



THE HUMBLE APPROACH INITIATIVE

THE COMBAT

*You have no name.
We have wrestled with you all
day, and now night approaches,
the darkness from which we
emerged
seeking: and anonymous
you withdraw, leaving us nursing
our bruises, our dislocations.
For the failure of language
there is no redress. The physicists
tell us your size, the chemists
the ingredients of your
thinking. But who you are
does not appear, nor why
on the innocent marches
of vocabulary you should choose
to engage us, belabouring us
with your silence. We die, we die
with the knowledge that your
resistance
is endless at the frontier of the
great poem.*

R.S. Thomas

Collected Poems, 1945–1990

SPIRITUAL INFORMATION

KNOWING
THE UNKNOWNABLE
ABOUT GOD
AND THE UNIVERSE

A symposium sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation

7,8,9 APRIL 2005

TRINITY COLLEGE
CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

PURPOSE

Contact: Mary Ann Meyers, Ph.D., Senior Fellow

The purpose of this symposium is to explore the profound mystery of God's presence and absence. It arises from a core concern of the John Templeton Foundation—the possibility of learning more about "a God who would be known but dwells as non-being beyond the realm of our conception." Our approach is through the perspectives of two major religious traditions, the Indian and the Christian. In both traditions, people believe they derive "spiritual information" from God, and yet they know perfectly well that God is not present with them in the immediate sense that humans are present to each other. But how can God be both absent (if, as it is often put, God is not an object like a universe, still less an object in a universe) and yet also present (often with the physical closeness of a human lover)?

The conundrum lies at the very heart of Indian and Christian ways of worship. For example, *viraha bhakti* ("absence devotion") and apophatic theology are supremely important in their respective traditions. Both have produced prayer and poetry of the highest order, as they articulate (rather than solve) the epistemological problem of how to recognize that which can never satisfy the ordinary demands for perceptual evidence but requires "spiritual sight." In India, Jains and Buddhists, in their emergence and continuing history, have drawn attention to the absence of God with entirely different consequences. Indeed, the importance of spiritual truth informing (i.e. forming in human lives in such a way that those lives are transformed) has been, and still is, paramount for all religions. But much of that spiritual information comes from a resource or resources that are not open to immediate observation. How, then, can it be genuinely informative—or at least informative in a way that those outside the traditions can assess and take seriously? Are there insights to be gained from natural and behavioral sciences that will help us to understand this profoundly important

part of the human spiritual quest? How extensive is this sense of absence among human beings, and how important is it in the human search for spiritual and scientific information?

Thirteen theologians, scholars in religious studies, philosophers, and scientists are gathered at Trinity College, Cambridge, under the aegis of the Templeton Foundation,

to consider absence as an invitation. Amongst some Christians, that invitation has been interpreted as a call to come, through contemplation or action, further and deeper into God's presence—to seek Christ in the Eucharist and look for Him, as one contemporary theologian writes, "in other places of brokenness" throughout the world. Or, in a Hindu context, it is an invitation to think more intensely about the paradox of experiencing a world without God, even turned away from God, while at the same time remembering God's gracious intent to be nearby—to rediscover God where God seems not to be. Amongst some scientists, the invitation has been read as a challenge to push further and deeper into the universe itself. The perspectives of the symposium participants differ but their shared conviction is that we can learn something from the varied ways in which people in both science and religion have engaged with the hidden and the open.

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*"Truly you are a God who hides
himself,*

O God and Savior of Israel."

Isaiah 45:15

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APPROACH

The symposium is part of the Templeton Foundation's *Humble Approach Initiative*. The goal of the initiative is to bring about the discovery of new spiritual information by furthering high-quality scientific research. The "humble approach" is inherently interdisciplinary, sensitive to nuance, and biased in favor of building linkages and connections. It assumes an openness to new ideas and a willingness to experiment. Placing high value upon patience and perseverance, it retains a sense of wondering expectation because it recognizes, in Loren Eiseley's haunting phrase, "a constant emergent novelty in nature that does not lie totally behind us, or we would not be where we are." A fundamental principle of the Foundation, in the words of its founder, is that "humility is a gateway to greater understanding and open[s] the doors to progress" in all endeavors. Sir John Templeton believes that in their quest to comprehend foundational realities, scientists, philosophers, and theologians have much to learn about and from one another. The humble approach is intended as a corrective to parochialism. It encourages discovery and seeks to accelerate its pace.



