

A large, stylized letter 'R' in a light purple color, set against a darker purple background. The 'R' is composed of a thick white outline and a solid light purple fill. It is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the cover.

**review  
for  
religious**

**Christian Heritages and Contemporary Living**

---

MARCH-APRIL 1992 • VOLUME 51 • NUMBER 2

## contents

---

### ministry and ministries

---

- 166 **The Spiritual Exercises as a Foundation for Educational Ministry**  
Walter J. Burghardt SJ reflects on the vision and values given to educational ministry when it is permeated by the spirituality of Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises.
- 182 **Going the Distance, Sustaining the Gift**  
Melannie Svoboda SND suggests some concrete ways that people can joyfully exercise their ministry over the long haul.
- 191 **Newman's Living the Oratory Charism**  
Halbert G. Weidner CO explains the Oratory foundation of Philip Neri in order to highlight values significant to John Henry Newman's life.

### theology and spirituality

---

- 206 **The Resurrection Kernel**  
Dennis Billy CSSR outlines the basic principle of the doctrine of the resurrection in order to show its influence in our way of living.
- 217 **The Fragile Connection between Prayer and Suffering**  
Matthias Neuman OSB speaks from his own experience of how human suffering affects our prayer.
- 229 **To Choose Jesus for My Heaven**  
Donald Macdonald SMM finds Julian of Norwich's insights into the maternal love of Jesus expressed in the Blessed Sacrament.

### religious life and renewal

---

- 236 **Seeing in the Dark**  
Janet Ruffing RSM finds light in John of the Cross's description of the Dark Night for understanding the current turmoil in religious life.

- 249 **Memories of the Future**  
Thomas McKenna CM shows how eschatology as a style of thinking provides understanding for the renewal efforts in religious life.
- 260 **Integrating Postmodernity and Tradition**  
Reid Perkins OP encourages the greater use of narratives in religious life to connect us to the tradition and at the same time to help us overcome the obliviousness of postmodern life.
- 267 **Religious-Life Issues in a Time of Transition**  
John A. Grindel CM and Sean Peters CSJ summarize the results of various studies of U.S. religious life funded by the Lilly Endowment and point to issues still to be dealt with.

### living religiously

---

- 276 **Cultivating Uselessness**  
Rose Hoover RC proposes that in the very experience of uselessness and foolishness lies the gift of religious life to a pragmatic society.
- 282 **Therapy for Religious: The Troublesome Triangle**  
Joyce Harris OSC offers some suggestions for a collaborative relationship among therapist, the individual religious, and the community and its representative.
- 289 **Prenovitate: Theory and Practice**  
Anthony Steel SSG believes a prenovitate program can help meet the challenges of contemporary cultural attitudes toward religious life and outlines the plan for his community.

### report

---

- 294 **U.S. Hispanic Catholics: Trends and Works 1991**  
Kenneth Davis OFM Conv reviews the various events and writings in the Catholic Hispanic experience.

### departments

---

- 164 Prisms
- 303 Canonical Counsel: Hermits and Virgins
- 309 Book Reviews

R  
religious  
life and  
renewal

## Seeing in the Dark

The past year produced for me more conscious reflection on the experience of religious life than the last fifteen or twenty, since it was the year I celebrated my silver jubilee of religious profession. I have been struggling to articulate this profoundly joyful and deeply graced moment on my own journey because at this moment religious life as we have known it is dying. I found myself paradoxically continuing to embrace a way of life—one which has not yet solidified into its new form—with even less warrant than when I made perpetual vows twenty years ago. In the context of jubilee I recognized an experience of grace offered to me that requires a trust far greater than the one I mustered years ago.

