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## Web Resources:

[www.thecsd.com](http://www.thecsd.com)

<a href="http://www.americamagazine.org">www.americamagazine.org</a>	<a href="http://www.innerexplorations.com">www.innerexplorations.com</a>
<a href="http://www.beliefnet.com">www.beliefnet.com</a>	<a href="http://www.ncronline.org">www.ncronline.org</a>
<a href="http://www.cacradicalgrace.org">www.cacradicalgrace.org</a>	<a href="http://www.op.org/ravensbread">www.op.org/ravensbread</a>
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<a href="http://www.contemplativerudder.com">www.contemplativerudder.com</a>	<a href="http://www.shalomplace.com">www.shalomplace.com</a>
<a href="http://www.desalesresource.org">www.desalesresource.org</a>	<a href="http://www.sojo.net">www.sojo.net</a>
<a href="http://www.fromholyground.org">www.fromholyground.org</a>	<a href="http://www.speakingoffaith.org">www.speakingoffaith.org</a>
<a href="http://www.gratefulness.org">www.gratefulness.org</a>	<a href="http://www.spiritualityhealth.com">www.spiritualityhealth.com</a>
<a href="http://www.heartlandspirituality.org">www.heartlandspirituality.org</a>	<a href="http://www.tenemos.org">www.tenemos.org</a>
<a href="http://www.henrinouwen.org">www.henrinouwen.org</a>	<a href="http://www.theark1.com">www.theark1.com</a>

## Recommended Reading:

Christine Hilliard, CSJ  
God Loved Us First: The Challenge of  
Accepting Unconditional Love  
By Antony F. Campbell, SJ

The Life of St. Paul  
By Lawrence Boadt, CSP

The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and  
Challenge in Biblical Faith  
By Walter Brueggemann

David Hoover  
Living with Wisdom: A Life of Thomas  
Merton  
By Jim Forest

Common Sense Spirituality: The Essential  
Wisdom of David Steindl-Rast  
By David Steindl-Rast

Simple Graces: Poems for Meditation and  
Prayer  
ed. Gretchen L. Schwenker

MaryAnne Huepper, CSJ  
No god but God  
By Reza Aslan

Dan Miller  
Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories That Heal  
By Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.

The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring  
Desert and Mountain Spirituality  
By Belden Lane

Healing Through the Dark Emotions: The  
Wisdom of Grief, Fear, and Despair  
By Miriam Greenspan

JoAnn Tabor, CSJ  
Seven Sacred Pauses  
By Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB

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## About this issue...

*Illuminate's purpose is to bring to light the fullness of the Center's ministry in a clear and quick manner, while also providing items for personal enlightenment. We hope you enjoy these vignettes that look behind the scenes and perhaps brighten your life. Comments and suggestions may be sent to [rcogswell@csjorange.org](mailto:rcogswell@csjorange.org).*

## Waking Up From A Dream

*continued from inside page*

prophetic dimensions of our calling. In a way, all we at the Center have to give is our prophetic reconciling vision and presence for the life of the world lived out through our share in the Vision, Mission and Promises of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

We firmly believe that faith impinges on lifestyle. And we invite you to join us as we all journey together seeking to recover a sense of the sacredness of all life and all creation. May God be with us as we attempt to move beyond the conventional and conformist dimensions of our lives into new ways of living which are more expansive, inclusive, and reconciling of the many divisions in our lives and world. May we become people in whom God's Love finds no obstacle to its manifestation in the world as we wake up from our "dream of separateness."

We pray that the Spirit of Jesus be with us in our yearning and our efforts to be instruments of the Great Love of God, which is weaving Love's fabric in the midst of this broken world of ours which we love so much. ✨

# illuminate

to bring to light ✨ to make clear

Official Newsletter of the Center for Spiritual Development

2008

## Dispatch from the Planet Earth

*by Julie Mussché, MA*

During a beautiful October weekend in San Rafael California, over 13,000 people, including CSD staff, converged with the common purpose of preserving the environmental integrity of our home the Earth. In the context of a volatile election year, the cascading economic crisis, and the escalating peril to our planet, the collective mood of the 19th annual Bioneers Conference was poignant, intense and hopeful. The following reflections emerged from the Conference.

While the overarching theme of the Conference was the preservation and vitality of the environment, the topics of the occasion ranged from hard science to eco-justice and spirituality. They included the healing properties of fungi, implementing green business models, biomimicry, youth and community action, spirituality and the arts. The prevailing voice that echoed from these sessions was a loud, "SOS, SOS, we are rapidly sinking." Here are some highlights:

- We are on the brink of ecological collapse and have about seven years to engage action or the environmental changes will be irreversible.
- There has been a 30-50% loss of biological diversity globally through overdevelopment or destruction of natural environments, pollution, introducing invasive species and over population. The current rate of loss is greater than any time in history by hundreds of times.

