

The Forum on Religion and Ecology Newsletter
9.7 (July 2015)

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1. Overview, by Elizabeth McAnally

Greetings,

Welcome to the July 2015 issue of the newsletter for the Forum on Religion and Ecology. We have much to share with you this month with regards to developments in the field of Religion and Ecology, including videos, publications, events, calls for papers, and more.

On June 18, the Vatican officially released the Papal encyclical on the environment: “Praised Be: On the Care of Our Common Home” (*Laudato Si’*). This is a crucial moment in the religion and ecology movement, as this is the first encyclical in the history of the Church to address environmental concerns. In the encyclical, Pope Francis highlighted issues of “integral ecology,” namely concerns for people and the planet. He addressed both the degradation of the environment and the challenge of climate change along with how this is impacting the poor and most vulnerable. Social and economic justice is an important theme along with care for Earth and for present and future generations. This teaching document could

serve as a motivating force for the over one billion Catholics of the world and many other people of spiritual and environmental conviction. There are a number of resources on the Forum site (fore.yale.edu) to provide you more information on the encyclical, including “Frequently Asked Questions on the Papal Encyclical,” a video recording and transcript of the Yale panel discussion entitled “Pope Francis and the Environment: Why His New Climate Encyclical Matters,” related news articles, and more.

We are happy to let you know about two important meetings that Mary Evelyn Tucker participated in this past month. The Earth Charter + 15 Celebration was held in Doorn, the Netherlands on June 28-29 and focused on the theme “One Earth Community, One Common Destiny.” *Journey of the Universe* was screened at the celebration. For more, visit: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/past-events/2015/7/28/film-screening-doorn-the-netherlands-june-29-2015.html>

Also, “Ecological Civilization & Environmental Reporting International Conference” was held in Beijing, China on June 16. This conference was organized by the School of Journalism at Communication University of China, Pulitzer Center, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, and the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale. See the conference agenda and the opening comments by Mary Evelyn Tucker: <http://fore.yale.edu/calendar/item/ecological-civilization-conference/>

We are excited that two of Thomas Berry’s publications—*The Dream of the Earth* and *Evening Thoughts*—have been reprinted by Counterpoint Press. For more, see below or visit: <http://counterpointpress.com/>

The Forum on Religion and Ecology now has a Facebook page! Please show your support by “liking” us and sharing our page with your Facebook friends. Visit the new page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Forum-on-Religion-and-Ecology-at-Yale/807941202606307>

Journey of the Universe also has a Facebook page that we invite you to visit: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Journey-of-the-Universe/179213572122084?fref=nf> *Journey of the Universe Conversations* is available on Vimeo for streaming and downloading. You can access the individual episodes or the complete collection at <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/jotuconversations> For a list of stores where the *Journey* project is available, visit: <http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/buy/>

We hope this newsletter supports your own work and helps you further your own engagements with the field of Religion and Ecology.

Warm wishes,
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2. New Publications

Sierra Club is no longer publishing books, and thus Thomas Berry's two Sierra Club books will be reissued by Counterpoint Press. This press, now based in Berkeley, publishes Wendell Berry, Gary Snyder, Wes Jackson, and many others noted in the environmental world.

Reprint:

The Dream of the Earth

By Thomas Berry

Foreword by Brian Swimme

New Preface by Terry Tempest Williams

Counterpoint Press, 2015

(First published by Sierra Club Books, 1988)

<http://counterpointpress.com/products/the-dream-of-the-earth/>

This landmark work has established itself as a foundational volume in the ecological canon. In it, noted cultural historian Thomas Berry provides nothing less than a new intellectual-ethical framework for the human community by positing planetary well-being as the measure of all human activity. Drawing on the wisdom of Western philosophy, Asian thought, and Native American traditions, as well as contemporary physics and evolutionary biology, Berry offers a new perspective that recasts our understanding of science, technology, politics, religion, ecology, and education. He shows us why it is important for us to respond to the Earth's need for planetary renewal, and what we must do to break free of the "technological trance" that drives a misguided dream of progress. Only then, he suggests, can we foster mutually enhancing human-Earth relationships that can heal our traumatized global biosystem.

