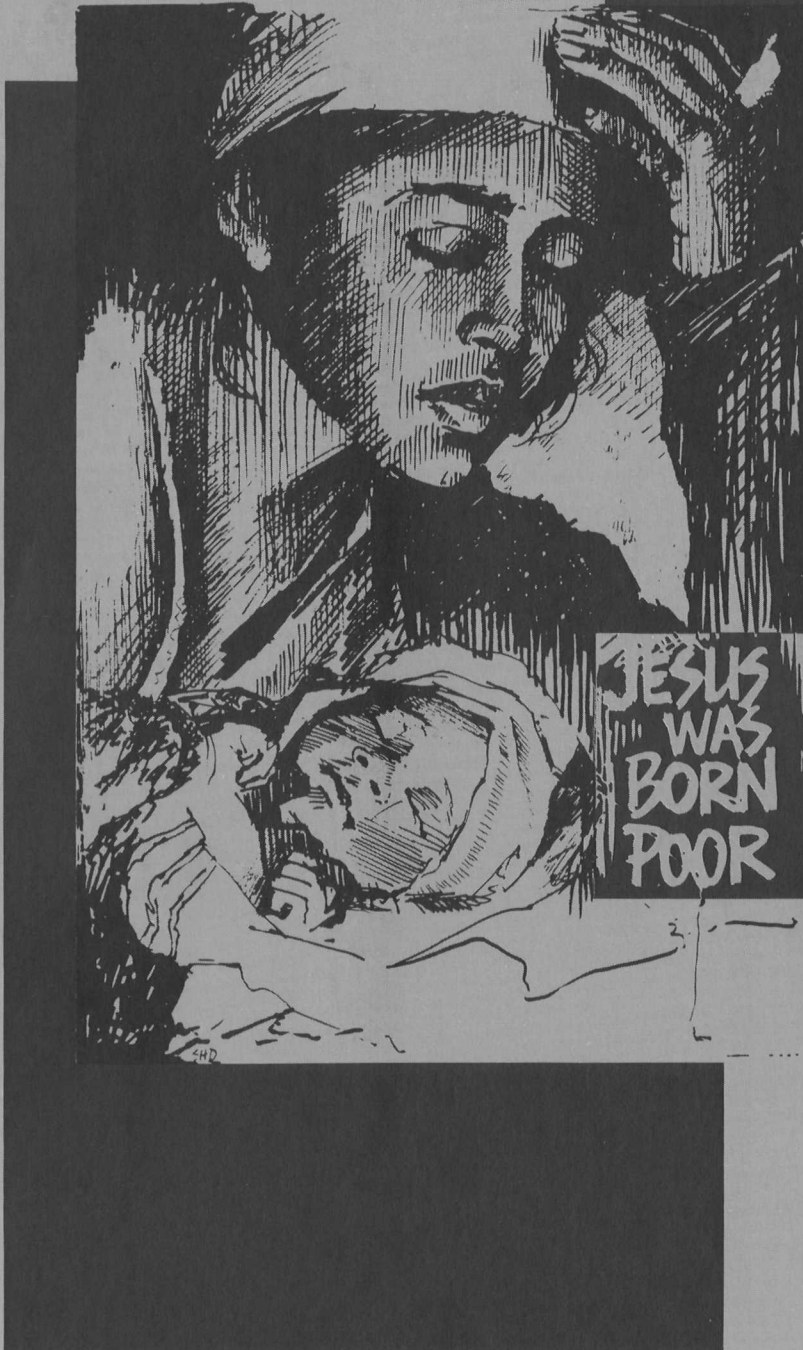


VOLUME • 71 NUMBER • 12 DECEMBER 1988

THE WITNESS



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Black 'God talk'

Sandra Richardson

Taming of the feminine

Beatrice Pasternak

Letters

Congrats, Episcopalians!

I'm so glad you stopped the presses in October and put in those glorious photographs of Bishop-elect Barbara Harris and companions, and her Advocate sermon, too!

The Rev. Barbara Harris speaks the truth with a clear voice. She lets no evasion of justice go unchecked. She emerges into the episcopate from the heart of the church's conscience. She has consistently challenged the church to act justly and respond honestly to the needs of the oppressed.

In 1974, Barbara was our courageous co-host with Paul Washington, rector of Church of the Advocate, for the Philadelphia 11 ordinations. Barbara Harris led the way: She carried the cross at the head of the procession, and we followed her into our place in history. Then she followed us.

Now her most significant election as the first woman in the House of Bishops in the Anglican Communion will do two things other than the most obvious. There will be a new presence in the House of Bishops to call it to integrity and compassionate justice. The needs of the laity, of women, and of people of color will be addressed, if not often voiced through Barbara.

And because of her stature as a lay woman and senior warden of the vestry in the Church of the Advocate at the time of the Philadelphia ordinations, her role as bishop draws our ordinations back to the center of institutional church history. It will no longer be possible or expedient for the church officially to regard us and our ordinations as an embarrassment.

Because there will be a Bishop Barbara Harris, I am confident that we will not be forgotten by the future, nor will the values of mutuality, which motivated us to respond to God's and the people's call against all odds. Advocacy, and the incarnational reminder of Christ the Ad-

vocate, will be the key reality of this consecration. Congratulations, Episcopalians! Long live the spirit of the Boston Tea Party!

**The Rev. Alla Renée Bozarth
Sandy, Ore.**

Bishop-elect special gift

For many years THE WITNESS has fed me, encouraged me, and sustained me. And then, to read in the *Boston Globe* that Barbara Harris has been elected as Bishop was a very special gift.

I look forward to her formal election, but most of all, to her leadership and to her continued writings in THE WITNESS.

The Rev. Ben Chavis, Jr. devoted his *Civil Rights Journal* of Oct. 7 to the election. I just want you to know that across denominational lines and within the faith-community there is great joy over Barbara Harris' election.

**Charles B. Higgins, Minister
United Church of Christ
Pelham, N.H.**

Unhappy with election

There recently appeared a penetrating book entitled *The Episcopal Church in Crisis*. The official Massachusetts diocesan newspaper captioned its review of the book; "Shifting with Society: For better or worse?" On Sept. 24, some 256 clergymen and clergypersons and 250 lay "delegates" met in Boston and voted their answer by electing a woman as suffragan. The next day 2,504,507 American Episcopalians got the score — after eight ballots, one which was nullified on charges of stuffed boxes, and a refusal to make the vote unanimous.

Against seemingly irreconcilable differences at home and abroad, mainstream Anglicans are now hit by an outbreak of passion for change, change with microwave speed. Surely, all dedicated Massachusetts Episcopalians want their

new Suffragan Bishop to come from the brightest and best qualified priests in their denomination. To date, their Diocesan Bishop has been unable to choose an Assistant Bishop who would serve but a 2-4 year term. Suffragans have unlimited tenure.

Would Episcopalians in a diocese-wide, democratic, secret ballot plebiscite deliberately elect in 1988 a priest with only nine years of service, with virtually no experience in this highly disparate flock, a woman, a black, a divorcee? After reflection, would they select such a person as the best qualified shepherd for this far-ranging, historic diocese?

**Marshall W.S. Swan
Rockport, Mass.**

Honor withdrawn

During our recent convocation, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale was scheduled to award an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree to the Rt. Rev. Edward MacBurney, Berkeley graduate and recently installed Bishop of the Diocese of Quincy, Ill. At the time our Board of Trustees voted to extend this invitation, we were well aware of Bishop MacBurney's traditionalist stance regarding church doctrine and the ordination of women. However, he made it clear that he had made no commitments not to ordain women.

Recently Bishop MacBurney, along with eight other bishops of the Evangelical and Catholic Mission signed a document which said that if Barbara Harris were consecrated in Massachusetts they would be out of communion with her and withhold any recognition of her ordinations or confirmations.

Our Board, our Episcopal faculty, and our Alumni/ae Council agreed unanimously that we could not carry out our intended honor to one who threatened schism if his views were not accepted by the church.

Accordingly, I called Bishop Mac-

Burney and asked to defer the degree until this matter could be clarified so that we would not be perceived as endorsing his action. He refused to defer on these grounds and I reluctantly withdrew the invitation indefinitely.

Bishop MacBurney, his diocese and some of his supporters have chosen to see this as an act of liberal tyranny against those who hold a minority opinion in the church. Such is not the case, as we were well aware of his opinion when the degree was offered. We believe there is a considerable difference between toleration of dissent and support of a threatened schism.

We have every respect for differing opinions, traditions, and doctrines here at Berkeley/Yale. Certainly the Yale context which produced both William Sloan Coffin and William F. Buckley, can hardly be said to be fostering ideological conformity.

However, we do take the integrity of the church seriously and cannot condone, endorse or honor those who threaten rupture if their views are not heeded. That is a serious tyranny.

**James E. Annand, Dean
Berkeley Divinity School at Yale**

Language exclusive

I was really astounded at the caption on the cover of the October WITNESS. As a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, I have spent some time this past year in work with the issue of inclusive language. Among the learnings I have had is that to speak of "women priests" is to speak exclusively. Priests are priests.

