



When asked to write an article about the relevance of Interfaith, I did not know how to approach it. Then it occurred to me that all I had to do was look to the times I grew up in and the state of global affairs today for the answer. My thoughts went quickly to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. whom I regard as the greatest Interfaith Minister of our time. It was his non-violent movement and call to American clergy that made Interfaith Councils spring up across the country to fight the great American problems of segregation and poverty.

As Dr. King so eloquently stated in one of his lesser known speeches, the World House, which was based on his Nobel Prize-winning lecture delivered in Oslo in 1966: "A widely separated family inherits a house in which they have to live together." This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great 'world house' in which we have to live together — black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu — a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace." This statement was extremely powerful and relevant in 1966 and it certainly is today.

If you look across this great globe of ours, to the Middle East, to Europe, Africa, and Asia, you will find war and strife in just about every region of the world. Most, if not all, of these conflicts are rooted in religious intolerance. This includes the United States' presence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Regardless of what the stated rationale is for our presence is in those countries, I think that some Americans feel we are waging a war against Islam.

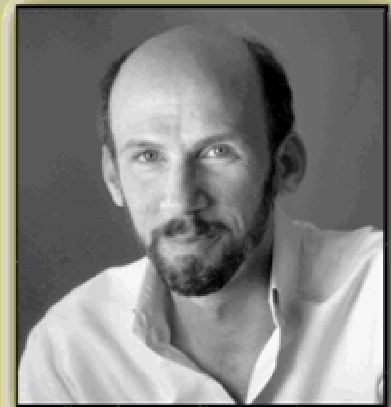
The clergy of the world must assume the responsibility of working in their communities and nations to spread the news that there truly is one common thread running seamlessly through every religion that links all of us to the Divine, the One Source, God. So if there is a Balm in Gilead to heal the war-hardened souls of this world, it can be found in an Interfaith approach to living.

Making Interfaith relevant also applies to a very fundamental institution in society: marriage. What better

way to make Dr. King's concept of a World House come to life than people of all races and creeds intermarrying? This is perhaps the most basic way to bring the universal family together under one God. The Interfaith community must embrace and help couples from different faith traditions, weather the scorn and controversy many of them will receive from their families, friends and communities by marrying individuals outside their faith. We can do this by educating all parties involved, and, of course, by arranging Interfaith weddings and providing guidance to families about how to raise children in an Interfaith environment.

There are Interfaith Councils in just about every American community; some more active than others. The real work for us living in this nation is to join these councils, make them bigger and better, thereby ensuring they are true banner carriers for the concept of "One God, Many Paths."

Many Americans don't want to face the truth that religion is being used as a tool of war, division and oppression. It is being used to punish those with different views about the role of religion in government, society and God, in general. This rolling tide of hard-line intolerance that is dominating public policy and sweeping across this land, leaving those with opposing views quaking with fear, must be stopped. Think about this; if we can strengthen the Interfaith movement in this country, and move our own society to be more open and accepting of all faith traditions, the world might just take notice.



DR. LEONARD FELDER
2005 Honorary Interfaith Minister

The New Seminary is proud to honor Dr. Leonard Felder, Ph.D. with its 2005 Honorary Interfaith Minister Award on Sunday, June 12 during the graduation and ordination ceremonies of the Class of 2005 at The Synod House, on the grounds of The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in New York. Dr. Felder's book, THE TEN CHALLENGES, has been a vital part of the seminary's First Year curriculum for the past six years.

A licensed psychologist living in West Los Angeles, California, Dr. Felder is the author of seven books, which have sold over 1 million copies and been translated into 14 languages. Originally from Detroit, Michigan, he is a Phi Beta Kappa and High Honors graduate from Kenyon College in Ohio. Dr. Felder is an expert on family conflict-resolution, and has appeared on over 180 radio and television programs, including Oprah, NBC News, CBS The Early Show, CNN, and National Public Radio.

