

## **Communal Study and the Evolution of Consciousness**

Address to Racine Dominicans, 6/17/08

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I must begin by confessing that I told a lie earlier today. Over lunch, Sister Mary Fisher asked me if I was nervous about my talk tonight. I said, "A little." That was a lie. I'm terrified. If you're anything like my community back in Caldwell, you're a friendly but formidable audience. You're the congregation that produced Suzanne Nofke who brought six Northeast Dominican congregations to their feet last year. That's a hard act to follow. And my specific assignment is also pretty daunting. As I understand it, I'm to prepare you for a communal study of my slender volume of prose and poetry on the interface of science and spirituality. Since that seems to be the subject of almost every book by a religious author in the last decade, you'll expect me to justify my book over all those others. More importantly, it seems to me that, on the eve of your assembly, my role is to persuade you that meditating on things like microbiology, quantum physics, and interstellar exploration will so strengthen your commitment to Dominican life that you'll rush off to your meeting tomorrow and complete your community agenda with spectacular, speed, vigor, and good humor. That's a huge order for which my talents are totally inadequate.

Therefore, like a candidate for political office I am compelled to spin my very incompetence into the ideal qualifications. Who better than a poet who is neither scientist nor theologian to provoke conversation about the relevance of science to

Dominican spirituality with a group of sisters where very few are theologians, even fewer are scientists, and all the children under sixty have already memorized the catechism of what they insist on calling “the new cosmology.” As one who has had to learn all her theology on her knees, the only expertise I can claim is in the discipline of faith. As a survivor, I can share with you some concerns raised by the current influence of science on our idea of God. Let me voice aloud some deep personal and painful questions the encroachment of science into what we consider theological territory has raised in some of our consecrated hearts:

- Do I have to let go of the God to whom I vowed my life to embrace the faceless God of the “new universe story?”
- “Does the God whom I have loved for a lifetime now demand that I renounce that sense of intimate “belovedness” that forms the very essence of my identity? “
- If God is really the blank, impersonal life force sustaining the universe, to whom do I pray?”

Sometimes, with the famous agnostic Ingmar Bergman, I have found myself praying: “Dear God, if you do not exist, why do I ache for you?” Albert Nolan describes the journey of some priestly eco-theologians as having “gone to atheism and back.” If we follow them on that road, will we ever return? I’m fairly sure that your community numbers some who began that journey thirty years ago and are still here physically. But now they pray, if they pray at all, “in a different church.” Others among you, repelled by the iconoclasm of some

zealots of the New Universe story, have resisted even opening that book because you feel that the only thing you've got left in this world is the faith you inherited from your dear parents and you'll be damned if you're going to give it up for some neo-pagan cult. And finally, some of you are lucky enough to have begun studying this "New Story thing" just recently when the evangelists of the new religion are at last more interested in making connections to our Christian faith than in demolishing it. With deep humility, I come to you as "all of the above." I have survived the new theology as a poet who processes all reality as multitudinous metaphors for divine life. Hence, it is with confidence that I can invite you to participate in an evolutionary faith where science can enhance faith rather than subvert it.

Furthermore, I dare to suggest that you as a Dominican community and its associates have a part to play in that evolution. For a lifetime we have thought of evolution as a physical process over which we had no control, something that happened a long time ago, before we got here. Teilhard de Chardin told us that biological evolution is complete, and from here on, it's consciousness that's evolving. We accepted the fact, but we didn't really feel obliged to do anything about that either. Within the past quarter century, however, physics has illuminated our understanding of the power of consciousness to effect change and we now recognize an urgency to take some responsibility for advancing human evolution from consciousness to communication to communion.

You don't need me to remind you that we are living through a dramatic phase in the evolution, not only of religious life, but of Christianity—and some would say, of humanity itself. Sometimes I wish theological evolution could be as leisurely—and as demonstratively upward-- as the gradual evolution of dinosaurs into birds. But as fossil evidence demonstrates, birds actually did begin as dinosaurs, didn't they? That miraculous transformation from earthbound and ugly to airborne and elegant really did happen, didn't it? It just took a little time—and a little help from the Creative Spirit we like to picture as a bird.