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*Where have you hidden,
Beloved, and left me moaning?
You fled like the stag
After wounding me;
I went out calling you, but you
were gone.*

John of the Cross
from *The Spiritual Canticle*

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CHAIR

John W. Bowker, an Anglican priest and honorary canon of Canterbury Cathedral, is a pioneering religious studies scholar who has written on the Bible and other sacred texts, the origins of religion, contemporary religious beliefs, and moral judgment in the light of science, as well as editing widely-read surveys of world religions. A graduate of Worcester College, Oxford University, where he studied theology and Oriental languages, Canon Bowker did graduate work in theology at Ripon Hall in Oxford and was ordained in 1961. The next year he was the Henry Stephenson Research Fellow at Sheffield University and served as deacon and curate of St. Augustine's Church in Brocco Bank. In 1962, he went to Cambridge University as a fellow, director of studies, and dean of chapel at Corpus Christi College, posts he held for the next twelve years. He was appointed a lecturer in the Cambridge Faculty of Theology in 1965 and introduced religious studies as a subject of study at the university. In 1974, Canon Bowker accepted a professorship of religious studies at Lancaster University where he was instrumental in establishing formal exchange programs with universities in Thailand, India, Greece, and the United States. He returned to Cambridge as a fellow, director of studies, and dean of chapel at Trinity College in 1984. He became Gresham Professor of Divinity at Gresham College, London University, in 1992, a position he held until his retirement five years later. While at Corpus Christi and then at Lancaster, Canon Bowker was also the Wilde Lecturer at Oxford University for three years. He has given numerous invited lectures in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, including the 2003 Hensley Henson Lectures at Oxford. An academic fellow of the Institute of Religion in the Age of Science, he has served as president of Christian Action and AIDS, honorary president of Stauros, an institute concerned with medical ethics, vice president of the Culture and Animals Foundation, and as a consultant on various Church of England commissions. He helped establish the Academy of Moral Sciences in Beijing and, as a consultant to UNESCO, wrote the draft resolution for the United Nations Declaration on Religions and Apartheid and a feasibility study on the possibility of reconciliation among religions using as a focus Jerusalem. In addition to numerous articles published in academic journals, Canon Bowker is the editor of five books, including *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (1997 and 1999), *The Complete Bible*

Handbook (1998 and 2001), and *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Religions* (2002). He is also the author seventeen other books, including *Problems of Suffering in the Religions of the World* (1970, 1975, and 1990), *The Meaning of Death* (1991 and 1993), which won the HarperCollins Prize Religious Book Award, and, *God: A Brief History* (2002). His latest book, *The Sacred Neuron: Amazing New Discoveries Connecting Science and Religion*, a study from the perspective of modern neuroscience on the link between emotions and reason in forming human opinions and judgments, was published last month by IBTauris.

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*Piercing is my pain
Through the absence in this night:
When will gently rise again
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The moonlight – O deceiving foil –
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Mirabai

Translated from the Hindi by
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Margaret Bowker is a historian who specializes in late-medieval and early modern English ecclesiastical history. Educated at Somerville College, Oxford, she took first-class honors in history and was awarded the Bryce Research Studentship. She went on to Girton College, Cambridge, as a research fellow. After receiving her M.A. and B.Litt. in history from Oxford in 1962, she was appointed a fellow of Girton and an assistant lecturer in Cambridge's Faculty of History. She became a lecturer and director of studies at Girton in 1965. Dr. Bowker was the first woman to be appointed secretary to the Faculty of History at Cambridge, and in 1972, she became a senior research fellow at Girton, where she pursued research on the English Church before and after the break with Rome under grants from the Leverhulme Trust and the British Academy. Appointed a lecturer in social history at Lancaster University in 1975, she was named a reader in 1975 with joint appointments in the departments of history and educational research. Returning to Cambridge 1985, she was appointed a senior research scholar at Corpus Christi College, and Cambridge awarded her a Litt.D. In 1986 she was invited to become a tutor in prayer and spirituality at Ridley Hall Theological College in Cambridge, a post that was created for her and which she held until her retirement. Dr. Bowker has had visiting appointments at the University of British Columbia and the University of Pennsylvania. A fellow of the Royal Historical Society, she has been active in community and ecclesiastical organizations as vice chair of the Board of Prison Visitors in Lancaster, an elected member of the General Synod of the Church of England, and a member of the Church of England's Board of Education. Her articles have been published in historical, theological, and education journals, and she is a recipient of the Alexander Prize Medal given by the Royal Historical Society. In addition to contributing to volumes on the English reformation, Dr. Bowker edited *An Episcopal Court Book for the Diocese of Lincoln, 1514-1520* (1967) and is the author of two other books, *The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln 1495-1520* (1968) and *The Henrician Reformation: The Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland, 1521-1547*, which was published by Cambridge University Press in 1981. She is a major contributor to *A History of Lincoln Minister* (Cambridge University Press, 1994) and also contributed to the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford



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A professor of comparative theology at Boston College, **Francis X. Clooney, S.J.**, has written widely on Hindu religious traditions and their implications for Christian theology. He has been a member of the Society of Jesus since 1968. A *summa cum laude* graduate of Fordham University, Dr. Clooney taught English at a Jesuit high school in Katmandu, Nepal for two years after college. He earned a master of divinity degree with distinction at the Weston School of Theology and took his Ph.D. in South Asian languages and civilizations at the University of Chicago in 1984. Dr. Clooney then joined the Boston College faculty as an assistant professor of theology. In 1989, he accepted an invitation to come to the Institute for Advanced Study of Religion at the University of Chicago as a senior fellow and was a visiting professor at Chicago's Divinity School. Returning to Boston College as an associate professor the next year, he was named to his present professorship in 1996. Dr. Clooney has been a visiting associate professor of Sanskrit and Indian studies at Harvard University, the visiting Tuohy Professor at John Carroll University, and a visiting professor at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, as well as a fellow at the Center for Theological Inquiry in Princeton. He was academic director of the Centre for Hindu Studies at Oxford University from 2002 to 2004 and a member of the university's Faculty of Theology. First president and for several years a member of the editorial board of the International Society for Hindu-Christian Studies, he has served on the board of directors of the Catholic Theological Society of America and is currently a board member of the American Academy of Religion, where he is also chair of the Publications Committee. He was formerly coordinator for Interreligious Dialogue of the Society of Jesus in the United States for six years. Dr. Clooney is a member of the editorial boards of the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* and the *Journal of Religious Ethics*. The author of some 125 articles in academic journals, he is also the author of nine books, including *Seeing the Texts: Doing Theology among the Srivaishnavas of South India* (1996), winner of the Best Book Award in Hindu-Christian Studies, and, most recently, *Divine Mother, Blessed Mother: Hindu Goddesses and the Virgin Mary*, the first comparative analysis of its kind, which was published by Oxford University Press earlier this year. He is currently researching a book on surrender to God in the Hindu and Christian traditions.

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Sarah Coakley is the Edward Mallinckrodt, Jr. Professor of Divinity at the Harvard Divinity School and an Anglican priest in the diocese of Oxford. A theologian whose work has had a growing international influence over the past decade, she has embarked on a four-volume systematic theology, which will be the first such major undertaking attempted from a feminist perspective. Dr. Coakley serves as an associate priest at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Waban, Massachusetts, during the academic year and, in the summer, at St. Mary and St. Nicholas Church in Littlemore, Oxford, where she does chaplaincy work in a mental hospital. She was once the chaplain in a Boston jail. Educated at the Blackheath High School in London, she taught English and Latin to young Africans in Mohale's Hoek, Lesotho, before going up to New Hall, Cambridge, where she took first-class honors in theology. She went on to earn a master's degree in theology at Harvard as a Harkness Fellow. Returning to England, she became a junior lecturer in religious studies at the University of Lancaster in 1976 and received her doctorate in theology from Cambridge in 1982. She was appointed senior lecturer at Lancaster in 1990, and the next year, she became the first woman to be appointed a tutorial fellow in theology at Oriel College, Oxford. She came to Harvard as a tenured professor of Christian theology in 1993 and was named to her present chair in 1995. The recipient of two Cambridge essay prizes—the Chadwick and the Hulsean, a Henry Luce III Fellowship, and a Lilly Foundation Fellowship, Dr. Coakley has delivered numerous invited lectures in the United Kingdom and the United States, including, most recently, the 2005 Hensley Henson Lectures at Oxford University. She has served as a member of the National Advisory Board of the Christian Scholars Program and is a member of the board of advisors of the John Templeton Foundation and on the editorial boards of *Modern Theology*, *The Harvard Theological Review*, *Theology Today*, *Ecclesiology*, and *Spiritus*. In addition to contributing articles to academic journals and essays to collected volumes, she is the co-editor (with David A. Pailin) of *The Making and Remaking of Christian Doctrine* (1993), (with Kay Shelemay) of *Pain and Its Transformations* (forthcoming in 2005), and (with Fraser Watts) of *Spiritual Healing* (forthcoming 2006) and the editor of *Religion and the Body* (1997 and 2000) and *Rethinking Gregory of Nyssa* (2003). Dr. Coakley is the author of *Christ Without*

Absolutes: A Study of the Christology of Ernst Troeltsch (1988 and 1994) and *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (2002), a study which combines analytic philosophy of religion and theology while reflecting the author's deep interest in spiritual practice and feminist thought. Her most recent book, *God, Sexuality and the Self: An Essay 'On the Trinity'*, the first volume in her systematic theology, will be published next year by Cambridge University Press.

