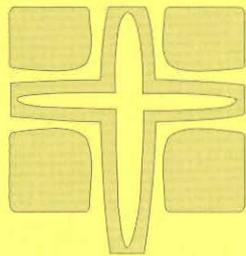




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# Jesus: A Feminist Mystical Perspective

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Janet K. Ruffing, R.S.M.

## Introduction

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When we answer Jesus' question: "Who do you say that I am?" and the you who responds is a woman conscious of her female experience as a member of the community of believers, we begin to glimpse both the struggle and theological creativity of Christian feminist theologians and mystics of our own day. This accumulating, critical reflection on and reconstruction of the Christ symbol for women is characterized by a number of features. Reformist Christian feminists find sufficient good news and emancipatory possibilities within Christian tradition to advocate a critical recognition of the religious legitimization of gender discrimination fostered by Christianity in its various cultural contexts. They criticize this discrimination as a betrayal of the "dangerous memory" of Jesus' own ministry, behavior, teaching and that of the original community of co-equal disciples which formed under the sway of God's Spirit mediated through Jesus' life, death and resurrection.

## Feminist Perspective as Liberation Theology

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This feminist critique, retrieval, and imaginative reconstruction of the Jesus tradition and its understanding of Christology is a form of liberation theology. These theologies begin with the concrete experience of the oppression or injustice experienced by a particular group of people within a particular cultural and social location. Within Christianity, the dominant group encourages oppressed persons passively to accept their social oppression and the suffering it entails by identifying themselves with the suffering Jesus rather than naming and resisting socially caused suffering. Critical consciousness asks these questions: "Who is made holy by passive resignation to suffering?" "Who benefits from this resignation and acceptance of an unjust

social or economic status?" "Who in power in the church or in society participates in this same suffering?" "Who thinks a particular form of suffering is good for members of a completely different social group?" "Have members of the group who suffer participated in theological reflection on their situation?" Historically, liberation theologies which developed first in Latin America, then in other parts of the third world and in African-American communities here, were developed by male theologians who ignored the specific ways women experience oppression in addition to their marginalization by virtue of race, ethnicity, religion, or class. Thus, rather rapidly, women theologians began to voice the unique oppression of women, giving birth to feminist liberation theologies.

Today, Christian feminism struggles to be inclusive. It is no longer the reflection of primarily white, middle and upper-middle-class women of North American or European backgrounds, but now includes *womanist* reflection authored by Afro-American women, *mujerista* reflection by Hispanic women, and reflection by third-world women from all parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> No woman now claims to speak for all women, but each theologizes from her own cultural and class perspectives. Thus, women recognize that patterns of domination and submission are present world-wide yet vary in significant ways.

## Questions for the Reader's Reflection

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As you read my reflections, I invite you to notice how you have personally related to Jesus and the narratives and theologies through which we understand him. In what ways do you identify with Jesus through the lens of gender and culture? As a woman, do you experience the maleness of Jesus to be theologically significant? Have you experienced

the maleness of Jesus to be an obstacle to your full participation in the ecclesial community? Have you experienced the maleness of Jesus to be an obstacle in your spiritual development or in your relationship to God? If you have enjoyed mystical experience, how has Jesus been involved? Do you relate to Jesus as *other* and as sexual partner, or as someone with whom you identify as “another Christ”? If you are lesbian, how does this sexual orientation affect your relationship to Christ? As a man, how do you identify with or relate to Jesus? What about Jesus makes you uneasy about your masculinity? For both men and women, how has your experience of the Risen Christ been empowering or liberating? These are all questions which deeply affect the possibility of mystical intimacy with God through the Jesus symbol as well as our own identity as Christians and our participation in our various ecclesial communities. Although these questions may seem

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irrelevant to some, they are now occurring to children as young as five years of age in Roman Catholic experience.

One of my women students reported this christological conversation between her nine-year-old son and her five-year-old daughter. Mollie gives this reply to her mother's question, “What is the most holy time for you?”

**Mollie:** “When we all go to the mall and you buy me presents and I feel like I'm the baby Jesus.”

**JP:** “You know the baby Jesus was a boy!”

**Mollie:** “It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter, JP.”

Their mother reported another conversation in which JP was struggling with the androcentric attitudes of another boy and said, “Boys are better than girls because God was a boy.” JP muses to his mother, “I'd like to know more about Mary.” This

wondering about Mary seemed to be his only way out of this impasse he finds himself in between the voices he hears in his boys' world and his sister's resistance to them.