I presume that the same should hold for bishops. Your caption, however, immediately suggests that there are bishops and there are women bishops. I thought part of the struggle at Detroit was to work away from creating two types of bishops. I thought THE WITNESS had

long espoused inclusivity, and so my great surprise at the front cover implication.

I believe you would have avoided the exclusive label had you printed the caption "First woman elected bishop in the Anglican Communion."

**The Rev. Andrew N. Jergens
Cincinnati, Ohio**

Holy Spirit at work?

Thanks for the most substantive report yet, in any of the church publications this household receives or subscribes to, about — "Lambeth Puts On a New Face" (October WITNESS). Is it just coincidence that Barbara C. Harris, the writer who evidences that kind of understanding is also the person newly elected to the episcopate? Or could it actually be the leading of the Holy Spirit? (I know irony doesn't work well in a letter, but I can't seem to tamp it down.)

**Joanna B. Gillespie
East Greenwich, R.I.**

Faithful to herstory

From the silences in Scripture, tradition and history, women are learning that *herstory* must be as faithfully raised up and recorded as *history*. Women did make *herstory* at the 12th Lambeth Conference this year and we thank THE WITNESS for reporting it so sensitively and fully.

In September, you reprinted the Rev. Nan Peete's historic address to the bishops. In October, two pages — written by Barbara Harris — described the official happenings of the Conference; three pages were dedicated to Susan Pierce's perceptive and tender picture of the women's presence there; and then there was the euphoria of Harris' election as Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts! The first person to sign up to live with us at the Oast, Bishop-elect Harris commuted daily from Wye to Canterbury and we

grew to respect her ever more as pressures from the English press mounted nastily.

In her mother's tradition, Pierce captured the extraordinary atmosphere of Canterbury. She created a kaleidoscope of tensions and paradoxes that presented constantly changing glimpses of the many-hued people, bits and pieces of life at Lambeth.

Her metaphor of "weaving the dream" was real; we went to challenge what *is* with a vision of what might be. We were resolved to help shape the church that has shaped us.

Our "marginal" band of weavers has now dispersed carrying with them the words of the noted theologian from Peru, Gustavo Gutierrez, who told the bishops, "Love is possible only among equals." That will be the woof in the mantle that cloaks the earth in the coming decade, for the presence of women at Lambeth, even in the priesthood and episcopate, will be useless unless it transforms the church and brings it fully within the reign of God.

**Sally M. Bucklee
Co-chair, Lambeth Presence
Episcopal Women's Caucus**

Topped all others

Your September issue topped all other magazines arriving at my home that month. And it had many rivals. Keep surpassing others.

**Dr. Fred E. Luchs
Athens, Ohio**

Women at Lambeth

Sue Pierce is some kind of wonderful journalist. In her article, "Weaving the dream," she captured the joy and pain of the women's presence at Lambeth so exquisitely. She made me feel as if I had been there physically, not just in spirit. Sue not only looks and walks and talks

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Editorial

ECPC lauds prophetic election

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company, publisher of THE WITNESS magazine, is proud of and rejoices in the historic election of its Executive Director and former Board Member, the Rev. Barbara C. Harris, as Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts. Her ordination and consecration to the episcopate represent not only a personal achievement for Barbara but also an unprecedented event in the life of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion.

As a woman, a Black person, an experienced, mature and committed Christian, she will bring to the episcopate the same unique gifts and talents that we have been blessed with, and grateful for, over the past several years.

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company has always struggled against the evils of racism, classism, and homophobia in church and society. We strongly affirm that the election of the Rev. Barbara Harris and her ordination and consecration to the episcopate is God's gift to the church at this time in history, fulfilling St. Paul's prophetic proclamation that in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female." (*Galatians 3:28*)

The Episcopal Church Publishing Company regrets and deplors that organizations of our church such as the Prayer Book Society, Episcopalians United, and the Evangelical and Catholic Mission are using this historic occasion to launch not only a vicious personal attack against Barbara Harris, but also a McCarthy-type smear campaign against her and ECPC. We are proud of our 71-year heritage and the positions for which we stand. We do not apologize for them. In his own time Jesus favored women, the poor, the outcast, the persecuted and oppressed. Barbara Harris epitomizes for us and many in our church these firm commitments to the powerless which are at the heart of the Gospel and the church's faithfulness to the Crucified and Risen One.

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Superpatriotism: The importance of being number one

by Michael Parenti

As a guest on radio talk shows, I have repeatedly criticized various aspects of U.S. foreign policy. On one such occasion, an irate caller asked me, "Don't you love your country?" Here was someone who questioned my patriotism because I questioned the policies of our leaders. The caller was manifesting a symptom of what might be called "superpatriotism," which is best defined as the willingness to follow our leaders uncritically in their dealings with other nations, especially those that are confrontational and belligerent and involve "national pride."

Whether or not this superpatriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels, as Samuel Johnson might say, it is a highly emotive force that is repeatedly used to discourage critical public discourse. It is time the superpatriots explained what their brand of patriotism is all about. What, for instance, do they mean when they say they love their country? Do they love every region and locale in the United States? Most of us have had direct exposure to few parts of this nation's vast expanse. Who can claim to know and love all of America? Who would find all of its regions and locales loveable? Or perhaps love of country means loving the American people. Here again, even the most gregarious among us knows only a small percentage of the total U.S. population. And, in any case, there are ethnic and racial elements of our population that the more bigoted superpatriots dislike.

Do superpatriots love America for its history and culture? I doubt it, since there is so much about our country's history and culture unknown to them or unappreciated when made known. Furthermore there is a terrible side to our history that is anything but loveable: the extermination of Native American nations; the enslavement of African people; and the aggressive wars against Mexico, Central America, Canada, Spain, the Philippines, Vietnam, and others. Nor might we be all that enamored with certain aspects of our culture, such as the mind-abuse of prime-time television, dispiriting commercialism, corporate greed, ecological desecration, and economic and racial injustice.

In fact, the "America" superpatriots claim to love is neither a geographic totality, nor a vast population, nor a history nor

a culture. Their "America" is an *ideological abstraction*, an emotive symbol that can be embodied in other abstract symbols like the flag. Yet, superpatriotism is not totally devoid of content. Its main substance is militarism. Indeed, the more militaristic among us always seem to think they are the more patriotic. Our history's patriotic vignettes are usually military ones: Valley Forge, the Alamo, Gettysburg, the battleship Maine, Pearl Harbor, raising the flag on Iwo Jima, D-Day, the MIA-POWs, and the like.

The commemorations conducted by our leaders during national holidays would be incomplete without the marching troops, weapons displays, martial music, and formations of fighter planes zooming overhead. July 4th fireworks are a benign replication of "the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting in air," as our national anthem goes.

It seems the love we have for our country rests on some kind of competition with other countries. If we love our country, we have to believe it is better than any other country. The superpatriots will even ask us "Don't you think this is the greatest country in the world?" This is what might be recognized at the "Being Number One" syndrome. I first heard it enunciated in the late '60s by President Richard Nixon, who said, "America is still number one." Never mind that the "still" bespeaks an anxiety that there might be some slippage in our position. What bothered me about Nixon's utterance was the notion that we were in some kind of adversarial relationship with all the other countries in the world and that somehow our greatness or goodness could be measured only in invidious comparison to them.

But what exactly are we number one in? Population? No, China walks away with all the awards in that category. Geographic size? No, the Soviet Union and Canada have more real estate. Steel production and other basic industries? We used to be number one in these but our superpatriotic corporate leaders have taken to abandoning our communities and exporting jobs and industries to cheaper labor markets overseas — which, when you think about it, is not the way for superpatriots to act. Could we possibly be number one in national cuisine? Please. In that category we rank well behind France, China, Japan, Mexico, Italy, Greece, India and others. Trade? I believe the Japanese have outstripped us there, or so it might seem to anyone who bought any durable-use goods in recent years.

Michael Parenti's most recent book, *The Sword and the Dollar: Imperialism, Revolution and the Arms Race* was just published by St. Martin's Press.





The question remains, what are we number one in? As best I can tell, it gets down to our wealth and military might. These two things qualify us as *numero uno* in the eyes of the superpatriot, who gives little consideration to how our wealth is distributed and used, and in whose interest our military serves at home and abroad. But this view implies that if America were not so great, we would not find it so loveable.

What then of people who come from Luxembourg, for example? Luxembourg can never aspire to be number one. In fact, it must be about number 113. Do people from Luxembourg walk about shamefaced because they rank so low? Do they try to pass themselves off as French? When asked if they love their country, do they mumble, "What's there to love — a few border police, no air force, no navy?"

The superpatriots were exhilarated by the U.S. aggression against Grenada. Ronald Reagan, the Conqueror of Grenada, reflecting on his greatest military victory, hailed the venture as an example of how the United States defends democracy. In fact, Grenada's unemployment rate has quadrupled since it was "liberated from Moscow's yoke" by Reagan. Grenada's

native enterprises, development projects, and health and educational projects initiated by the New Jewel Movement have been wiped out. Grenada is once more safe for free market, private capital penetration. The Reagan invasion served notice to the Caribbean nations that they had better not try to develop alternative social orders that go against the multinational corporate way of doing things.