At that time we did not have a clue how provisional the form of our life had become. Things still looked and felt stable. Change was all about us, but life generally went on as usual. That, of course, has all changed. I can predict no institutional stability that will last as long as I am likely to live. Nor can I expect the validation of my religious life by a new generation. (I can no longer deny any of this.) And yet I have found the challenges and hazards of religious life even in this time of transition a good way

**Janet Ruffing RSM** is assistant professor of spirituality and spiritual direction in the Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education at Fordham University. The present article is based on a presentation made to sixty women religious leaders in New York City. Her address is GSRRE, Fordham University; Bronx, New York 10458-5169.

of life for me, a way of life which has supported and fostered the deepest desires of my heart and which I feel is still worth living. I continue to choose this way of life because it is where the Holy Mystery we call God has faithfully companioned me and invited me to grow. The question of commitment turns on a history of grace now requiring an utter trust in an unpredictable and unreliable future. My reflections led me to think as much about religious life itself—our current situation, our present moment of crisis—as about my experience of living it.

Now, continuing my reflections and sharing them, I find myself offering, as persuasively as I can, an invitation to embrace our condition of “unknowing” and to explore our experience of the “night journey” or the “dark night.” I propose, too, some attitudes and some behaviors that might enable us to endure the present ambiguity and might even lead to something analogous to the way one sees in the dark—obscurely though sensitively.

The more I thought and read, the more I came to distrust much about what I was reading. Everyone offers some “truth” about our situation, but none of us has “put it together” in any satisfactory way. Barbara Fiand and Sandra Schneiders offer me the most helpful points of reference.<sup>1</sup> They always invite us to continue to live with our present ambiguity. From within my own experience, which of course includes the journey of my own religious community, I find us in a wonderful place with one another, living ever more deeply into God, energized and creative in ministry, risking even our lives in some situations, yet struggling with communal life, with balance, with extension of ourselves to new or potential members, and with diminishment from aging and dying. Subjectively we are healthier and happier than I have ever known us, yet collectively we do not know where we are going either. There is a clearer sense that we have only just begun, that the transformation taking place within us and among us is larger than our individual lives.

As I read Mary Jo Leddy, I felt her cultural analysis to be correct: we are living in a time when our assumptions about the world are changing. The first world is waning at its core even as every region of the world is struggling with its own issues and in many areas refashioning an entirely new world order. Much that has shaped our sense of who we are and how we fit into the world is changing even beyond what Leddy could describe when she wrote *Reweaving Religious Life*.<sup>2</sup> But her placement of religious life is



not quite accurate. I find that most religious are far more critical of cultural norms than she admits and that vowed life is still not mainstream in any of its styles. Who else do you know so clearly choosing interdependence, risking actual poverty as professional persons, and forgoing both the companionship of committed love and the affectional and sexual gratification usually part of those relationships? For what? For some kind of relationship with God and service to that mystery at work in our world and in us. No matter how "liberal" or "conservative" we may look, our core commitments, if we allow ourselves to feel them existentially, are more precarious and more countercultural than ever. Many religious women are more prophetic than Leddy admits.

The literature on refounding also leaves me with more questions than answers. We know that religious life has died and been reborn in the past. We can describe some of those patterns, but we cannot simply *design* them. Living religiously develops new forms as they are required. They happen more by accident, more by individual and communal grace than by logical processes and plans. Living a life focused on God results eventually in the construction of a lifestyle that maintains this focus. As Sandra Schneiders asserts, people who live such a life construct a lifestyle that enables the quest. One does not first invent the form in order to live the life.

The sociological literature, too, is only partially useful. While reading Patricia Wittberg's *Creating a Future for Religious Life: A Sociological Perspective*,<sup>3</sup> I again felt this was not the last word. The more clearly she described her three models of social groups, the more clearly it seemed to me that none of them actually fits religious life either as it is or as it is becoming. Sociology has paid scant attention to the phenomenon of religious life, and I do not believe it has developed an adequate descriptive model. Nonetheless, we do need to pay attention to many of the issues and strategies she discusses.

