track system," points out Episcopal priest Reginald Blaxton, a Washington, D.C., marketing consultant who is also the assistant at St. George's Episcopal Church.

"Until the day of graduation, black [and other non-Anglo] candidates are treated the same as whites. But after ordination that changes. The opportunities for employment available to my white classmates [at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass.] were unavailable to me."

Blaxton believes that part of the reason he was finally ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Chicago was to fill a position in a black, inner-city parish.

"There is very little racial integration of parish ministry in the Episcopal Church," said Blaxton. Recruitment of blacks would be ethical, he argues, only if "matched by a serious effort to desegregate congregations."

Perhaps because deployment of non-Anglo priests is so difficult, there is a diminishing number of non-Anglo priests seeking ordination. According to the Church's Board for Theological Education, only 41 of the 597 students enrolled in the Church's 11 Episcopal seminaries in 1990 were black; 12 were of Asian heritage, eight were Hispanic and seven were Native American.

Henry Atkins, co-chair of the Executive Council's Commission on Racism

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

and president of the *Instituto Hispano Pastoral's* board, favors recruitment of ethnically-identified candidates, but is concerned that diocesan commissions on ministry are ill-prepared to evaluate non-Anglo applicants.

"I'm shocked by how commissions on ministry don't know how to make decisions about Hispanics who come before them," Atkins said. "If the person doesn't speak English very well, everything breaks down."

The Board for Theological Education asked General Convention to urge dioceses "to provide their commissions on ministry with continuing training in awareness of the important cultural differences among ethnic communities in the Church from which prospective postulants may come, with the objective of removing stereotypical biases from the screening process," a resolution which the legislative body passed. Similar training and consulting resources are to be provided "concerning ways to avoid perpetuating sexist stereotyping."

The board's recruitment and selection committee also told last year's General Convention that the emphasis on screening people who present themselves for ordination should be dropped in favor of a focus on leadership recruitment.

Yet the Diocese of Atlanta is having a hard time raising funds for a Canterbury Center to house an Episcopal campus ministry at the University of Atlanta and other established campus ministries are struggling to make ends meet.

"[Atlanta's] campus has the highest concentration of black college students in the country and is the home of the Interdenominational Theological Center, the largest black theological consortium in the world," Peete emphasizes.

"If we're serious about recruiting blacks, we've got to put money into it. This [campus ministry] is a viable way to recruit younger black men and women.

But we can't get support, even though this would be for the whole Church."

The Church Deployment Board points out that its bishops are partly to blame for the limited range of church employment opportunities non-Anglos see.

"We recommend that all bishops be actively and effectively involved in the search process," a 1990 deployment board study said. "This includes the responsibility to nominate clergy for positions in addition to those names received from other sources."

*"I have felt the necessity to do ministry for and with Hispanic people because I have seen my people in exile." — Rafaela Maquete*

Washington's Blaxton, who chose non-parochial work because of the narrow range of positions available to black priests, says: "Bishops could use their influence if they wanted to, but there must be a change in attitude."

Not only could bishops be more involved in recruitment and deployment, they could also push seminaries to broaden their curricula so that new clergy get more exposure to theology examined through multi- or cross-cultural lenses.

"Our primary consumers are bishops," says Bill Bennett, provost of Austin's Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, which has a nascent Hispanic ministries program that seminary administrators hope will spark a stronger cross-cultural emphasis throughout the school's curriculum. Bishops' desire for a strong "core" curriculum in the preparatory coursework required by Church canon, however, limits opportunities for broadening the curriculum, Bennett and other seminary administrators say.

Of course, bishops and diocesan advisors can require that their prospective clergy get the training they want them to

have, if not in seminary, in home-grown programs before and after graduation.

In Central Florida, Bishop John Howe has directed the diocese's commission on ministry to explore ways of strengthening candidates' expertise in evangelism and "church planting."

Similarly, bishops *could* require a multi- or cross-cultural literacy for their candidates.

Evaluating a candidate's readiness for ordained ministry is a diocesan matter, despite the great emphasis given to candidates' performance on the standardized General Ordination Examinations (GOEs). In Connecticut and San Joaquin, candidates are not required to take GOEs. They take diocesan-formulated exams. In some dioceses, GOEs are only used as a diagnostic exam, a guide for areas where a student needs more work.

In the end, if Church leaders are committed to affirming a multicultural clergy for a multicultural Church, they have the means of moving the Church in that direction through more aggressive approaches to recruitment, education and deployment. The only remaining question, Peete and others say, is how Church leaders understand Church unity, that ineffable something bishops vow to uphold.

"Is it that we've got an English heritage and can sing an Anglican chant? Or is what holds us together our belief in the Incarnation and the Resurrection?" Peete asks. "Affirming our multiculturalism means acknowledging the gifts that everyone brings from his or her tradition."

When Rafaela Moquete wrote her statement of "call" for New York's Diocesan Commission on Ministry, she wrote, "Having an Anglo priest has been important for me to understand about the Church from his perspective."

The inverse of Moquete's logic should be clear to a Church intent on ending racism by the year 2,000. **TW**



مَدِينَةُ مَجْدَلَا

Mary Magdalene

credit Robert Lentz

*To ordain: to invest with ministerial authority; to minister: to serve as an agent for another; to attend to the wants and needs of others.*

**W**hen many of us think of ordained ministers, it is Episcopal priests, Baptist preachers or Jewish rabbis that come most easily to mind; if we stretch beyond the boundaries of Western religions, we might also imagine Buddhist monks, Islamic imams, or the shamans of tribal cultures. Within Christianity, it is the laying on of hands by a bishop or an elder that officially effects ordination. In its larger sense, however — that of being recognized as one who will act with authority on behalf of others — “ordination” to a ministry happens through the recognition and acceptance of the people being served. The Holy Spirit’s action of investment will not be limited solely to where the institutional Church would direct it.

Robert Lentz is a contemporary icon painter who understands ordination in this larger sense, and celebrates it through the ancient forms of his art. He depicts a wide range of those who have been faithful to their ministerial vocations: from Jesus himself to Mary Magdalene to St. Francis of Assisi to Martin Luther King, Jr. He has also created icons of the 20th-century union organizer Mother Jones and gay activist politician Harvey Milk.

In an article written for *Festivals* magazine, Lentz quotes Cardinal Juan Fresno of Chile as having said, “Whoever stands up for human rights stands up for the rights of God.” He goes on to defend that the people he portrays — in their identification with the least of their brothers and sisters, and regardless of their particular religious consciousness— have indeed achieved a measure of holiness worthy of the icon tradition. “Icons are images of God’s kingdom, and God’s

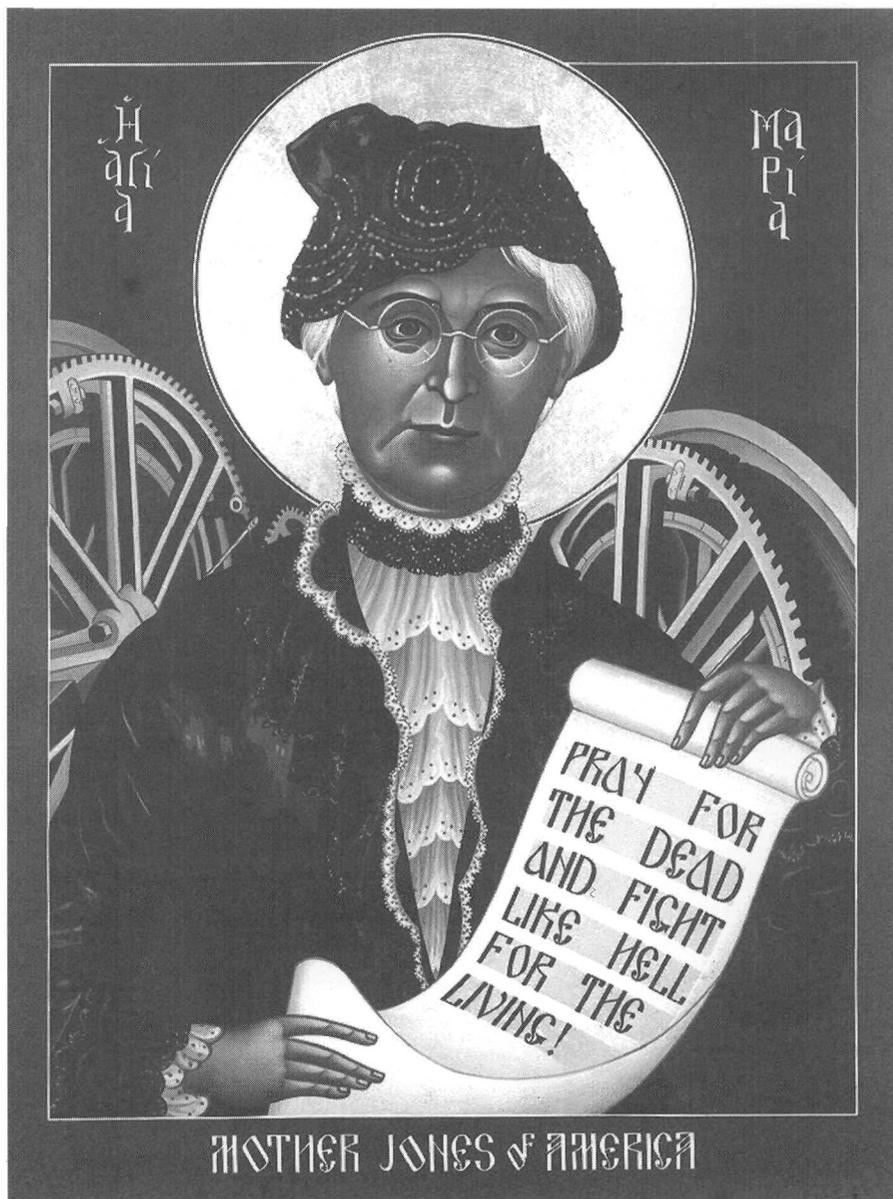
## Ordained by community

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

kingdom is larger than the Church,” Lentz also wrote in *Festival*. “The icon is the best way I have found to tie the transcendent and the immanent together — and tied together they must be.”

Lentz has received complaints about some of his icons, especially from Roman Catholic clergy, but, as he points out, he grew up in the Byzantine tradition where icons are the creations of the laity, not the clerical hierarchy. In fact, Lentz states that Eastern bishops often take popular icon paintings into consideration during the canonization process, as evidence that the people already regard the depicted person as an example of faith. “Canonization is simply an official recognition of God’s work among the people,” Lentz observes.

Besides King, Jones and Milk, Lentz has painted likenesses of Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, Stephen Biko, Thomas Merton and Pope John XXIII, who many consider to be modern-day saints. He has also set about revamping the images of traditional saints, a number of whom worked without the benefit of official ordination, such as Mary Magdalene. Eastern Christian tradition holds that, after the Ascension of Jesus, Mary (who was not a prostitute but a woman of considerable wealth) travelled around the Mediterranean preaching the good news, not necessarily with any mandate other than her own faith. Lentz paints her pointing to an egg, an Eastern symbol of the Resurrection. (Notably, this icon was commissioned for Grace Cathedral in San Francisco to commemorate the election of Barbara Harris as the first woman bishop in the Anglican Church.) Lentz has also given traditional subjects unconventional (but scripturally faithful) twists that reinforce God’s identity with the full spectrum of humanity. He has portrayed Christ as an Apache Indian and as a Masai warrior. He has shown Mary the Mother of Jesus as a Navajo cradling a laughing



**Mother Jones**

credit Robert Lentz

child, as a Salvadoran woman mourning her Son’s death at the hands of a death squad, and as a pregnant Jewish girl pinned with a gold star and standing before the barbed wire of a Nazi concentration camp.

More information about Robert Lentz, and a catalog of his icons, may be obtained from Bridge Building Images, P.O. Box 1048, Burlington, Vermont 05402. **TW**



# A God of truth or prejudice?

by Richard Kerr

**I** am an openly gay priest of the Church. I share my experience because not to do so is to make common cause with forces which threaten to completely undo the Church's mission.

It was in junior high school that my interest in the Church blossomed. I found in the Church loving people and a place where loving relationships seemed to be the norm. It was a wonderfully different atmosphere from football, whose only goal, to my mind, was to teach us how to endure or inflict pain upon other boys for the amusement of onlookers.

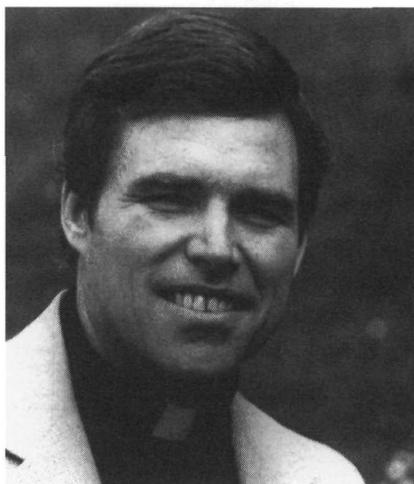
At the same time I was finding out that what I wanted to do in secret with other boys was not only "nasty" but also dangerous, because such boys were beat up by other boys. When the Church referred to this issue in the most oblique terms, its advice was "don't do it," because God hates it.

Despite my discomfort in dating girls, I found one girl whose company was more pleasant than any others and we talked about marriage.

In college I read everything I could find about homosexuality. The agreed teaching seemed to be that homosexuality was a way station on the journey from childhood to adulthood. Adults who failed the transformation to heterosexuality were cursed by God and became child molesters. The picture was so horrific that it convinced me beyond reasonable doubt that I was not homosexual.

**Richard Kerr** is director of Project Open Hand, an organization that delivers more than 2,000 hot meals a day to people living with AIDS who are homebound. He lives in San Francisco.

When I had a single homosexual contact as a college junior, I was so traumatized by my enjoyment of the experience that I was married within six weeks. At



Richard Kerr

age 20, I had embarked on the Church's prescribed path toward holy sexuality. My feelings remained entirely unchanged.

As I came into the formal ordination process, I was terrified that the homosexual kernel of my being would be discovered during my psychological examination. But I did not lie when asked any question about myself, and I was duly certified for ordination.

I served parishes in Montana and suburban Colorado in the early part of my ministry, continuously pressed by my feelings toward men, but never acting on them. Finally, while serving as rector of a parish in Denver, and as Secretary of

the Executive Council of the diocese, I could no longer internalize the contradictions. I divorced my wife, even then not able to say that the divorce happened because I was gay, although my wife knew. Soon, however, I knew that I was gay. That occurred while I served on a task force on human sexuality for the Diocese of Colorado. Since no openly gay people were appointed to the task force, it was only my closeted, deeply confused and terrified sexuality which I brought to the deliberations.

There was never any intent that meaningful discussion about the issue occur, in Colorado, at least. General Convention after General Convention has mandated the Church to study sexuality, but the penalty for honesty among clergy — loss of employment — entirely prevents the Church from developing anything approximating the truth about human sexuality.

Of much more meaning were the discussions which occurred between myself and a gay priest and his lover, both of whom had been treated abysmally by the Church because they were known to be gay. After meeting these men, the closet seemed a coward's paradise. I knew without doubt that if I were to "come out" that

*The battle over acceptance of lesbian and gay people really is a battle about the nature of God.*

I would become unemployable in the Church. Employment, however, built on dishonesty was more than I could stomach.

My parish was in a very poor section of the City of Denver, and its members were primarily African-Americans. I was just completing almost ten years as rector. During that time the church buildings literally fell down around us. I had led an effort which raised half a million dollars, supervised an enormous construction project, developed a dynamic parish life

and helped lead the project to desegregate the Denver Public School System. I am certain that exhaustion contributed to my decision to resign *before* coming out. I was assisted in this decision by a young black associate who insisted that the black community had crucial objectives which did not include homosexuality, and in my isolation and confusion I accepted his judgment.

I also believe that I already had been infected with the AIDS virus, and that the weakness it caused contributed to my inability to see the truth: that homosexuality knows no racial, ethnic or national boundaries, but is a simple fact-from-the-womb of all human societies.

I resigned in mid-1979, a few months before the Denver General Convention.

During Convention, Presiding Bishop John Allin agreed to dedicate the renewed parish buildings. I was invited to concelebrate the mass with him and to say a few words. I listed the many groups which had need of the shelter the Community Wing could provide and the support the Church pledged itself to give. I concluded my remarks saying, "and the gay community, of which I am a part, needs your loving support and help."

To my astonishment everyone broke into applause, and I felt each of the 600 people present tried to touch me during the kiss of peace, offering support.

Yet within a week, Bishop William Frey called me to his office and complained that I had not revealed to him that I was gay, and said I would not serve the Church in Colorado.

Although I am still a priest in good standing and on cordial terms with Bishop William Swing, as an openly gay priest, I have been unable to secure a Church job.

What my life has taught me, however, is that regret is worthless. Instead, it is now time to face the Church with the consequences of its failure to understand human sexuality, and, particularly, to

honor homosexual persons.

Because I paid attention to the Church's teachings, I believe that I deeply injured a woman whom I married in good faith. I believe that the Church's failure to listen to its gay people, and to encourage them to openly and honestly share their experience, has deprived the Church of a vast body of extremely talented priests. Those who are in the closet still serving the Church lead lives of quiet desperation. Their best gifts are perverted by the en-

ergy they have to exert hiding.

Living the lie, the Church deprives itself of creative energies which it can ill afford to lose.

The battle over acceptance of lesbian and gay people really is a battle about the nature of God. Do we worship the Living God who has created us gay and straight, black and white, male and female, or do we worship the God who is nothing more than a symbol created out of prejudice?

## Bishops' Court Convicts Jim Ferry

On Friday, March 20, the Bishop's Court in Toronto convicted James Ferry on two of the five charges brought against him by Bishop Terence Finlay: "wrongdoing by refusing to refrain from continuing a homosexual relationship contrary to the Bishop's instructions" and "contumacy and disrespectful conduct." Ferry was acquitted of canonical disobedience, dishonorable and disorderly conduct, and conduct unbecoming a member of the clergy.

Following the Court's sentencing recommendations, Finlay suspended Ferry's license, prohibiting him from exercising his priestly ministry, but retained him on the clergy list of the diocese. He said he would consider the Court's further recommendation that he release Ferry to serve in a different diocese if another bishop requested him.

"I wouldn't be surprised if there was an American bishop" who would make that offer, Finlay said at a press conference following the trial.

Observers have interpreted the Court's recommendation that Ferry be allowed to serve elsewhere as a rejection of Bishop Finlay's argument that he was legally bound by the 1979 House of Bishops' Guidelines requiring gay clergy to be celibate.

"The Court was saying, 'It's up to the individual bishop, Terry, and you could have done otherwise,'" said Integrity/Toronto member Chris Ambidge, who reported on the trial in the *April Witness*.

Michael Peers, primate of the Canadian Church, released a statement expressing "pastoral concern...for both Bishop Finlay and Fr. Jim Ferry." While asserting that "Bishop Finlay has acted fully within his authority...with sensitivity and care," he also praised Ferry's "courage" in enduring a "difficult public ordeal...to raise up the predicament of all gays and lesbians within the Church."

Ferry, who will be paid by the diocese through July, has said he will take time to consider his options before making decisions about his future or about further legal recourse.

"The bishop's action is very painful to me and to many others," he said at a post-trial press conference. But "in spite of it all, I am a person of hope...The Church hierarchy may have abandoned me, but I will not abandon the Church. I will remain, on the margins, as a voice crying out for justice, love, and full inclusion in the life of the Church family."

# CASUALTY CAMPS OF THE GREAT WAR

By William B. Spofford Jr.

Dean, St. Michael's Cathedral, Boise, Idaho

## THE CHURCH NEEDS A CENTER WHERE CLERGY CAN GET HELP FROM PSYCHIATRISTS AND OTHER SPECIALISTS TRAINED IN THE ART OF HEALING.

THE LEAD EDITORIAL in *The Witness* for Theological Education Sunday this year was headlined: "Training Camps for the Great War." It was a shocking and immobilizing thing to see those words, and we thought an inside scoop was in the offing. Only as one read further was the relevance made clear.

The church is, and always will be, at war with the fallen world. As C.S. Lewis has written, each Christian is like a member of the underground in France in World War II or, more appropriately, like a soldier in the O.S.S. who is parachuted into hostile country with the aim of changing that country into a new pattern of community . . .

In all wars, there are casualties. . .

### Training Places

The Editorial was concerned with telling us about the relevance of our seminaries — the training camps for the great war of the church . . .

More often, the battle is one of toughness and attrition, involving persons who won't listen and couldn't care less; involving an institution which conforms to the world and sees buildings as a sign of grace and numbers as a sign of triumph. The Adversary, who has been called by an epistler "a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," is a slippery and clever foe, wearing now the mask of boredom and now the mask of pride, and then the mask of status. He lurks within one as well as around oneself. Each of us is a casualty.

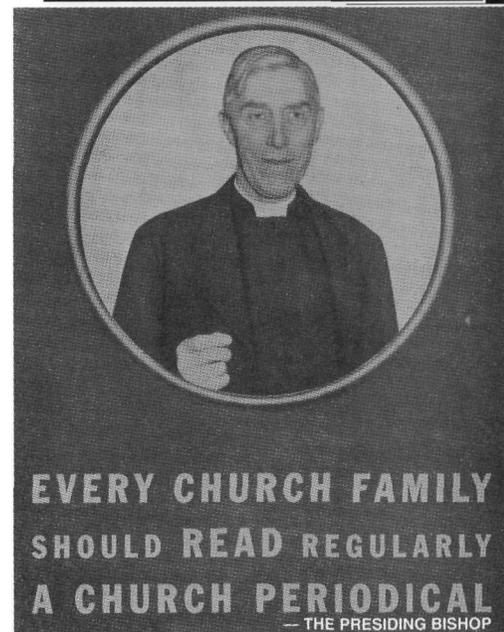
Thank God, most of us seem to have reasonably minor wounds which can be handled by supportive pastoral care on the part of our bishop, or by a good vacation, or an enriching sabbatical, or an occasional conference. But, for some, more is necessary. The wounds are deep. They are manifested in illness. . .

### Therapy Center

Is there some possibility that the church, through its formal agencies — General Convention, the House of Bishops, National Council, seminaries and all diocesan and district organizations — could take this seriously? It would seem, on the surface, that it would be feasible to develop such a center for our casualties — a center which is little known or advertized where the wounded could receive help that they need from psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, doctors, social workers and clergy . . .

Whatever the cost to establish such a treatment program on the part of the church, it is undoubtedly cheaper — and a whale of a lot more Christian — than to loose onto unsuspecting congregations those who have been defeated, even temporarily, by the great war. It is undoubtedly more economic than to have casualties dishonorably discharged, when the dishonor is not exclusively their own but rather that of the body of Christ for which they have given their years, their actions, their faith and their talents.

Celebrating  
— 75 —  
years



January 18, 1940 *Witness* cover.

[ Excerpted from the June 13, 1963 *Witness*. William Spofford, Jr., son of long-time *Witness* editor Bill Spofford, is now the retired bishop of Eastern Oregon, living in Salem, OR.]

# The quest to serve God

by Andrew Foster

**A Dresser of Sycamore Trees: The Finding of a Ministry** by Garret Keizer. Viking Press, New York, New York, 1991.

One of the popular trends in the Church these days is the notion of the Gospel as “story,” which leads both to the abstractions of narrative theology and to an often sentimental preaching style. While listening to edifying personal anecdotes told from the pulpit as gospel illustrations, I often feel that some preachers must be following a seminary-taught maxim: “All theology is autobiographical.” (Sadly, most do not heed the corrective corollary: “Not all autobiography is theological!”) In such a context, the highly personal book *A Dresser of Sycamore Trees: The Finding of a Ministry* by lay minister and high school English teacher, Garret Keizer, blazes as a shining paradox.

The book recounts the story of how the author became the lay vicar of a small Episcopal parish in an old railroad junction town in Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom. The title’s reference to Amos, the prophet who declared himself merely a shepherd, not a formally trained minister of Yahweh, echoes Keizer’s point of view as an observer from the edges of our increasingly urban society. The mystery of this spiritual autobiography, to my mind, is how skillfully the author disappears into the narrative. Somehow, the more personal and poignant the incident, the more Keizer illuminates the other people and circumstances in his story. I

---

Andrew Foster is the Chaplain of Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio.

think it is because he loves his neighbors so much that Keizer is able to subordinate himself while remaining the central character of the book. Here is autobiography without egocentricity.

As one might hope from the pen of a teacher, the writing itself is technically superb. In a series of chapters about religious mentors; the joys of preaching and parish visiting; caring for the church’s steeple clock; encounters with a commune of biblical literalists; a touch of diocesan politics; the feasts and fasts of the Christian year; and memories of a deep friendship; Keizer displays his virtuosity in guiding the flow of a good story. The details are vivid and sensual, often with a delightful contemporary spark. While he writes with genuine piety, there is no shred of conventional religiosity.

Here is a tantalizing morsel from the first page which gives the flavor of Keizer’s eccentric, yet engaging style. The author is returning home at night from a pastoral call, meditating, as we all do these days, in his automotive oratory: *The ionosphere has come down in the night, like St. Peter’s visionary sheetful of clean and unclean animals, and my car radio is a feast of stations. A little more volume, a little more speed — I give thanks for my family, my church, the Supremes. Next week, without fail, I will stop at the farm which it is too late to visit now, but passing by I pray for the family who live there. I pray for their cows and the land. And I tell myself by way of exultation what I now tell my reader by way of warning: it won’t get much better than this.*

The author is wrong. It keeps getting better! The secret of this storyteller goes

deeper than a self-effacing humility or wry self-deprecation. Keizer has somehow tapped into the gift of welcoming his readers into his own mind and then turning our eyes outward onto a community that radiates and reflects our own awkwardness, our own touching kindness, our own deep hunger to love and to be loved. No matter how comical the situation, the joke is never at the expense of his subjects. No matter how tempting it would be to resort to cheap stereotypes, the reader is made to look a while longer, to notice a bit more detail, that puts even the most unsavory characters in a new, redeeming light.



book review

At its heart, *A Dresser of Sycamore Trees* is a book about one Christian vocation. By sharing his own “finding of a ministry,” Garret Keizer models the disarming candor and inclusive compassion which is a requisite of everyone’s quest to serve God. Even though much of this book circles around the churchly concerns of a lay vicar, its chief value is in the way that Keizer’s ministry is woven among the more secular threads of daily life in Island Pond, Vermont. Just as each of us lives both outside and inside the Church, so this book portrays only a part of a total vocation, even as it builds bridges between the mundane and the holy. Should you want to learn more about this winsome high school teacher, another side of his life work is also artfully recounted in his award-winning first book, *No Place But Here*. Do yourself a favor. Discover the writings of Garret Keizer. I think this may be what the Gospel as “story” is all about.

**TW**

"Johnson wouldn't be a slave no more!" I cried. "He died a free man. They's slaves today in Justice county, both white and black. Hit's time to break them chains...."

Doc placed a stack of union cards on the communion plate beside the broken crackers. When the plate reached the back of the church, the cards were gone. The pianist played a rattling version of "Precious Lord Take My Hand." They sang and their shadows danced across the ceiling....

"The Holy Ghost got a holt of us now," [the preacher] said.

"Why now?" I asked. "Why not ten years ago, or ten years from now?"

"Hit's the fullness of time," he said.

I loved that phrase, "the fullness of time." I shivered to whisper it to myself, for I sensed I was living in it, right then. Nothing afterward would be so important, not like what was happening there on Blackberry Creek. We are put on earth for the fullness of time, we spend our days reaching it, and then we pass on.

*Storming Heaven,*  
Denise Giardina, 1987



Denise Giardina

credit: Kristin Layng Szakos

## The fullness of time

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

**T**he mountains of Appalachia raised Denise Giardina and they are home to her once again.

Giardina writes books.

She was also, for a brief time, an Episcopal deacon. Some who know and love her insist that her vocation was thwarted by Church leaders who were appalled by her challenges to companies operating in West Virginia while she served as deacon at Grace, Northfork.

Giardina says it was a mismatch from the start.

"I think ordination was one of the most frightening things that's ever hap-

pened to me. People must feel like that when they're getting married and they realize it's the wrong person."

Giardina grew up in a coal camp. Her father was a coal company bookkeeper. He hung the sign that said whether there was work each day. "People were only working one or two days a week. They had jobs but they were starving to death.

"We shared a lot of things — the dust, the coal trains, the isolation, but my family was better off."

Giardina's mother drove her two children to a company-owned church that was administered by the United Methodists three miles away. The pastor was a coal miner who eventually got Black Lung disease.

Giardina became an Episcopalian af-

ter meeting Jim Lewis [then a rector in Charleston, W.Va., now director of Christian Social Ministries in North Carolina and a contributing editor of *The Witness*]. Three years later, in 1976 Giardina enrolled at Virginia Theological Seminary where she appreciated the seminary classes but experienced "the whole old boy Virginia thing" as a shock.

To protect her sanity, Giardina decided to live with the Sojourners Community in Washington, D.C. People there shared her politics and her faith.

But Giardina's activities made waves on campus. She thought the Episcopal Church should do more than send care packages when a Pittston Coal Company dam broke loose on Buffalo Creek and more than 100 people died.

---

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

When Giardina helped conduct research that showed that Norfolk and Western Railroad owned 30 percent of the land near Northfork, W. Va., but paid only 16 cents an acre in property taxes, she made that information public in the VTS student newspaper and suggested divesting. The fact that the president of the railroad, John Fishwick, was on the board of VTS didn't deter her.

"The dean went through the ceiling. He raked me over the coals. He made veiled threats, asking 'Would you be happier somewhere else?' He talked about what a fine person Fishwick was and how I had hurt the seminary."

As a deacon, Giardina served Grace, Northfork, W. Va. "It was a small church. People there liked me." But Giardina's work was undermined by Jim Churchill, a retired, white collar Union Carbide employee from N.J. Churchill helped direct the community center where Giardina worked half-time and he attended her parish. He took his complaints to Bishop Robert Atkinson, saying Giardina was harassing corporate leaders.

"It became real clear that I couldn't work with Churchill and the bishop said that if I left the center, I had to leave Grace."

Three years after her ordination, Giardina laid down her orders.

Her reasons were mixed. Giardina will say that she may have allowed herself to be caught in the wake of women hurrying toward ordination, since hers was the first class of women to enter seminary knowing they *could* be ordained.

*"Ordination is one of the most frightening things that has ever happened to me."*

She'll also say she has serious reservations about the priesthood.

"I don't like the idea of setting apart some elite—and it usually turns out to be male, especially as you move up the feeding chain, so to speak. It's also so unfair to the ordained. There are so many double standards it perpetuates. People expect the priest to have the answer, to always say the right thing.

"I was getting comfortable with the service aspect [of being a deacon]. But if I was going to be getting grief all the time,

I felt like it would hurt my writing. My writing explores religious things — I didn't want to feel like I had to represent the Church in my writing. I've seen too many ministers get in trouble. It was a hard decision."

Giardina recently moved from North Carolina to Whitesburg, Kentucky where she has just finished a new novel on the coal fields, *Unquiet Earth* [Norton, 1992].

Giardina is still technically an Episcopalian, but says she is "really sort of a Quaker Catholic."

While she has reservations about the priesthood, sacraments are important to her, Giardina says.

"I have this sense of God being so large. (Denominations are efforts to put God in a cage, to try to tame God.) I have this sense of God as untamed and undefined. I like the Native American sense of the sacredness of the earth and animals. I'm interested in Hindu beliefs. At the same time, I like the centrality of the mass and the Incarnation, the idea of God becoming flesh.

"I believe in the sacraments — especially the eucharist. I guess as a fiction writer I am really comfortable with taking something that appears not to exist and making it concrete."

## Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. We've sent this issue to you because we understand that you have an interest in ordination and its process.

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!

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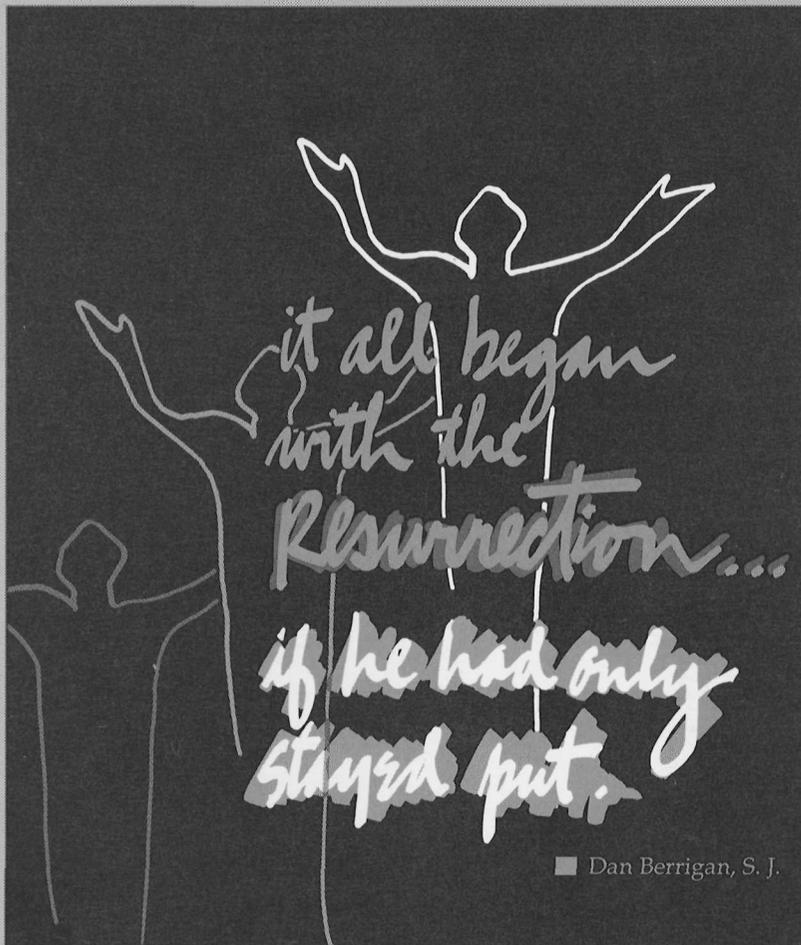
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*June issue:*  
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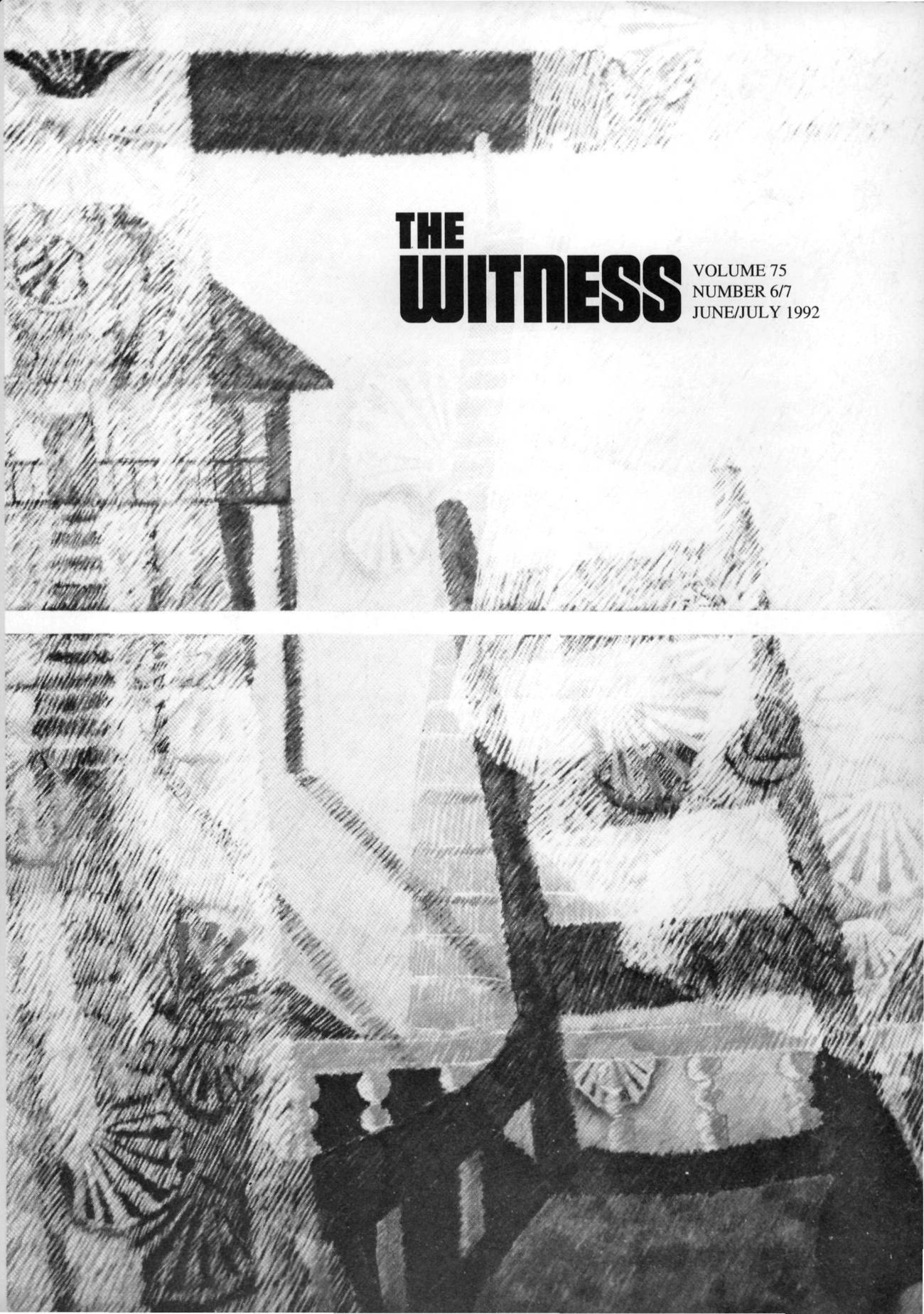
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*Inner healing/  
inner voices*

*Interviews with:  
Walter Brueggemann  
Carter Heyward  
John Sanford*

# THE WITNESS

VOLUME 75  
NUMBER 6/7  
JUNE/JULY 1992



## The resurrection

I FOUND YOUR INTERVIEWS with readers on their views of the resurrection [April, 1992], and Wylie-Kellermann's editorial too, most validating. Now if only church practices (esp. liturgies) would reflect her members' creative and honest beliefs, we'd have a more live-ly church.

**Carol Rouillard Wolff**  
Portland OR

"TO LIVE IN GRACE is to live knowing who and *whose* we are. What we do is far less important than that." So begins the conclusion of Andrew McThenia, Jr.'s article, "The Law and the Resurrection" [April, 1992].

If I were the bible scholar I wish I was, perhaps I could think of a better example than that of the Good Samaritan, who was both less, and more, than the law and the priest who passed by the man fallen among robbers.

"60 Minutes" of April 5 had a segment I saw part of, with a "Father Greg" attacking the gang problems of one city; this is a rather far cry from adopting a siege mentality and awaiting the second coming.

**Russell Blankenheim**  
London  
Station WI

THANKS FOR the lovely article on Bishop Dan Corrigan.

**Betty and David Streett**  
Clarksdale MS

THANK YOU EVER SO MUCH for your profile on Dan and Elizabeth Corrigan (April, 1992). What a joy it was to read about these two wonderful saints who have served the Episcopal Church for so long and well. A true inspiration and challenge to all of us. I attend a church in Massachusetts where the Corrigan's youngest son, Michael, is rector. The church and its members are great and Michael is a dynamic rector! I can now see after reading your profile on Dan and Elizabeth Corrigan where Michael gets his gifts and talents!

**Amy Madge**  
Westwood MA

## Ordination

JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW how much *The Witness* has come to mean to me. You have found ways to articulate the faith and raise issues that we need to confront — even if we don't always agree.

As I seek to refocus my own ministry from administration to servanthood, your May issue especially enlightened me. I'm grateful for the insights, especially the article on Denise Giardina, who was my classmate at Virginia Seminary. Even then, she was a hero to me in her iconoclasm and her integrity and her love of God.

My prayer is that all of our churches will find ways to move from "the way it's always been" to "the way it might and can be." We need to move to a real ministry of *all* believers. Priests can serve among the people of God, can help enable that ministry of transformation in Christ's name, a ministry to bring all people into a radical life of *active* faith and love in community. The ministry can shine light on the world and can carry God's spirit forth into the darkness of peoples' hearts if it is the ministry of the Body of Christ.

As a fellow "Quaker-Catholic" Episcopalian, I'm sad at Denise's disillusionment — but illusions aren't reality, certainly not God's. So Denise inspires one still, for God works in her ministry.

**Stephen E. Klingelhofer**  
Kalamazoo MI

## Homelessness and the arts

I WISH TO RESPOND to an article that I read reprinted in your publication [Feb. 1992]. The article was adapted from a National Public Radio report from Chicago about public libraries and the homeless. As an unemployed, impoverished, chronically mentally ill, disabled person living at the Nashville Rescue Mission in July, 1990, I was refused a library card by the public library of Metro Nashville. After three meetings with the head librarian and her staff along with the valuable assistance and support of Bill Friskies-Warren, director of the Nashville Homeless coalition, today a person living in a shelter in Nashville

can receive a library card and check out a book.

**Karl Smithson**  
Nashville TN

## 815 takes issue

I HAVE READ your article regarding the reorganization of the staff of the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society at the Church Center and the resulting downsizing. We at the Church Center have learned that a reorganization is a dynamic and continuing process that can lead to erroneous conclusions and perceptions, as is the case with your report in the January, 1992 issue of *The Witness*. Allow me, then, to set the record straight.

Your list is incomplete and misleading. It includes seven individuals whose termination of employment was not the result of downsizing. Two employees announced their retirement prior to the General Convention, two resigned their positions prior to the reorganization, and three were released for performance-related reasons. In addition, two other employees whose positions were eliminated exercised their option to retire under the provisions of the Human Resources Manual. Lastly, your list fails to mention five of the staff members whose positions were eliminated and employment terminated. They are: David Anger, General Convention; Alice Pagnotta, Mission Support; Irene Jackson-Brown, Education for Mission & Ministry; Barbara Wilson, Mission Support; Aubrey Stoll, Mission Support. The pain was just as real for these people as it was for all of the others.

Your opening paragraph says that the employees who lost their jobs "were told they could no longer be employed at 815." This is not true. As a result of the reorganization, we began to actively recruit for 22 vacant positions, effecting an exclusive 30-day application period for continuing and terminated employees, prior to announcing vacant positions to the church-at-large and the general public. As a result, five of the terminated employees have been reemployed by the Society, while six continuing employees have assumed new positions at the Church Center.

All of the 30 employees whose positions were eliminated were offered career transi-



tion counseling. As of this date, 14 have found other jobs, three are pursuing self-employment opportunities, and four have delayed their reemployment process for personal reasons.

The career transition specialists engaged by the Society to assist terminated employees have observed that this is a resilient group. It is a positive irony that parishes and dioceses challenged to new ministry have demonstrated a like resilience which, in turn, has contributed in part to this reorganization. *The Wall Street Journal* has described the current economic recession as the "dismantling of the American bureaucracy." What is happening here, then, is a microcosm of what is happening all around us. In the midst of these new challenges our task as a Church is to continue proclaiming with confidence that no matter what confronts us, "God is nigh."

**John E. Colon**  
**Executive for Human Resources**  
**Episcopal Church Center**  
**New York, NY**

[**Ed. Note:** Thank you for the information you offer concerning the terminations at 815 last fall. The "article" to which you refer said (in its entirety): *The current economy and a trend toward voting with checkbooks drastically reduced funding for the National church. The following people, a handful of whom are retiring, were told they could no longer be employed at 815:*

We considered it a privilege to be the only publication within the Episcopal communion which attempted to offer the names of those who lost (or, in a few cases, left) their jobs. We do regret having omitted the names of David Anger, Alice Pagnotta, Irene Jackson-Brown, Barbara Wilson and Aubrey Stoll.]

— J.W.-K.

### Not renewing

PLEASE CANCEL my subscription effective immediately. You should rename yourselves the "Inner City Witness" because of the new slant of the publication.

**Greg Grosh**  
**Ft. Lauderdale FL**

CONCERNING A complimentary copy sent to me: This magazine is the biggest load of self-righteous indignation. It's all Secular Humanism — not Christianity!

Not once do your writers' realize that their sexual orientation is due to original sin or that God does have a proscribed order for the world and you are working to discover ways to thwart God's will. Repent and return to God — the God who gave his only Son to die for our original sin.

**S.J. Kelly**

### Witnessing praise

I ENJOY READING your magazine and was particularly interested in the history of *The Witness* in the latest issue. How about some of editor Spofford's columns? Some may apply to today.

**Anne M. Huff**  
**Sacramento CA**

GRANT GALLUP SHARED with me his December issue of *The Witness* and it is exquisite. I'm really "limited" (actually no income) but someone gave me \$15 so I'd like to put it toward your holiday offer and ask that you send Kayce and myself the issues beginning in December.

Since '86 I've been working here in Matagulpa — the past two years helping get the Casa Materna functioning.

Keep up the wonderful work!

**Kitty Madden**  
**Matagulpa, Nicaragua**

I HAVE WRESTLED with the new format and have just realized it has challenged my thinking! No wonder I'm not always happy with the articles, artwork and poetry. This is as it should be. When we are happy or content with *all* that we see, we fail to see what is around us. It's not wrong to be happy, we just need to be aware of those who can't share in our happiness of the moment. My wish is that more of us can bring some happiness into the lives of others.

**Bettie Connors**  
**Arlington MA**

I AM ORDERING a renewal for two years for Mary Berry, who passes the magazine on to the library of "Rolling Green Village" Retirement Center in Greenville, S.C. Mary and others at Rolling Green Village enjoy *The Witness* and so do I!!

**John E. Lenox**  
**Pittsburgh PA**



### Correction

Mary Anne Barkhouse should have been identified as the artist of the graphic on page 22 of the January issue of *The Witness*. Barkhouse lives and works in Toronto.

### Seeking contact

I AM A 30-YEAR-OLD gay Yugoslavian man, baptized into the Serbian Orthodox Church. Reconciling the Scriptures with one's gayness is not easy even in pseudo-democratic societies as the U.S., let alone in a strongly patriarchal (greater-nationalistic) one with tendency to fascism as it is here. In short, guys, I can hardly make it myself and I have a task to preach the Truth to those who worship abominations of Vanity and Hatred here amongst the civil war. Do help with your prayers/meditations, references and assets (don't send money!). Thanks to those amongst ye who are willing to share.

**Miodrag Kojadinovic**  
**Beograd, Yugoslavia (Serbia)**

[**Ed. note:** Kojadinovic's address is Cika Mise Djurica 3, 11060 Beograd, Yugoslavia (Serbia)]

**THE WITNESS**

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Cover: Memories of a Carolina Childhood by Nell Hillsley. Hillsley lives in St. Paul, Minn.

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.



credit: Jim West

## The sound of water

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Photographer **Jim West** helps produce *Labor Notes* and lives in Detroit.

**I** am intrigued by how often healing — physical or psychic — is influenced by whether we listen to the inner voices and movements in our soul.

For me, God shines through in breathless beauty when women begin to take seriously their fears or body pains and find the courage to recover their histories. To do so they have to dismiss the impulses that say this is self-preoccupation or nonsense, but once free to trust themselves, they often can name truths that give a context for their lives and clarity about how to care for themselves.

Most often those people choose to stand steady, witnessing to the power of healing, a resource for the rest of us who need someone to regard our own lives with sober and nonjudgmental eyes. Such people are not naive about evil or pain. They

often have a good sense of the ways in which we are complicit in our own illness. They don't say the work is easy, but by their lives they show it is possible.

People in recovery who are confronting addiction and problems inherited through family systems usually have the same clear-eyed, patient appreciation of how binding — even demonic — a power can be, tempered by a confidence that — through a power larger than themselves — they *can* step outside its grip.

People doing dream work fall in the same category. The chaotic images that surface in the night can lead us to find events in our history that crippled us in some way, or disease in our bodies, or even the approach of outward events for which we need some forewarning.

John Sanford, an Episcopalian renowned for his work with dreams, points out repeatedly that dream work is not a new age or self-conscious phenomenon,

but one of the consistent (and biblical) ways through which God has spoken (p. 22).

I'm impressed by midwives and those who urge us to trust our bodies, trust the force of life, trust the earth. They call us to surrender our dependence on technology and expertise and to listen to our own experience.

To a person, I think, these icons of healing seem to avoid grandiose ideas of change. They do not promise quick and radical transformation, although such things are possible. They seem to speak quietly of the rationales we use to delude ourselves, the fear we carry, the raw humility required to face ourselves and the assaults that can follow when someone does break free of a system of family or institutional lies.

The victories often appear small, but I always have a profound sense of

being in the presence of God when a friend, often with eyes full of grief, speaks plainly of his/her life. Now and then, there is the mercy of knowing that this person's children will not carry the full weight of the burden that is the family's inheritance.

*Healing courses like  
water over rock.*

*editor's note*

God's delight in our healing, in our minute choices for life over death, must be as steady as the ways the earth heals itself in age-old continuing cleansing. Water washing over rock, seeping through the soil — the very sound reminding us of our origin in God and creation.

The Church is called, through Christ, to heal.

Healing is a charismatic gift. It is our inheritance from the early Church and an area where we are called to practice dominion.

Yet, I've watched, from a distance, while good Church folks attempted to pray life back into a man dying of cancer. When he died his wife became locked in bitterness against those in the prayer circle.

And I've been outraged when prayers of deliverance were uttered over the heads of people whose guts and identity were tangled through some things that might very well be demonic, but whose crying need was for a safe place in which they could let their wounds be exposed, a place in which they could be afforded the time to know and make choices about their woundedness.

Part of the antidote to these things that I recoil from in Christian faith healing is, I think, that healing is age-old. It does not depend on quick fixes. It courses like water over rock. There is time. We can afford each other safe places. The specters in our souls and psyches can be rebuked or reintegrated one at a time within a community of friends who know their own woundedness.

Stephen Levine, author of *Healing into Life and Death*, offers a gift when he suggests that his work in healing brought him to the conclusion that healing does not mean staying alive. There are people who experience complete healing who die. There are others, in flight from them-

selves and the work that needs to be done, who manage to live. Healing is deeper than death.

Healing is subversive. It is the Word to the powers of death that they are not supreme (see p. 24). There is a terror in choosing to face and witness before the powers of death in ourselves or in society. But there is a grace in the age-old presence of water pouring over rock, in God, present in our torment and delighting in each small act of courage.

\* \* \* \* \*

Healing has institutional and community implications as well.

This may be exceptionally difficult to address within the Church. We have such high standards for how we expect to relate ("See how they love one another"). Sometimes I think people in corporations can deal more honestly with conflict because they are not bound by an ethic that presumes love.

Women at the 1988 Lambeth Conference did not experience an international groundswell of love — there was an implicit rejection simply in the all-male character of the assembly and there were more pronounced rejections from a variety of bishops who are ambivalent about

women having a voice in the Church. In reaction to that experience women from around the world gathered recently in Brazil. While the gathering offered an antidote to previous pain, it also revealed wounds within the community of women (see p. 16).

In a similar vein, this issue includes a conversation between Carter Heyward and myself about abortion (p. 17). It is a risky conversation for both of us. Some

subscribers have been unambiguous in their effort to force me to take a pro-choice stance. Others will probably fault Heyward for agreeing to a conversation with someone who would not agree at the outset to support *Roe v. Wade*. Heyward and I offer this conversation in the interests of honesty and with a belief in healing.

Likewise, *The Witness* intends to hold a forum at Trinity School for Ministry in October. The Church has been said to be on the verge of schism; we want to position ourselves in that break and are humbled that Trinity has agreed to receive us. The intent is not to reconcile, nor to come to consensus. It is simply to meet in a context of nonviolence to learn who we each are. (See p. 25.)

Nancy Gatch Svien suggests (on p. 10) that when we lose innocence, we gain the impetus to use our eyes, to witness, to take risks. Although the Church is not always — perhaps not even often — good at examining the specters within and challenging those without, it does have the language, the symbols and the witness of the saints. As Walter Brueggemann suggests (p.14), the Church may well have the resources necessary to address this age in a way that can bring a sense of play, imagination and resolve. — J.W.-K.

*God's delight in our healing, in our minute choices for life over death, must be as steady as the ways the earth heals itself.*

## No stranger to fiction

*The Witness* staff is soliciting short pieces of fiction for an issue to be published next winter.

Short stories, poetry, vignettes — anything is welcome. We can accommodate stories of 1,500 words or less.

**News tips.** We always appreciate postcards or telephone calls alerting us to news items or story ideas. Items for *Vital Signs* can be sent directly to Julie A. Wortman.

**Photographs.** Feel free to send us your favorite photographs. When an article calls

for a generic picture (for instance, of an elderly person with a child, an embrace, a flock of birds in flying pattern), we would prefer to publish a photo taken by a *Witness* reader than an image from a syndicated photo catalogue.

If you do submit photos, we will file them and then pay \$50 upon use. We will credit the photographer and include a reference to her/his work or location.

**Children.** We'd welcome children's art work, stories or poems.

Please send copies, not originals to *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., #3115, Detroit, MI 48226

## Crossing

by Gloria T. Hull

At the foot of the cross  
kneeling before the altar of myself  
exorcising demons  
with the power of soundings  
and universal, mystic law

Showers of blessing  
rain from my eyes  
My great-grandmother brings comfort  
her hand an affirmation on my shoulder

A cry for riddance, for release  
becomes its own answer:  
Yes, I forgive  
and I love everybody —  
hugging the old devils  
one by one

from *Healing Heart*, Kitchen Table: Women of Color  
Press, Latham, N.Y., 1989

Gloria T. Hull is professor of Literature and Women's  
Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

## Ongiving

by Gloria T. Hull

Some people weigh and balance  
and count the cost  
Make change to the last worthless penny  
Hug tight the shrinking dollar as it slides

But what price brotherhood or sistren?  
Which sales tag do we pin on love?

What I pass on to you  
is bounty from the universe:

Lunch money a teacher gave me in third grade  
The term dress to say my speeches in  
Bad colds and cancer which did not catch me  
Yellow and white light protecting me and kin  
All the fellowships, friendships, prayers,  
good wishes,  
good vibes, luck  
which keep me alive and standing

returning, turning to its source

Give thanks — and give back

Living in the spirit is one spiral dance

From each according to her riches  
To each according to his need,  
Met on every rung  
and climbing higher, higher



Poetry

# After L. A.

## the Church's role

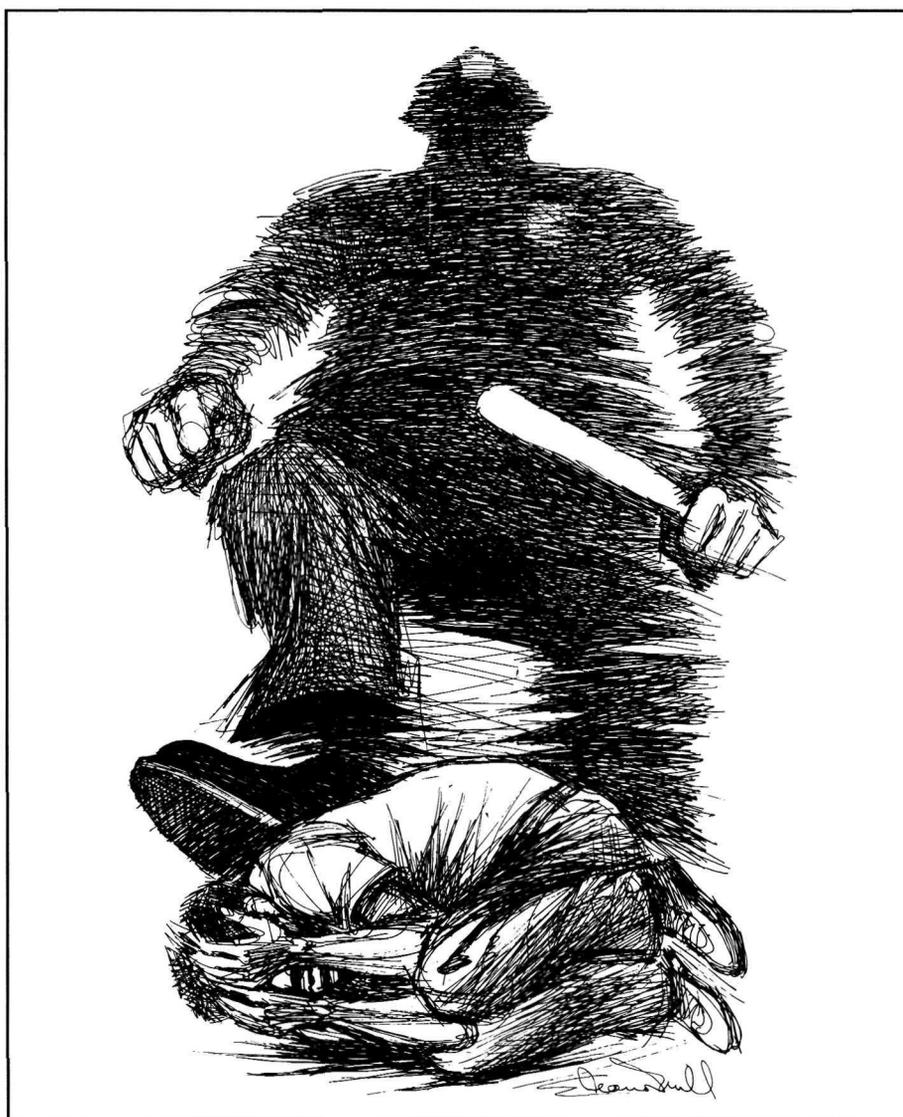
by Ed Rodman

**T**he period immediately following an event as traumatic as the L.A. riots presents both a precious moment of opportunity and the advent of a very dangerous time. Precious, because finally the nation's attention has been directed toward the matrix of issues that underlie the L.A. eruption. One can hope that this time we will move beyond quick and easy reactions to systemic analysis and action, although history teaches otherwise. Dangerous, because just as the Watts riots of 1965 lit the fuse for urban unrest culminating in the 1968 King assassination and its aftermath, the period between now and September could follow the three-year pattern of the 1960s. The real question is whether we will have the patience and the fortitude to make the connections between the hard facts of the immediate crisis, a serious historical perspective and the tough short- and long-term steps that will be needed if history is not to repeat itself.

The reality is that the Church has a process to offer the society, a process that is as old as time. It is a simple four-step program: (1) acknowledge the sin of racism and our complicity in it from the beginning until now; (2) seek forgiveness for this transgression; (3) acknowledge the unearned privilege that the perpetuation of racist systems provide for the majority group; and (4) make restitution to those who have been disrespected and oppressed as a result. A simple idea with profound implications. But as Mar-

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**Ed Rodman** is canon missioner for urban affairs in the Diocese of Massachusetts.



*Until we make the linkages between the economic, psychological, sociological and spiritual dimensions of this issue, the primary problem of the 20th century will remain the color line.*

tin Luther King, Jr., and others observed, there can be no peace without justice and until we make the linkages between the economic, psychological, sociological and spiritual dimensions of this issue, the primary problem of the 20th century will remain the color line. The Church does have a role to play, for good or ill. **TW**

[**Editor's Note:** See *The Witness* history column on page 32 to see how Martin Luther King's words in 1963 apply 20 years later.]

# Neighborly justice

by Gwen Hurd

**T**he rage, hopelessness and dis-ease in Los Angeles' black community today is as bad, if not worse, than it was 25 years ago when Watts exploded after the death of Martin Luther King. Under the Reagan and Bush administrations, the rich are the beneficiaries of the new social welfare programs developed by and for those who already have more than enough, so it is little wonder that — when the opportunity arises — those who have the least in our society strike out

**Gwen Hurd**, who grew up in Detroit, is currently completing an M. Div. at Union Theological Seminary in N.Y. In May, Gwen will be back in Detroit as the program coordinator for Detroit Summer.



Endangered species

credit: Eleanor Mill

at the nearest available symbols of power.

I was a junior at Oakland university in the summer of 1967 when Detroit was engulfed in its days of rage.

How many more riots in Los Angeles and Detroit do we have to witness before we say “no more?” We need to start demanding that our church and political leaders become accountable. If we really do want to get rid of the matches that will ignite the fire next time, then we have to start working.

What I am proposing may seem simplistic and naive. I believe that the challenge to change begins with such simple steps as finding out who your neighbors are. Organize neighborhoods to be safe places to live, work and play. Do you know who lives next door to you? Do you know the names of their children and do they know your children's names? If we don't know each other, then we can't help each other.

It's going to be hard work, but in the long run it's cheaper than buying a new alarm system and waiting for someone else “to do something.”

## A shared world

All of us are frightened, all outraged and deeply saddened and concerned for ourselves, our children, the future of Los Angeles and of our society. Some of us can continue to live in enclaves, build gated communities and private schools, and hire more protection, but none of us can escape the fear and the worry for the children and the future.

Maybe there is some hope in this. Maybe there is hope in the realization that, if we condone or don't care about what happens to one black man in a hard place in his life, sooner or later this

will profoundly affect the lives of all of us.

It is not always easy to discern a corporate moral order, but it does exist. In biblical terms, if the society fails to care for the poor — the widows, the orphans and the strangers — that society will come to tragedy.

Hope is in short supply. Perhaps it is only when we realize how much we all share in each other's hopelessness that we can truly want hope for one another.

—excerpted from an April 30 statement by **Frederick Borsch**, Bishop of L.A.

## Detroit summer '92

If you are between the ages of 18 and 25, and would like to spend part of your summer working with Detroit youth on community and cultural exchange projects, you are invited to contact *Detroit Summer '92*. From July 12 to August 2, volunteers from across the country will come to Detroit to join in programs designed to improve neighborhoods and rekindle hope in the city. To apply, write *Detroit Summer '92*, 2990 W. Grand Blvd., Rm. 307, Detroit, MI 48202; or call Clementine Barfield (313) 361-5200 or Rick Feldman (313) 546-4870.

# From innocence to vigilance

by Nancy Gatch Svien

**O**ur Army Evacuation Hospital was in the beautiful southern part of Germany. It was early May of 1945; World War II was ending, we thought, but weren't sure. Supposedly fighting had stopped, but the numbers of wounded waiting outside our hospital tents for beds were no fewer.

We sent a small group of nurses to Dachau on detached service. The ill-famed extermination camp, the scar on the pleasant Bavarian landscape, was in need of help. The emaciated prisoners still clinging to life needed immediate nutritive diets for survival, but were incapable of digesting anything richer than their daily flavored-water regimen.

"Bodies still fill 20 railway cars drawn up near the main buildings," our first officer on the scene reported. "Those inside all died of starvation."

The Chief Nurse and I borrowed a jeep to drive over to check on our nurses. I wrote in my diary: *The horrors of Dachau are not exaggerated. We passed the railroad cars, now empty but grim with evidence. Then, as we turned the road to the complex of buildings, a procession from Hell itself approached in measured gait. First came German civilians wearing gas masks as the stench was intolerable. They were followed by ten open carts pulled by oxen. These were piled high with stinking cadavers, green with age. The dead were tossed on top of each other, arms and legs dragging, all pitifully starved and exposed to the elements. The procession continued up the road where the German working crew would dump the bodies into a common grave. We were close enough to see the looks of unbearable anguish on the nightmarish faces.*

With the end of the war in sight, the hope that such atrocities were forever ended kept us going. Days were full of work. In my nightly prayers, I gave in to self-pity and asked God why I had had to see what spewed forth from the abscess called Dachau. I had to believe that humankind is good and decent and that God is just; however, something was gone from life that I couldn't describe.

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**Nancy Gatch Svien** spent two-and-one-half years working with the American Red Cross during World War II. She now lives in Minneapolis, Minn.



Nancy Gatch was among Army nurses and American Red Cross women landing at St. Tropez in Southern France on August 19, 1946.

The end of World War II brought us home to the joy of reunion with families, with marriage and raising a family drowning out sad memories.

When my three children were in college, my husband suffered a fatal heart attack. I drifted down into a valley of depression, wondering how to fight my way back up. I remembered my dad's advice: "The most successful way to cure depression or thoughts of suicide is to do something that frightens you, something that truly scares you half to death. Fear is a great medicine because it makes you feel that just being alive is a blessing."

At 53 I felt too old to take up sky-diving, so I settled for moving to a foreign country where I knew not one soul and had to learn the language. I headed for the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, taking with me a long-neglected set of water-color paints.

Mexico had thousands of refugees crossing its border from its neighbor to the south, Guatemala. The government of that country was systematically annihilating entire towns and causing residents of neighboring villages to run for their lives.

The refugees, in spite of their pleas to remain close to their homeland, were being sent to United Nations camps away from the border. These Mexican-run camps were closed to outsiders because *Americas Watch* had published a critical article at the start of their program.

Then my nightmares began. At three in the morning I was back in Dachau reliving conversations with the citizens of the town. None of them had known what was going on in the camp. They had stopped seeing railroad cars pull up, stopped looking at the polluting clouds of black smoke pouring out of the chimney. With the Mexican camps closed to outsiders, I became convinced that genocide was again surfacing.

I was becoming obsessed and had to

act. When my request to visit the camps was turned down by Quintana Roo authorities, I appealed to Ambassador Oscar Gonzalez who headed the agency in charge of the camps. I am not very assertive by nature and my Spanish was not the best, but I started phoning his office. After four or five calls his secretary befriended me. She told me he was not an easy person to get hold of, but that she would do everything she could to make

*In my nightly prayers, I asked God why I had had to see what spewed forth from the abscess called Dachau.*

sure he got my message. When he finally did call me I could tell he was a bit put out. He asked, "What makes you think you should be given permission to enter the camps when they are closed to everyone but Mexican nationals?"

I was so determined I forgot I was a shy person. "I *have* to see them!" I cried out, and then decided to try a little name-dropping. "When the Governor of Quintana Roo bought my designs for his re-election posters, he suggested that I

### The current status of refugee camps in Mexico

Currently most Central American human rights groups report adequate conditions at the Mexican refugee camps for Guatemalans.

George Garry of NISGUA in Washington D.C. [Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala] says there is some concern over the health problems in and visits from Guatemalan officials to the camps.

call you directly for permission to observe the camps in his territory." It worked! "I did not realize you were an artist," he said. To my joy artists are sometimes perceived as non-threatening.

Good fortune was with me when I was admitted to Los Lirios. I accompanied two anthropologists who had visited camps around the world. A horseshoe-shaped row of connecting one-story wooden shacks took care of housing and feeding new arrivals, the weekly distribution of cooking supplies, an infirmary, a barber shop, and classrooms where refugees learned details of their own history and traditions. Potable water was being brought in by truck three times a week but pipelines were being laid with a pumping system and electricity was anticipated soon. We left the camp in high spirits.

What I had felt keenly in 1945 was the loss of innocence. I wanted it back. But now I saw I had been fortunate to be armed with the knowledge of what to beware of, what to look for to prevent another Holocaust. Now I could sleep again without visions of black smoke hanging over the Mexican landscape while I looked the other way. We are all born with weapons to fight evil, and those are our prying eyes. It feels good to use them.

### Stats on Anglican ordained women

Fourteen of the Anglican Communion's 34 provinces now have women priests according to new statistics released by the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in London. That number includes Australia, where the women were ordained by an individual diocesan bishop and not as the result of provincial legislation.

Released March 25, the ACC statistics indicate that a total of 1,342 Anglican women are currently priests, 1,942 are deacons and two are bishops.

# Facing terror

by K. Kelleigh

**M**emory is a capricious thing. Growing up, the reality of my life was too terrifying to face. I had to forget so that I could live from day to day. Now the past is like a slow-working poison. Now I must remember in order to live. Recovering those days and weeks is grueling work. Sometimes things seem hopeful. Sometimes I feel like I've been run over by a semi carrying a full load.

*I must be going crazy.*

*The old rule is that if anyone else ever finds out, I must die. That's the rule from as far back as forever. He said that as he pushed his penis in my face and I wanted to throw up. It's not a law like stopping for red lights or not shooting people for no reason at McDonald's. It's more like the law of gravity that has been around since forever.*

*I try not to follow the rules, but as I walk around I am dying. Inside I am already dead. If I try, I can see things happening around me, but have no response. I am already dead and my limbs have been cut from me. My eyes stare blankly. I can't see. I can't hear.*

*But the images won't leave me alone. They are right behind my eyes.*

*I am tied up with electrical cords. Blood gets all over everything. Bruises on my mother's face . . . His hands*

*The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sex Abuse, by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis, is an excellent resource published by Harper & Row in 1988.*

**K. Kelleigh** is an incest survivor who lives and works in the Midwest. Artist **Eleanor Mill** works in Hartford, Conn.

*around my throat, he shakes me until I stop screaming. He undresses me. I hit my head on the tub.*

*He is my father.*

*His eyes look different. His smile is funny. It scares me.*

When the memories are coming all you've got is the emotion of a person within who is terrified and doesn't have the resources to deal with it. You face all the reasons that the memory is in the unconscious in the first place. It's all the stuff you've been avoiding for all the years you've been alive. If you could manage to live your life in a decent way without remembering, you wouldn't do it.

To avoid memories, I sometimes don't eat. I can eat minimally; I can drink myself into oblivion if I'm not worried about keeping my world in control; I can leave abruptly for California; I can take pills.

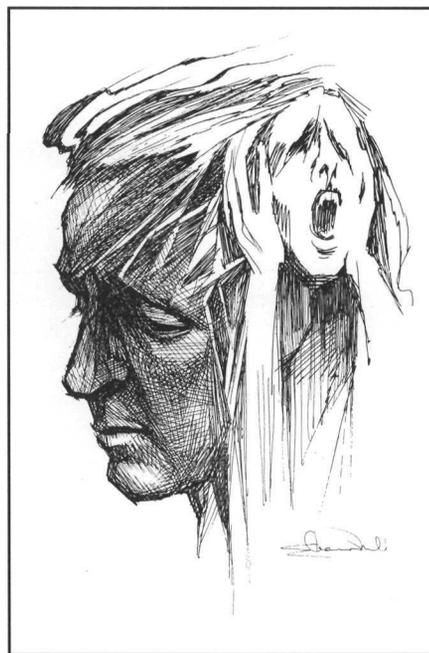
When you decide, finally, to face a memory, it feels like hell. It is like a roller coaster — you can either ride the sucker or get dragged along. Riding it may be easier. The good thing is that then

you have access to the side of you that is adult. Prior to actually knowing what's going on, the inner adult can't function.

A lot of times you start with a little piece. Even through the whole avoidance/repression stage you're getting little pieces. Sometimes pieces come at different times — the visual, the things you hear, the feelings — it's like they're stored different places. Sometimes you get bombarded by all of it. Sometimes it's like a

movie and you can view it dispassionately. Then, of course, when it's midnight and you're alone the feelings catch up to you.

You need to know that someone is there. Sometimes all you need is to hear someone. It can be totally inane, it doesn't have to be on the subject — but you have to know that someone's there. A child who says, "You come to my house" can be just as helpful as a counselor who has



Total recall

credit: Eleanor Mill

years of training.

After the whole memory breaks you're drained. Then you're convinced that none of it could possibly be real. Then you do start accepting it and dealing with it, which is where one's adult side becomes useful. At that point it's usually a whole lot better than the stage before remembering. And, while it's probably pretty awful, there's a value in knowing your history and in understanding why some things terrify you. You can begin to take care of yourself. You reclaim your own power. It's the only way of regaining any sort of sanity.

TW

## Images of archetypes

On my 39th birthday I bought myself a book — *Awakening the Heroes Within*, by Carol S. Pearson.

I knew I had found something of acute personal significance.

This writer was writing about life in metaphors, she was tapping the archetypes, she was propelling me into a journey. She injected 12 people into my interior — Innocent, Orphan, Warrior, Caregiver, Seeker, Destroyer, Lover, Creator, Ruler, Magician, Sage and Fool.

After presenting each of the archetypal heroes, Pearson suggests that the reader might want to “describe or otherwise portray” each hero as expressed in that person’s life. So I set out to do that.

I made collages, each wedge-shaped so that when I was done they would form a complete circle. I thought it would be interesting and fun.

It has been much, much more. It has become a labor, a journey, a tool, a blessing.

I have been engaged with these images for six months now and I have completed nine collages. I’ve read and re-read the

**Alice Hinterman** is an elementary school librarian who lives in Ann Arbor, Mich.



credit: Alice Hinterman

by Alice Hinterman

book, pulled quotations from it, pulled images from many sources, photocopied, blown up and reduced, arranged and rearranged, cut and pasted, colored and decorated.

I’ve ransacked my photo albums and included pictures of myself at all ages, pictures of my parents and of my daughter. I’ve searched out remembered images of paintings, sculptures, dancers, places. I’ve photocopied significant objects and let copies of book covers stand for the content. I’ve acknowledged the impact children’s books have had on my life by including illustrations from them.

In the end, I find that I’ve created something really beautiful, something I’m proud of — touchstones, personal icons. Sometimes I spread them out and just pore over them and drink in the significance of the images, of the process, of the concept and of myself as the artist.

Pearson has written that “taking your journey requires you to leave behind the illusion of your insignificance.” When I look at my collages I see the pattern of who I am and I must accept that I am real and I am whole.

**T**he Church has access to a resource of tremendous value in these times, should it choose to unleash it. That gift is imagination, Walter Brueggemann says in a series of lectures prepared for the Trinity Institute.

Imagination is an antidote to the scientific rationalism which has dominated Western Civilization for centuries. Practice of imagination is all the more important, because — with or without the participation of the Church — the logic of Enlightenment-era thinkers is being rejected by people throughout the Western world. “Pure reason,” objectivity and the subjugation of all things to a rational and masculine point of view is increasingly less acceptable.

Instead people are shifting toward a preference for oral and personal accounts. They care more about things that are local and specific than about abstractions.

The emerging “postmodern” worldview is challenging all the old ways of discerning reality and it’s generating its share of chaos, even precipitating a crisis, Brueggemann says.

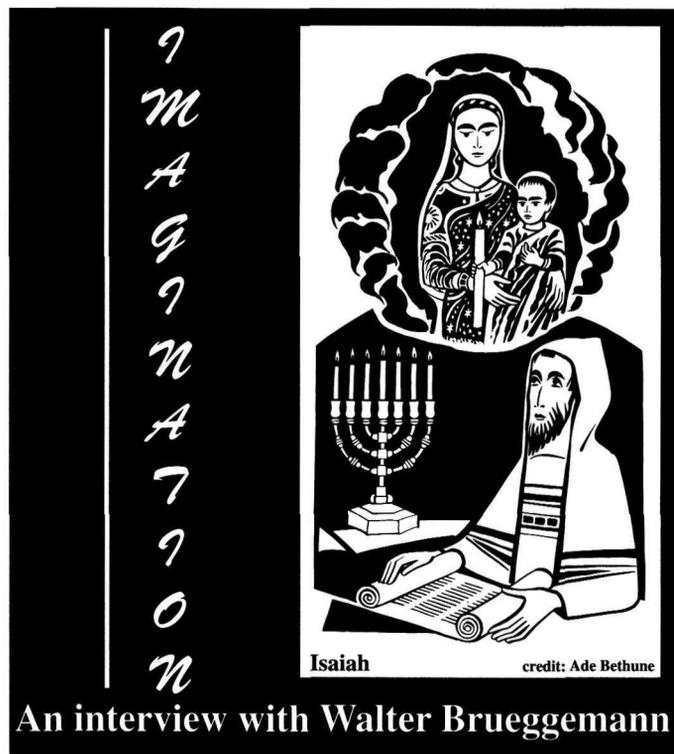
“My urging is that the Church imagine the world differently; the materials out of which we imagine the world differently are the materials of the Bible. If people don’t have those materials — which they largely don’t — then people are mainly going to [draw their images] from the consumer ideology which they get in advertising.

“We need to help people read the text. Possibilities for newness depend on the text. The texts are realistic about who we are, but are also acts of imagination about what it will be like to be in communion with God, to have one’s body filled with hope rather than fear.”

*The texts are acts of imagination about what it will be like to be in communion with God, to have one’s body filled with hope rather than fear.*

Brueggemann defines imagination as “the capacity to construe one’s reality differently than the dominant definitions. This can lead to the awareness that every construal of reality, including the dominant one, is in fact an act of imagination. It’s just that it has been dominant for so long that it doesn’t seem like

**Walter Brueggemann**, an Old Testament professor at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, recently gave the Trinity Institute lectures. His reflections on imagination will be published by Fortress Press. **Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist **Ade Bethune**’s work is published in *Eye Contact*, Sheed & Ward, 1986.



an act of imagination.”