On June 11th at 1:30PM The New Seminary will host a reception and booksigning for Dr. Felder at Chelsea Studios in Manhattan. Turn to page 8 of this issue and use the response form to secure your place.

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DIRECTORS CORNER |

By Rabbi Roger Ross, Executive Director, and Reverend Deborah Steen Ross, Associate Director

Welcome to the spring edition of The New Seminary News. This is our first e-edition of the newsletter. We hope that you enjoy it and will share it with your friends and colleagues by e-mailing it to them so that they can become more acquainted with Interfaith and how it is impacting our world.

We have been busy this year; all sorts of new and exciting things are happening. First, The New Seminary's *Interfaith Lecture Series* premiered on April 14 on Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN). Turn to page 4 for program information.

We are currently videotaping lecturers for the series. Dean Deb has been privileged to conduct the interviews with many of them about their respective religions and the impact they are having on the world today, each program offering thought-provoking conversation. These short interviews will be aired on an on-going basis.

As we reported in the last issue of The New Seminary News, the Association of Interfaith Ministers (AIM) is no more. In its place a new association, A World Alliance of Interfaith Clergy (AWAIC), is forming. AWAIC is the brainchild of Reverend Carla Ivson (Class of 2004), and Reverend John Yoegel (Class of 2003). It will be a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, open to graduates of any Interfaith seminary, both here and abroad. For a short time the annual membership rate will be \$50. Initially, AWAIC will provide a web-based directory for clergy, where the general public can also find services. The AWAIC web site, www.worldinterfaithclergy.org, is under construction; however, you may contact Reverend Carla at worldcitizenministries@earthlink.net for an application.

In a few weeks, our First Year Class will begin its End-of-Year Retreat in preparation for spiritual initiation into the Interfaith Ministry, and our Second Year Class will graduate and be ordained. Seventy-nine Second Year students will be ordained as Interfaith Ministers on June 12 at The Synod House, on the grounds of The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, in Manhattan.

Each year during our graduation and ordination, the seminary presents an Honorary Interfaith Minister Award to someone who has had a profound impact on The New Seminary as well as on the Interfaith movement. The 2005 Honorary Interfaith Minister Award will be presented to Dr. Leonard Felder, Ph.D., author of *THE TEN CHALLENGES*. This extraordinary book has been part of the seminary's First Year curriculum for the past six years and has been one of the most effective texts for transformation and healing among our students. It is a privilege to welcome Dr. Felder and make him a part of The New Seminary family with this honorary distinction.

In 2006, The New Seminary marks a quarter of a century of training Interfaith Ministers. As this benchmark anniversary approaches, we



are pleased to let you know that as part of our year-long celebration we are planning many wonderful things to help increase awareness about Interfaith and the role that this seminary has played in bringing this movement to humanity. Chief among our plans is the reorganization of The New Seminary Alumni Association as a means of including each of you in the most meaningful way in the Silver Anniversary of your Alma Mater. It is important to all of us that you are a part of it. Therefore, if you have moved since you graduated and think we do not have your current address or telephone number or that we don't have the

mailing address, telephone number or email address of another New Seminary Alum, please send up-to-date information to us at info@newseminary.org or to 2565 Broadway, PMB 344, New York, New York 10025.

As we draw nearer to our First and Second Year retreats, graduation and ordination and to our Silver Anniversary, we must take a moment to express our deepest gratitude to the Deans, Staff, Board, Advisors and Instructors. Each of you have helped to shape The New Seminary into the truly "new" school it has become and, as a living institution, will continue to evolve into throughout its 25th year and into the next quarter of a century.



THE NEW SEMINARY

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Founded in 1981, by Rabbi Joseph H. Gelberman, a pioneer and teacher of the Interfaith approach, with Reverend Jon Mundy, a former Methodist minister, Father Giles Spoonhour, a leader in church reform, and The Reverend Sri Swami Satchidanandam a revered Yoga Master, The New Seminary is the world's first Interfaith seminary.