Most superpatriots have given little thought to Grenada's welfare. Nor are they encouraged to do so. They got a vicarious thrill from the spectacle of the most powerful nation in the world stomping on a mini-state of 112,000 souls. It was like the Washington Redskins playing Our Lady of Mercy Junior High School. But this "victory" was perceived by most of the world not as a sign of strength but of weakness, not something glorious but something shameful, a bullying act of political bankruptcy.

The superpatriots never explain what's so important about being number one nor even what it means. In any case, this preoccupation with being number one strikes me as a sign of insecurity, not security. A people who are in touch with the deeper values of social justice and democracy don't get a number-one thrill from stomping on a tiny nation and don't need to lord it over other nations.

Superpatriotic morality is an inversion of individual morality. For the superpatriot, the nation-state is something more than an institution whose function is to protect other social values.

The nation becomes an end in itself, a powerful abstract symbol that claims our ultimate loyalty, a moral entity whose existence and growth are taken as self-justifying. The moral code applied to nationalism does not operate quite the same as the one applied to individuals. Individual morality calls for self-restraint and even self-sacrifice. There are certain things you should not do even if you have the impulse and even if it advances your self-interest (as in "thou shalt not . . .") Individual morality is predicated on the realization that sin (i.e., unjust and harmful behavior towards others) is always within the human potential. To err is human, to sin is all too human. But the nation-state is something more than human — and there lies the power of its appeal.

The heart of the superpatriotic chauvinist ethic is the belief that the nation's existence and its actions are so endowed with virtue as to place it above the commonplace rules of life. As a kind of supreme entity, the nation knows no restrictions other than the limitations of its own desires and power. Hence the most ruthless violence — outrageous to individual morality and unsupportable in civil life — is applauded as heroism when performed in the name of the nation. "Thou shalt not" becomes "Thou shalt do anything by any means necessary if it is in the 'national interest.'"

Who are the superpatriots? They can be found in high and not so high places, in the White House and the local American Legion Post. Superpatriotism is not a product of mass macho psychology, although it appeals to and exploits machismo, often resorting to a John Wayne approach to foreign policy. We have been taught to think of Archie Bunker as the superpatriotic prototype. In fact, Archie is one of its victims, one of its consumers. He pays the taxes that support the empire and he and his children must fight superpatriotic wars.

The most conspicuous pushers of superpatriotism are our top political leaders, publicists, media pundits, institutional heads and corporate leaders. It has been at the heart of Reagan's eight-year propaganda effort. Like the anti-communist ideology, superpatriotism is not a product of mass hysteria though its goal is often to instigate mass hysteria.

If superpatriotism were just a manifestation of a macho psychology, how do we explain the way it is directed toward specific targets, i.e., Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua, the USSR, all countries seen as developing social orders which threaten global capitalism? In relation to countries like Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, Indonesia, South Africa, Israel, South Korea, Zaire — countries that support the interests of multinational capitalism and imperialism — the superpatriots are surprisingly accommodating, supportive, nurturing, passive, and very un-macho.

Superpatriotism blurs the class differences in our society and tries to convince us that we are all in the same boat, rich and poor alike. We are made to believe that we, the people of the United States, have a community of interest with the giant multinationals, the very corporations that at any time might export our jobs and desert our country in pursuit of cheaper labor markets abroad. In truth, on almost every issue we, the people, are not in the same boat with the big financiers and companies. Policy costs are not equally shared, and policy benefits are not equally enjoyed. This was as true of ancient empires as of the ones today. In 1919, the conservative economist Joseph Schumpeter described the imperialism of classical Rome as a policy dominated by "domestic class interests," specifically the "aristocracy of landlords, agricultural entrepreneurs, born of struggle against their own people" whose dominance rested on "control of the state machine." The historian Ernst Badian concludes: "No administration in history has ever devoted itself so wholeheartedly to fleecing its subjects for the private benefit of its ruling class as Rome of the last age of the Republic." He wrote that before the Reagan Administration came into existence.

Seeing the evil done in the name of patriotism, many on the Left — especially during the Vietnam era — attacked the patriotic symbols of our country. They spelled America "Amerikkka." They burned American flags, thereby convinc-

ing millions of citizens that they were either maniacs or traitors. They mistakenly blamed America for what was being done in its name by imperialists and militarists.

But the imperialists acted a lot smarter. They legitimated their crimes by wrapping themselves in the flag, conveniently branding all opposition to their policies as attacks against the nation. Today we still hear them label critics of existing policy as the "Hate America crowd."

The anarchistic tendencies of the New Left added fuel to the superpatriotic bonfire. Anarchists see the state as the enemy, rather than the particular policies and class interests of certain states. In a way, anarchists are a mirror image of superpatriots. They elevate the state to an entity that has a moral existence of its own (one that is supremely evil as opposed to the superpatriot's supremely virtuous state). And when they attack the symbols of the state, they play right into the hands of leaders who have always sought to treat ruling class interest as tantamount to the national interest.

In contrast to the superpatriots are the real patriots, those who love their country enough to criticize and improve it. Their patriotism has a social content. They know that democracy is not just the ability to hold elections but to serve and fulfill the basic needs and interests of the *demos*, the people. Real patriots are also internationalists. They feel a special attachment to their own country but not in some competitive way that pits them against other countries. They love people of all countries, seeing them as different representations of the same human family.

Real patriots educate themselves about the history of their country and are not satisfied with the flag-waving promo stuff. They find different things in our history to be proud of, such as the struggle for enfranchisement, the Abolitionist movement, the peace movement, the abolition of child labor, the struggle for collective bargaining, for the eight-hour day, for occupational safety, for racial justice, and for gender equality.

As real patriots, we should start advocating to tax the rich, not the working people. We need to restructure the use of energy to save the environment and our selves. We need more efforts against virulent racism and sexism in training, recruitment, hiring, job evaluation, wages, salaries and personal relationships. We need a national health insurance program for the 35 million Americans who are not covered, and a national health program for everyone.

We also need some relief from the evasive, fatuous, know-it-all anti-communist media pundits and conservative columnists. The airwaves of this country do not belong to the networks; they are the property of the U.S. people.

We need a government that has the capacity to go directly

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Short Takes

We are all mothers

What good is it to me if Mary gave birth to the son of God 1400 years ago and I do not give birth to the child of God in my time and in my culture? We are all meant to be mothers of God. God is always needing to be born

Meister Eckhart
Quoted in *Bread*

USAID pays Obando staff

Nicaraguan Cardinal Miguel Obando Y Bravo pays each of five Washington and Miami-based "consultants" \$9,000 monthly from U.S. Agency for International Development Aid (AID) funds, informed sources in Washington charge, saying the money is being drawn from a \$10 million grant designed to promote the peace process within Nicaragua.

The \$10 million in U.S. funds has been congressionally mandated. The AID money flows to the Organization of American States, where Obando and OAS Secretary General Joao Baena Soares are authorized to draw on it to support their monitoring activities as "witnesses" to the Sandinista-contra peace agreement, which went into effect last March. However, in June the contras abandoned the peace process because of their own divisions and anger at the Sandinista government negotiating positions. Since then, a dispute has arisen between Obando and the Nicaraguan government over whether the Obando-Soares Verification Commission has anything to monitor or verify.

National Catholic Reporter 11/4/88

Wall street justice

The richest 1% of Americans averaged \$134,513 *more* in real income in 1988 than in 1977.

U.S. Bureau of the Census



"Committed Christians on the right, nominal Christians on the left, and please leave the center free for those who want to leave early."

SCM Movement

Christmas prayer

O Jesus, son of a Hebrew Mother, who yet rejoiced in the faith of a Syrian woman and a Roman soldier, who welcomed the Greeks who sought Thee, and suffered an African to carry Thy cross, help us to bring all races and creeds to the Throne of Thy Heavenly Grace. Amen.

SCM Movement
Spring '88

Quote of note

Years ago we fought a war to make the world safe for democracy. In our time, you and I can use our heritage of democracy to make the world safe from war.

Thomas Watson, Jr.
Former U.S. Ambassador to USSR

Bumper sticker

We the unwilling, led by the unqualified, are doing the impossible, for the ungrateful.

Jay K. Longacre

Who controls the newspapers?

According to Ben Bagdikian, author of *The Media Monopoly*, newspapers stand on the threshold of losing their souls to profit-think, a result of growing monopoly concentration in the field and the collapse at many papers of a traditional wall between the business and editorial departments.

Bagdikian says that 29 corporations now control most major media business, compared with 50 five years ago. He is surprised by the ever-quickenening rise of mega-media, the naivete of journalists about the influence of their owners on the news, the failure of newspaper editors to care about how "mass advertising is changing the form and content of the news itself."

Carlin Romano
The Philadelphia Inquirer 7/31/88

How to stop wife-beating

I continue to retell the story that Helen Keller Oneka told a small group of women at Lambeth. It is about the women from a village in Uganda who stopped wife-beating by giving a woman a whistle. She had been badly beaten by her husband and the women did not expect her to live through another beating. When she blew her whistle the women came running, surrounded and protected her, telling the man, "Oh beat me! No, beat me! Please beat me!" He was dumbfounded. This non-violent action of solidarity freed the women of the village from the age-old sin of wife-beating. Other women in other villages handed out whistles until the whole of Uganda had stopped the practice. We have so much to learn from one another in this story and others; so much the church can learn from us.