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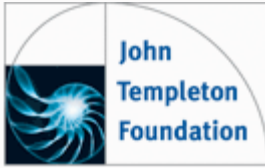
PARTICIPANTS

A professor of physics at Washington University in St. Louis, **Ramanath Cowsik** is the director emeritus and the Vainu Bappu Distinguished Professor of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics in Bangalore, which he headed for a decade. He has made wide-ranging contributions to astronomy, astrophysics, cosmology, and non-accelerator particle physics, as well as science management, in the course of his scientific career. He formerly was in charge of the Gravitation Group at the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Bombay with which he was associated for forty years. His papers pointing out the astrophysical and cosmological consequences of finite neutrino masses contributed to the basic paradigm for studying galaxy formation and dark matter. Dr. Cowsik also has contributed to the understanding of the behavior of cosmic rays at low and high energies, and his discussion of non-thermal particle populations inside supernova remnants have led to a physical understanding of their spectra. In the course of his experimental searches for new feeble forces and tests of Einstein's principle of equivalence of inertial and gravitational masses, he designed a new kind of torsion balance with which he performed the first laboratory experiment searching for the so-called "fifth force"—a hypothesized addition to the four fundamental interactions between material objects. Investigating the dust of presolar diamonds, rubies, and carborundum embedded and preserved in meteorites, Dr. Cowsik has been able to infer the formation of these materials in stellar winds and to estimate by a completely new method the age of the Milky Way. Recently he explored the Himalayas to establish a unique site for optical infrared astronomy in Ladakh on the border of Tibet. His current research efforts are directed towards building an even more sensitive torsion balance to probe possible violations of the inverse square law of gravity at sub-millimeter scales that are promoted by string theories. Dr. Cowsik was born in Nagpur in central India and took his baccalaureate degree at the University of Mysore. He earned a master's degree in physics at Karnatak University and, after further graduate work at the Atomic Energy Training School in Mumbai, he received his Ph.D. in physics from the University of Bombay in 1969. He had joined the Tata Institute as a research associate in 1961, and he subsequently became a research fellow, a fellow, a reader, an associate professor, a professor, and a senior professor there. Named a Distinguished Professor

in 1996, he retired from his faculty position in 2002 when he accepted his present post at Washington University. Dr. Cowsik has held a research fellowship at the University of Chicago and been a visiting lecturer and assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley, and a senior visiting fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Physics and Astrophysics in Munich. Until recently, he served on the governing council of the Commission on Cosmic Rays of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics. He is a fellow of the Indian National Science Academy, the Indian Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences in India, the Indian Geophysical Union, and the Third World Academy of Sciences. In 2004, he was elected a foreign associate of the National Academy of Sciences in the United States. In addition to invited lectureships, he is the recipient of many other honors, including the Vikram Sarabhai Award for Space Sciences, the Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award in Physical Sciences, a NASA Public Service Group Achievement Award, the Third World Academy of Sciences Award in Basic Sciences, the Vainu Bappu Memorial Award of the Indian National Science Academy, the S.N. Bose Birth Centenary Award of the Indian Science Congress Association, and the Padma Shri Award from the President of India. Dr. Cowsik has published some 180 papers in scientific journals and is the editor of *Cosmic Pathways* (1985) and two other books.