Reprint:

Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community

By Thomas Berry

Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker

Counterpoint Press, 2015

(First published by Sierra Club Books, 2006)

<http://counterpointpress.com/products/evening-thoughts/>

Among the contemporary voices for the Earth, none resonates like that of noted cultural historian Thomas Berry. His teaching and writings have inspired a generation's thinking about humankind's place in the Earth Community and the universe, engendering widespread critical acclaim and a documentary film on his life and work. This new collection of essays, from various years and occasions, expands and deepens ideas articulated in his earlier writings and also breaks new ground. Berry opens our eyes to the full dimensions of the ecological crisis,

framing it as a crisis of spiritual vision. Applying his formidable erudition in cultural history, science, and comparative religions, he forges a compelling narrative of creation and communion that reconciles modern evolutionary thinking and traditional religious insights concerning our integral role in Earth's society. While sounding an urgent alarm at our current dilemma, Berry inspires us to reclaim our role as the consciousness of the universe and thereby begin to create a true partnership with the Earth Community. With *Evening Thoughts*, this wise elder has lit another beacon to lead us home.

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“Democratic Equality, Economic Inequality, and the Earth Charter”

By Steven C. Rockefeller

Preface by Leonardo Boff

Earth Charter International, 2015

Read this essay for free:

<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/articles/1150/1/Launch-of-new-publication---Democratic-Equality-Economic-Inequality-and-the-Earth-Charter/Page1.html>

In this essay, Steven Rockefeller explores the origin and meaning of the principle of equality, considers the economic implications of the ideal, and provides a brief historical overview of liberal democracy and economic inequality since the American and French revolutions. The essay then highlights the principles in the Earth Charter that have been designed to frame the intensifying debate on these critical issues and guide change. It concludes with reflections on equality and sustainability as two transformative ideals that have become interrelated and are the principal keys to a promising future. It is organized around the following themes: The Modern Democratic Concept of Equality; Economic Inequality; The Earth Charter and the Principle of Equality; The Earth Charter and Economic Inequality; A World Founded on Visions of Equality and Sustainability.

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Mindscaping the Landscape of Tibet: Place, Memorability, Ecoaesthetics

By Dan Smyer Yü

De Gruyter, 2015

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/210950>

Based on the author's cross-regional fieldwork, archival findings, and critical reading of memoirs and creative works of Tibetans and Chinese, this book recounts how the potency of Tibet manifests itself in modern material culture concerning Tibet, which is interwoven with state ideology, politics of identity, imagination, nostalgia, forgetting, remembering, and earth-inspired transcendence. The physical place of Tibet is the antecedent point of contact for subsequent spiritual imaginations, acts of destruction and reconstruction, collective nostalgia, and delayed aesthetic and environmental awareness shown in the eco-religious acts of native Tibetans, Communist radical utopianism, former military officers' recollections, Tibetan and Chinese artwork, and touristic consumption of the Tibetan landscape. By drawing connections between differences, dichotomies, and oppositions, this book explores the interiors of the diverse

agentive modes of imaginations from which Tibet is imagined in China. On the theoretical front, this book attempts to bring forth a set of fresh perspectives on how a culturally and religiously specific landscape is antecedent to simultaneous processes of place-making, identity-making, and the bonding between place and people.

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“Catholic Moral Traditions and Energy Ethics of the Twenty-First Century”

By Erin Lothes Biviano, David Cloutier, Elaine Padilla, Christiana Z. Peppard, and Jame Schaefer

Journal of Moral Theology, Vol. 5, No. 2 (June 2016): 1-36.

http://msmary.edu/College_of_liberal_arts/departments-of-theology/jmt-files/Energy%20Ethics.pdf

The institutional Catholic Church has engaged energy issues in multiple documents, ranging from papal encyclicals to the U.S. Bishops’ 1981 statement on energy. So too have discussions of fossil fuels, climate change, and ethics occurred within broader scholarly discourses of Catholic theology and ethics. Catholic organizations dedicated to the global common good and to countering the effects of climate change have proliferated in the U.S. and worldwide. This essay builds upon the growing ecclesial, scholarly, and practical attention to these issues by revisiting the U.S. Bishops’ 1981 statement on energy, “Reflections on the Energy Crisis,” in recognition that the question of what powers societies in the twenty-first century is not merely an issue of technology or economics: It is also an issue of energy ethics. A Catholic energy ethics requires attention to current energy realities with scientific and technological precision, and can offer unique clarity about the specifically moral character of the problem.