### **Feminist Christology**

The core insight of feminist reflection on Jesus recognizes the androcentric bias of the cultural contexts and thinking which shaped classical christological belief about Jesus and about how Christians ought to behave. Thus, feminist theologians seek to unmask this bias, reveal its oppressive and distorting effects on women's lives in the churches and in society, and resist it on the basis of discovering and promoting other more liberating strands within the tradition itself as normative for the community. The theological assumption such women hold is that women share equally with men in the dignity of being fully human; that women are equally redeemed by Christ; that God wills not women's oppression and diminishment, but their full flourishing; and that the historical life and ministry of Jesus demonstrated such an inclusive intention and actual relationship with women despite the patriarchal culture which shaped Jesus' own humanity. Furthermore, feminist theologians look to the future. They advocate a vision of a new human community based on the values of mutuality and reciprocity; this new community represents what the community of disciples, called church, who gather in the name of Jesus, is meant to become now, not merely projected as a vision for the next life. In summary, this process represents basically three steps: analyzing the situation of sexism, searching the tradition and naming what contributes to the oppression, and finally searching the tradition for what liberates.<sup>2</sup>

### **Sexism**

After thirty years of the contemporary women's movement and beginning with Vatican II in the church, sexism is understood to be discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, invisibility, and subhuman treatment on the basis of gender. This discrimination includes subtle psychological pressures as well as forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence. Sexism is recognized as a social sin and one of the “signs of the times” of God's Spirit

moving in the world to right this injustice. Sexism is culturally constructed through the ideology of patriarchy—that is, structures shaped by males for males in which power is exclusively in the hands of males who are themselves ranked in a series of graded subordinations, with the least powerful being at the base. Women do not fit at all in this structure except as defined by the men to whom they belong as wives, daughters, etc. Women who belong to men higher up in the power pyramid outrank the women who belong to men lesser ranked. Within most societies today, the structures of family life, social life, political life, economic life and ecclesial life are predominately patriarchal. In societies such as ours in which the women's movement has effected legal changes making job discrimination on the basis of gender illegal, women can occupy positions in the structures so regulated. However, they do so as "honorary males" and are usually successful if they can conform to the masculine rules of such structures.

Sexism also occurs in patterns of thinking which take the humanity of male human beings and make it normative for all. The adult male is the model of the appropriately human. Women are not considered fully "human" in their own right, and their way of being, thinking, doing, structuring life and organization is not considered to be equally good or appropriate and is resisted when women attempt to create organizational change. The social and economic analysis of the recent U.N. Conference on Women held in Beijing offers a world-wide, multicultural analysis of gender discrimination.<sup>3</sup>

### **Feminist Critique of Christology**

Within the theological tradition, virtually all of the most influential theologians were both male and androcentric in their thinking. Feminist critiques have adequately demonstrated the anti-woman bias assumed as normal in the tradition which presents women universally as temptress, identified with Eve and with evil—in Tertullian's charming phrase, "The devil's gateway"—or as not possessing the image of God in herself, (Augustine) or is rejected as a "misbegotten male" because of her embodiment. (Aquinas).<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the Christ symbol has been used in ways which are oppressive for women. According

to Mary Daly, "If God is male, then the male is God." If, according to Augustine, "a woman is in the image of God only when taken together with the male who is her head," while "as far as the man is concerned, he is by himself alone the image of God just as fully and completely as when he and the woman are joined together into one," then women and men do not fully and co-equally embody human nature nor are both equally the image of God. Presently within Roman Catholicism, the insistence that only a male can act *in persona Christi* and

The insistence that only a male can be symbolically suitable for ordained ministry is the most blatant expression of an androcentric Christology being used against the full flourishing of women's humanity in order to preserve male sacral power.

so be symbolically suitable for ordained ministry is the most blatant expression of an androcentric Christology being used against the full flourishing of women's humanity in order to preserve male sacral power. The maleness of Jesus is thus used to deform the image of God, restricting it to exclusively male gender, to make the male the norm of the truly and fully human, and to enforce an unjust structure of power domination within the church itself. This latter social experience within Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism is, according to Rosemary Ruether, creating a serious church/world split.<sup>5</sup> The churches now teach that gender discrimination against women in society is wrong, but apparently not in the churches.