Once free of the dominating myths and also of the constraints of a purely academic approach to the Bible (Brueggemann calls some scholars “text killers”), the Church could encourage people to reimagine their world through Scripture.

“The Bible imagines community as essentially a conversation about justice, fidelity and social possibility,” Brueggemann said. “Political and social action about poverty or homelessness, or whatever, runs out of steam because we’re not doing the textual work about how it’s going to be in the promise of God.

“The text says, ‘There will come a time when there won’t be any more poverty.’ The Church has to decide whether that’s true — we don’t really think these are viable texts.”

If the Church took Scripture seriously, Brueggemann says, “We would have a very different conversation about who we are and what the possibilities are. Out of that conversation could come energy and freedom, courage and resolve.”

Brueggemann suggests that the Biblical God is less an entity of omni-powers than a “God who exercises tremendous freedom in constancy. I have argued that God in the Bible is a conundrum of unresolved ambiguities and that we, made in the image of God, are the same.

“The Church is one of the last places to honor the ambiguity and complexities of human life,” Brueggemann said. “The life

of faith consists in adjudicating those ambiguities critically and knowingly.”

In the midst of the collapse of the old order, the Church offers leadership to a world that no longer acknowledges its moral authority. In addition, many denominations are deeply divided between liberals and conservatives.

“I think liberalism is a kind of rationalism that wants to be generous in the ways it maintains the status quo,” Brueggemann said. “I think the real struggle for many people is not the struggle between liberal and conservative, but between liberal and radical. Liberalism is relatively safe and has domesticated the Gospel.”

In the right wing of the Churches, Brueggemann perceives “fear, deep deep fear. I think the Right senses that the old world is collapsing. They are doing a lot of rear-guard action to try to maintain it. Of course you can’t, but a lot of people keep trying. Liberals have the same fear. They allow modest changes to keep the system intact.”

What then must we do?

“I think we should be discerning and patient with each other to recognize that we’re all scared to death. But the Bible story is God being continually out in front of us, leading us to a new place where — most of the time — we do not want to be.”

Asked whether he finds talking to liberals or conservatives more constructive, Brueggemann said, “In the seminary where I teach, I have better conversations with conservatives because they take the Bible seriously, whereas liberals tend to operate out of culturally sophisticated assumptions that tend to be hidden and are not easily congruent with the Bible.”

The Church *should* be “that odd community, with all its pathology, that keeps raising human questions.” It can offer a counter-story, one that confesses, not self-reliance and consumerism, but awe and confidence in God, whose justice reaches beyond what we have seen. **TV**

## Excerpts from the Trinity Institute Lectures

In an evangelical infrastructure, the community operates with a powerful, poignant memory — a memory which affirms that our past originated through, and has been kept for us by, a faithful God who calls into being things that did not exist.

An evangelical infrastructure affirms and celebrates that each human self, each precious one, is a product of God’s majesty, power, and generosity. I can only respond in doxology.

[Our] tradition of biblical text has an enormous stake in memory, and the Church is the community which gathers to remember miraculous origins in God’s generosity.

Memory does not need to be ordered or coherent — it is rather like the script of psychotherapy. It brings to consciousness all sorts of odd features from our past which we have repressed. This memory shatters our thin present tense and makes available to us all sorts of materials out of which alternative present tenses may be made and chosen. The task of ministry is not always to come down with relevance on the present; it is enough sometimes to be playful in exploring the past. And when our past is hosted in playfulness, our present does not need to be held so tightly in control, but may become an arena for gratitude.

Evangelical infrastructure, unlike the claims of consumerism, operates with a powerful vision of the future that is not yet finished. I’m talking about eschatology. A Church that is so affluent that it has joined up with the present tense can hardly entertain serious eschatology. This notion of consumption invites us to an act of “futuring” that refuses the closed devel-

opmentalism which denies any notion of newness that is discontinuous from the present.

Hope is not an explanation of anything. Indeed, Biblical hope most often has little suggestion about how to get from here to there. It is rather a celebrative conviction that God will not quit until God has had God’s full way in the world. And I suggest that that affirmation is an antidote to the deep despair that sees no way out of our present vexation. Such an affirmation is a warning about our self-sufficiency, which imagines that in our own power we can have life on our terms — now and in time to come. Hope is an act that cedes our existence over to God, who is able to accomplish far more abundantly all that we can ask or imagine.

If the Church quits telling young people its promises, they will grow up to be adults who believe that everything must stay the way it is. This will yield a defeated world, a world with no hope and driven by an economy of scarcity, greed, and monopoly in which the abrasion between “haves” and “have nots” will be limitless. The only way of overcoming that abrasion is to live in hope that God may give a new thing, and that we work toward its creation.

We have two tasks: to displace amnesia with memory, and to supplant despair with hope. One text at a time.

The Church speaks of a self that is open to obedience and re clothed in holiness and righteousness. It asserts a world that stands under God’s full promise. It imagines a Church that is cared for, not orphaned. It imagines a self, a world, and a Church that is willing to let its whole life be received and given in covenant.

# Encountering women

by Julie A. Wortman

**R**efer to the World Council of Churches-sponsored Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women and most Episcopalian eyes glaze over into uncomprehending blankness. But mention the Decade of Evangelism and those same eyes may light up with enthusiasm. It's not any more enlightening a title for a decade, but many Episcopalians are eager to get on board with it.

After all, who can be against bringing people to Jesus Christ and into our churches? Women, some evangelism-minded folks will say, are only a "sub-group" within the Church. By insisting that the Church give priority to being in solidarity with them, women are asking us to forget that we're all one in Christ.

The problem is that when Church people talk about being one in Christ, it too often seems to mean that only one version of Christ's life, death and resurrection is worth hearing and that the concerns of an individual or of a particular group within the body are not the concerns of all. It is a rejection and subordination that is deeply wounding.

"I am sick of old men in white telling me about the resurrection," said the president of Australia's Movement for the Ordination of Women, Judy Scarf, who journeyed 43 hours in the air from Melbourne to Bahia, Brazil last April to join with 600 women and a handful of men in a Worldwide Anglican Encounter



Chung Hyung-Kyung, of Korea, with Carmen Gomez of Brazil.

credit: Jim Solheim, ENS

to experience the healing effects of church when a wider range of witnesses are heard and the theology of our fathers is exchanged for that of our mothers.

The keynote speaker for this six-day observance of the WCC's Solidarity-with-Women decade, Chung Hyung-Kyung of Korea's Ewa University, suggested the sort of history that informs feminist theology using the story of a young Korean woman, one of 200,000 women abducted from their villages to serve as prostitutes for the Japanese army during World War II.

The darkened auditorium was filled with sounds of screaming and weeping women while graphic slides illustrated the story. "Soldiers attacked my body as if I were their enemy the day before their

attack on American bases. I was violated by more than 60 soldiers a day," the young woman's memoir read.

"Healing begins when women finally break the silence and tell their stories," observed Encounter participant Sally Bucklee, who is president of the U.S. Episcopal Women's Caucus.

Bucklee recalled how Encounter participants came forward to share their stories at a public hearing on women and violence held by representatives of the U.S. Church's Committee on the Status of Women. They spoke of childhood incest, of battering husbands, of being forced to marry against their will, of community-sanctioned wife-beating.

"Non-North Americans couldn't believe the violence towards women in North America," Bucklee said.

And the North Americans had trouble believing the poverty of the third world, which crowded in around them in the form of Bahia's beggar children, dilapidated housing and unsavory streets.

Some threw pieces of sandwiches and fruit from their buses to clamoring hands,

a sight which reminded Maria Aris-Paul that even in a church of our mothers conversion is necessary. "We were looking at the poor like so many animals at a zoo," said Aris-Paul, who

is director of New York's Instituto Hispano Pastoral. "People need to be prepared [for an experience like this].

"It's like missionaries who think they are going someplace to bring God to people. The first assumption is wrong. God is already there." **TW**

*Healing begins when  
women finally break the  
silence and tell their stories.*

— Sally Bucklee

*Episcopal Women's Caucus*

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

**Carter Heyward:** If anybody had asked me when I was 16 what I thought about abortion, I would have said it was wrong.

It really wasn't until about 1973, when I was 28 years old that I became interested in the women's group through the Church and was increasingly interested in women's rights, including reproductive rights. I had begun to understand that reproductive freedom is a basic condition for women's well-being and that we need to put our trust in women to be able to make these very important decisions about how we understand our bodies and that which we carry within them. I don't trust the State to do what is just for women.

I am not sure if my own personal misgivings about having an abortion have shifted a great deal from the time I was a teenager. I'm not sure what I would do if I were pregnant and did not want to be. I would talk to those whom I trust. I would pray. I would look at the circumstances of my own life and then I would make a decision. I am more likely to make the decision at age 46 to abort than probably I would have been at 18, but I still would not do it casually.

But I really believe quite passionately that we need an absolute, unqualified support for women's reproductive freedom in this society.

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann:** It feels significant to me that you and I were different ages when Roe v. Wade hit. The decision that made abortion legal happened when I was in the eighth grade, and before I was done with the eighth grade one of my classmates had had two abortions.

I was growing up at General Theological Seminary and I know that was a rarefied environment, but my entire surroundings within the Church context were very pro-abortion. There was almost a giddiness with Church people saying, "A woman has a right to her body and to this freedom." The logic that followed was "it's merely a biological event." There was no consideration of whether there might be deeper ramifications even for the woman herself. This shut down a lot of possibilities for conversation.

When I was in college and suddenly had a number of friends who were trying to make the decision about whether or not to have an abortion, it felt like the entire momentum was toward abortion. It was a lot easier for white, middle class parents never to know that there had been a pregnancy. So rather than these decisions getting made in a real environment of freedom, it felt like a lot of things were most easily taken care of by having an

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abortion.

I ended up feeling a real frustration with the Church — and with the feminist community as well — for not giving more boundaries or some way to interpret what it meant to be making these decisions.



credit: Eleanor Mill

## Abortion rights: a conversation between Carter Heyward and Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

**C.H.:** I know I probably sound very cynical, but I don't think I am. I believe that the Church, in order to begin to help us build the supportive matrixes we are going to need if we are to live lives of justice and compassion, needs to become very hard-edged and realistic about what we're up against.

Take "the family," for example, I agree that, ideally speaking, a teenage girl ought to be able to discuss her pregnancy with her parents, her siblings, her spouse — if she is married. But, in a large number of cases, parents are going to be punitive. Often the father or a brother has been the perpetrator of the rape that has brought the pregnancy into existence. That's why I think the restrictions states are increasingly going to try to put on abor-

tions, such as getting parental or husband's consent, are very problematic.

**J.W-K.:** I'm not suggesting that we should have a more naive approach to how to make these decisions, but it would have been helpful to my generation if, included in this blanket permission to have abortions, there had been some recognition that the experience would be very raw, that there would be a lot of depression, a lot of grief and a lot of confusion. Even the ghosts of children at different ages.

**C.H.:** I agree that what you are saying is awfully important, but to do that in a way that doesn't become wildly idealistic there must be conditions established in the society that enable freedom of choice within which, then, the Church has a primary responsibility to do exactly what you are talking about.

**J.W-K.:** I don't share your confidence that that will happen. The Church runs scared. It has taken the position that is supportive of a woman's right to abortion. It's afraid of the backlash. It is trying to hold the line there. I don't think it knows how to have this conversation. Consequently, it is not offering very much to the women who are trying to make decisions about whether or not to have an abortion.

**C.H.:** I think the Church should take an even clearer stand than it has taken.

**J.W-K.:** But would you feel like the Church is equivocating if it takes that position and then follows it with an analysis of the repercussions and damage that gets done through abortion?

**C.H.:** I would have a difficult time with the Church doing that. What the Church should do is be clear about women's fundamental right to reproductive freedom and then open up all kinds of possibilities through Christian education, preaching and teaching, whatever, to look at the situations in women's lives as realistically as possible.

I hear you talking about one side, but it's much more common in our society that women are severely damaged or actually destroyed, by either illegal abortions or by winding up with seven or eight kids by the time they are 25. Then the kids often become damaged, abused — by the society, sometimes by the woman, and sometimes by her male partner.

There are all kinds of horrific things that happen as consequences of women's lack of reproductive freedom. I think the Churches need to acknowledge that this is the situation. I don't see the Protestant Churches doing much — other than making statements that are watered down because of the onslaught from the religious and political right which have converged in the last 12 years.

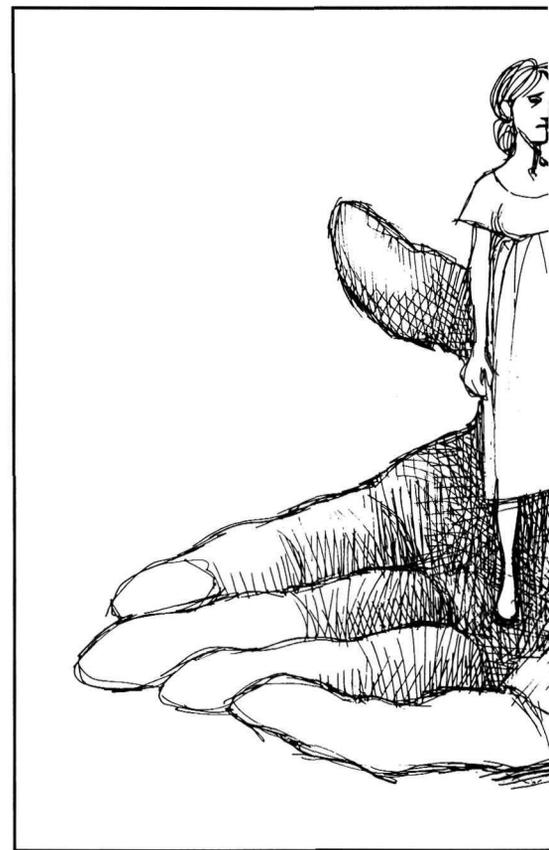
**J.W-K.:** To me, there is some reference to sanity in the Church putting qualifications on what it said in the past [about abortion], because it helps me believe that the Church is actually thinking.

In the early 1970s I didn't think this, but I believe now that for a woman to choose abortion is a really desperate and horrifying reflection on the society in which she lives. Part of the change in my

*Is a woman better served  
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—J.W-K.

view stems from the work of women who want to reclaim their bodies and take back power from the medical establishment. (Like midwives who would rather deliver at home and don't want high-tech interventions.) There is an organic rela-

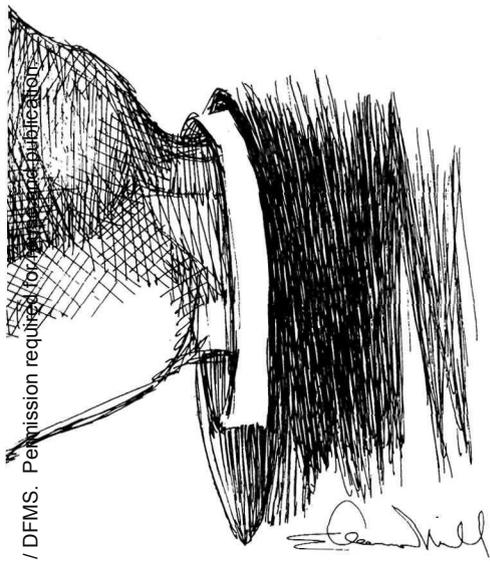


Reproductive rights in the hands of the Supreme Court

tionship between our bodies and what grows within us that this surgical, invasive experience of abortion invalidates. It rips at the integrity of the woman herself. To have that be the best option, things have to be awfully bad.

But there are a lot of people I know who went through abortions for whom the situation was not drastic. It was a matter of wanting to be able to finish school, or they hadn't thought about having kids, or couldn't imagine how to accommodate a kid, but they also didn't spend a lot of time trying to imagine it either. They also didn't understand, at the time, anyway, how invasive abortion might end up being.

**C.H.:** But it's dangerous in these times for us to try to legislate the morality we believe is best. Women are taught to be very alienated from our bodies. I think



credit: Eleanor Mill

the only way to eliminate difficult third-term abortions where there is a viable or almost viable fetus that could become a living human being — which I don't, by the way, believe that the fetus is, until the fetus is actually born — is to have abortions very easily available and legal, in which case I suspect the third-term abortions would be eliminated entirely.

**J.W-K.:** Do you see that abortion can also be abusive?

**C.H.:** What do you mean?

**J.W-K.:** Well, situations where the boyfriend insists on it.

**C.H.:** Oh yes, I think it's abusive whenever it's taken out of the woman's hands.

**J.W-K.:** It seems to me, sometimes, that it's the last straw on top of a series of abuses.

**C.H.:** I certainly see that as abusive,

but that's still beyond the scope of whether abortion should be legally accessible to women.

**J.W-K.:** Except it's very hard to legislate because it's interactive. It's so hard in a close intimate relationship to maintain clarity between what one of you thinks and what the other one thinks. If a really dominant mate insists that you need this abortion, it can be hard to be clear that that's not what you want.

**C.H.:** That's right, but then that's the dilemma we all live with. That takes us into to the whole realm of what is consent, what is mutuality — these are important relational issues, but I don't think they have anything at all to do with whether abortion should be legal.

**J.W-K.:** But if abortion is legal, there needs to be a very sophisticated way of dealing with that, which might require the kind of additions to the law that I imagine you would think were not helpful. I had a close friend who on a Friday was told by the counselor at an abortion clinic, "You're not resolved on this." On Saturday, the same clinic performed the abortion. She got there under the momentum of her boyfriend and her fear of

*I think that the minute we move away from the question of who will decide — if not the woman — then we will have moved into the arena of a kind of creeping fascism.*

—C.H.

telling her parents. And Saturday afternoon she was left to put the pieces back together. I would like there to have been more hoops and more resources for her.

**C.H.:** I think it is very important that she be able to do what she did. I don't wish pain and distress upon anybody, but the women I know best, who have had an abortion, don't look with gladness and great joy upon it but don't regret it either. And I think we have a right even to make a mistake.

**J.W-K.:** I am not sure that at the age of 19 she was equipped to be making decisions of that scope without more help.

**C.H.:** Possibly, but I don't think the help should be a legal requirement. I feel like behind your words there is an incredible naivete about the powers in this nation that would destroy you and me, your kids, and my niece and nephew, unless we are very vigilant. The state does not look kindly upon women who are living with a goodly sense of self-direction and empowerment.

**J.W-K.:** I understand that the state has its limitations and I don't feel naive about the power it exercises. But I feel like the feminists who went before me made a good space for radical, strong, childless women to function; I appreciate that. It was helpful to me in discerning my vocation and in assessing the climate that I was working in — there is an amazing power in knowing you're facing a sexist attitude and being able to speak directly to that.

Now, I want to see room for children and for women to have a sense of identification with the pregnancies that they begin. There is space in society — not a lot, but there is some — for assertive, educated women to go out and make a mark. But there is zip tolerance for the kids that may come with them.

**C.H.:** I do not experience that at all. Sunday we had a blessing of a six-month-old Chinese baby girl who had just been adopted by friends of mine. Fifty friends gathered for the most extraordinary celebration. I would bet that every person there would have been strongly pro-

choice.

**J.W-K.:** I may not have spoken clearly enough. I don't mean that pro-choice people do not appreciate babies. I mean that our society makes it very difficult for women to be whole people *and* parents. And that the corporate work environment in this country, more so than most industrialized nations, does not make room for mothers.

**C.H.:** I suspect that if we were to spend a weekend together and really probe some of these things, you and I probably would be standing very close together on some of our perceptions.

I hear you saying you weren't implying this, but certainly sometimes it is implied that [pro-choice] women don't want or like children. I think that is untrue.

**J.W-K.:** I do too. I was making the point about professionalism because it is another force in society that moves us toward the decision to abort.

**C.H.:** That's right, but it's another thing entirely to say that there should be any kind of regulation that would make it impossible for the woman to get the abortion if for whatever reason she chooses it.

I look at the people who are behind the politics of the right to life movement in the Reagan/Bush era and I see that the folks engineering this are the same people who have given us Iran/Contra and the defeat of the ERA [Equal Rights Amendment], and an economic order that is literally feeding off the lives of the poor, and who gave us the war in the Persian Gulf. You know, at the very least, there is reason to be suspicious.

**J.W-K.:** Sure, it's also true that there are a number of people who are pro-life that do not have those characteristics at all. There are also people who may be naive about foreign policy but given accurate facts — which I don't think they have access to through the media — would come to some conclusions that you and I would share about whether the United States should be funding the Contra.

Have you read about the Common Ground movement?

**C.H.:** I don't think so, no.

**J.W-K.:** There have been meetings between women who are strongly pro-life and others who are strongly pro-choice. They are looking for areas where they agree. They found that they both have at heart the welfare of the woman at risk. In some cases,



Daniel Choly Zettner drew this when he was four and his mother was pregnant.

#### Operation rescue?

credit: Eleanor Mill

women have started, together, organizing shelters and support systems. Part of what they were concerned about was the amount of money that both sides have been spending on publicity.

**C.H.:** I am sure that there is some common ground and that's good. I also assume that one place that there would not be common ground has to do with who fundamentally should decide these matters. It is either women or the state. And — in the state we're in — that means primarily a right-wing power.

**J.W-K.:** But is a woman better served by being able to strip herself of the life that has been conceived in her or by a different approach? I think that the folks who sup-

port the seamless garment argument, who put abortion on the same scale as nuclear attacks, are saying that choosing death is never the best option for someone and it's not where our energy ought to be.

I am not looking to legislate this right now, I am looking to think and to have a range of ideas. I don't approach the way that I live through the political schema as much as a personal one.

I can understand that given the climate and your convictions, you can't not talk about the legislation. You have to.

**C.H.:** That's right. I think that the minute we move away from the question of who will decide — if not the woman — then we will have moved into the arena of a kind of creeping fascism. It comes in all kinds of seductive guises. We don't understand the extent to which our control of our lives — our bodies — is slipping right through our hands.

**J.W-K.:** What goes through your mind when you think about a woman being obligated to retain a pregnancy but, obviously, not obligated to keep that child?

**C.H.:** I feel it's like holding a woman hostage for nine months. It is violating that woman's integrity. To me, that would be as gross a violation as if somebody was to take me off the sidewalk and rape me and put a gun to my head.

I think that would be outrageous, because there's something utterly demeaning about the state or a Church — God help us — suggesting that, as a woman, I could not make a decision that would be as moral as possible.

**J.W-K.:** In situations where someone's pregnant because the pregnancy has been forced on them, I think a lot of questions are appropriate. When it's a loving relationship that accidentally resulted in a pregnancy, I am not convinced that nine months is an enormous price to pay.

**C.H.:** For a woman to make the decision you just described would be fine. I would certainly support a woman in making that decision. For example, I have a relative who had a Downs Syndrome

baby who chose to have the baby. The baby is now a woman, and her family is very, very grateful that they gave birth to this child. But these people would be the first to say that they wouldn't propose everybody should do what they did, because not everybody has the vocation to raise a Downs Syndrome child.

**J.W-K.:** But the only option is not whether to keep the baby or to abort it. It seems to me that carrying the baby to term and giving it up for adoption gets very little consideration. There really is a bias against that right now, but I am not sure it's such a bad option. The woman can retain her life with this nine-month hiatus during which there are going to be a lot of specters, but she hands the child a life. Then the mother needs to live with the ambiguity of whether or not that child is safe and that would be hellish, but is it any more hellish than

knowing that the child is not going to have a life?

**C.H.:** What you're describing is the kind of conversation that I can see happening in a counselor's office or between friends or family. I cannot see that this should impinge upon whether or not that legal right is there.

When the legal right is there, then the morality gets fleshed out among the real live people.

**J.W-K.:** In the environment that I grew up in, there was a lot more momen-

tum and pressure toward abortion than there was articulated thought coming up to meet that pressure — that is what I am rebelling against. I think it's important to talk about how men or career plans, or whatever, can be manipulative in pushing women toward abortions.

**C.H.:** If abortion can be safe and legal, Planned Parenthood and other groups could get on with the business of doing exactly what you are talking about. That's the irony of this. Pro-choice people would love to get

on with helping make the world a safer place for mothers and children. But after this summer or next summer, in Louisiana and other states, there are going to have to be underground abortion clinics and underground railroads for women who want abortions.

What I find distressing quite frankly is the number of people of good will who really don't see the political urgency of this.

**J.W-K.:** There is probably a level on which we each have disappointments with each other's point of view. It would have to be immensely disappointing to be in the first wave of feminists in this era — who are followed by another wave of women, who perceive themselves as feminists and who share a lot of common assumptions, but who don't have the same analysis and conviction that abortion needs to be protected. That could feel like walking into battle and having the second line not want to participate.

**C.H.:** We are in serious trouble. Have you ever read *The Handmaid's Tale*?

**J.W-K.:** Yes.

**C.H.:** I really think that Margaret

*When a loving relationship accidentally results in a pregnancy, I am not convinced nine months is an enormous price to pay.*

— J.W-K.

*I feel it's like holding a woman hostage for nine months. To me, that would be as gross a violation as if somebody was to take me off the sidewalk and rape me and put a gun to my head.* — C.H.

Atwood's not exaggerating. That's where we are going unless we become vigilant, but this can be easily written off as fiction.

If abortion is legal and safe, we are freeing up a whole lot of energy — including feminist energy — to look at exactly the things you are talking about. This would increase the quality of human community and enhance women's capacity to have children that are going to be wanted.

**J.W-K.:** Hopefully. Ideally. It's my turn to sound cynical, but I can't share your confidence in that. I don't think it is to be presumed that because we have the right to terminate pregnancies, there will be a healthier environment for children.

You have said that a fetus — especially in the early portion of existence — is not necessarily a human baby. I guess my own feelings are linked to the problems women have around miscarriage and the recent effort to try to ritualize that loss. Biologically a woman's body is already changing and her emotions consequently are tied to those changes. Part of what I think is born with the conception of the fetus is a changing sense of the future. One suddenly starts to imagine this new person and what this new person is going to require of and give to your life. It seems clear that if it is a wanted pregnancy there is a lot of bonding with that fetus long before it is born. Even some of its character is apparent — whether it's a really rowdy baby or a pretty pacific baby and certainly it's got a genetic inheritance and what Carl Jung calls the family unconscious. So, it's not

just any biological process; it's a particular child that would evolve if this process continues. One of the things I worry about is where God gets in that mix.

**C.H.:** My faith is that God is in it from the beginning. I believe that the fetus is life. I am not arguing that the fetus is not life. I am arguing that not until the baby is delivered does that baby have equal standing in the human community with a woman.

I don't think abortion is like cutting your hair. But everything in me tells me it's very different to have a newly fertilized egg sucked out of a womb a month or two after conception than it is to have a seven- or eight-month-old developing human life taken out surgically.

**J.W-K.:** I have a very close friend — and in this case it's the person who would have been the father — who, some years after an abortion, asked forgiveness of the child. I think that was a whole way to approach it. I have a problem with



abortion, especially when people have the attitude that we can control everything, that we have the right to be totally individualistic. Accommodating, in your mind and your spirituality, the fact that there is more to it than simply your body — that there is also God and creation — is helpful to me.

**C.H.:** Well, I think the idea of building the human community and having dialogue and helping women see and have a greater range of choices is very important. I don't believe that can take precedence over helping maintain the legal conditions within which such choices and dialogue are possible.

**Q** **How can dreams heal?**  
**A:** The most significant thing about dreams is that they reveal to us our inner condition the way it really is. Dreams offer a glimpse into the condition of our soul. If the ego — the center of conscious personality — is deluding itself, this inner revealing of our true condition is very helpful. If we have been denying a great deal of what the Bible calls our sins, it sets the stage for what the Bible calls **metanoia**.

An elderly woman who had been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for many years often told me that a condition of her remaining sober was to be completely honest with herself and everyone else. She told me one day she had had a dream that she was having sexual intercourse with a certain man. I asked her, "Do you know him?" "Yes," she said, "He's a terrible liar."

Then she told me this story: A famous lecturer had come to her church, and she was unable to attend. The church had made a tape. She borrowed a copy, and decided she would make her own copy. In the process of replicating it, she erased it. She returned the blank copy to the librarian without saying anything, and that night she had the dream. She knew what she had to do. She went back and made her confession to the librarian. (The librarian told her, "Don't worry. We have nine other copies.") For her it was not just a casual deception, but the beginning of a trip into alcoholism again.

**Q: How is dreamwork related to Christian tradition?**

**John Sanford** is an Episcopal priest in San Diego, Calif., a dreams scholar, author and the son of faith healer Agnes Sanford. Interviewer **Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*. **Ida Mae Sydnor** is a Philadelphia artist in recovery who visits the Southwest Community Center with Sister Helen David. The bird is her symbol of survival.



credit: Ida Mac Sydnor

# Healing through dreams:

An interview with John Sanford  
by Marianne Arbogast

**A:** There are many references to dreams in the Bible and the early Church fathers. Nine out of ten references in the early fathers are supportive of the view that in dreams God is contacting us.

[In dream analysis] we step back into another Christian attitude. The contemporary attitude is essentially to deny the reality of the inner life and the spiritual world. When we hear talk of angels and demons, we say that's a quaint metaphysical way of speaking. When we step into the world of dreams, we step into the

archetypal world, another name for the spiritual world. This frightens people; it goes against the rational outlook, the materialistic outlook.

**Q: Your mother, Agnes Sanford, was well-known for her healing ministry. Could you describe her work?**

**A:** When I was a child, she suffered from a lot of depression. In struggling to get free, she found powers of healing.

She anticipated a lot of the imaging that goes on nowadays. In prayer, very often with the laying on of hands, she

would imagine the person getting well, becoming better, stronger. She would invoke the name of Christ. Her hands would get hot and shake and a kind of energy would come. All of that rested upon a very deep inner life.

**Q: How was that similar to, or different from, your own approach?**

**A:** One can't do the healing work I do without a great deal of training. To be a psychotherapist, to know when to work with dreams and when not to, is a professional kind of work. The other kind of healing I don't think requires that. It requires some wisdom or grounding in one's own spirituality, and it requires humility. Today, generally, there is not much interest in it. Seminarians are not trained in it, but it is something quite simple to do.

When I was working as an Episcopal minister, I used the laying on of hands in sickrooms and hospitals. I never feel I had the healing gift my mother did, but every now and then people claimed it helped them a great deal. I never once used it where the patient did not appreciate it.

**Q: What aspects of healing do you deal with in your new book?**

**A:** When people get ill, it causes psychological and spiritual problems as well as physical. Many people wonder today, *Am I responsible for my illness?* Sometimes they carry a great deal of guilt because they've been listening to people who say, if you become ill, it's because you chose it. My latest book, which will be out in the fall [*Healing Body and Soul*, Westminster: John Knox Press, Louisville, KY] explores different reasons for illness in the New Testament. My thesis is that there is no one overriding meaning of illness. There are different reasons for it, and Jesus' approach is accordingly different.

Healing of any kind is a great mystery. It has its own ways of working. **TV**

# Healing Into Freedom

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

**And [the Pharisees] answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and you are trying to teach us?” And they drove him out. (John 9:34)**

It is a strikingly consistent feature of the Gospels that healings should occasion such hostility from the authorities. The actions of Jesus in this regard are scrupulously surveilled. They are the cause of plottings and death threats against him. Granted, often as not, these deeds simultaneously violate the legalisms of the sabbath - or challenge and subvert some aspect of the purity code which regulates and marginalizes the life of the infirm. Still there is something in human wholeness which remains oddly unwelcome to the powers that be. Those healed are scrutinized, harassed, and even brought to trial.

The most elaborate drama of this sort is the “grand jury” proceeding against the man born blind in the ninth chapter of John. It’s wonderful.

“Who sinned, this man or his parents?”

The healing begins in Jesus’ reply to this question. Neither, says Jesus, breaking the defining strictures of dominant ideology which blame and stigmatize the

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**Bill Wylie-Kellermann** is a United Methodist pastor, teaching at the Whitaker School of Theology in Detroit. He is the author of *Seasons of Faith and Conscience* (Orbis Press, 1991).

victim.

An alternative is set in motion. Often as not in such stories, the initiative and assertiveness, the bold and creative moxy of the ailing is celebrated by Jesus as faith. Here, however, the blind man, who is initially passive and no more than a passing object of theological conversation for the disciples, is transformed — by Jesus’ initiative — into the actor at center stage.

After the healing, when his neighbors doubt that this could be the same person they know, he avers, “I am the man.” His answer anticipates, with painful irony, the courtyard trial of Peter before the cockcrow who denies he is the man, and the trial of Jesus who declares his identity saying, “I am.”

The blind man’s parents (who are also “subpoenaed” by the Pharisees) appear intimidated, turning the inquisitors back on their son. In this kangaroo court, the blind one’s healing is a process with momentum to it: he becomes progressively bold and free under official badgering. As he utters increasingly strong confessions of Jesus’ identity, his own identity seems to grow more whole and full. It is less and less clear whether he is a witness in a proceeding against Jesus *in absentia*, or himself the one under indictment. In the end he is judged unfit and “cast out.” As long recognized, John’s community certainly heard and told their own story of trial witness in this one’s experience.

If they had their way, the authorities clearly would have him once again blind and in his place. It’s as if they ruled by virtue of brokenness, division, infirmity, nay death itself. Healing flies in the face of that. Little wonder that in John’s telling, the event which finally precipitates Jesus’ arrest is not the Temple action, but the raising of Lazarus. That “healing” portends a freedom from the power of death which they never can abide.

**T**he easiest format for a 75th anniversary forum for *The Witness* is to take the celebration to someplace friendly, perhaps the Church Divinity School of the Pacific. Some good conversations might take place. But there is a risk that we would simply be preaching to the choir, an exercise the Left seems to engage in quite often.

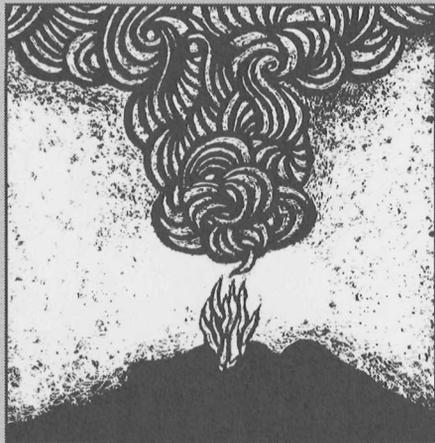
The challenge is greater, we decided, in taking the witness of this magazine into an arena where many presumptions are not shared. Holding onto our vision will be more difficult and perhaps more fruitful if some of those in attendance bring criticisms and ask us, in light of our faith, to explain what we mean.

Therefore, we sought out an environment that would offer us that challenge. Trinity School for Ministry has offered us hospitality, though not without misgivings. Specters of the kind of message *The Witness* might bring were raised. Yet, in the end, the only binding condition Trinity placed on the invitation was that the worship services follow the Book of Common Prayer.

Trinity’s condition is an explicit reminder of that which we have in common: our love for the Lord and the liturgy of the Church.

The theme of the forum is evangelism. This, too, pivots around our love for God and our desire to be faithful, passions that *The Witness* and Trinity share. Articulating these commitments before one another may require us both to work harder to explain what we believe. It may reveal areas where we each need to work to resolve apparent inconsistencies.

We are not privy to the reactions of Trinity’s supporters, but already friends of *The Witness* are raising red flags. Trinity is considered enemy turf. They see no value in dignifying the campus with our presence. They don’t see what can be gained. Worse, they fear that as a rela-



# 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary forum on evangelism

## ENCOUNTERING OUR SHADOWS: *The Witness goes to Trinity School for Ministry*

tively new editor, I plan to lead the magazine to some middle ground commitments.

But the intent of this forum is not to reconcile our communities. It is not to reach consensus. It is not to convert.

All we hope for is that adversaries within the Church can meet. No doubt some of the images we have of one another will be found invalid and laid down. Some won't. There won't be answers to all the questions that are asked. Some of these questions will pivot around deeply held beliefs and symbols. Can we even join one another at the communion rail — does it depend on who celebrates?

The purpose of the forum is to provide a safe setting in which to discern where our hearts may be in alignment and where they are at war. As we step from faith into praxis, where is it that our paths diverge?

In Jungian circles, it is believed that your enemy holds a truth about you which you need in order to become whole. Christ's story of the plank and splinter which interfere with our vision makes the same claim.

At the root of our intention, I guess, is a conviction that it is okay for people to disagree. Feeling satisfied with the course of a witness or debate, even when you don't "win," is grounded in the knowledge that neither "we" nor "they" have the market on truth. As long as one fights fair, an adversary can be a wonderful thing to behold. In this case, we know that folks at Trinity take Scripture, faith and action as seriously as we do. Like us, they are willing to be marginalized within the

*It is possible that  
we share neither  
a Lord nor a  
faith, only a  
baptism that is  
laden with irony.*

October 24, 1992  
at Trinity School for Ministry

Registration, coffee, 9 a.m.

Worship

Workshops

Bible study

Lunch

Workshops

Moderated discussion between

representatives of Trinity and *The Witness*

Closing worship

We need to know who is coming. Please send a postcard to Marietta Jaeger, *The Witness*, 1249 Washington Blvd., Suite 3115, Detroit, MI 48226; (313) 962-2650. The cost will be minimal — enough to cover lunch.

Church for their beliefs.

For some people in both constituencies the words "fight fair" will bring resounding responses — stories of occasions where *Witness* or Trinity folks allegedly lied, misrepresented a situation, were deliberately cruel...

There are members of Trinity's faculty and administration who do not like *The Witness* and who will probably avoid the forum. There are also *Witness* supporters who have said they cannot go to a forum at Trinity. Several women priests have said they carry scars and cannot choose to subject themselves to what they consider a potentially violent exchange.

It is possible that the wounds are too deep. It is possible that, even committing this forum to prayer, we will be unable to speak or hear one another. It is possible that we share neither a Lord nor a faith, only a baptism that is laden with irony.

If that's true, I shudder for the Church. Some people are convinced that it is true and shudder instead at my naivete. We'll see. It seems to me we have one day and some hope/naivete to lose. What we gain is freedom from the "thought police" on both sides who say no conversation should take place. And in the heart of the conflict, we might even catch a glimpse of Christ crucified.

— Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

# VOICES FROM MANTUA



View of mask installation by Willie Birch, The Painted Bride Art Center  
photo credit: Blaise Tobia

## Unmasking fear

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

**L**ike many urban areas, the Philadelphia neighborhood of Mantua is in desperate need of healing. It is suffering from multiple wounds — poverty, drug and alcohol abuse, violence and despair — as are many of our communities, especially those beset by poverty. But unlike similar places, Mantua has not

succumbed. There are voices to be heard in this neighborhood that cry out against the pain. Some are forceful and loud, like those of the parents who chant in front of local crack houses for hours on end. And some are small and at times barely audible, like those of the children who grow up witnessing the destruction of those they love.

Artist Willie Birch has long had a special concern for helping such small voices be heard. His most recent project of this type involved six weeks working

with a group of children at the McMichaels School in Mantua. Because of his ability to identify with the children, and the alternate method of communication, the project provided a model for helping them reveal their fears, their anger and their aspirations.

Originally from New Orleans, now a New York City resident, Birch is well known for his sculpture and painting combining folksy renderings of black community life with strong social and political messages (messages usually made

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Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz are editors of the art section for *The Witness*. They teach in Philadelphia, PA.

absolutely clear through the use of words incorporated directly into the image).

He received a graduate degree in 1973 from the Maryland Institute College of Art, not in fine art like most artists, but in art education. This, in combination with his work for the Jesuit Education Association in Baltimore and his position as artist-in-residence for St. Francis Xavier, the oldest black Catholic Church in Maryland, set the stage for Birch's interest in making art within a community setting. This interest solidified into an ongoing commitment after his move to New York, when from 1978 to 1979 Birch participated in a large government-funded artist project (within the CETA program) that placed artists in residencies at neighborhood schools and organizations. Such a populist approach to artmaking, Birch found, set him in direct opposition to what he terms as the type of "bourgeois, intellectual black art community" that he encountered at places like the Studio Museum of Harlem.

In spite of criticism within some art circles, Birch has struggled to integrate his own individual art with the collective projects that he undertakes. When the Painted Bride Art Center in Philadelphia invited him to work with students at the McMichaels School, Birch jumped at the chance. Once there, with the support and enthusiasm of the principal and staff, he guided the children through a mask-making project that blended a traditional African art form with contemporary American concerns. The children chose societal problems that troubled them: homelessness, pollution, drugs, gangs, guns, smoking, abused children, alcohol abuse. They made sketches, molded and painted masks about these issues, and then wrote short essays describing the symbolism they used. The final results were displayed at the Painted Bride Center, complete with an opening reception for the young artists and their parents.

One essay, by Jermar Fisher, age 12, described some very personal wounds:

*My mask is about my grandma who died in her sleep. So did my grandpa who had a stroke and was paralyzed on the left side. My grandma tried to kill herself three times. That is what the hammer stands for. The gun stands for all the pain and struggle she went through. The bottles of beer for her nose means how the beer took over her body and made her talk funny and smell funny. It just could not stop. Then she died and took our family to bits. My brother and I did not go to the funeral.*

Unlike the other children's masks, this one was unpainted, remaining a ghostly white.

The show included 25 masks made by the children and one made by Birch. Such an exhibit will do little to advance his own art career, but may go a long way towards enabling a small group of children to learn how to make their voices heard. And the hope is that there will be somebody on the other end to listen to what they are saying. In Birch's estimation, that is, after all, the whole point of



Mask by Willie Birch

photo credit: Blaise Tobia

art and society

making art. "If you can't communicate with somebody else," he says, "you're wasting your time." **TW**

*We have no argument with the people of Iraq. Indeed, for the innocent caught in this conflict, I pray for their safety.*

— President George Bush in 1991

*When the sanctions were imposed — and I supported the sanctions — I assumed there was to be a humanitarian exemption for food and medicine. That did not happen. Whether it was clumsy or purposeful, nothing was done to protect civilians.*

— Jonathon Fine, Founder,  
Physicians for Human Rights

**T**he yellow ribbons have faded or disappeared, and with them the intense preoccupation with events in the Gulf that dominated American consciousness a year ago. For most Americans, war supporters and protesters alike, the war is over. For Iraqi Americans, relief workers, and others with connections in Iraq, this perception is a source of increasing anguish and alarm.

Members of Detroit's Chaldean community, along with a handful of peace activists, gathered at Mother of God Chaldean Catholic Church recently to hear speakers address the ongoing crisis in Iraq. Their message was urgent: The economic embargo is increasing war casualties on a massive scale. Its victims are mostly children, the elderly and those in frail health.

"The cumulative effect of war damage which targeted the infrastructure — water, sanitation, and power facilities — and the sanctions is going to make recovery very long and cause a lot of suffering," said Chris George, Assistant Director, Middle East/Africa for Save the Children, an international relief organization. "Sewage still floods the streets. The water is unclean. Food is still inaccessible, especially to the poor. The crisis is as

**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.

critical as it was a year ago."

In Basra, families are forced to live on their rooftops because sewage still floods their homes, George said. Schools remain closed, and have been stripped of desks and chairs by people foraging for firewood to boil the contaminated water. Clinics are closed for lack of medicines and supplies. Hospitals struggle to stay



## IRAQ: An update by Marianne Arbogast

open; because of the power shortage, halls are darkened and soiled hospital linens are washed by hand.

Christine Oram, founder of the Iraqi-American Humanitarian Delegation, described hospital conditions in testimony before a Congressional task force on hunger in March: "In every hospital I visited, my first impression was always the same: oppressively hot wards, overcrowded with patients, ill-equipped with unsanitary conditions....I visited the Saddam Central Teaching Hospital in Baghdad, considered to be the best children's hospital in Iraq. In a makeshift surgical room, I

saw an eight-year-old boy, lying on a vinyl-covered bench. He was screaming in agony while his father and an assistant held him down so that the doctor could stitch his seven inch abdominal wound in a germ-filled environment. He cried out to his mother, over and over again, 'Mom, mom, momma, come to me, please.' He cried out, 'Please stop the pain. Let them stop.' The doctor had no anesthesia for the surgery."

Jennifer Habte of Catholic Relief Services said that relief workers are reporting pre-famine conditions in Iraq: people eating seed grain, families selling household goods to buy food, children begging on city streets.

"Bomb now, die later," was the military policy against Iraq, Jonathon Fine, founder of Physicians for Human Rights, said. Although imports of food, medicine, and humanitarian supplies have been allowed since March of 1991, the ban on oil exports has crippled Iraq's economy, making such purchases impossible. The inflation rate may be as high as 2000 percent. One can of baby formula costs the equivalent of 80 dollars.

"The Horn of Africa is now bracing itself for what may be one of the greatest famines in history," George said. "It is a tragic irony that the U.N. is participating in creating a situation of emergency" in a nation that *could* help itself.

A number of religious organizations advocate a restructuring of the embargo to allow Iraq to use its resources to purchase essential commodities. Others are calling for it to be lifted.

"We're all responsible for what's happened there," Fine says. "The Geneva Conventions, to which the U.S. has agreed by treaty, say civilians must be protected in times of hostility. Their survival — and access to water and medical care — must be protected. The opposite has happened. The sad thing is, the victors are never held accountable." **TW**

## A Salvadoran bishop at last!

On March 28, Martin de Jesus Barahona, 49, became the first Salvadoran-chosen, Salvadoran-born bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of El Salvador. He will also be the diocese's first full-time episcopal authority. All four of El Salvador's previous bishops, James H. Ottley of Panama being the most recent, were heads of other dioceses who were also appointed to oversee the diocese's 12 Episcopal congregations and small handful of unorganized missions.

Barahona's consecration at a service which attracted 800 people comes as his country engages in a hesitant peace process after 12 years of civil war, a coincidence that former Episcopal missionary Josie Beecher, for one, believes might be a "serendipitous" plus for a people in need of reconciliation and healing. Beecher was one of 21 church workers arrested when government troops raided the refugee center at San Salvador's St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church in December 1989 and continues to live and work in El Salvador.

"As Christians in solidarity with our Salvadoran brothers and sisters we are now called to accompany them as they embark on the grand project of constructing the Kingdom of God here in this earth, the society of justice and plentitude that God has promised us," Beecher said after the Salvadoran government and the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN) signed the peace agreement last Dec. 31.

## One of the saints

A revised edition of John Melish's 1942 memoir of Episcopal peace activist Paul Jones is now available from Forward Movement Publications. Jones was Bishop of Utah during World War I, a war he spoke against, causing the House of Bishops to call for his resignation.

Jones was a founder of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and has been proposed for commemoration in the Church's calendar of Lesser Feasts and Fasts. The Fellowship, by the way, will be holding its annual national conference this year at

Snow Ranch, Colo., July 15-19. The theme is "Building Community, Breaking Free: 500 Years of Resistance."

The 56-booklet on Jones costs \$2.25 and can be obtained from FMP at 412 Sycamore Street, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202.

## Native witness

Funds to finance a delegation of 15 native people from North America on a trip to Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua are proving hard to come by, but Thomas Trimmer, an Episcopal deacon who is national coordinator for Native-Americans in Solidarity with Central America and a member of the Ottawa tribe, is determined to make the trip happen. "[North American Indians] need to see how other native people respond to the same problems [of poverty and racism] we have" Trimmer said, noting that participants will include Indians of limited means economically, but with influence in their tribes.

Many native people in the U.S. lack self-esteem, Trimmer says, perhaps largely because "Indians in this country are a kept people." His own travels in Central America have indicated that its indigenous peoples are much prouder of their identity.

"Suicide is unheard of in these countries while our rate of suicide is the highest in this country," Trimmer said, noting that alcoholism is also much less common among Central American native populations. "We want to find out why the Mayans, for example, still have pride. It's important that we become united — hopefully we will be able to change our culture."

Trimmer is also helping to organize an experience for non-Indians who want to understand what life is like for Indians in this country. "It's an immersion or a plunge into life on a reservation for 25 to 30 people for about five days," Trimmer explained. Participants will live with Indian families in one of four different Michigan communities in the context of a pow-wow.

For more information on either the Central American trip or the immersion [which is being sponsored by Groundwork

for a Just World, a social justice group in Detroit] contact Trimmer at 3532 W. Monroe Road, Alma, Mich., 48801; 517-463-6531.

## James Bay II

The Diocese of Massachusetts has urged Massachusetts' public utilities not to purchase power from the Canadian James Bay II power project until safeguards are provided for the environment and for the interests of the aboriginal peoples of Quebec, where the project is located.

Diocesan opposition to Phase II of the hydro-electric power project began with a resolution sponsored by a confirmation class of 14- and 15-year olds from Trinity Church in Topsfield. Trinity's rector, Jeffrey Gill, wanted the teens to become aware of how the actions of this country affect peoples in other places. A fact-finding trip to James Bay, financed by a variety of fundraisers and hosted by local Cree people, brought the young people face-to-face with the already devastating effects of James Bay I.

"Tens of thousands of acres of wilderness have been flooded; rotting vegetation and wildlife carcasses have had adverse effects on the environment; mercury and other hazardous chemicals have entered the food chain, causing slow brain development in Cree infants," the confirmation students reported at their diocesan convention.

Delegates passed the James Bay II resolution, which called for the diocese and all its people to make "conscious efforts to reduce dependence on electricity produced and consumed at the expense of the environment and the way of life of native peoples."

*Prepared by Julie A. Wortman*



*Killing yourself amounts to confessing. It is confessing that life is too much for you...*

Albert Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

*Someone has said that statistics are human faces with the tears wiped off.*

Grant Wacker in *The Christian Century*, Nov. 1990

**S**omeone commits suicide in the United States every 20 minutes. There are over 29,000 annually; 10,000 over age 65 and 7,000 between ages 15 and 24. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among teenagers. According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control in 1986, these figures will double by the year 2000. Though almost beyond belief, suicide is among the top 10 causes of death among children 6-12 years of age.

Clergy are called upon by tens of millions of Americans in times of personal crisis. A national survey has shown that about three out of 10 Americans who seek help in crisis consult clergy first.

“Parish-based clergy, especially the black clergy, function as a major mental health resource to communities with limited access to professional mental health services,” a 1986 Yale University study reported. Eighty-five percent of the clergy surveyed reported that they had counseled dangerous or suicidal persons and 100 percent said they did some crisis intervention counseling in the course of their pastoral work.

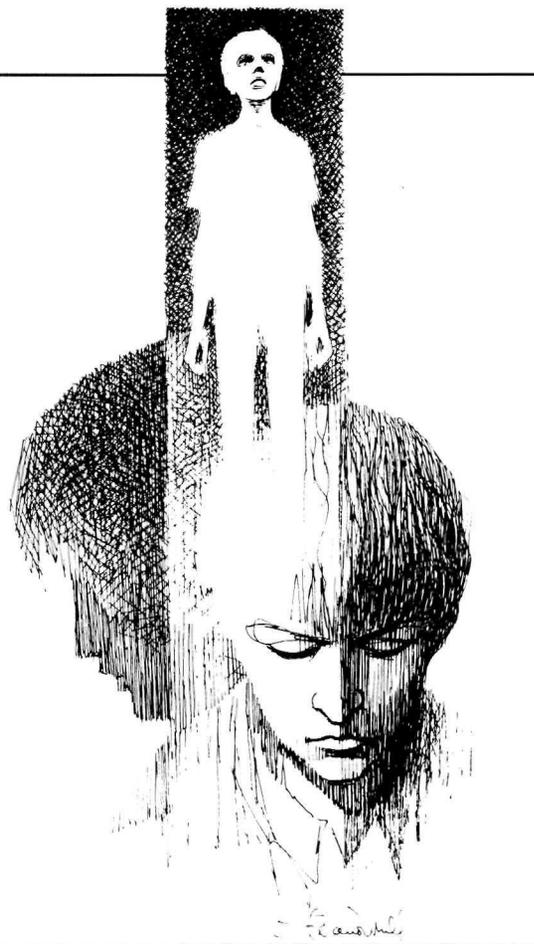
Although clergy are a primary resource for many persons in crisis, there is a body of recent research demonstrating that even

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**Andrew Weaver**, a United Methodist minister and clinical psychologist, directs the Pacific Counseling Center in Los Angeles. An expanded version of this article, including footnotes, is available upon request. Artist **Eleanor Mill** is a syndicated artist living in Hartford, CT.

# Assessing suicide risks

by Andrew Weaver



credit: Eleanor Mill

experienced clergy are ill-prepared to assess for suicide potential. When compared to mental health professionals such as psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers and marriage and family therapists, clergy scored significantly lower on the ability to assess for suicide lethality.

This is particularly alarming when we know that suicide is preventable. Most suicidal individuals are ambivalent. Seventy to 80 percent of suicides communicate intent to harm themselves. This article offers two quick reference acronyms for assessment and intervention with potentially suicidal individuals: **SADPERSONS** and **RIGOR**.

**Sex:** Women make more attempts at suicide than men, but men use more lethal means, such as firearms, and therefore accomplish more suicides. The in-

crease in suicide in the last three decades has been in direct relationship to the rise in handguns — those states with the lowest rates of suicide have the strictest handgun control laws.

**Age:** The highest rates of suicide attempts occur in persons between ages 24 and 44. The highest rates of completed suicides are among persons 55 to 64. The greatest increase in suicides in recent years have been teenagers. For adults over 80, suicide is one of the major causes of death.

**Depression/Mania:** Almost everyone is depressed at one time or another. Suicidal depression, however, is in another category. Ten percent of Americans experience a more intense form of depression that significantly interferes with their ability to function at work and/or socially. These “major depressions” place a

person at a significant risk of suicide and are marked by such symptoms as loss of self-worth and excessive guilt, extreme fatigue, difficulty with memory and concentration, significant change in eating and/or sleeping patterns, loss of interest in formerly pleasurable activities, withdrawal from others, and irritability. It is estimated that about three-quarters of the people who kill themselves are clinically depressed when they take their lives.

Approximately ten percent of people who become clinically depressed also have a manic episode. These people are said to be suffering a “manic-depressive” or “bi-polar” disorder. The predominant mood during the mania is elevated, expansive, elated or irritable. During a manic episode a person may sleep very little, talk rapidly, loudly and continually, experience racing thoughts and take little time to eat. They often have poor judgement and can lose touch with reality. They may become impulsive, making serious financial, social and occupational blunders. Mania and depression are two sides of a mood disorder that may appear separately or in conjunction, accounting for half of all suicides.

**Previous Attempts:** The single most significant indicator of suicide potential is past attempts. Persons contemplating suicide with a history of suicidal attempts should be taken very seriously. Between one-fifth and one-third of all suicides have prior attempts.

**Ethanol: Alcohol and/or Drug Abuse:** About one-fourth of suicides are alcoholics. An alcoholic, regardless of gender or age, who is considering suicide and has had a major interpersonal loss (divorce, separation, death, etc.) within the last six weeks, or expects to have such a loss, is a very high risk of suicide. Drug-abusing individuals who have not sought treatment for suicidal behavior appear to be at special risk for completed suicide.

**Rational Thinking Loss: Suicidal in-**

dividuals often become constricted in their thought processes. They begin to see no options and exercise poor judgement. In more serious instances the person can lose orientation (loss of a sense of time or place) or may hear voices telling them to kill themselves. These people need emergency assistance.

**Social Support System:** Persons who are isolated from contact with others or unemployed have one risk factor toward suicide. One published study reports that those who do not attend church are four times more prone to taking their life than the people who attend church regularly.

**Organized Plan:** Most fatal suicides are not impulsive acts. The more specific the plan the greater the danger. An organized plan with an available means demands immediate attention.

**No Life-Partner:** Persons who are single, separated, divorced or widowed have one risk factor toward suicide.

**Sickness:** Long-term illness, particularly involving intractable pain, places a person at risk of suicide when associated with feelings of helplessness.

When an individual has any of the combinations of high-risk factors I have described, or five or more of any of the 10 risk factors of **SADPERSONS**, assess with **RIGOR**.

**Recognition of Intention:** When individuals say things like “Everyone would be better off without me” or “I have nothing worth living for,” they are giving you a message you need to hear. Remember, most persons express their intention to take their life before they do so.

**Ideas in the Head:** One of the biggest myths about suicide prevention is that asking a person if they are suicidal will encourage the person and “put ideas in their head.” The very opposite is true. Bringing the subject out into the open will diminish the danger that the person will act on their thoughts and feelings. Asking a person about their feelings com-

municates that someone cares and that they need not be so afraid of talking about the scary feelings they are hiding.

**Gradual Questioning:** If you suspect a person is contemplating suicide, the best course of action is a gentle, gradual progression of direct questions such as: “I can see that you are upset; how badly are you feeling? Have you ever felt badly enough to consider harming yourself? Do you feel suicidal now?”

**Organized Plan:** If a person tells you they are contemplating harming themselves, you need to ask about their plan. “How will you do it?” “When will you do it?” “Where will you do it?” The more detailed the plan, the greater the risk. Do not leave a person alone who has a plan of action and a means to commit suicide.

**Referral:** Clergy need mental health or emergency professionals to assist in cases of potential suicide. Persons at high risk may require hospitalization and/or medication until the crisis has passed. Most suicidal behavior is a symptom of an underlying, severe emotional distress that requires treatment by a qualified mental health professional. The essential requirement is that a suicidal person receive the support they need from you until assistance is secured.

These two acronyms may be remembered with the memory byte: Assess **SADPERSONS** with **RIGOR**. Put this to memory and you have a quick reference resource to evaluate suicide potential.

Recently the U.S. Navy completed a two-year study of suicide prevention. They implemented a comprehensive training program among supervisory staff. The study demonstrated that prevention training reduced rates of suicidal behavior. It appears to me that clergy and congregations could make an equally significant contribution to preventive mental health by learning how to assess suicide risk and to intervene appropriately. **TAV**

**Story of the Week****Martin Luther King Jr. Writes  
Co-Religionists from Jail**

★ While confined in the city jail in Birmingham, Ala., the

*The Witness* was one of very few magazines and newspapers to publish Martin Luther King's *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* in its entirety in June, 1963. To explain his decision, Bill Spofford, Sr. wrote:

Dr. King's reply is too long for one issue. We believe, however, that it is one of those rare "to-read-twice" documents so we suggest that you give it a second reading when you get your June 27 copy.

**Wait Means Never**

For years now I have heard the word "Wait!" It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." It has been a tranquilizing thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration. We must come to see with the distinguished jurist of yesterday that "justice too long delayed is justice denied."

We have waited for more than three hundred and forty years for our constitutional and God-given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jet-like speed toward the goal of political independence and we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward the gaining of a cup of coffee at a lunchcounter.

swer your statement in what I hope will be patient and reasonable terms.

I think I should give the reason for my being in Birmingham, since I have been influenced by the argument of "outsiders coming in." I have the honor of serving as president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization operating in every Southern state with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia. We have some eighty-five affiliate organizations all across the South—one being the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Whenever necessary

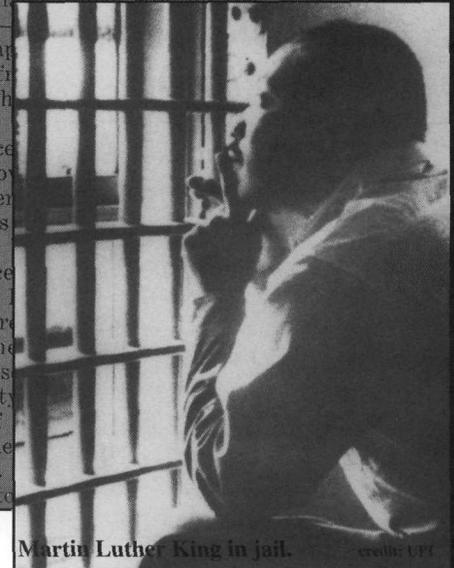
possible we share staff, operational and financial resources with our affiliates. Several months ago our local affiliate here in Birmingham led us to be on call to engage in a non-violent direct action program if such were deemed necessary. We readily agreed and when the hour came we lived up to our promises. So I am here, along with several members of my staff, because we were invited here. I am here because I have organizational ties here.

**Injustice Here**

Beyond this, I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the eighth century prophets left their little villages to carry their "thus saith the Lord" far beyond the

boundaries of their home towns; and just as the Apostle Paul left his little village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the

Greco-Roman world, I am compelled of particular historicity. I must confess to the Macedonia. Moreover, the international communities sit idly by and be concerned. It happens in Birmingham anywhere and everywhere an inescapable mutuality of interest affects one directly. It affords to



Martin Luther King in jail. credit: UPI

**White Moderates**

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the last few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Counciler or the Klu Klux Klanner, but the white moderate who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice. . . .

# An invocation of memory

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

**Animal Dreams** by Barbara Kingsolver. Harper Collins Publishers, New York, New York, 1990.

**A**nimal Dreams is dedicated to Ben Linder, an international volunteer who was killed by a Contra land mine in Nicaragua. This fact made me leery. I thought the book might be politically heavy-handed or even sentimental.

To my surprise the book does not focus on Hallie, who goes off to Nicaragua to offer her skills to the *campesinos*, but on Codi, the sister who stays home.

It is the story of a rootless woman in

her thirties who can't make a commitment to lover or vocation. She is a woman who moves often, a woman disturbed by her own cowardice and one who is quick to lionize her sister.

A letter comes from Nicaragua with an unequivocal renunciation of her praise:

*I am like God, Codi? Like GOD. Give me a break. If I get another letter that mentions SAVING THE WORLD, I am sending you, by return mail, a letter bomb. Codi, please.*

In a later letter, Codi is told by her sister that "the very least you can accomplish in your life is to figure out what you hope for. And the most you can do is live inside that hope."

For the balance of the book Codi recovers childhood memories. Her father's failing health persuades her to spend a year in her hometown.

When the story is told through her father's eyes, which it is from time to time, it is startling because he always struggles to root his daughter in time: Is this the eight-year-old Codi? The teenage Codi? Which Codi? Then, too, his view includes the love and the inhibitions which she experienced as emotional neglect.

The chaos of Alzheimers invades their relationship.

*"Hallie, I'm going to die."*

*"I'm Codi."*

*"I'm dying."*

*"Well, I know. We all are, more or less." After a lifetime on the emotional austerity plan, my father and I were caving in to melodrama. When I put my hand on his hand it lay dead on the sheet. It was the diagnosis that killed him. Sometimes that's how it happens.*

*"Where is Hallie?"*

*"Please don't ask me that again. We*

*don't know where she is. Don't worry about her right now, okay? We can't do anything."*

*He looked at me accusingly. "You shouldn't have stood on the slide [in elementary school]. I defended you on principle, but it was dangerous."*

*How do people live with loved ones after their minds have fallen into anarchy? I rejected his ruined monologues every day, still expecting order to emerge victorious in Doc Homer's universe. I can remember once seeing a monument somewhere in the desert north of Tucson, commemorating a dedicated but ill-informed platoon of men who died in a Civil War battle six months after Lee had surrendered. That's exactly who I was — a soldier of the lost cause, still rooting for my father's recovery. Pain reaches the heart with electrical speed, but truth moves to the heart as slowly as a glacier.*

The novel is placed in the southwest. It is rich in Native American imagery and inheritance as well as the stories of European immigrants. It has everything to do with the angst of a nation that does not know its own history or even where its dead are buried. *Animal Dreams* is an invocation of memory: personal and political.



It is flawlessly written, piercing through rationalizations and self-hatred, moving into a tenderness that retains humor.

My only complaint is that Barbara Kingsolver, who grew up in Kentucky and now lives in Tucson, has not lived long enough to have earned the wisdom that is woven through the book. **TW**

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

## *A Book of Revelations*

Richard Kerr's autobiographical essay in the May issue of *The Witness* was also published in *A Book of Revelations*, edited by Louie Crew. *A Book of Revelations* was published in 1991 by Integrity. It offers brief personal histories of gay and lesbian members of the Episcopal Church. It does so in a simple, unencumbered style. Its editor, Louie Crew, says the book is offered as a resource to the Church, which has said it wants genuine dialogue.

**P**lay. Be silly. Remember the things from your childhood that you loved. “I really think the message of the clown is to do what the rest of society tells us not to do,” says Betsy Willis, a.k.a. Doodad, who for ten years convened a clown group at St. Paul’s-in-the-Pines Episcopal Church in Fayetteville, N. C. “That’s what Jesus said: Don’t do as the world does.”

With God’s Clods — most of them fellow members of St. Paul’s — Willis visited hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons, joined in parades and festivals, and participated in services at her own and other churches.

In children’s hospitals, they chased nurses and doctors with a giant cardboard hypodermic needle, to the great delight of young patients. In nursing homes, they tied balloons to bedrails.

They carried their subversive message to prisons and shopping malls.

At a workshop for women prisoners, they began by reading the Scripture passage about receiving the reign of God as a child. They then asked participants to make up a list of things children did. “After we did that, one of the women said, ‘Do you know what we’ve just done? We’ve listed all the things they don’t want us to do in prison!’” Willis said.

*Walking through a group of bikers, “I felt uneasy, but I decided the best thing to do was to clown. They responded by inviting me to dance”*

**Betsy Willis, a.k.a. Doodad**



## The fool’s gift

by Marianne Arbogast

We gave people a choice or something. The military presence [from Fort Bragg] gets very heavy at times.”

Though initially drawn to clowning through her work with Christian education (“It seemed a way to take the Bible story and give it a different thrust so our eyes didn’t glass over with the familiarity of it.”) she later came to value its power to overcome barriers between people.

She recounts having to walk through a group of bikers at a rock concert on her way to meet her clown group. “I felt uneasy, but I decided the best thing to do was to clown. They responded by jumping up and inviting me to dance. I danced with them for about 15 minutes. It was very freeing for me. In other circumstances I would not have gone near them, nor would they have let me in.”

“The Fool’s wisdom is to see beyond human limitations — limitations of the body as well as of the mind and spirit,” writes psychologist Elizabeth Lloyd

Mayer (*Creation Spirituality*, 11-12/91). “In folk plays from all over the world, Fool characters have power over life and death; they bring healing when nothing else can.”

Willis has found the healing to flow both ways.

“It is a healing agent for us behind the masks,” she says. “Right now I’m involved with straightening out my own life in a 12-step program. Clowning certainly played a part in that by getting me to look at my past.”

Willis is currently on sabbatical. She plans to continue clowning, but also feels pulled toward greater social involvement “in women’s issues, helping women break loose from where we’ve been,” she says. “As clowns, maybe we graduate from being the joyful foolish to being the adult foolish by following Christ in more social action, in the front lines.”

Either way, Doodad refuses to conform to the world.

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

Another time, while promoting a CROP walk at a local shopping center, they met up with an Army band. “We lined up behind the chorus, which was very rigid, and marched behind them.

**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.

# Out, and in the Church

by Mary E. Hunt

**C**an Christianity and healthy, good, natural and holy lesbian women go hand in hand?

Hints come from the rich mix of the several hundred courageous women who now make up CLOUT (Christian Lesbians Out Together), an ecumenical organization formed by a small group in 1991. Our work has been ecumenical of necessity, but we celebrate they very fluidity of lines that would divide us if we let them.

It is hard to imagine CLOUT people wrangling over questions of "baptism, eucharist and ministry," when we know that what divides us kills us, all object lessons for churches seeking spiritual health.

Women in positions of authority and responsibility are, relatively speaking,

---

**Mary Hunt** is co-director of WATER, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, in Silver Spring, MD.

## Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. We've sent this issue to you because we understand that you have an interest in creative approaches to healing.

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.

THE WITNESS

new to institutional church structures. While lesbian women are found at the highest levels in their respective denominations, lesbian women in high elected and appointed church office are not necessarily the first to put their names on the CLOUT membership list. But unlike some of their gay male counterparts (bishops, church executives, etc.) who have distinguished themselves by oppressing self-acknowledged lesbian/gay/bisexual people, lesbian women "in high places" use their good offices to encourage others. It is edifying to see — oh, how I wish to sing their praises — an example to emulate in churches which claim a preferential option for those who are marginalized.

The common boat of Church patriarchy in which all Christian women ride, whether lesbian, bi-sexual or heterosexual, provides CLOUT with a large constituency since lesbian oppression is but a pernicious refinement of all women's oppression. It is my experience that most

heterosexual women are not nearly as homophobic as heterosexual men. To the contrary, the common bond of sexism, while different depending on race, class and ethnicity, of course, makes lesbian experience but one more part of a large, shared contradiction for women. CLOUT is something that all Christian women need as members of patriarchal churches.

At a time when mainline churches are shrinking rather than growing, when AIDS, recession and political uncertainty shape a rocky landscape, that any lesbian women want to continue in relationship with what has been a major source of oppression remains, frankly, something of a mystery to me. But the lusty singing, reverent prayer, searching questions, desire for community and commitment to social/ecclesial change that make up CLOUT spring naturally from a tradition whose best answers have always been shrouded in faith. That is sufficient to keep it interesting for us and to portend healing unto good health for welcoming churches. Christian lesbian women are doing our part, and expect that churches will do theirs, by embracing previously silenced and dishonored lesbian members. Time will tell. **TW**

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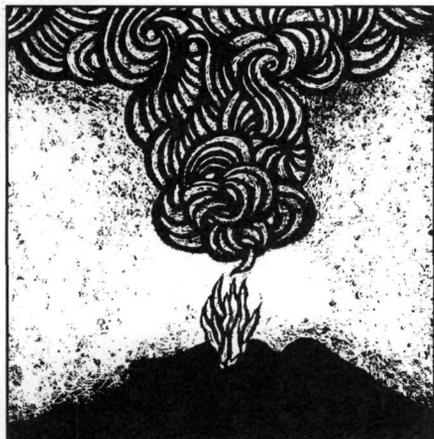
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**ENCOUNTERING OUR SHADOWS:**  
*The Witness goes to Trinity School for Ministry*

October 24, 1992

in Ambridge, Penn.

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Witness in a challenging  
setting, and a panel discussion  
between representatives of  
Trinity School for Ministry and  
of The Witness:

*“Toward the living Christ:  
common ground/  
divergent paths”*

*September issue:*

*Harvesting rural America*



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# *The Witness*

Volume 75 • Number 8/9 • September 1992



## Harvesting rural America:

Alternative farms

Mountain harvests

Genetically-engineered food

## Abortion

WHAT A DISAPPOINTMENT to read your viewpoint as expressed in the conversation with Carter Heyward about abortion rights. The change in the editorial policy of *The Witness* is not only personally disturbing but causes me deep concern as a member of the Executive Board of the Episcopal Women's Caucus. The EWC has long supported a woman's right to make such a decision for herself; indeed we see the issue as a first amendment example and wonder what has happened to the magazine we counted on to champion the cause of freedom wherever and whenever it is threatened.

More than 15 years ago the Caucus adopted a statement of support for a woman's right to obtain an abortion without the interference of national or state legislatures. We are a contributing member of the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights and proud of it. The statement, reaffirmed in 1990, declares that "all should be free to exercise their own consciences...and that where widely differing views are held, the particular belief of one religious body should not be forced on those who believe otherwise."

That is the heart of the matter and a point of view that you appeared unable to comprehend.

Carter Heyward certainly tried to reach you, but you seemed intent on looking at this complex and global subject through simplistic and narrow eyes. To generalize out of the thinking of a few friends and acquaintances cannot be the rationale for an editorial policy affecting the hundreds of thousands of women driven to a decision to choose abortion because of the conditions of the pregnancy and of their lives.

**Marge Christie**  
Member, Executive Board  
Episcopal Women's Caucus  
Franklin Lakes, NJ

I AM WRITING TO COMMEND your great courage in your conversation with Carter Heyward about abortion. You never stated

directly whether you feel *Roe vs. Wade* should be reversed so that abortion is illegal. If this is your view, I do not agree, but I do agree with almost everything you said in the dialogue.

Above all, I thank you for clearly stating that "our society makes it very difficult for people to be whole people and parents. And that the corporate work environment in this country, more so than most industrialized nations, does not make room for mothers." Heyward's confusion over this observation reflects how little attention is given to this crucial point in most discussions of women's issues. You are absolutely right that an earlier generation of feminists made it possible for strong assertive educated women to make a mark in the world — if they were childless. Unfortunately society still barely allows men to be good parents and pursue an absorbing career, let alone women.

I agree with you that abortion is often undertaken too lightly, and if it could be made a little more difficult to obtain without unfairly discriminating against poor and young women, I would be glad. Like you, I would rather that no one ever resorted to abortion, and I agree that it is a horrifying reflection on the society.

However my state court has recently imposed several restrictions on abortion. I was deeply disturbed by two of the Pennsylvania restrictions. The waiting period is a serious burden for women too poor to take more time off from work or to pay for an extra night's stay in a large town far from home. Even more serious is the requirement for parental consent. If there is any reason justifying an abortion, it is to protect young girls from being cast out or receiving damaging treatment by their parents.

I am four years younger than Carter Heyward and eight years older than you, so *Roe vs. Wade* happened when I was in college. Certainly before that I can remember knowing that one could very possibly lose everything in life if one were so foolish as to be found pregnant. Many people still spoke of contraceptives as if they were equivalent to abortion. In most parts of the country today, I think we are seeing the opposite extreme. Some pro-life people are bending over backwards to be lenient about sexual irresponsibility so that no one will be frightened into an

abortion. I do not think it will ever work to be lenient about the cause (both sexes' irresponsibility) but punish people (that is, women only) for the consequence.

**Anne Ramirez**  
Springfield, PA

TO HAVE THE *WITNESS* abandon the strong [stand] for reproductive freedom that has characterized this journal for at least two decades is tragic. For this to happen at a time when pro-choice people are struggling to maintain that freedom against efforts by a President, courts, legislatures and mobs to destroy it leaves many of us feeling deserted and betrayed. To have such a stance appear in the same issue with excellent articles on other subjects seems as incongruous and absurd as would be the appearance of an article defending capital punishment or the war in the Persian Gulf.

I realize that the article on *Abortion Rights* was a dialogue that contained Carter Heyward's able defense of the pro-choice position. But this hardly compensates for the loss of editorial support. You need only to consult your files to note the thorough treatment of the theological and ethical aspects of abortion.

You ask "Where is God in this mix?" This is indeed a question all of us must face in many of life's ambiguities. It is not adequately answered by any facile implication that God wills the continuance of every pregnancy or the birth of every child.

While fully respecting your right to express your editorial opinions freely I hope that members of the Board of Directors will make their own positions clear, publicly and unequivocally.

**George W. Barrett**  
Santa Barbara, CA

CHEERS FOR *THE WITNESS* (June/July '92) challenge to all sorts of "givens," including the *Wall Street Journal* stereotype that Episcopalians prefer our own stuffy propriety to exploring, with care and integrity, honest differences of heart and mind. It is doing precisely what Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann says, on page 14 of the same issue, a Church ought to be doing: continuing to be one of the last places on earth that



“honors the ambiguity and complexities of human life.” The conversation with Carter Heyward, and the decision to hold *The Witness*’ 75th anniversary at Trinity School of Theology seem to expressly preserve the edge of conscience and calling that is the gift of our Episcopal version of the Body of Christ — “that odd community with all its pathology, that keeps raising human questions” (Brueggemann again). I wanted you to know that your explanation of the Trinity Decision made my heart leap. On all levels: the decision itself, the words in which you clothe it, and the honest insight it reveals. God bless you. You give me hope for the world after what my generation has done to it.

**Joanna B. Gillespie**  
Core Faculty, Bangor Theological  
Seminary at Hanover, NH

SINCE YOUR RECENT CHANGE of staff, format and direction, I have been trying to evaluate fairly whether I wished to continue my subscription. The June/July 1992 issue’s Abortion Rights “conversation” resolved my question. Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann’s arrogant, “I know what is best for everyone” attitude, her refusal to consider that another woman should be allowed to make a decision for herself if it differed from Ms. Wylie-Kellermann’s, is totally unacceptable to me. There are *many* of us who are as intelligent as she and as capable of making a rational decision about abortion, as well as many other subjects. Neither God nor any human agency appointed her to force her view of right and wrong on anyone else, or to claim that she knows more than anyone who disagrees with her. She has every right to try to influence others to agree with her way of thinking, but NO right to demand that all be forced by law to do so.

Incidentally, I am 77 years old and will continue for the rest of my life to fight for the right of my daughters, grand-daughters, and great-grand-daughters to make their own intelligent decisions on this and all other subjects.

**Jane O. Johnson**  
Denver, CO

WHEN I WAS 21, and married to a poor Polish musician, I quite accidentally got preg-

nant. We both knew we were probably going to be very poor all our lives, and Roger was adamant about getting the baby aborted. So we sold everything we possibly could to accumulate \$300 and made arrangements. The night we were going out the door to taxi over to this guy a friend had found, I told Roger I left something in the apartment, and when he went back inside I ran down the stairs, jumped into the cab and took off for my parents’ home. The baby was ever so luckily (for me and him) adopted by a family member. Each time I look at him I shudder to think of the sink he might have been washed down that night.

