

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 2
SPRING 2000

THE SPIRE

Vanderbilt University Divinity School and Oberlin Graduate School of Theology

A Sharing of Tradition





Saint Barbara, ca. 1500
Anonymous
Stained glass in leaded frame
Flemish
9-1/2" x 9-1/2"
Vanderbilt Art Association
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Mark your calendar today for these events at Vanderbilt University Divinity School

Friday, September 1

FALL CONVOCATION
4:00 p.m. in Benton Chapel

Keynote address delivered by the Reverend Doctor Gardner C. Taylor, BD'40, Recipient of the 2000 Distinguished Alumnus Award

Following the convocation, the Divinity School will host a picnic for students, faculty, staff, alumni/ae, and convocation guests.

Tuesday, September 12

THE INSTALLATION OF JACK M. SASSON
The first Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt University Divinity School

Sarratt Theatre, 6:00 p.m.

Following Professor Sasson's address, guests are invited to a cocktail supper in the new Sarratt Courtyard.

Acquisitions from the Mary and Harry Zimmerman Judaica Collection of the Divinity Library will be on display in the Sarratt Lobby.

Thursday, October 12 at 7:00 p.m. & Friday, October 13 at 10:00 a.m.

THE COLE LECTURES
"Jesus Today: The Legacy of Albert Schweitzer"
"The Battle Over Jesus Today"

Delivered by Marcus Borg
The Distinguished Professor in Religion and Culture and Hundere Endowed Chair in Religious Studies at Oregon State University

THE SPIRE

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A Sharing of Tradition

The Divinity School celebrates the endowment of two chairs in Jewish and Catholic studies.

On the front cover: Vanderbilt University Divinity School celebrated the 1999-2000 academic year with the initial faculty appointments to the Mary Jane Werthan Chair in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible and to the Edward A. Malloy Chair in Catholic Studies. The relationships between these two religious traditions are suggested by the image of the unrolled scroll across the chairs in the acrylic painting by Nashville illustrator Natalie Cox Jaynes. A graduate of the Ringling School of Art and Design in Sarasota, Florida, Jaynes was among four artists whose paintings were exhibited recently at the Divinity School.

On the back cover: Nashville artist Kurt M. Lightner's india ink and sandpaper etchings of the symbols of the four evangelists are based upon the details of the pulpit in Benton Chapel. Lightner was graduated from Wheaton College in Illinois where he earned a baccalaureate in studio art.

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Spring 2000

Around the QUADRANGLE

Hudnut-Beumler Appointed to Deanship



American religious historian James Hudnut-Beumler becomes the 15th dean of Vanderbilt University Divinity School on August 1.

The former dean of faculty, executive vice president, and professor of religion and culture at Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia, Hudnut-Beumler (pronounced BOYM-ler) succeeds Joseph C. Hough Jr., professor of Christian ethics and dean, emeritus, who assumed the presidency of Union Theological Seminary in New York.

"Vanderbilt is the ideal place for the kind of education in which I'm interested," says Hudnut-Beumler. "I think it is very important in an increasingly diverse and connected world for theological education to take place in a diverse and plural setting like the modern university. Vanderbilt is one of the places best equipped to meet that challenge because

the University has strong programs in the professions, a first-rate arts and science faculty, and a willingness to ask questions about how we should live and how we use received traditions to project a future."

University Provost Thomas G. Burish characterizes the new dean as one who has uncompromising academic values and a dedication to achievement at the highest levels. "Dr. Hudnut-Beumler brings to the deanship great energy, an incisive intellect, and a strong commitment to the advancement of theological education," Burish says. "His longstanding interests in social justice and community ministry will promote these highly valued traditions at Vanderbilt Divinity School."

An ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA), Hudnut-Beumler was graduated cum laude with a baccalaureate in history from The College of Wooster before earning a master of divinity degree in church history from Union Theological Seminary. From 1984 to 1989 he studied at Princeton University where he received the master of

arts degree and the doctorate of philosophy.

Before his tenure at Columbia Theological Seminary, he served as program associate of the religion division of the Lilly Endowment.

His current research and teaching interests focus on ethics and philanthropy, church and state relations, the theological analysis of culture, and the social aspects of Christian history in the United States. Hudnut-Beumler is the author of *Generous Saints: Congregations Rethinking Ethics and Money*, published in 1999 by the Alban Institute, and *Looking for God in the Suburbs: The Religion of the American Dream and Its Critics, 1945-1965* by Rutgers University Press.

The newly appointed dean holds membership in the American Academy of Religion, American Society of Church History, Association for Religion and Intellectual Life, and Society for the Scientific Study of Religion. He and his wife, Heidi, also a Presbyterian minister, have a daughter, Julia, eight; and a son, Adam, five. An interview with the dean will appear in the fall issue of *The Spire*.

Gee Assumes Chancellorship in August

In a unanimous election by the Vanderbilt Board of Trust, E. Gordon Gee, former president of Brown University, has been appointed the seventh chancellor of Vanderbilt University. He succeeds Chancellor Joe B. Wyatt who retires in July after 18 years as the University's chief executive.

"Gordon Gee is the ideal leader for Vanderbilt University," says Board of Trust Chairman Martha R. Ingram. "He embodies the values that are so important for a great university and for the University in particular: excellence in scholarship, a passionate concern for every individual, a commitment to partnership with the community, and the courage to make difficult decisions. Equally important, he has a great passion for our educational mission and a keen sense of Vanderbilt's traditions."

A native of Vernal, Utah, Gee was graduated from the University of Utah in 1968 with a baccalaureate in history. He earned a doctorate of jurisprudence and a doctorate in education from Columbia University before serving as a judicial clerk for the United States Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit. Prior to his appointment at Brown, Gee served as president of West Virginia University, the University of Colorado, and The Ohio State University.

"There is no other university in the country that already does so many things so well, yet has almost limitless possibilities and a solid foundation on which to build for the future," said Gee when describing Vanderbilt in his introductory speech to the University community. "Vanderbilt is blessed with rich traditions and even



Chancellor-elect Gordon Gee and his wife, Constance, were introduced this spring to the University community. He assumes his role as the seventh chancellor of Vanderbilt on August 1.

richer opportunities for learning, for discovery, and for service."

The chancellor-elect is married to Constance Bumgarner Gee, assistant professor of public policy and education at Brown and former director of the Arts Policy and Administration Program at Ohio State. She will hold a faculty appointment at Peabody College as an associate professor of art education policy.

Preserving Memory

Holocaust Survivor Recounts Life as "Triple Target"

During the 22nd annual Holocaust Lecture Series at Vanderbilt University, Gad Beck, author of *An Underground Life: The Memoirs of a Gay Jew in Nazi Berlin*, discussed his experiences as a Holocaust survivor and participant in the Nazi anti-resistance. The former director of the Jewish Adult Education Center in Berlin, Beck described himself as a "triple target" of Nazi persecution—a Jew, a

before his liberation by the Russian army.

"Maybe I had the luck to survive, but to survive and to know that six million people, of your own, from your family have died—my heart is not free," says Beck.

Vanderbilt's lecture series on the Holocaust, held annually in October, is the longest-sustained series presented on the subject on a university campus in the United

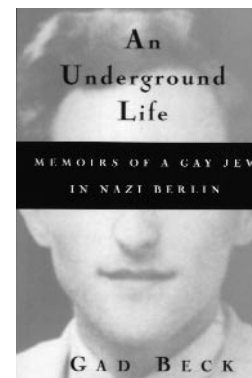


Holocaust survivor Gad Beck discussed his book, *An Underground Life: The Memoirs of a Gay Jew in Nazi Berlin*, with students from the Divinity School during his visit to Vanderbilt University for the 22nd annual Holocaust Lecture Series.

gay man, and a resister—when he met with Divinity School students at a reception in Tillet Lounge sponsored by GABLE, the Divinity School/Graduate Department of Religion's Office of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns.

Born in 1923 as the son of an Austrian Jewish father and German Christian mother, Beck was known as a *mischling*, the name the Nazis bestowed upon individuals with "mixed Jewish blood." His family became

stateless because only non-Jewish Austrians were offered German citizenship. Although Beck and his family were protected by their Christian relatives, he eventually went underground and worked with Zionist organizations dedicated to protecting Jews in hiding. Arrested by the Gestapo in February 1945, Beck was incarcerated in a Berlin prison



States. The 1999-2000 series was titled *Making and Evoking Memory* and explored the ways the Holocaust is memorialized collectively and individually.

The Distanced Other

Soyinka Examines Question of Kinship

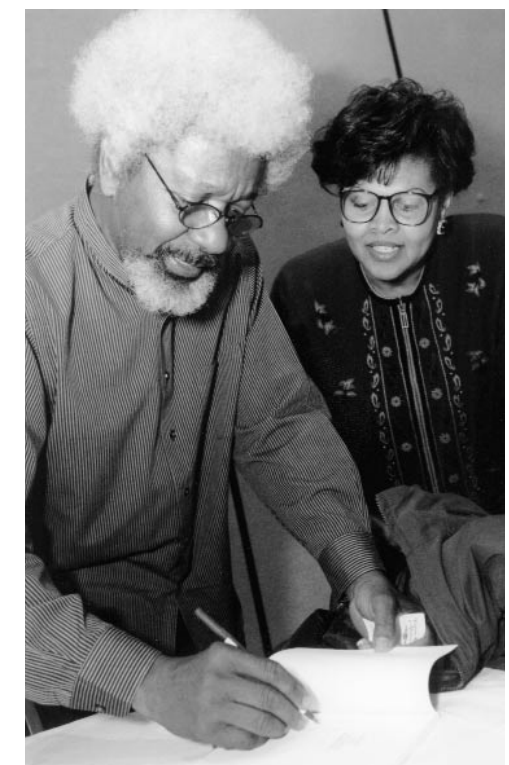
Political exile and Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka delivered the keynote address, *Culture, Politics, and the Burden of Kinship*, for the ninth annual conference of the Association of Black Cultural Centers hosted by the Bishop Joseph Johnson Cultural Center of Vanderbilt University.

Despite being censored, banned, and imprisoned by successive military regimes, Soyinka became the first Black African to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1986. The Nigerian playwright, poet, novelist, critic, and dissident fled his country in 1994 after learning that military authorities were planning to arrest him for his criticism of the government. Living in exile in Europe and the United States since 1994, he currently

serves as the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of the Arts at Emory University in Atlanta.

"When political leaders are assured of no consequences for their actions, a culture of impunity arises, and humanity is abandoned—a human becomes 'the distanced other,'" Soyinka informed the Nashville audience. "We cannot ignore the distressing operations of injustice because irreparable harm may occur by the time the voices of good are raised in opposition. We must remember the lawyer's question to Jesus Christ, 'Who is my neighbor?' and we must ask ourselves, 'What neighborliness have I cultivated with the distanced other?'"

While visiting Vanderbilt, Soyinka also met with students at the University's Black Cultural Center named in memory of Joseph A. Johnson, BD'54, PhD'58, the first African American admitted to the University. Johnson (1914-79) became the 34th bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church and a member of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust.



Following his address at the ninth annual conference of the Association of Black Cultural Centers, Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka of Nigeria signs a book for conference participant Terry Duffy, administrative assistant at the ABCC national headquarters in Galesburg, Illinois.

Beloved Woman and Warrior

Folklorist Interprets Apocryphal Heroine's Life

The story of a beautiful, devout Jewish widow who, in defense of God and country, captivates and decapitates the Assyrian general Holofernes was narrated by internationally acclaimed raconteuse Diane Wolkstein when she performed "The Story of Judith, Woman Warrior."

Presented in All Faith Chapel, Wolkstein's interpretation of the life of this heroine from the Apocrypha is inspired by the dissertation and subsequent book, *Artistry and Faith in the Book of Judith*, by alumna Toni Craven, PhD'80, professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School of Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. Wolkstein also acknowledges the scholarship of Amy-Jill Levine, the Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies and director of the Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender and Sexuality, as contributing to her understanding of Judith's character.

"Beloved by her community and respected by the elders, Judith is a pious, heroic, imaginative figure who confronts overwhelming odds and prevails in rescuing her people from destruction," says Wolkstein. "Judith gives

political and spiritual rebirth to the people of Bethulia, and she tells us we can accomplish our heart's desire, live with passion, and achieve the impossible."

Wolkstein is recognized for her ability to make stories accessible to her audiences by interweaving modern scholarship with the ancient traditions of oral literature. The author of 21 books of folklore, she currently teaches mythology at New York University and storytelling techniques at the Bank Street College of Education.

The Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality, the Chaplain's Office, the Women's Center, Judaic Studies, and Women's Studies sponsored her performance at Vanderbilt. Divinity School students Paul Griffith and Otis Thornton served as percussionists for "The Story of Judith, Woman Warrior."

Celebrated folklorist and storyteller Diane Wolkstein performed "The Story of Judith, Woman Warrior" in All Faith Chapel as part of the Carpenter Program's public events for the academic year.



BEYTON HOGE

Harbaugh Appointed Admissions Director

Lyn Hartridge Harbaugh, the new director of admissions and student services at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, always imagined that Massachusetts would be the setting for her education.

A third-generation alumna of Smith College, she became acquainted with VUDS during her sophomore year in Northampton while studying religion and biblical literature. Encouraged by her professors to accept an invitation from Walter Harrelson and travel to Nashville for a conference sponsored by the Lilly Foundation on exploring vocations in ministry, Harbaugh only knew that the Divinity School was where Sallie McFague, a Smith alumna and author of one of her textbooks, *Models of God*, had been teaching since 1970.

Two years after participating in the conference, Harbaugh returned in 1995 to the Divinity School as the Harold Stirling Vanderbilt Scholar, the recipient of the Smith College Alumnae Graduate Scholarship, and a matriculant for the master of divinity degree which she completes in December 2000.