Read a review of this essay by Bill Patenaude:

<http://catholicology.net/blog/ethics-energy>

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Kamandalu: The Seven Sacred Rivers of Hinduism

By Shrikala Warriar

Mayur University London, 2014

<https://books.google.co.in/books?id=qNhiCAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>

Hindu theology views rivers as goddesses who confer blessings and spiritual purification. The release of celestial waters from the grip of "Vritra", the demon dragon, to flow down from the heavens and relieve drought on earth is a recurring theme in Hindu mythology. The book draws extensively on Hindu sacred texts to present the mythological stories relating to the seven sacred rivers, namely, Ganga, Yamuna, Sarasvati, Sindhu, Narmada, Godavari and Kaveri, and the practices connected with river goddess worship. The shared concerns of sacred and secular ecology in modern India are also discussed. A comprehensive reference list and detailed end-notes and glossary are provided which should make this a useful reference text for research scholars and academics. The book is also extremely reader-friendly with 20 colour illustrations

and should appeal to a wide and varied audience.

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The Vandana Shiva Reader

By Vandana Shiva

Kentucky Press, 2015

http://kentuckypress.com/live/title_detail.php?titleid=2651#.VWEUmk9Viko

Motivated by agricultural devastation in her home country of India, Vandana Shiva became one of the world's most influential and highly acclaimed environmental and antiglobalization activists. Her groundbreaking research has exposed the destructive effects of monocultures and commercial agriculture and revealed the links between ecology, gender, and poverty. In *The Vandana Shiva Reader*, Shiva assembles her most influential writings, combining trenchant critiques of the corporate monopolization of agriculture with a powerful defense of biodiversity and food democracy. Containing up-to-date data and a foreword by Wendell Berry, this essential collection demonstrates the full range of Shiva's research and activism, from her condemnation of commercial seed technology, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and the international agriculture industry's dependence on fossil fuels, to her tireless documentation of the extensive human costs of ecological deterioration. This important volume illuminates Shiva's profound understanding of both the perils and potential of our interconnected world and calls on citizens of all nations to renew their commitment to love and care for soil, seeds, and people.

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Kabbalah and Ecology: God's Image in the More-Than-Human World

By David Mevorach Seidenberg

Cambridge University Press, 2015

<http://www.cambridge.org/us/academic/subjects/religion/judaism/kabbalah-and-ecology-gods-image-more-human-world?format=HB>

Kabbalah and Ecology is a groundbreaking book that resets the conversation about ecology and the Abrahamic traditions. David Mevorach Seidenberg challenges the anthropocentric reading of the Torah, showing that a radically different orientation to the more-than-human world of nature is not only possible, but that it also leads to a more accurate interpretation of scripture, rabbinic texts, Maimonides, and Kabbalah. Deeply grounded in traditional texts and fluent with the physical sciences, this book proposes not only a new understanding of God's image but also a new direction to restore religion – to its senses and to a more alive relationship with the more than human, with nature and with divinity.

3. Islamic Climate Declaration – Call for Consultation

The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) has been working on a draft Islamic Declaration on Climate Change since early this year which will be launched in Istanbul on August 17-18.

You can read the draft here:

<http://us11.campaign-archive1.com/?u=9e7db8d664e580892adb797bf&id=a0d111d907&e=cf8b97f11d>

We have till August 10 to put together a declaration which will be launched at the symposium in Istanbul seven days later. It will be good to have your thoughts and comments on this draft, and they can be sent directly to islam.climatedeclaration@ifees.org.uk

4. Encyclical Climate Action Kit

Putting the encyclical into action can be simple. Catholic Climate Covenant and Interfaith Power & Light have teamed up to bring you Pope Francis' encyclical Climate Action Kit. You'll receive a step-by-step guide to understand and apply the encyclical, shrink your carbon footprint, and advocate for policy change. The encyclical climate action toolkit is free of charge. You can request the toolkit here:

http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/50836/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=15418

5. *Renewal* – an Important Film to Inspire Change

In the light of Pope Francis's encyclical, the challenge of turning his words into transformative action is apparent. People need concrete examples -- dynamic stories -- to inspire the conversion process that Francis suggests is essential to protect the earth and one another. *Renewal* is a groundbreaking film about America's growing religious-environmental movement. It is a powerful resource for personal change and environmental action. Shot across the nation, the 90-minute documentary is comprised of 8 stories about grassroots environmental activists: ordinary people who have been inspired by their diverse faith beliefs to care for the earth.