You feel this Life inside you... It doesn’t matter if you are three months or six or eight. It’s just there. You can’t play games with that. And you know, if you dump it, there will be a huge black hole inside which nothing can ever fill again. I think it’s probably crummy to give away your kid — but I’d rather do that than kill one.

Roger moved out, of course, and I worked all through my pregnancy right up to the day I delivered. I was so poor I didn’t even have milk to drink. I was sad. I was scared. But it was worth it.

I’m pro-choice, and always will be. One childhood friend lost a sister to a botched abortion; one dear friend I carried myself in my arms down the stairs at 3 a.m. while she was hemorrhaging to death from another. I believe a woman has a right to decide for herself what she can handle. But I also believe abortion is thoroughly abominable, and that a society which forgets that has lost its soul. The most hideous aspect of the whole issue, however, is the ferocity displayed by both sides, which totally precludes compassion or understanding. You are right in your assertions that people with differences must gather in toleration. Closed minds create bullies and no bully ever found themselves on God’s side in anything.

**Name Withheld**  
Wisconsin

BRAVO! I WAS EXHILARATED by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann’s unwillingness to be “boxed in,” insistence on open thoughtful dialogue about hard topics, and earned wisdom in this issue!!

**Norvene Vest**  
Altadena, CA

YOU HAVE ANSWERED MY QUESTION of several months ago regarding your position on abortion. Carter Heyward in her dialogue with you in that article stated clearly what used to be the viewpoint of the *Witness*. Your argument by comparison seemed a bit woolly and didn’t really meet Carter Heyward’s adequately.

I am more disappointed than I can say that you have moved the *Witness* in the pro life direction; in so doing you have joined forces with the Roman Catholic crazies and the off the wall born agains.

It is too bad as you have done some really good things since you have been editor/publisher.

As a former staff person on the magazine I know you are out of sync with the policy of the past.

**E. Lawrence Carter**  
Sierra Madre, CA

THE COMMENTS AND JUDGMENT expressed in the letter of E. Lawrence Carter in the April issue (“if...you are pro life, *The Witness* is in deep trouble” and “many of your readers are pro choice and would cancel their subscriptions were this to be a fact that the editor was found to be pro life”) is indicative of a major problem in the church today (indeed in the entire country as well).

Are our beliefs so shallow that we cannot afford to be exposed to a differing view? Are we so absolutely certain of our own rightness that we cannot admit that another view may have some value?

**Dorothy W. Spaulding**  
McLean, VA

I’VE JUST FINISHED READING the conversation between you and Carter Heyward on abortion. As we Quakers say, you really “spoke to my condition.” I admire your magazine very much for including this piece. *Please, please* can you tell me more about the Common Ground movement? It is what I’ve been seeking.

Keep up the good (but difficult) work.

**Donna Foley**  
Yardley, PA

[In Missouri, contacts for Common Ground are Loretta Wagner (314) 391-1688; and Jean

Cavender (314) 367-0300.]

IT IS POSSIBLE TO TAKE [an alternative] point of view; one that would accept the reality of life at conception, and that abortion destroys that life, but that would also accept that this choice — even though it is a sin — is, in some instances, a better one than bringing the pregnancy to term. The problem is that the definition of “sin” is far too limited. Each of us, knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly; makes daily choices that can be defined as sin; indeed choices that may well result in the deaths of children.

We go out to dinner, and in so doing spend the equivalent of a week’s pay for a worker in a Mexican auto plant, yet resent the fact that immigrant labor comes North for better paying work. We vote policies to punitively limit welfare grants, as a way to balance the budget of a nation whose tax policies have fattened the pockets of the rich. We use sex to sell everything from perfume to automobiles, and then condemn the children who respond to these suggestive messages. We fill our airwaves and television screens with trash and wonder why our nation has a growing population of illiterates. We buy food that is layered in packaging that will burden us to the seventh generation, and salve our consciences with a trip to the recycling center.

There is no way to live a sinless life. If each of us concentrated fully on our own complicity in systems and policies that are death-dealing rather than life-giving, and do all that we can to “live simply, so that others may simply live,” we would not have the energy, or the need, to focus so singularly on the personal, and agonizing, choices of others.

**Mary S. Webber**  
St. Louis, MO

JUST A NOTE TO THANK YOU for having the courage to publish your conversation re: abortion with Carter Heyward. I hope it will get the favorable response it deserves.

**Harold Henderson**  
LaPorte, IN

### Trinity Forum

I LOVE THE NEW LIFE that is present in *The Witness*. I love the inclusion of more Biblical theology and a grounding of progres-

sive stands in Scripture and tradition.

What has gotten me to write, however, is your willingness to meet with Trinity on October 24. The thought of Trinity School for Ministry makes me nervous. I know that there is much inspiration of the Holy Spirit in a meeting of *The Witness* and Trinity. Maybe the Episcopal Church really can lead Christianity in finding ways for opposite sides to talk to each other. We are united in Christ and in baptism and in the love of God. The church is not a debate team. Maybe God can help us see through our blindness when we sit down together.

**David Hoover**  
Irvin, CA

PLEASE ACCEPT A SALUTE for planning an invasion of Trinity School for Ministry — for learning and reconciliation. I plan to be present if possible.

**Bennett J. Sims**  
Hendersonville, NC

I HAVE JUST FINISHED reading Scott Peck’s *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace* where he points out the fact that we find integrity in integration. That in a given community we must ask what is missing. The idea to have the magazine’s 75th anniversary at Trinity, Ambridge is WONDERFUL...an attempt at including, to put in what is missing. I congratulate and uphold the kind of loving and living such a risky venture shows. Now THAT is living up to your name!

**Betsy Willis**  
Vilas, NC

WHILE NEARLY EVERY ISSUE of *Witness* brings something to delight me, nothing encourages me more than your announcement in the June/July issue of the 75th anniversary forum on evangelism to be held at Trinity School for Ministry.

I am not able to attend the forum myself, but want to commend you for initiating a dialogue with one of the several components of our Episcopal Church and I commend Trinity for offering hospitality. The move from contention to conversation is never easy, but this hard work is, I believe, the task God has set for us all now and for some years to

come. In this tangible act *The Witness* fully realizes its name and ministry. Thanks for exemplifying the marvelous witness that comes of meeting and engaging difference face to face.

**Sam A. Portaro**  
Episcopal Chaplain, Brent House  
Chicago, IL

### Suicide Risks

ALTHOUGH IT’S DISTURBING that suicide is the second leading cause of death among teenagers (“Assessing Suicide Risks,” Andrew Weaver; June/July 1992), even more disturbing are the facts and figures surrounding *gay teen suicide* and the government cover-up of them.

According to a 1989 study first commissioned and then squelched by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), gay youth are *two to three times* more likely to attempt suicide than heterosexual youth. Indeed, up to *30 percent* of teenagers who do commit suicide are lesbian or gay.

**Sean L. Avery**  
East Boston, MA

### Survival

I NEED TO TELL YOU how delighted I am to have opened my first issue as a new subscriber and found an article by an incest survivor about her healing journey [Kim Kelleigh, June, 1992]. As an incest survivor myself, it is immensely satisfying and encouraging to read about others in contemporary publications, especially a Christian one, to help me know that I am not alone.

Please continue to have the courage to shine the light in this ugly corner of the world. Please use my full name and city — I am breaking silence!

**Ray Riess**  
Oakland, CA

### Clowning

I HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL WORKSHOPS in clown ministry, but somehow I am a bit fearful, as I recall the words that “people might look at you and *think* you are a fool, so don’t open your mouth and *confirm* the fact.” Perhaps I should consider miming! Anyway I

wanted to tell you I loved the article and it gave me some courage.

**Sister Marie Arteal  
Huntington, IN**

### Ordination

THE MAY, 1992, ISSUE of *The Witness* brings fresh insights and questions to the Church about the ordination process. We have read it with particular interest since the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of Michigan which we chair is in a process of self examination.

We take strong exception to one article, "Barriers to Ordination" by Julie Wortman. The use of the word "hoops" implies a gamey process of entry, set up by sadistic persons for their own reasons and satisfaction. In truth, all professions have entry requirements, both for education and experiential learning. Further, it should be noted that almost all the requirements to be met by our applicants are canonical, concrete and objective, and every attempt is made to act consistently and fairly with all applicants.

The variations in the process often come in working with applicants around discernment and their sense of "call" to ordained ministry. Our responsibility is to act in part of the Church's role, to assist the Bishop in "Preparing an evaluation of the applicant's qualifications to pursue a course of preparation for Holy Orders." (Canon III:4) This is a duty we take seriously, not a "hoop," and we try at all times and in every way to be pastoral in our work with applicants around this and other issues.

Granted, in the experience of applicants throughout the Church there are exceptions, and many have been tragic ones, to this practice and philosophy. But Wortman's article implies that these are more the rule than the exception.

**Ruth Clausen  
Letetia Brown  
Detroit, MI**

[Ed. Note: The word "hoop" was not used in Julie Wortman's article but in the accompanying graphics.]

ALTHOUGH THE PRESBYTERIAN Church differs from the Episcopal, I'm constantly amazed how the real issues that *The*

*Witness* addresses are ours as well as yours. I moderate the Committee on Preparation for Ministry here in Denver, and the issues you addressed in the May 1992 issue about ordination hit close to home.

Even though the Presbyterian Church has ordained women as Elders for 50 plus years, and as Ministers of Word and Sacrament for over 25 years, there are still roadblocks to face. Time after time I have to sit down with women candidates to explain that, even with our church history, calls for women are often very difficult to obtain. The "Barriers to Ordination" article and graphics were wonderful.

Also, at a time when our church is struggling with what ordination means, the "Ordained by Community" article is one I'm going to share with my friends. I really do appreciate your magazine.

**James L. Browne  
Denver, CO**

### Criticism

THIS WILL BE MY LAST RENEWAL unless the quality of articles improves. In the past you have had a good magazine, one that warranted my reading. Unfortunately that is no longer true. I am renewing with the assumption that you are still in transition and will improve during the coming year.

**John H. Heck  
Paradise Valley, AZ**

THE WORK OF THE MAGAZINE seems to be losing a sharp prophetic edge (so much needed in this country!) to some sort of fuzzy spiritual perspective that to me seems very middle-of-the-road and unclear. Also, there is more of a focus on the Episcopal Church; I am not Episcopalian, but never felt excluded by your magazine until now. In the past, I have been strengthened and challenged by *The Witness* as I have worked in solidarity with the people of El Salvador. I am willing to listen to you for one more year in the hope that the firm ground you once had will be regained.

**Linda Crockett  
Comunidad 22 de Abril  
El Salvador**

### Praise

THE MAGAZINE IS GETTING BETTER all the time, and it's beautiful.

**Grant M. Gallup  
Managua, Nicaragua, C.A.**

AS A PRESBYTERIAN ELDER — who grew up Episcopalian — I particularly appreciate your coverage of lesbian/gay issues, as tumultuous in both my church homes. Keep up the good work.

**Leonard B. Murphy  
San Antonio, TX**

I LOVE IT! Many thanks and keep up the good work.

**Sallie Shippen  
Astoria, OR**



### Corrections

Reader Marjorie Schier asked us to review the events leading to the death of Ben Linder, who was mentioned in the June book review. Linder was shot by the Contra while working on a small hydro-electric dam in Nicaragua and then shot fatally at very close range. We confused his death with that of a Swiss international worker whose life was taken when a Contra land mine blew up a truck.

In June, we incorrectly identified Janet Scarfe, president of the Movement for the Ordination of Women in Australia, and we misspelled the last name of Gwen Heard, who is supervising the Detroit Summer '92. Our apologies.

In May, we should have indicated that Wesley Frensdorff served as interim bishop of the Navajoland Area Mission.

## THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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Cover by Jim West, a Detroit photographer

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.



credit: Sister Helen David

## We Drink With Cupped Hands

by Red Hawk

On our knees drinking with cupped hands  
from our creek  
is a kind of praying  
for my daughters and me.  
In time of drouth  
there is nothing holier  
than the water in the bowl of our hands  
poured over our upraised faces  
or sipped on bent knee,  
giving thanks.  
Religion is such a simple thing:  
either it is cupping hands in deep gratitude  
and filling them with creek water,  
swallowing God whole,  
or it is nothing at all.

Red Hawk is the author of two books of poetry, *Journey of the Medicine Man*, August House, Little Rock, AZ, 1983, from which the above is reprinted; and *The Sioux Dog Dance*, Cleveland University Press, 1992. He has just completed a year as writer-in-residence at Princeton University. Born Robert Moore of Anglo parents, Red Hawk received his new name from his spiritual teacher, Osho. He lives in Little Rock.

## Collard Green Fields Forever

by Gloria House

Have you ever seen  
a crop of collards?  
It is a vision of green magnificence.  
Walking along an ordinary road in  
Tuskegee one day,  
I meandered upon a field  
where some industrious hand  
had sown the virile plant  
as far as the eye could see.  
Though the rows were disciplined,  
the vigorous jade leaves emanated  
an overwhelming energy.  
Here was a natural power  
sustaining the faded and leaning  
houses encircling it.  
Spellbound on the field's periphery,  
I remembered the Middle Passage,  
and pictures of slave quarters at mealtime  
whirled.

Collards and cornbread,  
communion meal of  
daily resurrection.

I ate the survival leaf as I stood at  
the field's edge,  
soaking its cure through pores and spirit.

from *Rain Rituals*, Broadside Press, Detroit, 1990.

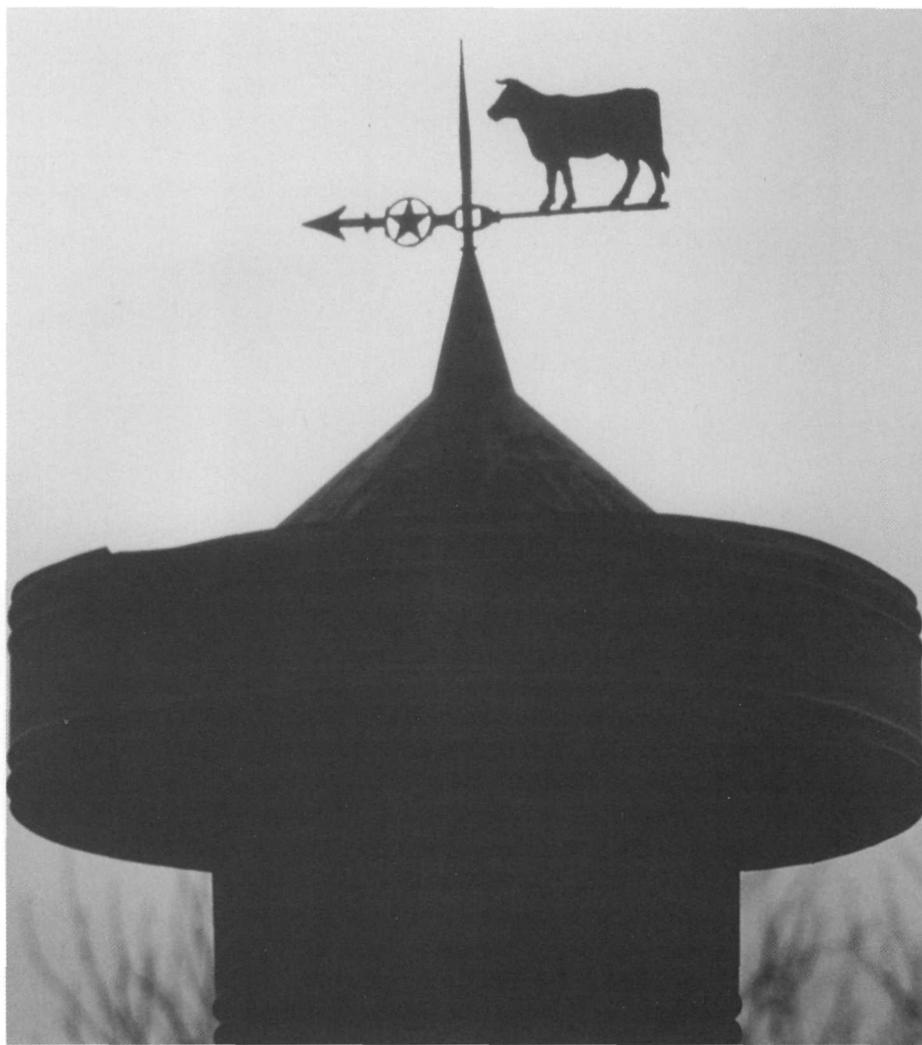
Poetry

When I was ten years of age I looked at the land and the rivers, the sky above, and the animals around me and could not fail to realize that they were made by some great power. I was so anxious to understand this power that I questioned the trees and the bushes. It seemed as though the flowers were staring at me, and I wanted to ask them "Who made you?" I looked at the moss-covered stones; some of them seemed to have the features of a man, but they could not answer me. Then I had a dream, and in my dream one of these small round stones appeared to me and told me that the maker of all was Wakan tanka, and that in order to honor him I must honor his works in nature.

—Tatanka-ohitika (Brave Buffalo) was born in the 1840s and became a Sioux medicine man on the Standing Rock Reservation (*Touch the Earth*, Pocket Books, NY, 1971).

**M**y great aunt lives in the Michigan farmhouse she was born in 90 years ago. In her treks into the fields surrounding it, she has discovered small relics of others who were once at home there — an arrowhead sharpened out of stone, a map carved into a pocket-sized rock. She handles them with reverence.

I wonder whether, a few hundred years from now, as much will be left of her own lifestyle. Whether her bond with the land that sustained her family for three generations will be an affinity felt by Americans anywhere, or whether it will be



© 1990, R. Norman Matheny *Christian Science Monitor*

## Listening to the land

by Marianne Arbogast

extinguished as remorselessly as the vanquished harmonies of the older native culture.

Her stories reveal, in bits and pieces, a lifestyle marked by community, attuned to the rhythms of nature.

"In the generation before my time, the country was mostly woods," she says. "People had to get sugar and flour from Greenville [about 15 miles away]. A day

would come in the spring when everyone would hitch up their sleighs and horses to go to Greenville. It was a communal affair. On the way back, the person who lived closest to town would load everyone's supplies on his sleigh, and people would take theirs off as they went along. That way, the person who went the farthest carried the lightest load. It was a way of saving the horses and helping one

*editor's note*

**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.

another.”

Children worked alongside their parents, absorbing the knowledge they would need to work the land. My great aunt fondly recalls staying home from school to help her father take down an old barn.

She knows the history of each tree and field and fence on the farm, each road and pond in its environs. She used to know every family, but that is changing as fewer members of each successive generation remain in the area.

When my great aunt was born, nearly 40 percent of the U.S. population lived on farms. Today it is less than two percent. With government support, corporations with easy access to credit invest in costly, high-tech equipment, then push the land to its limit with chemical fertilizers and pesticides. As corporations and large-scale operations edge small farmers out of the picture, some have suffered devastating personal loss.

But more and more voices warn that the losses are more than personal. Corporate control of agriculture raises concerns about environmental stewardship, about the migrant workers who may be increasingly necessary to harvest this land they do not own (see p. 20), about humane treatment of animals, about food safety (see p. 26), about the well-being of towns and entire regions whose economies have depended on the farmers.

The Church, of course, should not be without voice in this crisis and, just as naturally, has a confession to articulate.

Critics blame the Church for promul-

gating an exploitive relationship with nature, accepting modern technology without question as a means of establish-

## God

I am the wind that breathes upon the sea,  
I am the wave on the ocean,  
I am the murmur of leaves rustling,  
I am the rays of the sun,  
I am the beam of the moon and the stars,  
I am the power of the trees growing,  
I am the bud breaking into blossom,  
I am the movement of the salmon swimming,  
I am the courage of the wild board fighting,  
I am the speed of the stag running,  
I am the strength of the ox pulling the plough,  
I am the size of the mighty oak tree,  
And I am the thoughts of all people  
Who praise my beauty and grace.

—from *The Black Book of Camarthan*,  
published in *Celtic Fire*, Doubleday, 1991)

ing “dominion” over the earth. Christians are also charged with promoting a spiritual worldview that ignores the material world or sacrifices it easily in an apocalypse.

When the Reagan administration began an unprecedented transfer of federal lands and mineral rights to private corporations, James Watt, then U.S. Secretary of the Interior, was asked about the need to conserve resources for future generations. Watt said, “I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns.”

Any number of theologians are trying now to set right the balance, to remind us of the messengers to the vineyard.

And Christians are in the heart of the movement that is trying to preserve the societal benefits of small-scale farming.

Mona Brock, whose story appears on p. 34, works with a program established seven years ago by the Oklahoma Conference of Churches to assist struggling farmers by intervening personally and by providing them with the expertise and referrals they need.

Others have formed intentional farm communities like those described by Ariel Miller in “Signs of Regeneration” (p. 12). Fueled by ideals of environmental justice and a cooperative communal lifestyle, they have sought to create from scratch structures to support their vision. The challenges are enormous, but some com-

munities have recovered values which may prove an antidote to the sickness of our rural economy.

Land trusts, as advocated in the Episcopal Church’s Economic Justice Plan, are being created specifically to protect land from exploitation and to ensure access to its resources. (See p. 22.)

A Biblical approach, according to Walter Brueggemann, requires that “land be handled always as a gift not to be presumed upon” and that “land be managed as an arena for justice and freedom.”

God’s people “do not own the land but belongs to the land,” he says. “In that way, we are warned about presuming upon it, upon controlling it in scientific and rational ways, so that its own claim, indeed its own voice, is not heard or is disregarded.”

If we allow our nation’s farmland to slip under the control of a wealthy few, will anyone live close enough to hear its voice? Our deafness may cost more than we can bear to lose.

## Animal abuse

The Humane Farming Organization (HFO) links animal rights, food safety, and family-scale farming. Their current campaign targets BGH (Bovine Growth Hormone), a drug to boost milk production in cattle. Its use, they say, leads to more infections in cows, thus more antibiotics in milk. While benefiting pharmaceutical companies and commercial farms, it could drive a third of the nation’s dairy farmers out of business. Consumers are asked to write FDA Commissioner David Kessler, requesting that the FDA reject BGH, or, at minimum, require explicit labeling of products from BGH-treated cattle. Kessler’s address is FDA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20857.

**T**he earth's harvest is the source of artist Nancy Basket's livelihood. Coiling baskets from long-leaf pine needles and creating wall art from kudzu plants which she gathers and transforms into colorful paper, Basket nurtures her own sense of connectedness to the land.

"It helps me stay rooted in the earth, and maintain a balance of what is real and what is necessary," Basket says. She speaks of "hearing the plants talk," their voices countering the falsehoods of a consumer society. "My medicine is to work with plants."

Basket was raised near the Yacoma, Washington reservation by a mother of German descent. She knew that her father, who left when she was in the third grade, was Cherokee and that her parents had met in school. But no one would tell her the stories she wanted to know.

She questioned her father's mother, but "my mother told me not to ask any more because Grandma was ashamed." In fact, she says her Cherokee grandmother, who moved to Washington from Oklahoma, cried when Basket was born, because she was so dark.

As a child, Basket says she felt different, special. "I was always in the woods, off by myself," she says. "I used to gather weeds, weave them, learn their names..."

Eleven years ago a friend taught her how to make a coiled basket.

"I knew at that moment that it was something I would do the rest of my life," she says.

Then, after the birth of her fourth child, an uncle sent Basket a packet of genealogical information that rooted her in history.

Basket learned that her great-great-grandmother had been the basketmaker for her tribe in the Southeast in the mid-

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**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.



Iroquois ceremonial corn-husk masks made by Nancy Basket.

## Weaving the talking leaves

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

1800s. She chose then to take this ancestor's surname.

Her discovery of her family history prompted her to delve further into the traditions of her tribe. She moved her family to South Carolina and visited the North Carolina Cherokee Reservation, land that was ancestral to her father's family for 100,000 years.

"The first time I was there, I got cold chills. It was as though I had been there before. There was a great sense of peace."

But, she added, the tourist items for sale broke her heart. "The tomahawks and feathers all came from Taiwan."

Basket immersed herself in the stories of her people, and found in them a profound spirituality.

"I started piecing things together. Because I had no tribe, it was up to me to find the road back. We can do that with artwork, through the stories of the tribes, through reading the talking leaves that we have left. We can do that by filtering

out what the European men wrote about us and by getting together with some of the very few medicine people we have left. We can also pray, we can ask Grandfather to help us remember.

“Creating baskets, I feel the old ones guiding my fingers. Although several generations separate my grandmother from myself, I feel her spirit within me.

“When we hear the old legends and follow them, we are said to be on the Red Road,” Basket explained. “That means I am on the path of the peaceful warrior. I will stand up for what I believe in, but I am not going to fight. We believe there are five tribes of two-leggeds — the red, the yellow, the white, the black and the brown. All tribes need to learn about each other to live in harmony.”

Basket told the Cherokee legends to her children. And when her son wished for pictures, she started weaving symbols into her art. She has become a storyteller, offering programs to schoolchildren which combine Native American history with art instruction. She also teaches stories to Parks and Recreation and Forest Service workers, who pass them along to visitors. And she has taken her skills back to native peoples.

Basket’s family — which includes her four children whose father is Korean and her husband, who is of German and Lebanese descent, and his two children — weave Native American beliefs through their home-life.

“There is a grove of seven trees — it’s where we go for family council, to learn and where we have our medicine wheel. We have 12 stones in a circle. We seal the circle with tobacco and corn meal, and smoke the pipe for direction from Grandfather. We talk with each other until we come to a decision, then we remove the eastern rock and the ceremony

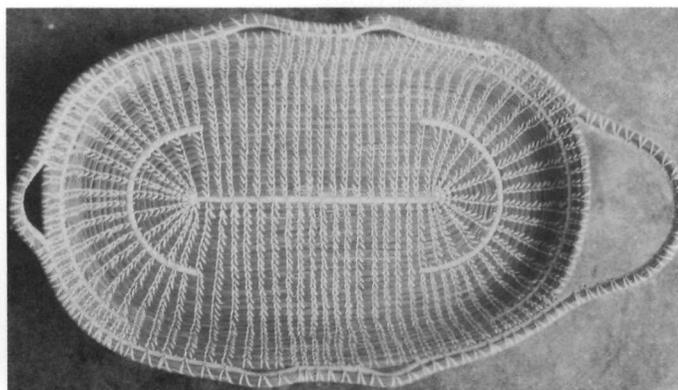


Nancy Basket

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*Creating baskets, I feel the old ones guiding my fingers. Although several generations separate my grandmother from myself, I feel her spirit within me. -Nancy Basket*

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A Cherokee cradle-board made of pine needles.

is over. The circle is available to all our other relations again.”

Basket’s youngest daughter is learning basket-weaving. Her older daughter was challenged by African American members of her high school’s basketball team to explain her racial heritage. She answered, “My mother’s from the red and white tribes and my father’s from the yellow, so I guess I’m orange.” One player smiled back at her, “Girl, we’re going to call you rainbow.”

Asked whether, she experiences rejection from full-blooded Native Americans, Basket says that happens sometimes, but that many native peoples have almost assimilated into the dominant culture through intermarriage and need to feel included somewhere.

“What does it mean to be really Native American? I think it means being able to live out the teachings, to walk your talk.”

When Basket learned that the Cherokees who were driven into Oklahoma during the Trail of Tears lost their knowledge of basket-weaving because the necessary pine trees do not grow in that region, she contacted Chief Wilma Mankiller, who heads the Oklahoma tribe. Basket is making plans to visit them with pine needles and patterns, “so they can remember the old skills again.”

She has worked in a similar way with the Catawba tribe in Rock Hill, South Carolina. “This is the kind of heritage that we need — this is what is real.”

Basket sees purpose in her own mixed heritage.

“Sometimes I feel like a shadow person, caught between cultures,” she says. “But I came into this body this way for a reason. It is so necessary for there to be communication between the tribes again. I don’t believe there are any accidents. All things are connected.”



Members of Sandhill Farm, Rutledge, Missouri.

# Signs of regeneration: Community farms

by Ariel Miller

**L**ike monastic reform movements throughout the middle ages, alternative farm communities have been founded as antidotes to abuses which their members saw in the surrounding society, particularly during the social foment of the 1960s.

Those which have survived offer living lessons of ways Americans could

---

**Ariel Miller** is assistant editor of *Interchange*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Southern Ohio.

learn to live simply, ecologically, and well. Their hard-won experience offers both challenge and hope, particularly since Americans seem stuck on the notion that they can have a decent life-style or a clean environment, but not both.

“Intentional communities are experimental labs for alternative energy and technology, alternative economic styles, alternative social arrangements,” notes Kathie Nicosia, who has over 20 years’ experience in the movement and now lives at East Wind Community in southern Missouri.

With per capita incomes as low as \$3,000 to \$4,500 — thousands of dollars below the official poverty line — people in land-based “intentional communities” report a growing sense of spiritual and material bounty. The new businesses they have started, the inches of humus building up in their fields, stand out in high relief against a backdrop of foreclosed farms, dying towns, and eroded land.

Some of the advantages held by community farmers are nearly ironic, according to Laird Schaub, whose *Directory of Intentional Communities* has sold 12,000

copies in the last 18 months and is now in its third printing.

For starters, community farms can't get loans easily which thwarts their growth but helps prevent over-extension and foreclosures, Schaub said. They are also more likely to be labor-intensive, substituting bodies for expensive machinery. When they do buy equipment, they can often survive with smaller less-sophisticated machines shared throughout the community.

Since small community farms can't hope to compete with larger farms, members often struggle to find ways to create a "value-added" product. For instance, they will turn soy beans into tempeh and market the tempeh. Very few have been able to achieve the "romantic notion" of self-sufficiency, of living entirely off the land. Most of the land-based communities that have survived have needed small businesses like mail-order sales or carpentry in order to break even. Twin Oaks, for example, earns most of its income making hammocks for the retail chain Pier 1.

The forms of community that are being tried are as variegated as a field of wildflowers. There are secular egalitarian societies and Christian feminist communities; tribes of eclectic contemplatives; a sanctuary for gay men; groups with children, others without.

Tough realities have forced compromises in many utopian programs. Admirers of B.F. Skinner founded Twin Oaks in Virginia in the late 1960s to embody the principles of Walden II, then quietly jettisoned most of the ideology when its tenets proved unliveable. The Farm in Tennessee, founded by California's Steve Gaskin and a caravan of followers in

1970, foreswore drug-use on the trek east and adopted strict sexual ethics as soon as children were conceived.

The work is hard, from the struggle to un-learn competition to the back-breaking toil of organic farming. "This life is

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*I'm at a farm where people decide what to do as a group of equals. Learning how to do that well is hard.*

— Laird Schaub,  
Sandhill Farm, Missouri

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not for everyone," acknowledges Schaub, who lives on the Sandhill Farm in Rutledge, Missouri. "Probably the biggest challenge is social dynamics. I'm at a farm where people decide what to do as a group of equals. Learning how to do that well is hard. It's exciting, but one of the hardest things to feel comfortable with is giving up control — in this society, we think when one becomes an adult it's your turn to control.

"But there has never been the interest that there is today," Schaub adds. "The benefits are enormous. We get security in community. If I'm sick, there are six other adults. The community is pledged to my health care. If you can share power the opportunities are very wide. The potential for impact goes far beyond our members, the products of community are relevant for everyone."

**Koinonia, in Americus, Georgia** was founded in 1942 by

scripture scholar Clarence Jordan, author of the *Cotton Patch* translations of the New Testament, to be "a demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God." Behavior like paying black and white

farmworkers equal wages brought armed attack by the Ku Klux Klan and a county-wide economic boycott. Koinonia's mail-order business, selling foods like peach cake and pecans, was born of the need to win outside support in order to survive the siege.

Today 17 adult Koinonia partners and 10 children make up a core community based on the principles of the Book of Acts. On becoming a partner one sells all one's outside assets; the proceeds don't have to go to Koinonia, but if kept apart they must go into interest-free loans. Each partner gets a salary from the common pot based on his/her needs as determined in consultation. On average, that's \$4,000-\$4,500 a person.

"Compared to the Third World, we're absolutely wealthy," says Gail Steiner, who has been a partner since 1975 and was elected this year as Coordinator of Activities (Koinonia's closest approximation to a C.E.O.). "I'm always having to think about this because my kids seem to think we're poor. Yet the garden overflows, all of our needs are very well met — we even go to Dairy Queen and movies."

In fact the material comforts and complexity of life at Koinonia have risen steadily over its 50 years.

"Clarence had a saying: you let us know what you need and we'll help you figure out how to do without it. I'm not sure that applies today," muses Steiner. "In the beginning the commu-

nity did laundry in washpots and cooked over fires. Now — though we just had to borrow \$70,000 to pay the bills — we have millions of dollars of assets in ma-

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*Intentional communities are experimental labs for alternative energy and technology, alternative economic styles, alternative social arrangements.*

— Kathe Nicosia,  
East Wind Community, MO

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chinery and land and buildings. How do we keep our vision intact?"

Koinonia spearheaded low-income housing for the region, catalyzing the creation of Habitat for Humanity, and opened Sumpter County's first integrated day care center. Its next ministries in the county may include efforts on crime, child abuse, or sexual abuse. Koinonia's folks are also struggling to transform row crop farming to organic, in a muggy climate that is one of the most hospitable in the world to weeds and bugs.

**The Farm, Summertown, Tennessee:** One of the famed utopian adventures emerging from the 1960s, the Farm was settled by a band of 200 who followed meditation teacher Steve Gaskin in 1970. Pooling everything they had, they bought land in rural Tennessee and settled there as a modern tribe, struggling to forge bonds and standards of mutual accountability.

"It was clear as we headed east in our

caravan that there was going to be an explosion of babies, and no plans had been made," recalls Ina May Gaskin. "We soon established that if a couple were sleeping together, you were engaged. If there was a birth, you were married. There would be no lack of commitment to the new life being created."

In the migration drugs were left behind and artificial birth control eschewed. A tribal morality emerged by consensus. Those who abused their families—physically or emotionally—were shunned or even expelled if they could not reform.

The Farm went on to become one of the nation's flourishing centers for the revival of home birth and the ancient art of midwifery. Members opened their homes to pregnant women who came to the Farm for the delivery of their children. Expanding to a population of over 1400 people by the early 1980s, the community almost foundered under the weight of its free services to outsiders, the pre-

cariousness of farming, and a crisis as many members rebelled against the charismatic leader role that they had projected on Gaskin.

Now its 220 members support themselves in a variety of paid professions, from midwifery to law. Decisions are made by committees. The Farm's businesses continue to serve its goals of social and physical healing, for example publishing books on nutrition and marketing clothes produced by a Guatemalan weavers' cooperative.

To the mission of teaching midwifery and home birth is now added a ministry to the dying: bringing them back into community and "sovereignty" instead of isolating them in a high-tech institution.

To Ina May Gaskin, a midwife herself, the enduring contribution of the Farm is to model restored human community.

"Now we're elders with grey hair," she says whimsically, describing the



The peanut harvest at Koinonia in Americus, Georgia.

founding members as they welcome back grown children returning for the annual reunion. Some bring their own children back to grow up in a community where it is safe for the young to be outside alone at night. "This is a culture of healthy confidence," says Ina May Gaskin. "We have a feeling of hope, a feeling that you can truly change things."

**Sandhill Farm, Rutlege, Missouri:**

Four friends committed to living in community pooled their assets in 1974 to buy this 160-acre farm. Working at first in off-farm jobs to raise money, they used it to create a hardy little communal economy. All income earned by members is shared, as are most possessions. The budget, with less than \$3,000 per capita, includes stipends for family vacation trips. Together with several other communes, Sandhill members also put money into a self-insurance fund.

For almost two decades neighboring farmers have been struggling to survive falling crop prices and rising input costs, with no control over either. Sandhill's members, with a lot of labor, convert \$9-bushels of soy beans into \$90 worth of tempeh.

Sandhill's organic techniques are far more labor-intensive than most Missouri farms can currently manage, where single families rely on expensive machines and chemicals to farm bigger acreage. But members of other communities - Twin Oaks in Virginia and East Wind in southern Missouri - travel to Sandhill to help at harvest time. When

their own work load eases, Sandhill members pitch in with the hammock-making business.

"To live as we do successfully calls for a big investment in social skills," Laird Schaub points out. "Learning to get along is a fundamental building block to world peace. If we can't live in small groups, how can we possibly do it internationally?"



**Lisa Freundlich and son Isaac who was born at the Midwifery Center at the Farm in Summerville, Tenn.**

**Grailville, Loveland, Ohio:**

The Grail, an international Christian women's movement founded in 1921, established Grailville on a 300-acre farm in southern Ohio in 1944 as a center for formation, preparing young women to use their gifts in service to God and the world. From

the beginning, the founders saw the disciplines of farming and worship linked, with feasts and Scripture grounded in the cycle of planting and harvest. "The focus at the beginning was on individuals and families: many young women came to Grailville to prepare for marriage and life on the land," notes Grail member Audrey

Sorrento. "Now our focus is the global ecology and the spiritual — the large community, the whole ecosystem."

From 1944 to 1968, Grail members farmed the land themselves until the workload proved too great for the resident community. The farm was leased to a farmer who chemicalized it. Grail members focused their energies on running a conference center and developing an educational program that draws theologians and students from all over the world.

By 1988, however, eco-justice had become so central to that mission that Grail members felt it urgent to restore the land through organic farming. The farmer could not take on the massive extra labor required. As suburban sprawl crept nearer, Grail members faced, and resolutely renounced, the temptation to sell the land and use the proceeds for the teaching ministry. Instead, a handful of resident Grail members, interns, and a new farm family have taken on the gargantuan task of rehabilitating the land and farming it sustainably.

Already this mission is central to the educational programs at Grailville, from resident semesters to outreach to the surrounding community. Though it could be years before (and if) the farm becomes self-sufficient, it is already a learning lab for sustainable agriculture. Many students are drawn to the Grail because of the unusual opportunities to combine theology, worship, arts and ecology.

*The Directory of Intentional Communities* lists over 400 alternative communities in the United States and abroad. Cross-reference charts group them by size, location, and purpose. This is the first time information on so many has been compiled in an easily-accessible manner. Copies are available for \$18 (postage included) by writing to Twin Oaks, Rt. 4 Box 169 W, Louisa, Virginia 23093. **tw**



**Garden workers at Grailville, Loveland, Ohio.**

**W**hen I left the Virginia mountains last August, the harvesting of my garden was entrusted to the hands of friends and neighbors for the time was not yet ripe to gather up the fruits of my labor. I had enjoyed a few early tomatoes, onion and greens, all of which I had plucked with care, for I knew that my time with my garden was limited. Many days I sat on the hill, feasted my eyes on the lush vegetation, and wondered whatever in the world was so important that I needed to leave home.

I knew that I was a daughter of the mountains, but I didn't realize how mountain I was until I arrived in New York where I would study for a divinity degree at General Theological Seminary. The contours and rhythms of mountain life and language have shaped my world view and my theology. The web of relationships among kin and neighbors, the daily struggle to survive in the coalfields, the many ways of knowing and talking about God, the stories and story-telling, the shaped-note singing at the community church, and meditating while walking the dogs in the field were the roots of my life, my community, and my spirituality.

To me there is something whole and holy about all this and about mountain people, who have a wisdom as deep and as old as the coal seams. It is a wisdom which grows from pain and suffering and human loss. It is a wisdom which acknowledges the beauty and goodness of creation and human life. One day while drinking coffee with a friend, he leaned against his kitchen window, pointed at the mountain, and said, "See that mountain? That's my art. It just doesn't have a frame around it. But it is as precious as a painting hanging in the Metropolitan Museum. They have guards with guns to protect those paintings. But we can't even protect the land. Now why should some strip miner be allowed to come in and destroy God's art?"

I believe my friend was talking about plundering. To plunder a region and a people is to extract whatever can be taken in the most efficient manner possible with the least expense incurred. Historically, that is what the coal industry has done.

On the other hand, to harvest is to recognize value and to be selective, for not all things come to fruition at the same time. Harvesting means there must be a sorting out and selecting that which has value. In order to continue to harvest over a period of time, one must put something back to restore the base, out of which will come new life.

The pillaging and plundering of the land has been accompa-

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**Linda Johnson** is a student at General Theological Seminary and former staffperson at Grace House in St. Paul, Virginia. Photographer **Jim West** lives in Detroit, Mich.



Massanutten Mountain, Virginia

credit: Jim West

## A mountain harvest

by Linda Johnson

nied by a continuing denigration of much of mountain life by the dominant culture. At the same time, there has been a harvesting of selective parts of the culture and people — traditional mountain music, dance, crafts, and story-telling have gone through cycles of being in and out of vogue.

But over the years, much more has been taken from the mountains than has been returned. When I left home, numerous people expressed their concern to me about whether I would return. I believe that behind this concern was fear — the fear that I would forget where I came from, that I would get lured away,

*The contours and rhythms of mountain life and language have shaped my world view and my theology.*

— Linda Johnson

that I would no longer see value in the people of the land.

I also suspect that tied to this fear was another set of concerns which has to do with self-identity and self-esteem. From the writings of the romantic novelists of the 1800s to today's television shows, mountain people have been portrayed as being out of step, backward, naive, stupid, or quaint. I think many mountain people have internalized this image, Others have resisted this it. Still others have left the creeks and hollows, their web of relationships of kin and neighbors, and their language and accents.

My fear of going to seminary was whether I could survive in the Church system and in the city. Although there is a lot of talk about diversity within the Church, I have yet to experience it with any degree of intensity within the Episcopal seminary community.

In the course of numerous conversations, I have told people that it is my intention and desire to return to the mountains. Sometimes people looked at me blankly. Occasionally someone inquires, "Why would you ever want to go back there?"

After all this expensive training, after all this time away from home, after living in New York City, why go back to the mountains? I think it is a question of identity and belonging. I know where my home is and I want to go home. I know that I have been part of the cultural harvesting of the region and I want to give something back to help restore the base.

When I drive off the mountain in the early morning hours, crest the ridge and begin the descent, I can look down in to the valley floor which is covered with a thick fog. And in the evening, when I climb the mountain, there's a point where I pull over. The setting sun spins shades of red, blue and lavender into the clouds; this is the place where the hawks circle on invisible wind drafts. It is the mountains which renew me and give me strength. I now know that God made the mountains so that we would have something to rest our eyes against. We all need rest for the journey. We need rest for healing and restoration. We need rest to prepare for the harvest.

I believe that my seminary learnings can be worked into the soil of the community and this may add a new richness which can be used at some point, perhaps for new growth. I can give something back to that part of creation where I was brought into being. When I leave New York I will leave a part of myself with others who accepted me and loved me because, not in spite, of who I am. And I'll surely take part of them with me to the mountains.

The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. This is true of New York and Appalachia. Last year I entrusted my garden to other folks. This year I planted a garden in my mind. Next year's garden awaits me. 

## Listening to the ancestors

Why have I struggled to stay home? Home in the West Virginia hills? Why have I struggled with unemployment, underemployment, eaten welfare cheese and hung over the edge by my bloody fingernails to stay home?

The last years as I over and over again have stood at the Crossroads — leave, stay, leave, the choice has kept making itself. I crossed over the borderline into a type of craziness that edges on martyrdom, to stay rooted, planted here. Home, where I can focus my energy, my being on work that will help move my people from being such cannonfodder — to end the vicious cycles of poverty and outmigration, to help us have more control over our destinies.

I am a hillbilly, I literally was raised as a ridge runner (Hickory Ridge), a holler inmate whose family made forays to southern milltowns for work but always came home again.

Grandpa Riley was a coal miner, a union organizer who took part in the Matewan Massacre. Grandma Zora hid under mattresses in tent cities to dodge scab bullets during the mine wars in bloody Mingo. She raised eight children to be sometimes hungry and to go without health care and basic education and to become fodder for an industrial machine (as they fought wars, worked in the steelmills, cotton mills, chemical plants, as waitresses, and most developing illness and broken bodies.)

And there is the dirt farmer side of my genes. Stoic hill people who made a living from the earth and worked from sunup to sundown. Their children escaped the hillside farms to be locked up in city factories. Or else they, too, went to war, to save someone else's standard of living.

Today their brutal legacy is in my blood. I struggle to stay home, to do meaningful work that will somehow, someway help bring justice to these hills whose wealth and people have been robbed over and over again by elite scavengers who have not cared that their greed has stunted so many lives.

During the last years of economic disaster in West Virginia, I have become in touch with the spirits of these ancestors. The genes have a wildness in them. A wildness they developed from having survived and struggled in the West Virginia hills. A wildness I've uncovered in myself that has helped me face down bill collectors, fair weather friends and the fears of becoming a homeless bag lady.

I've kept growing, ripening, honing my skills, resisting the living death of denying my blood, my roots. But as this year enters the autumn, I find that perhaps it is time to move on. There seems to be nothing here for me (certainly no welfare check or health insurance for an unemployed single woman). So now, the Hillbilly Highway beckons.

You all are going to miss me if I go.

Linda Meade wrote this just before she died. It was published in *Mountain Women's Journal* (Jan. 1992), 5719 Forrest Drive, Acworth, GA 30101.

“Exodusters” was a name borne with pride by the ex-slaves who migrated from Kentucky in 1877 to found Nicodemus, Kansas — the first free all black settlement after the Civil War. The early pioneers, who were among 15,000 participating in the exodus from the south to the desert, came seeking freedom and opportunity. And they came to stay.

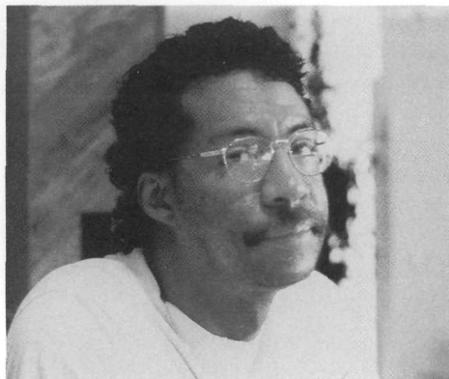
Alanzo Gillan Alexander is a third generation farmer in this tiny Western Kansas town. The only remaining full-time black farmers around Nicodemus, he and his father, work the original homestead land.

Alexander doesn't have to stay. He has a college degree in accounting. A gifted speaker and musician, he has other opportunities. He never intended to come back to the farm.

In 1979, after graduating from college, he was offered a management position for a large clothing chain and came home to think it over.

It was June. It was harvest. And the Alexander land is homestead land.

“At first, I stayed out of a sense of obligation,” says Alexander quietly. “My parents were getting older. There was no



Gil Alexander

**Charlotte Hinger** is a novelist in Hoxie, Kansas. She is the author of *Come Spring* (Simon and Schuster) which relates the lifestory of an aristocratic Eastern woman relocated to a Kansas homestead.

one else to take over. And it is homestead land,” he adds wistfully, with a soft smile.

Every Kansan knows the magic in the words “homestead land.” For a black family, the words have a double poignancy. The “Exodusters” were shocked at the bleakness of the promised land. The first winter was brutal. Fuel was buffalo chips and sunflower stalks. No one owned a horse, so it was a 30-mile walk for a sack of flour. Kansas was not their gentle Kentucky and freedom wasn't what it was cracked up to be.

Many of those who could afford to, left — the same as their white counterparts. Those who could not, learned to farm in a strange land and prospered. Despite the great hardships, the Exodusters rejoiced in owing their own land — free and clear, once it was “proved up.” Two years later, Nicodemus had 700 people and two newspapers.

Alexander's walls are decorated with pictures of his ancestors. The ones who stuck it out.

“Then I stayed because I really was in a position to appreciate what we had here. I was aware of what would be lost, if I left.”

Alexander is deeply aware of his heri-

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*You might as well schedule two days a month at the local ASCS office, and then learn you have to destroy 1.3 acres of wheat you just planted to be in conformity with the program. — Gil Alexander*

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tage. His maternal great-grandfather, Samuel Garland, was a Buffalo Soldier. Garland's home was also in Graham County. Alexander wears Garland's old uniform when he performs his one-man



An early homesteading family in Western Kansas.

## Nicodemus: The

by Charlotte Hinger

show dramatizing the life of the proud men of the 9th and 10th Cavalry. He and his cousin, Angela Bates, give presentations for schools and civic groups.

And then he stayed because his parents got caught up in the farm crisis. Waylaid by grief, his father was devastated when the Alexander family had to file a Chapter 11.

Alexander learned to deal with the stress and the fury and the constant knot in his chest. He prayed his way out of his depression.

“I couldn't just abandon them. My folks needed me more than ever then.” Sometimes he thinks about all the people he would be letting down if he ever takes off. He's 35 and the thoughts came more



credit: The Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas

## promised land

often after the Alexander family's financial problems.

"At their age, my parents should be

Ten years ago, the U.S. Civil Rights Commission warned that unless serious steps were taken to reverse the trend, there will be no more African-American farmers by the year 2000. So far, not much has changed.

African-Americans and other minorities are losing their land at a rate three times that of white farmers. Once one-seventh of all U.S. farmers, black farmers today represent just one percent.

"As bad as things are for everyone, they are significantly worse for black,

traveling, taking trips. Now there's no money."

Now being a Western Kansas farmer means fighting a fog of whimsical, crazy-making, ever-changing government regulations.

"You might as well schedule two days a month at the local ASCS office, and then learn you have to destroy 1.3 acres of wheat you just planted to be in conformity with the program. The paperwork involved in farming is mind-boggling."

Farming has become income projections and cost analysis and balance sheets. Alexander's accounting degree serves him well. He doesn't blame the bankers, but it's a frustrating situation for everyone.

"Something will have to change radically, for any of us to make it. We're just taking it a year at a time. The first time we can't make the payment, that's it. It's over."

In addition to his tie to the land, there is Nicodemus itself. A ghost town now, except for retirees living in the government housing projects, it comes to life every year during the Emancipation Day celebration. They come from all over—the former residents of this tiny town. They come from Denver and Los Angeles to reminisce and to sing once again in the choir at the Nicodemus Baptist

Church. Native American, and Hispanic farmers," said Katherine Ozer, director of the National Family Farm Coalition.

In 1990, a Minority Farmers Rights Act was set before Congress, with support from a wide range of farm advocates, social justice organizations, and Churches, including the Washington Office of the Episcopal Church. Much of it was deleted, but Congress did authorize up to \$10 million to fund a Minority Outreach and Education Program, and commissioned U.S.D.A. studies on minority farm issues.

Church.

Alexander believes that we will see black families moving out of the cities into small towns. His nephew, Lateef Dowdell, moved to Nicodemus from Los Angeles three years ago. He lives with the Alexanders and attends high school in Hill City. His mother flies in for visits.

Each time, Alexander looks for her, too, to stay. She wants to, but there's no work for her in Nicodemus.

"The city has become too dangerous," says Alexander. "Too many shootings. Too many problems. She wanted Lateef to grow up here in Nicodemus."

Lateef attends the same high school where all the family was graduated. It's nearly all white.

Alexander thinks Nicodemus should be shared, but he worries about new urban immigrants exploiting the town.

"Nicodemus needs to be cared for, treasured and nurtured. I don't want people to just see dollar signs and the money they can make off of the history."

Alexander doesn't look like a farmer in his great-grandfather's Buffalo Soldier uniform. He certainly doesn't look like a farmer in his bermuda shorts and T-shirts and gold chains.

But he most definitely *is* a Western Kansas farmer. You can tell them by the way they stay and stay and stay. **TW**

No studies have been issued, but this year, for the first time, the outreach program has been included in the congressional budget.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the Civil Rights Commission report, a Minority Farmers Caravan is being organized by the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in Atlanta, Georgia. Farmers will travel north from Atlanta to be in Washington, D.C. September 23-25, the weekend of the Congressional Black Caucus.

—Marianne Arbogast



credit: Robert McGovern

## The tools of harvest: Imported labor in Nebraska

by Julie A. Wortman

**N**o one will ever know what Miguel Valdez was trying to say when Gothenburg Police Sgt. Earl Imler shot him dead on Nebraska's Highway 30 in the early morning hours of April 11 last

spring. But the thought that knowing might have saved the 23-year-old Hispanic man's life has forced Dawson county residents to realize that Los Angeles is not so far away from the peaceful Platte River valley.

"It was a tragedy, but it was an eye-opener for everybody," says Jenny Gutierrez, a longtime Hispanic resident of nearby Lexington. "This is a big cultural shock in Nebraska."

Until Iowa Beef Packers (IBP) opened its new meat-packing facility in Lexington a year-and-a-half ago, Gutierrez was only one of a handful of Hispanic residents living amongst the descendants of the European immigrants who originally laid claim to Indian land.

IBP's slaughterhouse brought 2,000 new jobs to a town with a population of less than 7,000 and a county with an overall population of 20,000 — a seem-

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**Julie A. Wortman** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*. **Robert McGovern** is an instructor at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Penn.

ing economic bonanza well worth the tax incentives the town had offered the company if it would build here.

But only a small number of local residents sought IBP employment.

"If you don't have to work there you wouldn't," observes Lee Pederson, the local Episcopal priest. The work is bloody, repetitive and physically exhausting, but with starting wages at over \$7 an hour, unskilled laborers from Texas and Mexico — like Valdez — have been only too eager to get themselves on the \$30-million payroll.

"Some are on their last tank of gas when they arrive in town," Pederson says. Haven House was opened by the Dawson County Ministerial Association in response to the influx of homeless, often penniless, prosperity-seeking families. The facility's beds were filled 5,000 times last year alone.

Permanent solutions to the sudden demand for additional housing, classrooms and health care, not to mention the strain on the county's infrastructure, have come more slowly. And the effort to provide answers has been compounded by the fact that most of the newcomers know no English.

IBP made no provision for offering its employees English classes — you don't need to know English to work on the packing-plant line — but the local community college did, free of charge. "I taught 45 or 50 [Hispanic workers] English during construction of IBP's plant," Gutierrez said. Currently, about 100 are enrolled, although the professional educator estimates that at least 500 more should be.

"The classes are an hour-and-a-half long, four days a week," Gutierrez explains. "Many are tired when they get home from work and would rather spend time with their families than go to class."

Throughout, the assumption had been that the recently arrived "outsiders" were

*continued on page 22*

## Island migrants win Florida suit

by Nan Cobbey

Pulled muscles and broken ribs put an early end to Allan Jackson's cane cutting days. Sent home like a broken tool, the St. Ann, Jamaica, native can no longer send his children to school.

"... things is very hard for I cannot work," he writes lawyer Greg Schell, director of Florida Rural Legal Services and an Episcopal layperson who has fought for farmworkers since earning his law degree from Harvard in 1979. "And I have my wife and three children to take care of. I do not have any money."

"This is dangerous work ... more deaths than in any other industry, even higher than construction work," says Schell, who hears or reads of stories like Jackson's everyday. Farmworkers suffer a disability rate five times that in any other industry, according to Schell. Pesticide exposure affects 300,000 a year. Life expectancy is 49. The use of machetes and fire to harvest cane make the sugar industry especially dangerous: an average of 10 deaths occur each year among the estimated 7,000 migrant workers in Florida. Most survive the frequent eye injuries, slash wounds, burns and vehicle accidents, but many are maimed.

With no salary, no insurance, no Social Security and, sometimes, no way even to get home, foreign cane workers and their families face a nightmare.

Workers' Compensation could help end the ordeal if money were paid in for workers. But Schell claims that while

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Nan Cobbey is features editor for *Episcopal Life*.

almost all contractors claim that they pay workers' compensation, most pocket the money. And the Internal Revenue Service offers little help.

"It is pointless to sue contractors to get them to pay insurance," according to the Internal Revenue Service's Fort Myers representative, Bob Rust. "The guy's got all his assets under 'A' Corporation and he hires all his workers under 'B' Corporation which has no assets."

It would also help if employers insured and maintained their equipment and vehicles. They defy the law because noncompliance fines cost far less than insurance, Schell charges.

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*Farmworkers suffer a disability rate five times that in any other industry. Pesticide exposure affects 300,000 a year. Life expectancy is 49. The use of machetes and fire make the sugar industry especially dangerous.*

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For injured sugar workers charity is usually the only recourse.

But in June there was a victory to celebrate. A Palm Beach County Circuit Court judge ruled that U.S. Sugar Corp. and the Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative of Florida will have to pay back wages to 15,000 workers they systematically cheated of their full pay. More than \$50 million may be involved. The three-year-old class-action lawsuit included the 15,000 harvest cane cutters who worked between the 1983-84 season and 1990-91.

the ones who should do the changing. But that view was abruptly held up for scrutiny when the police killed Valdez last spring.

Over and over, local newspapers reviewed the key facts as they reported each stage of the grand jury investigation that followed:

The officers had encountered Valdez earlier in the evening and suspected he had been drinking. A second encounter led to a car chase. Valdez' car was stopped outside Gothenburg's town limits, at a point two miles west of neighboring Cozad. Valdez spoke only Spanish; Imler and his partner, Officer Pat Glen, spoke only English. When Valdez emerged from his car he was holding a knife and appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. He was yelling something and approached the officers in a threatening manner. The officers kept ordering him to put down his weapon. Police training ruled out firing a warning shot or shooting to disable Valdez when it appeared the young man was not going to comply.

Quotes from members of the Nebraska Mexican-American Commission indicated they were worried that Valdez' death might be part of an emerging statewide trend towards the use of excessive

force against minority groups. Local Mexican Americans voiced their conviction that Valdez' status as an undocumented worker from Mexico may have affected how the police officers treated him. Others condemned the fact that, despite their protests, the 16-member Dawson County grand jury investigating the shooting included no Hispanic or Latino members (grand jurors are selected at random from citizens who have a driver's license or are registered to vote).

And then came the final verdict: that in shooting Valdez, Imler had acted within the law.

There were no riots in response to the decision, only the uncomfortable feeling that racism might have been involved here. The clearest indication of institutionalized bias came in a set of observations and recommendations attached to the main verdict.

"Primary responsibilities for obtaining communication skills sufficient to function within our community rests with

individual residents," the Grand Jury stated, adding that law enforcement agencies should "continue to develop language skills for communicating with non-English speaking persons."

Don Martin, a founding member of the board of the Kansas-based Harvest America, Inc., a 10-year-old organization that focuses on building community

among Hispanics so that they can claim a voice in community decision-making, called that view "morally and ethically short of the mark.

"This is not a temporary thing," Martin added. "Language will al-

ways be a factor. It's okay for an industry to be dependent on Hispanics, but [the grand jury] is saying we'll serve you only as long as you're like us."

Despite the grand jury's inference that Valdez should have known English, a stance that upholds the mono-culturalism that has been part of this region's history since Indians were driven from the land, there has been a sudden upsurge of interest in learning Spanish.

Last July, Gutierrez spent an intensive week teaching Spanish six hours a day to 26 Platte River valley community leaders. Fifty more individuals are learning the language in a regular community-college course.

Most promising of all, she says, is a recent state ruling that all Nebraska schools must give their curricula a multi-cultural focus.

"Even if the grand jury decision was [legally] right, we've got to change the rules," Pederson observes with conviction. "The big next step is to make us one community."

*"Primary responsibilities for obtaining communication skills sufficient to function within our community rests with individual residents," the Grand Jury stated.*

## An invitation to readers

With some hesitation, we are inviting readers to send a *brief* description of that within the Church that enrages them. Those items that are succinct, even witty, will be considered for inclusion in a roundup in the November issue if we receive them by September 20th. As a testimony to your own sanity, you may also want to say why you maintain your connection to the Church. Mark the envelope: attention Julie A. Wortman.

We are soliciting short pieces of fiction for an issue next winter.

Children's art, poetry and stories are especially welcome.

Writers' guidelines are available upon request.

We always appreciate postcards or telephone calls alerting us to news items or story ideas.

Photographs. Please send us your favorite photographs. When an article calls for a generic picture (for instance, of an elderly person with a child, an embrace, a flock of birds in flying pattern, we would prefer to publish a photo taken by a *Witness* reader than an image from a syndicated photo catalogue.

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## A little less filling

Remember those people who insisted that the CIA was transmitting messages to them through the fillings in their teeth? Well, the latest from a dentist in Bethesda, MD is that hearing aids may soon be replaced by a little antenna loop and amplifier placed inside a tooth. A miniature microphone concealed in a shirt pocket can emit FM radio signals which the antenna picks up. A crystal on the inside edge of the tooth converts the radio waves to acoustic vibrations which one's inner ear understands as sound. This advancement, which it's suggested is at least a year from marketability, raises a question: just who else *can* transmit to those teeth?

—data from **George Nobbe**,  
*Omni Magazine*, 8/92

## NAVSTAR Protesters Jailed

Two peace activists have been jailed in Los Angeles after damaging components of Rockwell's NAVSTAR satellites. The satellites were in assembly at the corporation's Salt Beach, California facility. Peter Lumsdaine and Keith Kjoler scaled a fence May 10 and wielded axes against the satellites, part of the system that guided U.S. missiles during the Gulf War. NAVSTAR is now being used for counter-insurgency surveillance in Third World nations and is considered integral to U.S. nuclear first-strike capability. Lumsdaine and Kjoler have been charged with destruction of property being manufactured for the U.S. government and face prison terms of up to 10 years.

## Anti-Gay Legislation

Public libraries in Springfield, Oregon have been ordered to remove from their shelves any books that offer a positive or neutral perspective on homosexuality. The measure is part of an amendment to the City Charter which prohibits the city from

passing any law "that recognizes any categorical provisions such as 'sexual orientation,' 'sexual preference' or similar phrases." Adopted May 19 by public referendum, it also bans gay pride events on public property and allows city agencies to deny services to any group supportive of gay rights.

*The Guardian*, 6/17/92

## Peace Tax Fund Bill

Legislators are being sought to cosponsor the U.S. Peace Tax Fund Bill, for which a committee hearing was finally held May 21. Among those who testified was William Davidson, retired Bishop of Western Kansas and former chair of Episcopal Peace Fellowship. The bill (H.R. 1870) would allow conscientious objectors to pay the military portion of their taxes into a trust fund for non-military purposes. Now that it's had a hearing, the bill is "ready to be put on as a rider to an appropriations bill," said Mary Miller of E.P.F., though that is unlikely to occur this session.

## Family Roots of Racism

"Research has shown that the most prejudiced children have grown up in highly authoritarian homes, where obedience is the most important value. Such authoritarianism has been correlated with 'anti-intracception,' a refusal to look inside oneself and a lack of insight into one's own behavior and feelings. Children from such homes tend to develop a very hierarchical worldview; one where their value is based on being 'better than' someone else. Such children find it very difficult to accept any fault or flaw in themselves, and when such limitations appear, they are quick to project the blame or cause upon others."

**Mary Webber**, *Parenting for Peace and Justice*, 6/92

## If One Person Had Said...

"I had no idea when I joined what kind of training I'd have to go through in the military.... Bayonet training was one of the earlier things that really disturbed me. Here are 300 women in my company: we're all in battle dress fatigues, with our M16s and bayonets... The drill sergeant stands up on a platform with a megaphone, instructing us how to jab, how to thrust, how to use the bayonet in the correct position...He says, 'What's the spirit of the bayonet?' We're all forced to yell, 'To kill, to kill, to kill with no mercy.' He yells, 'What makes the grass grow?' 'Blood, blood makes the grass grow...'

"If I was 17 and had to do the whole thing again, I would have appreciated it if just one person had said, 'You know, you want to go to college, you want to be in politics, you want to do all these great things, Aimee, but why would you dedicate eight years of your life to an institution whose sole purpose is to kill people?'"

**Aimee Allison**, Gulf War resister now appealing denial of her appeal for a CO discharge, *The Plough*, 6/92



## Return to D.C.

To remind the nation that the AIDS epidemic has not gone away and that the need for action is more urgent than ever, the organizers of The NAMES Project are taking the entire AIDS Memorial Quilt back to Washington, D.C., this October 9-11. With more than 20,000 panels, it is now about 10 times the size it was when first displayed there in 1987.

# Shards of hope

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

**W**hen Sandra Menefee Taylor makes artworks about the farm crisis and the industrialization of food production, she does not do so merely from an observer's point of view. She grew up

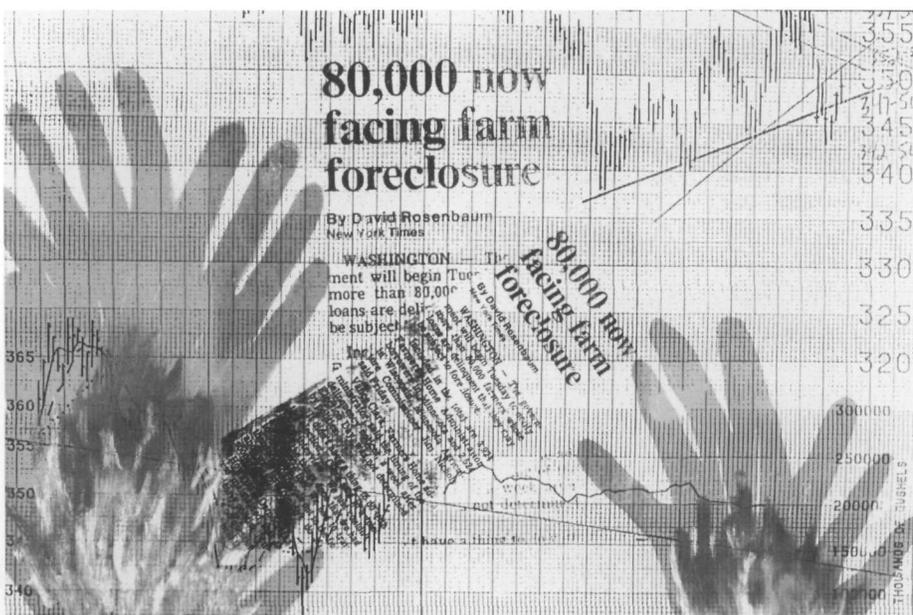
marked the day-by-day growth of the crop; she took part in the harvest, and enjoyed its fruits.

A generation later, she was there again. This time, it was as her brother lost their father's land to the bank — another victim

with racial overtones, Taylor points out, "people would be upset and we would all be aware of a racial and social prejudice — but if it involves class, it still seems okay to keep up the ignorance of 'urban equals good' and 'rural equals bad.'"

Taylor lives in the city now, residing in St. Paul. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design in 1976 and returned there as a visiting artist in 1989. She is a member of WARM, a cooperative gallery in St. Paul, and has exhibited her work around the country. She makes her art out of a variety of materials, using whatever seems appropriate for the message she wants to convey. *Unbound Pages in Hope of Being Lost* collages copies of commodities charts, newspaper headlines (one of them refers to Du Pont's selling of genetically engineered mice; this artwork predates the genetically engineered tomato) and silhouetted, traced hands seemingly aflame. *Commodity Charts* combines impersonal graphs from the Chicago Board of Trade with images from real life: family photos, letters, drawings and notebook scraps. As the chart lines spiral downward and prices plummet, painted flames seem to lick around the periphery. Even the frames themselves hold meaning: counting lines are scratched into the wood in a childlike scrawl (keeping track, perhaps, of the number of small farms that have fallen?).

Taylor has quoted Wendell Berry as stating: "The good farmer, like an artist, performs within a pattern; he must do one thing while remembering many others." Sandra Menefee Taylor wants to make sure that those of us who live in cities — where we become mired in asphalt and concrete — will remember those who are grounded in the earth. **TW**



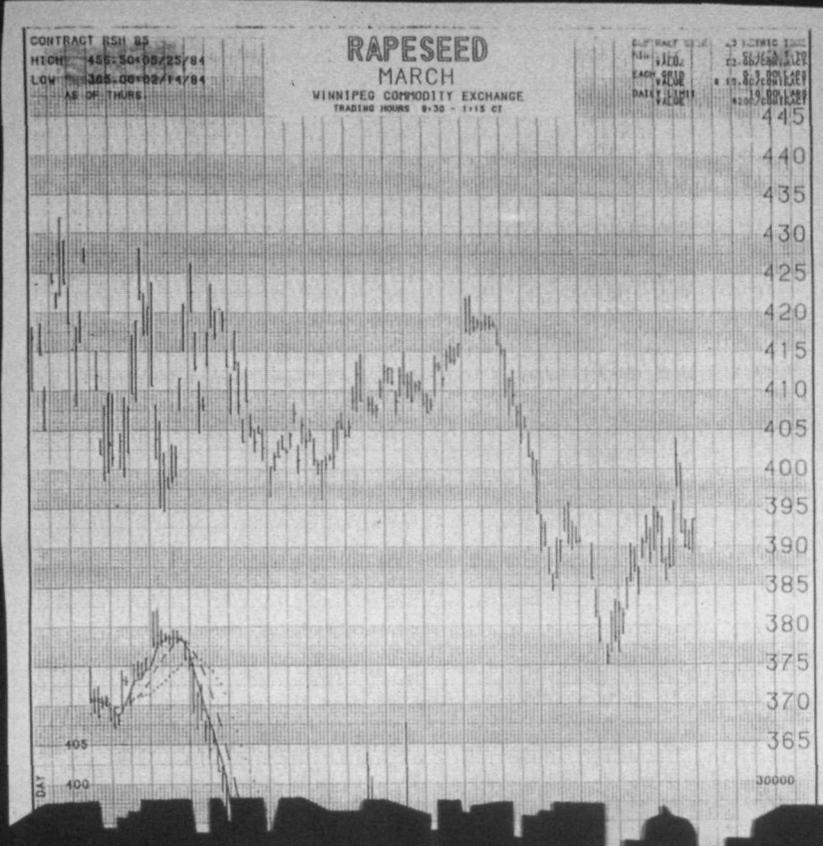
Detail from *Unbound Pages in Hope of Being Lost* by Sandra Menefee Taylor

of modern economic pressures to expand and to accumulate debt.

As an artist, Taylor has come to see a connection between her profession and that of the farmer: both typically live out their lives on the margins of society, receiving little financial reward and little respect. She is especially angry at the way country dwellers are depicted in the media and popular culture. As evidence, she quotes a description of a piece of furniture from an issue of *Metropolitan Home*, describing a dresser as quite sophisticated and no "country bumpkin." If the magazine had printed a similar slur

in rural Minnesota — a member, she says, of "the landbased working class." She was there when her father tilled the land and when the seed was planted; she

**Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz**  
edit the Art & Society section of *The Witness*.



Commodity Chart by Sandra Menefee Taylor.

# Forbidden fruit: Genetically-engineered food

by Jan Nunley

**T**he human story began in a garden, so the tale goes — a garden of wild abundance and diversity, filled with trees “pleasant to the sight and good for food.” Only one tree was forbidden to the keepers of the garden, a tree “good for food, and . . . a delight to the eyes”: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And when the first humans ate of it, their eyes were opened and they became self-aware — but the ground was also cursed for them, bringing forth thorns and thistles where there had once been goodness for the taking.

Sometime next fall, another kind of fruit — the herald of another kind of revolution — will appear on supermarket shelves across the country. It’s a tomato called the “Flavr Savr®”, a tasty, vine-ripened product developed by Calgene Inc. of Davis, California. The Flavr Savr has been genetically altered to reverse the enzyme that makes fruits and vegetables spoil, suppressing the rotting process so it can be transported over long distances and stored for longer periods without losing its marketability.

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**Jan Nunley** is a newscaster for National Public Radio’s environmental program “Living on Earth,” heard in over 200 cities in the U.S. and worldwide on the Armed Forces Radio Network. She’s also a frequent contributor to Episcopal Church publications. Artist **Tana Moore** works for the Lawrence Institute of Technology in Southfield, Mich.

Thanks to a ruling by the Food and Drug Administration this spring, the Flavr Savr — and other products of recombinant DNA testing on more than 50 plant species — can be marketed without regulation or special labelling.



credit: Tana Moore

The new policy is the result of collaboration between the FDA and the Council on Competitiveness, Vice President Dan Quayle’s regulatory watchdog agency. Quayle commented that the ruling would unleash the economic power of the biotechnology industry, which grossed \$4 billion last year and has the potential to rocket to \$50 billion in profits by the end of the decade.

Plant geneticists at leading universities reassured the public that the new technology represents a “wonderful breakthrough” with no safety problems;

industry analysts called it the greatest thing for profits since frozen foods; while consumer activists like Jeremy Rifkin filed protests with the FDA and threatened to join with a group of Florida farmers to file lawsuits halting the sale of any gene-altered food unless the FDA goes through a formal rule-making process on the products.

Most of the controversy has centered on how much the consuming public needs to know about what is in food. The Food and Drug Administration, by law, requires labeling of any food if additives or genetic alterations produce a change in nutritional content, in toxin levels, or in the presence of allergens. The last two are of particular concern to consumer advocates. Genes for toxins have already been inserted into some species of plants to enable them to repel insect predators. What happens if those same genes prove toxic to humans over time? Allergens are a more immediate concern. While the FDA has promised to require labeling if known allergen-producers, such as peanut protein, are added to the genetic makeup of a food, other proteins might be exempted, such as bananas. Persons allergic to those proteins might be in for a

rude shock (or worse), biting into one food and developing an allergic reaction appropriate to another one.

As genetic manipulation crosses, not only species, but the lines between the plant and animal kingdoms, ancient dietary and purity laws may be unwittingly transgressed. Leviticus 19:19 forbids breeding animals “with a different kind,” or sowing a field with two different kinds of seed; other sections of the Hebrew Holiness Code prohibit the consumption of certain animals, such as shellfish and pigs, and insects. How would a rabbinical

council react to corn containing firefly genes, or potatoes fine-tuned with the genes of silk moths? What would a devout Muslim do with food altered by pig genes? How would a vegetarian respond to lettuce protected against freezing with flounder genes? All of these experimental uses are currently under investigation for possible commercial production.

For advocates of biotechnology, the advantages and benefits of genetically altered food are many. It is the culmination of thousands of years of plant breeding technology, says Richard Godown, president of the Industrial Biotechnology Association.

"It has been a relentless pursuit of mankind to try and feed himself [sic], to try and produce an abundance of food, and we've done so through selection," Godown explains. "Then as we got more technically skilled, through applying the hand of man [sic] — we do cross-breeding, producing the hybrids that result in the abundance of fruits and grains and vegetables we have now. Biotechnology is exactly that, with considerably more precision."

Through the manipulation of genetic material, Godown assures, foods will be made tastier, crops more abundant — and all without the need for the pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers that have generated concern about the effects of agricultural runoff on water quality, and about the cost of all that extra technology to the cash-strapped farmer of the Two-Thirds World.

"We'll make it herbicide-resistant and disease-resistant, faster-growing; we'll increase the nutritional content; make it grow in arid soil, and have all of those attributes incorporated in the seed," promises Godown. "You'll take it to the Third World farmer and they won't need any advanced knowledge in order to be able to use it, nor will they need any technical machinery. What the guy needs is a sharp

stick and a muddy piece of ground." Godown calls biotech "the only hope and the best hope" for solving the problem of world hunger.

That one genetic super-strain crop could be devastated by pests and blights yet unknown (such as Ireland's Lumper potato blight of 1845-7 and the Southern corn leaf blight of 1970) doesn't shake Godown's confidence in biotech. "If any problems should arise naturally in the field," he says, "you'd be much better able to react to it and replace it with a species which is immune to the blight, thanks to modern technology." And of course, "if there were a blight and you were the company holding the seeds which solved the problem, you'd be rich. Everybody would want your product."

Godown also downplays the prospect of so-called "outcropping", the possibility that a genetically-altered crop could cross-pollinate and transfer its resistant characteristics to nearby weed relatives, making the weed impervious to all but the most toxic herbicides: "The Department of Agriculture has maps of the close relatives of these crops, so they know where those concerns would arise." The solution? "Dig big furrows around your field," advises Godown, adding, "It's not a big deal."

Critics say that's short-sighted. Geneticist Wes Jackson, of the Land Institute in Kansas, recalls that the last "harmless, non-toxic, non-corrosive, non-polluting" substances to come out of the chemist's lab, were chlorofluorocarbons, or CFC's: the villain in the ozone-depletion threat. "Now we're in the era of

biotechnology, and we're trying to assess it in the same way that we tried to assess the chemicals. What are the assumptions that the biotechnologists are making that an ozone-hole equivalent is not in the cards?"

Jackson doubts that "human cleverness" can ultimately outstrip rapidly mutating pests and predators with "designer gene pools." The resulting genetic truncation of the major crop lines presents a

*How would a rabbinical council react to corn containing firefly genes, or potatoes with the genes of silk moths? How would a vegetarian respond to lettuce protected against freezing with flounder genes?*

danger to the biodiversity that stands between the human population and overwhelming disruption, even disappearance, of essential crops such as wheat and rice. Genetic cloning, in particular, narrows the chromosomal focus.