We might pose ourselves some questions: What structures, processes, and conditions are required for us to live authentically the fundamental discipleship to which we are called in today's culture? This might yield some clue to the future shaping of our lives and to some of the hard choices which confront us. What kind of solitude, what amount of time, and what other conditions do we need for practicing the deep contemplation our times require? What kinds of activities and events will foster the shared

vision and shared commitments our communal lives require? What assumptions about ministry need to be questioned regarding, for instance, the professionalization of our ministries, the stresses involved, the shaping of our consciousness by the ecclesial and secular institutions in which we participate, the continued oppression of all women within the institutional church, the frenetic pace of our work lives, and the correlative inhibition of our affectional, relational, and contemplative lives? What strategies are we adopting to address some of these issues?<sup>4</sup>

Further questions include: How might communal life respond? What would need to change about how we live together and organize our time? Are some ways better than others? What hinders asking these questions? What prevents us from sharing what we are all learning?

Rather than focus on "refounding," we can reflect on our communal and personal stories; we can, and need to, reinterpret our charisms, the shared charism of religious life and the unique one of each congregation, in the light of the enormous cultural, social, political, scientific, and theological changes which we are undergoing. We cannot *decide* to refound, but we can develop new forms of community cohesion by shared theological reflection, by discovering how and where and in whom God's spirit seems to be animating us in similar ways. By so doing we can encourage one another to be faithful to the movements of God's spirit in our lives. And thus we can become codiscerners with one another, creating a climate in which we notice or sense these movements and respond to them individually and communally. Furthermore, we can try together to repent of what causes us to evade the questions before us. Is not some of our business an escape from reflection and from feeling our losses? How do we numb our consciousness so that we remain undisturbed by what is going on all around us?

I think we all realize that wherever we are going we have not arrived. For those of us who are charged with leadership at this moment in history, the task is magnified because they have not only the responsibility of their own religious living but some responsibility for the life of the group as well. Increasingly I am wondering who gave leaders the task of "saving," "refounding," or "burying" religious life? Does not the heaviness and the frustration they encounter with this task come from a need to know or to feel in control? Is it partly motivated by a desire to escape from

the present confusion into an imagined, less uncomfortable future? If so, these attempts to *do something* mask their helplessness, powerlessness, and total dependence in faith on God. The future of religious life is ultimately in God's hands. It is God's task to inspire charismatic leaders and to bring this future to birth.

Who are we to presume that our role is less like that of Elizabeth or John the Baptist or Simeon or Anna than that of Mary or even Clare of Assisi? Was Moses, who never entered the promised land, a less important leader than Joshua, who did? I think not. Transitional leadership is important in its unique way. Nothing will be achieved if transitional leadership seeks to escape the opportune moment, the time of challenge and danger that is the present moment.

The Sufis tell a story about the folly of hopelessly looking for answers in the wrong places:

A neighbor found Nasruddin on his knees searching for something. "What are you searching for, Mullah?" "My key. I've lost it." Both people got on their knees to search for the lost key. After a while the neighbor says, "Where did you lose it?" "At home." "Good Lord! Then why are you searching for it here?" "Because there is more light here."<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps when we seek to find our way where the light is better and more abundant, we are looking in the wrong place. Perhaps our lost key is to be found at home, in our unlit house, in the experience typically symbolized in the spiritual tradition by the dark night. The lost key is to be found by groping on our hands and knees in the dark, relying more on touch and intuition than on clarity of sight and rational schemas of interpretation. It is to be found by staying in the dark until we gain our night vision and begin to see in the dark.

Three important reflections on the experience of the dark night have been published in the last ten years: Mary Giles's essay "Take Back the Night,"<sup>6</sup> Constance Fitzgerald's "Impasse and Dark Night,"<sup>7</sup> and Joann Wolski Conn's "Psychological Depression and Spiritual Darkness."<sup>8</sup> Each time I read these essays and the original material from John of the Cross, I am struck by the phenomenon of the Dark Night that renders us confused, helpless, and dependent, but that eventually opens up, first, into a luminous darkness as one begins to see again in the dark and, finally, into the dawn of a new life with God.