<http://www.renewalproject.net>

6. Feast of St. Francis

Registration for the Catholic Climate Covenant's Feast of St. Francis event on October 4 is now open. The Feast of St. Francis celebrates the patron saint of those who promote ecology. It's an opportunity to reflect on how and why we care for creation. This year, our Feast of St. Francis theme is "Caring for Our Common Home." At our Feast event, which is hosted by local leaders across the country, you'll dig deep into Pope Francis's encyclical. You'll connect Pope Francis's teaching to our everyday lives and take action on our faith. Our event package contains online components to engage your community. You'll receive resources before, during, and after the event, so your event and participants must register with an email address.

Register to host an event in your community:

http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/act/feast_of_stfrancis

7. “Cultivating and Caring for Creation” (12 new online videos and study guides)

“Cultivating and caring for creation is God’s indication given to each one of us not only at the beginning of history; it is part of His project; it means nurturing the world with responsibility and transforming it into a garden, a habitable place for everyone.” (Pope Francis, World Earth Day, 2013)

Produced by greenspirttv.com (GSTV), a participant in romancatholicv.com (RCTV), “Cultivating and Caring for Creation” is narrated by Bishop Donald Bolen, chair of Justice and Peace, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) and includes content from several Canadian Catholic eco-justice leaders.

See the press release:

http://fore.yale.edu/files/Cultivating_and_Caring_for_Creation.pdf

8. Events

“Global Ethics and Politics: In Relation to Ecological Philosophy and Other Crucial Issues of Our Global Era”

27th International Conference of Philosophy
International Association of Greek Philosophy (IAGP)
Athens, Greece
July 11-16, 2015

<http://www.hri.org/iagp/conf27/conf27a.pdf>

<http://www.hri.org/iagp/>

“Transforming the Human in Christ: the Wisdom of Teilhard, Berry and Merton”

San Alfonso Pastoral Institute
With Ilia Delio, Kathleen Deignan, and Daniel Horan
Long Branch, NJ, USA
July 12-17, 2015

<http://www.sanalfonso retreats.org/>

“Chinese Philosophy in the Contemporary World”

19th International Conference of the International Society for Chinese Philosophy (ISCP)
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Mary Evelyn Tucker will be speaking on "The Earth Charter and Contributions of Confucian Values Toward a Sustainable Future."
July 21-24, 2015

www.phil.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/iscp/en/index.php

“Environmental Ethics between Action and Reflection”
Conference of the International Society for Environmental Ethics
Christian Albrechts Universität Kiel, Germany
July 23-25, 2015
<http://www.isee2015.uni-kiel.de/iseehalt/Conference-General.php>

“Contemplative Environmental Studies: Pedagogy for Self and Planet”
Summer Workshop 2015
Lama Foundation, San Cristobal, New Mexico, USA
July 26 – August 1, 2015
<http://www.american.edu/sis/gep/Contemplative-Environmental-Studies-Workshop.cfm>

“Exploring the Sacred Universe Earth Literacy Program”
Oblate Ecological Initiative, Godfrey, Illinois, USA
August 4-11, 2015
<http://www.lavistaec.org/pdf/2015-Earth-Literacy-Brochure.pdf>

“Unsettling Science and Religion: Contributions and Questions from Queer Studies”
2015 Institute on Religion in an Age of Science (IRAS) conference
Star Island, NH, USA
August 8-15, 2015
<http://www.iras.org/2015-conference.html>