"The reception I received at Vanderbilt, the favorable observations of the Divinity School from students and alumni/ae, and a curriculum based on the minister as theologian were

the reasons I elected to enroll at VUDS," says Harbaugh, who also is preparing for ordination in the Unitarian Universalist Church. Of the three designations for ministers in her denomination—parish minister, religious education minister, or community minister—she has chosen to fulfill the requirements for the community minister track.

"Among the vocational interests I pursued during my graduate studies is the subject of addiction and spirituality, and as a community minister, I can continue working with people who are in recovery," she says. "I'm interested in learning how people make spiritual connections within a secular society while they reevaluate their lives and begin vocational searches."

As a community minister intern at First Unitarian Universalist Church of Nashville,



BEYTON HOGE

Lyn Hartridge Harbaugh, a candidate for the master of divinity degree in December 2000, serves as director of admissions and student services for the Divinity School.

Harbaugh currently works with the congregation and the larger community in the areas of faith development, addiction treatment, and prevention education. Her ordination is planned for 2002.

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Annual Fund 2000

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Unmasking Patriarchal Images of God

German Feminist Theologian Presents Colloquium

Biblical scholar Erhard Gerstenberger of Germany explored "Gender and Sexuality: Feminist Perspectives on the Hebrew Bible" during a colloquium sponsored by the Graduate Department of Religion and Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender and Sexuality.

A retired professor at the University of Marburg, Gerstenberger became attuned to feminist issues early in his academic career and remains one of the few male scholars in Germany who actively promotes feminist theology through lecturing and publishing. While living in Brazil and teaching at the Lutheran Seminary in São Leopoldo, he also committed himself to liberation theology and began addressing Third World issues

in his exegetical and historical research.

During his address at the Divinity School, Gerstenberger acknowledged the scholarship of Sallie McFague, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Theology emerita at Vanderbilt, for helping "to unmask the patriarchal images of God."



BEYTON HOGE

During his recent visit to America for lectures in Boston and Nashville, German theologian Erhard Gerstenberger returned to the Divinity School and presented a colloquium on feminist perspectives on the Hebrew Bible. His lecture was part of the Carpenter Program's forum titled "Opening the Conversation."



The Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality of the Vanderbilt University Divinity School

The Art of Negotiation

Former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell related his experiences as chairman of the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland during a lecture cosponsored by the Cal Turner Program in Moral Leadership and the Law School.

While delivering "The Lawyer as Peacemaker," Mitchell stated that the greatest challenge in negotiating peace is convincing political leaders and the populace that compromise is necessary.

"One of the most difficult issues I faced when I arrived in Northern Ireland was a political culture in which everyone believed and acted as though any hint of compromise was a sign a weakness and demonstrated a lack of conviction—and was in fact a sellout to the enemy."

The judge, lawmaker, and statesman also explained that the lessons gleaned from his



Former United States Senator George Mitchell of Maine answers questions for Vanderbilt students April Hingst and Maureen Bickford following his lecture on the peace negotiations in Northern Ireland. Mitchell's winter visit to Vanderbilt was cosponsored by the Law School and the Cal Turner Program in Moral Leadership whose mission is fostering understanding of moral behavior, ethical practices, and individual responsibility in the professions of ministry, business, law, and medicine.

experiences with the Protestant Unionists and Catholic Republicans are applicable in most societies.

"Unfortunately, what passes for politics in most democratic societies, including our own, represents attempts to gain by divi-

sion—by creating a *them* and an *us* in every society by attempting to exploit differences. The lack of opportunity, the lack of hope, the absence of any chance to have a stake in a society is the fuel for conflict and instability everywhere."

Lady Prophet & Mother of Biblical Criticism

Associate Professor Renita J. Weems delivered "Writing a Woman's Life: Huldah, the Lady Prophet" for the 2000 Antoinette Brown Lecture in March. Based upon her research of the seventh-century B.C.E. Hebrew prophet from 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles, Weems presented Huldah as the "founder and mother of biblical criticism" and "the patron of women theologians." Weems, whose interest in this prophet's role in biblical history developed during her graduate studies at Princeton Theological Seminary, suggests the first exegesis is conducted when Huldah is consulted about the authenticity of the book of the law discovered by the high priest Hilkiyah.

The 26th scholar to be invited to deliver the annual Antoinette Brown Lecture, Weems has been a member of the Divinity School faculty since 1987. Recognized by *Ebony* magazine in 1998 as the fourth best African American female preacher in the nation, Weems also received the 1999 Wilbur Award from the Religion Communicators Council for her book *Listening for God: A Minister's Journey Through Silence and Doubt*. She is currently working on a manuscript for Fortress Press on suffering and evil in the Hebrew Bible, and she will address the conference for Feminist Exegesis and Hermeneutics of Liberation in Ascona, Switzerland, during July.

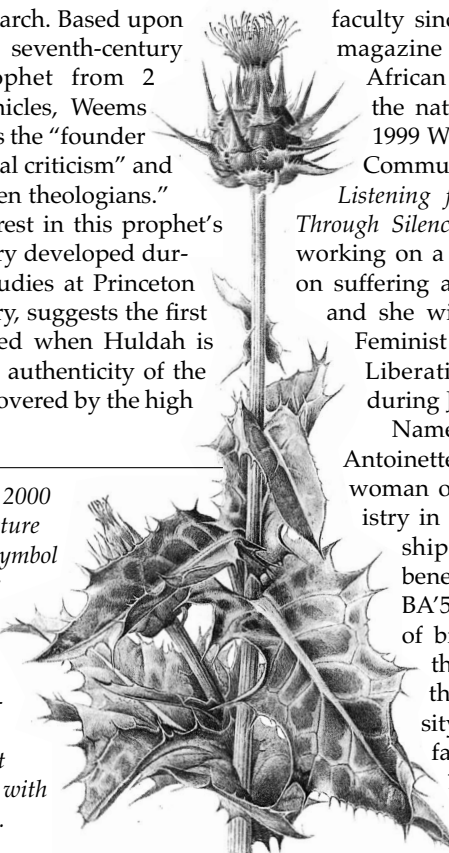
Named in honor of Oberlin alumna Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the first woman ordained to the Christian ministry in the United States, the lecture-ship was funded originally by benefactor Sylvia Sanders Kelley, BA'54, of Atlanta for the purpose of bringing distinguished women theologians to Vanderbilt where they could address the University community on the concerns facing women in ministry. In 1996, Sanders, alumni/ae, and friends of the Divinity School



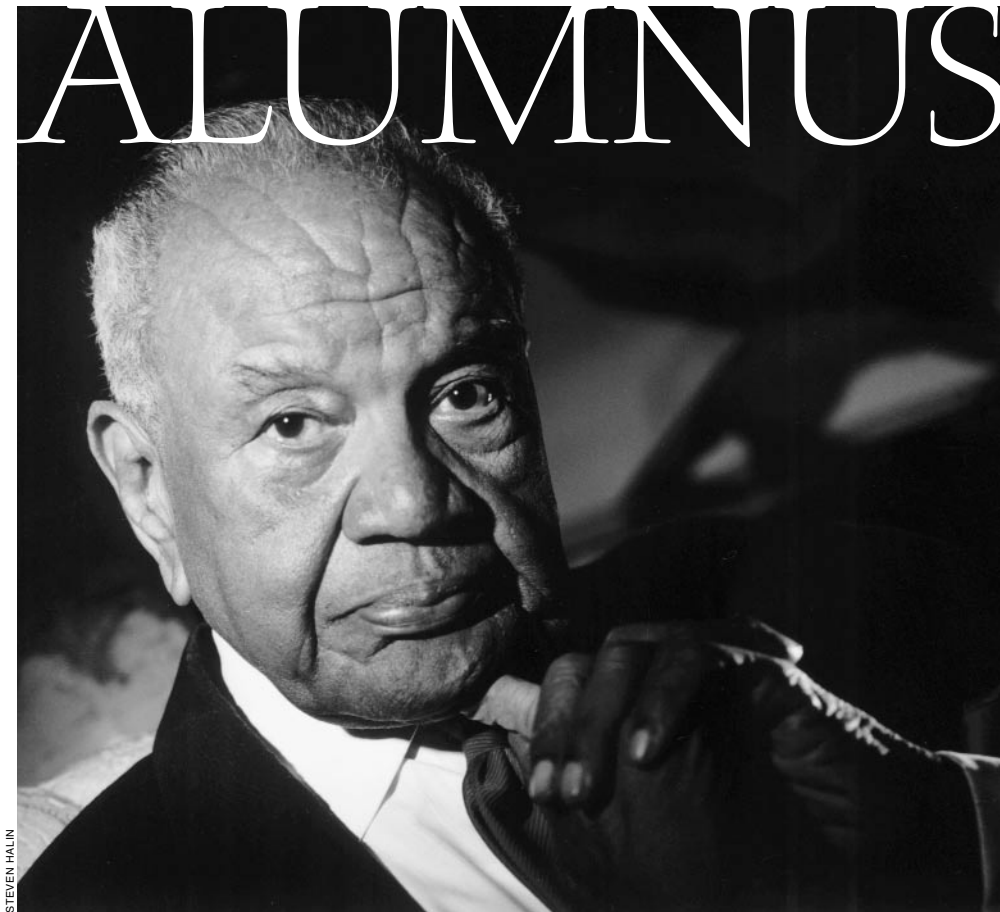
Renita J. Weems, associate professor of Hebrew Bible

established a permanent endowment for the lecture series. Sponsors for the 2000 lecture included the Office of Women's Concerns, the Office of Black Seminary, Vanderbilt Lectures Committee, the Margaret Cuningim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University Women's Studies Program, the Carpenter Program in Religion, Gender, and Sexuality, and Vanderbilt University Speakers Committee.

The committee for the 2000 Antoinette Brown Lecture chose the thistle as a symbol for Huldah, the "Lady Prophet." Traditionally regarded as a weed, the thistle is now cultivated in gardens and spreads its seeds in a manner that suggests a connection with both heaven and earth.



"Dean of America's Black Preachers" Named DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS



The alumni/ae association of Vanderbilt University Divinity School has named the Reverend Doctor Gardner C. Taylor, Oberlin BD'40, the distinguished alumnus for 2000.

Pastor emeritus of Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, New York, Taylor has been acknowledged by *Time* magazine as "the dean of America's black preachers" and by *Christian Century* magazine as "the poet laureate of American Protestantism." He joins James M. Lawson, D'71, and Fred Craddock, PhD'64, as distinguished alumni/ae of the Divinity School.

"Reverend Taylor was chosen from a large number of outstanding alumni/ae for his exceptionally courageous ministry as preacher, teacher, pastor, and prophet to the church and society," says James L. Smalley, BD'67, pastor of First United Church, UCC, in Nashville and president of the alumni/ae association. "He is a pastor to pastors and a prophet to prophets."

Known for the eloquence, passion, and astounding vocabulary he brings to the pulpit, Taylor describes his role as preacher as

"giving scriptural principles personality."

"Reverend Taylor knows that words are fragile, fleeting, and ultimately weak," says L. Susan Bond, MA'94, PhD'96, assistant professor of homiletics at Vanderbilt University Divinity School and author of the disserta-

"One must get out of life and into the Bible, but also there are times when one must get out of the Bible and into life."

— the Reverend Doctor Gardner C. Taylor, Oberlin BD'40
Vanderbilt University Divinity School Distinguished Alumnus 2000

tion *To Hear the Angels' Wings: Apocalyptic Language and the Formation of Moral Community with Reference to the Sermons of Gardner C. Taylor*. "His ability to turn a phrase, work a metaphor, and hold a vision aloft in the palm of his hand works deeply, not so much on the emotions as on the imagination. He speaks aloud the unspeakable and imagines the unimaginable by putting flesh on dry bones, and through language—like the British writer T. S. Eliot—Taylor leads 'a raid on the inarticulate' when preaching."

Responding to the Call

Born in 1918 as the son of the minister of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Taylor recoiled from the idea of following his father to the pulpit. He aspired, instead, to attend law school and become a criminal lawyer. His boyhood friends, aware that no African American ever had been admitted to the Louisiana Bar, discouraged their peer from his jurisprudential ambition and asked him, "Where are you going to practice law, in the middle of the Mississippi River?"

When a 19-year-old Taylor left the South to matriculate at the University of Michigan Law School, he could not foresee that his educational plans would change before he arrived in Ann Arbor. Driving at night on a Louisiana back road, Taylor tried to avoid hitting the car that swerved into his path, but the collision resulted in the deaths of two white men. The only witnesses to that fateful event in 1937 were also white, but they reported the truth about the accident.

"That fearful automobile accident touched me at the very center of my being," remembers Taylor, "and through that experience I heard the Lord's call to the ministry. I was surprised by God's grace, and I felt an enormous relief and a great embarrassment in telling everyone I felt called to the ministry. To be honest, I felt that embarrassment for several

years. I did not start off with any great confidence or sense of appreciation and awe about being a preacher. I wasn't sure the ministry was worthwhile for a young, healthy, thoughtful man."

Five Decades in the Pulpit

One year after earning his degree from the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology, Taylor was called from his student pastorate in Ohio to Beulah Baptist Church in New Orleans, and then from 1943 to 1947, he served his

The Value of a Good Name

The Experiential Wisdom of Gardner C. Taylor



STEVEN VRAIN

On the importance of context:

I don't think preachers should flit about the Scriptures looking for favorite notions; they're liable to become Johnny-one-notes. When taking a text, be careful of the context lest the text becomes the pretext for saying something *you* want to say. All of the moods, experiences, and thoughts of the human mind are contained in the Scriptures; the preacher does not have to make the Scriptures relevant—they already are. The preacher only has to communicate the relevance that is native to the theme. The Bible is full of life-and-blood people; it's frightfully honest. I'm also more and more convinced the Bible has a life of its own; it addresses itself to us in different ways at different times. Sometimes you'll read a passage of Scripture 100 times and it's absolutely barren, it's silent. Then you read it the 101st time, and suddenly it talks to you, tugs at you for attention.