Daly claims that even more harm is done to women by idealizing the image of Jesus as sacrificial victim. Within a tradition that denies women the possibility of identifying with the role of priest, she is forced to identify exclusively with the role of victim: sacrificial love, passive acceptance of suffering, humility, meekness, etc.<sup>6</sup> Protestant theologian Rita

Brock argues that various theories of the atonement cause even more damage to women. For her and others, Christology supports the patriarchal family by its father-son language and she refers to God the Father's acceptance of his son's death as "cosmic child abuse." Brock's work has particularly focused on the struggle of Asian-American women and victims of sexual abuse.

### **Feminist Retrieval of Women's Mystical Tradition**

While it is true that many women have experienced negative effects from the androcentric theological tradition related to Jesus, Carolyn Walker Bynum and numerous other feminist historians have consistently shown that the mystical tradition, while often assuming the androcentric cultural frame of reference in which theology developed, has also had liberating effects on women.<sup>7</sup> Bynum's work sensitively explores the actual and creative ways the complex and ambiguous symbolism related to the Christ figure has functioned in women's spiritual lives. Symbols cannot simply be created anew according to logic. Symbols function in far more am-

While other men resisted these women, Jesus in his maleness authorized, called, empowered, and supported them through their prophetic callings and mystical experiences.

biguous ways within their particular social and cultural contexts. For instance, numerous women mystics and reformers developed their relational, empowered selves in relationship to Jesus who both nurtured their development into selfhood and made concrete demands on them requiring them to teach, preach, found convents, convert, console and present often another face of God to people. Joan of Arc was compelled by her mystical voices to lead the French army. Teresa of Avila undertook the reform of the Carmelite contemplative tradition. Catherine of Siena cultivated the

spiritual development of her lay community, influenced local politics, and dictated her theology of the spiritual life in a visionary state. Julian of Norwich offered an alternative theology of the mothering Jesus and the compassion of God at time when the theology of the atonement had taken on extraordinarily vengeful forms.

This radical mystical empowerment of women was the only form of legitimization women had apart from traditional authority such as a queen might exert. This spiritual empowerment also made them potential objects of intense persecution in the form of witch hunts, heresy accusations, and other sanctions. Within the situation of patriarchy, many women have found in Jesus a countervailing form of masculine empowerment. While other men resisted these women, Jesus in his maleness authorized, called, empowered, and supported them through their prophetic callings and mystical experiences. A couple of my favorite examples are Gertrude the Great's mystical affirmation of her counseling ministry in which she found she spoke for God in her reconciling words.

And another time when she prayed for someone . . . the Lord replied: "Whatever anyone hopes to be able to obtain from you, so much without a doubt she will receive from me. Moreover, whatever you promise to someone in my name, I will certainly supply . . ."

After several days, remembering this promise of the Lord without forgetting her own unworthiness, she asked how it was possible . . . the Lord replied: "Is not the faith of the universal church that promise once made to Peter: Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and firmly she believes this to be carried out by all ecclesiastical ministers. Therefore why do you not equally believe because of this that I can and will perfect that which, moved by love, I promise you by my divine mouth?" And touching her tongue he said, "Behold I give my words into your mouth."<sup>8</sup>

Another is Teresa of Avila's vision in which when she complained that all the books that had helped her grow in her spiritual life had now been burned by order of the Inquisition, Jesus replied, "Do Not be afraid, I will be for you a Living Book."<sup>9</sup>

The Afro-American womanist tradition according to Kelly Douglas asserts, "*Jesus Christ means that God is real*. Christ brings God down to earth. Christ is God's actual presence in the daily lives of African-American women. Christ is a living being

with whom African-American women have an intimate relationship.”<sup>10</sup> There are several dimensions to this relationship: Christ is a friend and confidant with whom they intimately share their pains and sorrows of being black and female in a hostile society; Christ is a co-sufferer, intimately in solidarity with their sufferings; Christ is a healer and provider helping them take care of their needs; and Christ is a liberator working through them to liberate their community from its complex forms of oppression.

Feminist theologians ask: Can Christology be developed in such a way that it no longer encourages women to be passive victims within families and societies and offers women the energy, courage, and hope to work for change, and move out of oppressive situations if necessary? The overarching feminist theological principle is whatever enables the full humanity of women (and men) to flourish is redemptive and of God; whatever damages this is non-redemptive and contrary to God’s intent.