"What we're doing," says Jackson, is creating an

ever more brittle, fragile, more dependent-on-the-experts approach to the world." The result is not good news for the farmer, North or South. The fact that large petrochemical and pharmaceutical concerns (such as Royal Dutch/Shell and Upjohn) have swallowed up thousands of independent seed companies and are marketing seeds along with their own pesticides and fertilizers lends credence to the argument that genetically-altered seeds will increase farmers' dependence on products from the multinationals, which will reap the profits. "It's just building another conduit for the extractive economy to exploit what is already a somewhat miserable condition in the countryside," says Jackson.

Environmental theologian and farmer Richard Cartwright Austin agrees. Biotech, he says, is "simply looking in

the wrong direction. The reason why we have difficulty feeding people is not that the plants that God created are inadequate. The reasons have much more to do with inequitable distribution, with population, and particularly with the thoughtless abuse of natural systems that lead to crises in production. Focusing efforts on genetic manipulation of food plants in order to increase yield . . . [is] not going at the root problem of hunger or malnutrition, and it is accentuating the very tendency that has produced some of our problems: to fix isolated aspects of a plant rather than looking at the natural system within which

it's imbedded.

Both Jackson and Austin see disturbing traces of an old human trait in the assurances of industry that biotech food is a foolproof answer to the world's agricultural needs; it's that old tendency exhibited in Eden. Jackson calls it "hubris," which "even the Greeks understood . . . to be the introduction of a human pattern into the world that disrupted a larger pattern not of our making, but that we're dependent upon."

"People need to demand adequate information so they can make consumer choices, and simply not purchase suspect

goods," Austin says. "Not that they're inherently evil, but that until the fundamental evils that underlie their development are corrected — we're better off without them."

For further information on biotechnology, contact : Biotechnology Working Groups, c/o Rural Vermont, 15 Barre St., Montpelier, Vt.. 05601, (802) 223-7222; Council for Responsible Genetics, 19 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138, (617) 868-0870; Foundation on Economic Trends, 1130 17th St., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 835-1570.

## Land trusts: To be a guest

*"Land will not be sold absolutely, for the land belongs to me, you are only strangers and guests of mine."  
(Leviticus 25:24)*

"No one owns the land really and truly," says Bruce Miller, director of the Wisconsin Farmland Conservancy. The five-year-old Conservancy is pioneering a new rural form of the community land trust, a means of land stewardship recommended in the Episcopal Church's economic Justice Proposal.

"Community land trusts have worked quite well in New England, preserving farmland from development and for environmental protection, and in urban areas for affordable housing," Miller says. "We're discovering it can also work as an economic development tool to have affordable farms."

Since 1985, the Conservancy has purchased five farms. Their primary financing has come through the Institute for Community Economics in Springfield, Massachusetts, which has received loans from the Diocese of Connecticut as well as several Massachusetts congregations. The Conservancy has leased the farms to

low-income or low-equity beginning farmers. They have also developed three local Community Land Trust Committees. Each local trust will hold the title to the farms in its region and assist farmers with financial planning. Farmers will have lifetime leases on the land, but can own the farmstead — the buildings and the land surrounding them.

The Conservancy is currently launching the "Next Generation" project, an effort to help retiring farmers transfer their land to new farmers, rather than seeing it annexed to commercial farms.

"Within the next 10 years, 50 percent of the farms in Wisconsin will need to be transferred to the next generation," Miller said. "One of the critical problems is seeing large farms become larger. The impact on small rural communities is absolutely devastating. It's not just farms — it's classrooms, it's parishes, it's Main Street businesses closing."

By giving some of their land to the Conservancy, retiring farmers can offset taxes on the sale of their land. The Conservancy will then purchase the remainder.

The Conservancy is also working to educate the broader community on issues of environmentally sound, sustainable farming, and the rural economy. Churches can play a role by using farmland they receive through wills to put new farmers on the land, Miller said.

Though the development of a workable farm land trust model is still in the experimental stage, the community land trust concept was initiated by Robert Swann, a World War II conscientious objector who studied Gandhi and Indian land reform movements. Swann later worked with civil rights leaders in the 1960s to address the problem of black farmers being forced off the land in the South. With Slater King, a relative and co-worker of Martin Luther King, Jr., he travelled to Israel in 1967 to investigate the Jewish National Fund, which was buying land and leasing it to individuals and communities forming *kibbutzes*. They returned to set up New Communities, the first community land trust project, in rural Georgia. Although it eventually fell prey to the drought and fluctuating land values that struck down family farms in the 1980s, New Communities served as a stimulus for further exploration and development of community land trusts. There are currently more than 100 such trusts in the U.S.

—Marianne Arbogast

*Economic Justice and a Theology of Alternative Communities* by William Woods is available from Applied Information, 900 Second National Bank Building, 830 Main St., Cincinnati, OH 45202.

As *The Witness* enters its second year in Detroit, we would like to recognize five outgoing ECPC Board members and extend a welcome to three new ones. John Burt of Marquette, Mich., Bill Rankin of Belvedere, Calif., Chris Bugbee of Princeton, N.J., and Alice Callaghan and Carmen Guerrero of Los Angeles, Calif., served on the Board during a critical and sometimes difficult time in the life of *The Witness*. We are grateful for their dedication.

New Board members are Marie Aris-Paul of New York, N.Y., Mary Alice Bird of Rockland, Maine, and long-time ECPC treasurer Bob Eckersley of Scranton, Penn.

Aris-Paul, a native of Guatemala, is director of the *Instituto Pastoral Hispano* at General Theological Seminary. An advocate of a dialogic approach to education, Aris-Paul oversees formation of Spanish-speaking ministry candidates.

Bird is director of development at the Farnsworth Art Museum. She brings a professional background in education and fundraising. "I know an organization like this cannot survive without strong financial support in addition to subscriptions," Bird said. "I'm pleased to use my professional experience to help keep alive a voice so important for the spirit of our age and for the Church."

Eckersley's involvement with the ECPC dates back to 1965. For many years he has handled ECPC finances in addition to managing his Scranton-based accounting firm. Now semi-retired, he will continue his long-standing relationship with the ECPC by serving on the Board. "*The Witness* follows all those things I hold dear," Eckersley said, naming the struggles against militarism, racism, sexism and economic injustice.



Treading in the footsteps of those who produced *The Witness* in Pennsylvania, the current *Witness* staff recently captured 13 awards for excellence in writing, photography, art and design.

*A publication committed to good design and fine photography. The images are filled with information and emotional impact.*

— the Associated Church Press

In the Associated Church Press competition, which is ecumenical and international, *The Witness* was given two first place awards for photography, citing the work of Jim West, Liz Rogers and David Turnley. The December issue, *Birthing in the face of a dragon*, was awarded a second place in graphics.

In the Episcopal Communicators' competition, *The Witness* took 10 awards from the 15 categories entered.

*The Witness* took first place awards in:

- General excellence: October, November, December.
- Editorial writing: "Confessing Sin / Confessing faith" by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, September, 1991.
- Feature writing: "Rain Your Spirit in My Heart" by Ruth Seymour, October, 1991.
- News Story: "Inauguration is Kairos moment in Haiti" by Nan Cobbey, March, 1991.
- Interview: "Resisting civil religion"

intv. with Dorothee Solle by J.W-K., September, 1991.

- Theological reflection: "Loving our enemies" by Walter Wink, November, 1991.
  - Devotional/inspirational: "Standing up to Death" by John Meyer, October, 1991.
- The Witness* took second place in:
- Original graphic: "Confessing sin" by Sister Helen David, September, 1991.
  - Layout: "Loving our enemies"— art by Sr. Helen David — November, 1991.
  - Photography: "Smoke and Mirrors" by Jim West, October, 1991.

*A tremendously interesting and challenging publication — graphically, editorially, theologically. Clear, accessible writing. Sophisticated ideas and faith challenges presented in a down-to-earth way. Very inviting style. Tremendous use of art inside and on covers. Color inside is well-used. Good mixture of people-oriented articles and theology. Beautiful issues — the kind you keep to refer to over and over.*

—the Episcopal Communicators

## Anticipating *the Rt. Rev. Jane Dixon*

Adding a second woman to the Episcopal Church's 275-member House of Bishops may not be enough to feminize that historically all-male bastion of church leadership, but for advocates of women's ordination Jane Holmes Dixon's May 30th election as Suffragan Bishop of Washington is a welcome and long-awaited sign that further progress in that direction is finally being made.

"I think Jane is going to throw the House of Bishops on its ear," observed House of Deputies President Pamela Chinnis, who characterizes Mississippi-born and Vanderbilt University-educated Dixon as a warm and outgoing "southern belle," with a "typically feminine" approach to most things—a style quite different from the reserved manner of native Philadelphian Barbara Harris, who was consecrated Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts in 1989.

"But that doesn't mean Jane isn't tough," Chinnis cautioned. "She's also a pragmatic politician. I can see her charming people right and left — and then they won't know what hit them."

Sally Bucklee, president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus and a parishioner at St. Philip's Church in Laurel, Md., where Dixon, 55, had been rector since 1986, pushed hard for Dixon's election because of her "passion for creating a just society."

"Jane is one of the few people I know who live out Micah 6 — that call to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God," Bucklee said. "She'll find concrete ways to solve problems that an all-male [diocesan leadership] wouldn't see."

Bucklee cites a community program for low-income and homeless Laurel residents that began with Dixon's decision to hire a part-time social worker to work with walk-ins looking for handouts from

St. Philip's. Now known as Laurel Advocacy and Referral Services, the program is independent, ecumenical and committed to fighting the root causes of local poverty and homelessness as much as to effective direct service.



Jane Dixon, elected suffragan of Washington.

credit: Diane Wayman, ENS

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*I think Jane is going to throw the House of Bishops on its ear. — Pamela Chinnis, House of Deputies President*

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Dixon is waiting until her election is properly ratified before she grants any formal interview with the media, although she easily fulfills popular expectations of what background a bishop should have. Married with three grown children, she holds a divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary and has served on

a variety of diocesan bodies, including Washington's standing committee, of which she was president.

More controversial is the fact that she is on record as favoring the ordination of qualified lesbian women and gay men as deacons and priests, a position four of the six nominees for suffragan unequivocally endorsed.

This same issue, specifically diocesan Bishop Ronald Haines' decision to ordain lesbian Elizabeth Carl in 1991, resulted in some dioceses' symbolic protest when the Washington Diocese asked permission to hold the election of a suffragan bishop in the first place.

"[They] said 'no' because they didn't trust who we'd elect," said Carlin Rankin, a member of Washington's standing committee who has known Dixon as a friend for 25 years. Other dioceses granted permission for the election, Rankin said, but indicated they would look closely at the suffragan bishop-elect's stand on this issue.

"Jane doesn't stand for one particular thing, but she has always been a fighter against racism and sexism," Rankin said.

### Is there a church nearby?

"The appalling silence of decent people in positions of leadership and the demonization of gay people by right-wing officials and 'traditional values' groups is largely responsible for [escalating violence against gay men and lesbian women]," said Richard

Shimpfky, bishop of the 18,000-member Diocese of El Camino Real (Calif.), preparatory to leading a contingent of clergy and lay Episcopalians in San Jose's gay pride parade on June 14.

Violence against gays and lesbians has risen as much as 31 percent in 1991, Shimpfky noted.

Diocesan communicator Kenneth Plate reports that media coverage of Shimpfky's participation in the parade attracted large numbers of gays and lesbians to a parade booth staffed by El Camino Real's local chapter of Integrity, the Episcopal Church's organization of gay and lesbian church members. The most common question? "Is there a church near where I live?"

### **"Are you women going to stand for this?"**

Eighteen years of experience with women priests hasn't changed the fact that resistance to women's ordination and to their ordained leadership is still very much a part of Episcopal Church life — yes, even in Suffragan Bishop-elect Jane Dixon's Diocese of Washington, as Marian Cover found out the Sunday following Dixon's election last May 30.

Cover, president of the diocese's Episcopal Church Women and a member of the episcopal election nominating committee, was attending services at her home congregation of St. Luke's that morning when rector J. Shelton Pollen announced that the new suffragan bishop would not be welcome in their D.C. parish as long as he was in charge. Pollen and six other diocesan clergy had informed Washington's Bishop Ronald Haines of their objection to women bishops as soon as they learned of Dixon's election.

A disbelieving Cover rose from her pew in protest.

"Do you mean that there are no women bishops in this Church?" she demanded, referring to Barbara Harris' consecration as Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts in 1989.

"I was outraged that he would have the audacity to say that [St. Luke's wouldn't welcome Dixon]," Cover said afterward. "I turned around and asked, 'Are you women going to stand for this?'"

Thirty-six of Cover's parish sisters answered by joining her in walking out of the sanctuary. They then regathered in the parish hall and developed a petition

aimed at forcing Pollen to rescind his action. More than 200 parishioners, both men and women, have signed it.

"We knew it would be natural for people to disagree," explained Pollen, who identified himself as an Anglo-Catholic traditionalist who did not agree with the election. "At some point it will be resolved — it's something the clergy have to do themselves — and I'll be speaking to the bishop."

"I think [Pollen] expects this to blow over, but we're not going to let it die," a determined Cover said.

Of the 99 U.S. dioceses, only the five most strongly associated with the Episcopal Synod of America — Fond du Lac, Eau Claire, Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin — categorically reject women priests and bishops. Four other dioceses — Georgia, Western Kansas, Albany and Springfield — haven't ordained any women priests, although each has begun accepting applicants.

But despite the fact that the vast majority of U.S. dioceses ordain women to the priesthood, women lead fewer than 400 of the Church's approximately 7,350 congregations and comprise only 11 percent of its clergy. Penelope Jamieson of New Zealand is the only one of the Anglican Communion's three women bishops who heads a diocese. Barbara Harris and Jane Dixon were elected to be suffragan bishops — that is, bishops who are subordinate assistants to the diocesan bishop, with no right of succession.

The position of suffragan was first created in the U.S. Church when Edward Demby of Arkansas and Henry Delany of North Carolina were elected specifically for "colored work," as authorized by the 1916 General Convention. They were not allowed to vote in the House of Bishops.

In 1969 John Burgess of Massachusetts became the first African American elected to head a U.S. diocese. He had first been consecrated suffragan bishop of Massachusetts in 1962. Orris Walker of Long Island and Herbert Thompson of Southern Ohio, both consecrated in 1988, were the first black bishops to be elected diocesan bishops without having been

elected suffragan bishops first. Out of a total of 33 black bishops that have served in the Episcopal Church, 24 are still living, 18 now active and six retired. Walker and Thompson remain the only two who head U.S. dioceses, while four head Episcopal dioceses outside the U.S.

### **Women in Episcopal Elections: Caucus calls for information**

The Episcopal Women's Caucus is collecting information on episcopal elections that have involved women nominees. Persons with information on any of those elections — who ran, voting statistics, etc. — are encouraged to send it to: EWC, P.O. Box 5172, Laurel, Md., 20726.

### **Cousin Bobby**

Filmmaker Jonathan Demme ("Silence of the Lambs") has made a one-hour documentary about his activist cousin Robert Castle, an Episcopal priest serving St. Mary's Church in New York City. Castle is author of "Prayers from a Burned-Out City" and gained notoriety in 1969 when he was arrested for trying to celebrate an Episcopal Peace Fellowship-sponsored Eucharist at the Pentagon.

One scene in Demme's film shows Castle leading St. Mary's Harlem congregation to a nearby Broadway intersection where they set up an altar for a worship service protesting the lack of a traffic light where 1200 school children cross daily.

The film was shown at the Cannes Film Festival last May and was then released in the U.S.



— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

## AFTER FOURTEEN MONTHS

By

ALICE REX

*C.L.I.D. Workers at the Delta Cooperative Farm*

THE Delta Cooperative Farm is in the second month of its second year. Visitors who come to learn more about us are amazed at the work that has already been accomplished, but there is still so much to be done that we have not yet stopped to catch our breath. I wish that the people who wonder whether sharecroppers would work under a system other than sharecropping could see how our men have labored this spring.

To work out an adequate income through cooperative farming, for families which have previously been destitute, is a very difficult and challenging task. The work must be so organized that no time will be lost during the frequent periods of heavy rain, with their resultant sticky soil. The plowing of the land, and the planting of the cotton, was delayed because of the rains. Then there came the dry days and dry nights, when men who had been working hard all day continued to stay in the field until past midnight, or even until the morning shift was ready to come out. The tractor plowed by moonlight, and later was equipped with powerful head and rear lights. Just ahead, in the path of its lights, the John Deere plowed along. That was in the early spring, when it was still cold at night.

The cooperative garden is still not large enough. Shortage of man-power on the farm made it impractical, this year, to attempt a larger garden. Each family is therefore urged to have a garden of its own, and behind many of our little houses rows of cabbage, lettuce, tomatoes, and beans, are lifting their green heads. To folk who have so long known what hunger is the slogan of the cooperative garden sounds unbelievable: "The more you eat the greater your income!" The

OUR Church and our Sunday Schools are trying to develop a religion which will be as adequate and as far-reaching as our new economic set-up. To minister to those who have been most neglected, and often most seriously exploited by those who call themselves Christians, is a task which requires a good deal of grace and perseverance. Their religion has largely been an otherworldly agent for their release from the hard realities of life, and a reminder of pious rules which were supposed to govern the personal habits of a religious person. "Religious" people are those who do not work on Sunday, who do not dance, or play cards at any time, who do not watch ball games on Sunday, or worship the Lord in the same building where a square dance or a social may have been held earlier in the week. Both the colored and white members share in these sentiments, and the "city" religion of some of the rest of us tends to confuse them.



AGAIN HAPPILY AT WORK

THE health of our people has generally improved. We have fewer serious infections, and so far no active cases of malaria. Our nurse, and a visiting doctor, who came from San Diego to help us, have had a remarkable record of success with their patients. We managed to live through a good deal of influenza this winter, and pneumonia cases were carefully nursed through the crisis. One little five year old boy was cared for during two anxious weeks at the clinic. His general health was poor, due to malnutrition, and he had a serious heart and kidney complication. This family is the one most recently taken on to the farm and when Mr. Franklin found them in Arkansas they had not had anything to eat, except beans, for four days. The mother of this family was in a terrible condition when she came. Thin, and emaciated, she presented the typical picture of the most destitute of sharecroppers. Due to an enforced rest of three weeks in bed, and good care and food, she already shows the effects of her treatment.

Celebrating  
— 75 —  
years

Excerpted from *The Witness*, June 24, 1937.  
The article describes a cooperative farm worked by members of the Church League for Industrial Democracy (C.L. I.D.)

cannot satisfy the orders which are given for garden stuffs. We are working hard to build a farm, and we are building strong bodies to do the job.

The dairy now has seven cows, and it is a joy to see the dairyman make his rounds each morning and to see the children walk away from the store loaded down with bottles of milk. All the products of the producers' cooperative are handled through the consumers' cooperative store, so those who purchase the commodities are the largest sharers in the dividends.

# Scott Nearing's path to the good life

by Suzanne Schmidt

*Scott Nearing: An Intellectual Biography* by John A. Saltmarsh. Temple University Press, Philadelphia, 1991.

**M**any of you have heard of Helen and Scott Nearing and their homesteading in New England from 1932 until Scott's death in 1983 at age 100. Their book, *Living the Good Life: How to Live Sanely and Simply in a Troubled World* (1954), was the guide to the "back-to-the-land" movement of the early 1970s.

If you are like me, however, you were probably not aware that in the 1930s Scott Nearing was a powerful voice against the privilege of affluence. John Saltmarsh has given us a precious opportunity to learn more about this persistent radical whose struggles for freedom, economic justice and peace have been nearly forgotten. *Scott Nearing: An Intellectual Biography*, is thorough and well-documented. In its pages, we discover a man whose faith, courage, intellect and committed life should be a model and prophetic challenge to us.

Born in 1883 into the privileges and luxuries of a wealthy, coal company family in Pennsylvania, Nearing labored at a wide variety of odd jobs before studying at the prestigious Wharton School of Finance and Economy of the University of Pennsylvania. He went on to teach economics there. He wrote and spoke out strongly in opposition to child labor and the maldistribution of wealth. His radi-

calism brought him into such conflict with the leaders of the community (business, university, church) that the university trustees fired him in 1915. Saltmarsh gives a thorough presentation of the academic-freedom issues, the public controversy, and Nearing's courageous and principled stand. Subsequently welcomed into



Scott Nearing at the Forest Farm, Maine.

credit: Richard Garrett, courtesy of Helen Nearing.

the University of Toledo, Nearing soon got into serious controversy over his opposition to U.S. involvement in World War I. Again he was fired.

Nearing boldly continued speaking and writing. He was indicted and tried under the Espionage and Sedition Acts for writing *The Great Madness: A Victory for American Plutocracy*. This pamphlet advocated "economic justice and world brotherhood, and peace among all men"(sic) and attacked the American plutocracy for using "its position of privilege and economic power to live off the labor of others and to control the channels of public opinion as well as the machin-

ery of politics" (pp. 158-159). While Nearing was found not guilty, the American Socialist Society received a guilty verdict for publishing the pamphlet.

Saltmarsh focuses on Nearing's intellectual struggles during his first 50 years. He tells of Nearing's involvements with various labor and socialist and communist organizations, his family relationships, and his deepening commitment to nonviolence (influenced by Tolstoy and Thoreau) and to economic justice. The bibliography includes a complete (and very enticing) listing of the prolific works of Scott Nearing — 50 books, 70 pamphlets and debates, and hundreds of articles. A few photographs add much character. The book ends with a summary of Helen and Scott Nearing's *Living the Good Life*.

"Homesteading marked a further break with American culture, an estrangement made complete when the United States dropped the atomic bomb on August 6, 1945, Nearing's sixty-second birthday. He rushed off a letter of protest to President Truman:

'Your government is no longer mine. From this day onward our paths diverge: you to continue your suicide course, blasting and cursing the world. I turn my hand to the task of helping to build a human society based on cooperation, social justice and human welfare.'" (p. 261)

book review

We are still on the suicide course, ever more in need of radical understanding and radical change. Saltmarsh's biography gives us a golden opportunity to learn from and be inspired to action by the witness and wisdom of Scott Nearing.

---

**Suzanne Schmidt** lives and works at Noonday Catholic Worker Farm in Winchendon Springs, Massachusetts, and is involved with the Plowshares/Atlantic Life Community and the War Tax Refusers of the Colrain campaign.

**A** few weeks ago, Mona Brock answered her telephone at the Oklahoma Conference of Churches' (OCC) Farm Crisis Hotline. The voice on the other end was hysterical.

"My husband just shot at me!" the woman screamed into the phone.

After determining that the caller was safe — she had run into her bedroom and locked the door — Brock calmed her enough to find out what had happened.

The woman lived with her husband on the farm he had worked all his life. He had been born in the kitchen that was now their living room. They were on the brink of losing everything in a foreclosure.

"The intense pressure and desperation backed him into a corner," Brock said. "He wanted to pay but was not getting money for his wheat and cattle above the cost of production."

He had aimed three missed shots at his own temple before firing twice in his wife's direction. As the bullets hit a paint bucket and a tire, she ran for cover.

Brock got directions to the farm — a two-hour drive from her Oklahoma City

*"My neighbors were killing themselves," she says.*

*"Three around me whom I'd known forever had taken their lives."*



Mona Brock

## Fighting for family farms

by Marianne Arbogast

psychologist who works with Oklahoma farmers. Wallace was reporting on a visit he had made in the western part of the state, but offered immediately to meet her at her destination.

When they arrived at the farmhouse, all was quiet.

"I knocked, and the lady came to the door," Brock said. "[Her husband] was sitting on a divan. He motioned us to sit down, and we put our arms around him."

They called the farmer's pastor, who drove him to a clinic where he was admitted for treatment. Brock then turned the case over to the financial management and legal aid staff who work alongside her at Ag-Link, OCC's farm crisis program. They were able to work out a plan enabling the farmer to keep his property.

"Praise the Lord, he's on the farm today," Brock said.

Brock's compassion and commitment are born of bitter experience. An Oklahoma farmer's daughter, she married a farmer's son and enjoyed 36 prosperous

years on the land. With him, she raised their two sons while pursuing a career in education.

She and her husband took out a loan in 1980, the year the farm crisis hit bottom.

"The rules were changed," she said. "The president, the Congress, and the USDA stepped in, and the whole philosophy changed." Land was abruptly devalued, costing farmers the security they had on their loans. Foreclosures multiplied across the nation.

"It caused a state of panic," Brock recalls. "Third, fourth, sometimes fifth-generation farmers had their land sold at auctions, and sheriffs evicting them.

"My neighbors were killing themselves," she says. "Three around me whom I'd known forever had taken their lives."

Brock's husband travelled with other farmers to Washington, D.C. to plead their cause. At a dinner she hosted after one such trip, two of her neighbors — Ted Riddle and Orla Ratliff — decided they needed to do more. They went to

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

office — and told the woman she was on her way. Before leaving, she scribbled a note to her two sons, telling them where to find her bills and insurance papers.

"I told them to remember John 3:16," she said. "I told them, I hope to see you tonight, but I might see you in heaven."

As she was walking out the door, she got a call from Glen Wallace, a clinical

**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.

their pastor, who approached Methodist Bishop John Wesley Hart with their concerns. He presented their idea to OCC, which agreed to sponsor a program to respond to the crisis.

Before the project could get underway, the Brocks lost their own farm. They moved out with a pick-up, some furniture, and 68 dollars to their name. They moved to the city of Madill, but Brock was soon commuting to Oklahoma City to help Ag-Link take shape. In October, 1985, the program began with seed money from Willie Nelson's first Farm-Aid concert.

In 1986, Brock's 57-year-old husband suffered a fatal heart attack. "The stress and the loss and the shock" of losing the farm "were greater than he could handle," she said.

Brock became the coordinator of Ag-Link's Farm Crisis Hotline. Other services include crisis intervention, financial management analysis, legal aid, and a mediation program to arbitrate between farmers and lenders. All are free of charge.

Brock's hotline receives an average of 50 calls per day. She keeps farmers' hours, arriving before 7 a.m. so farmers can call before going out to their fields, keeping the line open during the noon dinner

hour, and employing an after-5 p.m. answering service to alert her of night calls.

"Many times, I've had farmers tell me they were going to take their lives, or kill their lender," she says. She takes these threats seriously: Ag-Link has documented close to 300 suicides of farmers or family members due to the farm crisis.

She disputes the notion that the situation has improved. "It depends on which side of the fence you're looking from," she says. While the "middlemen" — often large corporations — reap huge profits, small farmers are sinking below the poverty line, unable to buy food for their own families. Government-mandated prices — artificially low to promote exports — benefit corporations but drive small farmers off the land. Price supports do not cover production costs. Brock cites statistics which predict that 500,000 farms will be lost between 1990 and 1995. "That's 20 million people migrating outward from rural areas.

"Each farmer has lived through an era that has changed life forever," she says. Farmers know they can no longer neglect to maintain a vigilant watch on political developments. "We must bring back a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."

Though she fights tirelessly to save small farms, Brock, a Southern Baptist, places her ultimate trust in God. "Faith in God is the only eternal, concrete, solid thing we have," she says. "If you lose your livelihood, your land, your way of life — oftentimes I've told farmers, we're not going to take it with us. And our lenders, the people taking it from us, are not going to take it with them either."

Brock still lives in Madill, but is making plans to return to a rural life. She struggles to explain her love for the land:

"I saw my husband many times stop the tractor or the plough and walk behind it, reach down and pick up a double handful of soil, and let it trickle down between his fingers. It's the most beautiful sight I've ever seen. It's a closeness to God. It's creation, birth, revitalization, life anew."

Many readers have commented on Wesley Frensdorff's essay on the role of clergy (May 1992). A book about Frensdorff's ministry is available, *Reshaping Ministry: Essays in memory of Wesley Frensdorff*, Jethro Publications, Arvada, Colorado, 1990. *Reshaping Ministry* includes three other essays written or coauthored by Frensdorff, in addition to essays written about his work and vision.

## Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. We've sent issues this month to people with a particular interest in land and stewardship.

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!

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**75<sup>th</sup>**  
*anniversary*  
*forum*  
*on evangelism*

**ENCOUNTERING OUR SHADOWS:**  
*The Witness goes to Trinity School for Ministry*

**October 24, 1992**

Participants in a discussion titled *Toward the living Christ: common ground/ divergent paths* will be Virginia Mollenkott, feminist theologian and Witness writer; Chester Talton, suffragan bishop of Los Angeles and former board member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company; Mary Hays, professor of pastoral theology at Trinity and William Frey, dean of Trinity and former Bishop of Colorado.

**Verna Dozier to preach!**

*Witness* subscribers and Trinity students will have a chance to wrestle with issues of feminist theology; Native American spirituality and mission work; the need for a multi-cultural Church; questions of sexuality and the authority of Scripture. Registrations are limited, please contact Marietta Jaeger (313-962-2650) if you hope to attend.

*October issue:*

Culture as resistance



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# The Witness

Volume 75 • Number 10 • October 1992



## Culture as Resistance

The Hunt  
by Dierdre Luzwick

## Mountain women

LINDA MEADE ("Listening to the ancestors," 9/92) died suddenly of an aneurism a month after submitting her story to the *Mountain Women's Journal*. At the time of her death she was organizing *against* toxic dumping and *for* a statewide health care plan in West Virginia. She had found a way to "stay home ... to help bring justice to these hills," for at least a little while longer. Sadly, her life ended shortly before the birth of the Appalachian Women's alliance, the group which finally brought together her friends and colleagues — her Appalachian sisters — in the fight to hold on to home.

The Appalachian Women's Alliance represents women's organizations and concern from nine Appalachian states — West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Georgia. Our purpose is to bring together our power as Appalachian women to explore and create a unified way for women to work and act in a regional context. We are committed to affirming and supporting Appalachian women; providing opportunities for mountain women to come together and to

make our voices heard; and to facilitating a regional network of women around women's issues.

We are grounded in our commitment to

mutual accountability and responsibility and are working to create and promote new understandings of leadership and authority which are inclusive and non-hierarchical and which actively challenge the patriarchy in which we live. Together we are developing and articulating a new vision which is empowering to women. We practice shared leadership and consensus-style decision making in all aspects of our life together and our processes are open, participatory and "circular." Within the Alliance every woman has equal ownership, an equal voice, equal responsibility to use her voice (as well as to monitor it) and an equal space in which to be heard.

We are currently publishing the Mountain

Women's Journal, developing a database around women's issues, working as part of a regional coalition on national health care, putting out a regional newsletter, planning and responding to regional actions and events and creating a women's emergency fund. And we are just beginning.

We hope that the Episcopal Church will continue to be supportive of our efforts and will hold true to its promise of supporting the struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere.

For more information about the Appalachian Women's Alliance or to order copies of the Mountain Women's Journal (\$6 each) contact me at the Appalachian Women's Alliance, Rt. 1, Box 492, Riner, Va., 24149.

**Meredith Dean**

**Appalachian Peoples' Service  
Organization  
Blacksburg VA**

## Abortion

I READ YOUR INTERVIEW with Ms. Heyward with both interest and dismay. I believe it is an individual's decision whether (she) "is better served by being able to strip herself of the (potential) life that has been conceived in her or by a different approach." Likewise, "When a loving relationship accidentally results in a pregnancy," it is not your right to decide for that couple what is or isn't "an enormous price to pay." It is, conversely, your right to decide if that loving relationship is yours.

I am quite comfortable with a belief that a woman who HAS conceived a child will reach ANY decision in consultation with her trusted people, give ANY decision prayerful consideration if she has a relationship with God, and then act as she has determined most wise. It is not my business, or *The Witness*'s, or the Institutional Church's, or any government's business to interfere in her decision. My degree of comfort with someone else's decision is entirely irrelevant. It is a private matter. This is NOT China.

Having said that, I will also say that one of the great mysteries of the abortion war is that Family Planning as an honorable manner of reducing the need for abortions has not had a great ground swell of financial and political support by all fragments of our society. The

U.S. is measurably behind other western nations in both availability of new techniques tested elsewhere and research to improve the success rates and safety of various means of contraception.

Education, developmentally appropriate rather than after the fact, about what is happening in and with one's own body and what can result from a variety of actions is a minimum curriculum standard that is very often lacking. The shared misconceptions of casual peer discussions can spread as fast as disease.

I am hoping that *The Witness* will look further into the broader ramifications of reproductive issues of all kinds, rather than obsessing about the middle of the road position on abortion.

**Carol Daniels  
Captiva FL**

I APPRECIATED Carter Heyward and Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann's "risky conversation" on abortion.

Like Wylie-Kellermann, I've been concerned for a while that so many otherwise thoughtful people have "shut down" the possibility of any real consideration of abortion. I wish that those of us who are pro-choice could go beyond the "clump of tissue which belongs to me" school of thought to a broader appraisal of the social meaning of abortion.

It is helpful to remember that abortion is a means of birth control for the individual, but for society it is (and always has been) a form of population control. Throughout history, women have aborted fetuses. Of course, until recently, it has been difficult and dangerous to abort, and infanticide has been much more widely practiced. We recoil at the thought of infanticide, and refuse to understand how it could have occurred except within the context of subsistence crises.

I imagine the personal responses of women now aborting are much the same as in ages past; that our choices are "for the best," or that we really have no choice. This is the subjective side of population control. The individual perception of unwanted pregnancy and the choice for abortion are only one piece of a much larger social "choice" for stringently limiting reproduction.

It is surprising that we talk about the abortion issue without acknowledging how ex-



traordinarily anti-natalist our society is. Together with a handful of other Western countries, we have dropped below Zero Population Growth. We are no longer producing enough people even to replace ourselves. Extreme population control, together with the breakdown of traditional marriage, has meant that “something has to give.” For millions of women, that “something” has been one or more babies that would have been wanted under better conditions.

Since our way of life is based on plundering the resources of the Earth, rather than caring for it, it is unlikely that even modest population growth will be tolerated any time soon. And, the Dan Quayles and Clarence Thomases of our society aside, women will not give up reproductive freedom. So, abortion is here to stay for the foreseeable future. Given the dreadful performance of our free enterprise family system for children, it might be considered a blessing.

I want “choice.” I also want all of human life to become regarded as more sacred. The latter must be the basis for unity among us. It is also the correct emphasis of the Church.

**Marilyn Daniels**  
Belleville MI

I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST the June/July issue of *The Witness* and thought it a very good issue. I was very taken with the dialogue that took place on the issue of abortion. We need to have more conversations like that. Too often in important issues like that, people think that the other side is evil and has nothing to be said for them.

I also am rejoicing that you are going to Trinity in the fall. I think that is the kind of thing we need to have take place again and again in the Church.

**Carlson Gerdau**  
Director Deployment, Ministry, and  
Communications  
The Diocese of Chicago

### 75th anniversary forum

FIRST, LET ME CONGRATULATE YOU on the wonderful job you are doing with *The Witness*. It may well be said of you, as it was said of Paul and Silas, that “these people who have been turning the world upside down

have come here also” (Acts 17:6). I think you’re doing a fine job.

Second, there will be many (most of whom I count as friends) who will not agree with this assessment of your stewardship. Perhaps the hardest thing these days is the lack of common ground among Christians, finding ourselves with “strange bedfellows” on various issues. That makes it all the more important that progressive journals like *The Witness* take the kind of stands you are taking. I want to support you in that, and I am planning to come to the 75th anniversary forum on what to me is very strange turf indeed to that end.

**Emmett Jarrett**  
Episcopal Urban Caucus president  
Silver Spring MD

WHILE I’VE BEEN PLEASED with the new *Witness*, nothing I’ve seen heretofore has heartened me so much as your conversation with Carter Heyward and the announcement of your impending anniversary celebration at Trinity School for Ministry. I feel moved to compliment you on your courage; then I find myself reminded that, as Jesus taught, the opposite of fear is not courage, but love. In any case, brava and hallelujah!

**James G. Carson**  
Chicago IL

### Witness art

YOU CAN’T IMAGINE THE EXCITEMENT in our center when the June/July issue arrived. Thank you for giving the urban poor a chance to make their voice visible. It says a lot for you and *The Witness*. Thanks from all of us at the Northwest Center for affirming our belief in Ida Mae [Sydnor].

**Sister Helen David**  
Philadelphia PA

### Challenging avoidance

MY EYE, [reading Judges 18] was drawn down the page to read the story of the nameless concubine, gang raped by a bunch “of the worst scoundrels in town,” as my N.E.B. so nicely puts it. Why do we not read, ponder in our hearts, the deed of the father who says to these same scoundrels, “This man is my guest; do not commit this outrage. Here is my daughter, a virgin. Let me bring her out to you. Rape

her, and do to her what you please.” (Judges 19: 23-24).

Why do we stop short at this story? This is typical of the avoidance of the church in matters of sexual violence. We avert our eyes. We do not want to speak of *this* pain — let’s go to Job instead. I think it is time for this story to be included in our lectionary, in our meditations. I want to ask our ministers to preach about rape and incest — for “our hands are on the threshold of the door” (Judges 19).

Just last Sunday I read about Philippino maids in Kuwait who are routinely raped in the country we so gallantly defended during the war in the Persian Gulf. One story was almost identical to the woman in the Judges’ tale, except she was thrown out of a window, instead of out of doors. Where is the outcry from our government, our Church, our Episcopalian President?

**Roberta Nobleman**  
Dumont NJ

### Seeking contact

TRADITIONAL GREETINGS through the *Cannupa Wakan* (sacred pipe). I just finished reading several issues of *The Witness*. *Wanishi* (thank you). It is refreshing to see that theology is active in areas that need attention. Special thanks are in order for covering Native American issues and the indigenous perspective.

I have been active in civil rights, Native American rights, and prisoners’ rights for about 25 years. I am incarcerated.

If anyone is interested in correspondence with a 42-year-old Algonquin who enjoys art, crafts, writing, culture, computers, mother earth and all our relations, I would enjoy it. My address is: Iron Thunderhorse, SPN #353666, Harris County Jail, 8-C-3, 1301 Franklin St., Houston, Texas 77002.

May our Grandfather *Kitche Manitou* and the *Ohaas Niempang* (Thunderbeings) guide and keep you on your path of service. *Mitakuye Oyasin*,

**Iron Thunderhorse**  
Houston TX

[Ed. Note: Iron Thunderhorse is coauthor of *Return of the Thunderbeings*, Bear & Co., 1990.]

## THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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Cover: *The Hunt* by Dierdre Luzwick. Published in *Endangered Species*, Harper San Francisco, 1992.

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Exchanging birthrights: a nation of Esaus

**I** am not willing to feel guilty about my grandparents," insisted a friend who has spent much of his adulthood trying to establish whether he is the poor white trash he's been told he was. "They were good people," he added. People eking out a living on Michigan farm land — on Indian land.

The Columbus anniversary conversation which followed was good. One of the things that hit me hardest was the realization that "white" is not an ethnic identity.

I was raised with an appreciation of African American culture. With that appreciation came a load of white guilt. I am very interested in Native American culture. I've often wished I was a "person of color," a person with a tradition of music and art and story-telling.

Being generically white seemed a liability and kind of unimaginative. But I understood and concurred with the conclusion that white people needed to repent for much of the abuse in this nation.

What is only slowly dawning on me is that white people have been hugely victimized as well and in much the same way that Native and African Americans have. White privilege has obscured this victimization, but we were bought: the price was our heritage.

---

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. **Artist Irene Duffy** lives in Pullman, Washington.

In 1918, Ford Motor Company sponsored an Americanization program that culminated in a graduation ceremony in which participants descended from a boat into a 15-foot-wide melting pot. The director, Clinton C. DeWitt explained



An emblem of America, 1798, mezzotint. The New York Public Library. Artist unknown.

that *Six teachers, three on either side, stir the pot with 10-foot ladles, representing nine months of teaching in the school. Into the pot 52 nationalities with their foreign clothes and baggage go, and out of the pot, after a vigorous stirring by the teachers, comes one nationality.*

How many white Americans know

their ancestry? How many can sing a song, say a prayer, bake the bread of their country/countries of origin?

As important, how many know the positions their foreparents took in the struggles of their native land? Did they fight for or against the monarchy? Did they support or reject ecclesial authority? What was their world view and their sense of their place in it?

There is power in knowing these things. They offer a construct through which to consider the United States today. And most of us forfeited it.

It was forfeited in exchange for employment at Ford Motor Company, or for admission to the elite schools of the nation, or for the appearance of upward mobility.

Like Esau, we sold our inheritance for a mess of pottage.

And to this day we have an obsession with filling the bowl which exceeds our understanding. We do not fill our bowls in proportion to our physical needs. We fill our bowl with a desperation and a craving which is commensurate with the price we paid for it.

Without cultural roots, we asked few questions when other people were stripped of their heritage. Our bowls were filled and refilled with the wealth that was taken violently from others, those who were not privy to white privilege.

I think we did not even know our voices, although I'm sure most of us knew that as generic white people we were involved in something evil.

*editor's note*

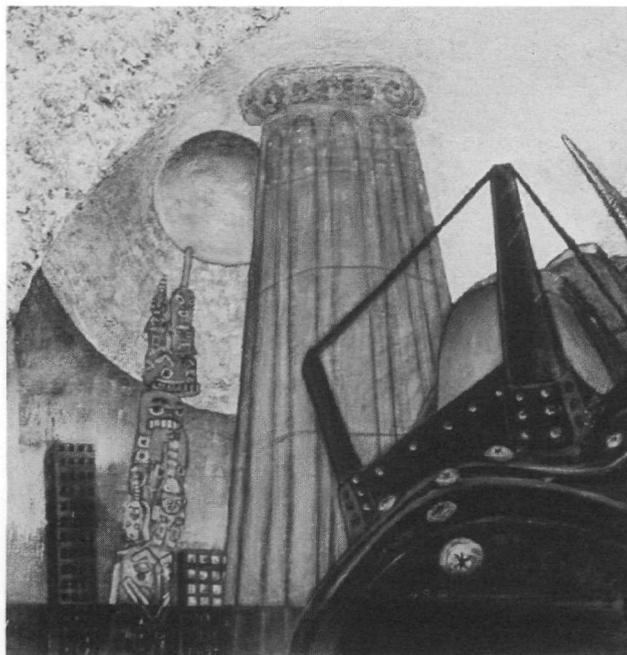
thing evil. But as a people with no name and no history, only privilege, many of us only chose between silent complicity or white guilt.

"Power is the ability to define reality," says David McMichaels, a CIA consultant who left his job after being told to produce non-existent evidence that Sandinistas were supplying weapons to Salvadoran guerrillas.

McMichaels adds that religious communities and alternative publications are an enormous threat to the Pentagon. Cultural identity, I would contend, is another forum in which one can learn to imagine and to speak in ways that go beyond the scope permitted in the mass media, by Madison Avenue and by government propaganda.

The only thing that allows one to stand outside and critique actions of the nation is a community world view that includes a history. That history can be scriptural, or rooted in an alternative lifestyle or publication. But on some level it must be rooted in our own histories.

I felt a corporate responsibility for the decimation of the Indians and the enslavement of Africans, but I did not feel personally implicated until I traced family history on my mother's side back to southwestern Pennsylvania and Ohio.



Momentum

credit: Irene Duffy

My great-great-great grandfather, John Cowen, was one of the first white people to hold a patent for land in Hickory, Pa. The Scotch Irish communities that my ancestors lived in had "block houses" to which townspeople could run during Indian attacks. As poor farmers, their lives were threatened by the land claims of those they had displaced. My great-great-great-great-great grandfather James Dinsmore was admired for being a Presbyterian elder and an Indian-killer. Where they felt the most fear in their lives, they developed corresponding rationales to

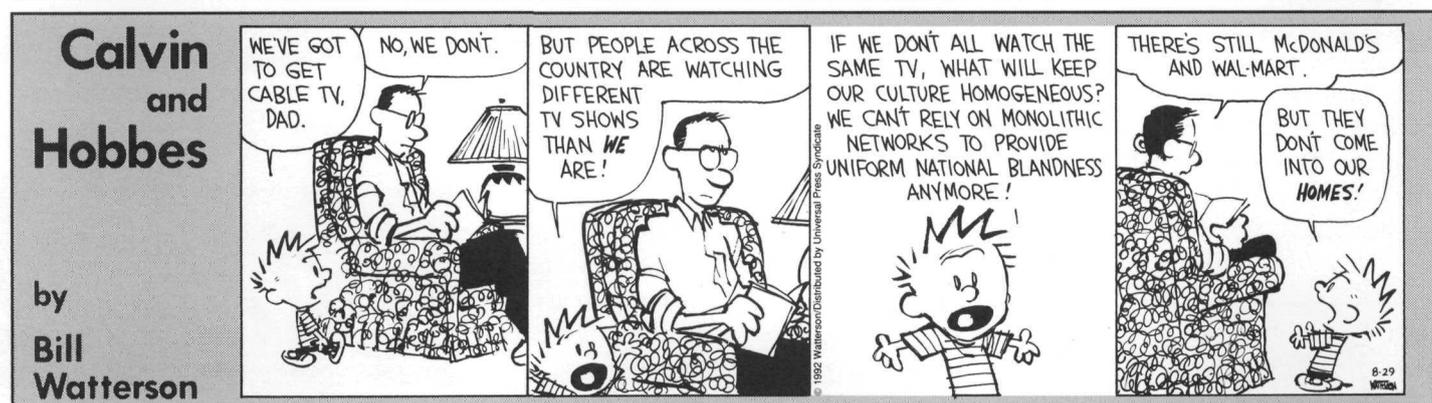
allow them to feel righteous in their hold on the land.

When I asked the 82-year-old family historian what Indian tribes had lived in the county, he said he did not know. He could point out the burial mounds where a local college had started an archeological dig but he could not say to whom these bones of the dead belonged. (I've learned they belong to the Lenni Lenape, "Grandfathers" of the Algonquins.)

My ancestors are also buried in that earth. There is blood, enmity and a common desire for life buried in that earth. It gave me life. I need to atone for some specific things and I am in the course of learning what those may be. This is not generic white guilt.

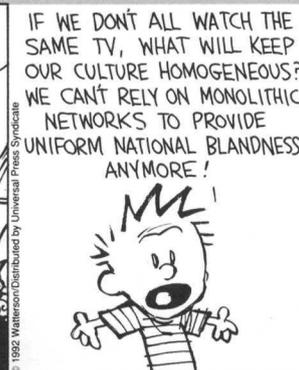
Paying attention to my family's history and to the stories buried in Washington County, Pa. will root me in a place. While I learn things that I do not like, I also come to respect the immigrant coal miners, farmers and school teachers who are my people.

Standing with my ancestors involves me in a history to which I'd had only an intellectual connection. Knowing in detail even just that piece of my heritage can help to restore my birthright. It can give me a scale on which to evaluate what I would sell for pottage. **TW**



Calvin  
and  
Hobbes

by  
Bill  
Watterson



## Cincinnati

by Mitsuye Yamada

Freedom at last  
in this town aimless  
I walked against the rush  
hour traffic  
My first day  
in a real city  
where

no one knew me.

No one except one  
hissing voice that said  
dirty jap  
warm spittle on my right cheek.  
I turned and faced  
the shop window  
and my spittled face  
spilled onto a hill  
of books.  
Words on display.

In government Square  
people criss-crossed  
the street  
like the spokes of  
a giant wheel.

I lifted my right hand  
but it would not obey me.  
My other hand fumbled for a hankie.

My tears would not  
wash it. They stopped  
and parted.  
My hankie brushed  
the forked  
tears and spittle  
together.  
I edged toward the curb  
loosened my fisthold  
and the bleached laced  
mother-ironed hankie blossomed in  
the gutter atop teeth marked  
gum wads and heeled candy wrappers.

Everyone knew me.

*Camp Notes and other poems*, Shameless  
Hussy Press, Berkeley California, 1986.



credit: Jerrilyn Prestiano

*Mitsuye Yamada was born in Kyushu, Japan and raised in Seattle, Washington until the outbreak of World War II when her family was removed to a concentration camp in Idaho. She teaches English at Cypress College in Southern California and is the founder of the Multicultural Women Writers of Orange County. She is active in Amnesty International.*

## American Son

by Mitsuye Yamada

When I was ten  
I rolled my hair in rags  
for Shirley Temple ringlets  
polished my teeth white  
for a pepsodent smile  
clattered about in slick  
tap shoes  
so my father  
sent me away  
to his mother in Japan  
who took me in  
because I was hers,

a piece of an only son sent  
home like dirty laundry to be  
washed and pressed  
then returned to America less  
tomboy American more  
ladylike Japanese

a daily reminder of him  
who only yesterday  
crossed that river  
on a swinging narrow bridge  
to school

a thin-boned body like his  
that worked years ago  
in the teeming rice fields  
until dark.

*Desert Run*, Kitchen Table: Women of Color  
Press, Latham NY, 1988.

Poetry

**T**hough she was in her ninth decade in the 1950s, Indian midwife Kate Johns still went from cabin to cabin on the wooded slopes of Bear Mountain to deliver the babies of her tribe. Far more was at stake than each new life: she was striving to keep alive an ancient legacy on the verge of destruction. Any newborn she could reach in time would be safely recorded as Indian on the birth certificate.

But any Indian born in a Virginia hospital would be registered as Black, as state and county officials worked relentlessly to bring all non-Whites in the Commonwealth under the iron restrictions of segregation.

Despite the cost, Indian families on Bear Mountain refused to surrender their identity. "My great-grandmother said, 'you're Indian and don't you ever forget it!'" recalls Phyllis Hicks of her forbear Kate Johns. But beyond that knowledge, almost nothing was left for the elders of this Indian enclave in the Virginia Piedmont to hand down to their children. The ancient language and culture were lost. "Our ancestors pushed aside whatever they had done that was Indian," Hicks explains sadly. "All that was left were things that were part of the White man's world, so that nothing would be said against us."

Then, in the 1980s, at the prompting of Episcopal missionary John Haraughty, Lynchburg pediatrician Peter Houck uncovered evidence that the Indians of Bear Mountain were descended from Monacan tribes who had lived in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge for over 10,000 years. With Houck's findings supported by a growing body of scholarly research, the Bear Mountain Monacans were formally recognized in 1989 by the Governor of Virginia as one of only eight indigenous

**Ariel Miller** is assistant editor of *Interchange*, the newspapers of the Diocese of Southern Ohio.



Chief Ronnie, Eleanor and Holly Branham, now know they are Monacan Indians of West Virginia.

credit: Ariel Miller

## Learning one's name

by Ariel Miller

Virginian Indian tribes, reversing 60 years of official efforts to deny their existence.

The story of how they found their heritage again is testimony to their endurance and the commitment of the missionaries and other friends who cared deeply that justice be done.

Houck's research revealed that the ordeal of the Amherst County Indians began soon after patriarch William Johns

bought a tract of 400 acres on the secluded mountainside north of the James River in 1833, and settled there with his extended family. Despite their English names, geneologies indicate that all were Indian or of Indian-White descent.

Most vestiges of the Monacan culture of their ancestors had disappeared from the region long before. Historians estimate that up to 90 percent of the Pied-

mont-dwelling Indians had died of epidemics of European diseases to which they had no immunity, and most of the rest had migrated south or north. By the late 19th century the last of their descendants were widely believed to have died in Canada.

Nevertheless, the people on Bear Mountain had such strong Indian characteristics that some Whites came to believe that the families in the settlement were Cherokee refugees who had come to Virginia to escape the death march of the Trail of Tears. With no oral or written tradition to tell them otherwise, the Bear Mountain Indians accepted this story. Some of the scattered descendants of the clan believe that to this day.

But a tale grew up in Amherst County that the Bear Mountain settlement were the descendants of Indians and a group of freed slaves, or “free Issue,” who had been settled in a hollow near Bear Mountain just before the Civil War. From then on they began calling the settlement families “Issue,” a term of contempt as stingy as “half-breed” or “nigger.”

By the 20th century, most of the settlement families were impoverished as well as outcasts. A succession of farm depressions drove Indian farmers into debt. The county seized land for non-payment of taxes. More was lost through White chicanery. Monacan Chief Ronnie Branham reports an amazing conversation in an Amherst bar a few years back where locals, taking him for White, boasted of how Whites had tricked “those issues” out of land.

In 1908, concerned about the plight of the settlement, a group of Amherst County

patricians raised money to help seminarian Arthur Gray, Jr. found St. Paul’s Mission at the foot of Bear Mountain. For 50 years a succession of indomitable missionary deaconesses would see to it that Indian children, barred from White schools, received an elementary education at the outpost school at the Mission. The mission became and remains the heart of the tribal community.

But off the mountain the climate of bigotry grew steadily worse. Under the rubric of Virginia’s 1924 Racial Purity Act, state Vital Statistics Registrar W.A. Plecker circulated a hit list of the tribe’s surnames to county officials and insisted that all families with those names be classified as Negro “because there are no descendants of Virginia Indians claiming or reputed to be Indians who are unmixed with Negro blood.”

They would be subjected to Virginia’s own version of apartheid. *Mongrel Virginians*, the title of a pseudo-sociology published about the Bear Mountain Indians in 1926, epitomizes the pariah status inflicted on them.

The missionaries at St. Paul stood up staunchly for the tribe. Deaconess Florence Cowan waged a seven-year desegregation battle and finally in 1963 won Indian children access to white schools and a high school education.

Her successor, Church Army Captain

John Haraughty, helped the tribe overcome impending economic disaster. When he arrived at St. Paul’s 1968, most of the families were landless and were reduced to working and living as tenant farmers in mountain orchards. With land prices rising, the orchards were being sold off, and the Indians faced the loss of both jobs and shelter.

*“We knew we were Indian, but we couldn’t be Indian, we couldn’t be White, and the White man wanted us to be Black.”*

— Eleanor Branham

Working with tribal representatives like Phyllis Hicks, Haraughty succeeded in getting federal grants for job training and the construction of a housing subdivision for the tribe. Together they dramatically improved the economic status of the tribe. But a profound bereavement persisted. “We were lost - that’s the only word for it,” explains Eleanor Branham, wife of the chief. “We knew we were Indian, but we couldn’t be Indian, we couldn’t be White, and the White man wanted us to be Black.”

With a hunch that the tribe might be the descendants of the lost Monacans, Haraughty approached amateur historian Peter Houck, pediatrician to many Bear Mountain children, and asked him to delve into the roots of the Bear Mountain settlement.

Published in 1984, the revelations in Houck’s book *Indian Island* electrified the tribe and led to a complete revolution in the treatment accorded them by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

He traced the settlement’s genealogy back to Indians living in the Piedmont in the late 18th century, then linked it for the first time to historical evidence of an uninterrupted Monacan presence in the Piedmont until that time.

New archaeological evidence shows that Monacans have been in the Piedmont

*In 1989, the Governor of Virginia officially recognized the Bear Mountain Monacans as one of the indigenous Indian tribes, reversing 60 years of official efforts to deny their existence.*

for 10,000 years, and at one time had a complex civilization including farming and trade that extended from the Atlantic Coast possibly as far as the Great Lakes.

Suddenly, these erstwhile “mongrel Virginians” were founding mothers and fathers. Within four years of the publication of Houck’s book, the tribe had won state recognition.

Since then the Monacans of Bear Mountain have been working hard to uncover more traces of their lost heritage. Scholars have sought them out; they have participated in digs; they have won research grants to prepare a monograph and a traveling display on the history of the tribe. Now they are regularly invited to give presentations at Virginia’s major cultural festivals, at churches, schools, and boy scout troops.

A new epiphany occurred with the arrival on Bear Mountain of George Branham at the end of 1990. An Indian raised in Maryland, he had had no contact with Bear Mountain and believed his heritage was Cherokee and Sioux. His own quest for his roots took him to the Pine Ridge Reservation, where he overcame alcoholism under the tutelage of a Lakota medicine man who told him that to stay well he must continue to grow in his tradition and serve his people.

Then Monacan Jimmy Knuckles, one of Branham’s Maryland cousins, urged him to read Houck’s book. Branham did, and finally found himself at Bear Mountain standing in front of the graves of generations of his Branham forbears. “He told us,” Eleanor Branham says softly, “that he was talked to by the spirits.”

It was the most uncanny convergence. Following Houck’s book, scholars had begun to republish old ethnological evi-

dence that the Monacans were a branch of the eastern Sioux, sharing an ancient common ancestry with the Sioux of the Great Plains.



The cemetery at St. Paul’s Episcopal Mission, like the ancient burial mounds in the area, holds clues about the Monacan’s identity.

credit: Ariel Miller

George Branham now spends his winters on Bear Mountain and has begun to teach Sioux spirituality and culture in weekly classes at the parish hall. Members of the tribe have responded with deep satisfaction. They are learning to make traditional leather and beadwork, and plan to embellish the parish hall with symbols of their culture.

This year they hope to start learning to speak Sioux.

Not long after George Branham discovered his roots on Bear Mountain, B. Lloyd retired as director of the Appalachian Peoples Service Organization and became supply priest to the Mission. Lloyd, who has made a Sioux vision quest, sees the com-

ing years as a profound journey of spiritual rediscovery for the Bear Mountain congregation. “George’s coming is providential,” Lloyd says. “He is here to help the Monacans regain a sense of being Sioux.”

And so the Indians of Bear Mountain have regained their rightful place in Virginia’s history.

It is a crossroads where joy mingles with bereavement. Over the years, scores of Monacan families were driven away from Virginia by racism. Tribal leaders are sure that many will never come back. They suffered too much, they want to forget. Some refuse to tell their children that they have Indian blood.

But state recognition has had an incredible liberating impact. Small wonder: as John Haraughty puts it, “the state that said they were nobody has admitted they are somebody.”

People of the diaspora are beginning to return: to see the mountain again, to lay flowers on ancestral graves, to learn about their roots.

“A lot of people who went away and married away have come forward and want to be a part of the tribe,” adds Kate Johns’ granddaughter Annie Branham, a

witness to the tribe’s worst times. Now she looks joyfully to the future.

“Kate told us very little,” says this quiet elder, smiling. “But she’d say, ‘someday it will come back to

you.’ And now this discovery! You’re a whole new person. You can go out and shout and you’re not ashamed!” **TW**

*“You can shout. You’re not ashamed. You’re a whole new person!”*

*— Annie Branham*

# Native issues in 1992

## Religious Freedom

In 1978, Congress passed the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA). However, recent Supreme Court decisions have shown it to be inadequate. In the 1988 Lyng case, the Court gave the Forest Service permission to destroy an ancient sacred site on public land. In 1990, states were given the right to prohibit the sacramental use of peyote in Native American church services. A coalition of Native American organizations is calling for amendments to guarantee religious freedom.

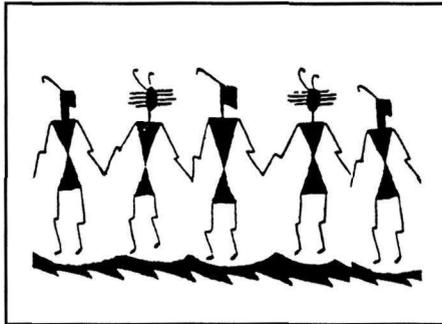
**Action:** 1. Write your senators and representatives, asking them to hold hearings on issues of Native American religious freedom. Ask them to support the legislative efforts of Senator Daniel Inouye on these matters. 2. Write Rep. George Miller, Chairman of the House Interior Committee, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515. 3. Write the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. Express support for their leadership on American Indian issues and their investigation of religious freedom problems. Ask them to introduce a separate bill to protect Native American religious freedom.

In Arizona, Apaches are struggling to stop construction of a telescope on Dził nchaa zi (Mt. Graham), a mountain sacred to the Apache people. The observatory is sponsored by the University of Arizona, the Vatican, Italy's Arcetri Observatory, and the German Max Planck Institute.

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This data was provided by **HONOR** (Honor Our Neighbors' Origins and Rights) and assembled by **Marianne Arbogast**. Artist **K. Kelleigh** is of Cherokee descent and lives in the Midwest.

**Action:** Write the following officials to express opposition to the Mt. Graham construction project: 1. Cardinal Castillo Lara, 00120 Vatican City-State, Europe. 2. Bishop Manuel Moreno, 192 S. Stone Ave., Tucson, AZ 85702. 3. Franco Pacini,



credit: K. Kelleigh

Arcetri Observatory, Largo Enrico Fermi 5, 50125 Florence, Italy. 4. Dr. Heinz Riesenhuber, Fed'l Minister for Research and Technology, Heinnemannstr. 2, 5300 Bohn 2, Federal Republic of Germany. 5. Pope John Paul II, c/o Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, Apostolic Nunciature, 339 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20008. 6. Dr. Manuel Pacheco, President, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85734.

## Environmental Protection

Further development of the James Bay hydro-electric project in Quebec threatens the health and traditional lifestyle of 1200 Cree and 6000 Inuit Eskimos living in the region, contaminating the water and poisoning the fish which has been their dietary staple. The state of New York recently terminated its contracts with Hydro-Quebec, but New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island still receive energy from the company.

**Action:** Support Massachusetts State Assembly Bill H 1978 (Robert Marzilli-D) which will prohibit the state from

loaning money to Hydro-Quebec through Massachusetts' pension and retirement fund. Write legislators in states holding contracts with Hydro-Quebec, urging them to follow New York's lead.

## Mascots, Logos and Symbols

A number of Indian organizations are encouraging a boycott of Heilmann's malt liquor called Chief Crazy Horse. Reps. Frank Wolf and Patricia Schroeder have introduced legislation which would prohibit the Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco from approving such labeling.

A Missouri state legislator, Vernon Thompson, has introduced a bill to prohibit state financial support of the stadium where the Kansas City Chiefs play if the team "discriminated against Native Americans or mock sacred Native American symbols." Rep. Jack Jackson of Arizona has introduced a bill that would make it illegal "to use any Indian name or place in a derogatory manner."

## Land

HONOR (Honor Our Neighbors' Origins and Rights) is developing several initiatives to help restore and consolidate tribal land bases. They offer a model resolution for congregations or other church bodies challenging the Church to return excess lands on or near reservations to the appropriate tribe. In March, the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan became the first to adopt the resolution.

HONOR also plans to develop a "Return the Homelands" foundation to raise money for tribes to purchase priority lands. It hopes to match up people who wish to purchase an "Acre of HONOR" with a tribe which needs a specific parcel. It may also offer leadership training for activists with expertise on land issues.

**Action:** Become a member of HONOR. Ask your congregation or diocese to support the HONOR land resolution (available from HONOR, Sharon Metz, director, 2647 N. Stowell Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211).

**B**ernice Johnson Reagon, founder of Sweet Honey in the Rock, consented to be interviewed about Sweet Honey's upcoming release, *In This Land*. Reagon is a curator at the Smithsonian Institute and a civil-rights activist.

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann:** I've heard you talk about the importance of culture as a way of teaching African American children their identity when there is no land on which to raise them. What does it mean to have a cultural identity?

**Bernice Reagon:** It's really the whole complex, almost a medium, that supports and sustains life. It is language. It is song. It is belief. It is expression. It's your art. It's your land identity.

The African American culture is a warrior culture, mostly because it has evolved having to fight for the lives it is created by. (Even as the culture hosts you, you have to transmit the culture.)

Yet — some people think miraculously — a lot is affirming and celebratory. If you think about the historical legacy of this people in this land, you find people who really understand that if you get up in the morning and you know your name, you have witnessed something of a miracle and there is reason to delight.

As African American people see it: you can be broken and *live*. When you wake up and you touch yourself and you still have your legs and your hands, and when you open your eyes and can see, and you know your name and can call your family, Black people often say, "Thank you."

There is a lesson in African American culture about naming where you are, so it does not name you. You can be in a particular situation, but that situation is not your name.

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**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.



Sweet Honey in the Rock

credit: Sharon Farmer

## Witnessing a miracle: interview with Bernice Reagon

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

I grew up in a culture where I saw and experienced this again and again. Most of the time it was in church in my early days and later it was in the movement. The reason you came together in the group was to change your condition — and when you left you were supposed to be a bit more ready to go on in your next step. In every concert we try to invite the possibility of that. We like to invite people to move the stuff of their lives back and forth over this musical offering and try to be more ready for the next time.

**J.W-K.:** I'd like you to talk about anger.

**B.R.:** I find a lot of people who ask about rap — they're not asking about rap. They're asking about their fear of Afri-

can American young people who say so clearly what they think and are not willing to control their anger or be patient.

What's more terrifying to them is that so many young white people also love this music. People begin to ask whether it's a threat to the survival of the [dominant] culture. I think it's about fear of anger, not really being able to deal with opposition, or to function in a culture where many people are not like you.

We are not socialized to deal with this. I feel this is the work that this generation needs to bring to the culture — to provide exercises people can go through in order not to be anxiety-ridden by all of our people; our cultures; all people having

access to power; the changes in the relationships between men and women; [the existence of] more than one language; and the need to have the ability to go on with your life and work with people who you don't agree with all the time. People also need to learn when it is time to separate yourself because you do not have enough in common to walk together. We do not have the equipment at this point to do this with ease.

A lot of what *Sweet Honey* tries to do is say "We have to talk about some things that are hard, but we are not attacking your life. You are not going to die because of this conversation."

You need a center and an internal source of direction. (I think the same is true for institutions.) If you have that, you are more able to deal with the possibility that you may have to deal with people who are upset and angry.

**J.W-K:** Could you talk some about the song you sing in your new release, *In This Land*, the one that's called *Now that the Buffalo's Gone*.

**B.R.:** I first heard it sung by Buffie Sainte Marie. It has been especially important in 1992 to have a song in our repertoire that talks about the indigenous people and culture of this land. This song calls to those of us who have family members who are Native American — your people need you. You need to hear from your people.

We did not have a national gorging on the glories of Columbus' discovery — and that was not accidental. There are many, many people who said, "We must put within the culture our experience; When people think about this date, we must admit there was immense human

destruction, immense environmental destruction." People said this quincennial is an opportunity to get this a little more balanced in the American psyche. It's almost like you messed up the birthday party, but I think the most important thing that could be done is to add some of the damage to the picture. There are so many of us who walk in that damage that

to do less would be to deny that we walk.

**J.W-K.:** What about your rap song *A Priority*?

**B.R.:** What happens in *A Priority* is taking over territory. Women need more space than they have to walk in — no one is going to give us this space — we need to just start walking in it. You just have to change the way the culture deals with us — not by talking — but by actually placing ourselves in a new territory. In the civil rights movement, Black people changed the territory by walking.

We watch people during concerts and it's wonderful. More and more men are

getting up; it used to be only women. People get up and they are strutting in the new land created by the song. You can watch men — brothers, fathers, lovers — trying to determine if they can walk in this new land. Young African

American men and women — they leap to it immediately. *A Priority* is not even a song — it's a claim advancing territory

— masquerading as a song.

**J.W-K.:** In *Guide Me Thou Great Jehova*, there's a prayer. Yet, I remember on the *Good News* album you almost apologized for singing "Ain't That Good News." You reminded people that religion was not just a pie in the sky offer, but the church was a power in the Black community. How is your own experi-

ence of religion playing through your music and your life?

**B.R.:** My most radical days in the movement were hosted by the Black church. I have come to my position as a radical through an organized religious culture.

I feel that everything we do is part of a sacred experience. Life is sacred. Any time you gather to lift life, you are working in very special territory. Sometimes in concerts I actually thank the audience for allowing us to revisit hallowed ground that might not be within their culture.

I know that we are always — in terms of organized religion — in a mixed audience. I invite people to take what aspect of the truth they can. Our audience comes out of a broad-based community, where [people] challenge themselves to be more tolerant of things that are not them.

Sometimes people may not be able to agree with a particular song, but they experience the bigness there is when you don't smash that which is not you.

We are not entertainers. Entertainers create a reality that takes you out of your space, which is a necessary release. *Sweet Honey In The Rock* takes you into yourself where you are working through all parts of yourself and lifting all of that and saying, "I'm glad I'm here." **TW**

*If you think about the historical legacy of African Americans, you find people who really understand that if you get up in the morning and you know your name, you have witnessed something of a miracle.*

*We need to add some of the damage to the Columbus picture. There are so many of us who walk in that damage, that to do less would be to deny that we walk.*

"We're going to have to control your tongue," the dentist says, pulling out all the metal from my mouth. Silver bits plop and tinkle into the basin. My mouth is a motherlode.

The dentist is cleaning out my roots. I get a whiff of the stench when I gasp. "I can't cap that tooth yet, you're still draining," he says.

"We're going to have to do something about your tongue." I hear the anger rising in his voice. My tongue keeps pushing out the wads of cotton, pushing back the drills, the long thin needles. "I've never seen anything as strong or as stubborn," he says. And I think, how do you tame a wild tongue, train it to be quiet, how do you bridle and saddle it? How do you make it lie down?

"Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?" —Ray Gwyn Smith

**I** remember being caught speaking Spanish at recess — that was good for three licks on the knuckles with a sharp ruler. I remember being sent to the corner of the classroom for "talking back" to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name. "If you want to be American, speak 'American.' If you don't like it, go back to Mexico where you belong."

"I want you to speak English. *Pa' hallar buen trabajo tienes que saber hablar el inglés bien. Qué vale toda tu educación si todavía hablas inglés con un 'accent,'*" my mother would say, mortified that I spoke English like a Mexican. At Pan American University, I, and all Chicano students were required to take two speech classes. Their purpose: to get rid of our accents.

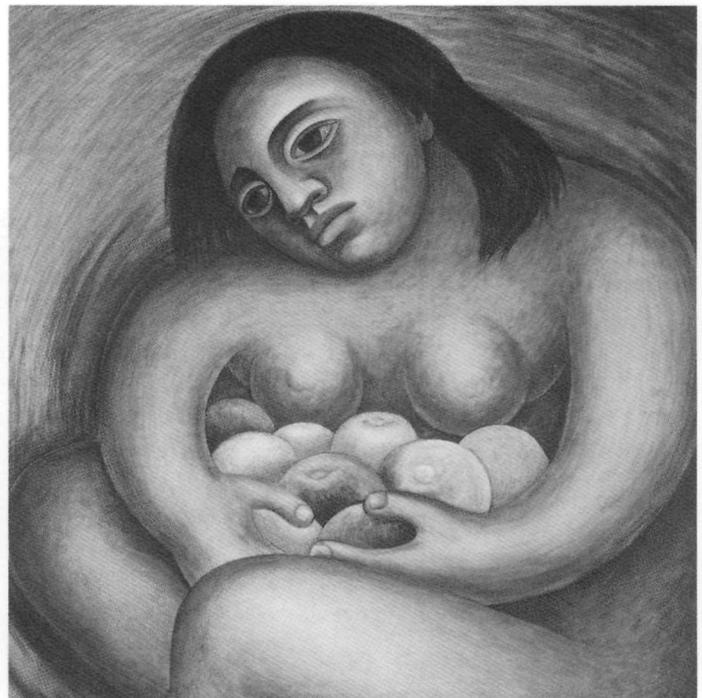
Attacks on one's form of expression with the intent to censor are a violation of the First Amendment. *El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua.* Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out.

Chicano Spanish is a border tongue which developed naturally. Change, *evolución, enriquecimiento de palabras nuevas por invención o adopción* have created variants of Chicano Spanish, *un nuevo lenguaje. Un lenguaje que corresponde a un modo de vivir.* Chicano Spanish is not incorrect, it is a living language.

For a people who are neither Spanish nor live in a country in which Spanish is the first language; for a people who live in a country in which English is the reigning tongue but who are not Anglo; for a people who cannot entirely identify with either standard (formal, Castillian) Spanish nor standard English, what recourse is left to them but to create their own language? A

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Article adapted from "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," *Borderlands*, Aunt Lute Foundation, San Francisco, CA, 1987.



Woman holding fruit, Diego Rivera's Detroit Industry Mural, 1932-1933.

Courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

## To tame a wild tongue

by Gloria Anzaldúa

language which they can connect their identity to, one capable of communicating the realities and values true to themselves — a language with terms that are neither *español ni inglés*, but both. We speak a patois, a forked tongue, a variation of two languages.

Chicano Spanish sprang out of the Chicanos' need to identify ourselves as a distinct people. We needed a language with which we could communicate with ourselves, a secret language. For some of us, language is a homeland closer than the Southwest — for many Chicanos today live in the Midwest and the East. And because we are a complex, heterogeneous people, we speak many languages. Some of the languages we speak are:

1. Standard English
2. Working class and slang English
3. Standard Spanish
4. Standard Mexican Spanish
5. North Mexican Spanish dialect
6. Chicano Spanish (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California have regional variations)
7. Tex-Mex

8. *Pachuco* (called *caló*)

My “home” tongues are the languages I speak with my sister and brothers, with my friends. They are the last five listed, with 6 and 7 being closest to my heart.

Chicanas who grew up speaking Chicano Spanish have internalized the belief that we speak poor Spanish. It is illegitimate, a bastard language. And because we internalize how our language has been used against us by the dominant culture, we use our language differences against each other.

“*Vistas,*” *corridos*, y *comida*: My Native Tongue

In the 1960s, I read my first Chicano novel. It was *City of Night* by John Rechy, a gay Texan, son of a Scottish father and a Mexican mother. For days I walked around in stunned amazement that a Chicano could write and could get published. When I read *I Am Joaquin* I was surprised to see a bilingual book by a Chicano in print. When I saw poetry written in Tex-Mex for the first time, a feeling of pure joy flashed through me. I felt like we really existed as a people. In 1971, when I started teaching High School English to Chicano students, I tried to supplement the required texts with works by Chicanos, only to be reprimanded and forbidden to do so by the principal. He claimed that I was supposed to teach “American” and English literature. At the risk of being fired, I swore my students to secrecy and slipped in Chicano short stories, poems, a play. In graduate school, while working toward a Ph.D., I had to “argue” with one advisor after the other, semester after semester, before I was allowed to make Chicano literature an area of focus.

*Si le preguntas a mi mamá, “¿Que eres?”*

Chicanos and other people of color suffer economically for not acculturating. This voluntary (yet forced) alienation makes for psychological conflict, a kind of dual identity — we don’t identify with the Anglo-American cultural values and we don’t totally identify with the Mexican cultural values. We are a synergy of two cultures with various degrees of Mexicanness or Angloness. I have so internalized the borderland conflict that sometimes I feel like one cancels out the other and we are zero, nothing, no one. *A voces no soy nada ni nada. Pero hasta cuando no lo soy, lo soy.*

When not copping out, when we know we are more than nothing, we call ourselves Mexican, referring to race and ancestry; *mestizo* when affirming both our Indian and Spanish (but we hardly ever own our Black ancestry); Chicano when referring to a politically aware people born and/or raised in the U.S.; *Raza* when referring to Chicanos; *tejanos* when we are Chicanos from Texas.

Chicanos did not know we were a people until 1965 when Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers united and *I Am Joaquin* was published and *la Raza Unida* party was formed in Texas. With that recognition, we became a distinct people. Something momentous happened to the Chicano soul — we became aware of our reality and acquired a name and a language (Chicano Spanish) that reflected that reality. Now that we had a name, some of the fragmented pieces began to fall together — who we were, what we were, how we had evolved. We began to get glimpses of what we might eventually become.

Yet the struggle of identities continues, the struggle of borders is our reality still. One day the inner struggle will cease and a true integration will take place. In the meantime, *tenemos que hacer la lucha. ¿Quién está protegiendo los ranchos de mi gente? ¿Quién está tratando de cerrar la fisura entre la india y el blanco en nuestra sangre? El Chicano, si, el Chicano que anda como un ladrón en su propia casa.*

*Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us. We know how to survive. When other races have given up their tongue, we’ve kept ours. We know what it is to live under the hammer blow of the dominant norteamericano culture. But more than we count the blows, we count the days the weeks the years the centuries the eons until the white laws and commerce and customs will rot in the deserts they’ve created.*

*Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us. We know how to survive. When other races have given up their tongue, we’ve kept ours. We know what it is to live under the hammer blow of the dominant norteamericano culture. But more than we count the blows, we count the days the weeks the years the centuries the eons until the white laws and commerce and customs will rot in the deserts they’ve created, lie bleached. Humildes yet proud, quietos yet wild, nosotros los mexicanos-Chicanos will walk by the crumbling ashes as we go about our business. Stubborn, persevering, impenetrable as stone, yet possessing a malleability that renders us unbreakable, we, the mestizas and mestizos, will remain.*

TW

**T**he spirituality of this land, harbored perhaps in the bones of the dead, is making a new claim on its people. Sensitive, educated European Americans are signing up for vision quests and asking Wakan Tanka to speak to them through the pipe. They are praying to the four directions and learning to call the earth their mother.