So today I come to you as a spiritual pterodactyl with wings still wet hoping to encourage you to believe that as Dominicans we have something unique and essential to offer to the evolutionary process. Every time we enter into an act of communal study, Dominicans, guided and energized by eight centuries of contemplation, are evolving together toward creation's Omega point. Physics assures us that we're doing more than that; we are carrying humanity with us toward a new level of consciousness. This is our gift to life in the new millennium. I have no fear that your assembly will neglect the corporal works of mercy, the plight of immigrants and refugees, or the needs of our befuddled nation and our dying planet. Instead therefore, I have based my talk on the suspicion that you just might need someone to assure you that a roomful of Dominicans studying together is the most relevant place in the galaxy. Scientifically speaking, your elevated consciousness impacts the entire human

population just as surely as your geothermal energy system impacts the health of your entire bio-region.

Specifically, I'd like to center this talk on just two distinctively Dominican dimensions we can bring to the evolution of consciousness in our universe: the vision we experience in contemplation and the vision we experience in community.

Etymologically, *to contemplate* means to *come together in the temple, to bring everything that exists into consciousness of its sacredness*. By contemplative vision, I mean a mode of perception, a way of knowing which is more than scientific. This is a kind of knowledge, different from science, but respected by scientists who have experienced it. It is a way of seeing shared by those who pray and by those we call artists. As one scientist has said: "Science often gives us the illusion that we understand things that we really do not understand. Art helps us to know life in a way that still keeps before us the mystery of things." That statement about art is also a pretty good definition of contemplative vision. "A way of knowing life that keeps before us the mystery of things."

✓ Contemplatives, like poets and artists are vehicles for a kind of knowledge that is much more than information. Because I'm a poet, I use the term poetic experience to refer to this knowledge that comes through all forms of creativity. Artists and contemplatives see beyond surface limitations and into future possibilities. That's why we sometimes call them visionaries. It's no accident that the environmental movement was spearheaded by so many artists and poets and that economists and politicians are just beginning to catch up with

them. A good example would be Miriam Therese Mac Gillis, the founder of Genesis Farm which has inspired over twenty similar initiatives among American sisters. Did you know that Miriam started out as a wonderful visual artist? Even before she became involved in environmental issues, she delighted in recycling discarded materials into beautiful artifacts. I remember attending an exhibit of hers where a room full of sculptures—people, animals, ships, and shrines were all wrought from discarded wood shavings she had salvaged from construction sites. Last summer when I went with the DIA to visit your Eco-Justice Center, I wasn't surprised to see that its director is also an artist.

In the act of creating a poem or an artifact, as in the act of prayer, one often enters a level of consciousness that demolishes time and space. That's why art is so often prophetic. Twenty-five years before his sudden electrocution in Bangkok, Thomas Merton wrote a poem in which he described his own death in a foreign land in astonishing detail.

In the act of prayer, when we all access the level of consciousness most open to the Creator, the limitations of thought relax and imagination travels to new possibilities. (In case you didn't know, that's why your prioress usually chooses the day before you end a retreat to ask you to do something impossible. She knows you're in a higher state of consciousness. That's why you say yes.)

Over a lifetime I have discovered that poetic experience is not just a way of saying things, but a way of seeing, a form of intuitive knowing which scientists acknowledge but cannot define or prove. This kind of knowledge which all of you have experienced in the act of prayer—is best described as an awareness of presence. Whether

that event occurs at a time of scheduled prayer or in an impromptu moment either outdoors or in, in the midst of work or play, you will agree that Presence—not theology— is the ultimate form of revelation. Wallace Stevens puts it this way: “The world is presence and not force. It fills the being before the mind can think.” Stevens wouldn’t use the word God, but he’s talking about a mystery you and I give that name because we have no other. “God is presence and not force. God fills the being before the mind can think.” The creative act can mediate this kind of presence as I discovered once when I was alone in a cabin in the woods writing. The stillness in the room deepened and something began to intrude on my thoughts. So I abandoned what I was writing to record exactly what was happening as a poem:

Moving across the blank page  
the sound of my pencil  
creates a silence  
the wake of a tiny ship.

The silence becomes a person  
more real to me than myself  
a companion looking over my shoulder  
smiling a little at the poem  
that has ceased to matter.

Nothing I shall ever write  
can be more true  
more trustworthy  
than this faceless presence  
beside, beyond  
inexorably within.

The wise ones called you  
Unpronounceable.  
He called you Abba.  
Now they tell us to call you  
Quantum Vacuum, Empty Fullness.  
Whatever.

Language neither  
creates nor destroys  
this moment  
this moving stillness  
whose white sails carry me  
through darkest waters  
unerringly home.