Ann Smith
Coordinator for Women's Ministries
Episcopal Church Center

How Christ liberates the oppressor

Can the Christ of Liberation Theology save White First World men? This is a test of its validity that is of particular interest to me, a White First World male.

As I understand Liberation Theology, we are offered a reading of the Gospels and an account of God's activities in the world which reveal an option for the poor. Jose Miguez Bonino has written, "Although Jesus surely died for all, he also lived especially for some — the poor, the weak, the dispossessed."

Similarly, it is the conviction of Robert McAfee Brown and other liberation theologians that the Gospels, indeed Scripture as a whole, is the account of a "God who takes sides." But our hope and joy is that "Christians can join in throwing off oppression, for God calls them to join in the struggles."

If this is so, where are those of us who by birth, and at least tacit acceptance of the benefits of the social order, going to turn in order to participate in the task of throwing off the oppressions which exist? How shall we share in the salvation of God? Most important, what shall be our motivation to faith?

An essential idea in Liberation Theology is taken from the work of Paulo Freire. It is *conscientization*, which I understand to be the process of recognizing that one is oppressed and realizing that a result of this is that people are warped by oppression. I suggest that what warps the oppressed warps the oppressor. Recovering the authentic self requires lib-

eration, whether one is the oppressed or the oppressor.

Liberation Theology says the power and impetus to recover one's authentic self comes from God through Christ. It seems to me then that we may rightfully search the Gospels for those incidents and teachings which bring Christ the Liberator to White First World men. For the same unjust structures, systems, and behaviors which have shaped us, which we benefit from and perpetuate, also warp us. We must find where Jesus works to bring forth justice in such a way that both the oppressed and the oppressor go free.

Two passages suggest themselves: the call of Matthew (*Mt. 9:9-13*) and the story of Zaccheus (*Lk. 19:1-10*). I believe these readings reveal that the outcome for these men after meeting Jesus is liberation.

In the call of Matthew, Jesus says simply, "Follow me," and Matthew goes along with him. Later, Jesus is eating, either at Matthew's house as some suggest or elsewhere, in the company of "many tax collectors and sinners." The Pharisees complain to the disciples about this and Jesus responds, "They that are well do not need a physician, but those who are sick." And then adds, quoting Hosea, "Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

This story suggests to me that while Jesus clearly sees the fault in what Matthew does — tax collectors were considered traitors and were known as thieves — the calling of Matthew was a healing

or restoration. By following Jesus, Matthew regains his authentic self, stops oppressing people, and joins the disciples. And, if one understands verse 10 to refer to his house, Matthew's first action is to open his doors to the world and to invite people like himself to meet Jesus. I would argue that we are meant to understand that Matthew and the others, for all their wealth and power, are seen by Jesus as they are — wretched and inauthentic people. Thus, they are prisoners of the oppression they perpetrate, and Jesus finds a way to address them so that they can acknowledge this and seek liberation.

The story of Zaccheus takes this theme of restoration to authentic selfhood further. Jesus is passing through Jericho, and as he goes a crowd gathers. Unable to see Jesus because of his short stature, Zaccheus, a tax collector, climbs a sycamore tree for a better view. Jesus sees him and says, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for I must stay at your house today." The crowd objects to all of this, but Jesus does not respond. It is Zaccheus who does so in his famous restitution speech: "Behold, Lord, the half



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by Thomas C.H. Scott

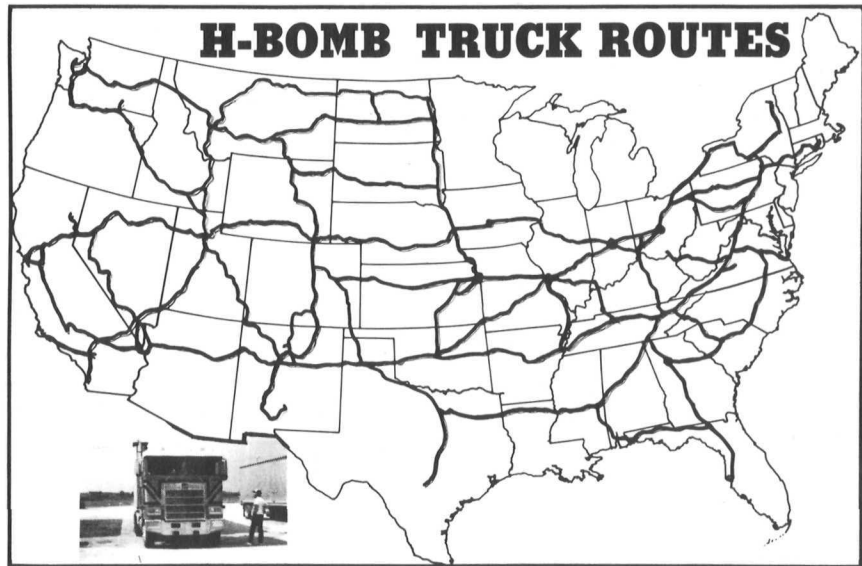
of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it four-fold." To which Jesus replies, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he is also a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and save the lost."

Very simply, Zaccheus does justice, and more, because he received both the mercy of God and the restoration of his true self. The extraordinary efforts Zaccheus made to see Jesus, and the joy with which he greeted Jesus, show what is crucial. An encounter with Jesus transforms a life interiorly, and the matters which separate a person from God and the community become the means for that person to express in word and deed the joy of being liberated.

Zaccheus ends up joyfully acting justly — and that would seem a good operating definition for an oppressor being liberated. The power of God in Christ to reach the depths of a person is also shown here. St. Augustine's description of the human heart is borne out in these stories: "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless 'til they rest in thee."

These passages from Matthew and Luke suggest that Christ motivates and transforms the rich. The power of the Gospel is that it pierces the defenses of oppression raised by diseased spirits so that we know we are known and accepted.

For White First World males, the stories of Matthew and Zaccheus tells us that we are distorted, that we feel the distortion, that we can be free of distortion and help to set others free as well.



H-Bomb trucks take on new look

The first of a new generation of unmarked, armor-plated tractor trucks which transport nuclear warheads and their ingredients across the United States made its appearance this year. (See photo at right.) The Department of Energy reports that 36 of the new models will be delivered through May of 1989.

At left is the current model. Both are built by the Marmon Motor Company. Convoys log over 5 million miles a year. (Routes, top photo.) The photos were obtained by Glen Milner of Seattle through a Freedom of Information request.

U.S. nuclear weapons are delivered by three principal means: land-based, sea-based, and bombers. The Intercontinental land-based missile force currently consists of 1000 Minuteman missiles

armed with 2100 warheads, and 10 MX missiles armed with 100 warheads. Each warhead is more powerful than the one which destroyed Hiroshima. This force is deployed in underground launching sites.

Nukewatch has maps of missile silos in Wyoming, Nebraska, Colorado, Montana, Missouri, North Dakota and South Dakota in postcard form which it distributes to raise public consciousness about the nuclear arms race by calling attention to the deadly "Gods of metal" planted in the soil of mid-America. It also stages frequent non-violent protests at the sites; 14 were arrested at its August demonstration in Bates County, Mo.

For further information, write Nukewatch, 315 W. Gorham St., Madison, WI 53703.

The taming of the feminine

by Beatrice Pasternak

Every year at this time the winter solstice and Christmas are upon us. Soon our parish church will ring out the carols of Christmas with their imagery of the Babe and his Mother. We sing of “offspring of the virgin’s womb,” “gentle Mary [who] laid her child lowly in a manger,” “a virgin mother [who] brings forth God’s only Son,” and of course, the “round yon virgin” of *Silent Night*. Many of our Christmas cards reflect these same images.

It is also appropriate at this time, when she is so much in our thoughts, to look at the evolution of this Mary from both Eve, the mother of us all, and Mary of Magdala. How can we compare two real women with one who is not? I think the answer lies in the realization that we never speak of “mythological Eve” or “Eve of the biblical creation story”; we call her “Eve” and we consider her to be real. It is in fact our vision of Eve as a reality that has determined the role of women throughout the centuries. We do not remember Sophia/Wisdom who says “When Yahweh created the world, I was there, and I was Yahweh’s greatest joy” (*Proverbs* 8:23, 27-31), or the description of her in the act of creation from *Ecclesiasticus* 24:3-5: “I am the word which was spoken by the Most High; it was I who covered the earth like a mist. My dwelling-place was in high heaven; my throne was in a pillar of cloud. Alone I made a circuit of the sky and traversed the depth of the abyss.” What might the status of God’s female creatures have

been in the world’s history and cultures if these passages had been given equal weight with those of Genesis?

Eve

With the rise of feminism in society and religion, the basic precepts about Eve have been in great upheaval. Two things become clear: (1) Adam and Eve are created in Genesis by a male-imagined God without help of a feminine co-creator such as those found in almost all the pre-biblical creation stories, and Eve is created twice — once simultaneously and equal to Adam and later and secondarily to be dominated by him. (2) The creation story is full of references to pre-biblical mythology, and in particular Eve and the serpent are meant to say very specific things to those who heard the stories first and understood the early Hebrews’ intention of ending goddess worship by their people. Today many of us are having to learn about those other creation stories, and the goddess mythology, in order to understand the true meaning of the Genesis story and to try to find a more equitable place in the scheme of things both for ourselves and for Eve.