Fundamentalists are alarmed that paganism is on the rise.

Bureaucrats in mainstream denominations are probably aware that they have lost not only members of the congregation but disposable income as well.

I understand the regrets (although not the radical fear) of Christians who, like me, find themselves apparently unable to effectively articulate the integrity and power of biblical beliefs. Partly this is because advancing a faith that rejects hedonism and holds to the way of the cross is difficult. But it is also because standing between us are enormous visages of the Church's complicity in Columbus' venture; the Inquisitions; the witch-burnings; the homophobia; and that pervasive and impenetrable posture of righteousness that fills Sunday's pews.

It's small surprise that European Americans are turning toward Native American (and Celtic and Eastern)

**Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann** is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist **Christine Sioui Wawanoloath** was published in *Every Woman's Almanac: 500 Years of Survival* by The Syracuse Cultural Workers.

beliefs with a vengeance.

And I understand some of the longings that lead European Americans toward Native American spirituality, having gone on a vision quest this summer. The encouraging thing is that it indicates that there is a real hunger for:

- a relationship to the earth;
- an expectation of miracles through rites, covenants, the elements;
- a spirituality that does not align with patriarchy, consumerism and moral hypocrisy;
- a faith community that has a long history of leadership by people of color and by women in particular;
- a place where we can express our most primitive selves — naked in the fire-flame shadows, painting cave walls and our bodies, praying the earliest child's prayer to Mama and Dada. To howl, dance, drum, weep;

*When the missionaries brought Christ to this land, they understood that their faith must make alliances. It could meld with the people of the pipe and in some missions it did. Or it could combine with the spirit of Columbia, preaching advancement and change and the virtue of conquest.*

our holy men and women have exchanged the numinous for membership in professional associations.

One would almost wonder what remains beyond a moral training for chil-

- the transcendent.

The elements of Christian spirituality which might feed this hunger are the ones that have been methodically weeded out since the scientific revolution. The mystery, visions, fasts, experience of the saints and mystics, earth cycles of the Jewish feasts, direct revelation, and power of sacraments have all been put aside or explained away. And



White Buffalo Woman, bringer of the pipe

## A war of angels

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

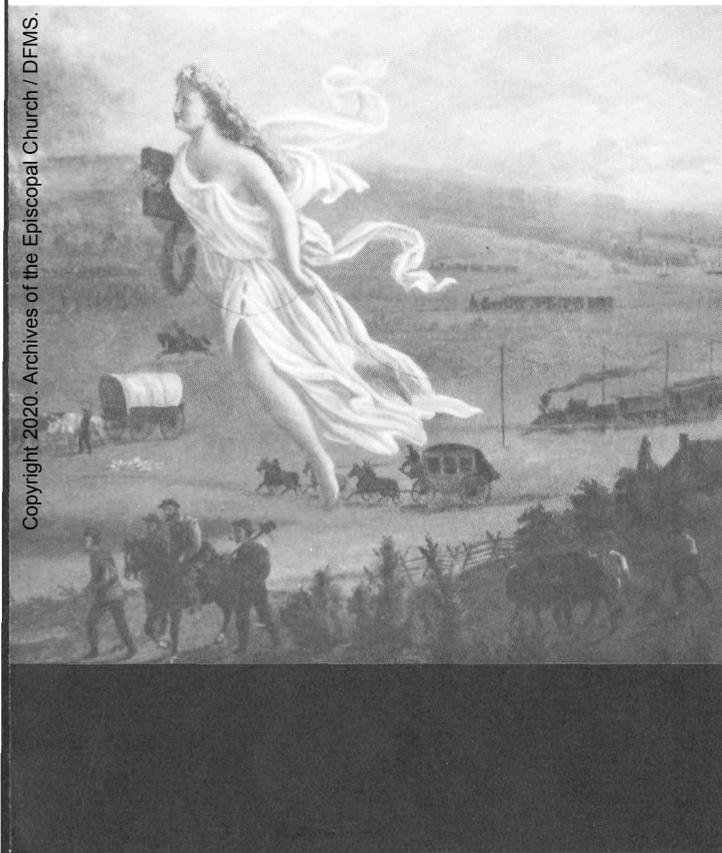
Westward — ho!

credit: John Gast

*This railroad advertisement of 1872 pictured Columbia stringing electric cable.*



credit: Christine Sioui Wawanoloath



dren. Once our faith is compressed to those things science can support and our sexuality, grief, passion, wild hopes and imaginations are checked at the door, what's left? What gets said during coffee hour?

In a vision quest, fancy clothes are not required. In fact, before long people are sweaty and have earth under their fingernails. Depending on the trust level, people talk about the important things in their lives: the transitions, the marriages, the broken relationships, the affairs, the changes in their children, the bankruptcy of their own vision, their need to discover and live through their own power. At best, people learn an intimacy that is premised in a sort of solitariness. They are reminded that they are responsible for their own circle. They are expected to pray and engage with the Great Spirit directly.

Native American priests who have integrated the Traditional Way with Christian faith sometimes suggest that Indians have a greater understanding of Christ's presence in the eucharist and in the reality of angels and saints. They have a more fundamental understanding of the relationships between all things in God's creation. They are quicker to anticipate that God is looking for an unedited view of our hearts.

At the same time, an increasing number of Native Americans are wary about the droves of European Americans who are rising, like another white wave, to consume their spiritual culture.

In 1984, Indian elders asked the American Indian

Movement to debunk "plastic medicine men" who were selling their people's spirituality to European Americans who, as in every other sphere of their lives, were looking for quick fixes. Among those condemned by AIM are Sun Bear, Wallace Black Elk, Cyfus McDonald, Brook Medicine Eagle, Osheana Fast Wolf, Dyhani Ywahoo, Rolling Thunder and "Beautiful Painted Arrow."

Other Native Americans, like Robert Allen Warrior — a contributing editor to *Christianity & Crisis*, protest that European Americans are scarfing up Native traditions but learning nothing of *current* political struggles.

And George Tinker, a Lutheran pastor and Osage, who welcomes European Americans into his congregation, now forbids them entry into the sacred sweat ceremonies. Tinker suggests that Native Americans need to help European Americans find life and sustenance in their own traditions.

The cynicism and the wisdom in this Native American effort to hold European Americans at arm's length probably has to do with each individual's responsibility to care for one's own circle.

We can't buy someone else's experience of God. No matter how many feathers and turquoise earrings one buys at pow wows from the Anglos who imported them from Mexico and Taiwan, one can't turn one's skin dark and one's heritage into someone else's.

And, from the Great Spirit's perspective, we can guess that one does not need to.

On the other hand, while respecting the hand that is outreached to keep Anglos at a distance, it is also true that the Hopi and the Ojibwe, among others, have prophecies that a time will come when the whites will learn to walk the red path. During that time the future of the earth will hang in the balance. Either whites will learn to harvest with the seventh

generation in mind, or the rapid progression toward death through contamination of the earth, water and air will continue.

Somewhere in the European American's experience of Native American spirituality is the hope of balance.

Christians, transplanted to this country and mobile in their career paths, can begin to learn the importance of place. We can learn the plants and animals native to the place where we are. We can begin to see the ways we are all connected. We can, perhaps for the first time, trust our own place in the circle. And we can feel, in our own hands, the stewardship that binds our lives to those of our great-great-great-great-great grandchildren. Perhaps there is more time than we are inclined to think, enough time to notice and even revere the place in which we live.

There is another reason why European Americans, while respecting that hand that holds us at a distance, need to learn the Traditional Way. It is, in a sense, the heritage of European Americans as well. And this is only because of the importance of place.

This land holds the bones of its dead. It holds the sacred places, the rocks and falls and medicine wheels where prayers have been offered. Embedded in its earth is an understanding of God and a covenant offered by God in the smoke of the pipe and the visions of the elders.

When White Buffalo Woman brings the pipe to her people, her spirit stands upright in the life of this land. (Her act is compared to the eucharist in the Episcopal Church's educational curriculum *In the Circle of the Spirit*.)

The railroad advertising artist who drew the image of Columbia sweeping over this country intuitively understood the power of earth and spirituality. He attempted to substitute conquest and "enlightenment" for the White Buffalo Woman.

The "angel of the nation" is an Old Testament concept that applies. Walter Wink and other Christian theologians suggest that in a biblical understanding of the spiritual and physical reality of a



**Monny Cobb, a member of Grace Episcopal Church in Holland, Michigan joined a vision quest led by an Episcopal priest.**  
credit: Herb Gunn, *The Record*

nation, "an interiority" exists, a power that — like a gyroscope — can hold a people in sway. It is argued that one would do well to learn to know the angel of a nation (a congregation, a denomination, a corporate structure) before attempting serious change.

The United States has an angel. For a long time, 500 years, it has been understood to be Columbia — the spirit of scientific advancement and domination. But powerful beneath that image is the White Buffalo Woman attesting to a God of

power that teaches the relationships between all things, that offers prophecies, that redeems and restores, that calls us to live with our sexuality, our dreams, our anger and grief — for the well-being of the children.

When the missionaries brought Christ to this land, they seemed to understand that their faith must make alliances as it had in so many cultures before. It could meld with the people of the pipe and in some missions it did. Or it could combine with the spirit of Columbia, preaching advancement and change and the virtue of conquest.

For five hundred years, the spirit of Columbia has prevailed, but she is losing influence. It is unlikely that either Columbia or the White Buffalo Woman could be totally suppressed. The angels of nations have a way of rising again — as is clear in the Soviet block among Poles, Serbs and Croats.

But the children of Columbus are making a choice. However narrowly or naively, they are rejecting his spiritual legacy. The living Church is given a choice as well: it can define itself within the vision of the Europe of the 1490s and

*For 500 years, the spirit of Columbia has prevailed, but she is losing influence. The children of Columbus are making a choice. They are rejecting his spiritual legacy.*

the imperial America which has evolved, or it can step beyond a conquering worldview and embrace its own biblical tradition in harmony with that of the original peoples of this earth.

As Yahweh sits in heavenly council perhaps there is room for reconciliation between the White

Buffalo Woman and Columbia. Perhaps the Christian Church in the U.S. can help facilitate that by reclaiming its relationship to the earth and to the transcendent. As above, so below. **TW**

## Greenham Common Memorial

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the start of the march by people from Wales which led to the women's peace camp at Greenham Common. A proposal has been launched to set up a sculpture commemorating all the women who supported Greenham.

It is to be a simple, natural figure of a woman with a baby, on a plinth where women can sit, with a plaque with dates of the main events at Greenham.

The protest marches began when women decided to oppose the siting of U.S. cruise missiles in Britain. Women began to occupy the land at the entrance of the missile site. The movement grew to encompass solidarity with the miners in the region and to fund-raising for famine victims in Ethiopia.

The last cruise missile left Greenham Common March 5, 1991.

Money for the sculpture is to be raised by worldwide public subscription. Write: Women for Life on Earth. Ynyslas, Borth, Dyfed SY24, 4JU, United Kingdom.

**Echoes: Justice, Peace & Creation News, WCC, Nr 1 1992**

## Easter Vigilers Imprisoned

Four Christian peace activists were recently sentenced by a federal magistrate to six months' incarceration with manual labor plus \$5,400 "restitution" for breaking into nuclear storage bunkers at Wurtsmith Air Force Base in Oscoda, Mich. A fifth, Jackie Hudson, is awaiting sentencing. Hudson, Peter Dougherty, Helen LaValley, Ardeth Platte and Liz Walters spray-painted "Christ Lives! Disarm!" on the walls of the empty bunkers during an Easter Vigil service they held on the base. The five were protesting the transfer of cruise missiles from Wurtsmith, now in the process of closing, to other military bases, arguing that the weapons should instead be dismantled. The four women are members of Roman Catholic religious orders. Dougherty is a Roman Catholic priest.

## Vatican Supports Discrimination

Laws prohibiting discrimination against homosexual persons, "even where they seem more directed toward support of basic civil rights than condonement of homosexual activity or a homosexual lifestyle, may in fact have a negative impact on the family and society," according to a recent statement from the Vatican. "'Sexual orientation' does not constitute a quality comparable to race, ethnic background, etc. in respect to non-discrimination," the statement declares. "Unlike these, homosexual orientation is an objective disorder." While asserting that "all persons have the right to work, to housing, etc.," the statement contends that the state "may restrict the exercise of rights, for example, in the case of contagious or mentally ill persons, in order to protect the common good."

## Dust and Ashes

Even though Job's experience is inscribed in our sacred texts, we have lost sight of his fundamental wisdom. He at least had the humility to repent as he beheld the grandeur of nature. Moreover, he learned to resituate himself as a subordinate creature in a world that he recognized to be beyond his comprehension or control.

**Timothy Weiskel, project director, Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values, and research fellow in the Center for Science and International Affairs at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard Divinity Bulletin, 1992, Vol. 21 No. 3**

## Disposable Workers

A growing number of Americans are becoming "contingent or disposable workers," writes Barbara Garson, author of *The Electronic Sweatshop* and *All the Livelong Day*. "Between burger flipper and manager is an expanding world of contingent workers with diminished ties to companies, to fellow workers, to customers and to the world in general.

Adjunct lecturers trek from university to university getting paid \$900 to \$3500 a course. Computer programmers migrate like farm workers between Route 128 and Silicon Valley.

"I met a single mother whose company had been taken over and her entire department declared 'temps.' She's still paid \$12.50 an hour on the word processor, but with no health insurance she has to decide whether it's worth a \$70 doctor's bill (plus the lost pay) to find out if her child's lingering sore throat is strep."

**The Nation, 6/92**



— Prepared by Marianne Arbogast

## Planning for Survival

A coalition of more than 40 grassroots anti-poverty organizations met for a National Survival Summit August 20-23 in Detroit. The meeting "brought together some of the strongest and most formidable street fighters in North America to plan a strategy in response to the war against the poor going on in this country," said Diane Bernard, chairperson of Michigan Up and Out of Poverty Now. Participants included representatives of the Native American movement, labor and welfare rights organizations, and the National Union of the Homeless. "I think it was significant that 350 poor people from around the country got the money together to have this conference," Bernard said. "It has become clear to a lot of poor people that they need to support this movement. We can't get Skillman grants, and nobody is going to do it for us."

# Genesis as resistance

by Bill Wylie-Kellermann

*"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished the work which God had done, and God rested on the seventh day...So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it... (from Genesis 2:1-3)*

**T**he creation story may be so familiar we have trouble hearing it. The first chapter of Genesis, in our own experience, does call to mind cultural conflicts over evolution, sexual politics, ecological domination and stewardship. Yet we are less likely to comprehend that this narrative was conceived in conflict. It is a story first uttered as an act of cultural resistance.

The roots of Genesis 1 are to be found in the Babylonian exile of the sixth century BCE. The two kingdoms had been crushed, the temple destroyed. The social world of Israel was literally unmade. The best and the brightest, namely the literary elite, had been dragged off to Babylon and often as not offered good government jobs. It was a time of confusion and cultural seduction. Who now to worship? Marduk and his kin, the Babylonian pantheon? They were literally overpowering. Hadn't they defeated Yahweh? That certainly was the Babylonian view made explicit in their own imperial celebrations.

I have in mind the New Year's festival

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which remembered the creation of the world as the founding anniversary of the empire. There the *Ennuma elish*, the Babylonian story of creation, was dramatically reenacted.



Word made flesh

credit: Meinrad Craighead

At the crux of their story is a great battle. Younger gods who have stirred the wrath of Tiamat, mother goddess of sea and chaos, turn in terror to Marduk, the up and coming young male god. His deal is that he will fight the great dragon in exchange for undisputed sovereignty in the assembly of the gods. Engaging her in fierce cosmic combat and emerging victorious, Marduk divides Tiamat's monstrous fishlike body and spreads it out upon the heavens, thereby imposing order upon the world and paving the way for his enthronement among the gods as the very god of Order. Here is the creation of the world. Then from the dripping blood of her consort, also felled, he fashions human beings to be slaves for the gods.

Several things ought to be mentioned

in connection with this ancient mythology.

- As foundation myth, this is the story which legitimates and virtually creates the social world of Babylon. It sanctions the Babylonian state as the real world of order. (Indeed, in such a scheme the cosmos itself may be conceived as a State.) The king as divine representative embodies the sovereignty of imperial order, a role authorized and ritualized in public festival.

- Moreover, by this story, human beings are assigned a place in the created social order: they are servants and slaves. The story not only grants meaning to the empire, it clarifies the significance of each person's life in relation to the world, social and political.

- Evil, in Babylonian theology, precedes creation. That was Paul Ricoeur's brilliant point in *The Symbolism of Evil*. Chaos and evil predate the world. They have a kind of metaphysical primacy. As he put it: *the origin of evil is coextensive with the origin of things; it is the "chaos" with which the creative act of the god struggles. The counterpart of this view is that salvation is identical with creation itself; the act that founds the world is at the same time the liberating act.*

- It issues in the preeminent theology of war. This is classic military imperial mythology. Might makes order makes right. And it is practically the primeval Orwellian equation: destruction is creation. This mythic ideology identifies every enemy with the original Enemy, chaos. And every victory creates anew the world of Pax Babylonia.

Walter Wink has shown how the "myth of redemptive violence" permeates American culture. It is the predominating myth of the last five hundred years. In *Engaging the Powers* (Fortress, 1992) he undertakes, among other things, a devas-

tating analysis of cartoon plotlines to show how our children are being fed “Babylonian mythology” with their breakfast cereal. In this cartoon catechism Marduk and Tiamat fight it out in an infinite variety of costumes, but with the same mythic plot, the same redundant meaning.

It is in light of our own imperial mythology that the liturgical resistance of the Israelites in Babylon may be most edifying. To reiterate their situation: the exiles were inundated in the empire’s myth; their children were being taught it; and they suffered the massive spectacle of the annual New Year’s festival. In that context the Genesis 1 account, with its stunning rhythm and its drama of voices and refrains, may be read as a subversive alternative, nearly a parody of the Marduk tale. As it stands we have it in Temple form orchestrated for full choirs, but I prefer to imagine it as a mimeographed leaflet passed hand to hand for recitation in home use around the kitchen table. This literally is a case of singing the Lord’s song in a strange land.

Whereupon several points again may be noticed:

- This telling of the story creates Israel’s social world. The world which has been destroyed by Babylonian might is recreated around the family table. An identity and community are sustained without the benefit of either Temple or State, indeed despite them.

- The recitation establishes a spiritual and social rhythm in the life of the exiled community. The sabbath as a seventh day of rest originated among the exiles. Previously unknown, it was inspired and invented there. (In the more ancient versions of the Ten Commandments, “sabbath” means merely holy day.) Insofar as

this was a public act of rest, it declared a different worldview, an alternative allegiance. Resting with Yahweh. I don’t mean to suggest that the sabbath was a periodic strike day, but one has to wonder how such a coordinated workstoppage would impact Babylonian society. The Israelites were marching to a different cultural drummer. In our own society, organized on the seven-day week, picture a sect which decided to order its life on a five day cycle, stopping work every fifth day. It makes me recall a nonviolent tactic of the Intifada, in which the Palestinians set their watches forward an hour. At one point Israeli soldiers were stopping people and smashing their watches if they showed the “wrong” time.

- It is fundamental to this story that creation is not by the sword, but by the Word. The biblical roots of non-violent transformation go back to day one, page one. True creation, say the exiles and their God, is not by violence, but by love and delight. By Word. This is also, notice, the prophetic tradition of social transformation in Israel. The prophets act as though the truth (or better the word of God) uttered in the streets has history-making power. They speak, trusting quite simply that a change is thereby set in motion.

- The gods are creatures. This is the sly sleeper of the story. (And one which bears on a New Testament understanding of the principalities: compare the creation hymn of Colossians 1:15-20). Here dualistic (Persian) gods of light and dark are discovered to be no gods at all. They are uttered and named by the Word. Sun gods and moon gods with their “rule,”

*It is a story first uttered as an act of cultural resistance.*

*In Babylon, this is a strange song indeed. One perhaps the captives need to sing in this hour and house.*

along with the astral deities — all are creatures. Even fertility is inherent in creation. The narrative functions to withdraw the mythic projection which in Israel is called idolatry. As God warns elsewhere: “Beware lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, the whole host of heaven, you are drawn away to worship and serve them, which Yahweh your God

has allotted to all the nations under the whole heaven” (Dt 4:19). This remains a perennial

problem, against which the creation account inveighs.

- Creation is good. This seems perhaps a small point, but it is every bit as momentous for how one views the world as the Babylonian conviction that evil precedes creation. This story flatly counters that view. Sin is subsequent. Evil is derivative and secondary. It has no claim to metaphysical preeminence. (Practically on this point alone the Creation spirituality folks stake a worldview they contend is decisive for planetary survival.)

- Human beings are the image of God. Here is an idea so incredibly subversive it may be the most politically loaded claim of all. Who in Babylon, not to mention virtually the whole of the ancient world, was the image of god? The King, of course, who stands in for Marduk in the creation pageant, and whose authority is annually legitimated. Who, however, in the liturgy of Israel? Humanity. Women and men. Human beings in community. This is a subversion and affront to every imperial authority. It’s practically anarchism. In this counter-story, human beings are not from the blood of a murdered god, created as slaves of the state. They are made for freedom and responsibility.

In Babylon, this is a strange song indeed. One, perhaps, the captives need to sing in this hour and house. **TKV**

## Southern Africa will ordain women

The Church of the Province of Southern Africa decided by a 79 percent majority this past August to approve the ordination of women as priests. The measure failed when it was proposed to the provincial synod in 1989.

Of the 34 provinces and member churches of the worldwide Anglican Communion, 15 have ordained women as deacons and 14 have ordained women to the priesthood. The Church of England will vote on the issue at its General Synod in November.

## Think locally?

Putting a positive spin on the fact that parishes and dioceses are allocating less money for the National Church in favor of supporting their own local ministries, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning told the Executive Council last March, "We celebrate that the ministry of local congregations is growing ever stronger."

But critics of a new proposal to consolidate four of the Church's social-justice programs indicate that Browning and his staff may be less than positive about this decentralizing trend.

"We see [the proposal] as a move for real centralization of authority by national church staff," said Episcopal Urban Caucus president Emmett Jarrett.

The proposal calls for the creation of a 10-member committee which will replace the current 15-member Coalition for Human Needs (CHN) committee and the 8-member Jubilee Ministries committee, according to Marcy Walsh, chair of the ad hoc Executive Council committee that

prepared the consolidation plan. With the help of grants administrators on Browning's staff, the new group would evaluate applications for CHN grants, provide administrative oversight for the Jubilee program and also guide what remains of the national church's Housing and Social/Specialized ministries programs. [The staff positions for these last ministries were eliminated when budget cuts reduced the number of national church staff positions from 291 to 239 last year.]

"It's purely an administrative efficiency move," Walsh said, noting that the smaller number of committee slots would reduce the cost of bringing people together for meetings.

Critics of the proposed consolidation don't deny that improved efficiency and lowered administrative costs are desirable goals, but they are concerned that the 10-member committee will not be able to represent the variety of constituencies which have been represented previously. This, they say, contradicts the empowerment focus of these ministries.

"We are committed to consensus, constituency grant-making by representatives from constituencies, not by [National Church] staff," the Appalachian Peoples' Service Organization (APSO) board told Executive Council members in an April 28 resolution. APSO also protested the heavy cuts already made to CHN and Jubilee. [CHN funding was reduced to 52 percent of the amount budgeted this year, while the \$100,000 budgeted for Jubilee has been reduced to \$65,000.]

"CHN has been one of the real ways the Church has participated in the Appalachian region," stresses APSO's Sandy Ellidge. APSO currently has one representative on the CHN committee.

Members of the Jubilee Ministries committee share these concerns.

The consolidation proposal is not "responsive to the nature of the Jubilee network," says the urban caucus' Jarrett, who also sits on the Jubilee Ministries committee. The new oversight and grant-making group being proposed would

operate in a "top-down," staff-heavy, administrative manner, Jarrett fears. At its most effective, the Jubilee committee's oversight of the network has been interactive and participatory.

The Jubilee Committee has also found its own solutions to a leaner budget, Jarrett added. "The last committee meeting was held here, in our rectory," the Silver Spring, Md., priest said. "We had people sleeping on couches and we prepared meals together — it was entirely in keeping with the nature of this ministry."

## A. Jones' bicentennial

St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pa., and the Union of Black Episcopalians will join together this Nov. 6-8 in sponsoring a bicentennial celebration honoring Absalom Jones and the beginnings of Black membership in the Episcopal Church. The event will be held at St. Thomas', which was founded by Jones.

Jones, born a slave in Delaware in 1746, was the first African American to be ordained an Episcopal priest. He founded the independent "African Church" in 1792, while he was still a lay person. The congregation was renamed St. Thomas' African Episcopal Church when the Diocese of Pennsylvania accepted it for Episcopal Church membership in 1795. But there were strings attached — the parish was not allowed to participate in the diocese's annual convention, a restriction that persisted until 1864.

## The Middle East

Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning recently joined 15 other U.S. religious leaders calling on President Bush to end the embargo against Iraq. Humanitarian relief, they said, should be "unconditional."

"We express our deep concern that the United Nations Security Council is violating this principle in the case of Iraq, thereby making the health of many Iraqi children apparently contingent on the fulfillment of political requirements of some Security Council members."

— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman



## Internment of Japanese Americans

photo credit:  
Linda Eber



# The Great Wall of Los Angeles

by Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz

**I**n their recent book, *Crossroads: Reflections on the Politics of Culture*, Don Adams and Arlene Goldbard examine the concept of the American “melting pot” in terms of the systematic efforts to obliterate minority cultural identities in this country. “Before the melting pot could do its work,” they write, “the unmeltable had to be dealt with.”

One of the ways that governing powers have tried to control ethnic minorities has been to erase their accomplishments and their struggles from the annals of a country’s history.

California artist Judy Baca recognized these intentional omissions and decided to do something about them. In 1976, she began a project that was to last a decade: the production of what may be the longest mural in the world, *The Great Wall of Los Angeles*. Rather than a wall of division between peoples, Baca conceptualized this half-mile long painting as a vehicle to bring together people from a range of cultural backgrounds. She hoped that it would tell the story of Los Angeles “from the eyes of the people who were not written about in the history books.” To that end, she spearheaded a coalition of about 250 young people (ages 14 to 21), 40 historians, 40 artists, and an eclectic

mix of community groups and funding sources (ranging from the Latin American Civic Association to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) who contributed to



*The Great Wall of Los Angeles*, a 350-foot mural, conceived by Judy Baca.

© Social and Public Art Resource Center

the research, design and production of the artwork. The mammoth project was directed under the auspices of the Social & Public Arts Resource Center, a nonprofit, multi-cultural arts center.

The site chosen for the mural was Tujunga Wash, a flood control channel of the Los Angeles River running through the San Fernando Valley. Baca viewed this concrete-lined waterway as a scar in the natural landscape and saw the mural as a means to transform its ugliness. Also since the surrounding, mostly-white, suburban neighborhood was formed as a result of flight from the problems of the

inner city, it could be seen as a symbol of Los Angeles’s long legacy of interracial violence — not only between white and black but among black, brown and yellow as well. Baca envisioned the process of creating the mural as an opportunity to address this, so she and the other project artists held workshops to bring the young people involved in the painting (some of

art and society

whom were recruited through the juvenile justice system) face-to-face with their peers from other cultures. The mural crew produced about 350 feet of painted imagery every other summer and, as Baca notes, some of the participants literally grew up with the project. **TW**

Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz  
edit the Art & Society section of *The Witness*.

# Worshipping in tongues

by Julie A. Wortman

**S**tressing “the importance of our common work to eliminate the sin of racism,” the Episcopal Church Racism Commission recently invited leaders in over 40 dioceses to participate in a national teleconference. Scheduled topics included forming a common definition of racism, recognizing its presence and organizing to fight it.

As useful as this kind of information-sharing might be, galvanizing Church-wide commitment to ending racial oppression will not be easy in an Anglo-centric Church, no matter how high-tech the methods. At this year’s annual meeting of the Episcopal Urban Caucus, longtime anti-racism activist Byron Rushing pointed out that the hard part will be “envisioning a Church without racism” and then bringing that vision to life.

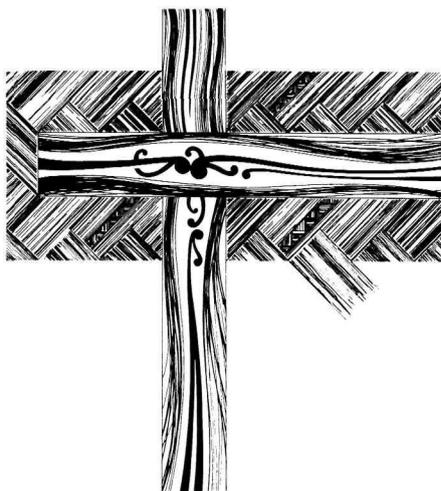
How can such a vision be built? Maybe prayer book revision is the answer.

Tinkering with the Church’s official worship life would at least be a sure-fire way to get everyone’s attention — anyone who was around when the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* was approved or when the so-called “inclusive-language” supplemental texts were considered can tell you that.

Perhaps that’s because when liturgy holds its mirror up to the face of the Church, people like to see an image they recognize.

“Liturgy describes the People of God,” R.G. McCullough writes in the introduction to *A New Zealand Prayer Book, He*

*Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, an icon of official Church commitment to multiculturalism almost from the very moment it was issued in Advent of 1989. McCullough was a member of the last of several provincial commissions to work on the book during a 25-year-period.



**Design in the New Zealand Anglican prayer book.**

“Liturgy expresses who we believe we are in the presence of God,” McCullough adds. “Liturgy reveals the God whom we worship. *Liturgy* reflects our mission.”

Propagating a “common” understanding of how Anglicans see themselves and their relationship to God has been a central concern of the Church since 1549, when Anglican reformer Thomas Cranmer produced his first *BCP* for the English Church.

A Hawaiian translation of eucharistic rites from the U.S. Church’s current prayer book, sponsored by the Commission on Hawaiian Ministry, is only one of the more recent examples of continuing efforts to insure that a person’s native lan-

guage need not be a barrier to his or her socialization into that common understanding.

But most English-speaking Episcopalians will likely go through their entire worshiping lives without ever once running into these new Hawaiian-language liturgies, let alone ones in Spanish or Lakota, languages that Episcopalians also speak. Perhaps the most “common” presumption in the Church today, whether in this country or in other former strongholds of English colonialism, is that the English language and culture are at the heart of what it means to be Anglican.

What is astonishing about New Zealand’s prayer book is the way that assumption is challenged. What in other churches are written off as peripheral concerns about how the book’s language fails to reflect the full diversity of church membership — problems usually “solved” by providing limited-circulation translations like the new Hawaiian one or devising texts for “alternative” use to placate those feeling devalued by gender-exclusive language — are here addressed directly and positively by the one official book meant to reveal the common understanding of who the people of God are and how they see God. For the New Zealand Church, the goal of prayer book revision was participation, not socialization.

“Liturgy expresses who we believe we are in the presence of God.”

—R.G. McCullough

“A Prayer Book for the Church of the Province of New Zealand, including as it does

*Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa* [the Maori people], and the island nations of the South Pacific in the Diocese of Polynesia, must be a deliberate attempt to allow a multitude of voices to speak,” McCullough says.

And speak they do.

“The Lord be with you. *Kia noho a Ihowa ki a koutou*,” are the words a pre-

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**Julie A. Wortman** is an assistant editor of *The Witness* and a member of the Diocese of Michigan’s anti-racism committee.

siding minister might say in greeting a worshipping congregation. Maori, Fijian, and Tongan, in addition to English, are all languages of eucharist. "O give thanks to the Lord, who is gracious: *he mau tonu hoki tana mahi tohu*. God's love endures for ever," begins Psalm 136.

But it is the *Benedicite Aotearoa*, included in the liturgy of Thanksgiving for Creation and Redemption, that most directly reveals the New Zealand church's deepest vision of itself:

"O give thanks to our God who is good:

whose love endures for ever.

You sun and moon, you stars of the southern sky:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

All mountains and valleys, grassland and scree, glacier, avalanche, mist and snow:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

You kauri and pine, rata and kowhai, mosses and ferns:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

Dolphins and kahawai, sealion and crab, coral, anemone, pipi and shrimp:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

Rabbits and cattle, moths and dogs, kiwi and sparrow and tui and hawk:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

You Maori and Pakeha [non-Maori], women and men, all who inhabit the long white cloud [New Zealand]:

*give to our God your thanks and praise.*

In its geographic and creaturely specificity, this modern song of thanksgiving embraces and affirms the unique, ecologically delicate and culturally diverse fabric of modern life the faithful encounter in this South Pacific island nation. What's provided is a vision of a varied creation through New Zealand eyes. By naming it, people in this part of the Anglican Communion may have a chance of praying it into life.

What's a satellite hook-up compared to that?

TTV

## THE WITNESS FORUM

AT TRINITY SCHOOL FOR MINISTRY

October 24, 1992

9:00 a.m. **Morning prayer**

Verna Dozier, preacher

10 a.m. **Participatory Workshops**

- The authority of Scripture
- Sexuality, feminism and faith
- The Traditional Way: Native faith and the imperial religion
- The powers and principalities: viewed through the work of William Stringfellow
- The multi-cultural challenge: Can the Church integrate?

**Lunch**

1:15 p.m. **Workshops** repeated

3:15 p.m. **Bible study**

4:15 p.m. **Panel discussion**

6:30 p.m. **Concluding worship**

### Panelists

**Virginia Mollenkott** teaches at William Patterson in N.J. She is the author of *Sensuous Spirituality: Out from Fundamentalism* (Crossroad Press, N.Y., 1992). Her views have been published in *The Witness*.

**Chester Talton** is Suffragan Bishop of Los Angeles and a former board member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, owner of *The Witness*.

**Mary Hays**, former associate rector of Truro Church in Fairfax, Va., is a priest and professor of pastoral theology at Trinity in Ambridge, Pa. Forward Movement recently published Hays' essay on Scripture study.

**William Frey** is dean of Trinity and the former Bishop of Colorado. He authored the controversial 1991 General Convention resolution that asked the Church to state that clergy sexual activity should occur only within heterosexual marriage.

### Preacher

**Verna Dozier**, author of *The Dream of God* (Cowley Press), taught high school English until she was 57. For the last 18 years, she has been a widely-enjoyed theologian and preacher.



### Workshop Leaders

*The authority of Scripture.* **Verna Dozier.**

*The traditional way.* **Quentin Kolb**, urban missionary in the Diocese of Utah and Ute Indian, integrates native spirituality with his role as Episcopal priest.

*The multi-cultural challenge.* **Butch Naters-Gamarra** was born and educated in Panama. He is a priest of an inner-city congregation in Boston's South End which is bi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-ethnic.

*Sexuality, feminism and faith.* **Mary Meader** is pursuing a Doctor of Ministry degree in feminist theology at the EDS. She is an advocate and counselor for survivors of incest.

*Powers and principalities.* **Andrew McThenia**, chair of the ECPC Board and professor of law at Washington and Lee, is editing a book of essays about William Stringfellow. McThenia engaged in civil disobedience on behalf of the Pittston coal miners in 1989.

*Childcare will be provided.*

*[This unsolicited article champions the electoral process. In November, we will publish some responses to this piece.]*

**A**t a conference on the Gulf war entitled "Bringing Home the War," there was much singing of old movement songs and recounting of stories from great movement events of the past, but although the conference was held in the midst of a critical presidential (and Congressional) campaign, I did not hear a word about electoral politics.

I have been involved in movement politics. In the 1960s and 1970s, I marched, went to rallies, gave money, and preached about civil rights, the Kerner Report, and the Vietnam war. But I was raised in a hotbed of electoral politics by agnostic socialists in Greenwich Village in the 1920s. My father was an American historian and teacher, and my mother worked in journalism, city government, and international affairs.

In the past 40 years I have regularly urged my students to get registered and vote, supplied them with voting records, worked in local campaigns, and served on the Cambridge Democratic City Committee, as well as the state board of Americans for Democratic Action. One of my students was murdered in Alabama in 1965 while working in voter registration.

This last point indicates that the politics of the civil rights movement were a complex mixture of movement and electoral politics. And what I am going to argue is that these two kinds of politics need each other and become distorted without each other.

The strengths of movement politics are obvious to all who have been in-

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**Owen C. Thomas** is professor of theology at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass. Artist **Eleanor Mill** works in Hartford, Conn.



Boys at play: Bush, Quayle, Clinton, Perot.

credit: Eleanor Mill

## Woe unto nonvoters

by Owen C. Thomas

involved. Movement politics came into its own in this century with the labor and civil right movements, because at the beginning of these movements there was no alternative, no other recourse but the methods of the movement, namely, strikes, sit-ins, the testing of discriminating laws, plus the powerful morale building ingredients of rallies. It is important to note, however, that the goal of both movements was electoral politics culminating in the labor legislation of the 1930s, the civil rights legislation of the 1960s, and the election of public officials sympathetic to the goals of the movements.

The anti-Vietnam war movement was rather different and marked the beginning of the separation of movement and electoral politics which we see today. Watergate, and later Iran-Contra strengthened this disillusionment and thus also

movement politics. I believe that this alienation from electoral politics on the part of many who would normally vote for liberal candidates played some part in the elections of Reagan and Bush.

This leads me to the weakness of movement politics. The Gulf war conference reminded me that at its worst movement politics is marked by self-righteousness and irrelevance. The disdain of anyone interested in electoral politics was depressing.

The keynoter at the conference told a moving story of his recent visit to Iraq. When someone asked him what we could do about it, he responded that we should go to Iraq ourselves. He did not mention the thousands of dollars it would cost, or what such a trip might achieve, nor did he mention the possibility of electing a different president.

This led me to reflect that movement politics had developed a Manichaeian attitude toward government and the state. The keynoter commended the movie "JFK" as the key to American politics. Another speaker stated, "We must say No to the state!" This is the "Christ against culture" attitude described by H. Richard Niebuhr and exemplified in I John in which the world is a region of darkness lying under the power of the evil one, in Tertullian who said "There is nothing more entirely foreign to us than affairs of state," in monasticism, sectarianism, and in Tolstoy who said that the state is the chief offender against life.

Niebuhr states that while this view is a necessary element of balance in Christianity, the extreme temptation of this view is to convert this ethical dualism into an ontological dualism. The state is seen as the absolute evil and must be resisted absolutely, either by total withdrawal, renunciation, and non-participation, or by violent attack.

The problem is that the complete renunciation of government and electoral politics is as impossible as the complete rejection of culture. Non-participation in politics has an effect on politics, and the opposite of the one intended. So this negative side of movement politics is a self-fulfilling prophecy. If government is a grand conspiracy and participation is pointless, then the more the non-participation, the worse it gets. QED.

Finally, if the goal of current movement politics is to have an impact on the political process, I believe that it has become increasingly ineffective, especially since the anti-Vietnam movement. I honor and support those who lie down in front of nuclear trains or who for justice and peace

are beaten, arrested, fined or imprisoned. They have more courage than I. But, sadly, I believe their impact on the issues is minimal. The impact is entirely dependent on media attention and responsiveness of public officials to that attention. If the time, energy, talents, money and other resources expended on movement political events were devoted to electoral politics, I believe the impact would be significant. (It is interesting to note that while in recent years the New Right has taken up movement politics, it has combined it fairly effectively with electoral politics.)

Now what of electoral politics? It is the essence of the American experiment. Thousands of people around the world are literally dying to participate in it. Most of the recent critiques have focussed on the influence of rich and powerful lobbies, the cost of campaigns, the power of incumbency, and secrecy in government. My conviction is that there is electoral and legislative and legal recourse for all of these weaknesses and corruptions, and the fundamental problem is lack of participation in the process,

*If government is a grand conspiracy and participation is pointless, then the more the non-participation, the worse it gets. QED.*

aided and abetted by movement politics. So we have the strange situation of the failures of electoral politics causing disillusionment and alienation of the electorate which deepens the failures. I believe that as a nation, but not as individuals, we get exactly the kind of government we deserve.

An important factor is that movement

politics is usually exciting and gratifying, whereas electoral politics is often boring and tedious. It is a lot more exciting to get arrested in front of T.V. cameras than it is to stuff envelopes and ring doorbells. It makes much better party conversation!

The strength of movement politics is that it is essentially communal—this is possible because it tends to be middle- and upper-middle class, white, and educated, whereas electoral politics, because

it cuts across class, race and educational differences has much more difficulty achieving this communal character.

Movement politics will have to be widened to include presently excluded

*At its worst, movement politics is marked by self-righteousness and irrelevance. The disdain of anyone interested in electoral politics is depressing.*

constituencies which it claims to serve. A recent PBS program, *Rage for Democracy*, chaired by Anthony Lewis, reported that political participation decreases with decrease in education and income, and suggested that a fundamental reason that the U.S. lags far behind the other industrialized democracies in regard to poverty, health care, education, infant mortality, and so forth, is that we are the only one without class-based political parties. The poor and lower middle class are divided by race and ethnicity and by racist politics, but a party based on these constituencies could win every residential election. The original constituencies of the New Deal approached this and paved the way for the most important social legislation of the century. So a new theory and practice of community is needed which is based not on homogeneity but on the acceptance of, and learning from, difference. This is something which a renewed movement politics could contribute. **RAY**

*Former editor Bob DeWitt asks readers to remember that presidents make judicial appointments.*

# The second reformation: interview with Steve Charleston

by Jan Nunley

*Steven Charleston, Bishop of Alaska and member of the Choctaw nation anticipates a second reformation for the Church. [Also, see page 30.]*

**Jan Nunley:** You've said that the central issue confronting relations between Euro-Americans and Native Americans is cultural reconciliation. What are the differences between the cultures?

**Steve Charleston:** It's very simplistic to put it in this way, but one of the differences between the two ways of life is the Western culture often asks, "Can we have more?" And the Native culture asks, "Do we have enough to share?" It seems to me that the reconciliation is not really a matter of choice any more. It's a matter of necessity, because the philosophy "Can we have more?" is rapidly being answered for us. If you continue to abuse the planet, to destroy the ecosystem on which we all depend for our survival, to alienate segments of society from one another, to exist in a state of militarization and materialism — the answer is, "No, you cannot have more." By necessity, I believe, the West needs to look toward the alternative offered by Native people.

**J.N.:** At the Convention in Phoenix, I was struck by the backlash against Native liturgies and environmental theology.

**S.C.:** The backlash against using Na-

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**Jan Nunley** is a newscaster for National Public Radio's environmental program "Living on Earth." She's also a frequent contributor to Episcopal Church publications. Artist **Norman Singer** produced this graphic for use in the educational series *In The Circle of the Spirit*, which Steve Charleston helped organize.



credit: Norman Singer

tive tradition or imagery in worship and the concerns about whether environmental theology is syncretism — those kinds of reactions are produced by ignorance and fear. They are symptomatic among some Western people of a loss of confidence in their own cultural system that they have inherited for generations.

In the latter part of this century it's becoming obvious that the assumptions on which the United States was originally founded by its immigrant populations are rapidly going bankrupt. Lacking any alternative vision, people retreat into a kind of bunker mentality, trying to hold fast to the archaic notion that colonialism can continue to work into the next century.

**J.N.:** And that's the context in which you say, "Christianity needs us more than we need Christianity," that we need a second Reformation.

**S.C.:** The Second Reformation is coming. I'm absolutely convinced of it. We are a generation living before the beginning of the second great Reformation, and that reformation will transform the face of Christianity all across the globe. It will produce in the next century a Church that is much different than the one that we understand now. Many of the growing pains that we see should not cause us any real sense of loss or anxiety. If we take it seriously then we can help form and guide this reformation in a way that is helpful. On the other hand, if we ignore our responsibilities and leave it in the hands of those who operate out of fear and reaction, then we're just abrogating God's call and causing a lot of pain and confusion.

**J.N.:** What will this Church of the Second Reformation look like?

**S.C.:** After the Second Reformation, there will still be splinter groups. But there will be a whole community within the Church, stretching around the globe, that will be much more horizontal in its relationships. There will be more equal understanding of the role of men and women, of laity and clergy, of youth and elders. It will be a more tolerant and accepting community. Its ritual and worship life will be far more integrated with the sight, sounds and smells of its many different members. The rights of creation will become a major issue, because we will have finally matured to the point where we understand that human rights and the rights of all forms of life are intimately interrelated.

In lots of ways the Church will start to inch towards that ancient imagery of the Body, in which individual communities thrive in their cultural richness, but where the integration between us, and the communication and cooperation among us, is much stronger than anything we've ever known before.

# Culture Wars

## by Reginald Blaxton

*Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* by James Davison Hunter. HarperCollins Publishers, New York, New York, 1991.

**T**he language of warfare, once a staple of popular Christian piety, has taken a beating over the last quarter-century. Apologetically useful as a way of molding Christian identity and cementing attachment and loyalty to the church's purposes, martial images are no longer much in evidence today in preaching, liturgy, or hymnody.

The irony in this situation is that over the last 25 years or so, as older historical contests between parties, denominations, and faith communities have receded into the past, increased intramural conflict has become a defining feature of mainline Church life.

In the Episcopal Church, for example, the bruising battle over ordaining women to the priesthood and episcopate has given place to yet another front in the continuing collision of values and world views—the ordination of out-and-proud homosexuals. This is a controversy now also familiar to Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists, and Presbyterians.

Typically, across denominational boundaries, one side, in support of its position, will claim the authority of scripture, tradition, and a transcendent deity, while the other side appeals to the spirit of the modern age, revealing a “tendency to resymbolize historic faith according to the prevailing assumptions of contempo-

rary life.”

To those in the middle, probably a majority, perplexed and wearied by unceasing social turmoil, Church life, has become just another venue in which the sometimes bitter and often impassioned cultural conflicts of American society are slugged out. Current hostilities in Church and society, marked by the increasingly militant posture of combatants on both sides of recent controversies, may fairly be called a state of war. And James Davison Hunter uses the image of a “culture war” as his controlling metaphor and point of departure in examining the anatomy, historical background, and political implication of the battle of belief systems.

Hunter contends, “the nub of political disagreements today on the range of issues debated—whether abortion, child care, funding for the arts, affirmative action and quotas, gay rights, values in public education or multiculturalism—can be traced ultimately and finally to the matter of moral authority.” This is an area in which religious institutions, traditionally, have had great say in providing public definitions and perspectives and in shaping public debate.

Unquestionably, however, there now appears to be a breakdown of middle class consensus relating to traditional concepts of moral authority. Moreover, it is the deep-seated commitment to different and *opposing* bases of moral authority and the world views that derive from them that creates the deep cleavages. This accounts for the raw edge in Church controversies, barely concealed in the Episcopal Church by a thin and brittle veneer of Anglican politesse.

Hunter's analysis of the battle of world views rings true to me, and has particular resonance within the context of Church life. As New Testament scholar Leon E. Wright observes of the church's dilemma:

*By reason of the authority of its pos-*

*ture, the Church must honestly recognize the fact of its teachings ... as organically geared to first-century patterns and designs. And yet, it is pledged authentically to tutor those in its ambience for whom a technological self-understanding has hopelessly outdistanced more primitive models of reality and being. The crucial question, then, becomes this: Has the Church realistically acknowledged the presence of a widespread problem in these terms, once thought the utilization of merely authoritarian or dogmatic methods and means?*

Or to set the church's dilemma in another idiom: *No one puts new wine into old wineskins; if one does, the wine will burst the skins and the wine is lost, and so are the skins; but new wine is for fresh skins* (Mk. 2:22, Mt. 9:17, Lk. 5:37f).

*Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America* is a challenging interpretation of the deep divisions at the heart of contemporary life. The book is not a call to arms, which may distress embattled partisans, but a clearly written, rigorously argued, evenhanded examination of the polarizing impulses of American culture, including religious life. Hunter, who teaches sociology and religion at the University of Virginia, is at his best addressing the deeper commitments—the clash of world views—that ideological antagonists bring to the resolution of social issues.



book review

This book is highly recommended to any person who, before returning to the fray, wants to acquire some critical distance and perspective on the moral and cultural conflicts of our time. **TW**

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**Reginald Blaxton** is an Episcopal priest and board member of the Episcopal Church Publishing Co.

Oklahoma was once Indian Territory, the final stop on the holocaust known as the Trail of Tears, at first for the great Southeastern nations — Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cherokee, Seminole and Creek — driven from their homes by the 1830 edict of President Andrew Jackson, and later for some 62 other nations and bands of Native peoples. Promised to them “as long as Grass grows or water runs,” Oklahoma, like their other homes before it, was overrun in a land grab by white settlers within living memory of the survivors of the Native diaspora. It still has the second largest Native population of any state in the union.

Oklahoma was the earliest home of Bishop Steven Charleston, sixth bishop of the Diocese of Alaska and a citizen of the Choctaw Nation. Born in Duncan, in the southwest part of the state, Charleston was raised in rural Oklahoma City. Both his great-grandfather Martin and his grandfather Simeon were Native clergy in the Presbyterian Church, and his first church experience, like that of many Choctaws, was Presbyterian.

*“I know it’s odd, but I’m feeling really good about where the Church is and about what we can do together.”*



Steve Charleston

## Building bridges between cultures: Bishop Steven Charleston of Alaska

by Jan Nunley

of his ancestry. Yet, he could not stay away from the Church.

“The Native tradition and the Gospel of Christ Jesus belong together,” Charleston said. “They work together, they speak together, they have the same voice. That’s why, the Native world view is something we can understand and embrace because it has a voice that we’ve heard before, the voice of Jesus, that speaks to us about issues of justice and mercy, of sharing, of giving away and of helping one another, of living as a tribe.”

In his pursuit of God, Charleston sampled a variety of churches, finally entering a small Episcopal mission where he was relieved to meet a priest who did not pretend to have all the answers. Paul Kendall “was saying that he was willing to search with me.”

Charleston entered seminary at the Episcopal Divinity School where he was

painfully aware that he was one of only four Native people in mainline Christian seminaries anywhere in the United States. Following graduation from EDS, he served for two years as executive director of the Church’s National Committee on Indian Work.

Charleston found vitality in his vocation, because, he says, “The one place where Western culture and the Native culture have come closest is in the spiritual. Western Christians and Native Christians can join and touch and build bridges. That’s where we can forge a reconciliation that will last into the future. The religious dimension challenges the economic, political and social assumptions on which much of North America has been based for over 500 years.”

Charleston served as director of cross-cultural studies and assistant professor of pastoral theology at Lutheran Northwest-

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

But remaining a Christian was a struggle for Charleston, who wanted to know if he could be both Indian and Christian.

Charleston is comfortable at sweat lodge and pipe ceremonies. He is proud

**Jan Nunley** is a newscaster for National Public Radio’s environmental program “Living on Earth,” heard in over 200 cities in the U.S. and worldwide on the Armed Forces Radio Network. She’s also a frequent contributor to Episcopal Church publications.

ern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, as well as priest-in-charge for Holy Trinity/St. Anskar Parish in Minneapolis in the 1980s.

“One of the sad things that I see so often is Western people who, being spiritual orphans in their own culture, go hunting for some adoption in the Native community,” Charleston says. “When I was a seminary professor, once in a while a European person would come to me and say I was very lucky because I came from a culture that had such an old covenant, because they didn’t. My answer was, ‘Of course you do.’”

“One of the powerful remnants of what the old covenant of European Americans was once like when it encountered Christianity is still available to us through Celtic Christianity where Celtic Christians tried to blend their understanding of nature’s harmony and balance with the Christian Gospel.

“The problem is not the original covenants. What we find often has distorted it is the Industrial Revolution, which had more impact on Christianity than the Protestant Reformation. Once colonialism got into high gear, the first people to be colonized were Europeans, not Indians or Africans — the first people to undergo

*... the Native world view is something we can understand and embrace because it has a voice that we've heard before, the voice of Jesus, that speaks to us about issues of justice and mercy, of sharing, of giving away and of helping one another, of living as a tribe.*

—Steve Charleston

the oppression of colonial powers were the European peoples themselves who were taken off the land and out of their original covenant relationships and into the factories. Then they were used as mercenaries to go out and extend the same colonial pattern on to other peoples.

“ I think the question for us, as we come towards this major opportunity for reform, is, Will we stand up and say, *Will we change these cycles?* Will we say, *No*

*to colonialism, to exploitation of human beings and the natural world?* Will we stand firmly for one another in a new sense of Christian community that is opposing oppression and exploitation? I think this is the time, the moment, we’re called to do that, and how we answer that call will affect generations to come.”

Charleston was consecrated the first Native bishop of Alaska in March, 1991, in ceremonies which celebrated his own Choctaw heritage and those of the Alaskan nations of his new diocese. In just under two years, Charleston has launched a new theological vision for the vast Diocese of Alaska — a vision of a bicultural bridge between Native and non-Native Alaskans as part of a “Mission Wheel,” drawing on the Native imagery of the circle to balance the work of the diocese and that of the parishes. It is a vision, as Bishop Charleston puts it, “as broad as Alaska itself.”

“I feel really hopeful. I know that’s odd in the Episcopal Church today, but from our viewpoint in Alaska, we feel this is a really wonderful time in the life of the Church. There’s lots of joy and growth ahead. I’m feeling really good these days about where the Church is and what we can do together.” TW

### **Welcome to The Witness!**

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. We’ve sent issues this month to people who take their identity from beyond the mainstream.

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

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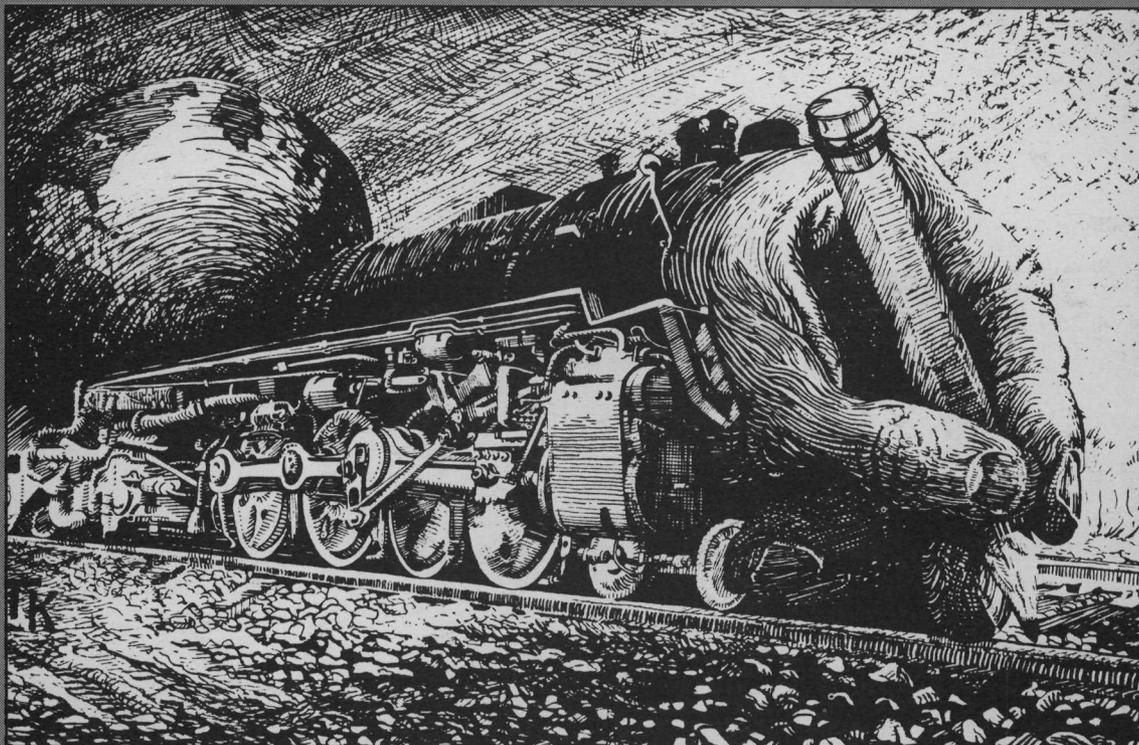
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credit: Tom Keough

*November issue:*

**RAGE**



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*The Witness*

Volume 75 • Number 11 • November 1992



***RAGE***

*in the*  
***1990s***

## Tools of Harvest

I RECEIVED THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE of *The Witness* today and was most pleased — and reminded of what I have been missing, as I have not subscribed (from sheer poverty) since I entered seminary. It is refreshing to renew acquaintance with a publication that speaks so loudly and clearly for faith, truth and justice.

I especially appreciated your “Tools of Harvest: imported labor in Nebraska” and wonder (I am editor of *The Nebraska Episcopalian*, our diocesan publication) what your reprint policy might be.

**J. Anne McConney  
Omaha, NE**

P.S. Just a comment on the letter by Ruth Clausen and Letitia Brown in your letters section: I did not see the article in question — but I can say from experience that if their diocese is as consistent and fair as they say, then they are to be congratulated. There are a few places (even one is too many) where the word “hoops” is an exact and accurate description.

[Ed. Note: We invite people to reprint *Witness* articles for nonprofit use and simply request that publications list the name, address and subscription cost of *The Witness* and send us a copy.]

## Marcia Spofford

THE RECENT ISSUES celebrating 75 years and remembering the founder and his son remind me of another history-making Spofford, Marcia, the daughter of William Spofford Sr. She was my mentor, role-model, heroine and inspiration as the leader of the small group of “radical” students at Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio, in the early 1940s. Our primary campus agitation in those years (joined by the few campus Socialists and pacifists) was the integration of Antioch, which finally succeeded in 1944 with the admission of Edith Scott and her younger sister Cory (as she was known to everyone at

Antioch in 1945).

On my return to Antioch for the academic year 1946-7 after two-and-one-half years in the Merchant Marines, I and my roommate Walt Rybeck became very close friends with Edith and Cory. Cory later married Martin Luther King.

Sadly, Marcia, who had married (Tony Russell) and had two children while still a student (again, she was a pioneer) died of polio in 1944 or 1945.

Long before I became an Episcopalian in 1978, I subscribed to *The Witness*, partly in memory of Marcia and her father.

If anyone reading this knew Marcia, I would be eager to hear from them. I think she deserves more than a footnote in history.

**Robert T. Jordan  
2901 Russell Road  
Alexandria, VA 22305-1717**

## Abortion

I SO ENJOYED all the letters in your September issue that I want to write and say I heartily agree with all those who [criticized] your change of position on abortion rights. I particularly enjoyed the letter from Jane Johnson from Denver since I'm older than she.

Most pro-choice advocates do not believe that abortion is the greatest; in other words, most people are not pro-abortion but pro-choice. It is not something the government should have anything to say about — purely a matter between a woman and her circumstances, conscience, and her doctor.

**Mary Lou Brackett  
St. Paul, MN**

THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE of *The Witness* contains predictable reactions to your raising with Carter Heyward the ambiguities of the abortion controversy. You are to be congratulated for doing that even if you are politically incorrect for so doing. While I am “pro-choice” I believe the whole question is much larger than the parameters in which it [is] usually cast. Unfortunately much of the “pro-life” side opposes measures that might lessen the number of unwanted pregnancies. On the other hand, the “pro-choice” does not always face the implications of its position.

The selection of Ambridge as the venue for *The Witness*' 75th anniversary meeting

reflects an uncommon generosity in these contentious days.

**Abner K. Pratt, 2nd  
Eastham, MA**

## 75th anniversary forum

WE MAY FIND “that we share neither a Lord nor a faith, only a baptism that is laden with irony.” Unsettling as it is, your observation may be true. But if that be true then we will have excluded ourselves from the one true Church, Christ's body on this earth.

Division does indeed exist within our Episcopal Church, but in the honesty and frankness of your article it becomes clear that there is also hope. For though we may disagree, we must Love.

**Clay Lein  
Ambridge, PA**

AS A LONG TIME READER and admirer of *The Witness*, I am very much interested in the coming meeting of *The Witness* with Trinity School. Although these two seem poles apart in their approach to the Christian mission, I believe what takes place at Trinity will evidence some beneficial results. At any rate, the efforts put forth are highly commendable.

Recently, a friend of mine who comes from the conservative tradition, asked me to characterize *The Witness* for him. He is presently leaning toward a moderate-liberal position. Inasmuch as he is into poetry, I attempted to provide him with a poetic response, which I have enclosed. Of course, this is not great poetry and likely does not do justice to such an eminent periodical; but it does reflect my strong feeling and interpretive devotion to this witness for Christ.

## *The Witness*

A channel of eternal relevance,  
With prophetic passion and spirited thought.  
Inspirational herald for social advance,  
Reverberating compassion for the poor and distraught.

Witness for truth on fiery wings,  
Comes startling revelations and traumatic themes.

While re-assuring with prophetic insight  
All humbly yielding to Godly light.

Letters

Witness for justice in the eyes of time,  
The uplifting of workmen toiling in the mine.  
Entreating for feminine celebration at the  
sacramental meal;  
Elevating status of minorities through  
contagious zeal.

Witness for peace through divine accord,  
Not to perish vainly by the sword.  
Loving, hoping with patient persuasion,  
The essence of harmony and reconciliation.

Witness for freedom through courageous  
stance,  
Facing liberation foes with ominous glance;  
That dignity and equality be the story  
Of our nation's pride and aspiring glory.

The flame of Bill Spofford, blazing depth and  
expanse,  
The progress of humane strivings to enhance.  
Buoyed by a consecrated, liberating crew,  
Countless are indebted to a wise and saintly  
few.

During the fifties, I had a cherished friend-  
ship with Bill Spofford. This was during my  
community services/social relations days with  
the Diocese of Newark. I am now retired.

**John R. Green**  
**Maumee, OH**

THANK YOU for taking *The Witness* into a  
forum on evangelism.

So far the "Decade of Evangelism" is  
turning into a disappointment for the Episco-  
pal Church. Not accustomed to evangelism,  
we try to reach out to others with nametags  
and newcomers classes, larger lawn signs and  
warmer welcomes. As a result, we are begin-  
ning to lose our reputation as "God's frozen  
chosen," but we are not much nearer our goal  
of resurgence and renewal.

What is missing? I believe it is conversion  
to Jesus Christ as Saviour. We don't know  
how to convert people! We don't know how  
to be ourselves converted. The result is a kind  
of spiritual emptiness at the very heart of  
things.

Each one of us longs to experience the  
peace, joy, freedom and power of new life in  
Jesus Christ. We continue to "spook" our-  
selves with fears of Fundamentalism or Ca-

tholicism or becoming too "churchy." What  
we are really afraid of is what Bonhoeffer  
called "the cost of discipleship." We keep at  
arm's length the One who calls to us because  
we dread the words "Take up your cross and  
follow me."

It need not go on like that.

**Frederick A. Fenton**  
**St. Augustine by-the-Sea**  
**Santa Monica, CA**

### Seeking solidarity

FOR CALIFORNIA GAYS AND LESBI-  
ANS still smarting from our governor's veto  
of AB101 (which would have prohibited job  
discrimination on the basis of sexual orienta-  
tion), the insult, rage and despair felt by  
African-Americans at the Rodney King ver-  
dict is a jolt of familiar emotion. We can  
understand the outcry against a system which  
people had trusted would deliver at least a  
measure of justice. So we must join their  
outcry. And they must join ours. There can be  
no justice for any unless there is justice for all.

Blacks and gays have both been betrayed  
by the system. California's gay and lesbian  
community had taken the word of a politician  
and thus probably should not have been sur-  
prised to find we'd been fed a lie, but in the  
case of the beating of Rodney King, the black  
community had trusted in the promises of The  
American Way of Justice. Both communities  
— indeed, all communities of the disenfran-  
chised and marginalized — must raise our  
voices. Together.

Where does the gay and lesbian commu-  
nity stand when racial tension pits black against  
white against Korean against Latino? And  
when economic injustice pits have-not against  
have — and, most tragically — have-not  
against have-not? We cannot stand by and say  
"it's not my battle." Human dignity is every-  
one's battle, but it is more particularly ours.  
The system, after all, at least gives lip service  
to the notion that prejudice based on sexual  
orientation is wrong.

Yet, all too often, the racial minorities see  
the gay community as composed entirely of  
upper-middle-class white males — who are  
thereby members of the ruling class. And  
lesbians and gays often feel they have enough  
strikes against them without complicating the

picture with racial and ethnic pluralities. It's  
tough enough fighting for civil rights when  
you're black and straight; it's tough enough  
fighting for civil rights when you're gay and  
white. The tragedy is that although both sides  
should have plenty of empathy for another  
disenfranchised minority, neither "side" feels  
they can risk inclusivity.

**Larkette Lein**  
**Integrity, Southland Chapter**  
**Fullerton, CA**

### Witness praise

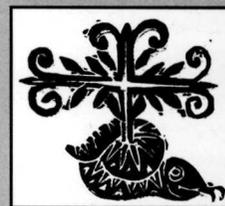
HERE'S MY 3-YEAR RENEWAL. I really  
appreciate what you're doing.

**Peter Selby**  
**University of Durham Dept. of Theology**  
**Durham, England**

### Stringfellow letters sought

I AM JUST BEGINNING WORK on a bio-  
graphy of William Stringfellow who, as you  
know, wrote regularly for *The Witness* in the  
70s and 80s. I have no doubt that among the  
*Witness* readership are to be found friends,  
correspondents, and co-workers of his. If any  
of them hold letters or related materials from  
him, I'd be delighted if they would send me  
copies c/o: 1994 Clarkdale, Detroit, MI 48209.  
Many thanks to them in advance, and to you.

**Bill Wylie-Kellermann**



### Correction

While Linda Crockett is in El Salva-  
dor as this issue is prepared, she does *not*  
live there despite indications to that ef-  
fect in the September issue of *The Wit-  
ness*. In the Letters section, her address  
was listed as 22nd of April, El Salvador.  
In fact, her community is Project Via  
Crucis and she lives in Adamstown, Pa.

## **THE WITNESS**

Since 1917

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Cover: *Long, hot summer* by Eleanor Mill, a syndicated artist working in Hartford, Conn. It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Facing rage: the Church's disability

**T**here is a spirit on the loose, a rage that like a cloud rolls over the nation — maybe it manifests itself in a war against Iraq, a brutal attack on a child, a resurgence of racism and neo-nazism, or maybe its icon is someone holding an

white men. Everywhere, and quite likely in our own lives, there are short fuses, passions that rocket to the surface after provocations that do not warrant it. If not around issues of substance, at least around aggressive freeway driving or standing in long lines.



A family of Klan supporters at a rally in Raleigh, NC.

credit: Jerome Friar, Impact Visuals

automatic weapon in a shopping mall and gunning down people he has never met.

Newspaper articles profile the mass killer today as a white male who has sustained a loss in employment or through divorce. The psychiatrists suggest that as a white male he has not developed the skills needed to cope with adversity.

But this rage is by no means limited to

---

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

THE WITNESS

It seems only logical that the anxiety and rage that are sweeping the nation are taking hold within our community as well. We sense, even intuitively, the fear that is out there. We read of atrocities from which we cannot hope to protect ourselves — and we need affirmation and security, but in a flip that is probably demonic, we project our worst hidden fears onto one another and a rage can begin to simmer.

I wonder if that dynamic is not operative in the Church as well. Is that a driving

factor in the withdrawal of ESA parishes? Does it partly account for the turmoil throughout the Church?

It seems to me that we need to pray. And then, people of faith need to figure out how to approach that roiling rage, how to affirm it and ride it. I picture a free spirit leaping onto the back of a wild horse and riding it until that horse can feel guides and tolerate currying.

It's not a vocation that will come easily. Church people normally veer away from conflict, preferring to hold up the joy of community and love. When it doesn't skirt anger, the Church practically begs people to keep their emotions inside, asking them to forgive before the Church has even fully understood the transgression.

But to ride, and eventually redirect rage, we need to honor it. It does not have to be a vice and it does hold a kind of terrifying beauty.

I have a friend, an incest survivor, who says she only prays when she is shaking her fist at God or when she is cleaning her bathtub. Another has resumed a relationship with God only recently. The silence between them broke when she allowed herself to yell at God.

However uneasy it makes us, the Church has a vocation in this day: to honor rage and to learn how to talk to Rambo. The Pentagon knows how to activate Rambo. Madison Avenue knows how to sell to Rambo and how to drive him to a frenzy — does the Church have nothing to say to him? As people of peace, perhaps a handful of us should, as a discipline, offer to read the *Soldier of*

editor's note

*Fortune* magazines and offer our intercessions and our hearts for the people to whom they speak.

It is not inconceivable that Rambo could become an ally. He has every right to be angry. The media has had little to say about the decline of the middle class or the exponential consolidation of wealth in this country. Perhaps Rambo, in economic pain, could learn to focus his rage without doing damage to the available, and advertised, targets: people of other races, creeds and lifestyles. I'm not sure that Rambo does not know how to think, but he's not receiving much encouragement to do so.

How come we have nothing to say to this man?

*Time Magazine* is predicting that by the year 2036 European-Americans will be a minority in the U.S. The changes ahead were a raw focus at the most recent Episcopal Urban Caucus meeting.

Michael Curry, rector of St. James, Baltimore, preached the future at that gathering (and again at the September House of Bishops meeting) saying that the Church needs to learn a new song. The U.S., he said, "will either weave a beautiful tapestry or create a social tragedy." Left to its own devices the nation will move toward becoming a South African apartheid or the chaos of Lebanon. The only institution, he said, which can demonstrate for the nation what a multicultural community might be like is the Church. Can we, he challenged, sing a new song?

Given the apoplexy of the age, rehearsing a new song will first require an ability to encounter rage. Somewhere embedded in our fury is our power. A number of feminists have discerned this as they explore ways to dance with anger.

Beverly Wildung Harrison writes in *The Power of Anger in the Work of Love*:

*Can anyone doubt that the avoidance of anger in popular Christian piety, reinforced by a long tradition of fear of deep feeling in our body-denying Christian tradition, is a chief reason why the Church is such a conservative, stodgy institution? ... Anger denied subverts commu-*

---

*Rage, shooting forth in a climate of reason and faith, can yield an incarnational strength and joy.*

---

*nity. Anger expressed directly is a mode of taking the other seriously, of caring. The important point is that where the feeling is evaded, where anger is hidden or goes unattended, masking itself, there the power of love, the power to act, to deepen relation, atrocities and dies.*

In letting rage speak, no matter how guttural and chaotic the speech, we reveal a power that has been brooding. Watching it erupt into the light is not always comprehensible as cleansing. But that self-same rage can offer energy and courage. It is ours and its movement, flickering out from the shadows, can become a delight. Once we have a relationship with our own deepest, least-confined renunciations and refusals and outcries — however unjustified they may be — the rage of others need not be so alarming. And we can testify to the truth that rage shooting forth in a climate of reason and faith can yield an incarnational strength and joy. If true for us, this must be true for Rambo as well.

In the interests of learning to listen to rage without trying to silence it, we've dedicated this issue to a variety of voices. The December issue will examine some of the things the Church *could* do if it did not imagine that rage is incompatible with the Golden Rule and if it were not paralyzed by fear.

### *Bulletin Board on this issue:*

\* Marietta Jaeger, circulation coordinator and promotion manager for The Witness, finds *Ancient Rage* (p. 16) offensive. In her objection to the piece, she writes: "Poor, poor Elizabeth, whom Scripture says was likewise filled with the Holy Spirit when Mary, pregnant, entered her presence; who proclaimed a faith-filled hymn of praise to God for fulfilling His promise to God's people; who helped to form John as The Baptist both in and out of the womb; whom Mary Lee Wiles now denies participation in the Resurrection Life of God's People!"

\* Charlotte Hinger, author of the piece on the Ku Klux Klan (p. 8) adds a personal note: "During the Persian Gulf War I could see the emergence once again of America's fiery troublesome shadow—the deeply fearful, racist and cultural prejudices embodied by the Ku Klux Klan. In the space of a heartbeat — even in my tiny community of Hoxie — the citizens of Iraq were no longer people. They deserved the fate which was being visited upon them. I left our table at the Elks Lodge during Super Bowl Sunday in tears because I could not bear another, 'Did you hear the one about the Iraqi who. . .'"

"The Klan is poised to ride again. Klansmen know full well the paralyzing fear that lies below the surface of America's civilized veneer and they know all the right words to appeal to our paranoia."

\* Artist Kathy Constantinides (p. 28) has compiled a bibliography about sexual exploitation by clergy. Copies can be obtained by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *The Witness*.

\**The Witness* has a new fax number! It is: 313-962-1250.

# Somebody Was Breaking Windows

by Luis J. Rodriguez

Somebody was breaking the windows  
out of a 1970s Ford.  
Somebody's anger, for who knows what,  
shattered the fragile mirror of sleep,  
the morning silence  
and chatter of birds.  
A sledge hammer in both hands then crashed  
onto the side of the car,  
down on the hood,  
through the front grill and headlights.  
This Humboldt Park street screamed  
in the rage of a single young man.  
Nobody got out of their homes.  
Nobody did anything.  
The dude kept yelling  
and tearing into the car.  
Nobody claimed it.  
I looked out the window as he swung again.  
Next to me was my woman.  
We had just awakened after a night of lovemaking.  
Her six-year-old daughter was asleep  
on a rug in the living room.  
My woman placed her arms around me  
and we both watched through the louvre blinds.  
Pieces of the car tumbled  
onto steamed asphalt.  
Man hands to create it.  
Man hands to destroy it.

## Aunt Florence

by Josie Kearns

Visiting a relative who has not yet been diagnosed,  
it is Florence who gulps down three barbiturates  
without water, enters the white room  
and says brightly,  
"My God, honey, I hope you don't have  
a brain tumor!"

She and my step-father once took turns  
trying to pull the telephone out of the wall.  
I think they wanted to deny each other  
the satisfaction of calling the police.  
She was fire, her auburn hair curled  
like autumn leaves, chain-smoking,  
smoke swirling above her head in fists.  
While he was a tidal wave, grown mad  
with volumes of whiskey, an alien,  
his face blue with explosion.

Something about being so mad  
and taking it out on your car.  
Anybody's car.  
I mean, cars get killed everyday.  
I understood this pain.  
And every time he swung down on the metal,  
I felt the blue heat swim up his veins.  
I sensed the seething eye staring from his chest,  
the gleam of sweat on his neck,  
the anger of a thousand sneers —  
the storm of bright lights  
into the abyss of an eyeball.  
Lonely? Out of work? Out of time?  
I knew this pain. I wanted to be there —  
to yell out with him,  
to squeeze out the violence  
that gnawed at his throat.  
I wanted to be the sledge hammer,  
to be the crush of steel on glass,  
to be this angry young man;  
a woman at my side.

— from *Poems Across The Pavement*, Tia Chucha Press, Chicago  
Luis Rodriguez is a Chicago poet.



Both survived the hollering, slung arms  
around shoulders and cried in the end  
over their children.  
The son visits only on weeks Dad  
has seen the psychiatrist.  
His daughter does not attend family functions.  
They miss out.

On her fifth marriage, as the license was written,  
her fiance expressed amazement at the number  
of former husbands whose names she wrote out by hand.  
She paused, glared at the newcomer, said,  
"Listen, dammit, I was in demand!"

— from *Contemporary Michigan Poetry*, Wayne State U. Press, 1988  
Josie Kearns is a poet in Flint, Mich.

**H**e's white. He's patriotic. He's a professed Christian. He's concerned about the erosion of family values. He's opposed to race mixing in any form. He's a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

He thrills to the sight of the fiery cross which stands for the living Christ and the blazing spirit of Western Civilization. He believes that wearing a hood is not a disguise for immorality and lawlessness, but "a symbol of humility, of anonymity in doing good works."

During the initiation ceremony, he presented his body as a living sacrifice to God and was instructed by the Kludd — the Klan chaplain — to "be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is good and acceptable in the perfect will of God."

He joined because he feels America has lost her way and the Klan's new smooth rhetoric makes sense to him.

"In their public forums and rallies, Klan spokesmen speak out against drugs and welfare and give-away programs and affirmative action — things that bother a lot of people, not just right-wing racists," says Danny Welch, director of Klanwatch.

Welch should know. He is in charge of monitoring 346 separate white supremacist groups in this country — 28 of these are different factions of the Ku Klux Klan.

"However, Klansmen drop out by the dozen," Welch says, "because the Klan movement is based on racial hatred. It's the one and only agenda. Always has been and always will be."

There have been some very famous Klan dropouts. Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black was a former Klansman. There is some disagreement among his-

---

**Charlotte Hinger**, a novelist in Hoxie, Kan., has completed a novel about the Klan's historic activities in the Midwest, called *Every Third Child*.