### **Feminist Liberation Theology**

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Ellen Leonard identifies five approaches to Christology in contemporary feminist theology which take into account women’s reflection on Christ in the light of their gendered experience. These are new insights into the meaning of Jesus the Christ for the coming century:

1. Beginning from the Jesus of history as prototype
2. Beginning from the Jesus of history as iconoclastic prophet
3. Relocating Christology in the community
4. Envisioning Christ as the incarnation of female divinity
5. Envisioning Christ’s humanity in female terms.<sup>11</sup>

For my purposes, I am presenting Ellen Leonard’s original analysis in an order which differs from hers. I begin with the reconstruction of the Jesus of history as both prototype of a liberating Christology for women and as indication of God’s desire for the flourishing of women. The retrieval of the historical Jesus which in itself does not exhaust the Christ mystery, an experience of on-going relationship through the Spirit of Jesus within the believing community, has enormous implications for us. Elizabeth Johnson is fond of saying: “If God

became a human being, then it matters enormously what kind of human being God became.” While the various quests for the historical Jesus yield limited information about him, nevertheless, the data serves as a corrective to our various pious images of Jesus that bear little or no resemblance to the his-

## **Can Christology be developed in such a way that it no longer encourages women to be passive victims within families and societies?**

torical Jesus. Elizabeth Johnson among others draws on this witness of Jesus’ ministry, death, and resurrection and the tradition of wisdom Christology. She identifies the following features as supportive of women’s flourishing:<sup>12</sup>

1. Jesus’ preaching proclaims justice and peace for all peoples, inclusive of women. The vision of the reign or *basileia* of God which he proclaimed was a community where every human person is valued and all interrelate in a mutually respectful way. This inclusiveness was particularly expressed in his table community with the poor, with sinners, tax collectors and prostitutes. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza claims that Jesus and the praxis of the earliest church is a prototype rather than an archetype. From the perspective of the present experience of women’s struggle for liberation, Jesus calls forth a community of co-equal disciples which was submerged and often oppressed historically by ecclesiastical patriarchy, and which invites women today to move into the future in a such a discipleship of equals.

2. Jesus’ naming of God as Abba can be liberating for women because Jesus’ Abba is the opposite of a dominating patriarch. Rather, this compassionate, intimate, and close Abba releases everyone from patterns of domination and subordination.

3. Jesus’ partiality for the marginalized included women at every turn. Jesus treated women with grace and respect, healed, exorcised, forgave, and restored women to shalom.

4. Feminist interpretation of the stories of women in the Gospels shows that Jesus called women to be disciples despite androcentric attempts to interpret these women out of the tradition whenever possible. These women were part of the missionary group that traveled with Jesus.

5. All of the Gospels show that women witnessed both Jesus' death and resurrection, that Jesus explicitly commissioned them to tell their brothers. Thus women were included in his community not as subordinate to males but as equals in the community.

6. In the early decades of the Christian community, there is strong evidence, massively documented by Fiorenza,<sup>13</sup> that women were missionaries, preachers, teachers, prophets, apostles, healers, speakers in tongues, leaders of house churches.

7. Contemporary interpretations of the death of Jesus make the connection between Jesus' revolutionary, prophetic behaviors of inclusion which so severely challenged the religious power holders of his day that they had him executed as a political revolutionary. Feminists have argued that his inclusion of women was among his socially destabilizing activities.

They assert that Jesus' message of good news to the poor and his inclusive practice is what is to be carried into the future by his followers. Jesus is a paradigm for liberating personhood, inclusive of all of redeemed humanity, every culture and people of the world. Thus the image of Christ must take on ever new forms "as woman, as Black and Brown woman, as impoverished and despised woman of those peoples who are the underside of Christian imperialism."<sup>14</sup> Thus, if Jesus as the Christ is a universal image of redemption, it is totally appropriate to represent Jesus in every ethnic identity and both genders.

### **Relocating Christ in the Community**

According to Leonard, other attempts to transform the image of Christ focus either on a Spirit Christology or in the community of believers itself. Ruether emphasizes a Spirit Christology which focuses on the post-resurrection experience of the community in which Jesus' spirit is poured out on all who believe, women equally with men. Both men and women were baptized into this

same spirit and both men and women were understood to be in the form of Christ. In this way, each Christian is *in persona Christi*. The Risen Christ is represented by the entire community of believers. Rita Nakashima Brock uses the phrase *Christa/Community* where she relocates Christ in "the community of which Jesus is only one historical part so that the community generates the erotic power which heals and thus becomes the locus for redemption."<sup>15</sup> However we understand this aspect of Christology theologically, I think this experience of believing Christians that each embodies the Christ is the spiritual or mystical experience from whence emerges empowerment and action despite the constancy of church preaching, practice, and teaching which denies this Christic reality in practice but which we know in our deepest faith experiences.