The New Seminary is committed to the integrity of the individual and the individual's own spiritual search. We honor all paths leading toward a deepening of one's relationship with the Eternal Spirit, Divine, God, Goddess, Higher Power, and other paths that lead to a positive rewarding spiritual life.

The New Seminary is an NGO with Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of The United Nations.

The New Seminary News is published quarterly as an additional resource for students and alumni of the institution and the community at-large.

Contributors to this issue of *The New Seminary News*

Father Giles Spoonhour ✎ Reverend Dr. Michael Festa ✎
Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf ✎ Rabbi Roger Ross ✎
Reverend Deborah Steen Ross ✎ James Speights ✎ Michelle B. Barr ✎
Theodore Richards ✎ Sharon Breland

The Board of Directors joins me in welcoming you to the Spring 2005 edition of The New Seminary News. In just a few days, the Class of 2006 will be spiritually initiated into the Interfaith Ministry. On June 12, the Class of 2005 will graduate and be ordained at The Synod House, on the grounds of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, each of them taking their respective place in the history of the Interfaith movement.

Interfaith has become the foundation for many religious institutions across the globe. The impact of this movement, which has steadily progressed from the margins of society to the centers of power, continues to transform our the world. You will find examples of this growth and transformation throughout our issue. The New Seminary, your seminary, continues to play a significant role in this growth.

As a respected leader in the Interfaith movement, The New Seminary has been able to accomplish a great deal over the past two years. This is due in large part to the tireless efforts and leadership of Rabbi Roger Ross, our Executive Director, and Reverend Deborah Steen Ross, our Associate Director. They continue to expand the vision of The New Seminary; and it is flourishing as never before.

The Board is pleased to announce the inauguration of the seminary's *Service to Humanity Award*, this year. We congratulate the first recipient, Dr. John C. LaRosa, MD, FACP, President of S.U.N.Y. Downstate Medical Center, for his accomplishments in creating an environment in which communication, cooperation and mutual respect have fostered an atmosphere where people of different faiths, cultures

and traditions can come together to create a safer, healthier and more welcoming medical center for a widening New York community.

It is with the greatest pleasure that The New Seminary

confers its 2005 Honorary Interfaith Minister Award on Dr. Leonard Felder, Ph.D. Dr. Felder has been an integral part of The New Seminary through his book *THE TEN CHALLENGES*, which has been a seminal part of our First Year curriculum. This honorary distinction will be bestowed upon Dr. Felder on June 12 at the ordination ceremonies.

Through the efforts of Herbert Yassky, The New Seminary's Chairman of the Board, plans are under way to open doors into programs of hospital and hospice chaplaincy to our graduates, with these CPE programs recognizing and accepting the worth of our program as the equivalent of a Master of Divinity degree. In addition, in alignment with one of our partners in Chaplaincy training, The New Seminary will be offering preparatory courses to make the transition to CPE training easier and more accessible. Several members of the Second Year Class are already in CPE courses and working as Chaplains-in-Training in hospitals and hospices nationwide.

As we approach The New Seminary's quarter century mark, plans are in the works for a year-long celebration. We have two important goals during the year; first is to raise \$250,000 over our yearly donations.

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ON THE PASSING OF POPE JOHN PAUL II |

By Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf

Spiritual Advisor to The New Seminary

To all our Catholic friends,

On the occasion of the passing of Pope John Paul II, we wish to express our deepest condolences to all our Catholic friends. Muslims share with Christians the belief that the real goal of life is the eternal life in the hereafter, and we pray that Pope John Paul's soul be welcomed into the best and highest rank in that eternal life.

Pope John Paul was in many respects a 21st Century Pope. He saw the Papacy transformed, and helped transform it, from one presiding over a smaller and more Western and European demographic to an increasingly international one. He worked diligently to further Interfaith dialogue called for in *Nostra Aetate*, which reads: "The Church also has a high regard for the Muslims, who worship one God, living and subsistent, merciful and compassionate, the Creator of heaven and earth;" adding that "the Council has also called for the Church to have a dialogue with followers of the Prophet."