Well, you expect that kind of statement from a poet who prays. Here's one from a fairly respectable scientist: "That deeply emotional conviction of the Presence of a superior reasoning power which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe—this forms my idea of God." <sup>1</sup>

These are the words of Einstein, a scientist's scientist certainly. Notice that the scientist attests to the existence of a convincing form of knowledge that is not scientific. "a deeply emotional conviction." Einstein, like poets and mystics since the beginning of recorded language, invokes "the Presence . . . revealed in the incomprehensible universe." Einstein the agnostic does not subvert your faith, he affirms the meta-scientific experience of your Dominican lifetime. Secular scientists can advance access to information about the universe; only contemplative scientists and/or scientific contemplatives can advance access to that Presence which is beyond data.

Lately, scientists have begun referring to physicists as "The mystics of the 21st century." Just within the past year, Jill Bolt Taylor, a neuroscientist

published a book *A Stroke of Insight* which tells how, in the aftermath of a stroke, she experienced a fusion of physical and metaphysical reality. Her description could have been written by Hildegard of Bingen or Meister Eckhardt. As a scientist, Dr. Taylor is careful to dissociate herself from religion, but it doesn't matter. The dualism that distinguishes matter from spirit has been declared scientifically untenable.

For centuries, theologians have devoted gallons of ink to linguistic distinctions of Catholic dogma from all other theologies. Very recently, I have had reason to trust the poetry in science as a more useful ecumenical language. It was only a month after *Science as Sacred Metaphor* was published that I was invited to give my first public lecture to a university audience. I was scared because I expected some science professor or student to tell me my poetry was okay but my science was hogwash. Sure enough, when it came time for questions, the first questioner identified himself as chair of the physics department. "Is it your thesis," he began, "that everything that exists is a sacred text, a metaphor for the Creator for whom we have no adequate name?" Trembling, I nodded and waited for his knockout question. "Thank you," he smiled. "Your thesis corresponds perfectly to my beliefs as a Muslim scientist." I decided to quit while I was ahead, so I didn't ask him to explain, but five years later, I read an essay which described the Koran in these words: "The book is made up of signs, in the way that the universe, a text of images spread out before our eyes, abounds with these very signs. When the intelligence of the heart—and not analytical intelligence alone—reads the scripture (Koran) and the physical

world, the two speak to one another; each one speaks of the other—and of the Unique One”<sup>2</sup> In the world of science, Muslim mystics and Christian mystics embrace each other.

Ironically, the first poem I ever wrote turns out to have anticipated what science is telling religion today. I was seven years old when my youngest brother was born and I decided immediately that I would be his first teacher of everything important. Having just made my First Communion, I was endowed with that confident theological infallibility that the parochial school inspired in second-graders. To be sure that I got everything right, I decided to write it down. Being an obsessive-compulsive-perfectionist, I insisted that my words be recorded in a perfectly new copy book with a perfectly sharpened pencil tipped with a pristine eraser on a perfect spring day. Finally, all requirements came together and I sat down on the bottom step of our back porch and wrote my first sentence: “Once there was nothing but God.” A stunned silence descended on my mind and I sat held in the beauty of that moment. I never wrote another sentence in that book.

In that little story we have a quaint encapsulation of what we used to think was the imperative of a religious vocation. Leave the world and have “nothing but God.” It was explained to Dominicans in the legend where the crucifix speaks to Thomas Aquinas. “Well have you written of me, Thomas. What do you ask?” “Nothing but yourself, O Lord.”

We wouldn’t try to attract religious vocations today with a promise

that you'll have nothing but God, would we? The concept of vocation has evolved outward. As indeed it should. In our time, Elizabeth Johnson dares to say, "an unworldly relationship to God is not possible . . . love of neighbor needs to go beyond the realm of private, individual relationships; love must be expressed in responsibility for the social sphere." <sup>3</sup>Men and women today are attracted to religious life precisely because they love the world. Science has something to do with this shift in emphasis. For 60 + years as a Dominican, contemplation has been telling me that in this world there is "nothing but God." Now in secular language, Science is telling us the same thing.

This divine immanence has been so since 'the beginning' when God expressed everything that would ever be in the one exclamation: "Let there be light." According to modern physics, everything that exists or ever did or will exist was present in that first burst of light. In this world, say the scientists, there is no such thing as matter: "all matter is gravitationally-trapped light." It has taken centuries of human exploration of both interstellar and subatomic universes to discover that "Let there be light" is the only scientifically literal statement in Genesis.