On dreading Sunday morning:

For preachers who feel that every time they look over their shoulder Sunday is coming, I recommend they go back to the Scriptures. They should try to pick up the sights and sounds and smells of the Scriptures and try to enter the situation of that text. What kind of street does this text live on? Is it a shabby street, or is it neat and tidy? What are the sounds? Are they cheerful, or are they melancholic? What people live around it? Are they people you'd want to be around? When one goes back into the Scriptures to live in them and feel the pressure of God on human life, some deliverance in preaching will come.

On the role of a congregation:

Once I get into the sermon, I try to get very close to the congregation. Any movement on their part bothers me greatly because I have to feel they are right there with me. What I am delivering is not an abstract lecture but a communication about a life-and-death matter. There's an invisible, mysterious interplay that goes on between pastor and people, and I can feel whether I'm getting to the people or not. People may not

know the rules of homiletics, but they can sense when a preacher has prepared. A friend of mine tells of overhearing a lady inform a pastor after the second night of a week-long series of meetings that she would not be back anymore because she didn't think much of the pastor's preaching. The pastor said, "Well, you don't even know what good preaching is." She replied, "I may not know what it is, but I know what it ain't."

On the power of words:

Words must make definite suggestions, not only in their definition but also in their sound. There are words that caress, words that lash and cut, words that lift, and words that have a glow in them. Words are the currency in which the preacher deals; we must be very careful not to deal with them loosely, because if they are debased or devalued, there's no other currency in which to deal. A preacher should not worship at the altar of words, but he or she must have due regard and reverence for language. One Sunday when I was preaching I said, "That is him," and I knew immediately it was grammatically wrong, but I was too far into the flight to try to do anything with it, so it had to stand. I hate to do that, but I remember the story of a very popular preacher reputed to have a Ph.D. One night he made a grammatical error and a critic in the congregation just hollered out, "Ph.D.s don't say that!" Without missing a beat, the preacher said, "It will be corrected before it gets to heaven," and went right on preaching.

On his counsel to young preachers:

When God puts pressure on your life to do this work, always realize this—the Lord does not misfire. With all the doubts and uncertainties I've had—and I very rarely preach and feel satisfied with what I've done—I'm thankful more and more every day that the Lord made me a preacher. I remember early in my ministry reading what the poet William Wordsworth asked, "What will you do when your ministry fades into the light of common day?" Well, my preaching has long since faded into that light, but whenever I come down from that pulpit so weary that I never want to preach again, the Lord finds some way to revive me and usually makes my next ministry opportunity one of my most exciting ones.

Excerpted from "The Sweet Torture of Sunday Morning: An Interview with Gardner C. Taylor," *Leadership*, Summer 1981, with permission of the publisher

father's former church in Baton Rouge.

But when he was 30 years old and accepted an invitation to preach the sermon for the centennial celebration at Brooklyn's Concord Baptist Church of Christ, he would deliver the first homily to a congregation to whom he would minister for 42 years. During his pastorate, membership at Concord Baptist Church grew from 5,000 to 14,000 congregants. Taylor also established a senior citizens' home, a Christian grade school, a nursing home, and a \$1 million endowment for economic development—and earned the reputation as one of the seven most outstanding preachers in America. Listening to a litany of his accomplishments, he modestly responds,

"One must get out of life and into the Bible, but also there are times when one must get out of the Bible and into life."

Taylor has taught homiletics at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Harvard Divinity School, and Union Theological Seminary, and in 1976, he was invited to deliver the esteemed Lyman Beecher Lectures in Preaching at Yale Divinity School. He has presided at conferences of the Baptist World Alliance on five continents, served on the New York City Board of Education, became the first African American to serve as vice president of the New York City Urban League, and was the first African American Baptist minister to be elected president of the New York City Council of Churches.

A close friend of the late Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr., Taylor was involved in a struggle over civil rights within the National Baptist Convention. He and King left the convention in 1960 and formed the Progressive National Baptist Convention whose successive generations of Progressive Baptists continue to work for full voter registration, equal education opportunities, affirmative action against all forms of racism and bigotry, freedom of religion from governmental authority, and the realization of universal human rights.

Taylor will visit the University for the 2000 Fall Convocation and receive the distinguished alumnus award on September 1.

As Samuel Houston Howard knocks the oaken tabletop three times with his right hand, he recites the first verse of the 22nd chapter of Proverbs: "A good name is to be chosen rather than the great riches of the world." The triad of staccato blows resonating from the conference table accent the phrases *good name*, *to be chosen*, and *great riches*.

Growing up in Lawton, Oklahoma, Howard repeatedly heard his mother quoting this passage from the Hebrew Bible before he knew the words were scriptural. Her admonition serves today as the epigraph for a chapter in the spiritual autobiography Howard is writing titled *The Rise of the Phoenix*, a book that was inspired by a recent visit to the Baptist church in Lawton where he was baptized.

Upon returning to his childhood house of worship, Howard experienced a "private revival." As the congregation sang the chorus to one of his favorite hymns, "On Christ

Although he decided to write *The Rise of the Phoenix* to illustrate how religious principles are relevant to success in business, the book also will serve as a forum for Howard to expound upon his more practical "rules of life"—such as the 25 percent rule—whereby one goes to work an hour earlier and stays an hour later without expecting compensation. And another practical feature of *The Rise of the Phoenix* will be the manuscript's length; Howard intends for his readers to finish his first book in one sitting.

The mythological phoenix from Egyptian antiquity is an appropriate attribute for health-care veteran Howard who at the age of 60 is beginning a new career as chief executive officer of Be Smart Kids Inc., an education firm that develops curricula for introducing preschool children to learning through computer technology. As the phoenix ascends from the ashes and mounts the sky, Howard also believes he is rising to a new mission that can benefit future gener-



PEYTON HOGE

Sam Howard, CEO of Be Smart Kids Inc. and chair of Vanderbilt University Divinity School's donor society

Church, a program dedicated to perpetuating the legacy of the first African American to be appointed an assistant dean at the Divinity School and at the University. Smith also was pastor to the congregation at the First Baptist Church Capitol Hill where Howard and his family were members.

"I respected Reverend Kelly Miller Smith not only for his work in the civil rights movement, but I remain indebted to him for his influence on my spiritual growth," says Howard, who became a deacon under Smith's guidance. "I'm proud to be part of the fundraising efforts of a school that was involved in the genesis of civil rights in Nashville and that always has contributed to the social progress of this country by educating men and women for the ministry."

The new chair of *Schola Prophetarum* earned his baccalaureate from Oklahoma State University and was graduated from Stanford University with a master of arts degree. Howard is the former chair of the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce and a former trustee of Fisk University. He and his wife, Karan, a Nashville realtor, attend Lake Providence Missionary Baptist Church. Their daughter, Anica, an alumna of Spelman College and Duke University, is president and CEO of an Internet company, ChristianSeeds.com. The Howards' son, Samuel "Buddy" II, MBA'97, serves on the board of directors for the alumni association of the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt.



PEYTON HOGE

In 1875, Methodist Bishop Holland N. McTyeire pronounced the Vanderbilt University theological community Schola Prophetarum, "School of Prophets." The Latin text was carved in the stone lintel above the door to the entrance of Old Wesley Hall. This architectural fragment now resides in the courtyard of the Divinity School, and the lintel's inscription serves as the name for the School's donor society.

the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand," Howard's attention suddenly was arrested by the verb *stand*, and he began to contemplate the role of religion for those "standing" in the corporate world.

"I am a strong advocate of the free enterprise system," says Howard, "however, free enterprise always needs the ethics that are advocated by institutions like Vanderbilt University Divinity School—ethics that emphasize the value of a good name instead of great riches."

ations.

"If our work at Be Smart Kids can encourage children to develop a thirst for knowledge, then America undoubtedly will be a better country," he says.

In addition to his work as an entrepreneur and author, Howard serves as chair of *Schola Prophetarum*, the Divinity School's donor society whose funds are designated for scholarships. He became acquainted with VUDS in 1985 as one of the contributors to the Kelly Miller Smith Institute on the Black

Entering the Eclectic Discourse

In the *sotto voce* one expects from a pastoral counselor, Leonard Hummel admits he defies the traditional profile of a Lutheran.

He doesn't hail from the upper Midwest, nor does his family's genealogy document that he descended from a long line of Lutherans. And his ordination as a minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America occurred 15 years after he entered Yale Divinity School—from where he was graduated with the master of divinity degree and with a graduate degree in sacred theology.

"I am a Lutheran by birth but also by accident," laughs Hummel, the newly appointed assistant professor of pastoral theology and counseling for Vanderbilt Divinity School. "My mother was reared a Southern Baptist, but my late father was Jewish, and the Protestant church nearest my family's residence in Baltimore was Lutheran."

Although he may not complement the profile of the Midwestern Lutheran, Hummel contends that he and the faith are compatible. "The central precept that one is 'set right with God' purely as an act of God's grace—not by what one says or does—always has been a consolation for me."

Moving to Nashville in 1999 with his wife, Elizabeth Sponheim, marked the second journey Hummel made to the South. During his initial visit to the city in the '80s, Richard Fulton was mayor; the Sounds were welcomed home after winning the league pennant; and Vanderbilt alumnus and senatorial candidate Al Gore Jr. was shaking voters' hands at the Williamson County Fair.

The transition 14 years later from Dorchester, Massachusetts, to a house on 18th Avenue, South, an area Hummel laughingly describes as "Gene TeSelle land," proved rather easeful for him and Sponheim, currently a Vanderbilt doctoral student in American history.

"My mother's family is from Virginia, and I have always been fascinated with questions about the social history of the American

South, so in moving down here, I feel as if I have come to a familiar region," he says. "During my interviews at the Divinity School, when the senior faculty members shared stories about the institution's southern heritage and discussed the critical questions with which the School has grappled, I was able to tell them that I had 'some Southern Baptist' in my background, but I also remain close to my Jewish heritage through my father's relatives."

A Speculative Bent

But the Divinity School's genuine respect for questions—not Vanderbilt's geographical setting—is the characteristic that ultimately attracted Hummel to the University. "This is a school where students are free to ask critical questions about their faith, their ministry, and the world. Questions are not only encouraged here—they are expected—and the questions and issues which the church has

needed to examine continue to be asked at the Divinity School, particularly questions about the role of women within the church as well as the concern for overcoming homophobia."

In the three decades since he began his formal studies, he has earned degrees in the disciplines of philosophy, theology, and pastoral psychology. "I was brought up with a speculative bent; consequently, I have developed a perennial interest in the questions that abide with philosophers—questions about the soul, the polis, and grace," says Hummel, who studied philosophy as an undergraduate at Haverford College.

Enrolling at Yale Divinity School, he originally intended to study systematic theology but found himself more interested in the implications the philosophers' and theologians' questions had for individuals outside the Academy. After his residency in clinical pastoral education, he served as chaplain at Fairview Riverside Medical Center in Minneapolis where he worked with adolescents in chemical dependency units and patients suffering from depression.

Hummel's speculative bent and his interest in counseling merged more intensely

"This is a school where students are free to ask critical questions about their faith, their ministry, and the world. Questions are not only encouraged here—they are expected...I feel I have a particular voice among the other voices, and all the voices do not have to be in harmony for us to establish a discourse."

—Leonard Hummel

when he decided to pursue a doctorate in pastoral psychology from Boston University. "From my studies in philosophy and theology, I am able to bring to the discipline of pastoral care an awareness of the larger, *meta* questions—such as those Plato asked about the tripartite soul or the medieval philosophers' arguments about grace and nature."

The Challenge of the Familiar

As a member of the VUDS faculty, Hummel teaches courses in religion and coping, pastoral care for addictions and mental disorders, health and salvation, and practical and historical theology. He currently is not assigned to a local congregation; however, he serves as advisor to Lutheran students attending the Divinity School. "My church takes very seriously the role of pastors in the formation and guidance of persons during their theological training, and my charge from the national office is to be a teacher at Vanderbilt. I feel I have a particular voice here among the other voices, and all the voices do not have to be in harmony for us to establish a discourse—eclectic voices speaking at the same time is both exciting and necessary for a university."

Among Hummel's scholarly interests is investigating how religion is both a denominational and cultural factor in coping with human suffering. Outside the classroom, he is continuing the historical and theological research he began for his dissertation on consolation in the Lutheran tradition with the intention of developing a manuscript for publication. But in his roles as academician, counselor, and minister, Hummel says the recurring challenge for him is realizing how familiar everything is.

"It is a challenge for me to remain aware of the differences in life, but as I experience these differences, whether as teacher or pastor, I always discover how ultimately familiar human needs are, so the challenge for me is to be less surprised."

Since living in Nashville, Hummel has discovered Percy Warner Park as a place where he can enjoy one of his avocations, walking, although in his first year at the Divinity School, most of his walking is confined to the one and one-half miles distance from Wedgewood to Vanderbilt. An avid reader, he also confesses to purchasing more books than he should. Quoting the 19th-century American cleric Henry Ward Beecher, Hummel asks in a quiet tone, "Why is it that human nature is never so weak as it is in a bookstore?"

A New Vision of the Abundant Life:

The Eschatological Banquet



In the Woods
by Asher Brown Durand
1855
oil on canvas

After teaching for three decades at the Divinity School, McFague shares the same passion for teaching as her late mentor, and she cannot remember a time when she didn't enjoy being in the classroom. "In kindergarten, I became the teacher's helper—that was my first TA position," she laughs, "and I never wanted to leave school. Every September, I sharpened my pencils and looked forward to returning to the classroom, and I've never regretted *staying*. Teaching is not work whereby you receive immediate gratification, but as the chemistry develops between the first meeting and the last session, and the students begin to think for themselves, an *event* occurs that involves more than the exchange of information."

A Theology for Planetary Living

As she prepares to leave VUDS, McFague remains confident about the School's strong academic standing, and she hopes the students and ministers educated here will continue to find a public voice. "Government and society would like for us to think that religion is a personal matter, but I believe theology should be part of the public conversation and that theologians should be public advocates; regrettably, the only religionists who are speaking out these days are those adhering to the far right, and while I do not agree with their positions, I share their view that religion is a public matter."