He added that "even if over the course of centuries Christians and Muslims have had more than a few dissensions and quarrels, this sacred Council now urges all to forget the past and to work toward mutual understanding as well as toward the preservation and promotion of social justice, moral welfare, peace, and freedom for the benefit of all mankind." (*Nostra Aetate* 3)

His *pro-activity* in this regard was notable. He prayed for peace in Bosnia, in Palestine and Israel. He was the first Pope to visit a mosque, most notably the mosque of John the Baptist in Damascus, Syria, a site holy both to Muslims and Christians. His concern with building relationships with Muslims broke new ground, and in his best selling book *CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF HOPE*, took pride in his unforgettable "encounter with the young people at Casablanca Stadium in 1985." "As a result of their monotheism," Pope John writes, "believers in Allah are particularly close to us." He respected the "religiosity of Muslims," admitting that "it is impossible not to admire their fidelity to prayer."

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On June 25th, fellow classmate **Sandy Stone**, will officiate at the wedding of **Theodore Richards** (also Class of 2005) to Arianne “Ari” Banks. Ted says, “It will be a truly Interfaith wedding, with aspects of Taoism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam and Cherokee religion.”
CONGRATULATIONS, TED! — Michelle B. Barr

In May, our own **Janet Slom** (Class of 2005) had her work showcased at an event in Connecticut and received deserved recognition as an “internationally acclaimed painter, sculptor and performance artist.” Fifty of Janet’s new pieces were exhibited throughout a \$5 million new construction estate in a “novel approach [that featured] worlds that naturally co-exist but seldom take center stage together.” A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the art and the fees generated on the listing side of the house sale will be donated to Save the Children and The Mnemosyne Foundation. “Creating a gallery experience in a real home environment has never been done before,” Janet says. Jillian Klaff of WRG Homes at William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty says, “We are thrilled to be collaborating with such a talented artist.” — MBB

EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION WITH REVEREND GALINA KRASSKOVA

By Theodore Richards (Class of 2005)

As Christians from southern Europe came into contact with the northern tribes from Germanic, Norse and Anglo-Saxon territories, they were struck by the harshness and openness of the land as well as the vitality and fortitude of the people who lived there. They came to call these people *Heathen*, derived from the English word “heath,” meaning “an open land, overgrown with coarse, wild foliage.” That they chose this emphasis in describing the character of the people is telling: more than simply describing the Northern Tradition as “pagan,” it speaks to the connection between land and tribe, and the openness and freedom of their way of life.

There is a growing reconstructionist movement among those who wish to rekindle the spirit of their ancestors, to honor their gods, and return to a way of life that promotes community and discipline. Reverend Galina Krasskova (Class of 2000) is at the forefront of this movement. In 2000 she co-founded the New York Metro Ásatrú Society, through which she holds public rites and seminars designed to educate the broader Pagan community and society-at-large about the Northern Traditions. Her keen knowledge of Heathen tradition combined with Interfaith training has made her a sought-after lecturer and writer.
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THE INFINITE DIVERSITY OF TULANI KINARD (Class of 2005)


Tulani Kinard is a vocalist, composer, author, cultural activist, and member of the Class of 2005, one of The New Seminary’s Accelerated students taking the First Year and Second Year classes, simultaneously.

A brief introduction to any of her inspirational songs, captivating performances, or motivating workshops reveals Tulani’s grounding as a creative artist and spiritually committed communicator. A former member of the GRAMMY-award-winning *a cappella* ensemble Sweet Honey In The Rock, her musical influences span many genres. She found her voice as a young girl singing in a Boston Pentecostal church choir. Since then, now New York based, Tulani has “found herself at one” with jazz, folk, gospel, rhythm & blues, traditional African songs, and spoken word. She integrates all these styles into her music. Her CD *Expressions of My Mind*, is a collection of songs that reaches down and stirs souls to rise up and fly freely.