As J. A. Phillips points out in his book entirely about her, “The history of Eve begins with the appearance of Yahweh in the place of the Mother of All the Living. This shift of power marks a fundamental change in the relationship between humanity and God, the world and God, the world and humanity, and men and women.”

He also notes:

In favoring the second account of Eve’s creation over the first . . . the early rabbis surmised that each version carried important implica-

tions for the religious and social order. If the woman is created simultaneous with the man, she is “perfect” also, and shares equally in the work of lordship. If she is created after him, she is somewhat less than perfect and belongs to the realm over which he exercises lordship. In preferring the second account, then, interpreters prefer an Eve who is religiously, socially, politically, and sexually under the control of her husband.

But what sin did Eve commit? Surely it was not just eating a forbidden apple. What did the apple represent? Knowledge of what? Many scholars believe it to be sexuality. According to Phillips, “The serpent was regarded, consciously or unconsciously, as a powerful symbol for the connection between evil and sexuality. The original transgression was seen from a very early date as having something to do with sexual awareness. Eve thus becomes the vehicle for the intrusion of lust into the created order.”

Another opinion is offered by Elaine Pagels in her new book, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent*, in which she notes that:

The majority of Christians . . . rejected the claim made by radical Christians that the sin of Adam and Eve was sexual — that the forbidden “fruit of the tree of knowledge” conveyed, above all, carnal knowledge. On the contrary, said Clement of Alexandria (c. 180 C.E.), conscious participation in procreation is “cooperation with God in the work of creation.” Adam’s sin was not sexual indulgence but disobedience; thus Clement agreed with most of his

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Jewish and Christian contemporaries that the real theme of the story of Adam and Eve is moral freedom and moral responsibility. Its point is to show that we are responsible for the choices we freely make — good or evil — just as Adam was.

The idea of moral freedom has become less associated with Eve and the apple than has the sin of lust and sexuality traditionally attached to the female of the species. Perhaps our male-dominated societies have chosen this interpretation over moral responsibility because the latter would make them, too, responsible for intercourse.

The effect of the interpretations of Eve on the society of the Hebrew/Jewish people down to the time of Jesus can be seen in the status of Mary Magdalene, and then the response to both these women in the form of Mary the Mother of Jesus.

Mary of Magdala

If 10 people were asked what they knew about Mary Magdalene it is a good guess that nine of them would describe her as a prostitute who was a follower of Jesus. They would be half right.

Just for the record, no Gospel writer has described this Mary as a prostitute. In fact, she is never introduced by the Gospel writers. She is simply *there*. The only descriptions of her are found in Mark and Luke. The former describes "Mary of Magdala from whom he had formerly cast out seven devils" (16:9), and the latter, "With him were the Twelve and a number of women who had been set free from evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, known as Mary of Magdala, from whom seven devils had come out . . ." (8:2).

But it is John (20:1-18) who tells us how valued Mary of Magdala was: At the discovery of the empty tomb the (male) disciples leave, but Mary stays on. Then, the Risen Christ appears to her and has a conversation with her, calling

her by name. "Mary" he says, and "Rabboni!" she answers. He cautions her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father." And he sends *her*, this woman, this "prostitute," to the (male) disciples with the news.

Surely only someone of real importance to this ministry would be so prominently identified with the first experiences of the Risen Christ in three of the four Gospels. It is clear that when the first generations of Christians told this oral history, they knew who Mary of Magdala was and what part she played in the journey of Jesus. The oral history did not name her as a prostitute because, I suspect, they knew her as a loving and trusted disciple of the Lord. They had no reason or need to discredit her. That came later.

Rosemary Radford Ruether suggests:

The suppression of the role of Mary Magdalene in the official church tradition may have something to do with the desire of the church to assign subordinate and conventional roles to women. Whatever her sexual history, Mary Magdalene is clearly an unconventional woman. Here is an independent woman whose close relations with Jesus are borne out by her faithfulness at the cross and her primacy in the resurrection experience. She represents a role model for women that later church leaders probably preferred to neglect!

Mary Magdalene participated in the ministry of this man who was raised as a Jew, who lived and worked within the Jewish community, and who was a part of as well as responding to the Jewish culture in which he lived. The religion of this culture did not honor women outside the home. It was and is the culture of the Eve in Genesis. It was not possible for a woman to be called an Apostle. It was not possible for a woman to be acknowledged as a leader of this movement. It

was possible for the women to prepare the Passover meal, and to be present at it, but they are just outside of the frame of the great paintings of the Last Supper.

It is interesting that historically when men have written about Mary Magdalene they identify her sexuality and downgrade her relationship with Jesus. As women have begun to look at her in a scholarly way, we want to know why she is not more clearly identified as a disciple along with the others who followed Jesus so closely during his earthly ministry.

Mary of Nazareth

Although this Mary entered religious history many generations later, almost everyone ties her to the last vestiges of goddess worship. It is clear that her later position in the Roman Catholic Church was a response to a particular need, just as was the Biblical Creation story generations before.

In his recent TV conversations with Bill Moyers, Joseph Campbell identified Isis with Horus at her breast as:

. . . the antique model for the Madonna. In Egyptian iconography, Isis represents the throne. The Pharaoh sits on the throne, which is Isis, as a child on its mother's lap. And so, when you stand before the Cathedral of Chartres, you will see over one of the portals of the western front an image of the Madonna as the throne upon which the Child Jesus sits and blesses the world as its emperor. That is precisely the image that has come down to us from most ancient Egypt. The early fathers and the early artists took over these images intentionally.

It is my understanding that the early statues of Mary were on sites previously devoted to worship of Isis, and that this was the Church Fathers' way of ending such goddess worship.

In *The Hebrew Goddess*, Raphael Patai tells that at the opening of the

Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D., Cyril of Alexandria delivered a sermon in which he described Mary as the mother and virgin “through whom the Trinity is glorified and worshiped, the cross of the Savior exalted and honored, through whom heaven triumphs, the angels are made glad, devils driven forth, the tempter overcome, and the fallen creature raised up even to heaven.”

The reference to Mary as virgin brings up another of the later church teachings, that of the virgin birth. This is not, however, a new idea in mythology. In his book *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero*, Otto Rank cites a number of virgin births, including that of Kunti who “bore as a virgin the boy Karna, whose father was the sun-god Surya.” In a footnote, Rank makes a provocative statement:

According to recent investigations, the birth history of Christ is said to have the greatest resemblance with the royal Egyptian myth, over 5,000 years old, which relates the birth of Amenophis III. Here again recurs the divine prophecy of the birth of a son, to the waiting queen, her fertilization by the breath of heavenly fire; the divine cows, which nurse the newborn child; the homage of the kings, and so forth.

The traditions about Eve, Mary of Magdala, and Mary of Nazareth seem to forever bounce back and forth between mythology, goddess worship, and the traditions of their own time and history.

In *Mary — The Feminine Face of the Church*, Ruether describes a symbol of the “new Eve” applied to Mary, “beginning with the writings of the Christian apologist Justin Martyr, around A.D. 155, and continuing with the works of the church fathers Tertullian and Irenaeus at the end of the century. The new Eve (Mary) embodies believing Israel, obedient to God’s will. She parallels Christ, the new Adam.”

Ruether goes on to state:

Mary, through her “Let it be done to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38), became the first believer. She represents believing Israel and is the link between the Old Israel, is the first member of the new covenant. She depicts the new believing community of people who accept the Word of God, in contrast to the old Eve and her

Contrasts

The morning of the first day, two hundred students fill the amphitheater. “There are,” says the geology professor, “two stories in Genesis. How can you believe?” As on Schoodic Point great black bands of basalt cut through red granite with no blurred edges, I believed in the separation of church and the state of knowledge. As igneous through igneous rock does not mingle, a scholar must choose, I thought, to walk one path, in faith, or out of it.

But contrast of red and black carries the eye from one band to the other. From heaven, one might perceive design as a green stone crisscrossed with quartz brings to mind winter branches. Short-sighted as ourselves, God’s early scribes recorded two stripes in an oversized pattern. Substituting one consistent story we miss the wisdom in their ignorance, leave half the double brain dissatisfied, half the double meanings unexplored.

Ellen Roberts Young

fallen offspring, who rejected God’s commandment. Mary is seen as having reversed the evil work of Eve. Through her obedience, she brings forth Jesus through whom the sin of fallen humanity is overcome. Irenaeus, for example, writing about A.D. 185, believed that each of the elements in the history of the Fall had a parallel in the history of salvation, one that overcame and reversed that element. The virgin Eve was misled by an angelic being and disobeyed God, causing the fall of humanity. So the salvation of humanity must come about by a second virgin (Mary) who received a true word from an angel and obediently accepted God’s word.

Ruether outlines the rapidly developing teachings about Mary after the late fourth century, so that “From the fifth century on, feasts of Mary duplicated the high points of the traditional cycle of the year.” After some opposition, Mary was named “Mother of God” in A.D. 451, and “The definition of Mary as a mother of God was the opening wedge for her veneration as a substitute mother goddess.”