To ensure her part in the public conversation, McFague is completing the first draft of her seventh book, a Christian theology for planetary living, in which she argues that the misplaced radical individualism and consumerism of our culture threatens the welfare of the planet. "We are living on this planet as if the earth were a hotel," contends McFague. "After using the clean towels and sheets and piling them in the middle of the room for the housekeeping staff, we then drive down the street to another hotel. But if we regard the planet as a *home*," an image she prefers for describing the earth, "we will share the resources, clean up after ourselves, and make necessary repairs so another generation may inhabit the house."

Directed toward first world, middle-class Christians such as herself, McFague's forthcoming book will explore the reasons why the sustainability of the planet is contingent upon the just distribution of our resources and how the increasing gap between the wealthy and the poor in the world is not conducive to personal happiness or planetary well being.

Although the spring semester marks the final term that Sallie McFague will occupy Office 223 as the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Theology, her retirement from Vanderbilt University Divinity School is not an indication of the conclusion of her vocation as an educator. During the summer, she will emigrate to Canada where she will teach part-time at the Vancouver School of Theology in British Columbia, edit the manuscript of her next book, and devote time to her avocation—hiking in the parks of the Western Canadian province.

"I'm not retiring completely," says McFague. "My mother had a part-time paying job until she died at the age of 95, and if she were alive, she would consider me a youngster, so I can't retire. My mentor at Smith College, Virginia Corwin, chair of the religion department and a Yale graduate, once told me that she would pay to teach if an institution didn't pay her salary, and when she died at 95, she was blind and required a wheelchair, but she was preparing to teach a liberation view of the Gospel of Luke to the elderly residents in the apartment building where she lived."

“Economics becomes a religious matter, especially when our understanding of human happiness is interwoven with Adam Smith’s view of the individual as an insatiable consumer.”

“One of the most critical changes that needs to occur for us is a new understanding of the abundant life. Christ’s statement, ‘I came that you may have life, and have life abundantly’ is not synonymous with abundant consumer goods, but the notion that life can be significant and meaningful without a high consumer lifestyle is not an idea people are considering today.”

In her manifesto to North American middle-class Christians, McFague acknowledges the instrumental roles played by the Protestant Reformation and Vatican II in bringing the importance of the human individual to the attention of Christians; however, the contemporary version of this model—the individualistic market in which each person has the right to all one can secure—is bankrupt and devastating the planet while making other people poor.

“The model of the human being as individual, derived from the Protestant Reformation and the Enlightenment, is deeply engrained in American culture,” she explains. “It is the assumption of our Bill of Rights and Constitution, symbolized by the phrase ‘life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness,’ goals that are oriented to the rights and desires of individuals. American Christianity also has been focused on individual well-being, either as salvation of believers or comfort to the distressed. This model of human life supports the growth of deep-seated assumptions about who we are and what we can do: we are a col-

“All religious language is necessarily metaphorical because no one has seen God.” —Sallie McFague

lection of individuals who have the right to improve our own lives in whatever ways we can. We see ourselves as basically separate from other people while acknowledging the right of others also to improve themselves to the best of their abilities.”

What began centuries ago as a reformation to free the human individual religiously and politically, McFague argues, has resulted in an individualistic model of human life joined by late 20th-century market forces. The key consequences of this model include a change in the climate from the effects of global warming, an increasing gap between the rich and the poor, the extinction of certain species, and the rapid decline in natural resources.

“Economics becomes a religious matter,” says McFague, “especially when our understanding of human happiness is interwoven with Adam Smith’s view of the individual as an insatiable consumer. Studies reveal that

after people are provided with such basics of life as employment, relationships, education for one’s children, and medical coverage, that more money doesn’t make one happy, and it certainly doesn’t make us good. If we truly love nature, we have to question our lifestyle of consumerism economics and begin to live differently by adopting new house rules of just distribution so that *everyone*, all life forms, gets a share.”

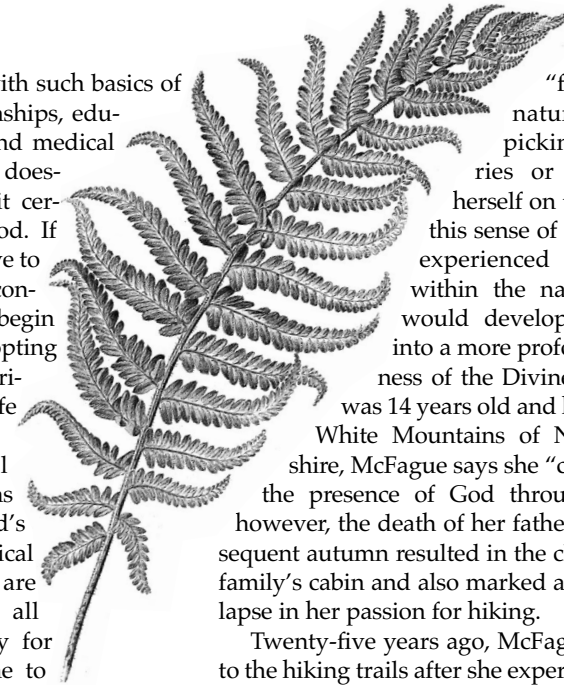
McFague’s ecological model suggests to Christians that the way to picture God’s presence is the eschatological banquet to which all are invited—all people and all other creatures. A theology for planetary living invites one to enter a relationship where one participates *in* and *with* nature—a relationship where one regards nature sacramentally and rejects unequivocally the premise that humankind should subdue and have dominion over creation.

The Trail to the Divine

As McFague explains the importance for an ecological reformation, one is reminded of a passage from her book *Super, Natural Christians: How We Should Love Nature* where she states, “...being present to some fragment of

nature reminds us of the basis of a Christian nature spirituality: growing in sensitivity toward it. This growth will hopefully issue in all sorts of actions: the energy we put into fighting city hall for a neighborhood park, the time we give to elect city officials who will make our city one of the success stories, the money we contribute to preserve wilderness areas for wild animals, the protest march we join to help disempower multinational environmental destruction in third-world countries, and even the birdbath that we remember to fill every day.”

The genesis of McFague’s interest in the theology of nature developed during the childhood summers she spent on the Cape—in a one-room cabin without electricity or running water that her father constructed during the Depression for \$400. “I remember feeling free during our trips to the cabin,” says McFague, who became acquainted with the



“fragments of nature” while picking blueberries or rowing by herself on the lake. But this sense of freedom she experienced as a child within the natural world would develop eventually into a more profound awareness of the Divine. When she was 14 years old and hiking in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, McFague says she “came alive to the presence of God through nature;” however, the death of her father in the subsequent autumn resulted in the closing of the family’s cabin and also marked a momentary lapse in her passion for hiking.

Twenty-five years ago, McFague returned to the hiking trails after she experienced what she acknowledges as a conversion in her scholarship. Upon reading an essay written by Gordon Kaufman during his presidency of the American Academy of Religion, McFague was affected by Kaufman’s question: Should theology *be done as usual* in view of the ecological and nuclear crisis facing the world?

“I took with utter seriousness Kaufman’s proposal that the relationship between God’s power and human beings’ power needs to become unified and interdependent and that we had to reconstruct our major symbols of

the tradition—God, Christ, and the human being. Reading Kaufman’s essay was a moment of conversion for me,” she explains. “I changed the direction of my research and began reading in cosmology, ecology, and evolutionary biology—disciplines in which I had no background,” says McFague, admitting that she never took a course in science if she could possibly avoid the subject.

Since the summer days she spent as a child on the Cape and as a teenager on the trails of the White Mountains—days when she was a “natural environmentalist,” a reference to her belief in a child’s innate interest in the natural world—McFague has emerged as a leading proponent of the cosmological approach to theology. She responded to Kaufman’s question by writing *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* in which she advances the need for a new sensibility of the world—a sensibility that is holistic,

responsible, inclusive of all forms of life, and acknowledges the interdependence of all life.

“Ecological theology is the oldest of the various contexts in which theology can be discussed, yet this is the context that has been neglected for the last 200 years in Protestantism when the scientific disciplines took over the natural world and religion retreated inwardly,” she says. “The cosmological context, which claims that the Redeemer is also the Creator and encourages one to consider the sacramentalism in nature, can be traced to the Hebrew scriptures that refer to the importance of our care for creation. As I tell my students at the beginning of the course, ecological theology is not a contemporary, New Age fun religion.”

Metaphors and Scripture

The foundation for her life’s work as a theologian was established during McFague’s undergraduate years at Smith College where in 1977 she was awarded an honorary doctorate. While pursuing her baccalaureate in English, she also studied religion with professors who were graduates of Yale, the university where she would earn her graduate degrees. “I was impressed with the teachers in the religion department at Smith,” says McFague. “I found them interesting and deeper than others; they were persons of integrity who were committed to the issues in which they believed.”

Matriculating at Yale, she elected to begin graduate studies in theology instead of English; however, literature would remain a constant companion in her scholarship. “Unlike most theologians, my ancillary discipline is not philosophy but literature,” she explains. Having written her undergraduate thesis at Smith on the treatment of the fall of man by the 17th-century English cleric and poet John Donne, McFague arrived at Yale Divinity School and discovered that the literary dimension was absent from the teaching of scripture. “During the late ‘50s and early ‘60s, plenty of attention was being paid to secondary or conceptual language, but there was little emphasis on primary language,” states McFague, “and while the historical and philosophical traditions were popular in teaching scripture, the fact that scripture involves narrative, poetry, drama, imagery, and metaphor was neglected.”

Although McFague’s interest in the metaphorical properties of religious language preceded the formal advent of literary criticism in the study of scripture, her gradu-

ate thesis on the concept of time in William Faulkner’s novels and her dissertation on literature in the Christian life foreshadowed a predominant current that characterizes her research in theology—language in religion.

“All religious language is necessarily metaphorical because no one has seen God,” contends McFague. “I’ve always appreciated Paul Ricoeur’s argument that concepts without images are sterile, and images without concepts are blind. Just as poets have to use metaphors to express what they cannot always understand about life and love, loss and grief, the same principle pertains to religion; unfortunately, many people forget this and think ‘Father’ is God’s name.”

During her studies at Yale, McFague also heard for the first time the name of Vanderbilt University Divinity School. She demonstrated her support for the School in 1960—ten years before her academic appointment to Vanderbilt—by participating in Yale’s sympathy march for VUDS student and civil rights activist James Lawson. “When we learned about the Lawson Affair, we carried signs and marched around the Yale Divinity Quadrangle on the hill and down to the main campus to support VUDS,” she remembers. “Although Vanderbilt may be located in an environment that is less rhetorical than the Northeast on certain issues, the Divinity School always has been at the forefront of protests against injustice and has served as a leader for social issues, and I am very proud to have become involved in this school’s history.”

In 1975, the year commemorating the University’s centennial, McFague made history not only at Vanderbilt’s Divinity School but for all theological schools on the continent when she was installed as the first woman dean of a North American divinity school. And of the fourteen deans’ black and white portraits that hang today in Tillett Lounge, McFague, who served as dean until 1979, is the only woman represented. “When I began teaching at the Divinity School, there was one paragraph in the catalogue about our commitment to the Hebraic and Christian

traditions. Today our commitments against racism, sexism, homophobia, and anti-Semitism and our commitments to diversity, religious pluralism, and environmentalism are discussed in nine paragraphs. As dean, I examined other divinity schools’ catalogues and discovered many of them did not include commitments, and they still do not. But from the faculty’s discussions over the past 30 years, these paragraphs have been adopted—some were added painfully and were not without controversy—but these commitments to the unheard voices were not added to our catalogue for the mere sake of public relations.”

Two critical challenges McFague believes the nation’s divinity schools of this decade will have to confront are a regressive attitude toward affirmative action policies and the declining membership within mainline

denominations. “It is a difficult time for ministers to be prophetic because of the dwindling prospects in the mainline churches,” she observes. “One of the issues facing divinity schools is whether they can produce scholars, ministers, preachers, and prophets who can rock the boat while the ship is sinking; the mainline denominations often find the discourse on issues of social justice and diversity uncomfortable, yet the church needs assistance in such issues as the ordination of women, gays, and lesbians and the recognition of same-sex couples. Disney now recognizes

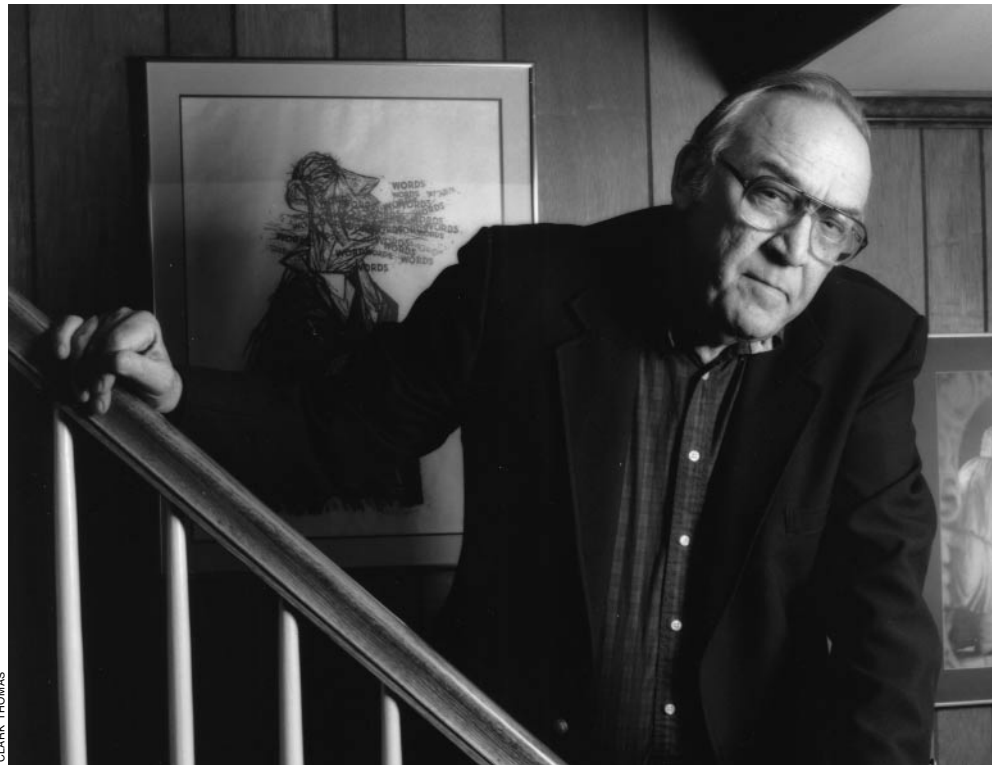
same-sex couples while the church disappointingly drags its feet, and it is not good news if Disney is out there in front of the church.”