Long before physicists started talking like that, the artist, Van Gogh declaring his explicit intention to "paint so as to reveal the divine in nature," created those familiar canvases on which there is no such thing as solid matter, only light dynamically gyrating in stars, cypresses, sunflowers. When a physicist tells me that all matter is gravitationally-trapped light, I have no problem believing that, because I have experienced it again and again. And when I do, no

matter where I am, I feel myself in the Presence of the creator who uttered  
everything once and again in that creative word LET THERE BE LIGHT!

For example, visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art, I wrote

Nothing in this silent labyrinthine  
hymn to human yearning  
moves me more than this  
quotidian miracle:

Natural light  
laying hands on  
bare walls of wood and stone and plaster  
awakens the dead.

No god adored in these captive temples  
tombs and tea gardens  
knows such freedom  
confers such grace.

The first-born of all creation  
trapped in every painting, sculpture, tessera  
abandons them all  
and inhabits me.

And later up on the roof looking down at Central Park

At precisely 4:15 PM  
this steel-grey afternoon  
I become a born-again pagan  
and repent not my apostasy.

Disrobing sunset's fat pink clouds  
naked light clothes the shivering treescape  
with a glow so pure it renders  
every other color  
trite  
and every padded deity  
obese.

Light  
my one true God  
I adore no other.

Science assures us that our physical existence began as light. A number of recent books by respectable theologians suggest that death is a return to the condition of pure light. And that's what we mean by risen glory. These books report episodes in which the body of a holy person after death has simply returned to the light. Barbara Fiand and others speculate on the resurrection of Jesus as an example of this phenomenon.<sup>4</sup> Many of us reading these accounts will immediately have stories to tell of our own similar experiences of the dead as eternal light. With me, these experiences inevitably end up in a poem. This one's about how my mother comes to me now as light.

Before you died  
You lived at one well-known address  
where I could come to visit you  
always on my schedule.

But now it's you who come to me  
in books, museums and music  
in landscapes, shops and taxicabs  
above all here in this Belleek bowl.

Long ago, I was there  
when you placed it carefully  
on the coffee table in the exact spot  
where it could catch the sunset.

Each evening I would wait  
for the perfect moment  
as the bowl and you filled up with light  
and drew the room to stillness.

This is now our two-way legacy:  
this thirst to drink in luminance  
until you yourself become the bowl  
fulfilled in glowing emptiness.

I guess that communication with her like that has prepared me for my own death as a similar consummation. Two years when ago I underwent minor surgery, I wrote:

A man whose face I have never seen  
is invading my body  
with eyes and hands  
I have never loved.

How can I  
surrender myself so completely  
knowing we will never  
meet again?

Because the Love whose face  
no one has seen  
Is  
and is coming soon  
to transubstantiate my flesh  
to light.

In the beginning, the tone of those preaching the new cosmology was aggressive and iconoclastic; “This is why you can’t believe that anymore.” However, as Margaret Galliardi observes “Today we are at a new moment.”<sup>5</sup> More often now we hear and read theologians and ecologists reflecting on traditional mysteries with enhanced faith. I have observed the evolution to this moment in leaders like Miriam and Tom Berry. In the beginning, their lectures were iconoclastic, judgmental, laying on guilt trips accompanied by indifference to theological implications. If someone asked, “Where is Jesus in all of this?” the answer was “Such questions don’t interest me.” Lately the same speakers are reclaiming forgotten threads of Judeo-Christian tradition and weaving them into new interpretations of scripture and sacrament.

Ignace Lepp, S.J., for example, invokes science to deepen our understanding of Eucharist: “Today, modern scientific theories clarify the mystery of transubstantiation. In the light of modern physics we know that matter is far from being an opaque, solid substance. Matter is essentially energy always in movement. Christ’s sacramental presence, the body of the resurrected Christ, is a unit of energy. Thinking of the energetic presence of Christ within us and within the community is certainly less offensive than devouring his flesh and blood. It is also more accurate scientifically. Christ does not become bread and wine; rather Christ’s presence liberates these species from the limitations of matter and unites the whole Christian community in divine energy.”<sup>6</sup>

Reading a book together as a community is also an act of holy communion. This brings us to the second contribution Dominican religious of the 21st century can make to the evolution of consciousness: Besides the vision that evolves from contemplation, we bring the vision that evolves from a community. According to Teilhard, there is no evolution without communion (Fiand 62-3). Evolution comes about through a series of creative unions which bring about greater complexity and higher consciousness. Subatomic particles unite to form atoms, atoms unite to form molecules, molecules unite to form cells, cells unite to form primitive organisms. Each union represents a new level of consciousness. Evolution of consciousness is moving us toward cosmic community. This phase of consciousness is not automatic; it demands our cooperation. We are the freely cooperating agents of the Creator’s unconditional love moving the universe

toward ultimate communion. You and I are an integral part of an historic movement in the evolution of faith.