Up to, during and beyond the Middle Ages, various traditions were created and/or built up about Mary. It is appropriate to note Ruether’s comment that “by replacing Mary Magdalene with Mary, the mother, as the ‘woman who loved him,’ the church replaced a dangerously unconventional role model with a conventional role model and relationship.”

So both Eve and Mary of Magdala have been replaced with this Mary who is submissive, content with motherhood as a true vocation, not about to ask questions or want a second career, or in any other way challenge the system. In today’s world, she would not want to be a Roman Catholic or Church of England priest, or an Episcopal bishop, either. **W**



Thanks for the memories

Four years in a job slot is not a long time. My first professional job lasted a little better than 19 years and my stint in the corporate world ran for 12. Yet even in the short span of four years a lot can happen. And when I add this brief time as executive director of the Episcopal Church Publishing Company into a total 11-year association with its board and THE WITNESS magazine, I get hit with a flood of memories of the people and myriad incidents that have helped to make it such a rich and rewarding experience . . . The commanding figure of former Presiding Bishop John Elbridge Hines immediately comes to mind. “Big John” Hines was chair of the ECPC board when Charlie Ritchie, Helen Seager and I became the first lay people to join several distinguished bishops who constituted the policy-making group of the revived organization. His deep spirituality, clear wisdom, ready wit and humor were an inspiration to us all. More importantly, he kept us focused on our mission and continually challenged us to risk and to dare for the cause of social justice, to lift up issues that frequently raised the hackles of some in the church and to venture into arenas where others found it imprudent or impolitic to walk. It was at John Hines’ urging that ECPC established the William Scarlett, William Spofford and Vida Scudder awards to honor folks on the cutting edge of social mission and whose life and ministry exemplify what those three “giants” espoused. The informal dinner at which these awards are presented has, for many, become a high point of the church’s triennial General Convention.

My 1980 ordination to priesthood took place on the 35th anniversary of John Hines’ consecration as bishop. He wrote me then that he could not think of a person with whom he would rather share an ordination date and that goes double for me . . . My years on the ECPC board were marked by friendship and shared ministry with the likes of Bob DeWitt, my former bishop in Pennsylvania and editor of the reactivated WITNESS from 1974 until he retired in 1981; the late J. Brooke Mosley, who was then serving as Assistant Bishop in Pennsylvania; Ben Arnold, former Suffragan of Massachusetts who chaired our group from 1979 to 1981; Coleman McGehee of Michigan, who followed Ben as chair and led us through two General Conventions . . . Those were great days when we seemed to have an embarrassment of riches and were able to assist some groups in the church then struggling to get established . . . Joe Pelham, who heads the Episcopal City Mission in Boston, Sue Hiatt and Carter Heyward, professors at the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Joan Howarth, now an ACLU attorney and Kwasi Thornell, Canon Missioner at the Washington National Cathedral were valuable contributors to the ECPC board and those friendships have endured over the years . . . We also formed strong bonds with Maria Cueto, Raisa Nemikin, Steven Guerra and other Grand Jury resisters who paid a stiff price with lengthy jail sentences and unusually harsh treatment in federal corrections institutions for refusing to testify on the grounds of conscience . . . Hugh White and Dick Gillett, two ECPC stal-

warts, also come to mind. Hugh and Dick doubled in brass as program staffers and WITNESS contributors, working out of Detroit and Los Angeles respectively. They were in the thick of our efforts to aid Maria, Steven, et al and their families and they added the word “secunded” to our lexicon as, on call, they would lend a hand to the Urban Bishops Coalition, Church and Society Network and many other groups working on justice concerns . . . There were fun times too, like the night we rocked the staid College of Preachers on the grounds of the Washington Cathedral with a small but raucous retirement party for Bob DeWitt. When his noisy brood, in company with his wife Bobbie, descended on the place as a surprise to Bob, gaiety suddenly turned to alarm as we thought he might have a coronary. He recovered his composure and we sent him off to Isle Au Haut, Maine, with a parcel of odd gifts including a log splitter, a wind sock and a case of potent potables to help ward off the effects of harsh Maine winters . . . My heart rejoices for the love of two former board members — Chicago educator and church mother Mattie Hopkins, and our long-time treasurer Bob Potter, former chancellor of the Diocese of New York — both of whom died this year. Sadly, I missed the beautiful memorial service for them held during our September board meeting . . . All in all, each of the 11 has been “a very good year” and I wouldn’t trade anything for this part of my journey. So long for a while. *A luta continua!*

Black theology: Living the gospel

Black theology is nothing new. It has always been a given in the Black community. What W. E. B. Dubois, Benjamin Mays and Howard Thurman, for example, wrote about was Black theology — how Blacks viewed God and life. The context of Black theology is the experience and history of Black people — of living and following the way of the cross.

“Nobody told us the road would be easy . . . I don't believe you brought me this far to leave me,” are the phrases of a gospel song that echo our everyday life.

Black theology was ignored and not really thought about much until other liberation theologies surfaced. Even today it is not recognized by mainstream Western theology because it does not fit the traditional theological mode. Inclusive language seems to be more important than including Black liturgy, music and historical acknowledgment of the Black experience. And there is more acceptance and inclusion of Latin American liberation theology and feminist theology than Black theology.

Gayraud Wilmore in the introduction to Theo Witvliet's *The Way of the Black Messiah* notes how James Baldwin, Marian Anderson and others won greater acclaim abroad than in the United States. Perhaps that is what is meant by “a prophet is not without honor except in his own country.” Will theologians outside of the United States be the ones who take the time to understand and put the stamp of approval on Black Theology

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before American theologians and churches accept it?

American Black theology and religious experiences were born out of slavery, oppression, and inhuman treatment. Black tradition cannot be evaluated with the same methods as classical tradition. Black theology reflects the unequal treatment Blacks received from others, causing them to seek a God of equality and love. The theology is a reaction to the slave master's preaching and espousing one set of truths at church and another set on the plantation.

Faith in God allowed slaves to withstand torture for the right to be treated human just as Christian martyrs faced their destiny for Christ. The common stamina in both cases was God. Black theology is a theology of liberation that freed Black people from the shackles and bonds of slavery, physically and mentally.

According to Major Jones in *The Color of God*, the Black concept of God is more than an “abstract ontological assumption.” The Black Church God talk must be of a living, usable God, who differs from the Euro-American concept of God and intellectual abstractedness. The Black Church God of the here and now identifies with the struggles and trials of Black people. It is an emotional presence that feeds the soul and mind for daily survival. Jones feels the Black religious experience is about “being and becoming more human under God.” Black people look toward God to free them from the chains of life, a God who determines their ultimate destiny toward becoming whole.

Black theology parallels other liberation theologies of those who in their struggles and crises turned to God for direction and deliverance. To oppressed

persons, God is a mixture of compassion and understanding of all peoples, not just one segment of society. Though we are diverse peoples, there is a richness and fullness in our diversity. God seeks unity through diversity.

Blacks were thought of as less than human and were not included in the Christian way of life that was proclaimed in the White churches. Out of this came a different knowledge and interpretation of Scripture and of God.

About 50 years before Major Jones' book was published, Dr. Benjamin Mays and Joseph Nicholson published a study, *The Negro's Church*. Its interpretation of the Black experience is valid today.

A sign on the outside of an important church in a metropolitan southern city reads thus: “We offer riches to the poorest, friendliness to the friendless, comfort to the sorrowing — a welcome to all. Step in.” But every Negro child in that city is aware of the fact that the invitation is not meant for him.

The Negro is not unmindful of the fact that as he elbows his way through the crowded thoroughfare, he must be just a little more careful than most people; and that if he were to do what others would be excused for doing, he would be condemned. He works on the job ever aware that to hold his position he must often go the second mile, do more and take more, and work for less money. He must be an epitome of politeness; and must smile when ordinarily he would frown; must pretend that it is all right when the respect that is habitually given others is deliberately denied him.

Dubois talked of the double consciousness that Blacks lived under in *The Souls*

from the heart

by Sandra D. Richardson

of *Black Folk*, his 1903 book. Today Blacks still see the world through two sets of eyes. It is these two visions that create tension, yet foster creativity and perseverance. According to Dubois, the Negro is:

. . . gifted with second sight in the American world — a world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness — an American, a Negro: two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. He simply wishes to make it possible for a person to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face.

Vincent Harding in *There is a River* compares the Black struggle for freedom in America to a river. It was a river with strength not on the surface but from the depths: "Thus at its deepest levels the river moves toward a freedom that liberates the whole person and humanizes the entire society, pressing us beyond the boundaries of race, class and nationality that serve temporarily, necessarily, as our organizing, stabilizing bases."

Exodus revealed to Blacks that one day they, too would be delivered. Jesus in the temple (*Luke 4:16-21*) speaks clearly to Blacks in many ways. They

felt strongly that indeed the good news was for them, that they were to be set free, and that the eyes of the oppressors were to be opened, though the oppressors felt the message excluded Blacks. Because of this Gospel, they felt more than ever that Jesus came for their sake.