Reflecting upon her life as a theological educator at the Divinity School, McFague says she will miss the students, but she hopes that through teaching and writing she has influenced the way people think about the importance of metaphor in religious language as well as about themselves and their roles in the greater scheme of the world. “It isn’t enough to know the world,” she states, “you have to become an active transformer and try to change the world.”



Sallie McFague, former dean of Vanderbilt Divinity School and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of Theology, emerita

An Un-retiring Life



CLARK THOMAS

Before David Buttrick accepted a faculty appointment in 1982 to Vanderbilt University's Divinity School, he had "retired twice" in his vocation as a homiletician—once over a racial issue, and later over a civil rights issue in the gay and lesbian community. As he approaches the eve of his retirement from the Divinity School as the Drucilla Moore Buffington Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics, Buttrick reminisces about his previous retirements and recounts the circumstances that led to the decisive moments when he could no longer remain affiliated with a particular seminary or with the denomination for which he originally became a minister.

Ordained by the Presbytery of New York City in 1951 after he was graduated from Union Theological Seminary, Buttrick was called immediately to five churches. Because the members of the First Presbyterian Church in Fredonia, New York, had not heard of Buttrick's father, George, one of the most celebrated preachers of the 20th century, he accepted their invitation and became minister to the 35 congregants living in the snow belt west of Buffalo.

Above: David Buttrick, the Drucilla Moore Buffington Professor of Homiletics and Liturgics, emeritus

"In the absence of theology, people read the Bible through political commitments, and this is the great tragedy in the church—the absence of theological minds and an absence of courage."

—David Buttrick

from New York and bawled me out because *he* was recommending me for all these positions. I couldn't go to Princeton," continues Buttrick, "because I would have made their conservative jowls shake, so my wife and I decided to move to Pittsburgh."

The First Retirement

In the 14 years of his tenure at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Buttrick advanced from instructor to the William Oliver Campbell Professorate of Homiletics and chair of the department of church and ministry. When an administrative decision threatened the livelihoods of all the African American personnel at the institution, Buttrick protested the personnel decision to the president who condescendingly asked him, "What's the matter, son? Can't you live with it?"

"I went home and decided, hell no, I can't live with it and resigned the next morning," says Buttrick in a tone probably as indignant as when he confronted the seminary president. "I gave myself four months to leave Pittsburgh—the same amount of time that was given to the service staff before they were unemployed. Those were the months my wife refers to as my 'period of creative insecurity.'"

A telephone call from Saint Meinrad School of Theology in southern Indiana, however, would dispel any uncertainty about Buttrick's professional career and prevent him from remaining in retirement. "I had never heard of Saint Meinrad, which proves how isolated I was, and I initially turned them down because I had reservations about teaching in a Catholic school. But 10 days later they called again and asked me to come for an interview on the feast day of their patron. I learned quickly that Catholics have grand parties, and in the middle of their celebration, they asked, 'You're coming, aren't you?' and I

said, 'Sure.' The next morning I called my wife and told her I was in the middle of a field near pig farmers and that we were moving."

In his first two years at Saint Meinrad, Buttrick spent \$8 thousand on books of Catholic theology for his personal library. "Teaching at Saint Meinrad was a good experience because they did not have a preconceived idea of what preaching should be, and we produced some amazing preachers there," he says.

Although he held the title of Marten Professor of Homiletics, Buttrick requested his appointment not be announced because he was the only Protestant holding a chair. "The donor who endowed the professorship was an eccentric man who lived 15 years too late to be a real robber baron, but I knew he had stamina because he was a fan of the Chicago Cubs," explains Buttrick. "One day he arrived on campus, unannounced, and unrolled a painting that depicted a congregation listening to a homily while Jesus sat fast asleep in the front pew. Holding the picture, he told the administration at Saint Meinrad, 'Do something!' as he gave them \$1.5 million.

To combat the image of Jesus sleeping during a sermon, a chair in homiletics was created. Later, when the benefactor walked into Buttrick's office, he pointed to the professor and remarked, "I just wanted to see what I bought."

The Second Retirement

On an afternoon seven years ago, Buttrick had concluded a class at Vanderbilt Divinity School when two students walked him to his office where they proceeded to ask their professor if he believed they were called to the ministry in the Presbyterian church. Buttrick responded to their question in the affirmative.

When the students disclosed to Buttrick that they were gay, he responded, "So, you'll be excellent ministers, too."

Their next question—how could one remain a Presbyterian considering the church's position against the ordination of gays and lesbians—consequently became a catalyst for Buttrick's retirement from the presbytery and his reception into the ministry of the United Church of Christ.

"Two weeks after that conversation with my students, the president of Princeton Seminary wrote a letter about the church's stand against the gay and lesbian community; he used that unctuous language of 'loving the

sinner but hating the sin,' and he concluded the letter by saying this position speaks for all Presbyterians."

Buttrick pauses. "Well, it didn't speak for me, so I left the church."

In the reformed tradition, he contends, a minister preaches the gospel, performs the sacraments, and exercises the discipline of the church in concert with the church's leadership—discipline understood as marshalling the troops. Buttrick argues there is nothing about gays and lesbians that prevents them from fulfilling these three theological tasks, so he decided he could no longer be a Presbyterian.

"Industrial workers brought the church into this country, and now the church has become so rich it can afford to be conservative. In the absence of theology, people read the Bible through political commitments, and this is the great tragedy in the church—the absence of theological minds and an absence of courage."

Buttrick attributes any courage he has to the influence of his father who came to America as a British Congregationalist and became the first president of the Federal Council of Churches as well as a professor at Harvard University and Vanderbilt's Divinity School. "He never lost his ecumenical perspective," remembers Buttrick. "He was a careful technician who showed no sympathy for anyone who didn't want to continue studying as a preacher. As a pacifist during World War II, he stayed in trouble endlessly, but he had courage and was not afraid to tackle social and political issues in the pulpit."

If Buttrick's departure from Vanderbilt follows the pattern of his previous retirements, one can expect the 73-year-old professor to un-retire and continue his work as one of the world's foremost scholars on the aims and methods of preaching. "I had no intention of becoming a homiletician; I never thought about joining a church until after college," he admits. "I had received a fellowship to Yale for graduate studies in English, but I showed up at Union 24 hours before they were opening for the semester and asked if I merely could sit in classes for a year. That's when Paul Tillich and Paul Scherer got hold of me."

With the publication this spring of his 16th book, *Speaking Parables: A Homiletic Guide*, Buttrick already is contemplating the next phase of his life. "My brain is still functional," he proclaims confidently, "so I may go elsewhere and teach and write another book."

The Grace of David Buttrick

BY ROBERT HOWARD, VU DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

I met David Buttrick in February 1988 when he lectured at Texas Christian University. I found the breadth of his scholarship astonishing, the bold clarity of his ideas breathtaking. After the lecture I asked to speak with him about Vanderbilt's doctoral program in homiletics. He made time for me and gave nothing but encouragement to this homiletic wannabee while listening carefully to my dreams.

As we conversed, word came that my wife, Marilyn, had been taken to an emergency room after slipping on the ice outside our motel room and cutting her eyebrow. He telephoned us at home a few days later to check on how she was. For me, that initial meeting characterizes David Buttrick: impeccable scholarship, clarity of thought, and the heart of a pastor.

Since overcoming my terror at studying under one of the world's leading homileticians, I've come to adopt this combination as a goal for my own teaching. Lectures will inevitably be sprinkled with anecdotes, personal or of acquaintances, which illuminate the subject under consideration. From telling us of yesterday's shopping trip to a Target store to demonstrate how humans organize the flood of perceptions into a meaningful narrative, to the silent patient in a mental hospital who repeatedly painted stark, bare branches of a tree during art therapy and then pointed to the tree and herself until one day a tiny green leaf appeared, Buttrick's stories have given insight coupled with a laugh—or a lump in the throat.

He brings incredibly broad reading into the classroom, synthesizing concepts and movements some of us were just proud to be able to pronounce. He listens to comments and responds to questions with an attention that opens up the students to the possibility that they, too, just might be able to carry away this weight of thought and make it their own. Underneath the disagreements, Buttrick shows a profound respect and deep caring for each student. Frantic telephone calls from any of us students are always met with easy grace, and the inevitable comment, "Don't worry about it." This is no idle dismissal. He lives the free, glad divine grace he preaches in the classroom.

GARAGE MINISTER

An Alternative for Generation X

BY MARTIN BRADY

There's a timeworn adage: "Seek and ye shall find." For Pam Fickenscher, MDiv'94, the search took her from California to Minnesota. What she found is Spirit Garage: The Church with a Really Big Door, a unique ministry operating since October 1997 from the auditorium of Jefferson Elementary School in the Uptown section of Minneapolis.

"Spirit Garage reflects the natural direction of this neighborhood," says Fickenscher. "Uptown is where young people new to the Twin Cities tend to move. Most of them would be identified as members of Generation X, a group the wider church often overlooks. It's hard getting them involved in traditional church services, so we're trying something different."

If members of Spirit Garage are representative of other Generation Xers, only 35 percent have had any involvement in an institutional church, and 45 percent of them have experienced a family trauma—either parents separating or divorcing or being reared by a single parent—according to a survey conducted on young adults in North Carolina and California by Duke University Divinity School and the University of California at Santa Barbara. While 80 percent believe in God, a majority thinks the congregations where they have worshiped lack vitality.

Variation on tradition

To enliven the services with music that would appeal to her congregation of 100, Fickenscher enlisted help from guitarist John Kerns who recruited other musicians to join the effort. "John's electric guitar is very different from conventional church instruments," she says. "The music at Spirit Garage could be categorized as alternative rock—taking old words and setting them to new melodies. We've done adaptations of traditional Lutheran hymns, and we even set the Prayer of Saint Francis to a tune by Stevie Ray Vaughn."

Fickenscher believes the casual tone created by the music makes the religious experience at Spirit Garage more accessible for the worshippers. Although the services involve the traditional practices of scripture reading and the distribution of Communion, sermons at Spirit Garage are rather "conversational" as Fickenscher discusses a theme from the New Testament.

This successful combination of traditional elements with contemporary interests extends to other areas of ministry at Spirit Garage. "We have summer retreats that include

canoing and sailing; we offer Bible study classes; and I'm currently doing a lot of premarital counseling." Because Bethlehem Lutheran Church, the sponsor of Spirit Garage, provides only a modest third-floor office, outreach activities are conducted in coffeehouses or in private homes.

Dedicated to making a difference in the community, the congregation contributes 30 percent of each Sunday offering to agencies that serve the homeless, runaways, and the sick. Members at Spirit Garage also participate in Habitat for Humanity as well as paint apartments for AIDS patients.

A fortuitous encounter

A minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Fickenscher is the daughter of a pastor in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, a traditional denomination that does not allow women to be ordained. While majoring in German at Valparaiso University, she made a fortuitous connection. "Betty DeBerg (MDiv'80, MA'87, PhD'88) taught theology there, and she previously had been admissions counselor at Vanderbilt Divinity School—so you could say she was a good recruiter."

After she was graduated from Valparaiso, Fickenscher worked in Washington, D.C., with the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, an experience that exposed her to a range of inner-city challenges, particularly with the Capitol Area Food Bank. Earning her graduate degree at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, she then completed denominational requirements and seminary studies in Berkeley, California, and Jersey City, New Jersey, before her ordination in August 1997.

"Vanderbilt was the right place at the right time for me," says Fickenscher. "The University was instrumental in building confidence in my leadership skills. Joretta Marshall (MA'89, PhD'92), my pastoral care professor, had a significant influence on my view of the practical side of ministry because my work involves looking at the culture of the world my people live in and helping them make sense of the Gospel."



ERIC MILLER/SAINT PAUL PIONEER PRESS

Pam Fickenscher, lower right, distributes Communion during a Sunday service at Spirit Garage: The Church With the Really Big Door, a congregation supported by Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Minneapolis. When church leaders at Bethlehem realized traditional religion was in danger of losing an entire generation, they called Fickenscher to establish a congregation of young people.

In January, Fickenscher celebrated her first anniversary of her marriage to William Schroerer, an environmental policy consultant who studies transportation issues. "Bill was reared a Mennonite, and he favors more traditional liturgies," she explains, "but he certainly understands what we're trying to accomplish at Spirit Garage."

As The Church with the Really Big Door enters its third year, Fickenscher is optimistic about the ministry's future. "We're offering this congregation opportunities they cannot find elsewhere in the Uptown neighborhood. As we continue to reach out and expand the ministry, we have to remain sensitive and flexible; as times change, we'll adapt."

To learn more about Spirit Garage, visit the ministry's Web site at www.spiritgarage.org.

Martin Brady, a freelance writer in Nashville, is a former senior editor for Booklist published by the American Library Association in Chicago. A graduate of The Catholic University of America, he has published articles and book reviews in the Chicago Sun Times, the Nashville Scene, and Northwestern magazine.