As students of sacred truth, Dominicans have always taken seriously the words of Jesus: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I.” When two or three study together, truth is in them in a way that it is not available to a solitary thinker. When everyone in the room is listening, truth is released into the room in a dynamic practical decision. I say this humbly as an inveterate introvert whom science has had to remind again and again that truth compels us to action. It is only in community that I acknowledge that we are the answers to our own prayers, that God is not up there, out there but within us—and helpless without us.

By now, I’m sure that the activists among us are beginning to ask: when is she going to start motivating us to do something? Actually, that’s all I have been doing. I’m suggesting that study is doing something harder than surrendering to the frenzied rat race—even when it’s called ministry.

But studying together is the very opposite of Team A persuading Team B to get with the program. Communal study is an exercise in autobiographical theology, a process in which: “One approaches a text with one’s own total history and with a new openness to experience including those of people on, behind, and beyond the pages of the Bible. Freedom to do this does not include freedom to eradicate someone else’s experience.”

From the outset we must acknowledge the limitations on our ability to share another’s experience. Older sisters who feel their faith in unchanging

dogma threatened by evolutionary theology need to remember that among you there are children under sixty who have never known your Church. Children under sixty have never known any sustained experience of either certainty or of permanence: neither in their textbooks, in their homes, in their schools, in their church, in their prayer. They have never prayed to a God who is changeless. For those who entered after 1962, the idea of the Church as the refuge from change has been supplanted by the vision of everything in process—including dogma. In theology as in science, truth is a combination of the mutable and the immutable. So, for the evolution of a new vision, you need each other's honesty as you bring your genuine experience to the conversation. The God of truth is communicating through both of you.

Communal study is not another contest between the liberals and conservatives. If there's anything we've learned in the past 40 years it's that truth emerges from the group by the fruitful interaction of liberal and conservative thinkers, not by the triumph of one over the other. (I like to define a liberal as one who protests the persecution of unrepentant conservatives.)

Moreover, in this communal study, we are not after scientific facts about God any more than the contemplative biblical scholar is on the trail of historical facts about Jesus. What we are after is experience of the mystery. "Only when discourse about God is rooted in discourse with God are we freed from the desire to grasp and define." <sup>7</sup>As Dominicans, we understand that "God as mystery can be encountered, but never explained." Our evolution of consciousness will be fulfilled, not when everyone thinks the same, not when old

and young subscribe to a new orthodoxy, but when everyone remains sincerely in quest of a fuller revelation. Some of you are already ardent apostles of the new and eager to rush the evolutionary process.

Be careful. The dinosaur who is impatient to fly dies on the tarmac—shortly after making a fool of herself.

All this is by way of saying: Trust your experience of God.

Don't be afraid to say something shocking—it might just liberate someone else from an old distortion. On the other hand, don't be afraid to sound old-fashioned. Your experience is part of a very long evolution. If anthropologists can learn something new and useful every day from pre-historic fossils, our communities can learn a thing or two from those fossils among us who are still afflicted with the power of speech.

Ideally, our study of science not demolish our religious tradition, but expand and enhance our understanding of it. When a community reads a new book together, the older members will be prompted to cite and often re-read their favorite theologians. They will find that perspectives on traditional concepts like incarnation and grace have actually been evolving for half a century. For example, at least 50 years ago Karl Rahner began correcting our concept of divine grace in the light of modern science, even though he didn't refer to science directly. Grace, he explained, is not a special gift coming down from on high when needed or deserved. "Grace, which is God's own self-communication, permeates the world at its roots. Grace is the animating force of all human history, present even before Jesus Christ. Co-extensive, but not

identical with, our race (grace) comes to expression wherever people express their love in care for others, in creative art, literature, technology, . . . in responsibility and trust, even in darkness.”<sup>8</sup>

I submit that Rahner is simply confirming theologically the sense of Presence we have all experienced, the force of divine energy released with the Big Bang, something for which science has other names. I submit further, that Rahner is describing the Presence we experience when the Spirit enters a group who are studying together.