John of the Cross's classical description of profound personal transformation into God has usually been applied only to individuals and primarily to their experiences in prayer. However, Mary Giles suggests that those of us who are not cloistered contemplatives will experience this situation of God-initiated and God-resolved confusion and disorientation more globally, in all of our being, rather than in some restricted part of our lives. It is precisely when our whole world falls apart unintentionally and against our wills that this process, she believes, might be underway. More recently Sandra Schneiders suggested that religious life itself might be going through a dark night collectively.<sup>9</sup> If this is the case, the call to endure the present ambiguity and its attendant disorientation will lead us deeper into God and toward the goal of our desiring and our hope. The teaching on the Dark Night might also suggest how to conduct ourselves in this dark time.

Every journey of the spirit is a journey without maps. No one can plot the route for another. And the maps we have do not quite fit our unique route in the topography which confronts us. Our maps are as crude as the ones the early explorers used which signified unknown lands as places inhabited by dragons. To a certain extent each of us individually and all of us collectively on this journey in religious life are now invited to meet the dragons—to journey through unknown, previously unexplored, and therefore unmapped territory of the spirit.

The mystical tradition describes this part of the journey as a journey into the night. Night can be a time of great creativity and wisdom, of problem solving and growth. It is the time when we live closest to our unconscious, a wellspring of creativity and a storehouse of imagery. How many of our inspirations come from our dreams; how many of our problems are solved from this less controlling part of ourselves? Night can also be a time when our submerged conflicts and anxieties rise to the surface and we pray to be delivered from dark terrors.

Night is a time of love. It is associated with the trysting of lovers—a time of intimacy and communion which is enhanced by the darkness. It is a time of loving union and of knowing another through touch and taste and smell rather than sight. Night is also a time of profound religious experience. Jesus spent long nights in prayer. The ancient monastic tradition kept vigils and regu-

*Every journey  
of the spirit  
is a journey  
without maps.*

larly returned to prayer in the middle of the night. And biblical stories such as Samuel's nocturnal call remind us of the night as a time of God's special presence and visitation. Nocturnal prayer is often absolutely still and uncluttered. Consciousness is usually highly focused. All the barriers between the self and the holy mystery more easily dissolve, and heart speaks to heart in silent presence and loving union.

Night is a time when one does not see. One gropes in the dark. One rests in unknowing and uncertainty. And it can become frightening to not know where one is going or to perceive in the dark a strange something that would be utterly familiar in the daylight. Yet all of us know the experience of getting used to the dark. Most of us discover we can traverse familiar terrain with some ease in the dark. We know the inside of our houses well enough to walk through them without turning on the lights. If we stay in the dark long enough, get used to it, begin to explore it, we discover it is not entirely dark. If we allow ourselves to become accustomed to it, we come to sense what is there and how to move through it in a subtle and indistinct way. So the symbolism of the dark night is rich and multivalent. It has been used to describe experiences with quite specific features, features which I think apply to this present moment in religious life when it is difficult for us to know where we are or where we are going; we are in a dark night.

What are the characteristics of the spiritual darkness, the dark night? Darkness is a special kind of light. Life is present in a way that is not yet recognized and therefore could be mistaken for death. Although some forms of darkness may be due to infidelity or ill health, *this* is a darkness that accompanies growth. This darkness leads to freer, more abundant communication with God.

John of the Cross offers three signs which together distinguish a growthful darkness from an unhealthy one: First, a breakdown occurs in one's ordinary mode of communication with God. One has exhausted the limits. Something else is already happening, but one cannot recognize it. Everything seems to be going in reverse. If one tries to do the old thing, it will not work. A second sign is that one is dissatisfied by the things of God but is not satisfied with anything else either. At the same time one desires God and continues to seek God in solitude in the midst of this discomfort. The third and essential sign of life is one's inability to go back to one's former mode of communication with God. Yet there

is a delicate peace and nourishment. One does not want to get out of this dryness; somehow this darkness is life-giving. So altogether the person is profoundly peaceful even though there is confusion. The person is able to maintain work and relationships, yet desires to stay with this dryer knowledge and subtle awareness of God that does not satisfy the senses.