The KKK in East Windsor.

credit: Ricky Flores, Impact Visuals.

## The Ku Klux Klan: America's fiery shadow

by Charlotte Hinger

torians as to whether or not Harry Truman actually participated in the ceremony, but there is certainly agreement that there was a swift and angry disassociation from the Klan once he understood what they were about. Some historians believe Warren Harding was initiated in the Green Room of the White House.

The Klan's bloody and violent history belies the purity of their vows. Tales of mass murders, torture, floggings and the unspeakable terror of visits by merciless hooded night riders are known to most Americans.

Few know that Klan membership was at its height in 1925 when the organization became violently anti-Catholic and five million Americans became Klansmen. At that time, the flood of European immigrants — largely Catholic — streaming onto our soil since the turn of the century, taking jobs away from Real Americans, was cause for alarm. It was a situation which cried out for solid action by Genuine Patriots. And so the Klan was given new life. Like a recurring nightmare, the dreaded Knights of the Ku Klux Klan have thundered through America's

history since post-Civil War days.

“Growth in white supremacist groups is based on economics,” says Welch. “We’re seeing this now. And as the country has become more diversified, the hatred has become more diversified. It’s no longer a black-versus-white issue as it once was. Now Asians, Hispanics and Jews are included.”

There was a surge of violence against Japanese-Americans when prominent business leaders and political candidates recently focused America’s attention on the amount of goods imported from Japan and Asian countries.

Attacks against Jewish-Americans and Arab-Americans accelerated dramatically during the Persian Gulf War. However these hate crimes, based on racial bias, tended to be spontaneous flare-ups of scattered individuals or groups rather than planned retribution by organized, white supremacists.

Right now, the traditional Klan is not the white supremacist group of choice for young people.

“They feel silly wearing pointed hats and bedsheets,” says Welch. “They’re heckled and laughed at when they walk down the street. Young men want to wear camouflage. Something more para-military. They think it looks cool to shave their heads and wear tattoos. The Skinhead movement has added a lot of fuel to the White Supremacy movement.”

Sensing that the old ways aren’t working, the Klan has developed new techniques. The hierarchy has learned a lot about managing the media as was demonstrated by the presidential candidacy of David Duke. And now they own and use computers.

Tom Robb, the Grand Wizard, was recently quoted in *Time* as saying, “They (media) always have these picture of people in the Klan, flies buzzing around the head, teeth missing, wiping manure off their feet. Louisiana has one David Duke. We plan to give America 1,000 of them.”

John Salter, author of *Jackson, Mississippi, An American Chronicle of Struggle and Schism*, states emphatically that the Klan is not going to be defeated by counter-hatred and contempt.

“Kill the Klan” sloganeering can only reinforce a dangerous and sometimes mutual paranoia,” says Salter. “Efforts to secure legislation to ban ideas would only undermine the Constitution. Democracies operate on the premise that the free

minds of people will reject error and accept truth.”

Salter believes that Klan growth is occurring because of economic frustration, interpersonal alienation and community breakdown.

“As long as we have white poverty

and insecurity we’re going to have racism — whether it’s the good old American kind or the Neo-Nazi kind,” says Salter.

Salter is a professor of American Indian Studies at the University of North Dakota and has been an activist all his adult life. A liberal Roman Catholic, he committed to fighting vigorously and non-violently for social justice.

He is still haunted by the gaunt, worn faces of Klansmen marching in a rally in Raleigh, N.C. — their defiant fervor not too successfully transcending their basic tiredness and their fear.

“The average Klansman is an inherently decent human being: a person who

is hungry spiritually and economically, starved educationally, relatively powerless and in many cases someone who has done virtually no traveling from his home area,” says Salter.

It worries Salter that America has now gone almost 20 years without a broad-based social movement to keep people on some sort of an even, effective keel.

“There is now a tremendous anger building at the grassroots in this country — and however quietly for the most part at this point, it’s building up steadily, faster and faster. It’s an anger that can go either way: further down into the dark canyons of hate and division and violence and deprivation and tyranny charted by the David Dukes — or out into the sunlight of freedom, dignity and spiritual well-being. It reminds me a great deal of the later 1950s.”

Salter was on the death list of Klansmen years ago and nearly died in an assassination attempt on a street in Jackson, Miss. His home has been shot up and he has been beaten.

Amazingly, Salter relates to Klansmen with compassion. “We must recognize our bond of brotherhood and sisterhood even with our mortal adversaries.” He believes that the only answer to the people of the Klan is to make their fundamental human needs for spiritual, libertarian and material well-being a reality. **TW**

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*“As long as we have white poverty and insecurity we’re going to have racism — whether it’s the good old American kind or the Neo-Nazi kind.” —John Salter*

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*“There is a tremendous anger building at the grassroots in this country — and however quietly, it’s building up steadily, faster and faster.”*

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—John Salter

# Generations of black rage

by Manning Marable

**I**t was a cold, clear, early winter day in 1946. World War II had ended only months before, and millions of young people in the military were going home. James P. Marable, my father, had been a master sergeant in the army. Arriving in the Anniston, Ala. bus station, he had to transfer to another local bus to make the final, 40-mile trek to his family's home outside Wedowee, Ala.

My father was wearing his army uniform, which proudly displayed his medals. Quietly he purchased his ticket, and stood patiently in line to enter the small bus. When my father finally reached the bus driver, the white man was staring intensely at him. With an ugly frown, the driver stepped back. "Nigger," he spat at my father, "you look like you're going to give somebody some trouble. You had better wait here for the next bus."

My father was instantly confused and angry. "As a soldier, you always felt sort of proud," Dad recalls. This bus driver's remarks "hit me like a ton of bricks. Here I am, going home, and I'd been away from the South for four years. I wasn't being aggressive."

Dad turned around and saw that he was standing in front of three whites, who had purchased tickets after him. James Marable had forgotten, or perhaps had repressed, a central rule in the public etiquette of Jim Crow segregation. Black

people had to be constantly vigilant not to offend whites in any way. My father was supposed to have stepped out of line immediately, permitting the white patrons to move ahead of him. My father felt a burning sense of anger. "You get there some other way nigger," the driver



**James Marable in 1943 at an army base outside Detroit.**

**Marable, with sons James (left) and Manning (right), 1954.**



repeated with a laugh. The bus door shut in my father's face. The small vehicle pulled away into the distance.

There was no other bus going to Wedowee that afternoon. My father wandered from the station into the street, feeling "really disgusted." Although he eventually obtained a ride home by hitchhiking on the highway, he never forgot the hatred in the driver's words. This incident was only one casual event, which

was repeated hundreds of times again, in different guises. After arriving home, my father drove his girlfriend to the ice cream store for a sundae. The white clerk, a freckled-faced, red-haired teenager, retorted: "Niggers git their ice cream at the rear window, boy!" Filled with anger, my father drove away.

Driving to the north to attend college in the early autumn of 1946, he slept in his car rather than face insults by white hotel managers. Instead of requesting the use of toilet facilities at filling stations, Dad simply hopped out beside a clump of trees or foliage to relieve himself. Even these defensive measures provided James Marable with only a modest degree of self-respect. "When you go against the grain of racism," my father reflects today, "you pay for it, one way or another."

Despite the oppressive character of segregation, my father never lost faith in the ultimate victory of the civil rights movement. Jim Crow was morally indefensible and politically bankrupt. Such a system could never last forever. And with the emergence of the modern desegregation movement of the 1950s and 1960s, legal racism was outlawed. In the nearly three decades since the march on Washington, D.C., obvious advances for African Americans have been achieved. But even today, the shadow of inequality looms heavily over the current generation of African Americans. Nationwide, 23 percent of all black men aged 18 to 29 are either in prison, on probation, parole, or are awaiting trial. Black unemployment rates remain more than twice that for whites. African Americans now have the highest cancer rates in the U.S., and are twice as likely to die before their first birthday than whites. The average black man living in Harlem has a lower life expectancy than a resident of Bangladesh. More than one-third of all blacks live

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**Manning Marable** is a contributing editor of *The Witness*. He is a professor of political science and history at the University of Colorado.

below the federal government's poverty line, and more than one-half of all black children are born in single-parent households, with average incomes below \$10,000 annually.

Yet racism cannot be capsulated into a narrow set of depressing socioeconomic statistics. "Racism" isn't simply the "silent discrimination" experienced by my generation of African Americans, who are often denied access to credit and capital by unfair banking practices, or who encounter the "glass ceiling" inside businesses which limit their job advancement.

At its essential core, "racism" is a contempt for "subordinate" human beings, and the elitist belief that we can treat others without simple courtesy and dignity. It is most painful to people of color in its smallest manifestations: the white merchant who drops change on the sales counter, rather than touch the hand of a black person; the white teacher who deliberately avoids the upraised hand of a Latino student in class, giving white pupils an unspoken advantage; the white woman who wraps the strap of her purse several times tightly around her arm, just

before passing a black man; the white taxi drivers who speed rapidly past blacks in business suits, picking up whites on the next block.

The grandchildren of James Marable have never encountered Jim Crow segregation. They have never experienced signs reading "white" and "colored." They have never been refused service at lunch counters, access to hotel accommodations, or admission to quality schools. For my children — 15-year-old Malaika, and the 13-year-old twins, Sojourner and Joshua — Martin Luther King, Jr., and Fannie Lou Hamer are distant figures from the pages of history books. Malcolm X is a charismatic figure mentioned in rap videos. "We Shall Overcome" is a quaint song of the past, rather than a militant anthem for racial equality.

Yet, like my father before them, they

also feel anguish and heartache. They complain that their textbooks don't have enough information about the contributions of African Americans to our society. When Joshua goes to the shopping mall, he has been followed and harassed by security guards. White children have moved items away from the reach of my son, because they believe the stereotype that "all blacks steal." Sojourner has had white teachers who were hostile and unsympathetic toward her academic development. As Malaika explains: "White people often misjudge you just by the way you look, without getting to know you. This makes me feel angry inside."

A new generation of African Americans who never personally marched for civil rights, and who never witnessed the crimes of segregation, feel the same rage expressed by my 70-year-old father. They clearly comprehend the racial hypocrisy of the court system. One recent example from Southern California: In San Fernando, a postman shot and killed a pesky German shepherd dog on his mail route. The postman was sentenced to six months jail. Yet white police officers in L.A., who are videotaped virtually beating a black man, walk free on the streets. "Where's the justice?" young African Americans are asking.

The rage which boiled over into violence in Los Angeles is experienced by almost every person of color in America. Unless whites come to feel as outraged as we have always been about prejudice, more conflict and tragedy across racial lines is inevitable.

THE WITNESS

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*At its core, "racism" is a contempt for "subordinate" human beings, and the elitist belief that we can treat others without simple courtesy and dignity. It is most painful in its smallest manifestations.*

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## Prelude

by Mongane Serote  
from *Tsetlo*

When i take a pen,  
my soul bursts to deface the paper  
pus spills —  
spreads  
deforming a line into a figure that violates my love,  
when i take a pen,  
my crimson heart oozes into the ink,  
dilutes it  
spreads the gem of my life  
makes the word i utter a gap to the world...

— from *Somehow We Survive*, Thunder's Mouth Press, N.Y., 1982  
Mongane Serote works for the African National Congress' Arts and Culture Department.

The following is excerpted from testimony offered to the Episcopal Church's national Committee on the Status of Women.

**F**ive or six years ago I recovered the memory that, as a child, I had been sexually abused by my grandfather. The recovery of those memories involves countless waves of pain and horror, and many levels of encounter with shock and disbelief.

I lacked the strength to deal with members of my family all at once, and so I had separate correspondences or conversations with each of my parents and my four younger siblings.

My two sisters both said, "Oh no, not me!" Subsequently, when one of them separated from the Christian cult she had belonged to for many years and entered therapy, she called up to talk about Grandpa. "Why did you say *not me* when I asked you before?" I wondered. "Oh," she replied, "when you said *incest* it never occurred to me that that was what he had done to me. I thought what he did to me was my fault."

The brother next to me in age wrote me a letter and said, "Pray for the soul of your grandfather. He needs your forgiveness."

My mother said, "Well, of course he did it to me, too. That's why I've always had trouble with God the Father."

These three responses, I would maintain, exemplify spiritual violence against women, and particularly how such vio-

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**Anne Fowler** is rector of St. John's, Jamaica Plain, Mass. Artist **Dierdre Luzwick** lives in Cambridge, Wis.



credit: Dierdre Luzwick

## Church violence against women

by Anne Fowler

lence is perpetrated by the Church.

As in my sister's case, women have been denied constructs by which to understand our experience, denied language to name our experience, and taught to trivialize our experience. We have been isolated from one another through our conviction of our sinfulness and shame-

fulness — by reason of our very bodiliness.

We have been victimized and brutalized by distorted understandings of Christian principles, such as my brother's. Except for weddings and funerals my brother probably hasn't been inside a church since his confirmation in 1960. Yet he felt free to co-opt the notion of Christian forgiveness and use it as a shield between himself and my anger and pain.

And like my mother — a lifelong Episcopalian of ever-deepening faith and commitment, altar guild, flower arranging, first woman warden in her parish, member of the diocesan Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee — we have endured lifetimes of liturgy and God-talk which raise for us primal imagery of abuse, violation, and betrayal.

These are just some of the forms spiritual violence may take.

Perhaps some of you have been reading, as I have, with fascination and horror, a journalistic essay in *The New Yorker* about a girl, pseudonymously called Genie, who emerged into the public world at age 12, without language. She had been kept shut in a room alone for those 12 years, strapped to a potty chair or in her crib — shut in there by her parents. She was a modern wild child.

The violence done to this child resonates for me as an image of the violence that has been done to women, spiritually, by the Church.

It has been common to speak of the Church — the parish church, in particular — as a family, with all the connotations of intimacy and permanence. Advocates for abused women and children, our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers, single

people, have cautioned against the designation of the Church as family because of the exclusivity — the implication that the “traditional family,” whatever that is — is the only and the correct way of being, and because, for many of us, the label “family” does not evoke the warm and welcoming sentiments that we want our church community to represent.

And yet, I think that we do well to remind ourselves that for many women, as for the wild child Geniie, church has been exactly like family.

Like Geniie, we have been held captive in our community of origin, strapped down, chained in, unable to leave, and at the same time isolated, alone, excluded. We have stayed because of the human need for community, the human dependency upon parents, especially a Parent who is life-giving and nurturing; stayed because of the faith memory of one who was radically committed to the helpless, the powerless, the innocent, the outcast, and the broken, the blind and the deformed. We have stayed out of hope, and we have stayed out of hopelessness.

Because we have stayed, we have been victimized, as Geniie was victimized. We have been betrayed by our closest intimates. But now, I think, we are beginning to emerge into the light. We walk with a stoop, spiritually speaking, as Geniie walked with an odd shuffle, as did the Biblical Woman Bent Over. And we speak with a strange and different language, perhaps. We are wild children. But we are coming into the light.

I want to touch briefly on Scripture. I notice our reluctance to speak from the pulpit about controversial issues which

affect women — issues such as domestic abuse, child abuse and incest; abortion; homosexuality; gender equality in the workplace; the historic Christian oppression of women. If we don't preach and teach about these things — by failing to tell the truth — we deny people permission to come and reveal their lives and sorrows to us.

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*We have been held captive  
in our community of origin,  
strapped down, chained  
in, unable to leave. We  
have stayed out of hope,  
and we have stayed out  
of hopelessness.*

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male-dominated family — the least safe place for women and children to live and a model which does particular violence to other kinds of family constellations;

- nostalgia for “tradition,” a tradition which cannot discriminate between what is God-given, universal and Gospel-centered, and what is “man-made,” time- and culture-bound, unjust and cruel.

And I notice liturgy. Is it necessary to name the hypocrisy which in one breath claims “the Word” as God's self-revelation, and in the next dismisses as trivial any objections to a male god and exclusively male divine and human imagery?

As “liberal,” “mainline,” Protestant Episcopalians, we may find it easy to recognize and to debunk the more blatant kinds of misuse and abuse of Scripture in the ongoing oppression of women and children. Nonetheless, we continue to be intimidated by proof-texters.

Folks who scrutinize Scripture to find validation for their prejudice and hatred of homosexuals invariably quote the story of Sodom and Gomorrah as evidence of

I notice our persistent imaging and valuing of the Church as a repository for nostalgia:

- nostalgia for some fantasized and specious former state of “innocence,” of “chastity,” of “moral standards;”

- nostalgia for the “nuclear family,” the

the sinfulness of homosexual acts. What goes unmentioned, generally, is that Lot's two daughters are offered up as sacrificial sexual victims in place of the male guest — and that ultimately it is a female prostitute who is raped, killed, and dismembered. Violence against women is a given here, so much a part of the cultural landscape that the biblical authors don't even comment upon it.

We refuse to remember and to read back into our Scriptures the messianic bias — for the poor, the oppressed, the disenfranchised. We refuse to read that bias back into our Scripture, including women and women's experience. Women, after all, are the underclass in any society. What does the Messiah have to say to us?

We need the image not of a God who is punitive and perpetuates violence — a God who reflects the human experience of male dominance and abuse of women and children. We need an image of a God who neither demands nor exalts suffering. And in that light, we need a revolution in our understanding of the Cross.

We must begin to see the work of Jesus not as a headlong rush to sacrifice, the kind of sacrifice which continues to be urged upon women. We must see the crucifixion of Jesus as the consequence of his refusal to give up the fight for radical mutuality, inclusivity, radical justice and radical love. The symbol of the cross is not, as so many Christians would have it be, a witness to the sanctification of suffering. The cross is a witness to the power, the relentlessness, the horror of violence.

And our calling as Christians, as women of the spirit, as members of the beloved community, is not to condone crucifixions. Our job is to put a stop to them, once for all. Our job is to go beyond crucifixion, to triumph over violence. Our job is the Resurrection.



Rage: a violent and uncontrolled anger, a fit of violent wrath.  
From the Latin *rabies*. — Webster's Dictionary

**F**rom the booming-bassed, Uzi-burst brutal street raps of Public Enemy and Ice-T to the screaming megadecibel heavy-metal guitar ranting of Guns n' Roses, rage is a driving force in pop music today.

Rage has always been an element of pop music, but it was generally an inchoate rage against authority or teen anguish or rotten boyfriends/girlfriends. This new rage is focused, political, and often violently nasty and aggressive.

The "voice of the street" is how rap artists and fans describe the music. And the news from the street is not good. As Clarence Lusane writes in the September issue of "Z" Magazine: *Living in a post-industrial, increasingly racist, anti-immigrant, less tolerant, more sexist, Jesse-dishing, King-beating, Quayle-spelling, Clarence Thomas-serving America, too many young blacks find too little hope in current society.*

The rappers in many ways are voices crying in the wilderness, prophets warning an unheeding people of troubles to come. The West Coast rappers, born of the hoods of East L.A. and Compton, were talking about police violence years before the Rodney King beating exploded into the national consciousness.

Two rappers who graphically describe their experience as African-Americans in the urban war zone are Ice-T and Sister Souljah. They have been at the center of a storm of criticism — Ice-T for his song "Cop Killer," and Sister Souljah for her outspoken support for those who rioted in East Los Angeles earlier this year.

Ice-T's album, *Body Count*, originally included *Cop Killer* until his record company, Warner Brothers, bowed to the threat of a boycott by law and order groups and conservatives, pulled the album to remove the "Cop Killer" track. Lt. Col. Oliver "Iran/Contra" North suggested that Ice-T be tried for sedition.

"I don't think like a white, middle-class yuppie," Ice-T told *USA Today* when it was observed that his new album is as angry as his last. "My true opinions are controversial."

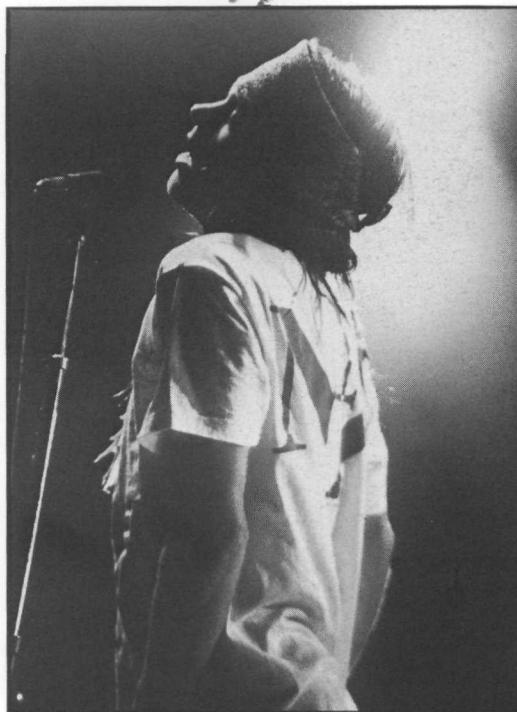
When Sister Souljah openly expressed sympathy for the Los

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**Susan E. Pierce**, former managing editor of *The Witness*, is now production editor for *American Writing: A Magazine*. She's also a popular music aficionada.



Above: Ice-T credit: Jesse Frohman  
Left: W. Axle Rose,  
Guns n' Roses credit: Robert John



## RAGE in music by Susan Pierce

Angeles rioters, her remarks created a storm of controversy, focussing attention on her album *360 Degrees of Power* and its incendiary raps like *The Final Solution: The Hate That Hate Produced*, which says:

*Souljah was not born to make people comfortable  
I am African first, I am Black first  
I want what's good for me and my people first  
And if my survival means your total destruction, then so be it  
You built this wicked system  
They say two wrongs don't make a right  
but it damn sure makes it even.*

Oliver North left her alone, but she got taken to task by presidential candidate Bill Clinton for saying "hateful" things

about white people.

The rap/hip-hop group *Arrested Development* sings in their song, *Give A Man A Fish*:

*Got to get political  
Political I gotta get  
Grown but I can't hold my own,  
so this government needs to be overthrown  
Brothers wit' their A.K.s and their 9mms  
Need to learn how to correctly shoot them  
Save those rounds for the revolution*

### White boy music

Young whites are pissed off, too. Metal groups have tapped a deep streak of disaffection and rage in their audience. These young white men who have made groups like *Guns n' Roses* million-selling artists are part of what Susan Faludi, author of *Backlash*, calls the "downscale" generation. Coming of age amongst the economic disaster wrought by years of Reaganomics and Bushinomics, unable to find work and support their families or even themselves, frustrated and confused, they look for someone to blame.

Because it's too complex to blame corporate greed, the "downscale" generation has turned its rage against women, minorities, and gays and lesbians.

When Axle Rose, the lead singer of today's hottest heavy metal group *Guns n' Roses*, sings the following lyrics from his song, "One in A Million," the group's fans respond with an almost religious fervor, jamming stadiums and buying millions of albums:

*Immigrants and faggots  
They make no sense to me  
They come to our country  
And think they'll do as they please  
like start some mini-Iran  
or spread some fucking disease...*

The message is unpleasant and frightening, but young white guys across America are turning up the volume.

### Women

Women rage too, but not in the same way the boys do. Angry women are found in rap, rock, reggae and folk.

The closest to the metal male rage are the female metal/thrash groups like L7, Hole, Babes in Toyland, and Bikini Kill, who play loud, dissonant, angry music with trenchant, politically pointed lyrics that can be tough to discern above the feedback.

In a gentler way, women folk musicians like Holly Near and the group *Sweet Honey in the Rock* have long been singing songs that deal forthrightly with sexism, homophobia, incest, child abuse, domestic violence and any other justice issue.

Reggae artists like Sister Carol and Rita Marley, as well as the incomparably sharp-edged Canadian Lillian Allen, give the women's voice to island music.

Singer Buffy Sainte-Marie, a Cree Native, has expressed the rage of Native people in her songs. From her 60s-era song *Where Have the Buffalo Gone?* — a biting indictment of the destruction of Native culture — to her latest album *Coincidence and Likely Stories*, she has expressed a searing anger against the injustice perpetrated against Native people in the Americas. (She also writes beautiful love songs.) Her music is a perfect antidote to the wretched excess of celebration surrounding the 500th anniversary of Columbus "discovery" of the Americas.

### Gay and lesbian

Gay and lesbian artists rage, but usually more wittily (and hopefully) than metal or rap. The lesbian singer, Phranc, sings a song to her punker/skinhead friends telling them "to take off their swastikas" because she's one of them but is also "a Jewish lesbian." Alix Dobkin is an icon of the women's music scene.

The gay male group *the Flirtations*, with member Michael Callen a noted AIDS activist/Person With AIDS, sings tough songs gloved in the velvet of melting doo-wop harmonies. The British group, *The Tom Robinson Band*, sings *Glad to Be Gay*, an anthem for the post-Stonewall generation.

### Progressive rap and Metal

Women rappers, *Queen Latisah*, *MC Lyte* and *Salt N' Pepa*, offer music that counsels young women to have pride and to combat sexism.

*KRS-One*, a male group, is classified as *educainment* because its repertoire educates listeners, advising them to avoid drugs and violence.

*Queensryche*, a heavy metal band, rages against the destruction of the environment, racism, sexism, the current political structure and organized religion.

Music these days is the voice of an angry, politicized, and increasingly polarized population. In rap, metal, thrash and all the other forms, the message is almost millennialist in its apocalyptic visions of racial strife, environmental destruction, and nihilistic despair. It is often racist, misogynist, and brutal, and possibly irresponsible. But it is real feelings, real rage, real despair. As much as Tipper Gore and others would like to protect their kids from it, censorship doesn't erase the fact that the music tells the reality that countless young people live. Like it or not, we ignore the prophecy at our peril.

*Let not your heart be faint, and be not fearful at the report heard in the land. . . and violence is in the land, and ruler against ruler. — Jeremiah* 

The following are excerpts from a novel-in-process, *Ancient Rage*. It opens here with a late night conversation between Elizabeth and her cousin Mary nine years after the Crucifixion and then moves backward in time to John's and Jesus' deaths.

**L**eaning forward, Elizabeth searched her cousin's face for understanding.

"I can't drink blood — not even my cousin's blood. Tell me it's blood, and I gag; tell me it's wine and it makes no sense. Maybe if I'd seen him after Golgotha — maybe if an angel had ever spoken to me..."

Elizabeth took a deep breath and continued.

"Do you know there's no name for what I am? I'm a widow, yes, but there's no word for a parent bereft of all children. It's too terrible to name." She shifted her slight weight. Her voice took a sharper edge. "Maybe if Jesus had saved John, if he had restored him to life, or if he had simply gone to visit John in prison, maybe then I could drink his blood and rejoice."

"Would you rather not have had a child?" Mary asked.

"No, I wanted a child."

"So John was a gift. . ."

"He was used! Zachariah and I were used. God didn't care about any of us, only about setting the stage for his own son. The casual way He disposed of John, that's what I can't forgive." She made a dismissive gesture with her hands.

Mary leaned closer and began stroking Elizabeth's bent back, kneading her hunched shoulders, offering wordless comfort.

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**Mary Lee Wile** lives in Yarmouth, Maine. She is a teacher and freelance writer. She has spent 11 years researching her novel on Elizabeth. Four years ago her family lost a child to cancer. Artist **Kathe Kollwitz**, 1867 – 1945, lived most of her life in Germany.

"What a long, far way we've come since you first came to stay with me all those years ago," Elizabeth mused. "We had such hope, then."

"I still do," Mary answered quietly.

"Mary, whatever our sons felt, you and I were forced to suffer. And we're not alone. Mothers put God on trial daily as they see their children suffer, and daily God is found guilty."

"Elizabeth," Mary countered, "you would make God the scapegoat for your anger rather than accepting Jesus as the scapegoat for your sins."

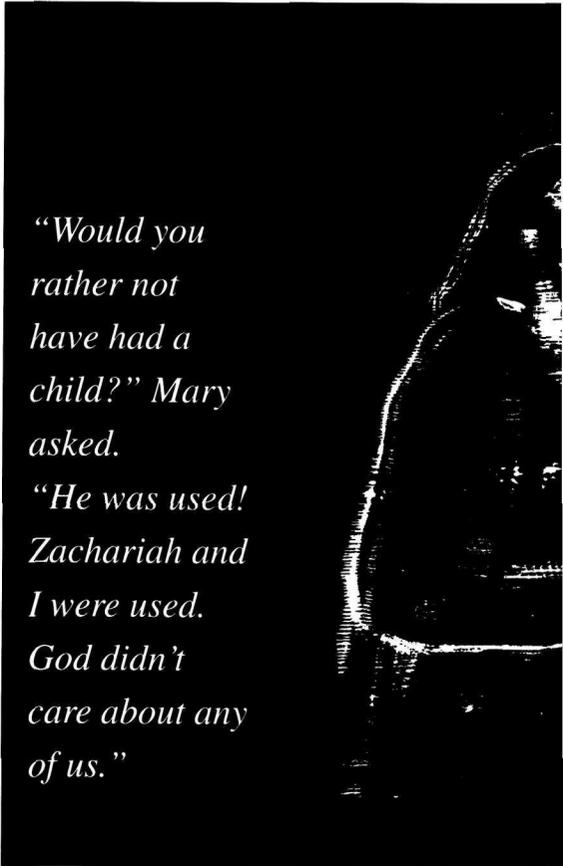
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At the first Passover meal after John's death, Elizabeth, unnoticed, had left her sister-in-law's Passover celebration and walked home barefoot, smearing the lintel and doorposts of her home with blood from her wounded feet. Elizabeth's silence stretched through summer. The servants kept careful vigil the night of the new moon of Tammuz, but Elizabeth showed no sign of recognizing it as the time of John's birth.

The hills slowly turned brown. Elul came, the month of mourning, but Elizabeth never wept. The Day of Atonement came and went in silence. When the night sky was lit with the flames of the Harvest Festival menorah, she turned her back; on those mornings the servants would find her sitting on the roof with her head bent down, eyes covered.

When the Festival was over and the rains began, she took no notice of the damp. She still went each morning to the roof before dawn. The servants would lead her down, her wet clothes weeping the tears she never shed.

One afternoon in the gray, damp month of Tevet, Anna, the old widow, came to call. Few visitors came any more; Anna herself had not been since shortly after Passover when Elizabeth lay on her bed,



*"Would you rather not have had a child?" Mary asked.*

*"He was used! Zachariah and I were used. God didn't care about any of us."*

*Mary and Elizabeth by Kathe Kollwitz*

## Ancient Rage: Elizabeth, the m

by Mary Lee Wile

knees drawn up, feet still bandaged, hands clenched together at her breast. Appalled by such naked agony, Anna had not returned.

Now her own agony drove her back to her old friend.

"She's no better," Rahab said, meeting her at the door.

"I'll just sit with her awhile," Anna said.

Anna stared at Elizabeth, small, straight, her high cheekbones gaunt, her lined face dry and fine as parchment, her almond eyes fixed nowhere.



Chur

## ther of John

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“Elizabeth?” Anna spoke softly. She waited for response, but the only sound was the slow dripping of rain. “You’re right, you know. The rage of grief has no words.” She sat down on the cushion beside Elizabeth, her hair short under the mantle, the sackcloth of mourning scratching her old legs, and quietly she spoke of why she’d come: her only granddaughter had died in childbirth, along with the newborn child, another girl. “These are only facts,” she said. I can’t make them unhappen, but I don’t know what to do with how I feel.” Anna fell

silent, hearing the rain, hearing the sound of their breathing. “I just want to come sit with you sometimes, if that’s all right.”

Elizabeth neither moved nor spoke.

When Elizabeth was alone again she hugged the silence to her, holding it like the child she no longer had. Sitting there in the soft lamplight, she fell asleep. She dreamed of Anna, weeping, standing beside a bed full of blood. On it lay Anna’s granddaughter and the baby; the baby had drowned in blood. Then the dream shifted and Elizabeth was the one ready to give birth. Exhausted, she gripped the sides of the bed and pushed, feeling the child pass out of her body. The faces around her froze in horror. She looked, and all she had birthed was a head.

Elizabeth woke screaming, drenched in sweat.

The servants came running. For nearly a year she had made no sound at all, and now this hideous, mad wailing echoed through the house.

She was sitting where they had left her, silent again, her face shiny with sweat. She stripped and bathed herself, washing away the sweat. She didn’t want to think.

She dressed again, then suddenly took up the basin, smashed it across the room, tore her clothes, and began to hurl Zachariah’s garments into a heap in the middle of the room.

How dare he die and leave her to face this alone? How dare he die in peace? Either he was dead and would never know the horror of John’s grotesque death, or he was, as John had promised, alive with God—and with John.

Breathing heavily, she sat on the bed.

Elizabeth could not still her mind. She thought about John’s talk of life after

death, and she envisioned him standing before God, without his head, unable to speak. Then she imagined John’s head alone in heaven, pure intellect, no heart, no feelings, no body to embrace when she finally got there, too. Crazily she imagined herself and Zachariah carrying John’s head on a golden platter, bringing it before God, asking for healing. “Ask Jesus,” He replied, and Elizabeth picked up John’s head and hurled it like a curse at God.

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[Elizabeth travelled to the crucifixion with Andrew, who had been John’s disciple before becoming Christ’s.]

As Elizabeth rode the familiar route to Jerusalem, the smudgy rim of the eastern sky began to bleed into darkness. Even the Temple was washed in crimson as they approached the city. The air still hung thick with the scent of roasted meat and pomegranate wood. Sleepy camels turned liquid eyes on them as they passed the encampments of pilgrims that dotted the landscape.

At one encampment, a woman’s voice sang quietly to a fretful child; the words were unfamiliar, in an alien tongue, but the tune was pure, clear, heartbreakingly sweet. Elizabeth turned to listen and felt tears on her cheeks. She strained to hold onto the haunting melody as they moved

away, closer to the city.

Jerusalem, when they reached it, still slept, debauched from too much Passover wine and meat. In the quiet hush of early morning, the donkey’s hooves

rang sharply against the paving stones.

Not knowing where to find Jesus or Mary yet, Andrew took Elizabeth to the

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*“Do you know there’s no name for what I am? I’m a widow, yes, but there’s no word for a parent bereft of all children. It’s too terrible to name.”*

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one place they were sure to be later: Golgotha, the place of execution. Elizabeth had never been there. It was unclean, a mouldering place of unsanctified death. Rolling a ball of lint under each thumbnail, her hands reflected nervous terror.

Golgotha stood bleak and empty. Andrew stopped. Should they proceed from here and enter the place itself, they would be defiled. The sun, now fully up, reflected off bones and skulls scattered beneath the upright beams of crosses. Elizabeth remembered the bleached colors of the desert, but this place was more hideous even than John's wilderness, more bleak, more terrible.

"When will they be here?" she asked.

"I don't know," Andrew answered.

"Do you want me to go find out?"

"Yes, please."

"Will you come, too?"

"No," Elizabeth said, looking around her. "I'll wait. You can find me here."

She slid off the donkey, then sat down and leaned against the trunk of an old tree.

"Go," she said. "I'll be safe here. No one will come until the time of crucifixion." She was right; not even robbers frequented Golgotha. Like the Holy of Holies, one entered here in fear and trembling, and even then only once, to die or watch a death. Reluctantly, Andrew left.

Elizabeth looked steadily at the bone-littered hill. Here she would witness another senseless death. She began a monologue directed at God: "Are you doing this to satisfy me? To show you have no favorites—you'll kill anybody? I never meant Mary's son to suffer just because mine did. I wanted you to save them both. I wanted them both alive."

She began rolling lint under her left thumbnail again. Maybe the others were all wrong. Maybe the angel who spoke to them was Lucifer, the most beautiful of all, the fallen angel of light luring Mary and Joseph and Zachariah to believe a lie.

Or maybe God had placed another bet with Satan, as he did over Job, to watch people react to—to what? Hopes destroyed?

None of it made sense. Rage knotted her chest.

Waves of heat shimmered off Golgotha's bones by the time Elizabeth heard voices. She stood and looked down the road. She couldn't tell if Andrew was there; a whole crowd moved in the distance. At the head of the crowd two Roman soldiers glinted as sun touched their armor. She heard raised voices, garbled words. As the crowd drew closer, she made out three men carrying cross beams. She forced herself to look at them. None was familiar.

Was Andrew wrong? Where was Andrew anyway? None of these men was Jesus.

She scanned the crowd, looking again for Andrew, and saw Mary, weeping. More Roman soldiers marched near her.

Elizabeth continued to stand in the protective shade of the tree, watching the procession parade up the littered hillside. The soldiers directed the three condemned men to crosses close together on the western slope of the hill. They set down their heavy burdens and the soldiers efficiently set to work assembling each cross. Elizabeth could still make out Mary. She studied her cousin,

who was now down on her knees in the defiled dust, other women bent over her. When a pounding sound rang out over the

crowd, silence fell. Elizabeth watched Mary raise her head and stare at the center cross. Elizabeth followed her gaze.

Jesus was on the cross, his neck arched

backward in agony as the soldiers beat nails into each hand. Where was the man who carried the cross beam? Why wasn't he up there?

Elizabeth, caught in a nightmare where nothing made sense, felt the pounding reverberate throughout her body. Mary jerked with each pounding as though whipped. Blood poured out of the nail wounds in Jesus' hands, staining the earth.

Mary lowered her face, her fingers clutching dry dust. Elizabeth involuntarily cringed at the thought of that vile dirt under her fingernails. Mary was oblivious, completely given over to grief.

The air grew darker. Elizabeth thought of the incense thrown on hot coals in the Holy of Holies to keep the High Priest from seeing God face to face. Was God now deliberately hiding the death of his son, using the dust of Golgotha as foul incense to obscure this hideous vision, to keep Himself from witnessing his own son's death?

Elizabeth made herself look at Jesus. In her blurred vision, seen through dust and tears, Jesus had two heads, both sunk on his chest. "A two-headed goat," Elizabeth thought, her mind still on the Day of Atonement. "Tie a red ribbon on Jesus' head, the scapegoat for man's sins. That other head is John's, the sacrifice already given to appease God. But I guess it

didn't work." As she watched, red did show on the left head, but it was no ribbon. Blood dripped down the face from the wounded

forehead. She blinked to clear her eyes, and the two heads resolved into one. The pain-contorted face was more than she could bear, so she turned her attention to

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*"Mary, whatever our sons felt,  
you and I were forced to suffer.*

*And we're not alone. Mothers put*

*God on trial daily as they see*

*their children suffer, and daily*

*God is found guilty."*

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the crowd. Mostly women were there. Where was Andrew? Where were the other disciples? One man stood, never moving his eyes from Jesus. Elizabeth thought she recognized him from the River, but didn't know his name.

She felt a stab of pride. John's followers hadn't deserted him when he was arrested. Jesus may have had a bigger following, but John's was more loyal.

Then she lowered her head in shame. What did it matter, now? Another young man was dying. That's all that mattered.

Elizabeth decided to leave her shaded circle; she had come to rage against this one more death and she would have to enter into the horror of it if she wanted to be more than a voyeur. Darkness thickened. Dust choked her. She felt Golgotha's filth creep into her hair, her clothes. She kept walking until she reached the throng of women below the center cross. She heard Jesus speak; he raised his bleeding head and stared at heaven. It was to God he spoke. "Why have you forsaken me?"

Elizabeth collapsed to her knees. Darkness seemed to cover the earth. This was God's son—and God had forsaken him, too. What kind of God is it that inflicts such pain on those he seems to choose—who abandons them to suffering and death? she asked the darkness.

A cry rang out; Elizabeth saw Jesus arch his body, then slowly slump to lifelessness. One of the soldiers drew his sword and pierced Jesus through the side; more blood poured out. The women began to wail the ancient chants of mourning. Elizabeth raised her voice among them, an old woman once again outliving youth. The soldiers took the body down. Elizabeth watched as Mary sat on the ground and enfolded the body, the blood of her son staining her clothes, a hideous mockery of the blood of childbirth, this childdeath.

Mary stroked his hair, caressed his face. Even as Elizabeth watched, Jesus'

skin took on the waxy palor of death. She remembered holding John as a child, how his body would conform to hers as he fell asleep in her arms, and she wondered if Mary remembered holding Jesus as a child as she embraced the dead body of this grown man.

Mary looked up and saw Elizabeth. "Help me," she begged. "Please, Elizabeth, help me."

Elizabeth moved beside Mary on the defiled ground of Golgotha. "What can I do?" she responded, helpless.

"It's nearly the Sabbath. Help me prepare him for burial. There's so little time. Don't leave me."

Elizabeth had forgotten what day it was; she had forgotten everything but this one more death.

She stayed, going with strangers to a strange tomb to help Mary wash the body, sponge away dirt and blood.

The stone sat heavily beside the open door of the tomb; the body was ready; but no one moved. Elizabeth looked at Mary. Mary stood staring down at the shrouded shape of her son, her bent shoulders giving her the look of a broken-winged bird, injured beyond repair, flight lost forever.



credit: Kathe Kollwitz

Her right hand was clenched at her throat; her left hand reached out to trace, light as a feather's touch, the outline of Jesus' face. Her own face was unrecognizable, swollen with weeping, sagging, every feature pulled downward into utter hopelessness, as though a demonic housewife had put both hands into a bowl of risen bread dough and dragged her fingers through it, collapsing the dough in ragged, ravaged lines.

The grieving maternal tenderness that had suffused her as she held her son back on Golgotha was gone. What Mary saw now was the end, the black mouth of the tomb ready to swallow her son forever.

That was the last time Elizabeth saw Jesus. 

**T**wenty-four church leaders, including Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning, cried “blasphemy” last August after U.S. President George Bush ridiculed Democrats because “God” does not appear in their political platform.

“As our Pledge of Allegiance affirms, we are ‘one nation, under God.’ Not ‘over’ God or in any other way owning God,” the leaders said in a letter to the White House following Bush’s Republican Convention address. “Any partisan use of God’s name tends to breed intolerance and to divide.”

Browning, at least, should know. Episcopalians these days seem irreparably split over the proper religious agenda for the Church in the 1990s, a dispute that couldn’t be more strongly rooted in God talk or accusations about the lack of it.

“Followers of Christ have a higher regard for the upper-case Trinity — Father, Son and Holy Ghost — than for the lower-case trinity — Freud, Adler and Jung,” a self-proclaimed upper-case Coloradan recently charged in a letter to the Milwaukee-based magazine, *The Living Church*. “Lower-case trinitarians [i.e., liberals] may believe that that is where their salvation lies if they wish, but how can they really be anything other than lower-case trinitarians?”

However restrained, the discourse of such conservatives seems increasingly passionate and insistent. Some are even calling their protests a form of “spiritual warfare.”

Such rhetoric seems strikingly reminiscent of arch-conservative Patrick Buchanan’s claim that there is “a religious war going on in our country.” Outraged, the hapless presidential candidate also characterizes the conflict as “a cul-

tural war” to be won only by taking back “our cities ... our culture ... our country” from such people as the residents of South Central Los Angeles or those working for passage of equal-rights amendments. The latter, Buchanan recently told Iowans in one of his most quotable speeches, are part of “a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism and become lesbians.”



Many anglophile church “conservatives” or “traditionalists” might shy away from Buchanan’s colorful language, but when you read between the lines it is difficult not to conclude that a sizeable number hold similar views about what needs to happen in the Episcopal Church — and based on similar assumptions about what needs to be won back from whom.

Take, for example, the new pro-conservative book, *New Millennium, New Church*, by Milwaukee Bishop Roger J. White and Richard Kew.

“The painful truth is that two competing factions have faced off ever since the General Convention Special Program in Seattle in 1967,” the two write. “This was an attempt to respond to the bitter violence that had erupted in black ghettos throughout America, and the Special Program earmarked funds to address the problems in society those disturbances highlighted. Controversial grants were made, and a Special Convention was called in

1969 at the campus of Notre Dame University to debate widening the Church’s range of participation.”

The authors then pointedly note: “This was also the first General Convention at which women, ethnic minorities and young people were present in significant numbers.”

Since then, White and Kew lament, the Church has been focused on liberal “causes” — civil rights, the peace movement, women’s ordination to the priesthood, and the pro-choice movement among them. But, they also assure us, the time has now come for “the coalescing of more conservative forces” that will “not only alter the direction the Episcopal Church takes, but will likely rescind or modify certain facets of church life that prevailed during the liberal heyday.”

What kind of changes might distressed conservatives like to see? These days, a casual sampling of angry views appearing in a variety of Church magazines and newspapers indicates that a pre-1969 *status quo* may be exactly what many people have in mind:

“Our clergy has run amuck again, stumbling about in a darkness of their own making. It’s different today, though. A dangerous new twist has been added: popularity. In their quest for popularity, the national church has robbed us of our ancient liturgy, substituting the language of the street. In contravention of New Testament teaching, gaggles of giggling girls have been introduced into the sanctuary in the form and function of priests.”

— **George T. Webb, Fayetteville, N.C. (in *Episcopal Life*)**

“My question ... is why was the church, at least on a local basis, involved in offering sanctuary to illegal aliens in the Southwest some years ago in violation of U.S. law?

“This mindless indirect support of il-

**Julie Wortman** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*. Art provided by **George Knowlton**.

legal immigration is, or was, an activity fostering the primary cause of the [Los Angeles] riots. The continuing position of the federal government in allowing an overpowering flow of illegals into the Southwest is unconscionable.

“In effect, the U.S. is no longer a melting pot but a dumping ground for people who adulterate our society, cheapen our goals and who unfortunately, do not have the background to understand nor appreciate a system of free enterprise and democracy.”

— **John L. Burwell, Jackson, Miss.** (in *Episcopal Life*)

“The Church has failed in her duty to serve her people. The position that we must offer compassion to the women who are in crisis with a problem pregnancy is absolutely correct. However to advise them to have an abortion, even as a last resort, is to offer counsel with Satan’s agenda in mind, not God’s plan....

“God has not changed. Biblical law is unchanged, timeless. Its laws, commandments and promises of punishment for the abandonment of these laws and commandments remains the same now as when they were written....

“We must stop falling prey to those feminists who demand ‘reproductive rights over their own bodies’ and expose this for what it really is. They are not looking for reproductive freedom, but for the freedom to practice senseless sex.”

— **Nancy L. Choches, Wickford, R.I.** (in *Rhode Island Episcopal News*)

“To the extent that we have leaders who conceive of the church’s missionary task as one of social action, advocacy, lobbying, ‘prophetic witness,’ or working for ‘peace and justice,’ we are preaching ‘another gospel.’ Social justice is better than social injustice, but it is ultimately irrelevant to the mission of the church, which is to form Christian people who do not allow any human society, of whatever sort, to give them their identity.

Our calling is not to transform culture, but to transcend it.”

— **Daniel H. Martins, Baton Rouge, La.** (in *The Living Church*)

“The ‘spirituality’ promoted in these articles [on women’s spirituality] is heretical in the classic sense of the word.

“By incorporating Native American, Hindu and ancient matriarchal religions into their worship, the feminist theologians described in the articles seek to defy Christ’s self-proclamation as ‘the way and the truth and the life’ and presume that one can come unto God the Father by a route other than Christ.”

— **Doug Truitt, North East, Md.** (in *Episcopal Life*)

“The tendency of the social engineers is to call for ‘social justice’ rather than a transcendent justice. What is established as a result are genuine feelings of compassion and mercy but implemented in such ways as are perceived to be for the recipients’ own good even before their rights are considered. The prohibition of prayer in the public schools is one example [of infringing on the ‘the freedom to worship [which] produces for every worshipper a privileged sanctuary of conscience into which no earthly power can invade’].

“Benefits are often forced upon people which the engineers consider as kindnesses but which the recipients too often see as condescension and respond with anger and/or contempt. So often this has been the result of unrestricted aid to underprivileged nations who then return these acts with hatred for the U.S.

“Social engineers also use the term ‘social justice’ to describe a system of redistribution which they favor but, according to historian Dr. Herbert Schlossberg, is really ‘institutionalized theft.’ In his book *Idols For Destruction* he condemns the idea that property rights can be separated from human rights. The

idea that property rights are inferior ‘is fraudulent. There are no societies that are cavalier toward property rights but which safeguard human rights. The state that lays its hand upon your purse will lay its hand upon your person. Both are acts that despise transcendent law.’”

— **Donald A. Seeks, Fresno, Ca.** (in *The San Joaquin Star*)

“A policy of ‘inclusion’ does not necessitate the demolition of more than a thousand years of Anglican tradition. It does not require that we alienate our brethren throughout the worldwide Anglican Communion.

“To welcome minorities from other cultures does not necessitate the dismantling of our culture. When this occurs, the leadership of the church is, in effect, excluding the mainstay of its membership ... those lifelong Episcopalians who treasure the canons and liturgy which define the Episcopal Church.”

— **Linda K. Ellis, Atlantic Highlands, N.J.** (in *Episcopal Life*)

“Throughout Christian history there have been multiple opinions about *variables* (e.g., incense, vestments, candles, etc.). But the Church has always been called upon to *agree* about the basics. The reason we are experiencing so much pain and contention in the Episcopal Church (ECUSA) today is the fact that *we no longer agree about the essentials*. There are now two religions in ECUSA: one which continues to accept Scripture as the authentic record of God’s self-revelation and a new sectarian religion which claims to have discovered new forms and new ways as God’s revelation. At stake are basic, vital issues: the *givenness* of the Sacred Ministry [for men only], a Biblical view of sexual morality, the truth of God’s Nature revealed as Father, Son and Holy Ghost.”

— **Charles Lynch, Clarkston, Mich.** (in *The Christian Challenge*)

## Delusions in the Church

It is not so much the spiritual bankruptcy and faithlessness or the injustice and oppression within the Church which enrage me. It is the denial that these exist, the pretense that there is health in us, which inflames me. I witness this denial vividly reflected in the contemporary Church around the issue of homosexuality.

We welcome biblical fundamentalists citing Sodom and Gomorrah but we allegorize Jesus' bidding to sell all that we have, give to the poor and follow him. We pretend that ordaining homosexuals is a new thing. We pledge ourselves to study and education when people's lives are at stake. We worry about losing conservative money and members and ignore evangelism of the gay and lesbian communities. We enter heated arguments while the very people we are discussing sit in our midst and are unsafe to say so. Our pretense supports, even requires, lying or a definition of private life far beyond the privacy needed or desired by our "straight" membership. The mutual care within our congregations is limited and harmed, the collegiality of clergy restricted, pastoral care is stunted. Saddest of all, this denial in the Church feeds a terrible, unrecognized malignancy: closeted gay men and lesbian women are subject to blackmail and spiritual violence within the Church with no recourse: What, for example is the closeted gay priest to do when his married bishop propositions him and what is the leader of a national organization within the Church to do when told to quit or be "outed"?

Why do I remain connected to this Church? Where else can I tell and hear "the old, old stories of Jesus in his glory?" Where else can my breath be taken away

by Sir Hubert Parry's, "I was glad" or by Evelyn Underhill's depth of spirit and exquisite prose? Who else will go with me in heart and soul to Bethlehem every Christmas or to an empty tomb every Easter? Who else will feed me holy bread

### Rage at 'A powerful man'

by Anne

The way we name something tells about the reality it possesses (look at the names men use for women: bitch, hussy, mistress and dame).

I am told that God is

Father

Son

Spirit.

A powerful man

molested my childhood self, imposing evil, and I don't want to call God 'father.'

Please, let me name in God creativity, nurture and redemption.

"Anne" is a pseudonym for an Episcopalian living in the midwest.

## Witnessing rage: readers send observations

and wine, or anoint me when I am sick? Where else will people sing "For all the saints" when they remember with me all those who have gone before? Who else will pray with me, worship with me, challenge me and, when I die, remember to say, "Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Patricia.

**Patricia E. Henking**, *the vicar of Faith Episcopal Church in Merrimack, N.H.*, notes that "the Latin *rabere* is the root of both our words, *rage* and *rabies*. Thus *rage* is implicitly associated with *madness* made by being bitten."

## Not teaching nonviolence

It enrages me that the Bush administration is more effective in teaching religious people to hate a made-up enemy than the national churches are in teaching their people to love the enemy.

Instead of being a leader in peace, our government, whose coins proclaim, "In God We Trust," teaches violence by word and action. Local churches are afraid to criticize the government lest they be thought unpatriotic.

I maintain my connection with the Church so I can worship God, listen to my friends in Christ, seek forgiveness and speak out for peace and non-violence.

**Fran Collier** *lives in Key Largo, Fla.*

## Surviving homicides

Outraged? You bet! And deeply saddened by the lack of awareness and support for survivors of homicide victims.

We are invisible people. You cannot readily see our pain and suffering when we have recovered just barely enough to be about the business of survival — returning to work, shopping for groceries, testing ourselves and fellow church-goers by appearing in our familiar pews.

When there is an effort in the Church to work in the area of criminal justice, it is most often directed to those in prison or on their way out. I support this, [but] very little effort is devoted to those of us who have been abused, raped, robbed or left to survive the murder of a family member, neighbor or dear friend — and we are an ancient population. It's as if other people feel that if they think deeply about our tragedies, they will also become victims.

Fortunately, Parents of Murdered Children and Other Survivors of Homicide Victims (PMOC) provides this support. I

do not see even the awareness in the Church that there is a rapidly growing group of survivors who are thirsting for help from our Church and communities.

I stay in the Church because I feel that I have been called, in addition to my ministry to other survivors, to a ministry of teaching my Church and community of all that is involved in surviving murder and of enlisting their help in meeting the needs of survivors. I am encouraged to stay in the Church because I feel God's presence at work in the Church in these uncertain times. I also am comforted by remembering that Mary, the mother of Jesus, and God himself are parents of a murdered child.

**Betty Parks, of Fletcher, N.C., is vice-president of the national board of Parents of Murdered Children and Other Survivors of Homicide Victims. Her 24-year-old daughter, Betsy, was murdered in Raleigh, N.C., in 1975. POMC can be contacted at 100 E. 8th St., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45202; 513-721-LOVE.**

## Local control

What can Episcopalians do when the elite take away traditional parish self-determination, close churches, excommunicate outspoken individuals and abolish convocations, saying the number of people and the amount of contributed dollars are too small to warrant continuing congregational life?

I am enraged that folks who can't afford expensive priests can't have self-determining parishes and that, in effect, the Canons of the Diocese of Newark provide for a "poll tax" because persons who are not regular contributors of record in their parishes may not vote. It is outrageous that in some dioceses of the Episcopal Church people are disqualified from voting (or full participation in God's Church) if (a) they do not have the financial wherewithal to be "regular givers of

record," or (b) they prefer to have their giving confidential and unrecorded.

I maintain my connection with the Church out of loyalty to God's call and in gratitude for the love of the folks with whom I am privileged to minister.

**Katrina Martha Swanson is rector of St. John's Episcopal Church in Union city, N.J.**

## AIDS-rejections

Just recently, my life partner of more than ten years, Ron Washburn, and I were invited and then summarily disinvited to a family reunion because we are both HIV-positive. After planning to attend the reunion for a number months, I was

told by an aunt that "we wouldn't want to put the children or anyone else at risk by having you and

Ron present." This goes against all medical facts, which clearly indicate that the virus is not transmitted through casual contact.

HIV/AIDS discrimination still exists, even among members of the Episcopal Church. In addition to dealing with the physical consequences of HIV infection, Ron and I suddenly had to deal with the emotional consequences of isolation and rejection. My sister was devastated by our family's irrational behavior. She also needs their support in dealing with Ron's and my illness.

This was all the more difficult to accept because of my longtime activism on behalf of people living with HIV/AIDS in the Church. It made me realize that no family is immune from fear based on ignorance.

**Tom Tull is a member of the Episcopal Church's Joint Commission on HIV/AIDS and one of the authors of the first AIDS-related resolution to be passed by the Episcopal Church (1985) or any other major Christian denomination.** 

## Rebuilding L.A.

The Diocese of Los Angeles' Task Force on Economic Development has designated \$300,000 (provided by the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief, the Episcopal Church's disaster-relief and charitable-giving arm) for creation of a community-development credit union to serve the South Central Los Angeles area. The national Church's alternative-investments committee has complimented that move by investing \$100,000 in each of two minority-owned L.A. banks and another \$100,000 in a project to provide loans for building low-income housing.

Equally strategic has been Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning's "loan" of his economic-justice staff officer, Gloria Brown, to help manage the year-long process of setting up the new credit union. Brown will also work with the diocese's task force in planning other community-development projects.

The focus, Brown says, is alternative investment tactics "that foster equity for people that have been locked out of the system."



— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

## Multi-ethnic experiment

This fall, an equal number of black, white and Hispanic Episcopalians from 10 Delaware congregations will spend eight Sundays worshipping together in an effort to see what it would take to create anti-racist, multi-cultural church communities. According to Max Bell, a diocesan spokesman for the project, Delaware currently has no multi-ethnic parishes. Project designers hope that with the insights they gain participants in the experimental "congregation" will be able to advise their home congregations on how to recognize and fight institutional racism.

**A**fter Watergate, Irangate, the Savings and Loan scandals and the monstrous crimes of the Gulf war, all human travesties directed by elected U.S. government officials, it is difficult to understand how anyone would indict *movement* politics for “gross irresponsibility.”

Broadly defined, the “movement” consists of an amazingly small number of individuals, most of whom know each other, or know of each other because the networks in which they function are interconnected, stretching across the U.S., into Europe and the Third World.

During the last 30 years, “movement” activists have been civil rights workers in the South, urban militants and community organizers in the North, union organizers, people of color in nationalist, community-based organizations for self-determination, workers in solidarity with Third World liberation movements, the essentially white, middle-class feminists; the environmentalists, cultural workers (e.g., poets, musicians), left organizations such as the Communist Party — USA and, of course, shifting alliances or coalitions of the above.

These activists do not constitute a homogeneous group, contrary to what Thomas says, coming as they do from a wide range of class, educational, cultural and racial backgrounds; and their cooperation at any level, on any issue, exacts a great deal of tolerance, patience and faith.

Unlike elected politicians, movement workers take no oaths to uphold the public good. They are not paid ample salaries to act on behalf of a constituency. They are not shielded from mundane realities

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by posh accommodations, chauffeured limousines and government planes. Yet the discipline with which individuals in movement organizations hold themselves responsible for implementing serious social change would astonish most people.



## Woe unto...

Gloria House responds  
to Owen C. Thomas

Movement activists fight because they want to realize their visions of a more just society. They do not see government *per se* as evil, as Thomas states. However, most of them are convinced that *capitalist* governments are destructive of human life and they believe we can conceive and develop new ways to organize and distribute our resources.

Conceiving new structures of human organization and striving to realize them is an unusual kind of work, but it is work, nevertheless. The work of a movement

activist is not fun, as Thomas suggests.

Romanticizing the experience of being arrested or going to jail as “fun” requires an alienated imagination. Having themselves never gasped at the filth of a county jail cell, critics of the movement might consider being locked in one a great adventure. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The work of a movement activist is in many ways a sacrifice hardly understood by even the closest friends and family. It may include daring acts of courage, but more often it involves the same steady, tedious chores that Thomas associates with the work of electoral politics — stuffing envelopes, making phone calls, doing political education, attending endless meetings which compete with commitment to home and family.

Anyone willing to take an honest look at contemporary electoral politics will recognize the bankruptcy of the system. Yet too many Americans believe we live in the “best of all possible worlds.” According to Thomas, “thousands of people around the world are literally dying to participate” in an American style of democracy. It is true that many people fall prey to media-propagated images of “the good life” available in this country. Such was the recent case, for example, of Cubans anxious to leave their socialist nation for the American dream. Once in the U.S., they ran headlong into the class and race discrimination which characterizes American society and, sadly, many of them are now in U.S. jails and prisons. So much for the good life. It is more important for us to recognize that thousands of people around the world are literally dying, not to come to the U.S., but because of U.S. aggression — both open and covert — against them and because of policies stemming from the deadly “new world order.” Movement activists play a vital role in helping us to face this fact and do something about it. 

**O**wen Thomas draws an unnecessarily bright line between movement politics and electoral politics in his attempt to be provocative. But it's not unhelpful, because he is onto something.

The American progressive movement really does need to figure out its relationship to the electoral realm. Neither working only in electoral politics, nor working only on "movement" issues is sufficient.

Easy agreement on that strategic point only carries you so far. We then have to ask ourselves why working for profound social change in the electoral realm always seems to produce unsatisfactory outcomes. People either end up sold out or burnt-out.

The reason, I think, lies in the unique (and uniquely bad) American political party system. Unlike other industrial nations (and many not so developed), the U.S. has weaker, less ideologically distinct, less effective political parties. We also have an endless number of fragmented single-issue organizations. These organizations do lots of vitally important work, but I've yet to meet an organizer who didn't wish that there was some other way to connect with people working on other issues.

Well, there is. A newly forming, grassroots-based political party, called the New Party, wants to take the country in a more humane and progressive direction. The New Party opened its doors in January, and currently has organizing projects underway in one-third of the states in the union. It's nothing glamorous — meetings, electoral planning sessions, cultural events — and we don't expect to show up on the national political radar this year, but we do think that

**Danny Cantor** is a long-time labor activist and national organizer of the New Party Campaign, 720 Monroe Street, Hoboken New Jersey 07030; 201-795-2013.

people are ready for some sort of bold initiative in American politics. People active in the project include a range of community organizers, unionists, issue advocates and professionals. We've got people from different issue areas, men



credit: Eleanor Mill

## nonvoters?

Danny Cantor responds to Owen C. Thomas

and women, people of color and whites, straights and gays and lesbians. We've got a few people with national name recognition, and lots of individuals known to particular communities.

The Perot phenomenon, whatever one's views of the Bonaparte-from-Texas, made it clear that the two major parties are in serious disrepair. The reality of an alienated and disempowered population will not disappear. The reason is that neither party really believes in educating and mobilizing the population to partici-

pate. And the reason for that, as everyone knows, is that the people who don't participate tend to be poorer, darker and younger than those who control the political scene.

The New Party's strategy for change is simple: Start local. Build for the long term. Combine electoral work with non-electoral work. Don't waste people's votes (or time). Don't be spoilers. [The New Party proposes running candidates in local elections where they might win. In races where there is a reasonable major party candidate, the New Party would attempt to list that candidate on the ballot a second time with the New Party slate. This tactic, called *fusion* or *cross-endorsing*, helped create the strength of the American Labor Party in the 1940s.]

We have reason to be optimistic. Although you'd never know it from current public policy, most Americans actually hold relatively progressive views. They think the country should be run for the common welfare and general benefit. They don't believe kids should get a lousy education, that poverty is good for economic performance, that taxes should be regressive, that living standards should decline, or that we should organize our economy in ways that wreck the earth. But most Americans have lost confidence in their own ability to address such problems and that workable solutions can be found. We need a different sort of political organization and a new philosophy of governance, more rooted in the people, to make democracy work. Neither is likely to happen without a new party.

So, we invite readers of *The Witness* to help build the New Party. Become a founding member. Hold a house party. Read some material and pass it on. Send money. Get involved in helping us develop a program, identify potential local candidates, or whatever. If we maintain a little patience and sense of humor, we might pull it off.

**“Y**ou can be sure that the gentlemen in Washington have their own file on you — certainly if you have done anything in the past 30 years that could be remotely called Christian Social Action,” William B. Spofford wrote in the Feb. 24, 1955 *The Witness*.

In his many years as editor of the magazine, Spofford not only practiced but preached such action with fervor, laying down none-too-subtle challenges to the status quo.

“Of course the Kingdom of God will not have been established once we end capitalism,” he wrote in 1934. “Nevertheless since under this system an increasing number of men [sic] are brought to the verge of starvation, it seems to me that the job immediately before us is to put an end to it in order that we may apply ourselves to more important matters.”

Spofford’s efforts did not go unnoticed.

In the April 4, 1949 issue of *LIFE Magazine*, his photo appears along with 49 others under the caption, “Dupes and Fellow Travelers Dress Up Communist Fronts.” Albert Einstein, Leonard Bernstein, Thomas Mann, Norman Mailer, Charles Chaplin, and Langston Hughes are among the “dupes” featured in the spread. More notably from a *Witness* standpoint, the gallery includes Vida Scudder, a scholar, social activist, and member of the Companions of the Holy Cross, who along with Spofford helped found the Church League for Industrial Democracy. Two other Episcopal clergy are also pictured — Bishop Edward L. Parsons and William Howard Melish.

Shortly afterwards, Spofford was summoned to testify before a New York subcommittee of the House UnAmerican Ac-

**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.

tivities Committee.

“They picked *The Witness* apart, and declared it to be a communist rag,” said Davis Hobbes, a Tunkhannock attorney and close friend of Spofford. “*The Witness* was a powerful voice and they wanted to kill it — and they wanted to kill Bill, too.”

Vandals hurled stones through the windows of the print shop, and the Spoffords lost most of their friends in

Tunkhannock.

“It probably affected my mother more, in terms of community shunning and snide comments,” says Spofford’s son, Bishop William Spofford. “My father never made a great big thing out of what he did. He was trying to build a more sensible, peaceful order. He would have been outraged at the notion that this was something out of the norm.”

With Spofford’s death in 1972, the

## *The Witness* and the U.S. Government

by Marianne Arbogast

*Life Magazine*, April 4, 1949. Bill Spofford is on the far left of this page, second from bottom. Spofford's print shop was vandalized after this photo was published. Courtesy Life Magazine



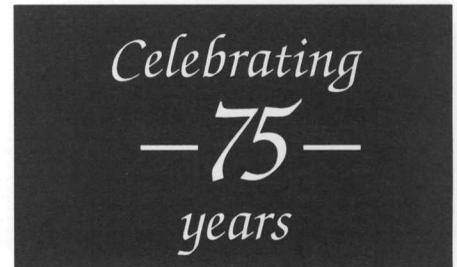
Episcopal Church Publishing Co. lost its most notorious voice, but not its penchant for irritating the powers-that-be. A 1976 ECPC study/action guide was labeled a "one-sided venture into political indoctrination" by Ronald Reagan; conservative columnist Jeffrey Hart called it "nothing less than a Marxist handbook for the overthrow of the U.S. political and economic system."

In 1977, *The Witness*' coverage of

events related to the Puerto Rican independence struggle and Grand Jury abuse earned it a visit from the FBI. At the time, two staff members of the national Church's Hispanic Affairs Desk — Maria Cueto and Raisa Nemikin — were in jail for their refusal to testify in a Grand Jury investigation. *The Witness* had been outspoken in criticizing then Presiding Bishop John Allin for permitting a late-night FBI search of Cueto's files at the

national Church offices, and in supporting the women's stance of non-cooperation. Mary Lou Suhor, then-managing editor and later editor of *The Witness*, visited the women in jail, the FBI showed up at the Ambler, Pa. office.

"They said they knew I had visited Maria and Raisa in jail and produced a folder and asked if I would identify some photographs," Suhor recalled.



The investigation was not pursued.

As *The Witness* deepened its involvement with Puerto Rican issues, the ECPC Board developed precautionary procedures. DeWitt was made official custodian of all records, and for a time files were stored in the safe of the Church of the Advocate in Philadelphia where Barbara Harris was deacon.

After spending 10 months in jail, Cueto was imprisoned a second time when a second Grand Jury was convened. She and four others, including Puerto Rican activist and ECPC Board member Steve Guerra, were sentenced to three years for refusing to testify. Bishop Coleman McGehee, another board member, testified as a character witness for Guerra. None of the five were ever indicted.

"The ECPC and the FBI were coming at this from two diametrically opposed positions," Suhor says. "The ECPC ended up honoring Maria and Raisa. At General Convention we had Bishop John Hines presenting awards to Maria and Raisa for the same thing they were being jailed for. They were doing all this from a biblically-rooted posture. You cannot separate politics from spirituality." **TW**

organizations labeled by the U.S. Attorney General or other government agencies as subversive.

In the beginning such people were prominent liberals who were lured into sponsoring or joining organizations that seemed American enough at the time. When the Moscow-directed line emerged, numerous liberals quit. But others like those below stuck it out. Some of them were receptive to shrewd Communist persuasiveness. Some in high position stubbornly ignored their critics in the honest belief that there would eventually be a meeting of minds. Still others cynically pursued a personal ambition, thinking that the Communists could

help them along in their careers. Not a few became so notorious that they were accused of being actual members of the party. Some of those pictured here publicly and sincerely repudiate Communism, but this does not alter the fact that they are of great use to the Communist cause.

Indeed membership would damage their special usefulness. Innocently or not, they accomplish quite as much for the Kremlin in their glamorous way as a card holder does in his drab toil. The Communist-front organizations have been exposed often enough, however, so that by now the perennial joiner whose friends try to excuse him because he is "just a dupe," is clearly a superdupe.

Publication required by the Episcopal Church / DFMS

the one in New York with scorn. But their weapons are the prominent Communist-front organization. They are not the most hard-working fellow lent their names to



ARTHUR MILLER  
Playwright



R. BALDWIN  
Party secretary



HARRY P. FAIRCHILD  
Professor emeritus



MARK VAN DOREN  
Poet



EDWARD L. PARSONS  
Episcopal bishop



CORLISS LAMONT  
Writer, philanthropist



CHARLES CHAPLIN  
Movie actor and producer



THOMAS MANN  
Novelist



HARLOW SHAPLEY  
Astronomer



LOUIS UNTERMAYER  
Poet



ARTHUR UPHAM POPE  
Authority on Persian art



PHILIP MORRISON  
Atomic physicist



VIDA O. SCUDDER  
English professor emerita



WILLIAM ROSE BENET  
Poet



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Editor



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Grandniece of suffragist



DEAN DIXON  
Orchestra conductor



WALTER RAUTENSTRAUCH  
Engineering prof. emeritus



LILLIAN HELLMAN  
Playwright



LILLIAN HELLMAN  
Playwright



NORMAN MAILER  
Novelist



O. JOHN ROGGE  
Lawyer



KENNETH LESLIE  
Editor of "The Protestant"



F. O. MATTHIESSEN  
History professor



WILLIAM HOWARD MELISH  
Episcopal clergyman



JAMES WATERMAN WISE  
Author son of Rabbi Wise



LYMAN R. BRADLEY  
Professor of German



FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN  
Political science professor



DONALD OGDEN STEWART  
Writer



GENE WELTFISH  
Anthropologist

There may be those who would prefer to believe that my statements here are untrue, and that I am a disturbed and irrational person. There may be those who ask, 'Why did she wait so long?' without understanding the abuse of power and the oppressive fear and silence which victims endure because policies, education and support are lacking. One might ask instead, 'What enabled him to get away with it for so long?'"

**A**rtist Kathy Constantinides' words get right to the crux of this issue. Like many similar victims of clergy sex abuse, she has recently come forward with her story of betrayal, pain, and confusion.

At the age of 18, Constantinides says she was sexually abused by a priest in her Greek Orthodox parish in Detroit. Her self-esteem was crushed by this breach of trust between the teenager and the priest whom she "worshipped as a hero."

Enraged, Constantinides ended her Church connections, and by extension her church-centered ethnic community. As is often the case, she has met with a wall of institutional silence on the part of the Greek Orthodox hierarchy. Consequently, Constantinides felt compelled to research the topic of clerical sexual abuse through professional journals and conferences. In addition, she contacted nearly 700 members of her former church congregation in the hope, she says, that they

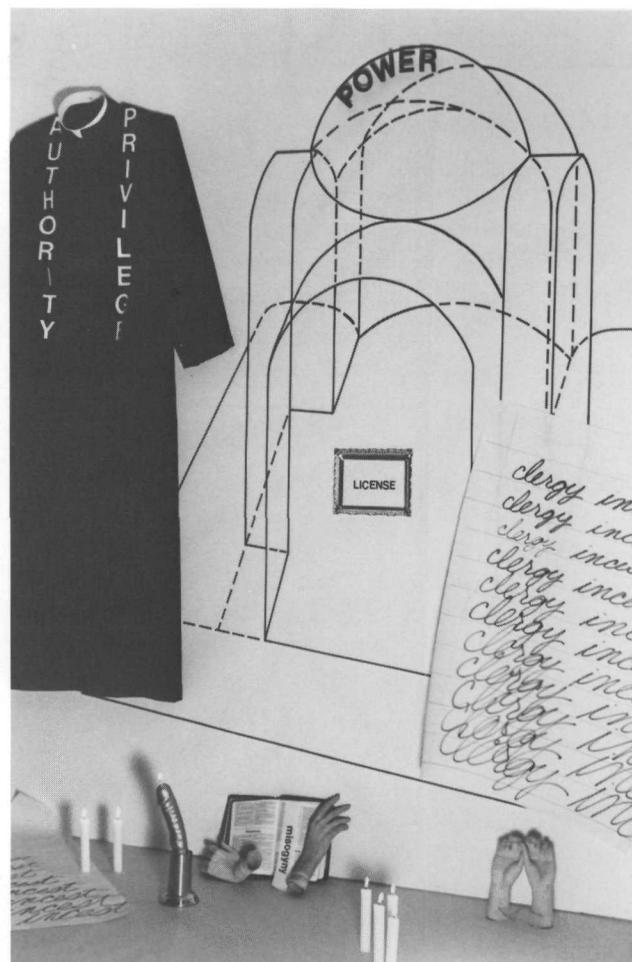
## Is silence a sacrament?

by  
Blaise  
Tobia  
and  
Virginia  
Maksymowicz

"will have the courage to confront this problem directly, to reach out to other women who may have been victimized."

Her incorporation of her sexual-abuse experiences into her art began two years ago, with a series of photographs and texts called *WITNESS: Is Silence A Sacrament?* Her current installation, *LESSON: photo/graphic/facts* is still in progress. It combines candles, a black cassock and a schematic diagram of a church with words such as *authority*, *privilege* and *power*.

Constantinides has spent more than a decade making art about women, the relationships they have with men, their position in society, their connections to their personal and collective pasts. Her



LESSON: *photo/graphic/facts* by Kathy Constantinides

hybrid artform is an example of a recent practice that has come to be known as sculptural installation; she creates displays by arranging objects, photographs, drawings and other elements within a space and adding handwritten or printed texts. Unlike traditional sculpture that is meant primarily to be looked at, Constantinides' installations invite active participation; the viewer might be asked to walk into or around the artwork, rearrange things, pull on strings, read something, write something or make something. As a result of this interaction, Constantinides hopes that the importance and shared human experience of her subject matter will be emphasized and, ultimately, remembered. **TW**

art and society

Blaise Tobia and Virginia Maksymowicz  
edit the Art & Society section of *The Witness*.

# America's hate groups

by David Crumm

*Blood in the Face: The Ku Klux Klan, Aryan Nations, Nazi Skinheads and the Rise of a New White Culture* by James Ridgeway, Thunder's Mouth Press, 208 pages, \$18.95 paperback.

**A** friendly woman in a light blue sweater relaxes on a comfortable couch in an old farmhouse and gazes at you with a gentle invitation in her eyes.

Her voice is so softly reassuring, she almost sighs as she says: "There's a feeling you get when you're totally among your own kind." She adds: "When you love something, you don't want to see it destroyed. If somebody comes in and tries to destroy our family, you're not going to let that happen."

The woman sounds almost loving until she reaches her conclusion: "And our race is our family. How can we sit back and let that be destroyed and not do something about it?"

This nameless woman is one of the dozens of white supremacists in *Blood in the Face*, the title both of a film and a book produced last year by *Village Voice* political correspondent James Ridgeway. Together they form a gut-wrenching family album of America's leading hate mongers.

Their vision for America's future is terrifying. One of the most popular underground novels in the movement is *The Turner Diaries*, a fantasy about all-out racial warfare written by William Pierce. The novelist dreams of white revolutionaries capturing southern California and then using every lamp post and street sign for lynchings. Pierce writes that most of

the victims will be white people who have promoted racial equality.

Among Turner's descriptions of the slaughter: "Hanging from a single overpass...is a group of about 30, each with an identical placard around its neck . . . 'I betrayed my race.'"

What's most unsettling about the white supremacists Ridgeway shows us is that so many of them, at first, look friendly and familiar.

The film includes a family portrait on a sunny day in the country: a child, a young man and an old man enjoy a picnic lunch. The young man says, "We have to get our government back. So that's what it's all about." He sounds a bit like Jimmy Stewart defending Americans' rights in *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. Then the young man adds, "All these so-called subversive groups are nothing but patriotic Americans trying to do just that."

Ridgeway doesn't psychoanalyze his subjects, but it's obvious there is a rage deep within these people. For some, it's a frustration born of poverty. For some, it's a kind of fear that their nostalgic dreams of America are spinning out of control. Still others have been trained to feel this kind of anger by their parents or friends.

As if trying to hammer America into their own image, supremacists often seize hallowed symbols and tilt them at bizarre new angles to serve their cause: the American flag is joined with the swastika. An open Bible is etched at the top of a registration form for a group called Posse Comitatus. In the United Methodist Church, the flaming cross is a symbol of evangelism; in the Ku Klux Klan, it is a holy call to a racial war.