As you proceed, many of you will discover that your experience of God is closer to science than it is to the catechism. It's often reliable theology. Don't worry about the ideas that you cannot understand. Follow the example of Mary who pondered in her heart what she could not understand. “To ponder in your heart is to do much more for the world than to split hairs”<sup>9</sup>

Those among you who are in the best position to benefit from a renewed commitment to study— those who can contribute most to the community and to the world while you are about it, are your retired sisters. So, I'd like to address a few words to you who are retired or ought to be. I say, ought to be because some of you are afraid to retire. Here's what Einstein has to say to you: “There is, after all, something eternal that lies beyond . . . all human delusions. And it lies closer to an older person than to a younger one . . . For us there remains the privilege of experiencing beauty and truth in their purest forms.”<sup>10</sup>

You will enjoy this access to truth only if you allow retirement to liberate you from the heresy of equating yourself with your job. A funny thing happened to me

long ago when I tried to communicate to our own retired sisters their great value to the world. I was responsible for publishing the first community directory which included each sister's title in ministry. When I got to the retired sisters, I thought I had hit on the perfect title for them: "Fulltime Contemplatives." Was I mistaken When the directory was published, I was bombarded with protests. You'd think I had accused them of posing for pornography! Indeed they were still very busy and very useful, they assured me. Some of them had a vision of contemplation of sitting in the chapel all day.

Etc.

If you are willing to endorse yourself as nobody's teacher, nobody's pastoral associate, nobody's secretary, nobody's administrator, nobody's work-a-holic anything , you can embrace this last great opportunity to know yourself as that unique expression of God's love that you are. Don't be afraid that retirement will make you a hermit. You won't be alone for long. As science teaches us, each of us and each atom of our being, is simultaneously a particle of individuality and a wave of connectivity. When in your freedom from work you reach the depth of what is most intimately you, it will open you to others in a way that transcends mere busyness. It will release an energy from you to the world and, I promise, the world will return it to you in ways that will astonish you.

Carry with you into the future the emotional intelligence that brought you to religious life in the first place, the emotion that kept you going even after that life evaporated in the heat of new ideas. Carry with you into the dark all

those who have been a light to your youth Maritain and Merton, Rahner, Lonergan, Nouwen, Teilhard, Mary of Nazareth, your parents and mine.

I began by posing a terrifying question: could the God of science be asking us to let go of the God of faith? Maybe all that God is asking is that we stop holding onto our *idea* of God and let a God *beyond ideas* hold us---and carry us into the light. We have already let go of one idea of Church, haven't we, one idea of religious life? If we are still mourning, we might remember the words of the Chinese poet who said: "Perhaps when all the tears are shed, the earth will be fertile." When all the tears have been shed over the death of Catholic triumphalism, over the death of clericalism and consecrated life as privileged subcultures— perhaps then the vineyard we call the church will again be fertile.

Take heart:  
already, the first sprouts of new growth  
appear in our ecosystem.

Some of you might live to see a church restored to a simplicity Jesus Christ would recognize as His idea. If you do, you will embrace a blessedness beyond our present imagining. You can look back with gratitude to this season when religious were among the bravest to open the Book of Earth and begin writing the first green chapters of the constantly-new story God has been writing since the dawn of creation.

As the human community's scientific knowledge advances rapidly, its wisdom evolves more slowly and sometimes gets de-railed. That's why the world needs Dominicans. My little book was born of much solitary prayer and

solitary study. You will give it the final dimension of community. As you read it,

I hope that you will hear me saying, “Thank you”

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<sup>1</sup> Cited in the Einstein Exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History (New York: November 15, 2002-August 10, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> Tariq Ramadan, Prof. of Islamic Studies, Oxford University. *NY Times Book Review* (1/6/08).

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Johnson, *Quest for the Living God* (New York: Continuum, 2007) 46.

<sup>4</sup> Barbara Fiand, *From Religion Back to Faith* (New York: Crossroad, 2006) 132-3.

<sup>5</sup> “Where the Pure Water Flows,” *Conversatio: Dominican Women on Earth* (February 2008).

<sup>6</sup> Ignace Lepp, S.J., *The Faith of Men: Meditations Inspired by Teilhard de Chardin*, 81-2.

<sup>7</sup> Sally McFague, cited by Johnson, 20.

<sup>8</sup> Cited by Johnson, 42. Italics mine.

<sup>9</sup> Raimundo Panikkar, *The Experience of God: Icons of Mystery* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006) 57.

<sup>10</sup> Einstein’s Letter to the Queen of Belgium cited by, Krista Tippett, *Speaking of Faith* (Dec.8, 2005; repeated March 2007).

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