In addition to these subjective experiences in prayer, there also appear certain benefits of this darkness: (1) It helps one become more inner-directed and less dependent on the feeling of God's presence or the approval or satisfaction of others. (2) There is energy (in contrast to depression). One is not incapacitated; there is energy especially for ministry. Empowerment is present even if it is not particularly noticed. (3) There is deep peace if one stops trying to control the experience and begins to trust. There is a desire not to turn back or give the journey up. (4) There is an increase in self-knowledge that is nourishing though not necessarily pleasant. The truth is ultimately freeing. (5) And, finally, one becomes more integrated, with all of one's capacities and natural powers working together.

In addition to these characteristics and benefits of the night, John of the Cross also offers five points of advice on how to conduct oneself in darkness: (1) Be patient and trust that God has not abandoned you. (2) Rest in prayer and in God even though it seems to be wasting time. Stay with the experience and do not give up contemplative prayer. (3) Be free. Let go of the need to accomplish something. (4) Be attentive. Keep on noticing God and what God might be doing without forcing anything or expecting the things to be the same as previously. (5) Be aware that for many the darkness comes and goes.<sup>10</sup>

All of the above descriptions apply to what John calls the night of sense, primarily issues of comfort and feeling. There is another type of dark night, that of the spirit, characterized by the loss of whatever has given assurance and meaning before. The way one has made sense out of one's life is now lost completely. These characteristics seem to have their parallels in present-day religious life. Not only are many of our members undergoing a personal dark night, which marks their growing maturity in prayer, but also religious life itself is experiencing its collective dark night.

Yet, along with the experience of darkness, I also sense a beginning of seeing in the dark. I find a gradual and not so gradual stripping of our collective illusions about knowing God. Religious

life is not the only way one can know and relate to God. It is not necessarily even the best way any more. What we had expected to give us a sure path to God now seems to be failing us. And yet many of us also sense a deep and new life in our midst. We are more humble in our claims and in our expectations. The external form of religious life can no longer “carry” us if we are unwilling

to go through the transformation required to relate to God in this more mature and consequently less secure way. Some members may feel that religious life has not fulfilled their expectations. Externals alone are not enough; deep personal transformation is required of most of the members at this moment in history.

We have been doing a lot of growing up individually and collectively. There appears to be nothing we can *do* as religious that cannot be *done* by someone else. All our ministries can be done by others. Yet we still feel ourselves to be called to be of service for which we have abundant energy and enthusiasm. Even the con-

templative life can be led by others as well. Yet we sense we are called to focus our entire lives on God, to trust and to rely on God without looking for satisfaction elsewhere. We find ourselves, if we are willing to “endure” ourselves as Rahner recommends, being sustained even when we find ourselves least able. Beneath the stripping, something is there that is true and good and reliable.

A sonnet by May Sarton about the loss of a love suggests the reality of this deeper substratum.<sup>11</sup> She gently and simply shows love as living through the seasons as trees do. As winter’s dark approaches, trees reach fulfillment and yet casually release leaf after life-giving and life-receiving leaf and let them fall, keeping only some roots dormant but enduring under the snow. The poem’s narrator sees herself as treelike, “losing what I lose to keep what I can keep.” Perhaps we religious are beginning to sense “the strong root still alive under the snow,” to discover that “love will endure,” collectively as well as individually. Sarton’s poem captures well the attitudes John of the Cross recommends—the patience, the willingness to let go, which of course we all struggle against. We are less able to let go of our illusions, our

*Not only are many  
undergoing a personal  
dark night, but  
religious life itself  
is experiencing its  
collective dark night.*

attachments, and our activities than the trees are able to release their leaves. To sustain a posture of willing detachment is, I think, extremely difficult. All of us, especially those charged with the task of leadership, want to do something about the situation, want to fix it, want to at least look as if we are in control.