One of the eeriest sequences in Ridgeway's film shows George Lincoln

Rockwell, the tall and handsome founder of the American Nazi Party, talking with reporters in the 1950s. The reporters challenge Rockwell's outrageous claim that Jews and homosexuals deserve to be murdered.

One man asks, "Why do you think you can accomplish your mission by following in the footsteps of Adolph Hitler — a man who is so universally despised by all freedom-loving people?"

Rockwell smoothly replies, "As far as being despised goes, the most despised man the world has ever known is also the most successful — Jesus Christ. He was crucified and all his followers were hated worse than I am. And He's doing very well now I would say."

Then the film leaps ahead 40 years to the present for a chilling interview with a teenaged boy who claims that Rockwell's spiritual example still inspires him. Americans were wrong to condemn Rockwell, the youth says. "He wasn't really a hate monger. He was really a love monger. He loved the white people."

Ridgeway intends the book and movie to be a kind of mental jump-start for Americans who let their social conscience stall in the late 1980s. On nearly every page, in nearly every scene, he seems to be shouting: Wake up! Wake up! Militant racists are alive and well in the 1990s!

*book review*

Alive. Well. And seductive.

The movie ends with the steely gaze of a white supremacist preacher, gazing out at viewers with a final appeal: "Did we make a point with you? Can you walk out of this room and not believe most of what we're telling you? Have we made a new convert?"

David Crumm is the *Detroit Free Press* religion writer.

**I** grew up in the deep South in the '40s, and they were violent times," Emmett Jarrett, president of the Episcopal Urban Caucus and Maryland rector, recalls. "I remember being whipped by my father when I was three years old for lying, when in fact I was telling the truth. My father abandoned us when I was five.

"There was no ongoing abuse in my childhood except for extreme poverty — but the violence was there, it permeated the culture. And I think it made me very fearful as a child.

Later, Jarrett's maternal grandfather came to live with his family. While in elementary school his grandfather pulled him down out of a fig tree in the back yard and broke his arm.

"Then when I was ten, he bloodied my face during an argument. I picked up a baseball bat and said, 'Take another step and I'll kill you.' And I meant it; I think I really would have bashed his head in."

In 1988 Jarrett took a vow of nonviolence with the support of the Presiding Bishop and his friends and family. The vow, written by John Dear, S.J., commits him to "recognizing the violence in [his] own heart" and to practicing the nonviolence of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Jarrett took the vow because, as an adult, he struggled with his own impulse to violence.

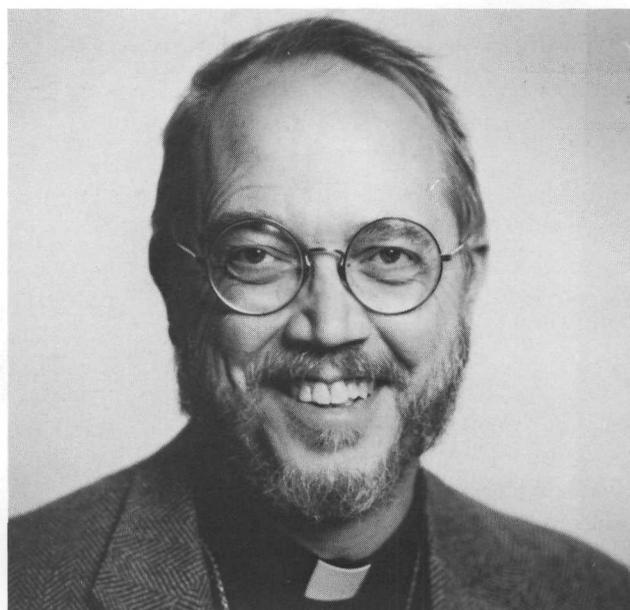
"My first marriage was violent in many ways. We beat each other up — I think because it seemed like the way to get what we wanted."

"Violence" for Jarrett is more than physical brutality — "though that is certainly where we have to start. We live in it. You see violence toward women, and old people, and children—it's part of our

---

**Craig R. Smith** interviewed Virgil Foote for the January, 1992 issue of *The Witness*. He is a member of St. Stephen and the Incarnation in Washington, D.C.

*"When I was ten, my grandfather bloodied my face during an argument. I picked up a baseball bat and said, 'Take another step and I'll kill you.'"*



Emmett Jarrett

## Raised in rage

by Craig Smith

life. Then there's the next step: you can do terrible injury to people just through your words. And thoughts do the same thing, but on a different level: they do violence to the self, to the condition of one's soul." The rule of nonviolence, therefore, must extend to the deepest parts of the self—to thoughts and words as well as actions.

Jarrett's nonviolence stands in sharp contrast to his past.

But it's not easy.

"I still experience tremendous rage when my son won't do what he's supposed to do. Whatever interrupts or gets in the way of my will produces a violent response, but now we have all kinds of social constraints that help me not beat up my kid. I'm looking for something beyond them. I want to stop getting mad when Nathaniel won't go to bed on time. I want to be a way to something different."

One of those ways is, as Jarrett puts it, "engaging in the difficult task of truth-telling. The greatest violence I'm subject to now is the violence of lying to myself, the violence of not being committed to that which is beyond me, that which is going beyond. And I'll say it: I'm somebody who will use others, who'll consume others, except that there is a commitment to move beyond that." Telling (and being open to hear) the truth, whether in personal relationships, within his congregation, in the church hierarchy or in the larger social arena, is, for Jarrett, one of the demands of the life of nonviolence.

An implication of his vow is the commitment to live in honest and diverse community—not just a "lifestyle enclave," says Jarrett, "but one which includes people we don't like. That's where the real work gets done." Such a commitment called Jarrett to confront racism and classism within his own parish, the Church

of the Ascension in Silver Spring, Maryland. "It was an enormously complex conflict which resulted in some 30 active members leaving the parish. But now there are about 40 percent non-white members, and we have a vestry that is 50 percent non-white."

Jarrett also attended the consecration of the suffragan bishop for the Armed Forces at the Washington National Cathedral, and stood in silent protest with members of the Episcopal Peace Fellowship. "In the heart of the Church, in the center of national power, I was a distinctly marginal figure, and my heart beat wildly with fear. I think I was afraid of what it would mean to be a truly marginal person."

But political resistance, for Jarrett, must always remain nonviolent, even when the rage profoundly just. "Violence is never a legitimate means of resisting oppression—for the simple reason that it won't establish justice. I don't think we can establish justice until we circumvent the pattern of violence at the heart. The Reign of God says that there is a better way to fight, the third way of radical nonviolence."

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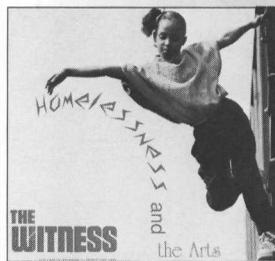
Subscriptions cost \$20 a year. Checks can be made out to *The Witness* and returned in the postage-paid envelope enclosed in this issue.

"I believe the whole thing, every word, the whole Creed: being 'orthodox' means a deeper understanding of the discipline of social justice. If we are going to be Christ to a world that turns to drugs in its despair, we have to be there saying, 'That is not all there is.'" **TW**



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*December issue:  
Prince of Peace  
If the Church could deal with rage*



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# The Witness

Volume 75 • Number 12 • December 1992



*Prince of peace:  
when the Church  
engages rage*

FEICHENBERG  
Xmas 1952

## Rage in the 1990s

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING my [11/92] copy of *The Witness* from cover to cover, and I think *Rage in the 1990s* is one of the best issues in many months... even years! Thank you for putting it all together so well, so successfully and so powerfully! This is a great service to all Episcopalians and I want to spread the word.

**Mary Nash Flagg**  
Portland, ME

YOUR NOVEMBER ARTICLE on "The Witness and the U.S. Government" was an interesting 'dig' into history and one of which we have to be aware. I remember the picture article in the April 4, 1949 issue of *Life* very well and my father always thought that, with that gallery of folk, he was in the company of some rather outstanding prophets, witnesses and creators of much that was best in the American culture of that post-war, new cold-war time.

You listed some Episcopalians in that group, but I regret that you failed to mention Dr. Guy Emery Shipler, long-time editor of *The Churchman*. That magazine, with an additional title of

*Human Quest*, continues as a monthly out of Florida under the capable editorial guidance of Edna Ruth Johnson.

"Ship," together with Dad, laughed at the whole thing although, later, when Francis Walters of Pennsylvania was chair of the House Un-American Activities Committee, the pressure got intense. What an era. What an abuse of power. And what a need to be vigilant against such happening again.

**William B. Spofford**  
Salem, OR

I AM GRATEFUL for the responses of Ms. House and Mr. Cantor to my essay in the November *Witness*. My problem in responding to them is that they were not responding to my essay as published, as is indicated by the fact that the quotes in Ms. House's essay were

not in my published essay, but rather to an earlier version of my original essay which was twice as long. Furthermore, I am not the author of the published essay. It was constructed out of my original essay by the editors, who also changed the title in a misleading way. I was not allowed to edit the published version, as promised, but through some frantic phone calls I was able to correct some of the more serious errors. I also note that the editors went out of their way to announce at the beginning of the article that it was *unsolicited* and that there would be *responses* to it, as if to defend the reputation of *The Witness* as a movement house organ. Oh, well, so it goes.

Ms. House's response confirms and is a good example of what I said about the weaknesses of movement politics, of which she gives an idealized picture. She also distorts some of my main points. For example, I said that thousands of people around the world are literally dying to participate in electoral politics. She distorts this into my saying that they are dying to participate in the "American dream," the "media-propagated image of the 'good life.'" (That may be true as well.) She does not respond at all to my main point, namely, that movement and electoral politics need each other and should combine their strengths in order to overcome their weaknesses. My question to Ms. House is this: Is the movement going to "implement serious social change" and "realize their visions of a more just society" entirely apart from electoral politics, as she implies? If so, how?

I appreciate Mr. Cantor's saying that I am "on to something" and that the "American progressive movement really does need to figure out its relationship to the electoral realm." Exactly. He goes on to state that "working for profound social change in the electoral realm always seems to produce unsatisfactory outcomes." I believe that this has not "always" been the case, that the New Deal was an example, and that the solution is increased participation. Mr. Cantor says that the American political party system is "uniquely bad." This is an extremely important issue about which a great deal has been written recently. I would argue that it is probably better than the alternatives, such as the multi-party systems of many European de-

mocracies which have splintered political responsibility and crippled united action. Again I believe that the solution lies in greater participation, especially through expanding voter registration among minorities and the poor. See Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Why Americans Don't Vote*, (Pantheon, 1988), which also includes the best recent discussion of the complex relation of movement and electoral politics. I honor Mr. Cantor for his work in organizing the New Party. He has made a strong argument for going the third party way. I believe, however, that the history of progressive third parties indicates that they tend to divide the progressive vote and help to elect conservatives. But Mr. Cantor is aware of this problem and properly commends the fusion approach when appropriate. So I believe that the same energy, time, talents and resources would be better spent trying to move the Democratic party to the left. But it is an important issue for progressives and I wish Mr. Cantor well and will support his effort.

**Owen C. Thomas**  
Cambridge, MA

[Ed. Note: We published the edited version of Owen Thomas's article, after he had an opportunity to review it, because we believed his views on movement and electoral politics were provocative and timely. We solicited responses to his piece because some of us shared Gloria House's conclusion that it took an "alienated imagination" to think that people risk going to jail because it is "more exciting" and "makes much better party conversation" than working in the electoral system.]

## A War of Angels

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING the October issue of *The Witness*. You did a marvelous job on your article, "A War of Angels." When I was born my mother was delighted that I had blue eyes and light skin, because I could pass as a white man. My grandmother, however, told me that my Indianess was not a matter of skin color but the content of my heart. The more I work with indigenous groups around the world the more I see that there is a commonality among all of us. When I see the eyes of white folks glaze



over and tears run down their cheeks at a pow-wow, I know we are truly one people.

The cover of October's *Witness* made me cry. It conveys a message of the despair my people feel. Being in Detroit last week also made me cry. Is this the best that the human race is capable of?

When people of the dominant culture tell me what they want out of life I have to chuckle, because they invariably describe Native American culture as it once was. We savages produced a culture where there were no locks on doors, no orphanages, no need for oaths or contracts, no old folks homes, no hunger, and no homeless. We lived the Gospel of Jesus Christ centuries before He was born. I thank Gitche Manitou that people are beginning to understand our culture and our religion.

I'm sure you are aware of the "Eight Fires" prophecies of my people [Ojibwe]. We feel that we are in the eighth and last fire when the light-skinned people will turn to our people. I believe it is happening. I find it marvelous that Jesus said He did not come to bring peace, but to light a fire on the earth. I believe with all my heart that Jesus is the one who has lit the eighth fire.

**Tom Trimmer**  
**(Owosh-Keday-So-Quay) Blackbird**  
**Alma, MI**

I AM VERY IMPRESSED with the entire [10/92] magazine. The cover was beautiful, and spoke directly to the way I see what is going on in the cities. "The War of Angels" is the best piece that I have read on the American Indian spiritual situation; the misunderstanding and the exploitation surrounding the issue is confusing, degrading and sometimes misconstrued to be complimentary. I thought your story treated the subject fairly, honestly and with dignity, for which I am thankful.

I do not think that many of the rites and traditional practices of the American Indian can be translated into a normative practice for the Greater Christian World.

I was grateful for what you said about the Eucharist. I do believe that most Indians have a greater understanding of the sacrificial yet joyful nature of this sacrament. It may be because of the sanctity with which they regard corn, their "staff of life." It is easier for

them to understand God's presence in the elements that are offered.

**Quentin Kolb**  
**Salt Lake City, UT**

### A Nation of Esaus

I DON'T OFTEN WRITE LETTERS to editors, but Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann's editorial in the October issue of *The Witness* struck a deep responsive chord in my soul, and I write to thank you for the editorial.

Your statement about, "I've often wished I was a 'person of color,'" was especially striking. I am a second-generation American but found that I have been frustrated with being a bland, white American. However, I found a strong sense of identity with my maternal Scottish grandmother who spoke broad Scots and taught me the Psalms, Rabbie Burn's poetry and her beloved Methodist hymns. Of all things she married a Dutch immigrant who came to this country in steerage at a very young age. Quite a combination. My paternal grandparents who were of German and Scottish stock were deceased prior to my birth.

Perhaps the fact that your personal melting pot and my melting pot both took place in Southwestern Pennsylvania and in Ohio made the chord resonate a bit louder for me. The bodies of my maternal grandparents are buried in Hickory, Pa. and my father's family were most lately from East Liverpool, Ohio. My Dutch and German grandfathers were potters as were their fathers before them.

I have sought my birthright mainly through identification with Scottish culture: wearing the kilt, playing the pipes, learning to play the Celtic harp and teaching myself to cook Scottish foods including Kidegree and Scones and also a deep appreciation of German culture. Most of this has been self taught as my immigrant family system sought to assimilate and to melt into the terribly bland American "dream." I never heard a word of Dutch or German spoken in my boyhood home or my Grandparents' homes.

Thank you for *The Witness* and for your editorial. I deeply appreciate what you and the journal are doing.

Pax et Bonum!

**Kenneth C. Emmerling**  
**Roanoke, VA**

I AM WRITING TO TELL YOU that your editorial, "Exchanging birthrights: a nation of Esaus," was very good and hit home for me. To be lost in the generic melting pot gives a sense of detachment or non-association with any special group.

I have been reading *The Witness* since 1984 when you all so kindly gave me a subscription while at a Federal Prison Camp. I have been released for five years and am now a first year student at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry. I have looked forward to meeting you and your people [at the Forum]. It is great that we in the body of Christ can come together and share the 80 or 90 per cent of the Church we totally agree upon and then discuss in Love that ten or so percent that we do not agree to.

**William R. Bailey**  
**Ambridge, PA**

### Design Demands

COMPLIMENTS TO ALL, especially [designer] Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann and the Art Section editors. Art is wonderful. Your graphic design is just terrific. However (picky, picky), I have always wondered why there is such a heavy line around every pull quote — no lines are needed but if desired a simple hairline above or below would suffice.

**Virginia Bennett**  
**Troy, MI**

[Ed. Note: Done!]



### Correction

MITSUYE YAMADA, the poet highlighted in the October issue, does not "teach English at Cypress College." Reader Leonora Holder de Avila notifies us that she retired from that position a few years ago.

## Minority Farming

I WAS VERY PLEASED about your article [progress report on minority farming, Marianne Arbogast, 9/92] in *The Witness*. Thank you for addressing and pointing out the serious problems of Black, Native, Hispanic farmers securing their rights of ownership. Instead of planting a crop we're planting our bodies and souls into the soil.

Four years ago I purchased a 37-acre farm in Lapeer, Mich. It was my lifelong dream! I always wanted to live on a farm! It took me five years to find this farm. Many of my friends and family members would say, Ron you've lost your mind, buying a farm, why, that's crazy!!! It's dark out there!!!

Before I bought this farm, I received many strange looks and questions: What do you need a farm for? Why do you need this amount of land? What will you raise on this farm? It's hard work you know? These were questions asked of me when I would approach a farmer (white) for being interested in buying. It was heart breaking!

After much sacrifice and pain, I finally found an old farm and a farmer who was willing to sell me his farm on a land contract. Others had refused. Even a mortgage was refused to me when my credit was of outstanding status.

I'm the first of my generation to have even considered owning a farm. My parents worked

on a plantation as well as my Grandmother and Great Grandparents. All worked very hard for as little as 50 cents a day picking cotton.

My mother was born on a plantation to a wealthy land owner. Her father was the owner of the plantation. He never accepted her or the other two sisters born by him. (I won't say fathered by him, because he doesn't deserve the title! He left them nothing, only a light skin, long hair and a difficult life from kids in school, calling her half breed!)

I read your article and it gave me hope and strength! Your staff is truly a witness to the truth. Thank you for being a true messenger of Jesus!

**Ron L. Parker  
Lapeer, MI**

## Witness History

SOMEWHERE RECENTLY I READ that *The Witness* was 75 years old. This milestone calls for personal congratulations.

In 1917 my father, Rev. Charles Jacob Shutt, then Rector of St. John's, Mankato, Minn.; Bishop Sage of Kansas (seminary classmate); and Bishop Johnson of Colorado determined to establish a Church-wide publication representing no partisanship. Published in Hobare, Ind. by a Mr. Applegate, it was type-set in Chicago. The original idea-format was a four-page newspaper. My father had

been a newspaper man, and learned to set type by hand. In 1918, the triumvirate found it more practical to move the headquarters to Chicago, eventually abandoning Hobart and Applegate. My father sometimes, so I have been told, worked in setting type. At any rate, he was Managing Editor and the survival of the news sheet (now a magazine) was solely due to my father, since the two Bishops were contributing editors.

In 1919, my father died. He was succeeded by Bill Spofford and presently the whole contents changed to become a "voice" for labor. Spofford was later listed with others on a Government "black-list" of suspected Communist-sympathizers.

In 1940 I was ordained to the Priesthood. Somewhere around 1946 I was brought to New York by Spofford and spent one year gathering news, and becoming familiar with the growing Socialistic trend of Spofford's editorship.

When we moved to Chicago in 1917 I was 9 years old. What I remember was told to me by my mother, who died in 1940. In 1992, I am 84 years old and in good health.

Permit me to congratulate you and your co-workers on this milestone of 75 years, and to look forward to more years of service to our beloved Church.

**Philip Leslie Shutt  
Paris, IL**

## Abortion

I MUST DISSENT from the pro-choice position affirmed by my sisters and brothers on the ECPC board in this issue, but not from the process which brought the board to its position.

My own conviction is that the time is not ripe for a definitive answer. We need to talk - and more importantly — listen to each other as we seek to discern God's will on the wrenching question of abortion. I think as a Church we need to stay with the question.

While the decision is one with which I disagree, it is an honorable one and the board's process in arriving at its decision is one which honors God. It is a rare and wonderful experience to be part of a group which is committed to understanding one another's concerns and commitments.

**Andrew McThenia  
Chair, ECPC board**

## ECPC Statement on Abortion

The following statement was adopted by the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company at its meeting, October 25, 1992:

In response to a number of questions from readers, the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, owner of *The Witness* magazine, affirms its strong support for the pro-choice position regarding abortion, and its continuing opposition to any legislation restricting women's access to all family-planning services, including contraception and abortion.

The Board's historic commitment to these principles, and the reservations about

abortion held by *Witness* Publisher and Editor, Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, were fully discussed at the time of her appointment. The Board does not feel that absolute agreement about this or other issues is necessary, and affirms the principle of editorial freedom.

The Board encourages and supports discussion to clarify the principles and guidelines women use in making a decision about abortion, particularly in terms of the contributions which Christian faith and ethics can make to this process, and welcomes the stimulus for such discussion provided by the editorial views expressed by Editor Wylie-Kellermann.

## THE WITNESS

Since 1917

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Cover art: NATIVITY 1950, illustration by Fritz Eichenberg, © 1950.

It is the policy of *The Witness* to use inclusive language whenever possible.

# Disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadow put to flight

**I**t is not news that Jesus was born into a world torn by domination, revolution and poverty. Cherubic and royal art notwithstanding, Jesus belongs to this world and these times, to the hardship of need and prison and confusion, to the reality of war and fear.

Jesus stands before us without a father's name, in a Rome-dominated state, where the Temple legitimated Roman authority and obligated those without resources to pay for the cleansing of their sins.

With little inherited right to official authority, Jesus grasped the covenant of God in Scripture and practiced dominion over disease, purity codes, the Sabbath and even death itself.

God in Christ speaks to us by arriving through the least expected avenue and by having recourse to the resurrection. We are offered the delight of knowing that God is at work where we are not looking.

Christ also admonishes us to throw away the formulas that seem to promise justice, the laws that tally injury and desert; he asks that we love one another and exercise authority with humility.

This issue is dedicated to those who have found ways to speak to, and even love, those whom they might more astutely kill. These are people — in Israel/

Palestine, Germany, El Salvador, South Africa, the U.S. — who do not dodge rage, who do not pretend reconciliation.

At a minimum, the people in these pages honor their enemies with a willingness to put their strength and lives in opposition to what they consider evil. There is more courage in

this than in the systems of denial that permit one to live in conjunction with evil without acknowledging it. (Mohandas Gandhi writes that it is better to resist evil violently than not at all; there is no virtue in refusing to engage the world and its horrors.)

At best, people of faith are standing in Jesus' third way, rejecting violence and passivity. Walter Wink examines the Sermon on the Mount, finding in it very practical suggestions about how people can fight oppression without joining the zealots. Walking the second mile, for instance, is a tactic that will result in Roman soldiers being disciplined by their superiors, because — by law — they are only allowed to require peasants to carry their packs for *one* mile. Similarly, under the purity code one can strike an inferior with the back of one's left (defiled) hand; a back slap with the right hand connotes equal social standing. Hence, turning the other cheek, invites a slap that, ironically, implies dignity and standing.

In pursuing that kind of shrewd and self-respecting struggle for justice, discernment is key. And since we draw our lines in different places, there is a wisdom in Gandhi's comment that he would die for the truth as he sees it, but would

not kill. Images of a Chinese student standing in the way of an armored tank or of protesters in the U.S. raising the elements of the eucharist before installations of nuclear technology stand as icons to that commitment. People, with nothing but their humanity, witness in the face of institutionalized violence.

On a smaller scale, *Better Homes and Gardens* reported in June that a committed Ku Klux Klan activist participated in a television interview with her estranged gay son and the mother of an interracial child. The

Klan mother made the claims she normally did about the evil of mixing races and the way AIDS serves as God's scourge on the homosexual community.

Flying home, the Klan member said she was haunted by the pain in the other mother's face during the interview. When the show's producer called to let her know the taping had gone well, she responded that she was going to have to quit the Klan and agreed to do it on television. Subsequently her husband and younger children left the Klan as well.

Hiding behind the rage of the Klan, the Afrikaners, the Israelis and the Palestinians, and, closer to home, the Left, the powers and principalities can lurk. If we allow our fear to turn us aside from those who are raging, we miss an opportunity to understand their concerns and to discern whether those concerns represent a longing for justice — however twisted the application — or whether in their evil intent they might educate us about the powers.

We can be sure that by looking straight into rage, learning to listen and to discern, we will be — in the words of Wendell Berry — “practicing resurrection.” Our perceptions, our desire to be faithful, *can* stand firm in the maelstrom. **TW**



editor's note

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*. Artist Helen Siegl, whose *O Antiphons* appear throughout this issue, has a clip art book published by Pueblo Press.

## Rain

by William Melnyk

Rain  
from dark clouds  
falls without conviction, without effect  
upon the smoldering black hulk  
of ruined dreams and realized fears.  
Smoke rises as embers die  
and with them, hope.

Pain  
in the sweet black looking-on face  
of a young girl who cannot understand  
is barely masked by the wonder  
of a child's eyes and heart.

Gray men in a gray men's world  
did it.

Did it in a suburban courtroom; did it.  
And terror reigns in black folks' homes  
again; in the fearful eyes of this  
young girl on her way to school:  
Hair braided, clothes pressed,  
ashes from Billie's Soul Food Place  
on her polished black shoes.

Sane:  
a word that in the wealthy store of a  
white theologian's vocabulary no longer  
exists.  
Stand with her, with that warm black face  
before cold black ashes,  
and give me your white Christian triumphalism  
if you dare.

Then, if you dare,  
look for God in the ruins;  
in the rain . . .

—William Melnyk is a *Witness* reader and priest in the Diocese of Michigan.

## A Child of the Snows

by G.K. Chesterton

And at night we win to the ancient inn  
where the child in the frost is furled,  
We follow the feet where all souls meet  
at the inn at the end of the world.

The gods lie dead where the leaves lie red,  
for the flame of the sun is flown.  
The gods lie cold where the leaves lie gold,  
and a Child comes forth alone.

— from *A Child of the Snows*



Poetry

# Evangelizing the Klan: responding to rage on the right

by Jan Nunley

**A**ssaults against U.S. Jews surged during the first two weeks of October—the High Holy Days, according to the Anti-Defamation League’s most recent statistics. Anti-Arab violence increased as well in the days leading up to and following the Persian Gulf War. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force’s Anti-Violence Project reported a 41 percent rise in harassment, assault, vandalism and murder of homosexuals in 1991 and projects further increases in 1992, as the effects of election-year rhetoric become apparent: a lesbian and a gay man died in the fire-bombing of their Oregon home during a bitter campaign to enact a law defining homosexuality as “abnormal, unnatural and perverse.” Fire-bombings and other acts of violence against abortion providers rose 23 percent in 1991.

The weapons used to defend against such violence and hatred are those of confrontation: the enactment of laws such as the Hate Crime Statistics Act, community organizing into safety patrols and self-defense courses, lobbying for stiffer penalties for offenders, direct-action methods such as rallies, demonstrations and civil disobedience.

And still the violence continues, seemingly stronger than ever, finding fuel in the climate of fear. Rarely do people of good will venture across the cultural divide to find out what their opposite numbers are really thinking.

**Jan Nunley** is a newscaster for National Public Radio’s environmental program, “Living on Earth,” and a frequent contributor to Episcopal Church publications.



KKK member protesting in Phlaski, Tenn.

credit: Catherine Smith, Impact Visuals

Will Campbell is one who has. A white Southerner, self-described as a racist and sexist by “this accident of birth, this incurable skin disease called whiteness,” the seventy-ish Campbell has a knack for the unpopular and prophetic act. Calling himself a “Baptist preacher of the South,” Campbell has marched with Martin Luther King; he’s also visited the North Carolina Klan’s Grand Dragon and Daniel Berrigan in the same federal prison. And it was Campbell’s clear-eyed refusal to stereotype or exclude anyone from the reach of the Gospel—even Klansmen—that got him in trouble with progressive friends.

“I think we all get in trouble when we start saying ‘The Klan’, as if that is their only identity,” Campbell told me by phone

from his farm in Mt. Juliet, Tenn. “We do it with an awful lot of people that we want to somehow isolate. I have a daughter who is a lesbian, and when she is identified in the press, it is always, ‘she is an active lesbian.’ Well, she’s also an eminently decent, spiritually knowing, loving, pretty, intelligent, caring woman, but that becomes her identity. I know people who have been members of some kind of Klan organization, who are also Methodists, or Baptists, but we identify them as the Klan, and thus alienate them right off.”

But don’t they identify themselves that way? Why do they join the Klan? Campbell answered my questions with a story. He described his relationship with a Klan family in North Carolina in the 1960s, a family he describes as having “many fine qualities. I didn’t relate to them as ‘those Klan people,’” he explains, “so that I could ask him [the family’s patriarch] as I did on one occasion, ‘What does your organization, the Klan, stand for?’ And he said, ‘It stands for peace and harmony and freedom.’ Which kind of took me aback mildly, but I did this little Socratic game that educated people are wont to do — ‘What do you mean by peace and harmony and freedom?’” Campbell says the non-plussed Klansman replied, “I mean the same thing you mean.”

“But you define those words, you don’t let blacks and Jews define them,” said Campbell. “What means are you willing to employ to accomplish those ends?” The Klansman replied, “Whatever it takes” — including murder, intimidation, psychological and guerrilla warfare. “And then he said, ‘Now, you tell me what we stand for in Viet Nam?’ Well, we stood for peace and harmony and freedom, and we did not ask the Vietnamese, North or South, to define those terms, and of course the means we were willing to employ are identical.

“What he had led me to see was that we are a nation of Klansmen. And we go on equating the Klan and ‘redneck’ with racism, when that is really not the case. I think this man was more bigoted than most anyone I’ve ever known, but he was not more racist than anyone I’ve ever known, and you have to make a distinction between those two.” Campbell became emphatic. “When we start talking about the Klan, what I hear is one more escape for us good, middle-class white folks. It is not a few pitiful, generally poor, generally uneducated people marching around a ridiculous burning cross in a Carolina cowpasture who are the governors and the warriors and the managers.”

Will Campbell is skeptical of institutional solutions to the problem of hate. “Mr. Jesus didn’t ask us to do very much, really,” he says. “He talked about things like a cup of cold water, but when you get to the institutional level, like a national Church, this is an insult to our intelligence. So we have committees and task forces to design and build a global sprinkler system so that everyone will have a drink of water. Meanwhile, the cat near at hand dies of thirst.

“My problem is my vocation, and my responsibility is here in this holler, relating to the people that I see every day down at the tavern or in my cornfield or wherever. Not building that global sprinkler system.”

In Boston’s South End, Butch Naters-Gamarra, rector of St. Stephen’s Epis-

*“When we talk about the Klan, I hear one more escape for us good, middle-class white folks. It is not a few generally poor, uneducated people marching around a ridiculous burning cross in a Carolina cowpasture who are the governors and the warriors and the managers.”*

—Will Campbell



The harrowing of hell, c. 1320

Wall painting in former Church of the Chora, Constantinople

copal Church, is quite willing to let Campbell and others do their thing with white bigots. Naters-Gamarra, born in Panama of Chinese, African and Latino ancestry, says, as a matter of good stewardship of his own time, he’d rather leave

the friendly persuasion to someone else. “Right now I’m dealing with life and death, with kids shooting one another and with violence against women and in the home and on the streets,” says Naters-Gamarra, frustration evident in his voice. “That’s the immediate stuff I need to deal with, and that’s where my energy and time has to go. I think it’s white folks’ responsibility to talk to their white peers about

something like this. Not mine. I wish ‘em luck. And I can support and pray for them, and if a dialogue were initiated I would respond, but my experience with bigoted people is that there’s no room for dialogue.”

But he does see bigots as human beings, and even as “victims, just like people of oppression are victims.”

But victims of what? How can people who belong to what’s clearly the dominant racial group, most if not all of whom are male, be oppressed? Naters-Gamarra reaches back into St. Paul’s vocabulary, identifying a force that echoes Will Campbell’s suspicion of institutions: “The real enemy is the principalities and powers, and that evil is very real. It feeds the kind of hatred and bigotry in people who’ve been victimized to believe that is the right attitude and the right posture to take.” Naters-Gamarra sees the Church as captive to those powers, to the culture of racism, sexism, and homophobia. “We say we are a diverse, inclusive Church,

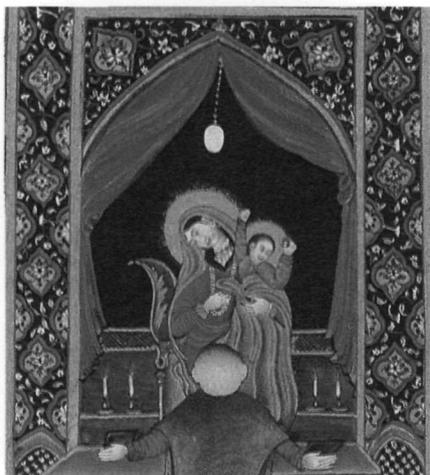
but when you go down all the different levels of the institutional life of the Church, you see that we're not inclusive after all. We're no better off than the Klan, except we're more hypocritical about it. The Church says we're all brothers and sisters in the Lord, no male or female, black or white, East or West — but we're going to oppress you anyway. The Church has the ability to shake itself free and transform the culture. But we don't have the guts to do that. We know that perfect love casts out fear. But because we are not practicing and being instruments of perfect love, we're just part of the fear."

Moving from fear to action is what motivates Herb Walters, of Rural Southern Voice for Peace (RSVP), an affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Walters is lead trainer for Grassroots Listening and Organizing, a unique project that sends volunteers to do listening interviews in troubled neighborhoods, encouraging respondents to express their feelings about racial or other issues, and shattering stereotypes in a non-confrontational style. Walters achieved startling success with the Louisiana Racial Issues Listening Project, taking 26 interviewers trained in non-violent communication techniques to the heart of David Duke country with a list of 25 carefully-crafted questions. Of those interviewed, at least 45 percent became more positive about race relations by the end of the session. Sixty percent expressed more positive feelings about programs to aid minorities.

"What we do first," says Walters, "is build trust in some of the questions and in the way we question. Then we present information that debunks some of the

myths, and we ask them to reflect about the information we've just given them. But we give it in such a way that we're not saying, 'Look, you jerk, don't you understand this, don't you know you're wrong? Here's the facts.'

"When we're able to depolarize the situation, sometimes they'll start by saying negative things. But as we work with them and ask them the right questions, they get down into a place where their values are more positive.



"We often find that the activists going out and doing the interviewing are really nervous, because they expect to find the enemy," explains Walters. "And they don't always find the enemy — they find

*"I think it's white folks' responsibility to talk to their white peers about bigotry.*

*Not mine. I wish 'em luck.*

*And I can pray for them.*

*—Butch Naters-Gamarra*

complex human beings, and they find the enemy is really in some of the ideas out there. We're working in a way to promote the humanity of the people who've been caught up in racist beliefs. Rather than assuming that the person is a racist, even if they start off by saying things that would indicate that, we assume that they're a part of the solution."

Listening projects are applicable to a variety of issues. RSVP cites projects in Harlan County, Ky., and Western North Carolina, educating people about solid, chemical, and nuclear waste; in St. Mary's, Ga., building bridges between local townspeople and anti-nuclear weapons activists; in Asheville, N.C., defusing concerns about a home for men with AIDS; and in Kannapolis, N.C., educating residents about the Federal budget. The concept has gone international as well: a Listening Project helped de-escalate tensions about independence in Palau, Micronesia. And Walters just completed a trip to the former Yugoslav republics, hoping to set up a project there.

Doing a listening project requires commitment. "Begin by identifying some of the positive solutions and the people who want to make positive change," advises Walters. "Help those forces organize themselves and pull together to work for that change. There should always be some follow-up organizing work at the grassroots level."

Walters' way of activism may be a harbinger of things to come, an activism that yields healing — and results — instead of bitterness, fear and gridlock. Perhaps the strongest indication that the politics of confrontation and division is wearing thin is the practical success of Bill Clinton's refusal to polarize the electorate in the Presidential campaign. "This is America," he intoned in his standard stump speech. "There is no 'them.' There's only us."

Perhaps, as a society, we're growing tired of taking sides in a bitter "cultural war" between races and classes, sexes and sexual orientations, and are willing to listen to and be led by those able to hold the contradictions and ambiguities of American life in one hand and hope for the future in the other. Perhaps, in the end, we really are in this together — all of us.

TW

## A listening project

We knocked on the door of a small home in a primarily white working class neighborhood in Denham Springs, La., home of David Duke. A young man, Jeff, told us to come on in, lit up a cigarette and from behind weary eyes said he'd been at a party until late last night. He was suspicious of us, but generally talkative.

When asked, "What are your hopes and fears about race relations today?" he answered: "I think it's hopeless. I'm not a racist or anything — but Abe Lincoln should have sent them (African Americans) back to Africa. There's such a gap between us whites and blacks. We don't understand each other."

"Why is there such a gap?" we asked.

"They're not developed like we are," he answered. "When you drive through there [pointing toward a nearby black community], it's like going into Africa."

"What has helped create such bad conditions in the black community?" I asked.

"Their environment affects them a lot," Jeff answered. "They don't want to work. They need to try to get off welfare. I worked for what I have and they could work hard and make it too."

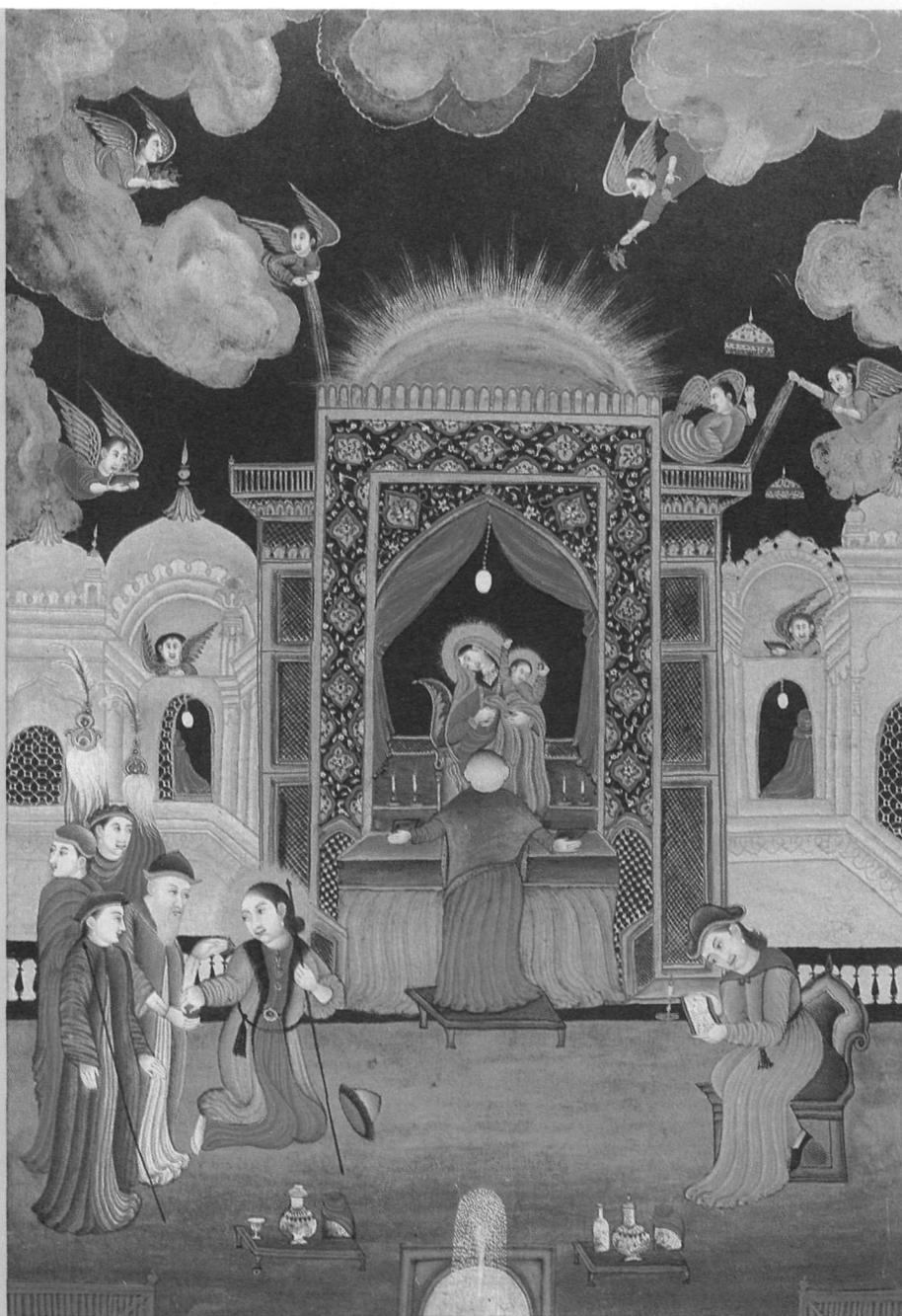
"Do you know anyone trying to get off of welfare?"

Jeff talked about a black woman he knew. "She really wants to work. Sometimes she uses our phone and I know she'd like to work but it's hard having kids and trying to find a decent job."

Asked if he saw a tendency to blame the poor for the country's problems, he said he did. Jeff told us that racial tensions exist in Baton Rouge because blacks resent that whites have more. He reflected more on this idea when our questions

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Adapted from an article by Herb Walters of the Rural Southern Voice for Peace, 1898 Hannah Branch Road, Burnsville, N.C. 28714.



A 17th century Asian depiction of the eucharist and nativity.

made clear the economic differences between blacks and whites. For example, black unemployment is three times that of white unemployment. We asked Jeff why such differences exist. His response surprised us: "It's partially racial. You

shouldn't hire a black man just because he's black. But if he's qualified hire him." He then told us that a black man doing the same work he does receives \$3-\$4 less per hour. "That's not fair. Blacks are almost still in slavery a little." **TW**

# Sexually assaulted by the shepherd

by Holly Bridges Elliott

**S**tupid, stupid, stupid,” a clergyperson on her diocese’s Standing Committee, responded after her painful disclosure. “You should never have become friends with a bishop.”

Miriam (not her real name), a lifelong Episcopalian, a clergy spouse and mother of five, had just sobbed out the story of her bishop’s sexual misconduct — of the progression of unwelcome, inappropriate advances he made, advances that finally culminated in a frenzied embrace behind the locked door of his office.

“I don’t think I’d ever said the word ‘penis’ out loud to a man before and here I was, having to say these things to this priest. I couldn’t stop crying,” Miriam said.

This was the second time Miriam had told this story to a Church official. When, nine months after the incident, she confronted the perpetrating bishop, he called in the national Church’s Office of Pastoral Development.

“He claimed that he was being persecuted and victimized,” Miriam recalled. “He brought in the big Church to see about this ‘alleged’ story.”

Remarkably, the investigating cleric chose to interview the bishop and Miriam’s husband first.

“Both suggested that he meet with

me,” Miriam said wryly.

The cleric revealed further insensitivity when he suggested that Miriam meet with him, alone, in his hotel room. In the end, he concluded, “We have your truth, and we have his truth. And they conflict,” Miriam remembered.

“I said to myself, ‘This is not the Church I thought it was. I hate the Church and all male clergy!’ The farthest thing from my mind was that when I told the truth my Church wouldn’t believe me.

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*“We have your truth, and we have his truth. And they conflict,” he said. “I said to myself, ‘This is not the Church I thought it was. I hate the Church and all male clergy!’”*

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They were in denial. Their only desire was to protect the bishop from embarrassment.”

Miriam’s relationship with the bishop began innocuously enough in the mid-1980s. She and her husband, a diocesan priest, established a cordial acquaintance with him and his wife. Their families shared Thanksgiving dinner. The two couples often attended the same social functions. The bishop, knowing Miriam’s artistic talent, commissioned her to do some work for a diocesan project. And, finally, she and her husband sought the bishop’s counseling for what Miriam described as “typical clergy-couple concerns.”

Although Miriam and her husband considered the bishop a friend, he was also their employer and counselor. In this last role, especially, the inequity of the relationship seemed pronounced.

“When a woman bares her soul, the imbalance of power becomes even more out of kilter,” said Miriam. “Because the counselor has this information, she becomes very vulnerable.”

Over time, Miriam noticed that the bishop was becoming increasingly flirtatious and physical with her. He began to comment on her personal appearance, the way she wore her hair or her clothes.

One Sunday, together in an empty church, the bishop impulsively kissed her, thrusting his tongue into her mouth. Miriam was stunned and they both immediately pretended it hadn’t happened.

About a month later, the bishop rescheduled a morning meeting to discuss some of her artwork to late afternoon. When she arrived, staff members were gone. The bishop seemed preoccupied and tense. After a perfunctory meeting, as she started to leave, the bishop locked the door and began to apologize for the kiss four weeks earlier. He began confiding in her, talking about problems in his childhood, his current self-doubts and loneliness.

“All of a sudden the roles were getting mixed up,” said Miriam. “I was stunned that he was asking for my advice. He had never done that before. I tried to reassure him about his effective-

ness as a bishop, to encourage him.”

Then came the seemingly innocent request: “I need a hug.”

Miriam complied, only to find herself in a tight grip, being furiously kissed and

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*“The truth was finally told, and I heard what I needed to hear. I believe he now knows how his conduct looks to me ... I can pray for him again.”*

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**Holly Bridges Elliott** is a free-lance writer in Minnesota.



From the *Belles Heures* of Jean, Duke of Berry.

The Cloisters

ment about her own experience. The bishop was ultimately asked to resign.

According to *The Episcopalian* he was suffering “spiritual, physical, and emotional stress.” An open letter from the Standing Committee to diocesan parishes said “there were patterns of behavior which were inconsistent with his role as pastor, priest, and bishop.” The city’s secular newspaper, however, reported that the resignation could be blamed on “a sexual liaison with a woman.”

Despite the vindication Miriam felt when the bishop was removed from office, the initial rebuff her disclosure had received and the Church’s unwillingness to be open even about the causes of the resignation, propelled Miriam into the victim’s typical cycle of self-recrimination, physical illnesses and impulses to self-destruct or lash out in anger. She sought counseling.

Then one day, in 1991, she read an article about clergy sexual abuse in *Episcopal Life*, the new incarnation of *The Episcopalian*. It mentioned Margo Maris, on the diocesan staff in Minnesota, who was advocating a healing process for victims that included an eventual reconciliation with the offender.

“I saw myself in that article,” said Miriam, “and I called Margo one night at ten o’clock.”

The “Minnesota process,” as Maris’ method is called, takes its cue from the classic intervention model used by rape crisis centers. “It focuses not on the offender, but on the victim and encourages an eventual meeting of the victim and the offender,” explained Maris, who first developed the process in 1984.

“Margo asked me, ‘What do you need?’ At the time, what I wanted was to tell my story to the Presiding Bishop [of the Episcopal Church].”

The requested meeting took place about a year later, with Maris in attendance.

fondled. She tried to push him away.

“He was out of control,” said Miriam. “Things stopped one step short of rape.”

Afterwards, Miriam attempted to make sense of what had happened.

“I was angry and hurt,” she said. “I wanted to talk to him,” but he began avoiding her. “I felt betrayed by someone who was my friend and who was supposed to be in a pastoral relationship with me. When a bishop does this, it’s almost an incestuous thing.”

Miriam told no one until the bishop fired her husband nine months later. Suspecting that the bishop’s conduct with her was a factor, she told her husband.

She and her husband sought legal counsel, but were advised against any action

since it might appear, their lawyer said, that Miriam’s story was retributive and thus not credible.

Throughout this time, Miriam kept going to church, even continuing to receive communion from the hand of the offending bishop, “partly because of stubbornness and partly because I still loved God, even though I was mad at my Church.”

About a year later, after Miriam and her family had moved to a different state, another woman lodged a sexual misconduct complaint against the same bishop. During this time personnel in the diocese and national Church had changed. The charge was taken seriously and Miriam was asked to contribute a written state-

“The Presiding Bishop said, ‘I believe you,’” recalled Miriam. “That’s about the best thing a victim can hear.”

But for Miriam the healing process would not be complete until she also met face-to-face with the offending bishop. It took a long time, but Miriam, her husband and Maris eventually arranged the trip. The bishop participated with his therapist at his side.

The Minnesota process uses a formula, a sort of liturgical structure, in organizing such meetings of reconciliation. A moderator opens the session, generally with comments about the pain and difficulty of such a meeting. Each party then gets a chance to tell his or her story. The moderator then concludes the session with prayer. Maris requests that the offending clergyperson’s bishop (or judicial head) be present so that “they are able to see firsthand the power differential between clergy and parishioners.”

Since 1984, Maris has helped about

350 people, of both sexes, from a variety of denominations, deal with clergy sexual abuse. About 10 percent, she says, have participated in a reconciliation meeting. In all but one of these meetings, the perpetrator admitted responsibility for the offense, although offenders often begin meetings denying the victim’s story.

“But the truth is so powerful, the offender can’t deny it in the end,” Maris said.

In Miriam’s case, the meeting “was very difficult and very emotional,” she said, “because I still had a fear of him and was still having bad dreams about him.”

Miriam and the bishop signed an agreement not to disclose the exact details of the meeting (not a standard practice in the Minnesota process), but Miriam offered an overview.

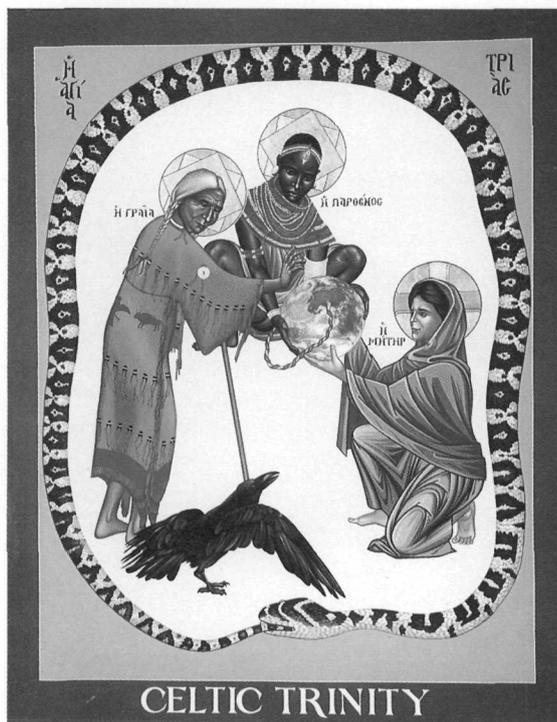
“The truth was finally told, and I heard what I needed to hear. I believe he now knows how it [his conduct] looks to me and would look to someone like me.

The last time I had seen him, he had accused me of being an evil woman. He had said, ‘If this ever happens to me again, I’ll know you’re behind it.’ At the end of our reconciliation meeting, by contrast, he said, ‘God bless you.’”

Miriam said the meeting helped her understand that God was interested not only in her recovery but in the bishop’s and his family’s. “I can pray for him again.”

The Minnesota intervention model “empowers victims and gives them a voice to tell the truth,” said Maris. “They know that one or two people in the Church understand. These victims are churchgoers. Their spiritual life is a given. This process not only gives them back their power and self-esteem, but it helps them re-image God, to realize that God is not this clergyperson.”

The relief at finally being believed and putting closure on a chronic ache, Miriam says, “is worth the wait.” **TW**



Celtic Trinity by Robert Lentz

credit: Bridge Building Images

## Hannah's prayer

*Yahweh kills and brings to life;  
brings down to Sheol and raises up;  
Yahweh makes poor and makes rich;  
God brings low and also exalts.*

*Yahweh raises up the poor from the dust,  
God lifts the needy from the ash heap,  
to make them sit with princes,  
and inherit a seat of honor.  
For the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's,  
and on them God has set the world.*

*Yahweh guards the feet of the faithful ones  
but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness;  
for not by might does one prevail.  
Yahweh's adversaries shall be shattered;  
the Most High will thunder in the heaven.*

—Excerpted from Hannah's song in I Samuel 2:1-10.

Marie Fortune, the author of *Is Nothing Sacred? When Sex Invades the Pastoral Relationship* (Harper, 1989), is the director of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle, Wash., and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ.

**Julie A. Wortman:** When did you first become involved in the issue of clergy sexual exploitation?

**Marie Fortune:** The first time this came to our attention was in the early 1980s. We'd been working on sexual and domestic violence issues since 1977, but it had never occurred to us that clergy were involved in this, which I look back on with a real sense of naiveté. We knew about therapists and doctors, but it frankly came as a surprise when we began to realize that, of course, clergy are doing it.

[Soon thereafter] a therapist in town wanted to know if I had heard about a pastoral counselor in my denomination who was facing three civil suits from clients for professional misconduct involving sexual abuse. I didn't know this individual particularly well, so I filed that information away in my memory — until I received a flyer a few weeks later indicating that this individual would be leading the clergy retreat during the next year.

I went to my conference minister and shared the information with him with the expectation that the pastor would not be allowed to do the retreat. The upshot of it was that I was called before our Church and Ministry Committee, which is our

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**Julie A. Wortman** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*. Artist **Betty LaDuke**, author of *Art and Social Change in Latin America* (City Lights, San Francisco, 1985) and *Africa Through the Eyes of Women Artists* (Africa World Press, Trenton, NJ, 1991), donated her work to this issue of *The Witness*. Her work can be ordered c/o Multi-Cultural Images, 610 Long Way, Ashland, Ore. 97520. Artist **Doris Klein**, CSA, works in Milwaukee, Wis.



Freedom

credit: Betty LaDuke

## Responding to clergy sexual abuse: an interview with Marie Fortune

by Julie A. Wortman

supervisory body for the clergy, to explain why I had disclosed that information — public at the time — to my confer-

ence minister. My colleague, who settled the three suits for significant sums of money, was never called to account for

his professional misconduct by the Church and Ministry Committee.

That was my first experience of the shooting-the-messenger phenomenon. What I began to see was that our judicatories had no idea what the problem was, how to approach it, what the necessary administrative intervention was. We [at the Center] began to provide training, which we have been doing ever since.

**J.W.** What does it mean to “sexualize” a pastoral relationship?

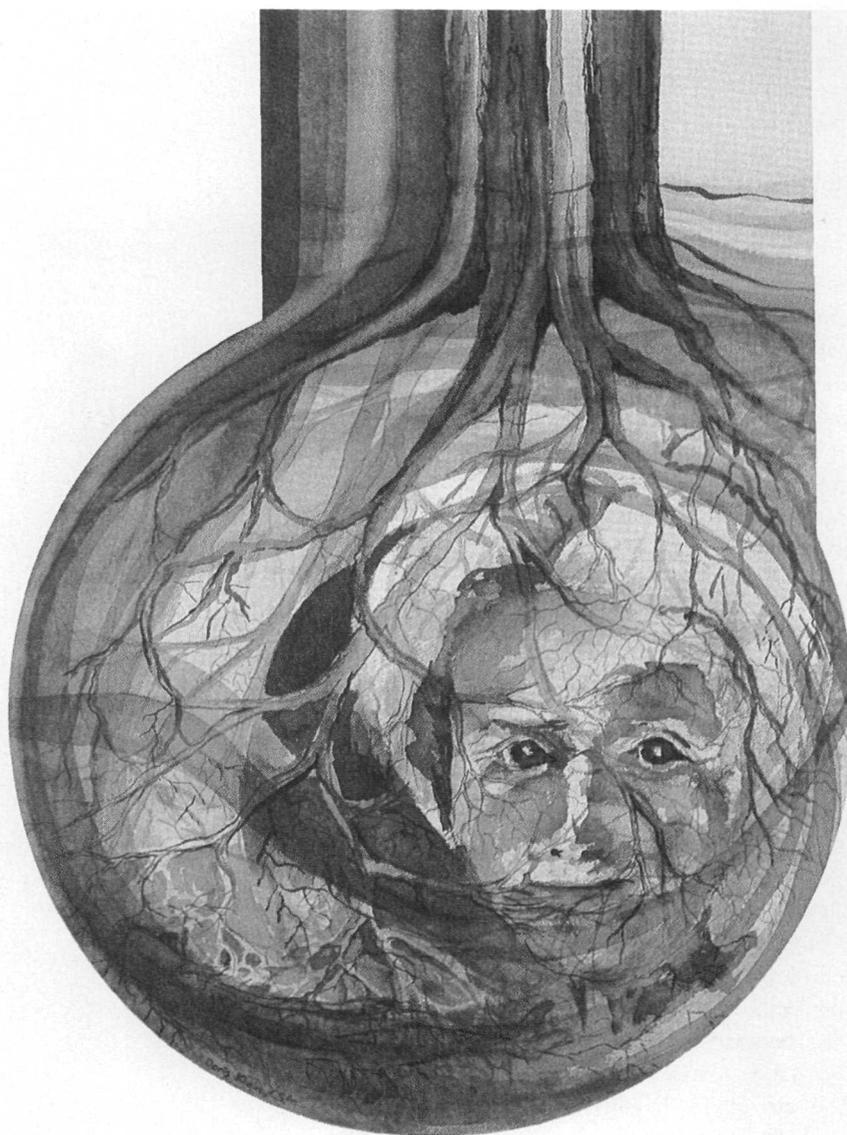
**M.F.** We talk about sexualizing a relationship to remind ourselves that the problem is not simply genital sexual activity between a pastor and a congregant or client. It can be physically or verbally bringing a sexual agenda into the relationship (which is clearly the pastor’s agenda), without regard for the needs of the client or congregant.

People often ask if [an offense involved] intercourse, that being for them the defining element. If it didn’t, they minimize what went on. But a lot of people don’t appreciate that the nature of the contact is hard to judge from the outside.

**J.W.** Is it really possible that clergy might not understand that their behavior is inappropriate when they do this?

**M.F.** It’s true that some don’t know, which is disturbing in and of itself, but there are also those who know and don’t care. We must realize that we are dealing with a culture in which male sexual access to women and children has been a privilege of gender for centuries. It is so normative that it’s possible for people to say that they don’t know what’s wrong. The same thing can be said of a lot of sexual harassment in the workplace. People’s awareness needs to be raised so that they understand that these behaviors are inappropriate in a professional setting, period.

**J.W.** That suggests that seminaries haven’t historically addressed the issue



#### **Rooted in Wisdom — Sophia**

or made that clear?

**M.F.** Absolutely. There has been very little effort to train clergy as part of a core curriculum in theological education. That’s one place where we can do some clear prevention with people for whom the lack of information is at the center of what’s going on. They’re what we call “wanderers” and they find themselves wandering into situations that are potentially harmful. With some education those

credit: Doris Klein, CSA

people can learn to do better. For other pastoral offenders, we have to have intervention available in order to move quickly to stop the pattern.

**J.W.** Do perpetrators conform to any identifiable profile? Is it possible to screen people out who might be likely perpetrators during the ordination process?

**M.F.** Most of the bishops and judicatory leaders are asking for a psychological test that will do this. The people I know who

treat perpetrators don't have such a tool. Research needs to be done to determine whether there are psychological profiles that would be predictive.

There are some common characteristics that we see, but I don't think they're predictive. For example, it is not unusual for the pastoral perpetrator to be a very charismatic, competent, effective pastor. The problem with having said that is that it does not mean that all our best and brightest are perpetrators — I want to be clear about that. But it is a useful piece of information when, at the point of intervention, committees or bishops are tempted to minimize [the offense] because they know this person is such a good pastor.

The one predictor we might have is people's conduct in seminary and in their field placement and internships. If there is any evidence that there is already confusion about appropriate boundaries and behavior in those professional settings, then we should take that very seriously. Some supervisors in those settings have not been prepared to do supervision around these issues.

My goal is to try to head the problem off as early as possible.

**J.W.** You have called on Church leaders to take a strong stand to stop sexual harassment. What would be happening if they were?

**M.F.** There's progress and retrenchment in every denomination. Some folks are doing an

excellent job, putting themselves on the line in their denominational structures and I want to acknowledge them. But that's not the consistent approach in any of our denominations and hence my con-

cern. The only statement that I've seen that comes close to what I was advocating was made by the moderator of the United Church of Canada.

**J.W.** Some Church administrators believe widespread publicity is not desirable. What do you think?

**M.F.** The larger question is whether the Church is going to be open about this problem. Our consistent experience is that when the Church acknowledges what has happened to the whole Church as well as to the community, the potential for healing is increased enormously. And that's the first priority, the healing of the victims — and, hopefully, the congregation, which in many ways is a secondary victim when this occurs.

It can't be done in secret. That's been the problem for years. The secrecy around clergy sexual abuse is the reason it has continued and the reason people have been so badly harmed by it. Whenever a congregation has informed its membership about the nature of the unethical conduct and the steps that the responsible authority has taken we have seen some

real potential for healing and a new sense of the nature of ministry. It is very painful and there is resistance, but not wanting to know something is no prescription for dealing with it. When people have tried to keep information from the congregations, it has resulted in greater harm, loss

of credibility and, ultimately, in the potential for legal liability if people have to go that route in order to get some response.

**J.W.** Would the Church be doing any-

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*I have yet to encounter anyone who wanted to sue their Church. What they want is for their Church to acknowledge the harm that's been done, for the person who harmed them to acknowledge responsibility and to have an apology.*

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*Excerpt from a May, 1992, pastoral letter to the people of the United Church of Canada from Moderator Walter Farquharson:*

I write offering apology to those wronged by the Church, those who have found harassment where there should have been haven, abuse and violation where they rightly expected healing and honoring. I also acknowledge that some have experienced accusations and alienation because they named the reality, or stood with those abused, or challenged particular abusers. Too often the Christian community has sought to deny the sin and has chosen instead to victimize those sinned against and those who have offered support and sought after justice for the violated or abused.

I write asking congregations to find ways of knowing the scandal is real, that it is a matter of abuse of office and power not "just of" sexual indiscretion, that our failure to minister effectively often results in victims being further victimized.

I write urging all to take the matter with great seriousness and to engage in the struggle to eradicate this evil from our churches and communities.

I write, too, urging all to be faithful in prayer that those abused find justice and healing, that abusers find new life in repentance and radical transformation, that communities work towards being able to deal with honesty and grace with abusers and abused. Our Church must continue to change our ways of dealing with sexual abuse so that our procedures more adequately reflect changed understanding of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and reflect more truly the Gospel call to stand with the exploited and voiceless.

thing about this if there weren't legal recourse? Are victims eager to find a legal remedy?

**M.F.** The response of the Church in the last five years, has been driven by law suits and the threat of law suits — the potential financial burden this represents is frightening to these institutions, as well it should be. And some insurance companies are starting to say they are not going to continue to insure for this — that's very real institutional pressure and is part of what has stimulated the process. There are some folks within denominations who are committed for the right reasons, but we're talking about institutions and that's the way institutions work and change.

From the survivor's perspective — and I've had contact now with over 800 cases — I have yet to encounter anyone who wanted to sue their Church. What they want is for their Church to acknowledge the harm that's been done, for the person who harmed them to acknowledge responsibility and to have an apology. For most people, that's all they want, literally. If they have any therapy expenses, or medical expenses or loss of salary as a result of having to deal with this, they sometimes will want that to be compensated, which is appropriate. It's only when they don't get that and are seen as the enemy of the Church, that they finally say, "There's no place for me to turn but to the civil system." It's a painful testimony to the Church's insensitivity and its inability to respond pastorally to folks who come forward and disclose what has been done to them.

**J.W.** What's the biggest obstacle keeping the Church from responding appropriately and pastorally?

**M.F.** The biggest thing is ignorance. People don't have the conceptual understanding or skills to respond, so they get scared — and then they start to do all the wrong things. But it's not just about ignorance — we've been educating about this

for a long time and there are places that are still pretty resistant, so we know that's not the only answer.

The other answer is denial. Minimization and denial are our only protection against things that are too painful to face. But until we are able to press ourselves beyond the pain, it's very difficult to act in ways that are constructive.

A colleague of mine in the United Church of Christ often uses the phrase, "You shall know the truth and the truth will make you flinch before it sets you free." That is absolutely true in this situation. It makes all of us flinch, but we've got to be willing to face the implications. It requires courage — courage on the part of the leadership to confront a powerful Church figure, to institute a protocol that some people are not going to like, to consistently apply whatever the procedure is without any favoritism. It takes energy and it takes courage and we don't have enough of that right now.

**J.W.** In the Episcopal Church there is a tradition, in some places, of referring to male clergy by the term "father" and there's also a penchant on the part of Church leaders to refer to the Church as a family. Do you have any views on whether such practices set up an unhealthy dynamic conducive to clergy sexual abuse?

**M.F.** Yes. We started likening the Church to a family to increase people's connection to each other in a congregation. For some people, it was to be an alternative family, to replace the family they'd never had or the abusive family they did have.

What we forgot was that families can

be very destructive as a structure. One of the critiques we need is, what does it say about people's expectations of intimacy? If I'm a parish pastor, I see my responsibility as helping to create a community of people who, out of that community experience find their family experiences. I see a difference between family and community. People need both, but I think they need to find each in different places.

The mission of the Church is at issue here. I was doing a workshop one time and a man asked, "Isn't it the job of the Church to increase intimacy among people?" He caught me off guard. I stopped and thought about it for a minute and then said, "No, that's not the job of the Church. The essence of the job of the Church is mission." I think we've gotten off track and that's been part of the problem.

We don't exist to be more and more intimate with this small group of people closed in on itself. When we are doing that, the potential for abuse to occur in that very closed, tight system is very, very high. But if our job is to be the place

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*We don't exist to be more and more intimate with a group of people closed in on itself.*

*When we do that, the potential for abuse is very high.*

*Our job is to come to be encouraged so we can go out to the world and do the mission of the Gospel.*

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where we come to be nurtured and encouraged so that we can go out to the world and do the mission of the Gospel, then there's a different structural dynamic that lessens the potential for anyone with any power in that system to misuse it.

**J.W.** What about cases of abuse that have occurred in

the distant past? Why do some people wait so long to come forward? Should there be a statute of limitations on prosecuting those cases?

**M.F.** It is not unlike sexual abuse of

children in other settings. It is not unusual for children to totally repress that kind of experience until adulthood, when they have more resources to deal with the implications of the memory.

The other reality is that 20 or 30 years ago nobody was talking about any of this, nobody was supporting children who would come forward. That's changing. I think we're going to see children disclosing earlier, then we can stop pastors who are molesting children earlier, so they won't have a chance to have the 50, 60, or 100 victims these people sometimes have. But we've got that backlog of past cases and we're going to have adults coming forward for another ten or 15 years.

I don't think statutes of limitations are appropriate in Church policies around this experience. If our goal is to stop injustice and bring healing, then every decision we make about policy needs to rest on that commitment. If you look at the impact a statute of limitations has on survivors, we have to understand it's not helpful to be told, "You didn't come forward [soon enough], so we don't have to do anything about this." There's no question that the cases that are disclosed by adult survivors are difficult because the offender may be deceased or retired, but he is still accountable for the harm he did.

**J.W.** Should known perpetrators ever be allowed to serve in parochial positions?

**M.F.** We have to deal with that on a case-by-case basis. If, after disclosures, we have intervened and deprived these people of their pastoral offices, then we've done our best to ensure that, at least under the auspices of the Church, they cannot use that role any longer. If we don't do that, and they reoffend, we have failed — not only in terms of our pastoral responsibility, but we're also extraordinarily liable.

In terms of any therapeutic response, the person involved has to acknowledge responsibility and be willing to do what-

ever it takes to change so that they don't do it again. If somebody is still minimizing and denying that it's really their problem, then they are not appropriate.

I would say, categorically, if someone has offended against children and teenagers, they should never be in that position again. We know that it is virtually impossible to cure people who offend against kids and teenagers.



The question, always, is what is the impact on survivors and what is the potential this pastoral offender will cause harm again?

**J.W.** What are you celebrating right now in terms of positive developments in the fight against clergy sexual abuse?

**M.F.** The Presbyterians repealed their statute of limitation provision and that is important for all the reasons we have been discussing. There have been some important policy statements at the national level in the United Church of Christ, in the Episcopal Church, in the United Methodist Church.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of America has just completed a major study on sexual harassment. They have a proposed a four-year comprehensive strategy that has been approved by the bishops and now goes to their national council body. People are hopeful it will be approved, but they have no sense whether

anyone will allocate money for it.

In Chicago's Roman Catholic Archdiocese, where they've had horrendous problems in the past, the cardinal finally acknowledged it and said that they had to do better. He put together a commission that developed an excellent policy for dealing with sexual abuse of children by priests — it looks great on paper, although it says nothing about adult victims.

I was also encouraged by a non-denominational congregation that had been sued by a member because of sexual abuse by the pastor. They fought the suit, lost, and the complainant was awarded a financial award. A second complainant came forward and was going to bring a second suit. The lawyers went to the church council and said, "We've got to fight this," and the council agreed. They went to the congregation, which was the decision-making body. The congregants responded that it seemed pretty clear that the pastor sexually abused these people and that their responsibility was to pay the cost of therapy and so forth; Why were their lawyers fighting this? I'm encouraged that some folks see the Church's responsibility and are not driven by some lawyers who evidently see their job as protecting the Church from victims instead of protecting victims from the Church.

**TAW**

*Marie Fortune, with her staff at the Center, has developed a video on clergy sexual exploitation called Not in My Church (for Jews, there's a version called Not in My Congregation) that comes with a study guide and "awareness" brochures for congregants. A complete training curriculum, Clergy Misconduct: Sexual Abuse in the Ministerial Relationship, is also available. To obtain copies of the video or the curriculum contact the Center at 1914 N. 34th St., Suite 105, Seattle, Wash., 98103; 206-634-1903.*

# Beyond the confines of prison and death

by Marianne Arbogast

**T**he memory of Franklin Abramson prompts Ahmad Abdur-Rahman to prayer, fasting and discipline in his struggles for justice. Rahman, who has served 21 years in prison on a felony murder conviction stemming from Abramson's death, views Abrahamson as an ancestor, someone whose life and death is integral to his own.

Abramson died in 1971 at the age of 23, an accidental casualty of the black liberation struggle being waged in U.S. cities.

Rahman, then 19, was new to Detroit. He had been recruited away from Chicago gang life by Black Panther Party leaders, who challenged teen gang members to redirect their rage away from each other and toward the racist class structure causing their oppression.

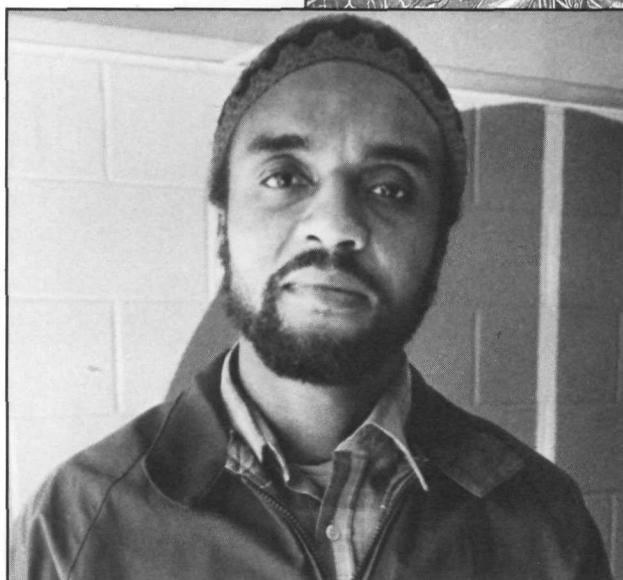
"In the 1960s the City of Chicago police department had the highest kill rating in the country, and most of the victims were black," Rahman says. "I had received my fair share of beatings from the Chicago police, and I had to ask myself: Why do I have so much courage fighting my own brothers, but had never done anything — leafletting or anything — to fight that? I thought, if I'm going to die for something, let me die for something important."

By day, the Panthers ran free meals programs and health clinics; by night, Rahman says, they conducted more covert operations in pursuit of their goals.

On April 11, 1971, Rahman and three

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**Marianne Arbogast** is an assistant editor of *The Witness*.



**Ahmad Abdur-Rahman, a member of the Black Panthers in 1971, participated in a raid on a drug house that resulted in Frank Abramson's death.**

courtesy The Detroit Free Press

others were given guns, taken to a house on Virginia Park in Detroit and instructed to carry out a "drug raid."

"Our term at the time was 'expropriation from the capitalists,'" Rahman explains. "We were striking a blow against one of the worst plagues in the community, and we would take the funds from these raids and use them to support our organization." Any drugs found were confiscated and destroyed.

The house turned out to be a student co-op, not a heroin den. Abramson was there to spend the night and collect friends

to help with planting at the farm he was caretaking that year. While Rahman was searching an upper floor, he heard a gunshot from a floor below, where a fellow raider was guarding Abramson. He rushed down to find Abramson dead.

Rahman and his companions fled to the waiting car and were driven away.

Within hours, Rahman says, the police had the names of the four — known only to the man who had set up the raid and provided transportation. They were arrested and charged with felony murder. The driver was never charged.



**Praying**

credit: Alex Grey,  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Rahman's companions, including the man who shot Abramson, pleaded guilty and received more lenient prison sentences. Rahman, who fought the charge, was found guilty and given the maximum sentence, life-without-parole.

Facing life in prison at the age of 19 "brought on a whole new kind of rage," Rahman says.

He learned of the pattern of FBI infiltration of radical groups throughout the country, and came to see the drug raid as a trap.

"Under the felony murder doctrine, whoever drives the getaway car is equally guilty," he says. "Why did they

never charge this person? I have never tried to diminish my responsibility, but I believe the files of the FBI should be opened, and there should be some shared responsibility."

Separated from his infant son, confronted with racist, sometimes brutal guards and dehumanizing prison conditions, Rahman sunk into a deep bitterness which alienated even his friends and family. His condition worsened until a fellow inmate gave him a book on Christian yoga, recommending it as a stress-reducing technique.

"I didn't believe in anything spiritual but I was game to try anything," Rahman says. He took up daily breathing exercises and yoga practices, and began to experience a profound change.

"Through spiritual practice and meditation, I came to the realization of a spiritual dimension in myself and the universe," he says. "I began to try to adjust my thoughts and actions to live in harmony with this spiritual reality."

An avid reader, Rahman embarked on an exploration of the mystical traditions of the great world religions.

Around the same time, he won honorable mention in a writing contest and began a correspondence with Episcopalian author Madeleine L'Engle, who had served as a judge. Along with advice on

writing, L'Engle sent Rahman books on theology and spirituality.

Rahman was startled when L'Engle wrote him of a dream she had had in which someone called him "Ishaq," a name he had been given by a Muslim mentor during an earlier spiritual search, but

had rejected and never revealed to anyone.

"I was going through a spiritual transformation, and this confirmed I was on the right path," Rahman says. "I felt I was meant to correspond with this woman,

that there was something she had to say to me about life that was important.

"We eventually became very good friends," Rahman says. "She showed me that being spiritual was not an opiate, but could deepen your creativity."

L'Engle also caused him to revise his negative opinion of Christianity, enabling him to see that it was "not in the actions of people like Jerry Falwell and

Jimmy Swaggart, but in the hearts of believers who follow the teaching of Jesus, 'As you have done to the least of these you've done unto me.'"

He also met Gloria House, another Episcopalian (now poetry editor of *The Witness*), who was teaching courses in a bachelors' degree program at Jackson Prison.

Rahman credits House with "pointing the way of balance," and allaying his fears that "becoming spiritually active [might] stop you being politically, socially active, making a difference."

"I became closer to prisoners studying martial arts, Zen, yoga, and different kinds of Christian mysticism," Rahman says. "We developed a circle, and exchanged books, ideas and practices — for example, we did a three-day silent fast in our cells."

Eventually Rahman was drawn back to Islam, largely because of the example of Muslim prisoners.

"When we who were black nationalists went to individuals to organize a strike, it was always the members of the Nation of Islam we could count on," he says.

Though they renounced Elijah Muhammad's characterization of whites as a race of devils in the late 1970s, they retained a zeal to fight racism.

Rahman says that while he was at Jackson, white guards beat a black prisoner so severely that he was paralyzed for life. After

the beating, the prisoner was left unattended for three days, then put on a bus to a prison in the Upper Peninsula, where

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*The Black Panthers "were striking a blow against one of the worst plagues in the community; we would take the funds from these [drug] raids and use them to support our organization."*

—Ahmad Abdur-Rahman

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*The house turned out to be a student coop, not a heroin den. While Rahman was searching an upper floor, he heard a gunshot. He rushed down to find Frank Abramson dead. Rahman and his companions fled.*

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prison authorities refused to accept him and returned him to Jackson.

The guards remained in their jobs until prisoners' protests forced the authorities to respond. "Muslims were the backbone of the actions that eventually got the guards disciplined," Rahman says.