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### The New Green Christianity: Why Faith Is Vital to Saving the Earth January 16-17, 2009

*Dr. Mark Wallace, Associate Professor of Religion at Swarthmore College, is recognized as a leading voice in the area of green Christianity. An acclaimed author on the topic of religion and ecology, Dr. Wallace also helps direct the Swarthmore College Campus Sustainability Project. He is the author of Finding God in the Singing River: Christianity, Nature, Spirit. Inspired by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange's Promise to Promote Ecological Justice, the Center for Spiritual Development will be hosting a two-day program presented by Dr. Wallace. He will guide participants through the many facets of green Christianity, including healthy religious practice in the context of global warming, the natural world as holy ground in the life of Jesus, and the inspiring restorative efforts of religious communities to implement green initiatives.*

## A Persistent Peace

*Welcoming Author John Dear, SJ to CSD*

On a Friday night at the end of September 2008, CSD welcomed Peace Activist Father John Dear, SJ who was beginning a tour of his latest book, *A Persistent Peace: One Man's Struggle for a Nonviolent World*. David and Sharon Hoover (right), who have led several book studies on Father John's works at CSD, introduced him to a crowd of about 75 people. Father John spoke of his conversion and personal experiences of peace activism, the subject of his latest written endeavor.

He fielded questions from the enthralled audience and later signed books for the guests, including Sister Ellen Jordan, CSJ (left). This is Father John's second visit to CSD and we look forward to more visits from him in the future. ✨





Dear Friends of the Center,

I could not resist beginning this letter with the words of Charles Dickens from *A Tale of Two Cities*: *It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair....* Within ourselves individually and in the world collectively we experience these opposites. The instability of our economy, the cost of war, and the uncertainty of the future make these words particularly poignant and deeply relevant. But there is good news! We can make choices that help us to navigate through the challenges. David's article unfolds for us how the charism of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, the promises, and ministries – particularly the Center for Spiritual Development – provide an antidote. More good news! Your participation in and contributions to the Center's programs help keep us all engaged in building the *kindom*, as well as the kingdom, of God. With God's grace, together we make it possible to move from despair to hope, Darkness to Light.

For your generosity, we at the Center are deeply grateful. Because this work is one in progress, we continue to rely on your support. Your gifts have provided scholarships, enhanced the beauty of the Center, and contributed to the development of our programs.

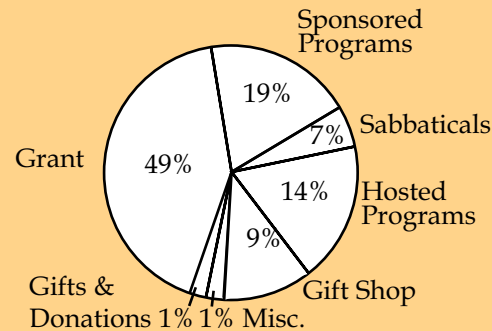
May God's deepest Peace be with you and with all those with whom you travel on life's journey.

Sister MaryAnne Huepper, CSJ  
Executive Director

## Stewardship July 2007-June 2008

The Center for Spiritual Development's 2007-2008 actual expenses and income was \$1,132,448. Greatly appreciated is the generosity of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, who provided a grant of \$554,771 through their Ministry Fund. A breakdown of income sources is shown below.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange and the CSD Staff are grateful to all who support the CSD and share in its ministry. In an effort to enable as many persons as possible to participate, CSD remains committed to affordable programming.



By the numbers...	2005-'06	2006-'07	2007-'08
Sponsored Programs	108	136	98
Attendance (Sponsored)	3303	2839	3732
Spiritual Direction	82	88	95
Speakers' Bureau	72	45	42
Hosted Groups	100	83	74
Attendance (Hosted)	1686	1520	1535
Private Retreatants	80	91	76

## Waking Up From A Dream Of Separateness: There Are No Strangers

by David Hoover, MA

The famous monk Thomas Merton once had a powerful spiritual experience which he described as "waking up from a dream of separateness." In this waking up he came to realize that "there are no strangers." The dream he woke up from is the dream-- the illusion--which sees our lives and communities as strangers separated and cut off from each other. As if we were "branches cut off from the vine." When we imagine ourselves to be "cut off" and disconnected from the vine of shared life and love with God and with each other, Jesus suggests that we can "whither."

In each of our lives, communities, and ministries, we too are invited to "wake up" from the illusion that we can be autonomously real apart from each other, apart from God, apart from Love. This call to wake up from the illusion of separateness and become a reconciled and reconciling people of unity is reflected in the charism of the *Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange*. Our charism invites us to seek to enter into living lives and serving in ministries which foster the "union with God and the dear neighbor." We at the Center for Spiritual Development are attempting to play our part in this "waking up" and entering into the ministry of union and reconciliation with God and all people--because "there are no strangers."