“Ecological Science at the Frontier: Celebrating ESA’s Centennial”
Ecological Society of America (ESA) 100th Annual Meeting
Mary Evelyn Tucker will be giving a presentation entitled “Global perspectives on the vital relationship between ecology and religion” in the session on “Ecologists and Faith & Justice Communities: A Journey from Antagonism to Earth Stewardship Partnerships for the Next Century.”
<http://esa.org/baltimore/sessions/organized-oral-sessions/list/>
Baltimore Convention Center, MD, USA
August 9-14, 2015
<http://esa.org/baltimore/>

“Retreat into the Universe Story”
What is Earth Asking?
Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat, Wheatland, IA, USA
August 9-15, 2015
<http://fore.yale.edu/calendar/item/retreat-into-the-universe-story1/>

“Care for Creation: Scripture, Science, and Ethics”
Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, IL, USA
September 8 - December 1, 2015
http://www.ctu.edu/lecturefall_2015

“EcoSattva Training”

Online, interactive training on Buddhist responses to climate change

Featuring Joanna Macy, rev. angel Kyodo Williams, and others

September 13 - November 15, 2015

<http://www.oneearthsangha.org/programs/ecosattva-training/>

“A Cosmology of Connection: Worldview, Ecology, Justice, and Creativity”

With Drew Dellinger

Schumacher College, The Old Postern, Dartington, Totnes, Devon, UK

September 21-25, 2015

<https://www.schumachercollege.org.uk/courses/short-courses/cosmology-connection>

“Moral March for Climate Justice”

Washington, DC, USA

September 24, 2015

<http://www.moralactiononclimate.org/>

For more events, visit: <http://fore.yale.edu/calendar/>

9. Call for Papers

“The Spirit of Sustainable Agriculture”

Harvard Divinity School, Cambridge, MA, USA

March 31 - April 1, 2016

Submission Deadline: October 1, 2015

http://fore.yale.edu/files/Spirit_of_Sustainable_Agriculture.pdf

10. Postdoctoral Opportunities at the Center for Theology, Science and Human Flourishing

The University of Notre Dame has just established a new Center for Theology, Science and Human Flourishing, directed by Professor Celia Deane-Drummond. Following receipt of a generous grant from the Templeton Religion Trust for a multidisciplinary project led by Celia Deane-Drummond, Darcia Narvaez and Tom Stapleford, entitled 'Developing Virtues in the Practice of Science' we are looking for five three-year postdoctoral fellows across the disciplines of psychology, history and philosophy of science, theology, ethnography. Part of the project will be based at the University of Durham (UK). Start date for all these positions is January 2016; and the closing date for receipt of applications is mid August or until the position can be filled.

<http://postdocs.nd.edu/open-positions/>

11. Video of Thomas Berry at Schumacher College

The Forum on Religion and Ecology is posting videos and audio recordings of Thomas Berry's talks on the Thomas Berry Foundation website. The videos are from the library of Lou Niznik thanks to the generous gift of Jane Blewett. We thank Don Smith and Wes Pascoe for editing them and making them available online. We are also very grateful to Don for creating the summary and discussion questions for the videos.

Watch these videos:

<http://thomasberry.org/Biography/videos.html>

This month we would like to share with you a video of Thomas Berry at Schumacher College. In this video, Thomas outlines the need for the humans as a species to re-imagine and re-invent themselves in light of the contemporary devastating impact which we are having on the health and vibrancy of the living systems of planet Earth.

Watch this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_pMGOsDBjA

For a summary of the video and discussion questions, visit:

http://www.thomasberry.org/Biography/Thomas_Berry_at_Schumacher_College.pdf

12. *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology*

Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology has as its focus the relationships between religion, culture and ecology world-wide. Articles discuss major world religious traditions, such as Islam, Buddhism or Christianity; the traditions of indigenous peoples; new religious movements; and philosophical belief systems, such as pantheism, nature spiritualities, and other religious and cultural worldviews in relation to the cultural and ecological systems. Focusing on a range of disciplinary areas including Anthropology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Sociology and Theology, the journal also presents special issues that center around one theme.

For more information, visit: brill.com/wo

For the online edition, visit: <http://booksandjournals.brillonline.com/content/journals/15685357>

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- Islamic Law and the Environment in Indonesia (Anna M. Gade)
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<http://fore.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/>

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