He began meeting with the Muslim prisoners, and fasted for the month of Ramadan even before he formally converted.

"I saw in Islam as they practiced it the kind of discipline I needed," he says. "In prison, trying to maintain an equilibrium of mental wholesomeness is hard to sustain."

Muslims learn techniques to deal with anger, Rahman says.

When anger rises, they are to make a series of prostrations before Allah, reciting verses from the Koran before each one. As in all prayer, they are to turn towards Mecca, "a symbol of turning towards the center within yourself which cannot get angry, which is peace itself, which is God," Rahman says.

If the anger persists they are enjoined to fast.

"Not getting angry is very important in Islam," Rahman says. But he clarifies that "when Mohammed prophesied, 'Do not get angry,' he meant, 'Do not make decisions based upon anger,' not 'Do not feel negatively against oppression.' If we see something wrong, we must try to change it."

Rahman's conversion to Islam "gave him a way to process the hurt and injustice done to him," House says. "When I first met him he was still very stern and harsh, very critical of just about everyone. I watched him develop into someone

who was more and more accepting of others. He has a clarity of vision and ability to counsel others."

Rahman's gifts have been affirmed by the Muslim communities at several different prisons, which have elected him to be their *imam*, or spiritual leader. (In typical prison fashion, "every time he has been elected he has been moved out of the

prison," House says. "They don't want him to exercise that kind of leadership.")

Throughout his journey, Rahman has been accompanied by Franklin Abramson.

"In African tradition, there is a belief that as long

as anybody thinks of an ancestor, they are not dead, they can come and help you. [Abramson's] image has never really got out of my head, and I know I share responsibility for what happened. I see him in that sense of an ancestor, and I see it as my duty to make something happen in my life that will give him honor."

Shortly after Rahman earned his degree, House gathered a committee of people to work for his release from prison. James Ricci, a *Detroit Free Press* columnist, visited Rahman and began to write about him.

Ricci's columns reached Heleen Eichen, Abramson's sister, who lives in Florida.

At first, she was infuriated. "When Frankie was killed, it was splashed all over the newspapers, and now all the pain

and anger was coming back again."

Her brother's death had "devastated my whole world," Eichen says. She, like Rahman, was 19 at the time. She had no contact with her father, and her mother had died several years before. Abramson was her only sibling, an older brother who faithfully kept in touch and sustained her sense of family.

"It was a senseless, stupid, meaningless death," Eichen says. "That was part of my anger — somebody shooting him for no reason at all. He was a genuinely good person."

Eichen stayed away from the trial, not wanting to hear the details, caring only that "someone pay" for her brother's death.

"I knew that four black men were involved, and I wanted to hate every single black person I ever saw," she says, though an inner voice told her "that's not what Frankie would want."

When she saw Ricci's articles, Eichen phoned him to voice her outrage. Other family members wrote angry letters to the editor.

Soon afterward, Eichen received a letter from Rahman.

"I was really moved," she says. "He said there wasn't a day that goes by that

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*Abramson's "image is in my head. I share responsibility for what happened. I see him as an ancestor. It is my duty to make something happen in my life that will give him honor."*

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he doesn't think of Frankie, and he said Frankie's memory has been a spur to his self-improvement. When I learned that, it made me think Frankie's death — even though it was tragic and meaningless — wouldn't have been in vain."

She began to see Rahman in a new light.

"When I saw his words I felt I got to know him," she says. "I came to recog-

nize and respect him as a person. Through-  
out my angry phase I looked at him as a  
non-entity. I didn't want to know him.  
You can ascribe all these [negative] traits  
to someone you don't know.

"I thought about what Frankie would  
do, and I knew Frankie would forgive  
him."

She talked with two of Abramson's  
friends who had been with him the night  
he was killed, and they agreed.

Eichen describes her observance of  
her Jewish faith as "more cultural than  
spiritual." Nonetheless, she finds signifi-  
cance in the fact that she was moved to  
make a second call to Ricci two years ago  
at the time of Rosh Hashanah.

"Traditional Judaism says an eye for  
an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but the Jewish  
New Year is a time when we're supposed  
to forgive enemies and atone for sins."

Eichen told Ricci she would support  
Rahman's release from prison.

In June of this year, she travelled to a  
parole board hearing in Michigan to speak  
on his behalf.

"There were about 75 people at the  
hearing," Eichen says. Many testified to  
the positive impact Rahman has had on  
their lives. "It made me feel vindicated,"  
she says. "It's still hard for some of my  
family members to understand my posi-  
tion."

The parole board, deluged with an  
overwhelming show of support for  
Rahman, voted unanimously to recom-  
mend his release. He is now awaiting  
Governor John Engler's decision.

"I'm doing it for Frankie," Eichen  
says of her advocacy for Rahman. "He  
could do more for Frankie if he was  
released. He would have a lot more to  
offer as a free man."



## Prison Repression

Human rights activists are opposing  
the construction of a new prison in  
Florence, Colo., which will virtually  
eliminate human contact for prisoners. It  
will have a higher security rating than the  
"level 6" federal prison in Marion, Ill.,  
currently the highest in the country.

Marion is the only U.S. prison to be  
condemned by Amnesty International for  
violating the U.N. Standard Minimum  
Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. It  
has been in a state of permanent  
"lockdown" since 1983. Prisoners rarely  
leave their cells, are forbidden to socialize  
with one another and have no access to  
educational or recreational activities or  
group worship. Guards discipline  
prisoners by tying them spread eagle and  
naked to their concrete bed slabs.

The prison in Florence is designed  
with no windows. Electronic surveillance  
will replace most personal contact with  
guards, and there will be no  
communication between prisoners.

Although the Bureau of Prisons claims  
that control units are necessary to contain  
violent prisoners, their residents include  
a disproportionate number of minority  
prisoners and political dissidents. Although  
Marion is among the smaller  
U.S. prisons, it houses more political  
prisoners than any other.

Rafael Cancel Miranda, a Puerto Rican  
independence fighter who spent 25 years  
in prison, described his experience at  
Marion: "I spent 18 months in the Control  
Unit. Within that space of time many  
people killed themselves. Many also went  
crazy. They used to give prolixin, thiorazine  
and valium. Once you get hooked into  
that, forget it; you're not your own man or  
woman any more."

Adding injury to outrage, the water  
supply both at Marion and at the new site  
in Florence may be unsafe. Critics say the  
Marion water fails to meet federal and  
state standards and the prison in Florence  
is being constructed near land  
contaminated with radioactive materials.

The federal prison in Florence is only  
one instance of a nation-wide trend toward

"super-maximum security" prisons or  
prison units. Thirty-six state prisons now  
operate similar control units which keep  
prisoners isolated and prohibit community.

In a forward to *Can't Jail the Spirit*, a  
collection of U.S. political prisoners'  
biographies, Jose Lopez argues that this  
trend is a tool of political and economic  
repression. "Those who cannot be  
controlled, those who will not submit to  
living in the areas designated for Third  
World peoples, those who refuse to work  
for low wages, and those who rebel and  
try to organize their people — will end up  
in prison where they can be controlled."

—Information from the *Committee  
to End the Marion Lockdown*, P.O. Box  
578172, Chicago, IL 60657-8172.

## Not Enough Jobs

"Disdain for the able-bodied poor is  
deeply rooted in ... what historian Michael  
B. Katz calls the 'enduring myth' of  
American history: that there are jobs  
available for all who want to work.

"Yet the simple truth is that there are  
not enough jobs to go around. Between  
1970 and 1984, New York City alone lost  
492,000 jobs with lower educational  
requirements, but gained only 239,000  
jobs with higher educational requirements.  
While the net loss of 253,000 is alarming,

—Prepared by Marianne Arbogast

the consequences for workers with limited  
education and skills has been devastating.

"National studies have found that,  
*excluding* discouraged workers and  
*including* all available jobs (regardless of  
skill or educational requirements), there  
are as many as ten unemployed people  
for each unfilled job opening."

Christopher Meade, "The Myth of  
Welfare," *Z*, 9/92

*(The following is excerpted from a letter written by Dorothee Sölle and her friend Luise Schottroff, professor of New Testament in Kassel, Germany, and sent to one Protestant and three Roman Catholic congregations in Cologne celebrating their ecumenical work on October 2, 1992. The theme of the worship was Den Himmel Erden, "Heaven on Earth" or "Grounding Heaven.")*

**W**e write to you in alarm and horror. Our country has changed; an evil spirit, a demon, walks among us. This spirit is hostile toward foreigners and hates everything that looks different from us. This demon sows hatred and causes conflagrations, roaring "Out!" but meaning "Away into the gas!" since there is no "out." Its name is racism and it is connected with the darkest time in the life of our people, when the huge majority broke from God and ran after idols — pure blood, one's own soil, the great nation and military force. For a long time, Christians in the ecumenical movement believed that this idol was overcome and could not return. Now we stand bewildered and ashamed. A young person in Hamburg carried a sign with the plaintive words, "I am ashamed."

Racism does not fall from the sky; it is made by some and exploited by others. One instrument for that exploitation is the discussion over the asylum paragraphs in the Constitution. The public is given the impression that the economic problems of German unity will be solved if only more severe action is taken against persons seeking sanctuary, these parasites. Unemployed youths live out the

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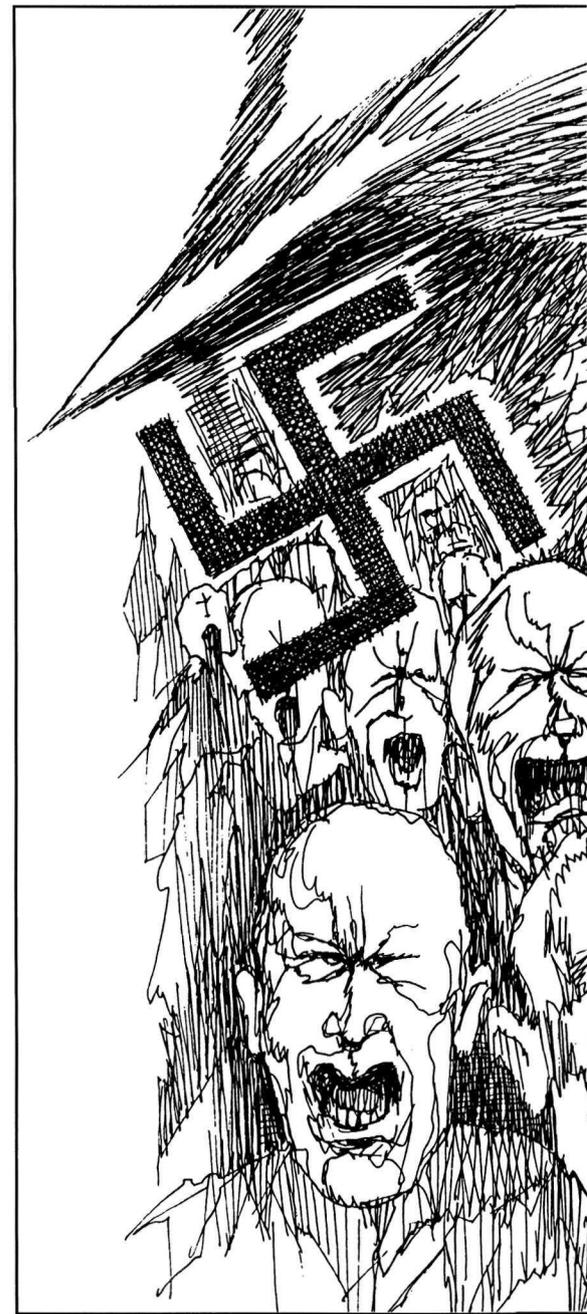
**Dorothee Sölle** is a feminist liberation theologian, living in Hamburg. She is also a new contributing editor of *The Witness*.  
**Marc Batko** translated this from the German. Artist **Eleanor Mill** lives in Hartford, Conn.

terms of their lives by attacking the scapegoats offered them — refugees.

Dear sisters and brothers, if we honestly examine ourselves, the difference is very small between those who burned the Jewish cemeteries in Sachsenhausen and those intent on changing the Constitution. The methods of the hoodlums below and the politicians above are quite different. Arson and Constitutional change have nothing in common in form, but the goal of getting rid of our past and living without remembrance is similar. Every foreigner and every stranger must be anxious in the presence of those below and those above. We all know today that the number of refugees will increase because economic injustice grows and is unbearable for those dying in it. The injustice cries to heaven. We cannot have heaven on earth without hearing this cry.

I'd like to remind you of the sanctity of life which God gives us. Ways out of the dangerous situation arise where sanctity increases. Those ways already exist in the initiatives of church communities who seek to bring German and foreign people into contact and create spaces for foreigners and the unemployed. Groups canvass for understanding and open the eyes of others to the distress of refugees, providing room for justice and attempting dialogue with the seduced Germans who await the solution to all difficulties from a right-wing shock.

In ancient times there was a conception of sanctity which is lost to us: there were holy places and profane places. In the temple, people could approach the deity. An infringement of the holy place was a violation of the deity. Temple sanctuaries and church sanctuaries are based on this idea of sanctity generally assumed in ancient societies. Persecuted people could flee to God's altar and could not be taken away by state authority. They stood on holy ground under God's protection. The word "asylum" means refuge or



Skin heads. A. Hitler is alive and well.

**Responding to God**  
by Dorothee Sölle and Luise Schottroff



credit: Eleanor Mill

## erman skin heads

ttroff

sanctuary; behind that is the word "sylao," take from, take away, rob, steal, plunder and injure. "Asylao" means being uninjured, unviolated and in the religious sense, which is always also political, being protected by God. There are remnants of this idea among us in the secularized society. Many cannot acquiesce when police enter churches to forcibly deport refugees.

Today a conception of holiness, shelter and refuge which has Biblical roots is growing among Christians. Christians who grant asylum to refugees, who open and thereby change their space, become more everyday and at the same time more holy.

Previously these spaces were guaranteed to be orderly, clean, mostly empty and suited for festivity. Now refugees eat and sleep there, fleeing the German bureaucracy and fearing persecution. The spaces of the community become more everyday and more holy. Sanctity grows where people are protected. Work with refugees is hard but it also produces happiness, the happiness of standing together with other people, the happiness of feeling sanctity and God's nearness.

Paul said: "Present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God." He alluded to the widespread cultic practice at that time of offering animals to the gods. His theme was that the experience of God's sanctity changed the bodies of people and their life together.

The place of the original experience of sanctity was the common meal. The disciples of Jesus met in house communi-

ties. They ate together, interpreted the Bible and deliberated what to do. Here was also the place for refugees, who as a rule were economic refugees. Christian communities formed little supply communities — underground groups within

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*We write to you in alarm and horror. Our country has changed; an evil spirit, a demon, walks among us. This spirit is hostile toward foreigners and hates everything that looks different from us. This demon sows hatred and causes conflagrations.*

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the community where the employed joined with the unemployed and shared their labor and their money. They made one another rich. They shared their songs, their enthusiasm for Biblical stories and their ability to build just relations. They even attempted to abolish the subordination of women and slaves under the patriarchal father of the

house. The common table of the house community was the place of the sanctification of bodies, the place of strengthening for the work of justice, the place of remembrance of injustice, of Jesus' death.

Jesus called refugees "blessed" (Matt. 25,35) and Paul again and again addressed the people in the communities as "saints." This is good. Sacred places arise today where people work against man-made injustice.

They are arising among us. God's friendliness enables their labor to grow in Klettenberg, Sulz and elsewhere. May God's love warm you and shine over all of us.

TW



*Rhea Miller, a recent Episcopal Divinity School graduate, spent Pentecost 1992 in an Israeli jail. She offers the following reflections.*

**T**all, articulate, worldly-wise with wild hair, she told us in St. George's Cathedral in East Jerusalem that if we wanted to join the *women in black* demonstration, we had to remain silent. Each week, this Israeli Jewish mother, together with about 100 other women, stands at a busy intersection in West Jerusalem, asking for an end to the occupation of the Palestinians by the Israeli government. "So, if the passersby spit on you, what do you do? Take out your tissue, wipe it off, and put it in your pocket. Are you hurt? No! This is our work."

A blind Palestinian social worker engaged me in conversation in the "house of peace" where we were both lodging. She counseled the victims of the *intifada*. She said, "Oh yes, I try and help them get around again with their new physical limitations, but that's not the hard part—not the loss of a leg or an eye. This week, a young man came in with both legs gone. After the Israeli soldiers had shot him, they rolled his legs in the dirt and delayed medical care. Gangrene set in and both legs were cut off. Then the soldiers beat him in his hospital bed. I have to help this young man deal with his psyche." When I told her of two other recent Palestinian beatings, she started laughing. I asked her why she was laughing. She answered, suddenly serious, "What else am I to do? Should I cry? Should I hate? Sometimes it is better to laugh so one can keep on going. It is all so insane."

A community leader from a little town called Beit Sahour, next door to Bethlehem, spoke of his attempt to bridge the Israeli Jewish and Palestinian gap. "I was approached to participate in an effort to bring Israeli Jews and Palestinians to-



Women in Black, Jewish women protesting the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Rhea Miller is at the center of the back row.

credit: Françoise Gall

## Witnessing in Israel/ Palestine by Rhea Y. Miller

gether in a more intimate way. I was reluctant, but I wanted my son to grow up loving Jews too. I did it for my son. I invited certain Jewish Israelis into my home—for tea, for meals. Finally my five-year-old son asked me, 'Dad, what is the difference between a good Jew and a bad Jew?' How was I to answer? He is so young. I can't let him be beaten by passing Israeli soldiers. I want him to be careful. So I told him simplistically, 'Good Jews don't wear uniforms and bad Jews do.' So one day, while playing out in the streets, an Israeli Jewish settler came by in his jeep and pointed his machine gun at my boy and told him he was going to kill him. My boy ran, and the settler chased him and beat him. When he finally arrived home, he barricaded himself in his room, and told me I had lied to

him. He said, 'When I grow up I am going to throw stones and kill Israelis.' I still bring Jews into my home to dialogue, but it is a struggle with my son."

During a rough arrest of 113 international demonstrators against the occupation, an Israeli Jewish man was being deliberately dragged to the bus through the gravel, along with other demonstrators from around the globe. Another Israeli soldier motioned to the first to stop. Then he bent down himself and picked up the young Jewish man in his arms and carried him to the bus without further bodily harm.

A Palestinian woman, an author and the first Palestinian member of the international social justice writers' organization "PEN," told us, "One hundred years of struggling for peace, even 1,000 years

struggling for peace, is better than one day of war.”

A Jewish Israeli graduate of Harvard Divinity School, told us that we must do more than find a political solution to this dilemma. “We must reach a spiritual depth. We must first acknowledge the damage done to the Palestinians, and the damage done to the Jews. Secondly, we must next confess each of our parts in the violence.... Yes, we Jews are pathological about Palestinians. We do become involved in a victimhood mentality due to WW II. But you Christians have also created years of anti-Jewish sentiment, and if the tides were turned and Palestinians were more powerful, would they not be doing the same to us? It is a difficult journey we have to take together.”

Many of the international demonstrators visited Yad Va Shem, the Holocaust memorial in West Jerusalem. I shivered to see once again the damage we human beings are capable of doing to one another. And then I shuddered as I recognized one human rights violation after another by Nazis to the Jews that were being repeated by Jews against Palestinians. I knew that the museum property itself included one corner of a buried Palestinian village where over 300 Palestinians were massacred by Israeli soldiers in an effort to encourage all Palestinians to flee the country. This was only one tiny piece of property that was the source of so much rage.

The Palestinian Israeli Elias Chacour, priest and author of *Blood Brothers*, famous for asking Holy Land pilgrims, “Are you here to see the dead stones, or the living?,” asked those of us sitting in his home, “Do you believe God ever sanctions violence?” When answered in the negative, he replied, “Neither do I.”

In speech after speech, I heard with my own ears Israeli Jews, including Israeli reserve soldiers, testify that it was the *intifada* that had awakened in them

the scandal of the occupation. They owed the *intifada* the awakening of their own conscience. In the words of Ari Shavit, reserve soldier and Israeli journalist:

*“For this is what the Palestinians have brought upon us by means of the intifada: they have provided, in the most unambiguous way, no possibility of an enlightened occupation. They have forced us to choose territories or decency. Occupation or fairness. And yes, that is indeed the question of the hour. An acute and urgent question, demanding an answer at once. It is not at this hour a matter of territories in exchange for peace. It is a matter of territories in exchange for our humanity.”* [“On Gaza Beach,” *The New York Review*, July 18, 1991, p. 6.]

On a hot summer Sunday morning in the Valley of Armageddon, Megiddo, a group of 180 world citizens followed a young Scottish man playing “Amazing Grace” on his bagpipes en route toward the West Bank to hear firsthand the voices of the Palestinians living under their own apartheid system. I was one of those world citizens, and we were met by the Israeli Defense Force (IDF), both police and army, at the Green Line, the boundary of Palestinian holdings prior to the war in 1967. The bagpiper was met by a contingent of cavalry, and he and a few cohorts kept the horses focused while the rest of us tried to proceed through the police line. One hundred and thirteen of us were arrested, some so roughly that I personally feared great pain. Our nonviolence mellowed the arresting process, however. We were bussed through Galilee twice on that Pentecost Sunday, finally landing in jail near Haifa.

Jail is discomfort, dishes so greasy that any food would be rendered unappetizing, and the norm is being threatened and yelled at for nothing and everything. Yet jail is the great school. An Israeli reserve soldier, arrested with us, translated the Hebrew and reminded us of our

rights under Israeli law. He carried the scar of a Palestinian rock on his head. Sister Ann Montgomery told of her time with the Gulf Peace Team in Iraq. The retired Amsterdam women taught us what it means to be resourceful in jail, including the writing of new songs that brought tears of laughter. The British woman taught us how to dry laundry in a cinderblock cell with 16 beds and a hole in the floor in the shower for our toilet. The Israeli Jewish woman jailed with us never failed to ask in Hebrew for that elusive role of toilet paper that was begrudged by the authorities. I learned the comfort of Love across international lines at a time when fatigue was all I thought I was capable of. When we walked out of jail 48 hours later, we knew our Jewish Israeli and Palestinian friends could be called back into jail at any point, or harassed in their homes.

When I finally managed to hail one of the few cabs at the Garden of Gethsemane on a high Muslim Holy Day to leave for home, the driver asked if I was part of “that peace group.” I gulped, not knowing if the driver was Palestinian or Jewish, and responded, “Yes.” He said, “Good, I want to help you.” I realized that though I had seen some dead stones in the Holy Land, whether in the walls of the Old Jerusalem or on the hillside of Shepherd’s Field, I had met the living Christ in the lives of a variety of brave Jewish Israeli and Palestinian men and women. Elias Chacour was right to encourage those of us pilgrimaging in the Holy Lands to look beyond the ancient shrines to the living. These people, living in one of the most volatile places on the face of the earth, dared all the odds to wage peace in the midst of rage. 



by William R. MacKaye

**A**s soon as Virginia Mollenkott began to speak, I was troubled all over again by those long-time *Witness* supporters who declined to participate in the magazine's 75th anniversary forum because it was taking place on what was perceived as alien if not enemy turf.

They should have been here to hear this. Mollenkott, forthright in her proclamation that homosexual love is a God-given gift for homosexual people, wasn't fazed for a moment by the procession of students who wanted to challenge her views by Bible chapter and verse.

Reared among the deeply conservative Plymouth Brethren (the same Church that spawned Garrison Keillor), Mollenkott is steeped in Scripture at least as profoundly as were her prospective challengers, students at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. She just doesn't find the same message there.

Take Romans 1:26-27, a passage often construed as a Pauline ban on all same-sex relationships.

That's not what it's about at all, Mollenkott told her audience -- it couldn't be, because Paul didn't know about homosexual orientation. His condemnation went rather to the disordered lives of pagan Greek freemen who understood sexual expression only in terms of exercising sexual power over powerless women, slaves, and boys.

Mollenkott is equally forthright in the seriousness with which she takes the Bible as teacher. Challenged by Stephen Noll, Trinity's academic dean and author of

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one of the four papers on the Authority of Scripture prepared for the House of Bishops, to disclose whether she would feel any differently about the permissibility of homosexual behavior if it could be shown unequivocally that Paul *did* know about homosexual orientation and *did* intend to condemn homosexual behavior in all its forms, she didn't resort to the obvious escape route of saying she didn't accept the premise.

"I would," she replied.

Then, after some reflection, she conceded that in the end she would probably

"Curing" homosexuality is perceived as an important ministry by many on the Trinity campus, and the frequency with which comments about homosexuality arose during the day's programs seemed to signal a preoccupation with the subject approaching the obsessive.

Chester Talton, another forum participant, who is suffragan bishop of Los Angeles, pointed out that the amount of time Church members spend talking about sexuality inevitably leads to neglect of many other concerns that ought to attract the attention of those committed to walk-

ing in the footsteps of Jesus — eradicating racism in the Church and in society, for example. Talton, who is African American, recalled going to the True Light Baptist Church as a child with his grandmother, "singing songs of suffering" and experiencing that "somehow God was tied up with all of that."

His grandmother, said Talton, never could abide Paul. "She just couldn't understand how he could encourage Philemon to return to his master," he said.

Nan Arrington Peete, a member of the board of *The Witness*, who is canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Atlanta and also African American, chided Trinity students for their preoccupation with questions of sexuality and for failing to address examples of systemic evil in their questions. If they were as concerned as they said they were about the authority of Scripture, she noted sharply, they should be applying those concerns to issues of justice.

Mollenkott and Talton spoke to forum participants — 80 people who identified themselves with the *Witness* community as well as the 92 Trinity constituents (a small additional number declined to ally themselves with either institution) -- at an afternoon gathering at which they were



take the guidance of her heart and her experience over the guidance Noll asked her to suppose was to be found in Paul, but with evident sadness she said this would amount to "breaking faith."

Mollenkott's comments, and the passion with which she spoke of her love for God and her experience of God's love for her, some of it mediated through the experience of lesbian relationships, formed an emotional high point of the extraordinary 75th Anniversary Forum on Evangelism that *The Witness* conducted October 24 on the Trinity campus. Her comments were also plainly unsettling to many of 92 Trinity faculty members, students, and supporters who attended the forum.

described as “speaking from the *Witness* constituency but not for it.”

Joining with them to speak “from the Trinity School for Ministry constituency but not for it” were William Frey, dean and president of Trinity, who is former bishop of Colorado, and Hays, a priest who is assistant professor of pastoral theology, dean of student life, and the only woman on the faculty of Trinity. Mary Hays was breathtakingly honest when she said her most recent “experience of God’s presence during a time of crisis” was in the midst of her anger and pain at the way some on Trinity’s campus had received her as the first female faculty member. Frey spoke of the freedom the resurrection gave him from chemical-dependency after he and his family were deported by Guatemala military.

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann, editor and publisher of *The Witness*, moderated the panel and set the discussion in motion before opening it to questions from the audience.

Earlier in the day the forum participants prayed Morning Prayer together in the seminary chapel, broke into small groups for study of Romans 12:1-2, and engaged in their choice of two of five workshops: “The Authority of Scripture,” led by Verna Dozier, author of *The Dream of God*; “The Traditional Way: Native Faith and the Imperial Religion,” led by Quentin Kolb, a Native American priest who is urban missionary of the Diocese of Utah; “Sexuality, Feminism and Faith,” led by Mary Meader, a Massachusetts therapist who is a deputy to General Convention and a member of the Joint Commission on Pastoral Teaching on Sexuality; “The Powers and Principalities Viewed Through the Work of William Stringfellow,” led by Andrew McThenia, a professor of law at Washington and Lee University and chair of the board of *The Witness*; and “The Multicultural Challenge: Can the Church Meet the Chal-

lenge to Integrate?” led by Butch Naters-Gamarra, who is the Panamanian-born rector of St. Stephen’s Church in Boston.

So what was gained by participating in the forum held under the circumstances it was? We fingers and toes and vertebrae and tendons and intestines of Christ’s body were challenged once again to discern where we are to build up the social structures that we have received and where we are to destroy them and start anew. In my experience, unfamiliar and possibly uncongenial surroundings stimulate that kind of reflection. Part of our call — liberals and conservatives, radicals and reactionaries alike — is not to make ourselves at home too quickly in a world in which we don’t belong.

As the day ended in offering of Evening Prayer, with a rousing African song-dance substituted for the familiar Magnificat, I looked about me at those with whom I’d spent the day. I can’t say whether I shared a common *experience* of faith with those who differed from me, especially in the great sense of interior freedom that the gospel has given me.

To me at 58, many of the Trinity students seemed astonishingly young (es-

pecially since nationally these days only one Episcopal seminarian out of five is under 30) and every bit as rigid as I was at their age. Some seemed to think complex questions had shorthand answers. (One student asked panel participants to state their definition of sin and their doctrine of the atonement in two sentences.) An African student, evidently reacting negatively to the tolerant views of sexual variances expressed during the day, asserted that African Muslims lead holier lives than Christians. No one commented, but I found that tough to swallow, given that the Muslim masters of the Sudan are currently using mass murder to wipe out the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches to which many recently living southern Sudanese adhered.

Be these observations of diversity as they may, many hands reached heavenwards when the congregation — and it was a congregation! — belted out Hymn 490, “I want to walk as a child of the light, I want to follow Jesus,” as day slid into dusk. Whether the upraised hands signaled charismatic transport or sheer exuberance, I cannot doubt that *this* was a yearning shared by all. **TW**

I find that it’s too soon to offer my perspective on *The Witness*’ forum. I was impressed by the commitment of the Trinity students and the seriousness with which they try to live the Gospel. I also saw Trinity’s location in a small working-class steel town as indicative of a rejection of the pomp and pretension that *can* be integral to the Episcopal Church. The staff could not have been more welcoming.

People spoke with striking honesty about their lifestyles and beliefs. The day was appreciated by many, including Trinity students, but one wrote afterwards: “It was sinful for us to allow ourselves to be led in worship by

those who worship another god, to discuss sin with people who are proud of sin and defiantly unrepentant.” I’ve heard some were asking that the chapel be reconsecrated after our visit.

The feelings run deep. There was a scandal simply in being together. And a relief in confronting one another directly rather than through journals or inter-Church gossip.

Finally, I rely on Virginia Mollenkott’s wisdom when she said we simply present ourselves in a spirit of love and, beyond that, rely on God’s grace and agency in putting the day to right use.

—J.W-K.

(A video is to be released in 1993.)

## Militarism at school

A new local action project developed by the Episcopal Peace Fellowship (EPF) called "Choose Life" is now available for use with young people wrestling with career and other important life decisions in an increasingly military-positive social environment. Project resources include a survey tool for measuring the presence and influence of the military on high school campuses as well as activities that cover topics from "Vocational Discernment through the Eyes of Faith" to "Draft Registration and Conscientious Objection."

"Since it is increasingly difficult for youth to obtain financial assistance for education or to find meaningful employment, regardless of socioeconomic background, a military career may appear to be the best or only option available," say project designers Janet Chisholm and Judith Beck.

For "Choose Life" resource packets write EPF at PO Box 28156, Washington, D.C. 20038 or call 202-783-3380 (FAX 202-393-3695). Episcopalians should note that diocesan youth officers have been sent copies — the packet is designed to be duplicated.

Episcopal Church in Pasadena, Calif., for organizing and developing an AIDS service center, the first of its kind in that community. Sadly, even minimal AIDS activism continues to be an exception in the Episcopal Church — only 20 or so Episcopal dioceses are currently on record with AIDS policies and educational activities recommended by the 1992 General Convention.



Photo credit: Argus Photo, Cape Town

*Dioceses in the Church of the Province of Southern Africa wasted little time ordaining women to the priesthood once the province approved women priests last August. Here Archbishop Desmond Tutu is praying over Wilma Jacobsen and Margaret Vertue after ordaining them priests in Cape Town on September 29. Bishop David Russell of Grahamstown ordained Nancy Charton (the first woman deacon ordained by the province in 1985), Bridge Dickson and Su Groves on Sept. 5. "Our Church will be enriched by the ministry of women priests," Tutu remarked about the history-making ordinations. "It will be more compassionate, more caring, after being impoverished for so long."*

Charles, who will retire in June 1993 after eight years in the position.

## Eight to go

Deacon Mary Kay Bond of Salina, Kans., will likely soon become the Diocese of Western Kansas' first woman priest now that the diocese's Standing Committee contains a majority of women's ordination advocates. Last year, Episcopal Synod of America folks held enough seats to block Bond's ordination by abstaining from approval "for reasons of conscience." Angry reaction to that vote engendered a campaign to change the committee's composition at the diocese's annual convention last October. "The issues were made clear to delegates by their priests . . . and by a large portion of the Bishop's Annual Address," Bond reports. Bond's ordination will reduce to eight the number of Episcopal Church dioceses that have not ordained women to the priesthood.

## Affirmative action

The Church Deployment Office (CDO) has finally acted on its longstanding policy of equal opportunity and affirmative action by now automatically including women, blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Native Americans when it receives requests for candidate profiles — whether or not the parish or diocese making the request indicates a willingness to hire such persons (in practice, that willingness has been missing).

It could be, according to James G. Wilson, the CDO's executive director, that a woman or a person of color might be best qualified for a job, even though a parish or diocese may have excluded such candidates from its profiles request.

"I've seen parishes surprise themselves once they discover that the person who best meets their criteria is, for example, a woman," Wilson said. "They've surprised themselves by going ahead and hiring that woman."

## Honoring AIDS activism

At its annual meeting last October, members of the National Episcopal AIDS Coalition (NEAC) took time out to honor Deborah Harmon Hines of Massachusetts for her work as an early pioneer in educating and organizing on behalf of persons living with HIV/AIDS, particularly among people of color. The group also praised the congregation of All Saints

## We're proud

The Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Mass., has named William W. Rankin, a contributing editor of *The Witness* and a former chair of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company, its new dean and president. Rankin is rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Belvedere, Calif. He succeeds Otis



— Prepared by Julie A. Wortman

**L**ittle seems to have changed since *Brown v. Board of Education*, the landmark Supreme Court decision that declared segregated education unconstitutional because it is “inherently unequal.”

“In no school that I saw anywhere in the United States, were nonwhite children in large numbers truly intermingled with white children,” says Jonathan Kozol, author of *Savage Inequalities: Children in America’s Schools*. Many of the influential white people that Kozol interviewed considered segregation “a ‘past injustice’ that had been sufficiently addressed,” despite research clearly showing vast inequities in school funding, with white suburban schools receiving as much as two and a half times the funding of black and hispanic urban ones.

Clarissa Sligh uses elements from the history of the school desegregation struggle and from current events to fashion *Witness to Dissent: Memory, Yearning, and Struggle*, a sculptural installation that has been exhibited in Washington, D.C. and New York City.

Sligh is an artist with a social conscience, an African-American woman, and an adult who played an integral part in the civil rights movement as a child. In 1956, as tenth-grader Clarissa Thompson, she was named the lead plaintiff in what became the first successful school desegregation case in the state of Virginia. Her grades, psychological profile and standardized test scores were used as the basis for the arguments presented in

state and federal courts as part of the suit. In *Witness to Dissent*, Sligh takes this experience, simultaneously personal and profoundly public, and attempts to show its connections to the racial issues of today.

Sligh first solicited stories from more



**Witness to Dissent: Memory, Yearning and Struggle, a sculptural installation designed by Clarissa Sligh.**

than 100 artists and friends from a variety of ethnic and racial backgrounds, who all grew up during the civil rights movement. They were encouraged to jot their memories down quickly and without editing; their statements are now part of the installation, providing a backdrop of honest and conflicting emotions. In a gallery room awash in patriotic colors, blue stars and red stripes surround a white table and chair which are provided for visitors who might wish to contribute their own written “witness” about life in a segregated society.

A series of red books mounted on a red wall (perhaps as a reminder of the blood

shed in the struggle for equality) contain the texts of civil rights legislation dating back to the Emancipation Proclamation (the legalistic language of which stands in stark contrast to the very direct and personal writing in the “witness” statements). Overseeing the installation and its classroom-like reading and writing activities, is a large blue-tinted photograph of two little girls, one Negro, one Caucasian, with the caption “They want integration.” (The image was taken from a 1956 newspaper photo of Sligh and her classmate Ann Marx.)

While Sligh wants viewers to understand the legal and political history of the civil rights movement, she is interested in something more than a textbook chronology — she wants to focus on how segregation affected, and continues to affect, individual lives. Her use of autobiographical elements presents events from the vantage point of a confused teenager who has unwittingly found herself in a “public position of representativity.” She includes a videotape in which she seeks the perspectives of fam-

ily members, other artists and political activists. And, finally, through the “witness” statements themselves, she encouraged people to confront their own private feelings and observations about racial relations in the United States over the past 40 years, and to begin healing “the xenophobia which divides America to this day.”

**TW**

*art and society*

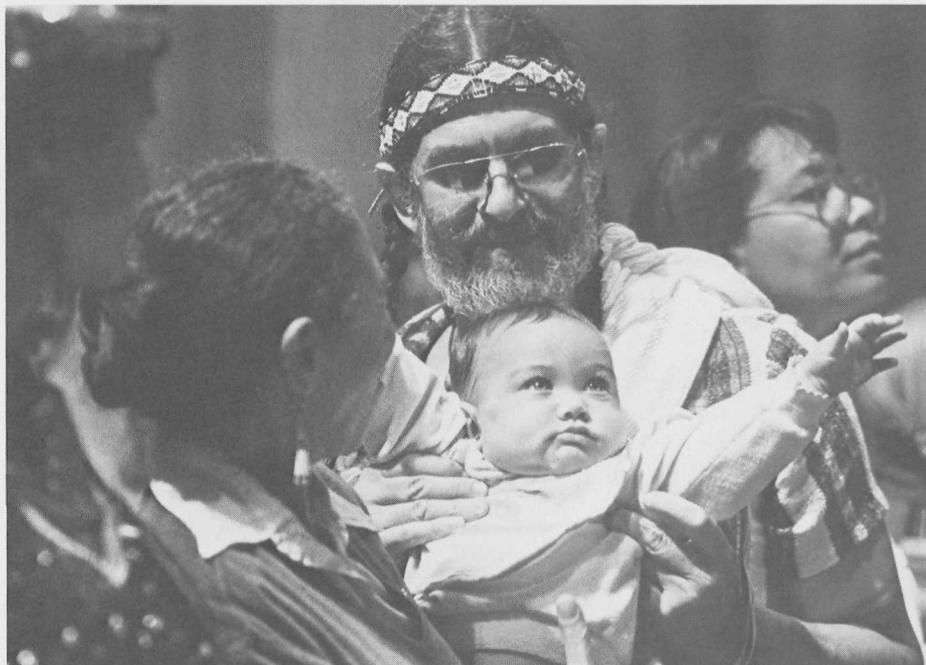
**Blaise Tobia** and **Virginia Maksymowicz**, Philadelphia artists, edit the Art & Society section of *The Witness*.

*[The following is adapted from the sermon preached by Steven Charleston, bishop of Alaska, at the Cultural Survival Celebration at Washington National Cathedral on October 12.]*

**W**hat brought you here today? Why are you here? Some of you have come out of anger. Some of you have come out of guilt. Some of you have come out of hope, and some out of need. Some have come to show solidarity, support. Some out of simple curiosity. I believe that whatever our personal answers may be to that simple but profound question, one thing can be said of us all: There is not a single person who is here by accident. We are gathered here for a reason, and it is the purpose of God that has brought us to this holy ground.

I will tell you what I believe that purpose is. It is to make of us a community, a people of God. From all four sacred directions we come to this place to be the living people of God, to be a new community, to start afresh and anew another 500 years together in the Americas. But the 500 years that will come forth from this place today will be a community dedicated not to greed, not to violence, but to peace, to reconciliation, a community of hope, a community of trust, a community of justice, a community of love. We are here, brothers and sisters all, by the will of God to be such a community. We are blessed by God on this sacred day to embody that new beginning.

And how do we do it? It begins with something as simple as remembering. To many of you this may not seem a powerful way for God to act in the lives of God's people. But I can tell you from my own tradition that the power to remember and to pass on the story of the people, generation unto generation, is the seed and the heart of what it means to be a tribe, to be the People of God. We tell our



Cultural Survival Celebration at the National Cathedral.

credit: Ruth Fremson

## Reclaiming America: an October 12 Celebration

by Steven Charleston

children the tradition of the people. We tell our story in song and in chant, in prophesy and in memory. We carry that on because it becomes for us the center of the tribe. There is a power that is released when we tell our story to one another. When we remember together, our shared history makes us a people.

What happened to us 500 years ago is our common story. It is not only the story of what happened to America's indigenous people. It is a story that has touched the lives of every culture and every race in this hemisphere. This has happened to you. We do not gather to remember something dead. My ancestors are witnesses to the truth of what happened here 500 years ago. They are a living testimony. Look

around you. See the native people gathered in this cathedral. There is a living testimony. And the truth never dies.

And how do we understand this truth of which I speak? There was a temple, a high holy place, the habitation of God Almighty. It stood on sacred ground, and its doors were open to all peoples of all nations. And once the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, came to Jerusalem, and approached that sacred place, what did he behold before him? There were many tables where business as usual was going on, where what had been sacred had now become profane. And what wonder and amazement did the people gathered around him exhibit when he strode forward and with a mighty hand turned them

over and spoke to the congregation, and said, "Not here. This is holy ground, and so it shall remain. For all people."

When Christopher Columbus planted his flag of conquest 500 years ago he stepped out onto sacred ground. In his blindness and his ignorance he thought he was conquering real estate. But he had stepped out onto the promised land for our people. This is the sacred place where we were called to be God's people and to give thanks and praise to the Creator. It was holy ground, and that flag of conquest planted deep within it drove home colonialism which is the beginning of our story. The tables were set up. Columbus in his ignorance and blindness opened our holy land for business. The tables were set and they are still doing thriving business today.

I choose only three names for the legacy of Christopher Columbus. The first is racism, the second is oppression, and the third is exploitation.

When Christopher Columbus came here, his first act was to seize innocent native people, men and women, bind them in chains, and take them back to Spain with him as slaves. And he did this because he thought they were less than human, because they were inferior. Colonialism brought us racism, and it is as alive today as it was 500 years ago. That racism has touched the lives of every person in this cathedral. It is not an experience unique to native people. Those of you who are proud to be of African descent need no message from me of the truth of what I am saying. Those of you who are from an Asian background, were you not used as cheap labor? Those of you who are of Hispanic origin, were you not those who toiled and still toil in the fields of colonial America? Racism continues to do a healthy traffic in the Native homeland, and every single day it defiles that which is holy and sacred.

And what of oppression that grows

from racism like insidious chains that ensnarl us all? Look to the south where whole nations have a majority of citizens who are indigenous, native people. Are they free? Look to the north, so smug, while in our own cities the economic, social, and political oppression of people of all colors continues unabated to this day. You know raw power is the currency of colonialism, and it is traded across the Americas every day.

And exploitation. I don't need to tell you how deeply my ancestors loved and revered this sacred place, to such a degree, with such passion, with such immeasurable love, that they called it their Mother. And how has the earth been treated over the last 500 years? Our forests are cleared of their timber for profit. Our rivers are polluted with sewage for profit. The very air we breathe is foul for profit. We have taken this Mother and abused her more vilely and more insidiously than at any other time in the history of the tribe of human beings. We have carved her up and sold her on the tables of colonialism that do a brisk business in the buying and selling of the earth itself. Is there anyone here that will not pay the price for that abuse? If this be the truth, what are you going to do about it?

I cannot answer for you. I can only answer for myself. And I say to you, I will stand with my ancestors. I will stand with my ancestors who for generations fought with every ounce of their strength against the dying of the light. Fought against racism, oppression, and the destruction of our Mother, the earth. I stand with them, and I stand with my people who continue that struggle every day of their lives because

they remember. I stand with my people and I stand with my God. Hear me: Christ is coming. The Christ who does not forget God's people is coming, is coming! Behold, Christ comes in a sacred way from all four sacred directions. And this Christ can see with the same clarity those tables of colonial, capitalist commerce that have defiled the sacred land of God and abused the people of God, and with a mighty hand this Christ shall reach out and those tables shall be turned.

My brothers, my sisters, is this too political a sermon? It's a day of liberation. Receive it. From this moment on, you will never be the same.

Here is the word of God for those of us commissioned on this day to a new community: "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus who loved us."

Columbus was only a conqueror. Colonialism is only a conqueror. We are more than conquerors, we are more than just survivors, we are those victorious, those brought to life again, those who know the truth, those who hear the truth,

those who speak the truth, and hear the words of St. Paul: "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation

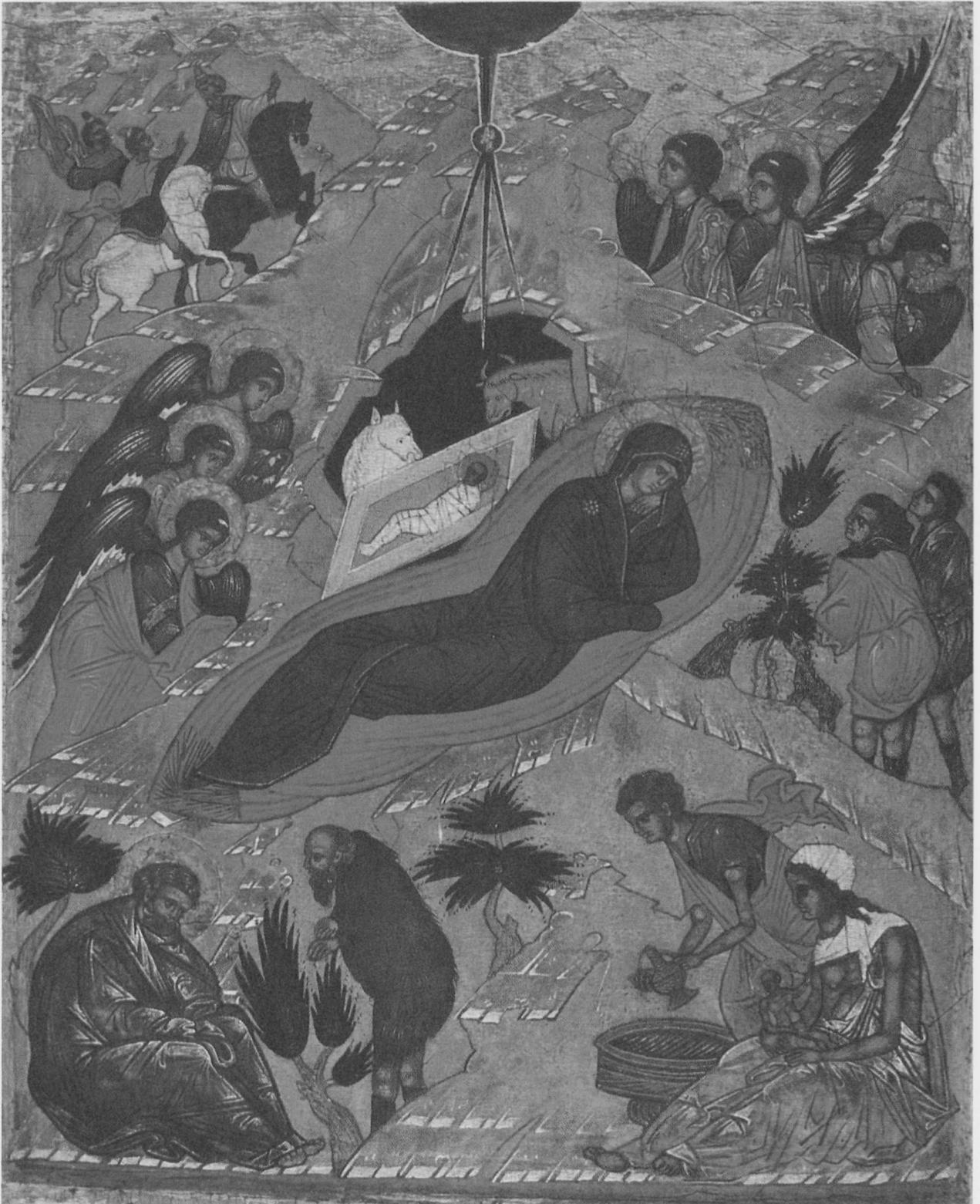
will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Brothers and sisters, we are more than conquerors. I stand to proclaim a new beginning. I stand to proclaim a new community. I stand with my ancestors. I stand with my people. I stand with God who stands with me. Amen. **UV**

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*From all four sacred directions we come to this place to be the living people of God, to be a new community, to start afresh another 500 years together in the Americas.*

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**Geburt  
Christi**

credit: 15th c. icon  
from Novgorod,  
Russia.  
Collection of  
George Hann.

# A Child under threat: El Salvador's accords

by Linda C. Crockett

**I**n the midst of the tension in El Salvador, there is a wonderful hope. Salvadoran Lutheran Bishop Medardo Gomez describes the Peace Accords as a newly born Child, in need of nurture to grow to strength and wholeness. This Child of Peace was born in New York at midnight on December 31, 1991, when agreement — mediated by the United Nations — was reached by the Government and FMLN. The umbilical cord was cut in Mexico on January 16, 1992, when the Accords were formally signed. And the Child was baptized on the Popular Altar in the Civic Plaza in San Salvador on February 1, when thousands gathered to celebrate the first day of the ceasefire.

“There are Herods who want to kill the Child,” Gomez said. “We are in a critical stage where all could be lost. It is important we be vigilant over the life of the Child. It must be the responsibility of Solidarity, which helped give birth to the Child, to help us assure that the Child grows to full strength.”

The Accords address a cease fire; purging of military officers responsible for the scorched earth policies and human rights violations; land redistribution; incorporation of the FMLN into civilian life; reduction of the military, including dissolution of the Treasury Police, National Guard and the five elite rapid response battalions; and creation of a new Civilian Police Force.

A nine-month calendar, ending Octo-

**Linda Crockett**, of Adamstown, Pa. is a founding member of Project Via Crucis and participated in the sixth annual delegation to El Salvador.

ber 31, detailed measures to be taken by each side through the delicate process of demilitarization and construction of a new political, social and economic landscape. The United Nations has proposed an extension until December 15, which both the U.S.-supported ARENA government and the FMLN have accepted. The FMLN is complying with full disarmament.

ARENA, meanwhile, is behind schedule. Its attempt in March to avoid dismantling the security forces was bolstered by an April Legislative Assembly vote that restructured the National Guard and Treasury Police by transferring them into other parts of the military. Only after an outcry from the United Nations and the public were the security forces finally disbanded. Governmental compliance is estimated at only about 50 percent.

Short-term and immediate danger is evident in the re-emergence of paramilitary death squads. Human rights violations are increasing. On October 11, a top FMLN military commander, Pablo Parado Andino, was ambushed and critically wounded by unknown men in military uniforms carrying M-16s at a roadblock. A member of the coffee workers' union was abducted October 13. His tortured body was found two days later. Paid ads by right-wing groups are appearing frequently in the newspapers, denouncing the Accords as treason, demanding that the FMLN disarm completely and threatening a new bloodbath.

The Ad Hoc Commission, set up under the Accords to review the human rights records of military officers, submitted their report to President Christiani on September 22, naming over 100 offi-

ers to be removed from the military. Under the Accords, the president has six weeks to carry out the recommendations. So far, no names have been made public and no officers have been removed. However, under the United Nations extension, the government is obligated to purge the military by 1993.

With painfully clear understanding that more of them may die in the struggle, the Salvadoran poor, along with the historic Churches, popular organizations, unions, and the FMLN, call the peace process “irreversible.” The Accords provide a foundation upon which a new model, characterized by full participation of the poor, can be constructed. The potential this represents is precisely the reason that this Peace Child, born of the blood of more than 75,000 martyrs, is viewed by the powers as dangerous.

What if other “third world” nations begin to take seriously this emerging model of a society that does not fit into any of the traditional East or West structures of political and economic power? What if the poor nations begin to adopt a model that supports their own internal development, and refuse to bleed their people dry to benefit “first world” economics and interests? What if the poor of the United States become conscientized as have the Salvadorans during the years of repression and war, awakening to the root causes of their poverty and organizing themselves to demand justice from our government?

“The Child has been born of Solidarity, Hope and Resistance,” Bishop Gomez says. “The Child, fully grown, will become Peace with Justice.” A threat to the Herods indeed. **TWC**





**Africa: Healer**  
credit: Betty  
LaDuke

# Rage, healing in South Africa

by David Chidester

**S**eptember 7, 1992, against the guns of Bisho, people fell, as the sudden, unexpected beehive of automatic rifle-fire left 29 dead and over 200 wounded. Yet another massacre, not ancient history, like Sharpeville 1960 or Soweto 1976, but today, like Sebokeng, Dobsonville, Boipatong, and over 50 other mass killings since 1990, Bisho stood out amidst the carnage of the daily death toll. It made reconciliation more difficult; it made calls for revenge and retribution easier to heed. In response, political leaders turned up the heat of the already boiling rhetoric. Religious leaders buried the dead.

"How much longer," Archbishop Desmond Tutu asked, "must we have to keep drying the people's tears?" People are in pain. If their grief turns to tears, it could just as easily turn to rage.

In South Africa, pain has assumed many, multiplying forms. It has resulted not only from the loss of loved ones, but also from the violations of humanity that have occurred in and through the routine humiliations and degradations, the recurring insults and occasional tortures, and the whole systematic, institutionalized apparatus of separation, exclusion, and dehumanization that came to be known as apartheid. South Africa has been a world of pain. However, if pain has been constant, the effects of pain have alternated between despair and rage. Despair

is obviously disempowering. Rage appears powerful, an explosive rush of violent energy seeking an outlet. Nevertheless, both despair and rage flow from the same river of pain.

Pain is a force that, among other things, poses the central challenge of being human. If pain turns into despair, the self is dehumanized. If pain turns into rage, the other is dehumanized, transformed into an object, a depersonalized target for righteous revenge or retribution. Being human, in these terms, is a dynamic, powerful equilibrium that is poised between a disempowered despair and an overempowered rage. Between those extremes, a space of mutual recognition can be negotiated in which humans can be human. After all, in African terms, a human is a human by virtue of recognizing others as human beings.

The Churches in South Africa have responded to rage in a variety of ways. The most predictable, perhaps, and least effective, have been issuing resolutions that call for peace. As might be expected, such resolutions have been largely useless in addressing the reality of grief, rage and violence in South Africa. Like the September, 1991 National Peace Accord, signed by all political leaders, but ignored by all the combatants on the ground, church resolutions have floated like bits of paper in the whirlwind.

Christians in South Africa have also addressed rage more meaningfully through rituals of healing. Many local

churches, especially, but not only, those known as African independent or indigenous churches, have drawn upon specifically African religious resources to address despair and rage. In traditional African religion, the cause of pain, whether it results from violence against or violations of human beings, can be identified as witchcraft. A much misunderstood symbolic idiom, witchcraft beliefs and practices locate the cause of human suffering in the antisocial, and therefore antihuman, acts of evil agents. In response, a person identified as an evil agent can confess and be reincorporated into the human community. As long as witches remain at large, however, people must be protected. If affected, people must be healed. If despair and rage are symptoms of the insidious effects of witchcraft, healing must address these symptoms. Following traditional practice, some Christians resort to sacred medicines, or muti, for protection from evil. By contrast, members of African independent churches reject the use of muti,

relying instead on moral purity and spiritual healing.

African independent churches, South Africa's largest religious constituency, now accounting for the religious affiliation of

roughly 40 percent of the population and divided into over 5,000 denominations, have found ways to incorporate traditional African religious resources, such as rites of purification, reverence for ancestors and detection of witches into a Christian framework. For the most part, these churches have been apolitical. They have been local, township-based havens, or rural sanctuaries, of spiritual security in a harsh world.

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*In African religion, the cause of pain, violations of human beings, can be identified as witchcraft. As long as witches remain at large, people must be protected.*

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**David Chidester** is associate professor of religious studies at the University of Cape Town and director of the Institute for Comparative Religion in Southern Africa. He is author of *Religions of South Africa* (Routledge, 1992) and *Shots in the Streets: Violence and Religion in South Africa* (Beacon, 1991).

In April 1992, however, the largest African independent church, the Zion Christian Church based in Moriah, north of Pretoria, provided a platform from which Nelson Mandela, F.W. de Klerk, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi addressed an Easter gathering of two million Zionists. Although the congregation listened attentively to three political leaders, they responded most enthusiastically to the Zionist prophet, Bishop Lekganyane, who presented the promise, not of political resolution, but of spiritual healing. In Zionist practice, healing is often enacted in dramatic performances in which despair and rage are exorcised through the laying on of hands, or washed away through baptism, or purged through ritual vomiting, or stamped under foot in vigorous, communal dancing. The cause of suffering might persist, as the witches remain at large — even occupying positions of political power, but the symptoms of despair and rage can be eased through ritual healing.

In counterpoint to rituals of spiritual healing, some Christians adopt a “prophetic” stance, identifying, and identifying with, the suffering that has caused the liberation movements to resort to violence. Working with the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and the Azanian Peoples Organization,

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*In Zionist practice, healing is often enacted in dramatic performances in which despair and rage are exorcised through the laying on of hands, washed away through baptism, purged through ritual vomiting, or stamped under foot in vigorous, communal dancing. The cause of suffering may persist, as the witches remain at large — even occupying positions of political power, but the symptoms of despair and rage can be eased through ritual healing.*

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Church people have struggled for an essentially religious, even apocalyptic, spiritual redemption. Banned and forced underground after 1960, liberation movements resorted to armed struggle, in part, as Nelson Mandela explained in the early 1960s, to channel popular anger, which might otherwise explode in terrorism. In prospect of revolutionary victory, liberation movements also promised a spiritual recovery of the humanity that had been denied under apartheid. If rage could be transformed into disciplined resistance, then resistance could result in human redemption.

In the second half of the 1980s, many of the most visible and vocal South African religious leaders aligned themselves with the promise of redemption through

resistance. The *Kairos Document*, for example, declared that any genuine Christian Church had “to confront and to disobey the state in order to serve God.” In the 1990s, however, with the revolutionary parousia indefinitely delayed, and a contested era of negotiations entered, despair still could be countered, and rage channeled, through acts of protest. As part of its mass action campaign, the ANC led 50,000 marchers into Bisho, a ritualized act of protest against the oppressive military rule that had been established there with the support of the South African government. Hopeful protest, however, was brutally slaughtered at Bisho.

During the ANC’s organized mass action in the early 1950s, known as the Defiance Campaign, labor leader Moses Kotane declared that government authorities “are Christians but they eat people.” Forty years later, at Bisho and elsewhere, the state continues to eat people with cold, calculating rationality. The river of pain continues to flow through South Africa.

If Christian Churches have addressed the despair and rage born of pain, it has not been through Church resolutions, but by providing practical resources of healing and hope in which people can find refuge. Only addressing the symptoms perhaps, rituals of spiritual healing and hopeful protest may nevertheless make pain bearable until the causes of grief and rage can begin to be more directly addressed through a negotiated political settlement. TW

**Notice!**

The Witness publishes ten issues a year. The January and February issues are combined and will be mailed in the third week of January.



**A**t the Phoenix General Convention in July 1991, bishops shouted at each other, violated the confidence of executive sessions, and generally embarrassed themselves. Shocked by their own behavior, they held a special meeting at Kanuga the next spring, meeting in small groups for bible sharing and reflection on their role as bishops, seeking to restore a sense of community, or at least civility, to their interactions.

Moving on gingerly, their next regular meeting, in September 1992 in Baltimore, combined the small group format — focused this time on the authority of Scripture — with some quasi-public sessions, most notably a brief address and Q-&-A period with the visiting Archbishop of Canterbury. They plan another retreat at Kanuga in the spring, to continue working on their common life.

Most post-meeting reactions to Kanuga and Baltimore have been cautiously worded, along the lines of: “We needed to get to know one another.” Less diplomatic sentiments have also been heard, ranging from “we need to stop navel-gazing and get on with the business of the Church” and “this is just one more way to avoid dealing with difficult issues” to “the legislative model should be abandoned; everything should be done through bible-based small groups” and “bishops should reclaim the magisterium, teaching the rest of the Church instead of expecting Convention to decide by majority vote.”

What is going on here? Should the rest of us, laity and clergy, at home and in the House of Deputies, be worried?

### Disaster or Turning Point?

The eruption of ungentlemanly be-

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**Pamela W. Darling** is an ECPC board member and Church historian from Philadelphia, Pa. Artist **Edward Bisone** works in Santa Ana, Calif.



Figure with halo, gagged.

credit: Edward Bisone

## Critiquing collegiality

by Pamela W. Darling

havior in Phoenix blew the lid off tensions that had been building for many years. Personal antagonisms between a few individuals merely exposed a web of conflict and suspicion previously hidden under the veneer of old-boy's-club geniality.

There wouldn't be anything particularly significant about this — after all, the House of Bishops is just made up of sinners like the rest of the Church — were it not for the point in history at which the blow-up occurred. The 1991 Convention began in controversy over racism — both the seemingly intractable problem of racist structures in Church and society, and the location of the Convention in Arizona which had just voted against observing Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Most

of the shouting in Phoenix stemmed from outraged disagreements about the Church's treatment of gay and lesbian people, especially regarding ordination. And the fault line dividing people on the issue of sexuality lies very close to the line drawn by those opposed to the ordination of women and, not so long ago, by those resisting Church involvement in the civil rights struggle.

This is not a coincidence. In both Church and society, changes in policy and attitude toward women, gay men and lesbians, like those affecting people of color, attack the foundations of Western patriarchy, relaxing the restrictions which keep power and authority in the hands of white, male, ostensibly-straight people. To the extent that the episcopacy has

been a patriarchal institution, its system of authority presuming paternalistic control of the faithful by their “fathers in God” and its members accustomed to the privileges of belonging to an elite group, it too is under attack.

### Protecting the Status Quo

In response to these challenges, the House of Bishops has repeatedly appealed to images of unity and collegiality in an attempt to prevent individual bishops from moving ahead of the group, and conversely promoted an agree-to-disagree attitude toward those who lag behind. Some historical precursors to the crisis in Phoenix shed light on this process:

1) In 1966, the House of Bishops censured civil rights activist Bishop James A. Pike for the disregard of “collegiality” implicit in his provocative writings and highly publicized recognition of Deaconess Phyllis Edwards as a full-fledged deacon in the Diocese of California — four years before the 1970 General Convention eliminated distinctions between female and male deacons.

2) After the House of Deputies rejected the ordination of women in 1973, a slim majority of those remaining in the House of Bishops at the end of Convention appealed to “collegiality and mutual loyalty” in the hope of dissuading individual bishops from ordaining women anyhow.

3) In 1974, the House of Bishops voted to “decry” the actions of three retired bishops who ordained eleven women to the priesthood in Philadelphia “in violation of the collegiality of the House of Bishops,” and censured them the following year after efforts to bring them to trial were stymied. The ordination of four more women by another bishop in Washington in 1975 was also “decried.”

4) A year after the 1976 General Convention did open the priesthood and episcopate to women, the House of Bishops seemed to set collegiality aside, unilaterally

declaring in its “conscience clause” that no one was really bound by the canon about women’s ordination. In the hope of avoiding outright schism, they persuaded themselves that its clearly prescriptive non-discriminatory language was meant



to be “permissive” only (an interpretation rejected by subsequent Conventions, but still proclaimed by many bishops), and ushered in the prolonged period of contradictory teaching and practice in which we find ourselves still.

5) In 1989, as Bishop Barbara Harris attended her first meeting, the House of Bishops responded to the newly-formed Episcopal Synod of America’s promise of disregard for canons regarding both women’s ordination and diocesan boundaries with a fuzzy statement of brotherly love (appropriately enough, written in Philadelphia) and an even fuzzier assertion that resistance to ordaining women was “a recognized theological position” in the Anglican Communion.

6) In 1990, the House of Bishops “dis-associated” itself from Bishop John Spong after his highly publicized ordination of a gay man who lived with his male partner,

citing as the “authoritative position of the Church at this time” a recommendation from the 1979 General Convention that the ordination of a “practicing” homosexual was not “appropriate.”

7) In 1991, amidst the name-calling in Phoenix, the House of Bishops narrowly backed away from censuring two other bishops for ordaining people who openly shared their lives with persons of the same sex, agreeing instead that such ordinations cause “pain and damage to the collegiality and credibility of this House” and calling for a process to develop consensus on the issue.

8) In 1992, the House of Bishops took no action against retired Bishop Donald Davies, who violated canon law by entering a diocese against its bishop’s wishes to confirm members of a break-away congregation, which affiliated with the “Missionary Diocese” established by the Episcopal Synod of America to protest the ordination of women and of gay and lesbian people.

### Understanding Inconsistency

These incidents from our last quarter century show a curious pattern. Sometimes the canons are rigidly enforced and sometimes they are interpreted away. Sometimes recommendations and tradition are treated as though they have the force of law and sometimes they are discreetly ignored. Sometimes collegiality means uniformity of practice and a single “mind of the house” and sometimes it allows disagreement and contradictory practice.

This inconsistency becomes explicable when analyzed in terms of inclusion: canons and statements which exclude categories of people from the ordained ministry carry more weight than those which include, and bishops whose actions support continued exclusion are tolerated, while, until the Phoenix Convention, bishops who acted to include those previously excluded were punished.

Why should this be so? In any expanding group there is an unconscious backlash phenomenon that prompts those who match the previous norm to resist the incursion of "others" — whether new waves of immigrants, or new categories of people seeking access to the ordination process, or new bishops who don't fit the elite white male model.

The fact is, the House of Bishops, like the rest of the clergy and lay leadership, is beginning to reflect the real demographics of the Church. About half the currently active bishops were consecrated since Edmond Browning became Presiding Bishop in 1985. Most of the non-white bishops ever consecrated in the American Church sit in the House today. Barbara Harris broke the male monopoly in 1989, and Jane Dixon's consecration last month lowers the psychological barriers to the election of even more women as bishops. Though no active bishop has yet self-identified as gay, it is well-known that there have long been gay bishops, some sharing life with same-sex partners. Elsewhere in the national Church, Pamela P. Chinnis is President of the House of Deputies, and only 45 percent of the elected members of the Executive Council are white men. And in this diverse context, the differences among white men themselves are more visible.

### Hope for the Future

The myth of the straight white male "fathers of the Church" has collapsed, and with it old understandings about authoritative teaching in the Church. There was no consensus in Phoenix — not about sexuality, and not about how to treat bishops who violate the old boundaries of collegiality. Some floun-

dering around is to be expected as we figure out how to deal with these new circumstances. A new model of episcopal leadership must be found to replace the old, which was too entwined with the perspectives and assumptions of the few to serve the many well.

There are voices which bemoan the breakdown of consensus, the loss of unity, the erosion of traditional understandings of authority. Many harbor a nostalgic desire to return to the good old days when "everyone" agreed on values, on mores, on standards of faith and practice, on how to be the Church in the world.

But there never really was such a time. The old consensus among those permitted to exercise authority in the Church did not take account of the perspectives, the wisdom, or the needs of many others. The Church seemed to speak with a single voice, because many others were silenced. As they begin to be heard, as the "others"

enter the ordained ministry and join in the councils of the Church, ears tuned to a single note at first hear only cacophony. We don't know who to listen to, whose testimony to believe, whose lead to follow. And we hate the uncertainty of

it all. Egypt looks good to those stumbling around in the wilderness.

If the temptation to turn back is resisted, a stronger, wiser leadership could develop. No longer homogenous or monolithic, the House of Bishops could

use its own interactions to teach the Church and the world something about co-existing with "the other" in love. It could find a new approach to "authoritative teaching" that draws its power from the pooled experience, insights and wisdom of the whole people of God. It could find courage to grant the same tolerance to those calling for greater inclusion as to those unable to accept some of their sisters and brothers. It could emerge

from this introspective interlude with a deeper sense of "unity" and "collegiality," no longer confused with uniformity but grounded in our common love of the one God in whom we all live and move and have our being. Let it be so. **TW**

*The myth of the straight white male "fathers of the Church" has collapsed, and with it old understandings about authoritative teaching in the Church.*

*No longer homogenous or monolithic, the House of Bishops could use its own interactions to teach the Church and the world something about co-existing with "the other" in love.*

### Fundraising policy

Fundraising for *The Witness* will be composed of one annual appeal from *Friends of The Witness* in the Spring. Readers will not receive emergency or irregular appeals throughout the year.

Board members of the Episcopal Church Publishing Co. have taken on this task in an effort to support the magazine and its staff.

Subscription revenue, at \$60,000, covers less than one-fifth of the total annual magazine budget, so additional revenues will always be necessary. *The Witness* is fortunate to have an endowment that supplies \$220,000 a year. The balance needed to cover the \$328,000 is another \$48,000.

*The Friends of The Witness'* fundraising letter went out later than usual this year. In the future, it will arrive in April or May. Our thanks to all of you who made donations for 1992! Your gifts make a critical difference.

**E**mma Mashinini knows the feel of outrage in her bones. There was a day when South African government repression drove the name of her baby from her mind. That's a hard thing to forgive.

Mashinini, now the officer for justice and reconciliation in the Anglican Province of South Africa, spent six months enduring solitary confinement and torture in 1981.

"They fetched me from my home in the early hours of the morning in Soweto," Mashinini explained during a recent telephone interview. "They pushed us all out of the house, even my husband. They went through all our letters and pictures. They put me in solitary confinement for six months.

"I was very angry to be kept in prison when I had not committed any crime. We had a lot of work to be done in the community and I should have been at home. There was a terrible day when I was sitting in a cell and I had forgotten my baby's name. I could see her face, but I could not place a name on her."

The thing that kept her sane, Mashinini says, was her faith. "I had someone to talk to all the time — I was talking to my Lord. I was in a weak position in prison but I became very strong when I demanded to have a visit from the Church and holy communion during Easter time.

*"I wasn't prepared to give in — to commit suicide or change my lifestyle. I was not going to please them. I said I will stand up against them."*



Emma Mashinini

Courtesy of Archbishop Desmond Tutu's office

## Confronting apartheid

by Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann

said I will stand up against them."

Ten years later, Mashinini's commitment is unflagging, but she says she is confused about the politics of South Africa for the first time in her memory.

As a child, forced by the South African government to relocate twice, she knew who her enemy was. That conviction was sustained during her trade union activism, imprisonment and Church work.

But suddenly, at the age of 63, she is confused.

"Today it is very distressing — you hear an eight-month-old child has been shot, a 90-year-old man has been killed. When a worker can go on a train and chop people....

"For the first time I am confused. I say, 'Lord, am I weakening? Why am I confused?' They want us to be confused. I fight against it. I do not want to be weakened by this system."

In Mashinini's view, part of the problem is that while ecumenical Church lead-

ers launched the 1991 peace accords, they officially stepped back once the government and big business leaders were on board. Unfortunately, she says, the accords predicated a new constitution on "an end to violence." Consequently, those resisting a new constitution had reason to promote factions and violence.

"We know there are people behind the many killings of our people, but why are we so weak to give in to instructions that you must kill? It is unlike South African children. Once you are an elder person, you are the mother and father of all South African children."

White Afrikaaners have often objected to Church support for political change, Mashinini said, although she notes that some young Afrikaaners are refusing military service because they understand it to be unjust.

"They know about these things. They cannot be ignorant. We speak about justice and equality. They always sit there

*Witnesses,  
the quick and the dead*

"I wasn't prepared to give in — to commit suicide or change my lifestyle — that's exactly what [the government] wanted. I was not going to please them. I

Jeanie Wylie-Kellermann is editor/publisher of *The Witness*.

— but what does it mean to them? Does it mean anything?"

Mashinini, raised an Anglican, has always been able to rely on the Church to speak out against forced relocation, even when it meant Church leaders would be deported. The Church provided meeting space for the union movement, just as it currently addresses issues of homelessness, land distribution, the death penalty, prison life, and the anti-conscription movement. Belatedly, she says, the Church has also affirmed the humanity of women by ordaining them.

She also draws hope from the indigent Christian Churches which lay a claim on 40 percent of the South African population. [See page 37.]

"These Churches reach the most humble of the people. They do so much. They may not have the kind of liturgy we have, but they do the laying on of hands; they pray for the people. People who cannot afford to go to doctors, go to those Churches and they find comfort. I appreciate them. When we serve on committees we never want to be without them. They are a force to reckon with — they are large numbers. They understand the need for change. They are the ones who are in the front, standing up and picketing on issues of homelessness.

"When many people have been killed, it is those people who are being affected. They can't keep quiet. They are in the forefront of the change. When you hear there has been a successful 100-percent stay-away from work — those are the people. They make you proud of who you are. If we want to know our roots — it is those people. They can counsel you during your time of distress. They are psychologists in their simple way."

And perhaps it is a simple endurance and wisdom that has the best chance to weave the current bloodshed and confusion in South Africa into a fabric of change and hope. **TW**

## Welcome to The Witness!

Each month we mail complimentary copies of *The Witness* to people we believe might be interested in subscribing. This December 1992 issue is distinct because it is 16 pages longer than usual and includes four-color art, affordable only

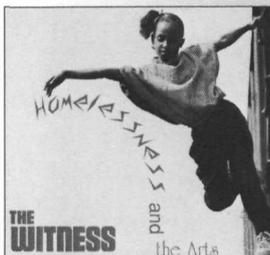
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# Joe Pelham remembered

by Barbara Harris

The recent death of Joe Pelham, executive director of Boston's Episcopal City Mission in the Diocese of Massachusetts, silenced one of the Church's most articulate advocates for the nation's poor and dispossessed. For nearly 40 years, this gentle and compassionate intellectual and spiritual giant provided prophetic leadership in the Episcopal Church and beyond to those seeking to respond to the cries of poor people in cities across this country.

"Old heads" and "young turks" alike will recall Pelham's presence wherever the "action" was in the Church — from his parish and diocesan ministry in Michigan during the late 1950s, his early leadership of the old integrationist Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity (ESCRU) during the 1960s and Coalition E at 1970s General Conventions, to his most recent role as convenor of The Consultation, an umbrella organization of progressive groups within the Episcopal Church. He perhaps best may be remembered as the principal author of *To Hear and To Heed: The Episcopal Church Listens and Acts in the City*, which grew out of a series of hearings held by the Urban Bishops' Coalition in the late '70s to allow the disadvantaged of the nation's cities to speak for themselves. That 1978 publication remains a primer for an understanding of the Church's role in identifying and addressing the systemic causes of poverty in our cities.

Often identified as "the conscience of the Episcopal Church," Pelham constantly, consistently and exasperatingly

poked, prodded and nudged the Church, reminding it of the moral responsibility to serve those most marginalized in our society. He held firmly to a conviction that this ministry could best be carried out



Joseph Pelham

by community-based organizations made up of and run by poor people. Acting on that conviction, Pelham made important contributions to the shaping of the national Church's Coalition for Human Needs grants program, its Jubilee Ministry thrust and other grass-roots constituency efforts. He also was one of the principal architects of the so-called Michigan Plan — the Church's yet-to-be-implemented grand foray into the world of community economic development adopted by the General Convention at Detroit in 1988.

For the past ten years Pelham's leadership of the Episcopal City Mission focused the organization's efforts in a joint mission and ministry with community and Church leaders and neighborhood activists to enable poor people to organize their own communities and to have a voice in issues affecting their lives. In

Boston and other Massachusetts urban centers, those efforts have been reflected particularly in the areas of affordable housing, economic development and organizing for the rights of tenants, senior citizens, women, children, the disabled, welfare recipients and newcomers to the country.

Among the mixed blessings bestowed on those of us who knew Pelham, this should-have-been bishop was never elected to that office, despite being a more than qualified sometime candidate. Here, it seems, his integrity worked against him. Twice, as it so often does, the Church rejected the messenger. Induction into that House, which many of us would have welcomed, might have offered less opportunity to express his text for living — "Public Faith and Public Policy." This was the title and thrust of his initial address to the annual meeting of ECM ten years ago; it was a call for people to involve themselves in the political process which forms public policy and to use their influence and power toward shaping one that would be both liberating and just.

Long-time friend and associate Ed Rodman, Canon Missioner for the Diocese of Massachusetts, said it best at Pelham's memorial service, held in Boston's Cathedral Church of St. Paul. Pelham was politic, but not a politician; strategic, but not a strategist; spiritual, but not a spiritualist. More, or most, importantly, he was trusted by all — a distinction few enjoy. May this gentle giant rest in peace. TW

## Jane Dixon's consecration

No, we haven't neglected to note that Jane Dixon was consecrated suffragan of Washington. It's just that the date of Dixon's consecration and her decision to delay interviews until after the service, make it impossible for us to cover the event until our Jan./Feb. issue.

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**Barbara Harris** is suffragan bishop of Massachusetts and former executive director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company.

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