As guidelines for this on-going journey into waking up to the great Love of God and our neighbor--and the ministry which flows from it--we are attempting to live in fidelity to the following three promises: 1.) becoming people of *unity and reconciliation* who yearn to embrace the whole world and all its peoples with the healing power of God's Love. 2.) standing with people who are *poor and oppressed*. 3.) *promoting ecological justice* by living in harmony with God--the Source of all life and love and being--and attempting to live in right relationship with all creation, thereby promoting equitable access to Earth's resources.

In our struggle to live in fidelity to our charism and promises, we at the Center are involved in a number of ministries either through our extensive programming or through individual staff participation in other CSJ ministries. Some examples of our ministries include:

- One-on-one *spiritual direction* as well as *formation programming* for spiritual directors such as our three year ecumenical program *The Art of Spiritual Direction (offered in conjunction with LMU)*, and an intensive summer formation program *Source at The Center*, drawing students from around the country.
- We offer many spiritual growth opportunities through our extensive catalogue of retreats and workshops on a great variety of relevant topics as well as for many years offering two, month-long Sabbatical programs each year.
- We have attempted to support opportunities for spiritual growth and practice including *Taize*, centering prayer, Zen meditation, and substantial programming on prayer, adult faith formation, classic spiritual figures (such as Teresa of Avila and Meister Eckhart), the *Human and Holy* program in spiritual formation, scripture studies, speaker's bureau outreach to many churches and groups, and the Arts.
- Living in a world that is in peril at many levels, we seek to offer and support ministries related to justice issues including supporting the Bethany ministries to homeless women, the Justice office programming such as the monthly justice themed film series, the Koinonia community, and other programming in development.
- We strive to offer ecumenically sensitive programming and foster inter-religious understanding.
- Through scholarships, we make programming available to people with a narrow range of financial capability.

As we prayerfully wake up to the ways we humans have been suffering from a misperception of our real place in the universe, we are attempting to enter into the

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## Bioneers Dispatch

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- The pace of destruction is outpacing our response and the need for substantial change is now. As put by one presenter at the Conference, "we need to get as busy 'as a cat in a roomful of rocking chairs.'"
- In 1950, there were 2.5 billion people in the world and now there are 6 billion and the pressing problem of providing basic resources such as food and fresh water is growing exponentially. Nearly 1 billion people on the planet do not consume enough food to meet their basic energy needs.
- Fresh sources of water have now joined the endangered list. This loss will stretch the social fabric and in some cases is projected to escalate into war. Currently, 1 billion people are without fresh water. By 2100, 3.2 billion are predicted to be impacted and the lack of fresh water is likewise predicted to exceed conflict as the primary cause for refugees.
- The dwindling level of fresh water is not just a global issue, but one that's right in our backyard. Scientists consider the southwest portion of the U.S. to be experiencing a 90 year mega-drought and our watersheds are diminishing and becoming more polluted.

Still, there were a number of hopeful moments from the Conference that stand out. First and foremost, our future, the youth of today, are actively engaged in the efforts to preserve the environment. There are a key number of scientists and environmental activists who have been persistent in their efforts to investigate, communicate, and capture not only the destructive actions to the environment, but also the innovations and alternatives for energy, production of goods, green business practices, and methods for decreasing the carbon footprint. The number of participants at Bioneers – a few hundred in 1989 – has grown to 13,000, which indicates recognition and action occurring at an individual, collective and spiritual level.

### Christianity and the Environment

From the beginnings of Judeo-Christian tradition and reflected in Scripture, there are significant threads connecting God's acts of creation, humankind's responsibility to partner with God as stewards of creation, and directives from God related to environment and worship. Most people are familiar with Genesis and God's view of creation as an

## Bright Spot

Life is so generous a giver.

But we, judging its gifts by their covering, cast them away as ugly or heavy or hard.

Remove the covering, and you will find beneath it a living splendor, woven of love by wisdom, with power.

Welcome it, grasp it, and you touch the angel's hand that brings it to you. Everything we call a trial, a sorrow, or a duty, believe me, that angel's hand is there.

The gift is there and the wonder of an overshadowing presence.

Your joys, too, be not content with them as joys.

They, too, conceal diviner gifts.

*-Fra Giovanni Giocondo*  
From "Letter to a Friend," written on Christmas Eve, 1513

act of goodness. In Leviticus 25, God directs Moses to share information with the Israelites about giving a time of Sabbath to the land and in verse 23 God claims ownership of the land and notes that we humans are God's tenants. In the New Testament, the teachings of Jesus are filled with examples from the earth, agriculture and the beauty of God's creation.

March 2008, the Vatican issued ten sins for our time, and two of them relate directly to our role as stewards of the Earth, genetic manipulation or engineering and pollution. Additionally, Benedict the XVI is blazing the trail by leading the effort to "green" the Vatican by use of solar energy and other less polluting alternatives. Evangelical Christians have also led the effort to bring forward the ecological responsibilities as stewards of God's creation. ✨