OUT OF AFRICA

Witnessing the Legacy of Apartheid

"The air in Africa is more significant in the landscape than in Europe, it is filled with loomings and mirages, and is in a way the real stage of activities. In the heat of the midday the air oscillates and vibrates like the string of a violin, lifts up long layers of grass-land and with thorn-trees and hills on it, and creates vast silvery expanses of water in the dry grass... You wake up in the morning and think: Here I am, where I ought to be."

— "From an Immigrant's Notebook" in *Out of Africa*, 1937 by Isak Dinesen (1885-1962)

Emily Hardman, Brandon Gilvin, and Matthew McCoy perceive the air of Africa quite differently from the description penned 63 years ago by Isak Dinesen in *Out of Africa*.

When these three students from Vanderbilt University Divinity School awaken each morning, they do not observe the indistinct loomings and illusory mirages recorded in the Danish writer's autobiography. From their field education assignments in South Africa, they witness the realistic drama of a populace recovering from the oppressive grip of apartheid.

But Hardman, Gilvin, and McCoy are more than mere observers of South Africa's emergence as a modern democracy. As the first Vanderbilt matriculants chosen to complete their field education requirements under the auspices of the Divinity School's grant from the Henry R. Luce Foundation, the student theologians may be considered minor participants in the country's political history.

At Saint Philomena's Children's Home in Durban, Hardman works with Catholic nuns as a caregiver for children and adolescents who range in age from three to seventeen years. In Capetown's Eros School for differently-abled students, Gilvin implements the life skills curriculum designed by the peace education department of the Quaker Peace

Center, a Friends agency. And McCoy conducts life skill sessions for youth at the Joint Enrichment Project in Johannesburg.

Before beginning their field education assignments for the spring semester, these students were members of a delegation from the Divinity School that traveled to South Africa in January to study race relations and the legacy of apartheid. Led by Director of Field Education Viki Matson and Associate Dean Mark Justad, the group also included Krista Hughes, Alex Jackson, Shannon Sellers-Harty, Rob Teitelbaum, Andrew Thompson, Marilyn Thornton-Tribble, Lisa Hammonds Frierson, and Jill Sawoski.

"While meeting with representatives from different agencies involved in race relations, we noticed the recurring use of theological language in the dialogues. The words of our faith—truth, forgiveness, and reconciliation—are used in discussions of justice," explains Matson. "Although South Africa now has a remarkably progressive constitution, the country is healing gradually through the language and actions of faith. People are asking, 'Now that we know the truth of the past, how

do we become reconciled to the truth and live together as different individuals?'"

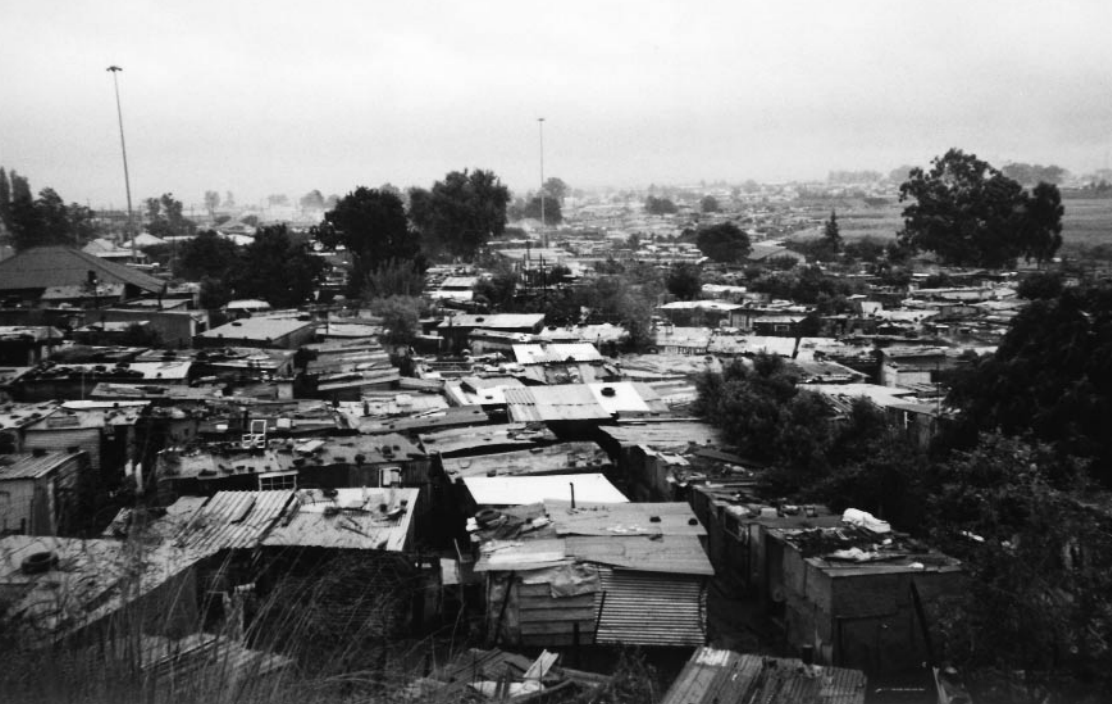
A new lens

The students readily admit that their experiences in the field of modern South Africa comprise the frame through which they now view the world. "The effects of the issues ending in the suffix 'ism' that we have studied in an academic context—exclusivism, classism, and racism—became undeniably real for us in South Africa," says Krista Hughes. "Although the country's constitution invites a future removed from the patriarchal inequality that governed the past, economic apartheid still exists in South Africa where the correlation between race and socioeconomic status that we see in America is magnified dramatically. And there are those in South Africa, as in America, who dismiss the poor by saying, 'But they choose to live this way.'"

"Every social problem we encounter in the United States exists here but to a much greater degree," agrees Gilvin. "Each day I am confronted with stories of life in the 'informal settlements' or squatters' camps where there is

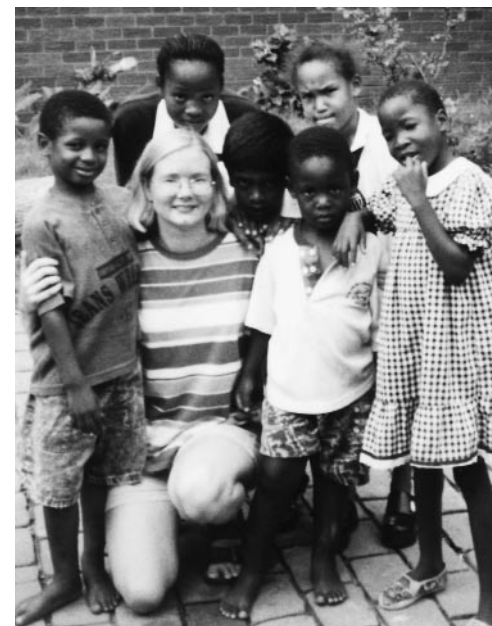


As part of Vanderbilt University Divinity School's initiative in global education funded by the Henry R. Luce Foundation, thirteen representatives from the School traveled to South Africa in January to study race relations and the legacy of apartheid. The wagon in the background is part of the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria that commemorates the founders of the former South Africa Republic and the Boers' battle against the Zulu. "Visiting this memorial that has served as an icon for Afrikaners was a slightly uncomfortable experience," says student Krista Hughes. "The circle of wagons at the entrance to the monument reminded me of the memorials to defeated Native Americans."



no electricity, and I read documented reports from victims whose human rights were abused during apartheid and wonder why President Mbeki doesn't support financial reparations for them. Children become orphaned as a result of AIDS, which threatens to deplete the adult work population by 15 percent this year, so any story I tell about growing up on a farm in Kentucky and being troubled by the subtle and not-so-subtle racism seems contrived in comparison to these conditions."

"Remnants of apartheid are apparent not only in the economic disparity but also in the segregation that occurs within the education system," writes Hardman from Saint Philomena's Children's Home in Durban. "Social workers do not place white children in orphanages with black children, nor do white children attend school with black children."



"While implementing an arts and crafts program for the children at Saint Philomena's, I've been able to develop trusting relationships with the children and to learn about South Africa through their innocence," writes Emily Hardman, MTS1, who is fulfilling her field education requirement this semester in Durban.

During the years of struggle for freedom, the South Africans who would have been of high school or college age postponed their education to fight for political reforms under the motto, "Liberation Now, Education Later;" consequently, there is a lost generation of uneducated youth.

"Whenever you hear references to the youth of South Africa, you discover that the youth consists of men and women who are 30 years old, which is the beginning of middle age by American standards," explains McCoy. "Although the country is free, there is a generation whose only education consists of knowing how to survive on the streets, and were it not for enrichment programs that offer training in life skills and provide employment opportunities, this generation would be lost further."

For Marilyn Thornton-Tribble, the sessions in conflict resolution she observed during her visit to Pollsmoor Prison influence the way she responds to her work as minister of education at Hobson United Methodist Church in Nashville. "Whenever a disagreement develops among people during a church meeting and they become unduly critical, I think immediately of the mediation process practiced in Pollsmoor where 56 men from rival gangs volunteer to serve their terms in a room where beds are stacked four high and where the guards don't carry guns or nightsticks," says Thornton-Tribble, who describes her experience at the prison as the most "authentic" moment of her trip. "Here they study strategies for developing the skills that can allow them to respond to conflicts in a mode of peacefulness—skills that are especially important for us as future religious leaders."

The presence of "something other"

But when Andrew Thompson is asked to recount the experience that made the most indelible impression upon him, he responds without reservation by pronouncing the name, "Joe Seremane." Thompson's chance encounter with Seremane, a member of Parliament's democratic party, became not only the lens through which he examined the polit-

"Visiting the 'informal housing' or squatters' camps gave me a new perspective on poverty when I saw the marked contrast between the 'haves' and the 'have nots,'" says Marilyn Thornton-Tribble, MDiv2.

ical history of South Africa but continues to serve as a case study of a religious conversion.

One evening after Thompson and the other members of the Divinity School delegation had finished supper, Seremane discussed his life as a South African activist and political prisoner and his subsequent conversion to Christianity. "What began as a narrative of Joe's life during apartheid resulted in a quiet testimony of his faith," remembers Thompson, "yet his story serves as a foil for every notion I previously held about faith."

For his involvement in the Pan African Congress, Seremane was imprisoned without



Joe Seremane, a member of the democratic party in South Africa's Parliament and former political prisoner, made an indelible impression on the Divinity School students when he narrated the story of his imprisonment and subsequent religious conversion. Andrew Thompson, MDiv2, (right) describes Seremane's life story as "a foil" for every notion he previously had about faith.

formal charges for 28 months. Detained in solitary confinement, he was tortured so frequently that he had to detach himself psychologically during the torture so that the "blows felt like feathers." And he astounded his torturers who once confided to him, "We don't understand why you don't have hatred in your eyes."

Although Seremane's wife and children were Christian, he often had ridiculed what he considered the hypocrisy of organized religion. But on the night the guards escorted him from his cell and placed him in the back seat of a car, Seremane heard an inner voice, a forceful presence he described for the Divinity School students as "something other" that told him he was not going to die.

Believing that he was being driven to his execution, Seremane, however, found himself

"The effects of the issues ending in the suffix 'ism' that we have studied in an academic context—exclusivism, classism, and racism—became undeniably real for us in South Africa. Although the country's constitution invites a future removed from the patriarchal inequality that governed the past, economic apartheid still exists in South Africa where the correlation between race and socioeconomic status that we see in America is magnified dramatically. And there are those in South Africa, as in America, who dismiss the poor by saying, 'But they choose to live this way.'"

—Krista Hughes, MDiv2



"Parts of South Africa are diverse and wonderful while other aspects are disheartening and immobilizing," says Matthew McCoy, MTS1 (left). "As an African born in America, I am learning that strong feelings against injustice and inequality must be tempered with patience, yet my tolerance for rhetoric is becoming increasingly low."

standing, unshackled, at the door to his home and told by the police escorts that he was free. But before his wife embraced and kissed him upon his return, she insisted that the family offer a prayer of gratitude and told her husband that his survival and release after two years of incarceration could only be explained as an answer to the prayers of her faith community.

Seremane continues to be an advocate for South Africans, but as a convert to Christianity, he condemns violence as a means to create change. As he explained to the Vanderbilt students, "Faith is a more subversive strategy than violence."

"We all agreed that Joe Seremane's testimony would be the inspiration for sermons we might deliver one day," says Thompson. "He is an example of the reality of God in the life of an individual."

Should Thompson and his peers decide one day, like Isak Dinesen, to write their autobiographies, it is probable that chapters will be devoted to their experiences in South Africa and their roles as witnesses of apartheid's legacy. Perhaps they will recall how the language of faith was employed in the country's healing and the parts that different religious agencies played in the development of a democratic government. And should their experiences become the subjects of future sermons and lectures or inspire them to become advocates for those whose voices are suppressed, perhaps they will write of South Africa in the words of Dinesen, "There we were, where we ought to have been."

Reflections on the Absurdity of Colors

—from the field education journal of Brandon Gilvin, MDiv2

I continue to learn about the absurd racial categories of South Africa during apartheid: whites, coloreds, and Africans. The whites, of course the most privileged, included people of British descent and the Afrikaners of Dutch ancestry who speak a dialect of Afrikaans that developed among the settlers and spread to many other ethnic groups in South Africa.

The "coloreds" were people of multi-racial backgrounds, the offsprings of African and white settlers. Sometimes the Asians of Malaysian and Indian backgrounds, who arrived in South Africa as slaves and laborers were placed in this group, but more often, Asians comprised their own group. Though not as despised as blacks, "coloreds" were also segregated into townships and carried less status than their white counterparts. They were also taught that they were better than those of singularly African ancestry. The most abused and most despised group under the old regime, however, were the people of African descent, including the Xhosa and Zulu.

My landlord is among those described as a "colored" and was employed as a physics teacher, however, he was "retrenched" recently as a result of the adoption nationwide of a new outcome-based educational curriculum. Now he is a struggling freelance writer, or as he says, "following his dream."