Recognized as a gifted singer and orator “with a colorful voice of conscience,” Tulani’s brand of empowerment music has produced a body of works that is used for leadership conferences, inspirational workshops, radio shows, and a theme song for a network television show. She also provides opening performances for keynote speakers such as Eve Ensler, Anita Hill, Carolyn Myss, and Dr. Maya Angelou.

Tulani has served as the Artistic/Musical Director for the lecture tours of renowned author and motivational speaker Iyanla Vanzant. She has appeared on *Oprah* as a performer and as the focus for one of that program’s “In The Spirit” segments. Recently, Tulani founded and launched the Ase (*ah-shay*) of Peace Fellowship performance series, designed to expand awareness of the power of the spirit of peace through artistic expression.

Another significant part of Tulani’s transformational work includes her commitment to empowering women through beauty and fashion. In 1997, she wrote the nationally acclaimed book *NO LYE: An African-American Woman’s Guide To Natural Hair Care*. She is currently serving as a Role Model for designer Eileen Fisher in the fashion industry’s campaign “Women Change the World Everyday.”

On June 12, Tulani will add to an already impressive list of accomplishments, Interfaith Minister. Whether she is making a joyful noise or blowing a cultural clarion call, she inspires movement in bodies, minds, and spirits. Her gift is helping to define a fertile moment in the journey toward personal transformation. 

TV GUIDE FOR INTERFAITH LECTURE SERIES *On Manhattan Neighborhood Network (MNN)*

This season, the Interfaith Lecture Series includes interviews with visiting lecturers from each of the world’s faiths, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Goddess as well as thought-provoking conversation on spirituality. Next broadcast:

June 9 [re-aired broadcast], 10:00 PM (Channel 34)

LONG LOST CHRISTIAN SCROLLS FOUND IN CHINA |

By Father Giles Spoonhour, *Co-Founder of The New Seminary*

A treasure trove of ancient scrolls, artifacts and stele were found in a remote cave in China in 1907. Among these, written in Chinese, are scrolls that recount a history of Jesus' life and teachings in beautiful Taoist concepts and imagery that were unknown in the West. These writings tell a story of Christianity that is by turns unique and disturbing, hopeful and uplifting. The best way to describe them is collectively, with a term they themselves use: *The Jesus Sutras*.

Martin Palmer is the author of a recent book that describes the origins, context and language of *The Jesus Sutras*. Palmer is director of the International Consultancy on Religion, Education and Culture, which specializes in religious, environmental, educational, and developmental projects and works with a variety of international organizations, such as the World Wide Fund for Nature and The United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization. He has authored books on religious topics and is one of the foremost translators of ancient Chinese texts, having published translations of the *Tao Te Ching*, *I Ching*, *Chuang Tzu*, and *Kuan Yin*. A regular broadcaster on BBC TV and Radio, Palmer records for the BBC on his frequent visits to China. He studied Theology at Cambridge, with a special emphasis on Chinese and Japanese studies, and is a leading expert on Taoist ritual.

The ancient scrolls were found near the ancient oasis town of Dunhuang in the extreme northwest frontier of China by a Taoist priest. It is estimated that they had been buried around 1005. They form part of a vast trove of thousands of books, paintings, and artifacts from the Fifth to Eleventh centuries C.E. Most of the scrolls are Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist — the great faiths of ancient China. Carefully stored alongside these works were scrolls from a faith that few knew had even existed in China at that time. These scrolls speak of "the Visitor," of "the Jade-Faced One," of "the One Sacred Spirit." They told of how the world began and records stories told by Jesus the Messiah that were unknown in the West. The scrolls are Christian books, written in Chinese, that tell a story of Christianity that is unique and surprising.