### **Envisioning Christ as the Incarnation of Female Divinity**

Elisabeth Fiorenza and Elizabeth Johnson have both retrieved the feminine image of God as Sophia from the biblical tradition. They both talk about Jesus-Sophia. Fiorenza talks about Jesus as Sophia's child, according to the Q tradition, and Johnson of Jesus as the embodiment or incarnation of the feminine divine Sophia.<sup>16</sup> This strategy revives the ancient wisdom tradition and lifts it up for our assimilation. If Sophia is the feminine personification of God's creative and saving involvement in the world, then Jesus is no longer only a son to a male father-God, but also Sophia's child. The exclusively masculine gender of God relentlessly reinforced by the use of male pronouns is broken. Jesus can be an androgynous, tricky, male/female embodiment. Others simply focus on God as mother or female and also employ non-gendered images for God as well as retaining some masculine images.

### **Envisioning Christ's Humanity in Female Terms**

The final strategy Leonard describes is that of envisioning Christ's humanity in female terms. This strategy values women's concrete embodiment in a positive way as medieval women realized: if God became flesh, then women could achieve religious

transcendence precisely through their embodied practices. The tradition of Mother Jesus which largely disappeared after the Reformation has strongly reemerged in the last thirty years. In Julian of Norwich's theology, Jesus' nurturing love for all humanity is evoked in her use of Mother Jesus.

But our true Mother Jesus, he alone bears us for joy and for endless life, blessed may he be. So he carries us within him in love and travail, until the full time when he wanted to suffer the sharpest thorns and cruel pains that ever were or will be, and at the last he died. And when he had finished, and he had borne us so for bliss, still all this could not satisfy his wonderful love.<sup>17</sup>

Prior to the Reformation, such androgynous, gender-bending images of Christ were common. They drew richly on women's embodied experiences of childbearing, birthing, nurturing and make connections to Eucharist and Jesus. Thus, they enable women to directly identify their embodied experiences in sustaining life and the suffering that entails as an access to the holy. Woman-Christ includes female embodiment in the image of Christ. This image tends to offer strength in the present adversity, but it continues to collapse the feminine into what remains a male image. Woman herself is not so clearly of herself in the image of God. Women may still have "to become virile or male" themselves, crossing over to include the masculine in order to be in the image of God and of Christ.

Rosemary Ruether suggests that a Spirit-Christology may overcome this androgyny. This means that when Jesus pours forth his Spirit in the Christian community, both men and women equally image/embody the Christ. The story of Blandina's martyrdom demonstrates this poignantly:

Blandina was hung on a post and exposed as bait for the wild animals that were let loose on her. She seemed to hang there in the form of a cross, and by her fervent prayer she aroused intense enthusiasm in those who were undergoing their ordeal, for in their torment with their physical eyes *they saw in the person of their sister him who was crucified for them*, that he might convince all who believe in him that all who suffer for Christ's glory will have eternal fellowship in the living God.<sup>18</sup>

## Contemporary Women's Experience and Images

In my experience and in that of many other women, women are both increasingly conscious of their oppression in the church and creatively innovating within the tradition. While many women in the pews remain without the rich resources for a more woman-affirming relationship with Jesus emerging from the technical scholarship of women theologians, artists, and popularizing materials which encourage women to develop and pray with feminine images of God, others have been struggling with naming the destructive effects of negative Christologies and creatively re-imagine a Jesus who wills women's flourishing. My directees speak about powerful and beautiful images of God as Sophia as well as a fully woman-affirming relationship with Jesus. They relate to and image God as maternal. They increasingly claim their own embodiment as an extension and image of God's body despite the official teachings which deny it. I poignantly remember my first experience in Berkeley years ago, when a pregnant clergywoman presided at Eucharist speaking the words, "This is my body." I experienced in her pregnant body the connection of women's life-creating, life-giving experience in a way I never could have imagined without that liturgy. One woman I interviewed described this lovely experience of Jesus as healer:

I was working with a massage therapist, a holistic practitioner. She was working on this shoulder, and she sort of delineated a triangle, and told me to close my eyes, and to breathe deeply, and to breathe in light, and to put that light in my shoulder. I often have the experience of the presence of Jesus with her, when she's working. At first I had the experience of Him behind her, and then it was as if His hand *became* her hand. And then—although her hand was more fingers, touching me—it was like His palm was on my shoulder, and the three nail holes in His hand were the three points of . . . the triangle. And I experienced, an image I guess, of the triangle at first becoming very luminous, and then that . . . that light kind of growing and spreading, almost as a flame. And it was very, just very strongly the feeling that that was coming from the nail holes in the hand. [EC10]