The theology of a God who was with them "through it all" became their sustenance of life. The Black encounter with God is an experience with God who identifies with Black life. In *Jesus and the Disinherited*, Howard Thurman sees Black life paralleling Jesus' life because he belonged to a minority group, the Jews. "Christianity as it was born in the mind of this Jewish teacher and thinker

appears as a technique of survival for the oppressed."

However, said Thurman, it has become "a religion of the powerful and the dominant, sometimes used as an instrument of oppression. It cannot be denied that too often the weight of the Christian movement has been on the side of the strong and the powerful against the weak and oppressed — this, despite the Gospel."

James Cone in *God of the Oppressed* remarked, "Blacks do not ask whether Jesus is one with the Father or divine and human. They ask whether Jesus is walking with them, whether they can call him up on the 'telephone of prayer'

IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO CHANGE SOCIAL STRUCTURES...
WE MUST CHANGE PERSONS. SOCIAL INJUSTICE IS
AN EXPRESSION OF THE ABSENCE OF LOVE



and tell him all about their troubles.”

As slaves, Blacks did not have exposure to theological discourses. Blacks did not ask whether God existed but whether God was with them in their struggles. Theologically, said Cone, Blacks “did not devise various philosophical arguments for God’s existence, because the God of Black experience was not a metaphysical idea. He was the God of history, the Liberator of the oppressed from bondage. Jesus was not an abstract Word of God, but God’s Word made flesh who came to set the prisoner free.”


Black theology developed out of an “I am Somebody” feeling in the Black Church. On Sundays, Miss Rosie, the household cook and servant for the oppressor became a choir member, head of the usher board, the deaconess. Mr. Henry, the male servant, was the deacon, usher, trustee, rich baritone singer. By way of the church, Blacks took leading



roles, learned to be administrators, business managers, developed musical, reading, praying and preaching talents. After receiving Sunday’s spiritual food they returned refreshed on Monday to cleaning, keeping house, yard and children for their White employers. Sunday was a release that gave sustenance for the next week. The scripture reading, singing, preaching, praying, oral tradition, and fellowship formed the creeds of the Black Church.

They expressed what was felt and lived. As Euro-Americans recited their creeds, Blacks could sing with vigor: “I will trust in the Lord; I don’t noways feel tired; The Lord is blessing me right now.” When someone would sing, “Does Jesus Care?,” the emotional response was *yes*. This they knew from their life experiences and the parallels with Exodus. They knew that one day they, too would be delivered.

Perhaps we all need to get back to basics and follow the Master Teacher, “to preach good news to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, set at liberty those who are oppressed and proclaim the acceptable year of our Lord.”

This is the heart of the Black experience and theology. We will not need to feel inferior because the Black experience will not be thought of as an adjunct. It will be molded into religious teachings, texts and education. Black theologians, clergy, traditions, music, experiences will be as much a part of Church History, Ethics, Theology and other courses and persons as Tillich, Barth, Cranmer, Abelard, and others. Once we can follow in our Lord’s footsteps, we will all be able to find fulfillment in an old spiritual which many feel developed out of the Episcopal Church at the time when Eucharist and seating were racially separated at the services. Then without barriers we can truly “break bread, drink wine, and praise God together on our knees.” 

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Parenti . . . *Continued from page 8*

into not-for-profit production. If private industry cannot provide for the needs of the people, cannot build homes and hospitals enough for all, then the public sector should do so — not by contracting out to profiteers but by direct production, as during the New Deal when public workers did all sorts of necessary work. They made tents, cots and shoes, and canned food for the poor, a not-for-profit production that created jobs, served human needs, and expanded social income and the tax base.

We need to open up our political system, to have new political parties, not just one party that red-baits and liberal-baits and another that lives in fear of being red-baited and liberal-baited.

We real patriots say along with Albert Camus: "I want to love my country and justice too." We want to spend less time trying to "save" others with our missiles and battleships and more time healing ourselves. This is not just a good and noble ideal; it is a historical necessity. This country does not belong to billionaires and their friends — although they act like it does. America belongs to us, and sooner or later we are going to take it back. **TW**

The woman healed

(Luke 13:11-17)

**The moment was undreamed of —
totally unprepared for —
hardly hoped
since life had seemed to be this way
forever.**

**In fact, she had come upon
the crowd by accident,
was not among the ones who
cloyingly clung on to him.**

**Then, it happened: she stood straight.
There were faces now in view
instead of earth; arms
in place of feet.**

**A totally new perspective
for a life beyond.**

**It did not take
the liberated woman long
to realize that the curing
had its liabilities.**

**Thanking God,
she saw the challenges ahead.
Erect now,
she would be despised by some
for being like "the rest of men."**

Ann Maureen Gallagher

Not Jesus

Christ didn't deal with the Temple merchants; neither did he come around on the sly to talk with them at midnight.

Christ doesn't opt for the lesser of two evils, because the lesser evil hides abominations.

Christ doesn't promote cluster bombs, or say they'll contribute to world peace.

Christ doesn't insist that the best communist is the dead communist; the best fascist, the dead fascist.

Christ didn't give a long sermon before Lazarus' tomb; he wept instead, and God heard him and Lazarus rose from the dead.

Christ didn't become a guerilla willing to eliminate his mother if necessary. Neither did he take money stolen from the poor, deposit it in a Swiss bank account and live off the interest.

Christ dined with rich and poor, but he neither flattered the rich nor became a demagogue to the poor.

Christ never climbed genealogical trees.

Christ never said an easy way for folks to reach heaven and enjoy life everlasting was by murdering them; that's why he never said the death penalty was a good thing.

Christ never looks the other way when they tell him Christians are robbing the public coffers in his name; that in his name they are raping, torturing and slitting throats on the pretext of uncovering the devil's clandestine activities.

Christ never earned a doctorate in prudence; neither did he yearn to appear on TV or do what he did so others would notice him.

Christ multiplied the loaves, but he did not change stones into bread just to gain power in this world, which is what happens in the reign of the Twisted.

Christ was not given the keys to the city of Bethlehem.

Christ didn't die surrounded by his disciples. Instead, it was women who refused to abandon him and accompanied him in his agony, and were the first to see him in his Ressurrection — a fact that solemn men forget.

**Paz y Justicia
Santiago, Chile
Latin American Press 7/7/88**

Healing the wounds of divorce:

A ceremony for the new family

by Mary Beth Gordon

When James Armstrong and Cynthia Manzelli asked the Rev. Peter Stebinger of Christ Episcopal Church to marry them, the Bethany, Conn. priest immediately laid out the ground rules. The couple would have to undergo extensive premarital counseling — even more rigorous than that required of couples contemplating marriage for the first time — because Manzelli was divorced with two children.

As the wedding day approached, Stebinger was satisfied that both Armstrong and Manzelli understood the seriousness of their commitment to each other and Manzelli's adolescent daughters.

The only remaining question was one he asked whenever he presided over a wedding involving children from previous marriages: How could he liturgically acknowledge, in a way that would be meaningful to both the couple and the children, the family nature of remarriage?

Stebinger's answer came from Manzelli, who showed him a newspaper article about a family-oriented wedding ceremony designed to make children an integral part of the marriage celebration. It differs from traditional wedding rites in only one respect: after the newlyweds exchange rings, their children join them at the altar for a special family service. During the five-minute ceremony, the couple place a sterling silver medal —

Mary Beth Gordon is a freelance writer from Kansas City, Mo. Her articles have appeared in *Commonweal*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *National Catholic Reporter*.

How a recently developed interfaith family wedding ceremony is being successfully integrated into traditional wedding rites to emphasize the important role of existing children into the remarriage relationship.

known as the Family Medallion — around the neck of each child as they pledge their love to all the children either spouse brings to the marriage.

"In my opinion, the wedding liturgy should bring together all marriage-related spiritual concerns and hold them before God," says Stebinger.

He agreed to use the Family Medallion ceremony because, through a series of biblical verses and other readings, it af-

firmed and blessed the new family unit that was being formed through remarriage. Armstrong and Manzelli liked the idea of giving 11-year-old Robyn and 14-year-old Terri the Family Medallions during their wedding because "it would help them understand they were being joined together with Jim and me."

All those participating in the Manzelli/Armstrong wedding say the ceremony far exceeded their expectations. "It was a very emotional moment when Jim and I placed the medals around the girls' necks," Manzelli recalls. "We were all overwhelmed; I don't think there was a dry eye in the church."

To Stebinger, the tears were a symbol of healing. "Divorce is fraught with feelings of disillusionment and fragmentation," he says.

"Before I performed the Family Medallion ceremony, I just thought it would add a nice touch to the wedding. But in

THE FAMILY MEDALLION

The inclusion of a third circle with the two traditional "marriage circles" portrays relationships of three or more. . . The gold center emphasizes equality and mutual caring. In this respect, the Family Medallion takes on significance not only for the family, but also for the larger society.

Love is always greater than the union of two persons. Its power cannot be limited, for love, as it grows, must find expression and fulfillment through active concern for the forgotten, the rejected.

— Roger Coleman



using it, I was awed by how clearly the presence of God was involved in the creation of this new family.”

During the last year, the Family Medallion ceremony has been utilized in a growing number of weddings of all faiths. Both the medallion and its attendant pledge, which can be adapted to any traditional religious wedding service, were developed by the Rev. Roger Coleman, Chaplain of Urban Ministry for the Community Christian Church in Kansas City, Mo.