The most common ways individuals avoid the dark-night experience are (1) to abandon contemplation and flee into work or into distractions that do not recreate, (2) to numb their feelings so that they avoid the experience of anguish and doubt, and miss the deep peace beneath it, and (3) to try repeatedly to return to the old ways which no longer nourish or help. People continue to go through the motions, behave in the old ways, and those habits obscure their ability to cooperate with God and notice what God is actually doing with them.

Women in leadership need to relinquish the illusion of control without relinquishing leadership or responsibility. They need to model patience, to trust that God has not abandoned them. They need to nourish their own contemplative being so that they can wait on God, allowing God to be God. They need to grow in trust that God is active in their midst. They need to be free both spiritually and psychologically, free as mature adults and free to foster that same freedom in the members. Women in leadership ought not be complicit in maintaining the old ways of behaving which no longer serve a purpose. And they need to be attentive, to notice how God seems to be moving within the group.

I continue to be amazed at the stories I hear about the oppression and exploitation of members in religious congregations. Congregations have a long way to go to foster a mature level of autonomy and respect for individual women and their gifts that will eventually be the basis for genuinely interdependent community relationships. Too much bureaucratic and impersonal functioning still distances and alienates the members. And there is still, among many, insufficient depth of spiritual development. We will never be able to let the old forms die if this development does not take place.

If this deep rooting in God beyond conventional forms does not take place, we can only cower in fear when free women impelled by God’s spirit birth afresh the God-life that is given to them. Such fear will ensure that we never enjoy the new life of the spirit, nor participate in it, nor allow it to shape the emerging form of religious living.



Women in leadership need to be discerning people who recognize when members are depressed, stuck, and dysfunctional and encourage them to attend to their own growth. This is not parenting, but rather refusing to be codependent in relation to the crises and needs of members. It is not surprising to see much psychological dysfunction within our groups side by side with healthy and robust psychospiritual maturity. The last two decades have taken a toll on all of us. For some they produced the psychological and spiritual development needed for survival and growth. But many were so reinforced in their dysfunctions by the old style of religious life that an inevitable disintegration of many collective forms has taken place more slowly than it otherwise would have, thus provoking for many members the *present* crisis. In view of this, leadership needs to distinguish between psychological immaturity or dysfunction and the particular forms of dark night upon which we have been reflecting.

Finally, we need to own the fact that we and many of our members experience a crisis of meaning which is far more profound than we realize. We have heard much talk recently about “paradigm shifts.” We are in the midst of numerous paradigm shifts within the culture and the church and consequently within religious life. Our images of God have changed; our experience of the church has changed, causing for many a sense of betrayal and misplaced hope; our relationship to the world and to the earth itself has changed. All the ways we had construed our place in the sun and the meaningfulness of our commitment have been gradually eroding. This crisis in meaning affects each of us differently and can be understood through the symbol of the dark night. It is a “darker” night than the first version and it leads to a yet more profound transformation.

I think we can expect this version of the dark night to be pervasive for a while. We will need to live with the frustration of unknowing, of seeming loss of vision until a new era dawns. We will discover that this darkness or crisis in meaning affects us at different times. For several days or months a sense of abiding grace and meaningfulness will relieve our anxiety about the questions that nag us; then the nagging uncertainty will return for a while. We can expect such alternation in ourselves as well as in other individual members and in the group. You and I can learn, with Sartre, to “take the dark with open eyes / and call it seasonal, not harsh or strange,” and become willing to “lose what I

lose to keep what I can keep, / the strong root still alive under the snow.” If we can let go, “love will endure.”