Another described her unfolding christological reflection and experience:

I'm not sure if I am a Christian in terms of classical, Christian believing, Jesus is the Son of God, whatever, or that Jesus is God. When I think of Jesus, God, myself . . . is that here I am. Here's Jesus standing before me, and saying before all of us "You want to know what it's like to be a human being which is to be like God? Look at me." And so I look at Jesus and I say, I live in the Father and the Father lives in me and I live in God, God lives in me, God and I are one, Jesus and I are one. Somehow we are all connected. For me, the connection with Jesus is very strong but it's not necessarily because I say Jesus is God in a classical language but that love has connected us all and we're all kind of in this together in some giant circle . . . It's quite personal and quite present and quite real though not differentiated. And in fact, impacts my outer world. As I am impacted . . . who I am on the inside has become more connected with who I am on the outside, so there's that integration . . . The way I move in the world is different. (WC6)

In our feminine Mercy tradition, we once had black ebony crosses with an ivory inlay in the center, no corpus. We were told we were to be the corpus, identified with Christ in our performance of the works of mercy. One of our artists, Celeste Marie Nuttman, paints Mercy crosses in the style of Taize which depict the historical works of Mercy performed by specific regional communities or institutions, by encoding in her icons the faces of pioneer and contemporary Sisters of Mercy in all of their ethnic and cultural particularity. Only the Christ is on the cross, the women of Mercy and their collaborators are Christ active in the world today.

The experience and power of Jesus continues to inspire, empower, and engage us today. The current practices of domination and subordination within the Roman Catholic church daily counter-sign an inclusive and liberating Christology. At the same time, God's Christic Spirit in the world and especially within women's experience and the experience of feminist men, invite and impel us into ever deeper contemplation of this profound faith reality and into liberating action and celebration which allows Christ and Christianity to be experienced as 'good news' for women.



## Notes

(This presentation was originally given at a Contemplative/Seminar, Jesus for the 21st Century, at Mercy Center in Burlingame, California, June 18, 1998).

- 1 For a brief account of African-American womanist christological reflection see Kelly Brown Douglas, "Christ, Jesus" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies* ed. by Letty M. Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson. Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996.
- 2 This entire account relies heavily on Elizabeth Johnson, *Consider Jesus: Waves of Renewal in Christology*. New York: Crossroad, 1991. See her entire chapter on "Feminist Christology," p. 97 ff.
- 3 See *The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women*, Beijing, China 4-15 September 1995, New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1996.
- 4 Johnson, pp. 100-102.
- 5 For a brief account of the feminist critique of Christology see Ellen Leonard, "Women and Christ: Toward Inclusive Christologies" *Toronto Journal of Theology* (6/2 1990) pp. 266-285 and Francine Cardman, "Christology" in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, pp. 40-3.
- 6 Leonard, p. 271.
- 7 Carolyn Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987 and *Fragmentation and Redemption*. New York: Zone, 1991.
- 8 Gertrude the Great, *The Herald of Divine Love*, trans. Alexandra Barratt. CF 35 Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1991, Book I, 14, p. 83.
- 9 *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*, trans. E. Allison Peers New York: Doubleday, 1960, Chapter 26, p. 247.
- 10 Douglas, *Dictionary of Feminist Theology*, p. 39.
- 11 Leonard, p. 273ff.
- 12 Johnson, pp. 54-55.
- 13 Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *In Memory of Her*. New York: Crossroad, 1983.
- 14 Rosemary Ruether, cited by Leonard, p. 278
- 15 Leonard, pp. 278-9.
- 16 Elizabeth Johnson, *She Who Is*. New York: Crossroad, 1992 and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet*. New York: Continuum, 1995.
- 17 *Julian of Norwich, Showings*, trans. and ed. by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh. New York: Paulist Press, 1978, chap. 60, p. 298. See Bridget M. Meehan, *Exploring the Feminine Face of God*. Kansas City: Sheed and Ward, 1991, for texts and illustrations of feminine images of God and of Jesus.
- 18 Rosemary Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*. Boston: Beacon, 1983. From *The Acts of the Martyrs of Lyon and Vienne*, CE 177, cited by Ruether, p. 131.