He blames South Africa's contemporary problems on what he considers an extreme form of Affirmative Action that has filled the seats of power with unqualified people simply because they are black. As a "good liberal," he agrees that Affirmative Action is necessary as reparation for years of inequality, but he thinks the policy has been enforced too much.

He cited the example of the South African national soccer team that recently lost in the African Nations Cup. The coach, who is black and whose appointment has been questioned from the beginning, is taking a lot of the heat, evidently for not listening to assistant coaches' advice.



My landlord also mentioned that he finds it very troublesome that South Africa has spent so much energy trying to promote indigenous leaders to positions of power. He refers to Peter the Great as a reformer who consulted the elite from outside his country to help Russia's advancement. First of all, if I remember Professor Sharfman's modern Russian history class at Hiram, doesn't Peter have a fairly dubious reputation in Russia for his admiration of Western European culture? Secondly, such advice seems to be sought everywhere, especially in terms of marketing the country to tourists. I also don't think the way to make up for years of abusing indigenous people is to continue to make them sit on the sidelines while they watch elite foreigners run their country. This becomes a form of neo-colonialism, and God knows, McDonalds and Disney have their hands full with that already. (By the way, for all you pulp fiction fans, a quarter pounder with cheese is still a quarter pounder with cheese in South Africa, but French fries are called chips, as in jolly ole England.)

It's evident from my landlord's words that the racial divisions between blacks and coloreds still bear significant ideological weight in the post-apartheid years. Not that I consider him to have the definitive view, nor am I claiming to be a social theorist, but I think he is fairly representative of the middle class that is emerging in South Africa as idealism becomes passé.

Meanwhile, I remain engaged in the questions. As they say in Cape Town, cheers.

Divinity School Celebrates Endowments of Two Professorships

A SHARING *of* TRADITION

In the Academy, the *chair* represents the seat of professorial authority. Benefactors of Vanderbilt University Divinity School have demonstrated once again their commitment to the School's ecumenical vision by ensuring that authorities on the Jewish and Catholic faiths will be among those participating in a critical and open examination of the Hebraic and Christian traditions.

Through the generosity of Albert and Mary Jane Lowenheim Werthan, BA'29, MA'35, the first woman to serve on the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust, the Divinity School's ecumenism has been advanced further by the endowment of the Mary Jane Werthan Professorship of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible. Jack M. Sasson, who accepted the appointment to the Werthan Chair, has completed his first year at the Divinity School and will be installed formally on September 12.

The 1999–2000 academic term also marked the initial year for the Edward A. Malloy Professorship in Catholic Studies. Augustinian scholar J. Patout Burns Jr. was installed in February as the first professor to occupy this chair that was endowed by the support of 19 patrons and alumni/ae. Primary funding for the Malloy Chair, named in honor of the current president of the University of Notre Dame, was provided through the bequest of Anne Potter Wilson and the William K. Warren Foundation of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Significant contributions also were received from the late Monroe Carell Sr.; University trustee Monroe J. Carell Jr., BE'59; Joel Cheek; the late University trustee Sam Fleming, BA'28; Dr. Denis and Ann O'Day; William and Carolyn O'Neil Jr.; Charles S. and Mary Nichols; Kent Kyger, MD'58, and Patricia Kyger, BS'59; University trustee William M. Hannon and Jane Hannon; Sydney F. Keeble Jr., BA'49, JD'51, and Shelia Broderick Keeble; and the late University trustee Charles W. Geny, BA'36.

In this issue of *The Spire*, Professors Sasson and Burns discuss their backgrounds and the ways the Werthan and Malloy Chairs can support the mission of Vanderbilt's Divinity School.



“Nothing in my life had prepared me for being in a divinity school,” admits

Jack Sasson as he reflects upon his first year as the Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible. “I never went to yeshiva, nor have I taught in a university that is confessionally-oriented, but my new colleagues at Vanderbilt have been very receptive, and I have discovered the Divinity School students are not university-channeled graduate students of a uniform type—each one is rich in experiences, and I'm glad to be a part of their questing.”

Sasson's own quest to the classroom began after his family immigrated to New York from Lebanon in 1955. Born in the Syrian city of Aleppo, one of the oldest, continuously lived-in cities of the world, he was five years old when his family moved in 1946 to Beirut where the larger Christian community and French influence proposed less threats of displacement for post-war Jews. “We moved to Lebanon expecting to find a more hospitable place to live as Jews,” explains Sasson, “but when the United Nations began deliberations for establishing a state of Israel, the Arab world began taking out its frustrations on Jewish communities.”

Whereas many Jews from Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon left for South America or the mercantile cities in Italy and England, Sasson's

mother had family connections in North America, and the family received permission from the American government to settle in Brooklyn. “My family shares in the familiar, ageless story of immigrants settling in a new nation where they are not fluent in the language,” says Sasson who attended high school in Brooklyn before matriculating at Brooklyn College where he developed an interest in the history and literature of the ancient world.

As an immigrant, Sasson's knowledge of American geography outside the state of New York was limited to Washington, D.C., and Chicago, yet one of his history professors, Mary Frances Giles, who lectured with a heavy southern accent, was always referring to the southern university from which she was graduated. “For all I knew, she had gone to college in Zanzibar,” laughs Sasson. But ironically, the alma mater of the memorable professor who spoke in an equally memorable accent was the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where Sasson would begin his teaching career after earning his doctorate in Mediterranean studies from Brandeis University. For 33 years, he served on the faculty of UNC and in 1991 was named the William Rand Kenan Jr. Professor of Religious Studies.

As an Assyriologist and the newly appointed Werthan Professor, Sasson hopes to open the world of the ancient Hebrews to students whose backgrounds have not exposed them to an examination of biblical texts from a non-New Testament perspective. “The Werthan Chair reinforces the bridge between Judaic studies and other religious traditions explored within the curricula of the Divinity School and the University,” says Sasson.

The author of over 170 articles and reviews, he has served as president of the American Oriental Society and the Society for Biblical Literature. For his next research project, Sasson has been commissioned to write a commentary on the Book of Judges for the Anchor Bible Series. He also is conducting an epistolary study on the ancient



To celebrate the appointment of Jack M. Sasson as the first Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, a reception was hosted by alumni Jerald Doochin, BA'52, and Dianne Shofner Doochin, MLAS'97 (left). Shown with the Doochins are Diane and Jack Sasson and Vanderbilt University Board of Trust life trustee Mary Jane Lowenheim Werthan, BA'29, MA'35, seated with her husband, Albert. The Werthans established the endowment for the chair to ensure permanently the presence of a professor of Jewish studies on the faculty.

city state of Mari by examining letters dating from 1800–1750 B.C.E. that were written on clay tablets in the ancient Semitic language of Mesopotamia known as Akkadian or Assyro-Babylonian. “These letters were discovered 90 years ago in Syria by French archeologists and provide an incredible window to the world of Mari,” contends Sasson. “I take delight in reading the letters as pieces of literature because when people compose letters they leave traces of their hopes and their hurts. What I hope to accomplish in my book is to make connections to a world that no longer exists by employing these letters.”

Sasson's new colleague, J. Patout Burns Jr., also is interested in making connections to the past through his research on the burial practices and baptismal rituals of Christianity in Roman North Africa. Having completed his manuscript on the episcopate of Cyprian, the third-century Bishop of Carthage, the new Malloy Professor is planning to return to North Africa in August where he and a team of archeologists, inscription scholars, and biblical text schol-

ars will study early Christian rituals in their physical context.

“Because we have the floor plans of the early Christian monuments, we are able to reconstruct the rituals on the actual footprint of the buildings and to explore the relationships among architectural appointments, physical space, and the literature that documents the rituals,” says Burns, whose research has been funded with a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Perhaps the foundation for this Louisianan's interest in studying the exactness of physical properties in early Christian monuments could be traced to his first teaching appointment as a high school mathematics instructor in Shreveport. Burns' undergraduate minor in mathematics not only qualified him to teach the subject but also supports his research in church history. “I look back on those two years of teaching high school math as the time I learned *how* to teach,” says Burns, “and whenever students tell me they are thinking about teaching on

the secondary level, I tell them such work is a young person's game and physically exhausting, but I encourage them to acquire teaching experience in high school because they will learn how to handle a 50-minute period without using notes.”

After he was graduated from high school in New Iberia, where his family still owns the state's largest plantation for processing sugar cane, Burns entered the Jesuit order and began his seminary studies. At Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, he earned a baccalaureate and a master's degree in philosophy. During his undergraduate years, Burns became interested in Silver Age Scholasticism—Roman Catholic thought after the Council of Trent—the period in church history where there is an attempt to recover medieval inquiry in a new context. From 1964 to 1974, he received a master of divinity degree from Regis College in Toronto, a master's degree in theology from Saint Michael's College in Toronto, and a doctorate of philosophy from Yale University.

Upon resigning from the priesthood,



During the spring semester, J. Patout Burns Jr. (second from left) was installed as the first Edward A. Malloy Professor of Catholic Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School. Among those attending Burns' installation were the Most Reverend Edward U. Kmiec, D.D., tenth Bishop of the Diocese of Nashville, and alumni Patricia Miller Kyger, BS'59, and Kent Kyger, MD'58. Dr. and Mrs. Kyger were among the contributors who funded the chair in Catholic studies named in honor of alumnus Edward A. (Monk) Malloy, PhD'75, president of the University of Notre Dame and one of the first two Catholic priests to earn a doctorate from Vanderbilt.

Burns was appointed professor of religion at the University of Florida and in 1990 was named the Thomas and Alberta White Professor in Christian Thought at Washington University in Saint Louis. "What I appreciated at the University of Florida and Washington University was that the religion departments were not limited to the study of Christianity—the history and traditions of other religions were invited to the curricula. What I was missing, however, was the more intensive study of Christianity associated with a divinity program and a graduate school. Vanderbilt is an attractive place for a scholar who wants to teach in a private institution that is not aligned with a particular church communion but has, nevertheless, a strong interest in the study of divinity and religion both in the College of Arts and Science and the Divinity School."

As the Malloy Professor, Burns also will participate in a two-year agreement beginning this fall to teach courses within the College of Arts and Science. "There is a significant number of Catholics represented in the undergraduate student body, and the Malloy Professorship will allow for specific courses on Catholic studies to be available to them," he says. "This new chair in the Divinity School provides another voice and brings a different set of resources for the training of ministers and biblical scholars."

To learn more about Burns' research with the interdisciplinary working group on *Devotion and Dissent: The Practice of Christianity in Roman Africa*, visit their web site at <http://divinity.library.vanderbilt.edu/burns/chroma/>

Guests attending the reception in Tillett Lounge following the installation of J. Patout Burns Jr. included Patricia Wilson, Deacon Jim McKenzie, assistant chaplain to the University's Catholic Community; Dr. James P. Wilson, associate professor of medicine and director of the adult primary care center at Vanderbilt University Medical Center; and Frances Anne Varallo.



In Appreciation of Christian Polyphony

The following excerpt is from the address delivered by J. Patout Burns Jr. on the occasion of his installation as the first Edward A. Malloy Professor of Catholic Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School on February 17, 2000, in Benton Chapel.

To establish a chair and to endow the scholarships and programs which support it is to make a significant step beyond inviting a series of Catholics to join the faculty, beyond offering admission to Catholic graduate and professional students. To endow a chair for a certain field of study, such as the Carpenter chairs in feminist and gender studies, the chairs in Methodist, Jewish and Catholic studies, or the Institute on the Black Church is to shape the character of the school by institutionalizing a permanent commitment to a particular kind of scholarly investigation and teaching, much as we might to New Testament or Christian theology or ethics. Vanderbilt's Divinity School has determined that henceforth, it will have a Roman Catholic voice in its scholarly discussions, its research seminars, its instructional lectures, its faculty deliberations and decisions. By soliciting scholarship funds, it attempts to insure that its student body always will include women and men preparing for Catholic ministry and teaching.

Institutionalization of the teaching function is something that Catholics know. Some of the structures of religious authority which are characteristic of the Roman Catholic communion were already well established even before the Christian movement achieved legitimacy in the Roman Empire. Not only had the bishop emerged as the authoritative teacher in the local congregations, but structures had been developed through which the network of bishops set policy and enforced discipline. The teaching office which Matthew's Gospel assigned to Peter, making him the chief rabbi of the Christian community, was claimed by local bishops by the end of the second century. In the third century, the college of bishops was legitimated as the successor to the Twelve Apostles whom Jesus is portrayed as charging with collective responsibility for guiding the church. Contemporaneously, the Petrine office as leader of the entire episcopacy already was being appropriated by bishops of Rome. Fourth century Christian funerary art depicts

"The university divinity schools have internalized religious diversity and dialogue in an explicitly secular setting. As the divinity faculty of Vanderbilt University, we are part of the secular order but the secular order turned toward the church, listening and speaking."

—J. Patout Burns Jr.

Peter and Moses in parallel roles and bearing the same facial features. By the time Christianity became the preferred religion of the Empire, the system of ecclesiastical provinces with metropolitan bishops and the great patriarchal sees already had emerged.

Even in the ancient church, where preaching was generally restricted to bishops, the laity shared a teaching role. Justin Martyr and Tertullian laid the foundations of Christian theology; Origen's stature as a Christian teacher was recognized widely before he was, irregularly, ordained a presbyter. In most churches, the catechists were ranked among the laity. The ministry which flourished in the tens of thousands of religious sisters and brothers, which continues in parochial and Sunday schools, has been part of the church's teaching office from earliest times.

Monks provided guidance to one another and to married Christians. Although Antony of Egypt spent a major portion of his life as a hermit isolated in as vast a desert as he could manage, his teaching on the Christian life was carried by letters and in a long discourse on the ascetic life included in his biography—itsself disseminated by the most prominent bishop of his day, Athanasius of Alexandria. The sage advice of his successors was preserved carefully in collections which we know as "The Sayings of the Fathers." In the following generations, Pachomius, Basil, and Benedict organized this experiential wisdom into rules of life and established monasteries where a practical teaching on Christian life was developed and dispensed. In our own day, Theresa of Avila and Catherine of Siena have been recognized formally as Teachers of the Church for their writings on prayer.