Joann Conn offers a clue about how women in leadership and our communities themselves can facilitate such a transition. During transition times in a person’s life, she points out, counselors and spiritual directors offer three functions: confirmation, contradiction, and holding.

In the confirmation function, the helper joins the person in her situation and usually her pain. She acknowledges the way it is, the feeling that God is absent; but she also opens up for her the possibility that God may be present in an experience of loss, crisis, or exhaustion. Confirmation offers empathy, respect, acceptance.

In the contradiction function, the helper contradicts the person’s inclination to regress to an earlier way of construing meaning or praying or behaving which can no longer serve growth. She also encourages her toward autonomy and greater freedom and helps her begin to put meaning together in a new way. This is often where a liberation-theological perspective, a feminist interpretation of the Scripture, and so forth can provide a new basis on which to build meaning. At the same time the helper encourages the person to explore the darkness, to be contemplative, to endure herself, and to notice how God may be present to her in some obscure yet more freeing way.

In the holding function, the helper is consistently there for the person. “Holding” is the assurance that someone, and hopefully a significant part of the group, can continue to be there for her so she can return to the group in her newfound identity.

It has struck me that *groupings* of people need to function in similar ways. Our communities should be capable of serving these functions either through peer support groups or through leadership’s style of relating to individuals. This is especially difficult at present, when so many members are in transition that the community itself is a continually changing reality. Certain people need to symbolize to the group its continuity and its capacity to respect and encourage the deep transformation the members are undergoing. For individuals to live their life focused on God requires the social support to keep on going when they have lost their way and gotten discouraged or confused. This is why people join religious communities. Religious life is meant to provide these functions of confirming, contradicting, and holding—to



facilitate genuine growth in holiness. It is a deformation of religious life if communal pressures keep individual members at an immature level of human and spiritual development.

In conclusion, I invite you to consider how the symbol of the dark night might apply to the present moment in religious life. What interior movements in you as leaders work against the deeper transformation in yourselves and in your communities suggested by the dark night? What interior movements support surrender and trust? What encouraging signs of new life do you notice in yourselves and in your communities—energy, commitment, peace, quiet love, and deeper faith—even in this dark time? Are we beginning to “take the dark with open eyes / and call it seasonal, not harsh or strange”? And are we willing to settle for “the strong root still alive under the snow,” in the confidence that life and “love will endure” if we let go?

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Barbara Fiand, *Living the Vision: Religious Vows in an Age of Change* (New York: Crossroad, 1990). Sandra Schneiders, *New Wineskins: Re-Imagining Religious Life Today* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> Mary Jo Leddy, *Reweaving Religious Life: Beyond the Liberal Model* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> Patricia M. Wittberg, *Creating a Future for Religious Life: A Sociological Perspective* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> For example, often the highly committed women who are choosing to live alone rather than in convents are attempting to create the space and time required to maintain poise and balance in the face of these pressures.

<sup>5</sup> In Anthony de Mello, *The Song of the Bird* (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1982), p. 32.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Giles, “Take Back the Night,” in *The Feminist Mystic and Other Essays on Women and Spirituality* (New York: Paulist, 1982).

<sup>7</sup> Constance Fitzgerald, “Impasse and Dark Night,” in *Living with Apocalypse: Spiritual Resources for Social Compassion*, ed. Tilden H. Edwards (New York: Harper and Row, 1984).

<sup>8</sup> Joann Wolski Conn, *Spirituality and Personal Maturity* (Mahwah: Paulist, 1989).

<sup>9</sup> Sandra Schneiders, Berkeley, 20 October 1990.

<sup>10</sup> This interpretation of John of the Cross is dependent on Joann Conn, cited above.

<sup>11</sup> May Sarton, “Sonnet 2,” from *The Autumn Sonnets*, anthologized in *Cries of the Spirit: A Celebration of Women’s Spirituality*, ed. Marilyn Sewell (Boston: Beacon, 1991), p. 130.