The sacred texts that Palmer has written about in THE JESUS SUTRAS provide the first popular history and translations of the sect's long-lost scriptures. All of them more than a thousand years old and comparable in significance to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Gathered, deciphered and interpreted by a team of expert linguists and scholars, these sacred texts present an inspiring use of Jesus' teachings and life

within Eastern practices and meditations, and provide an extraordinary window into an intriguing, profoundly gentler, more spiritual Christianity than existed in Europe or Asia at the time, or, indeed, even today.

Palmer has devoted more than a decade to seeking the extant writings and other evidence of this lost religion. His determined search eventually led him to rediscover one of the earliest Christian monasteries. At the site was a still intact Eighth Century pagoda. Within it, Palmer and his team found more evidence, including statues, underground passageways, and artifacts, that helped them uncover and recreate the era and rituals of the Taoist Christians. These Christians, who wrote *The Jesus Sutras*, recognized equality of the sexes, preached against slavery, and practiced nonviolence toward all forms of life. In particular, this tradition offered its followers a more hopeful vision of life on earth and after death than the dominant Eastern religions, teaching that Jesus had broken the wheel of Karma and its consequent punishing, endless reincarnations.

The Jesus Sutras bring together the beliefs of the Eastern world of Buddhism and Taoism with those of the Western Judeo-Christian world. Although some people today see these two worlds as separate and irreconcilably different, even as implacably opposed to each other, *The Jesus Sutras* show that these two world cultures can — and did — come together to create an astonishing, accessible, vibrant practice of Taoist Christianity within the context of Confucian China some fourteen hundred years ago.

“...Jesus had broken the wheel of Karma...”

Today many spiritual practitioners seek a way to reconcile the teachings and insights of East and West, of Tao and God, of Buddha and Christ. Yet, over fourteen hundred years ago, *The Jesus Sutras* had already created a synthesis of Tao, Christ, and Buddha. Their model of spiritual thought and practice shows how ideas, inspiration, and faith can flow across cultural boundaries and still remain faithful to the core teachings of each religion, while providing vital, fresh perspectives on the meaning of life and our place in the universe. Vividly recreating the turbulence of a distant age that is remarkably evocative of our own time, Palmer reveals an extraordinary evolution of spiritual thought that spans centuries. A thrilling modern quest that is also an ancient religious odyssey, THE JESUS SUTRAS shares a revolutionary discovery with profound historical implications, imparting timeless messages and lessons for men and women of all backgrounds and faiths.



Purchase books from The New Seminary's bookstore (www.newseminary.org), including Martin Palmer's groundbreaking work, THE JESUS SUTRAS. Follow the INTERFAITH STORE link to Amazon.com where your purchases benefit your Seminary.

Claire Wanebo (Class of 2005) has been very busy this year learning to be a shepherdess. Her small flock of sheep has doubled, and she also has a guardian donkey. Claire says she is learning a lot from sheep behavior, and adds, "I said to Reverend Eric [Second Year Dean Eric Jennings], when the Lord said, 'Feed my sheep,' why did I take Him literally?" — MBB

In October 2004, **Rebecca Booher** (Class of 2005) received a Holmes-Weatherly Award for Social Justice from the Mountain Desert District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. In addition, Rebecca says, "I'm introducing my new business, *Our Common Ground...An Interfaith Eco-Justice Ministry* promoting respect, compassion and justice for our interdependent Web of Life. Her *Common Ground* was launched with a booth at local a Earth Day event on April 23. — MBB

Leila Sesmero (Class of 2005) has been hard at work over the past several months producing a fund-raising concert to benefit the Yonkers Animal Shelter. Proceeds from the May benefit raised money to fund much needed capital improvements and programs that provide essential daily care to the 1,000 animals that come through the Shelter's doors. — MBB

EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION, *Continued from page 4*

Originally from Maryland, Reverend Krasskova came to New York as a dancer, her former way of "connecting to the gods." As she moved away from dance, she moved on to a more direct route to the Divine. It was when she was ordained as a priest in 1995 that she "first tasted the ecstasy of shared consciousness with a God, what the Afro-Caribbean traditions refer to as possession," she says. After several potent experiences with Wóden, in 1996, she converted to Heathenry.