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Oliver Davies, the professor of Christian doctrine at King's College, London, is a theologian whose research and writing has focused on the language of Christian texts and on the classical problems of metaphysical theology. His work has ranged from studies of medieval mysticism inspired by phenomenology to more systematic theology influenced by contemporary thinking in rabbinics and hermeneutics. Educated at Merton College, Oxford University, where he read German and Russian as an undergraduate, he went on to Wolfson College, where he specialized in contemporary German religious literature, taking his D.Phil. in theology at Oxford in 1986. He spent two years teaching at the University of Cologne before returning to his native Wales to teach, first, at the University of Wales at Bangor, and, then, at Lampeter, where he was appointed a lecturer in theology and religious studies in 1993. Named a senior lecturer two years later, he became a reader in 1997, a post he held until accepting his present professorship at London University in 2004. Dr. Davies has held visiting fellowships at Regent's Park College, Oxford, Clare Hall, Cambridge, and the University of Virginia. He is a fellow of the Centre for the Study of Christianity and Culture at Regent's Park and a life member of both Wolfson College and Clare Hall, as well as a trustee of the Spalding Trust. He has lectured widely throughout Britain and the United States, as well as in Russia, Germany, and Romania, and will deliver the 2007 Scottish Journal of Theology Lectures in Aberdeen on scriptural hermeneutics. Current projects include a workshop entitled "Athens to Jerusalem: Modes of Inquiry in Christianity and Judaism," which he is co-directing with C. T. Mathewes, with the support of the British Academy, and "Religion as Reading," a workshop being planned with Gavin Flood. Formerly co-editor of *Logos: the Welsh Theological Review*, Dr. Davies has contributed numerous articles to academic journals and essays to volumes of collected works. He has translated ten classic works in spirituality from Celtic languages or German into English, including *Celtic Spirituality* (2000), for which he received an award from the Catholic Press Association of North America, and served as general editor of two book series, *The Spirituality of the Fathers* (New City, 1991-1994) and *Religion, Culture and Society* (University of Wales Press, 1994-2000). Most recent of the eight volumes he has edited or co-edited is (with Denys Turner) *Silence and the Word: Negative Theology*

and Incarnation (2002), a study of the history of apophysis that examines its relationship with contemporary secular philosophy. Dr. Davies also is the author of five books, including *God Within: The Mystical Tradition of Northern Europe* (1988), which has been translated into Dutch and Italian, *Meister Eckhart: Mystical Theologian* (1991), *Celtic Christianity in Early Medieval Wales: The Origins of the Welsh Spiritual Tradition*, a study supported by a Welsh Arts Council Literary Award, *A Theology of Compassion: Metaphysics of Difference and the Renewal of Tradition* (2003), and, most recently, *The Creativity of God: World, Eucharist, Reason*, a volume published by Cambridge University Press in 2004 in which the author argues for a contemporary scriptural cosmology.

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A religious studies scholar whose research and writing has focused on South Asian traditions, particularly Kasmiri Saivism, **Gavin D. Flood** is professor and chair of religious studies at the University of Stirling. His work has involved the interpretation of Sanskrit and Tamil texts and, more recently, he has explored the relationship between self, text, and cultural tradition in a comparative context. A graduate of Lancaster University, where he took his bachelor's and master's degrees and earned a Ph.D. in religious studies in 1988, he began his teaching career there before joining the faculty of the Bath College of Higher Education. Dr. Flood was appointed a lecturer in religious studies at the University of Wales, Lampeter, in 1990 and became a senior lecturer in 1998. He accepted his present position in 2000. He has been a visiting scholar at Panjabi University in India, a visiting research scholar at India's Centre d'Indologie in Pondicherry, a visiting research fellow at Clare Hall, Cambridge, and a visiting scholar at the University of Virginia. In addition to delivering invited lectures in the United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, and the United States, he has served as co-editor of *DISKUS: A Disembodied Journal of Religious Studies* and as a member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies* and is currently a member of the advisory board of the *Journal of Contemporary Religion* and a member of European editorial board of *Religion*. He was formerly co-editor (with Oliver Davies) of the book series, Religion, Culture and Society (University of Wales Press, 1994-2000), and a member of the editorial board of the series Culture and Religion. He currently serves as a member of the editorial board of the Curzon Studies in Tantric Traditions. The author of a variety of articles in academic journals and essays in collected volumes, Dr. Flood has edited two books, most recently, *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism* (2003), and is the author of four others, including *Body and Cosmology in Kasmiri Saivism* (1993), *An Introduction to Hinduism* (1996), *Beyond Phenomenology: Rethinking the Study of Religion* (1999), and *The Ascetic Self: Subjectivity, Memory, and Tradition*, an examination of the interface between religious studies and cultural theory, which Cambridge University Press published in 2004. His latest book, *The Tantric Body: Text and Tradition*, will be published by Tauris Press later this year.

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Brings no comfort to my heart;

If I sleep, I wake in turmoil

Anguished while from you apart:

Lord of mercy, Lord of grace,

Glimpse me blessings from your

face.