When guilds of scholars organized themselves as universities independent of the monastic and cathedral schools, they developed yet another institution in which the medieval Christian church recognized a teaching authority. The entrance of new orders of friars, the preaching monks, into the universities strengthened their financial independence and planted the seeds of our modern specialized chairs by capturing and passing along master's positions from one Franciscan or Dominican to another.

To these four institutionalized forms of teaching authority must be added a very different one: the role of the hearer, the recipient. The assent and dissent of the faithful have been an integral part of the church's teaching office and authority, as Cardinal Newman demonstrated. In the first and second cen-

turies, many letters and gospels claimed to speak in the names of apostles, but the faithful recognized only some; these were finally received as witnesses to Jesus. The canon of the New Testament seems to have been determined by widespread usage among the churches and only subsequently confirmed by conciliar decree. During the iconoclast controversy, emperors and bishops worked to suppress the use of images in Christian worship, but the monks and the faithful steadfastly resisted their decisions, which were subsequently reversed.

The Christian Church, and particularly the Roman Catholic tradition within it, has traditionally institutionalized religious and teach-



Detail of the apostles on the shoulders of the prophets from the north side of the Princes' Portal, Bamberg Cathedral, Germany, ca.1230

ing authority but has consistently divided that office among many collaborating and competing structures. Teaching has always been polyphonic rather than monovocal; the church has risked cacophony but generally avoided dreary, deadening repetition.

In contemporary America, the religiously affiliated universities, colleges, and seminars continue their traditional contribution to the church's teaching office. The university divinity schools, however, speak in a new and quite different voice. Many of America's best private research universities grew out of church-sponsored seminaries; when they slipped free of religious control, some—such as Vanderbilt University—steadfastly retained and developed their divinity schools. While other professional schools—law, medicine, business—migrated to universities, the divinity schools themselves often founded and nourished the universities which they call home. These have become remarkable institutions, as most of my colleagues on this faculty who were trained in

just this sort of institution—at Yale, or Chicago, or Union, or here at Vanderbilt—can attest. The richness of these independent university divinity schools derives, I believe, from their participation in a research university and from their ecumenical and interfaith constitutions and constituencies. Some church-sponsored seminaries have joined together to share resources—Boston Theological Institute, Toronto School of Theology, Chicago Cluster of Theological Schools, Graduate Theological Union—but the university divinity schools have internalized religious diversity and dialogue in an explicitly secular setting.

As an integral part of a secular university, Vanderbilt's Divinity School does not claim to be a part of the teaching office of any Christian church; we do not speak in the name or with the authority of Christ or Peter, in any of their many institutional forms. Though individually the faculty and students we may be within a church, as a body and institution, we stand outside the churches.

As the divinity faculty of Vanderbilt University, we are part of the secular order but the secular order turned toward the church, listening and speaking. We seek to speak to and on behalf of the churches and thus to assist their own teaching offices. We search for common ground not only among the churches but between the churches and the secular order. We discern wisdom preserved in one tradition to make it more generally available. In this we are a distinctly American institution, reflecting the complex distinction and interaction between secular and religious which characterizes our national culture.

Vanderbilt University Divinity School has decided that this mission of teaching and learning requires that certain voices be institutionalized within it. Its complex relation to the Methodist Church is reaffirmed in the Cal Turner Chancellor's Chair in Wesleyan Studies. At the same time, the school reached out to traditions which traditionally were underrepresented at Vanderbilt in establishing the Mary Jane Werthan Professorship in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible and the Edward A. Malloy Professorship in Catholic Studies. It commits itself to attend to that new voice and to speak with it—to speak not only to its established partners, the churches of the Western Reformation and the secular university, but the Roman Catholic Church as well. I suggest that Vanderbilt's polyphonic method of teaching and learning is traditionally Christian and profoundly catholic.

gleanings



Divinity School alumni/ae attending the 1999 West Virginia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church at West Virginia Wesleyan College in Buckhannon included Virgil H. Ware, BD'50; Sara Facemyer Lamb, MDiv'97; Jane Ellen Nickell, MDiv'00; Linda M. Muhlly, MDiv'92; Matthew W. Alexander, MTS'92, JD'92; Angela Gay Kinkead, MDiv'97; Harold T. Elmore, BD'55; and James R. Denney, MDiv'62.

Lloyd A. Bates, BA'50, BD'53, is president and owner of Universal Systems with headquarters in Brentwood, Tennessee, and a branch office in Fairfax, Virginia. The company markets identification systems, access control systems, and inkless fingerprint systems worldwide. He is married to Wanda Carter Bates, BA'49, and they have three sons, including Marc Bates, BE'79.

William N. Harrison, BD'58, MA'62, announces the publication of his fifth novel, *The Blood Latitudes*, by MacMurray and Beck Publishers. Set against the backdrop of tribal conflict in Africa, the book concerns a foreign correspondent's search for his son. Harrison, professor of English, emeritus, at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, is best known for his historical novel titled *Burton and Speke*, the basis for the 1989 movie *Mountains of the Moon*.

James E. Magaw, Oberlin BD'58, has retired from the ministry and is writing monthly book reviews for the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church.

Dallas Blanchard, BD'60, retired in August 1999 from the University of West Florida in Pensacola where he was professor and chair of the department of sociology and anthropology. As professor emeritus, he is continuing his research on the Fellowship of Southern

Churchmen, an organization of Christian Socialists from 1934 to 1960.

Donald W. Kutz, BD'68, serves as pastor at the First Christian Church of Laguna Woods, California.

James Frederick Barber, MDiv'69, DMin'71, has been called as rector of Trinity Episcopal Church in Fort Worth, Texas. He recently served as chairman of the committee to elect the tenth bishop of Western New York.

Michael D. Thiel, MDiv'69, DMin'73, is serving in his ninth year of ministry with the First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Estherville, Iowa.

Paul Lewis Redditt, MA'71, PhD'72, chairman of the religion department at Georgetown College in Kentucky, announces the publication of a commentary on the book of Daniel in the New Century Bible Commentary Series.

Steve Monhollen, MDiv'72, DMin'73, chaplain at Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri, was among 30 United States and Israeli scholars and educators who planned International Interfaith 2000, a Holocaust education program for 250 American college students to travel to Poland and Israel.

Cynthia Ann Jarvis, MDiv'74, serves as minister for the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut

Hill in Philadelphia. She also is a consultant to the Center of Theological Inquiry Pastor-Theologian Project in Princeton, New Jersey, and a member of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Philadelphia Presbytery.

Jerry Allen Smith, MDiv'78, has been appointed senior minister of the Memorial United Methodist Church in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. He and his wife, Carol, recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary on November 22, 1999.

Brooks R. Faulkner, DMin'79, is a certified trainer for Compassion Fatigue, a Federal Bureau of Investigation training program sponsored by the Traumatology Institute of Florida State University. The program provides support to caregivers in random violence settings such as Columbine, Colorado; Pearl, Mississippi; Fort Worth, Texas; and Jonesboro, Arkansas.

George Odle, DMin'79, former pastor of Sulphur Springs United Methodist Church in Jonesborough, Tennessee, has been appointed field representative in the office of Finance and Field Service for the United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries in New York. He will be responsible for directing capital giving development efforts with local churches and colleges.

Saxon Cayce Scarborough, MDiv'79, has been appointed minister of music for the First United Methodist Church in Gastonia, North Carolina. He and his wife, Patricia, are the parents of a daughter, Lauren, 10.

Mary M. Brady, MA'80, serves as an associate pastor at the First United Methodist Church in Champaign, Illinois.

Glenn E. Boyd, MDiv'81, is a candidate for the doctorate of ministry at Houston Graduate School of Theology, a seminary of the Friends Church. He also maintains a private practice as a pastoral counselor.

John Greely Corry, DMin'81, pastor of Patterson Memorial United Methodist Church, has been appointed chaplain and chair of the ethics committee at Metropolitan Nashville General Hospital. He also serves as director of counseling services and professor of biomedical ethics at Meharry Medical College and is president of the Interdenominational Ministries Fellowship.

Leslie Rawlings, BS'84, MTS'90, married Victor Slezak on August 4, 1999. They reside in New York City where she has a private

practice in psychotherapy and he pursues an acting career.

Randy Smith, BA'84, MDiv'88, former assistant director of development for Vanderbilt University Divinity School, has been appointed director of major gifts and regional development for the University.

Jonathan David Brumberg-Kraus, MA'86, PhD'91, is an assistant professor of religion at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts. He resides in Providence, Rhode Island, with his wife, Maia, and their two children, Zoe, 9; and Max, 5.

Robin Mattison, MA'86, PhD'95, associate professor of New Testament and Greek at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, delivered "The Patter(n) of Beautiful Feet: New Testament Models for Mission" as part of LTSP's lecture series exploring the theological concept of "mission" in the new century. Fernando F. Segovia, professor of New Testament and early Christianity, also was among the theologians who lectured at the seminary.

Perry Stanton Miller, MDiv'87, serves as pastor of Asbury Memorial United Methodist Church in Asheville, North Carolina. He and his wife, the Reverend Karen F. Miller, are the parents of Elizabeth, 12.

David Penchansky, PhD'88, associate professor of theology at the University of Saint Thomas in Saint Paul, Minnesota, announces the publication of *What Rough Beast: Images of God in the Hebrew Bible* by Westminster John Knox Press.

Charlotte Joy Martin, MA'90, PhD'94, assistant professor of religious studies at Mount Mercy College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, proudly announces that she finally has quit smoking and has a new addiction—running.

Kelly Diane Turney, MDiv'91, has been ordained an elder in the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Darby Kathleen Ray, MA'92, PhD'96, is the first recipient of the Millsaps College Outstanding Young Faculty Award for teaching excellence and scholarly promise by an untenured faculty member. An assistant professor of religious studies who has taught at Millsaps for four years, Ray is described by Richard Smith, vice president and dean of the college, as "an outstanding teacher who cares deeply for her students but also demands much from them; she shows great promise as

a scholar and is thoroughly involved in the life of Millsaps." Ray is the author of *Deceiving the Devil* and currently is working on her second book, tentatively titled *Christic Imagination: An Ethic of Incarnation and Ingenuity*. She and her spouse, **Raymond Scott Clothier, MDiv'92**, reside in Jackson, Mississippi.

Julian H. Wright Jr., MDiv'92, JD'92, has been made a partner with the law firm of Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he practices civil litigation and works with appointed death penalty post convictions. He also serves as clerk of session for Seigle Avenue Presbyterian Church. Wright and his wife, Amy, are the parents of Elizabeth, 6; Cora, 4; and Hugh, 1.

Tracy Lynne Gorrell, BS'93, MTS'95, is pursuing a master's degree in public health at the University of California in Los Angeles and has been promoted to administrative coordinator of the nutrition center at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

Jonathan Craig Stewart, MTS'93, married Renee R. Levay on September 11, 1999. They reside in Nashville where he is an attorney in the litigation department of Bass Berry & Simms.

Lanny Cole Lawler, DMin'96, and **Joy Ann Kraft-Lawler, MDiv'87**, adopted a son, Patrick Austin, on July 4, 1999. The Lawlers reside in Chattanooga where Lanny has begun his new pastorate at First Christian Church—Disciples of Christ. Joy has taken family leave from the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church.

David Robinson-Slemp, MTS'97, has accepted the position of development associate for First Nations Development Institute, the country's largest research and development organization devoted to Native American economic development. Located in Fredericksburg, Virginia, the institute works with tribes and Native communities to help create self-reliant, Native-controlled economies. A privately funded organization, First Nations also has instituted an international program that promotes land rights education in South Africa and Australia.

Tanya Becker, MDiv'98, continues her work as program associate for Earth Ministry, an ecumenical, nonprofit agency that fosters care for the environment by local congregations.

Obituaries

Paul J. Acker, Oberlin BD'45, on June 22, 1999.

Glenn F. Lockard, Oberlin BD'45, a Methodist minister who served churches in Ohio for more than 50 years, on April 4, 1999.

Jay Elma Broyles, BD'47, a member of the Martin Methodist College Board of Trustees and retired United Methodist minister who served as pastor for 47 years in churches throughout Middle Tennessee, on November 6, 1999.

Alexander Campbell Meakin, Oberlin BD'52, a member of the Wooster College Board of Trustees and retired senior pastor of Parma South Presbyterian Church in Ohio, on June 2, 1999.

James Floyd Taylor Jr., BD'56, a retired minister of the Tennessee Conference of the United Methodist Church, on June 26, 1999.

Julia Tucker Bohannon, BD'57, an elementary school educator and past state president of the Alabama League of Women Voters, on August 25, 1999; survivors include her husband, the Reverend Kenneth L. Bohannon, BD'56 of Northport, Alabama.

Thomas F. Martin, BA'64, D'78, a former member of the Commodore football team and pastor of the Hanover Avenue Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Richmond, Virginia, on December 4, 1999.

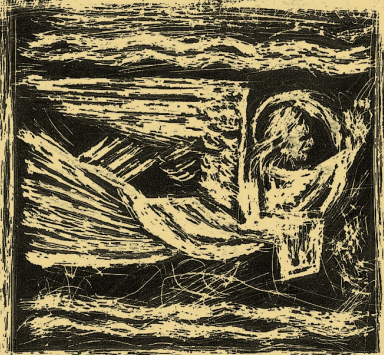
Raymond Jeffrey Council, MDiv'70, director of pastoral services and chaplain for the Middle Tennessee Mental Health Institute, on August 11, 1999.

Deryl Garland Watson, DMin'76, of Jackson, Tennessee, director of missions for the Hardean County Baptist Association, on November 3, 1998.

William A. Dansby, D'78, retired pastor of the Gay-Lea Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Nashville, Tennessee, on June 25, 1999.

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