“I was marrying more and more people who had children from previous marriages,” says Coleman. “Most of these couples tried to include any existing younger children in the wedding by having them serve as flower girls or ring bearers. But once these young people walked down the aisle, their role in the wedding ended. I believe the average child comes to the wedding of one of his parents with a great deal excitement and expectation. But as the actual ceremony progresses with the focus entirely on the couple, the child is cut off from the feeling of being part of what is going on. You can see the confusion on the child’s face and his or her crying or acting out after the wedding.”

Coleman says that in the case of a marriage involving children, there’s a lot more going on than simply the union of a man and a woman. “It’s the merging of two separate families,” he adds. “I spent about a year developing a special wedding ceremony, including the medallion, to recognize in a meaningful way the role of children in this newly created relationship.”

Most of the 350-plus guests at the wedding Coleman performed for Christy Surface and Ronnie Williams in Kansas City reported being deeply touched by the presentation of the medallion to Surface’s two young sons. “Through the medallion, the guests bore witness that we were getting married as a family,” explains Surface.



In an emotional moment, John and Cynthia Armstrong prepare Family Medallions for presentaion to Cynthia's daughters, Terri and Robyn, during the marriage ceremony at Christ Church, Bethany, Ct.

“It’s very important in these days and times to involve children in remarriage,” she adds. “If you don’t, kids will continue to feel insecure because they won’t know where they fit in. For example, before we were married, my six-year-old son, Ryan, kept saying ‘You and Ronnie are getting married but Andy (Surface’s three-year-old son) and I aren’t.’ But after the wedding, he said, ‘Mom, we re-

ally did get married as a family.’”

Like Stebinger and other Episcopalian priests, most clergy do not encourage divorce. But with 45% of all U.S. marriages constituting a second or subsequent marriage, there is a growing desire among priests, ministers and rabbis to address the special needs families involved in remarriage.

“I don’t like divorce,” says the Rev.

Michael Soppeland, a Lutheran minister who used the Family Medallion ceremony during a wedding he performed this year at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Ft. Dodge, Iowa. "But you have to be realistic and find a way to bring children into the remarriage family."

According to clergy who have used the medallion, most prefer to make the presentation as outlined in Coleman's

ceremony — immediately following the exchange of rings, with modifications for various theological and liturgical considerations.

"The wedding ring symbolizes love and faithfulness," explains Stebinger. "The Family Medallion is a parallel symbol demonstrating that parents and stepparents intend to be faithful to the children brought together by remarriage.

It is very easy to work the Family Medallion service into a ceremony as liturgically formal as the Episcopalian wedding."

Additional information about the Family Medallion ceremony can be obtained from the Rev. Roger Coleman, c/o Westport Allen Center, 706 West 42nd St. Kansas City, MO 64111, (816) 753-3886.

Presenting the family medallion

(An appropriate place for acknowledging the importance of children is following the pronouncement of the couple as husband and wife.)

Introduction: Often marriage is viewed as a union of two individuals. In reality, marriage is much broader.

As we give thanks to God for the love which brings _____ and _____ together, so too, we recognize the merging of families here represented and the additional love and responsibility they bring to this relationship.

We are, in fact, all members of one family, of God's family, a relationship established in the New Testament *Letter to James* (adapted from *The Living Bible*):

*And it was a happy day for God
when we received our new lives
through the truth of God's Word, and
we became, as it were, the first
children in God's new family*

(Also *Gal. 3:28* may be read and *Mk. 10:13-16* included when younger children are present.)

Presentation of the medallion:

(Child or children may be brought forward by grandparents or others if they are too young to stand with parents during the ceremony.)

As part of the family nature of God's creation we recognize _____ and the significant role he/she/they play(s) in this marriage today celebrated.

_____ and _____ present to _____ this/these Family Medallion(s) created as a symbol of family relationships and in recognition of the potential for a more just and loving world which God presents us

through the gift of each child.

(The following may be repeated by the minister or by one or both parents.)

In the placing of this/these medallion(s) we pledge to you, _____, our continuing love and protection even as we surround you now with our arms of support and protection.

(Other comments or readings may be included by the minister.)

Prayer for the family

Creator God, you have made us in your own image, male and female, that together we may live as members of your one family.

As you surround us with never-ending love, strengthen us that we too might reflect your love, becoming ever:

supportive of one another in times of sorrow
forgiving of one another in times of anger,
patient in those moments when we seek to rebuild
out of the pain of broken trusts and shattered dreams.

We give thanks, O Lord, for this family. In your presence we are humbled by the recognition that, today, we face a new future, one which love has unfolded and is unfolding before our very eyes.

May we ever respect the sanctity of this gift.

As you have filled our cup with joy, may we share the strength of our deepening love for each other, including, in ever-widening circles, those who wait without hope and live without love's shelter. Amen.

— Roger Coleman

Letters . . . Continued from page 3

like her very special mother, Jan. She, too, is a superb writer; her words create pictures and capture feelings. Jan Pierce is smiling, I'm sure, not only for daughter Sue but for the reality of what the women's presence at Lambeth became — the solidarity of a sharing community of Anglican men and women from all parts of the Communion.

Marge Christie
Franklin Lake, N.J.

Purple was unisex

We at Virginia Theological Seminary are delighted that Mary Lou Suhor mentioned us in her article about Barbara Harris' election. I write to say that those who wore purple the Monday after her election included both men and women. We are not all of one mind at VTS, but the women at the seminary rejoice and have the firm support of so many of our brothers.

Barbara Hall
Alexandria, Va.

Who was this Jesus?

The raging furor over the sexuality of Jesus in *The Last Temptation of Christ* seems to me to obscure a much more fascinating line of thought provoked by the Kazantzakis novel and the Scorsese film adaptation. The movie has forced me (along with others) as Paul Moore pointed out in the October WITNESS, to think and talk about Jesus in an altogether new way: To try to understand what it really means to assert that Jesus was both fully human and fully divine.

The question of Jesus' self-understanding is enormously fascinating. If you are fully human, from head to toes, inside and out, how divine can you imagine yourself to be before you are rightly considered mad? How sane is someone who asserts, "I will die and I will return in victory"? Willem Dafoe's Jesus is unarguably a manic-depressive, a Jesus of disturbing extremes. When wracked with doubts he appears to be hallucinating; at other times he is too assertive — a Rambo in the temple se-

quence. When the "rebellion" falls apart Jesus becomes altogether too passive, apparently depressed, virtually paralyzed with indecision.

"It is accomplished" are the last words spoken in the film. There is one more line in the English translation of the novel: "And it was as though he had said: Everything has begun." But the film says little about the Christ of faith. It does not proceed to the resurrection.

I've been left with a host of theological problems. I am unable to believe that the Jesus of history was anything but a whole, healthy human being, assailed by intense doubts from time to time — experiencing a growing sense of mission, fully aware of his place in what we now know as the Old Testament lineage, persuaded that he was preaching his Father's and his fathers' message. But how much beyond that does this construction permit? My faith does not demand total logic — but it does seem to me that if one is going to make a big issue of how fully human Jesus was, one also has an obligation to think through what this means for everything else. If Jesus did not know for sure that he was divine at the institution of the Eucharist, what was he doing? Does it matter? Who has written about this? The consequences of asserting that Jesus was purely divine or at least not an unalloyed human are horrendous.

Ann Orlov
Stowe, Vt.

Chun Yuk Che,
Widow of Leung Bing Ming
and Mother
of the Late Leung Sai Ham,
Requests
the honor of your Contribution
at her Investiture
as a Bag Lady
on the Lawn
of St. John's Cathedral
Garden Road, Central
just after the Christmas Mass.

Sportswear acceptable.
R.S.V.P. optional.

Li Min Hua

Grateful for Dementi

About the September WITNESS: Jean Dementi was a personal friend and we loved her very much. She blessed our house, she ate our food, she read our books and she gave us communion on the patio. She was a great lady and a great priest. If there is such a thing as a real Christian anymore, Jean was it! I wish our church proclaimed saints — she would have to be the Patron Saint of Alaska. Thanks for your coverage of her over the years.

Cal South
San Diego, Cal.

Huzzahs for Lewis

Hurrah for THE WITNESS, hurrah for the Rev. James Lewis and his editorial, "Sacrificing justice for unity" (September issue).

Any initial hope and excitement at General Convention soon vanished when I listened to the sometimes interminable arguments, especially in the House of Bishops, over whether or not babies could/should receive Communion, women could/should be bishops or needed to be replaced by Episcopal Visitors (Will the new order be: deacons, priests, bishops and episcopal visitors?).

At every step of the way Convention seemed to be limiting and circumscribing the furthering of the kingdom and the ministry of the faithful, be they lay or ordained, and the uppermost questions in the mind of the Body were: "What will the press make of this, what will the brethren say at Lambeth and what will be the reaction from the Roman and Orthodox churches?"

I came home sad and depressed while all around me bishops and deputations, diocesan and national press and even the secular media celebrated this so-called unity.

I give thanks again for Lewis, who with the lead article of this post-Convention issue stripped away the veneer to reveal what really took place and to remind us that the battle for justice must continue.

Annette Jecker
Vernon, N.J.

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