Mirabai

Translated from the Hindi by

John W. Bowker

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Bernard McGinn, the Naomi Shenstone Donnelley Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago Divinity School, is widely regarded as the preeminent scholar of mysticism in the Western Christian tradition. He has also written extensively on Jewish mysticism, the history of apocalyptic thought, and medieval Christianity. A *cum laude* graduate of St. Joseph's Seminary and College in Yonkers, NY, he earned a doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome in 1963 and a Ph.D. in history from Brandeis University in 1970. After teaching theology for a year at The Catholic University of America, he joined the Chicago faculty in 1969 as an instructor in theology and the history of Christianity and was appointed a full professor nine years later. Dr. McGinn was named to the Donnelley chair in 1992. He retired in 2003. The recent recipient of a Mellon Foundation Emeritus Grant, he also has held a Fulbright-Hays Research Fellowship, an American Association of Theological Schools research award, two research fellowships for work at the Institute for Advanced Study at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, a research fellowship at the Institute for Ecumenical and Culture Research at St. John's University, and a Lily Foundation Senior Research Fellowship. Dr. McGinn has delivered invited lectures at some one hundred colleges and universities in North America, Europe, and Israel. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the Medieval Academy of America. Past-president of the International Society for the Promotion of Eriugenean Studies, the American Society of Church History, and the American Catholic Historical Association, he is member of the board of The Eckhart Society. He served as editor-in-chief of the Paulist Press series Classics of Western Spirituality and currently serves as a member of the editorial boards of Cistercian Publications, *The Encyclopedia of World Spirituality*, *The Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, and *Spiritus*. The author of some 150 articles in scholarly journals, he has been the editor or co-editor of ten books, including two volumes of the works of the German Dominican theologian and mystic Meister Eckhart and (with John J. Collins and Stephen J. Stein) *The Continuum History of Apocalypticism* (2003). The most recent of his fifteen books are the third volume of a projected five-volume series on Christian mysticism in the West, *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism, 1200-1350* (1998), *The Doctors of the Church: Thirty-Three Men and*

Women who Shaped Christianity (1999), his highly-acclaimed *Meister Eckhart's Mystical Thought: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing* (2001), and (with his wife Patricia Ferris McGinn) *Early Christian Mystics: The Divine Vision of the Spiritual Masters*, an introductory guide to selected mystics, which was published by Crossroad in 2003. The fourth volume in series on Christian mysticism, *The Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany* (1300-1500), will be published by Crossroad-Herder later this year.

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A senior lecturer in mathematics at the University of Portsmouth, where his research is focused on problems in foundations of cosmology and quantum physics, **Alexei V. Nesteruk** has turned increasingly to writing about science from the perspective of his own Eastern Orthodox tradition. A native of Russia, he completed baccalaureate studies in physics and mathematics in St. Petersburg and received a master's of science degree with honors in physics from St. Petersburg State University and a Ph.D. in theoretical and mathematical physics from St. Petersburg State Technical University in 1983. For the next six years, he worked as a research scientist in the department for theoretical physics at S. I. Vavilov State Optical Institute and, during the latter part of that period, pursued graduate level studies in philosophy at St. Petersburg State University. After spending a year as a research fellow with the Group in General Relativity at the Free University of Brussels, he was appointed an assistant professor of mathematics at the University of Economics and Finance of St. Petersburg. In 1993, he undertook research on the philosophical and theological implications of an anthropological approach to the origins of the universe as a fellow in the College of Human and Social Sciences at St. Petersburg State Marine Technical University. Named a Royal Society Postdoctoral Fellow, he pursued research on gravitational entropy and quantum field theory at the Mathematical Institute at Oxford University. Dr. Nesteruk accepted his present position in 1994. He subsequently studied theology at the Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies at Cambridge University, and is currently a visiting lecturer there as well as teaching at Portsmouth. A corresponding member of the St. Petersburg Academy on the History of Science and Technology, he has received several awards from the John Templeton Foundation, including a Science and Religion Course Program grant. Dr. Nesteruk is the author of some eighty articles in mathematical physics, cosmology, philosophy of science, and science and theology. His book, *Light from the East: Theology, Science and the Eastern Orthodox Tradition*, which was published in by Augsburg Fortress in 2003, develops a neo-patristic synthesis of theology and science.



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John Stanley Rodwell is a professional ecologist and an Anglican priest in the diocese of Blackburn. For sixteen years, he served as coordinator the United Kingdom National Vegetation Classification Project, the first systematic and comprehensive inventory of British plant communities. He is an honorary canon of Blackburn Cathedral. A graduate of Leeds University, where he took first-class honors in botany, Dr. Rodwell earned his Ph.D. in ecology at Southampton University in 1974. He also studied at Cuddesdon Theological College in Oxford and received a post-graduate diploma in theology from Oxford University. He joined the Lancaster faculty as a research fellow in 1975. In 1991, he became the founding director of the university's Unit of Vegetation Science. Appointed a reader in vegetation science four years later, he was made professor of plant ecology in 1997. He also served as director of studies for Lancaster's master's program in environmental and ecological sciences. His research has been supported by numerous grants from British and European environmental and conservation organizations. A former chair of the Forest Commission Advisory Group on Conservation-related Research, Dr. Rodwell served for more than a decade as British Ecology Society representative on the Council of the National Trust. He has delivered invited lectures throughout the United Kingdom as well as in Europe and the United States. In addition to publishing articles in scientific journals and technical reports, he has contributed chapters to volumes of collected works, including *Faith in Science*, a publication of the Science and Spiritual Quest program coordinated by the Center for Theology and Natural Science in Berkeley. He is the editor of the five volume *British Plant Communities*, which was published between 1991 and 2000 by Cambridge University Press. Dr. Rodwell is presently preparing a collection of his sermons and other theological writings for publication under the title *The Tissue of His Kingdom*.



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Recently retired as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford University, **Keith Ward** is one of Britain's foremost writers on Christian belief and doctrine in the light of modern scientific discoveries and in the context of other faith traditions. He has explored the tensions between the classical tradition of natural theology, with its atemporal and self-sufficient God, and the Biblical idea of a creative and responsive God, critically examined recent secular theories of human nature that have led to what he perceives as a subtly misconceived attack on the idea of the soul, compared the place of revelation and concept of creation in the major world religions, and sketched a revised Christian vision that looks to a convergent global spirituality. Dr. Ward is currently serving as Gresham Professor of Divinity at Gresham College, London. A graduate of the University of Wales, where he took a first-class honors degree in 1962, he holds a B. Litt. from Oxford and an M.A. and doctorate in divinity from both Oxford and Cambridge universities. He has been a lecturer at the University of Glasgow, St. Andrews University, and King's College, London. Elected a fellow and named dean and director of studies in philosophy and in theology at Trinity Hall, Cambridge, in 1976, he was appointed F. D. Maurice Professor of Moral and Social Theology at the University of London in 1986 and subsequently professor of the history and philosophy of religion, a position he held for five years before returning to Oxford in 1991. He has been a visiting professor at Drake University and at the Claremont Graduate School and lectured in India and New Zealand, as well as throughout the United Kingdom. Ordained a priest in the Church of England in 1972, he was canon of Christ Church, Oxford, for twelve years and currently serves as a member of the council of the Institute of Philosophy, the board of governors of the Oxford Centre for Vaishnava and Hindu Studies, and the board of advisors of the John Templeton Foundation. Dr. Ward is a fellow of the British Academy. Formerly co-editor of *Religious Studies*, he is the author of numerous articles and twenty-two books on theology and philosophy, including a four-volume comparative theology. The final volume, *Religion and Community*, was published by Clarendon Press in 2000.

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Paul Williams is professor of Indian and Tibetan philosophy and founding co-director of the Centre for Buddhist Studies at the University of Bristol. His work has focused on Madhyamaka Buddhist philosophy, a school of Buddhism that developed in India two millennia ago and has had wide influence on Buddhist thought throughout India, Tibet, and East Asia. He also has written on Western philosophical and mystical theology. A graduate of the University of Sussex, where he took first-class honors in philosophy and religion, Dr. Williams earned his D.Phil. in Buddhist philosophy from Oxford University in 1978. He had begun his teaching career as a temporary lecturer in Indian civilization and religion at the University of Edinburgh three years earlier. He went on to The Open University as a lecturer in religious studies, and, in 1980, he joined the Bristol faculty as a lecturer in Indo-Tibetan studies. He became a reader in 1992 and was named to his present chair in 1998. He has been the Numata Visiting Professor of Buddhist Studies at the University of Calgary and lectured widely. A fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society, Dr. Williams has been a long time member of the Shap Working Party on World Religions in Education, which advises on school religious curricula in Britain, and formerly served as its chair. He also has been president of the UK Association of Buddhist Studies and European secretary of the International Association of Buddhist Studies. A member of the editorial boards of *Seria Buddhica Britannica*, the *Buddhist Studies Review*, the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, and the *Journal of Contemporary Buddhist Studies*, he was formerly a guest editor of a special issue of *The Tibetan Journal* and joint editor of *World Religions in Education*. He currently serves as advisory editor for a series on Buddhist thought for Curzon Press. In addition to articles in academic journals and chapters in volumes of collected works, Dr. Williams is the co-author of two books, including, most recently, (with Anthony Tribe) *Buddhist Thought: A Complete Introduction to the Indian Tradition* (2000), sole editor of the eight-volume series for Routledge *Critical Concepts in Religious Studies: Buddhism*, and the author of five books: *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations* (1989), which has been reprinted eleven times and translated into Italian and Korean; *A Tibetan Madhyamaka Defence of Reflexive Nature of Awareness* (1996); *Altruism and Reality: Studies in the Philosophy of Bodhicaryavatara* (1998); and *The Unexpected Way: On Converting from Buddhism*

to Catholicism (2001). His most recent book, *Songs of Love, Poems of Sadness: The Erotic Verse of the Sixth Dalai Lama*, a translation from the Tibetan with an introductory essay, was published last year by I.B. Tauris.

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Enthroned two years ago as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury in a line that stretches back to St. Augustine in 596, **Rowan Williams** is a theologian and a poet. He is a native of the Swansea Valley in Wales and the first Anglican leader from outside of England since the Anglican break with Rome in the sixteenth century. Deeply influenced by the rich spiritual tradition of Christianity, he also speaks forcefully on social and political issues of his time, particularly the impact of globalization, international environmental treaties, and continuing conflict in the Middle East. Archbishop Williams rigorously quarries tradition to address "moments of significant newness" in the history of the church. He has, in turn, challenged Anglican clergy and scholars to find ways of re-igniting the Christian imagination in secularized Britain. The future archbishop was educated at Dynevor Secondary School in Swansea and won a scholarship to Christ's College, Cambridge, where he took first-class honors in theology and studied philosophy of religion with Donald MacKinnon, the Norris-Hulse Professor of Divinity. Initially, at Christ Church College, Oxford, and then at Wadham College, Oxford, he went on to study Russian religious thought and earned a D.Phil. in theology in 1975. His dissertation was on the theology of Vladimir Nikolaevich Lossky, whose best known work on the mystical theology of the Eastern church deals with apophaticism described by the future archbishop as "the primordial theological moment, the moment of stripping and renunciation." During his student years, Archbishop Williams began visiting the Quarr Abbey, the Roman Catholic Benedictine monastery on the Isle of Wight, where the prior, Dom Joseph Warrilow, became a major mentor. He was appointed a lecture in theology at the College of the Resurrection in Mirfield in West Yorkshire after taking his doctorate and ordained a priest in the Church of Wales in 1978. A year earlier, he had been appointed a tutor at Westcott House, Cambridge, and in 1980, he was named a lecturer in divinity at Cambridge. Archbishop Williams became dean and chaplain of Clare College, Cambridge, four years later, and, in 1986, he accepted the Lady Margaret Professorship of Divinity at Oxford. The university granted him the senior doctor of divinity degree in 1989, and he was elected a fellow of the British Academy the next year. He was enthroned as Bishop of Monmouth in 1992 and eight years later as Archbishop of Wales. He has served for five years as president of the Bevan

Foundation, a think tank devoted to coordinating community regeneration in Wales. As a scholar, Archbishop Williams's principle academic focus has been patristics, and an especially important contribution to the field was his study of a fourth century heretic condemned at the Council of Nicea, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (1987 and 2001). His first book, however, was *The Wound of Knowledge: Spirituality from the New Testament to St. John of the Cross* (1979). It was followed by *Resurrection: Interpreting the Easter Gospel* (1982), *The Truce of God* (1983), which combines the case for nuclear disarmament with a study of modern examples of spiritual sickness, *Teresa of Avila* (1991), and *Open to Judgement* (1994, 1996, 2001, and 2002), a collection of sermons and other addresses. Among his more recent works are *Christ on Trail* (2000), a study of how each of the four Gospel writers presents the arraignment of Jesus, *Lost Icons: Reflections on Cultural Bereavement* (2000, 2001, and 2002), a lament over the corruption of values in contemporary society, *On Christian Theology* (2000), a collection of essays on fundamental themes, *Ponder These Things: Praying with Icons of the Virgin* (2002), and *Writing in the Dust* (2002), reflections on September 11, 2001 based on his own experiences 200 yards away in Wall Street the day that two hijacked passenger jets flew into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. His first two collections of poetry, *After Silent Centuries* (1994) and *Remembering Jerusalem* (2001), were reissued with new material in 2002 by Perpetua Press as *The Poems of Rowan Williams*.