Reverend Krasskova describes herself as a "ritual technician," drawing on more than a decade of her own experience as a priest and, currently, as a devotee and bride of Wóden. Her ministry goes beyond ritual duties, however. She is Healer-in-Residence of her tribe, has two certifications in herbology and employs the training she received at The New Seminary to provide pastoral counseling. In fact, she has built a thriving pastoral counseling practice

Although Reverend Krasskova continues to draw on the Interfaith training she received at the seminary, she says it was The New Seminary that actually strengthened her commitment to Heathenry. "I went into the seminary a fairly liberal Heathen and came out *Theodish*, the most orthodox denomination we have," she says. "The whole process of journeying through the seminary, and of being the only hard-core polytheist or Heathen in my class really made me examine my beliefs and relationship to Wóden."


It is from this strong orthodox foundation that Reverend Krasskova shares her faith as both lecturer and writer. In addition to being a frequent contributor to respected Pagan and Heathen magazines, she is the author of *THE WHISPERINGS OF WÓDEN* and, recently, *EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION*, the latter written at the invitation of New Page Books and released in May 2005.

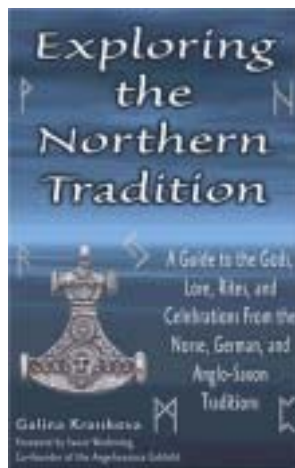
"I wrote *EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION* for folks new to Heathenry, folks who don't have a flourishing community in their area as well as those making the transition from another religion to their ancestral religion," she says. "I also thought it might be a nice

introduction for people who are interested in comparative religion or in Interfaith work. And I like to think that it can serve as a Heathenry 101 course for the rank beginner."

EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION is an excellent work for discovering the roots and essence of the Heathen faith. In Reverend Krasskova's skilled hands, ceremony and ritual find their way back to the ancients, showing how the ethics, beliefs and practices of an heroic people have made their way into the present day. For seasoned Pagans from other traditions, it provides an overview of the Norse pantheon and essential rites. For those on an Interfaith path, it offers insight into an ancient and fascinating worldview.

As a Heathen priest, ordained Interfaith Minister, lecturer, author and authority on pre-Christian tribal religion and culture of the Northern European people, Reverend Krasskova has taken on an extraordinary task: to open the way to greater understanding of Heathenry and offer valuable insight into why this tradition is experiencing a tremendous resurgence.

At a time when people are longing for greater connection, fueled by the ideal of *family values*, Reverend Krasskova believes that all of society can benefit from understanding and living by Heathen ethical teachings, which are "centered in what strengthens the community and the tribe. They teach responsibility, courage, discipline, and commitment to duty, values that would make our communities stronger, safer and far more cohesive." The ultimate goal of family values. 



Purchase all of your books from The New Seminary's bookstore, including *EXPLORING THE NORTHERN TRADITION*. Just visit www.newseminary.org, then follow the INTERFAITH STORE link to Amazon.com where your purchase benefits the seminary.

DON'T USE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO JUSTIFY WAR URGES WCC'S KOBIA

During the 2nd Inter-Faith Action for Peace in Africa Summit in South Africa, Reverend Samuel Kobia, World Council of Churches General Secretary, cautioned faith communities against use of holy scriptures to justify war, affirming to the Interfaith gathering the need to put into context the meaning of the rich heritage and diversity of all religions, adding, "The pursuit of peace is one of the supreme ethical values in public life proclaimed by world religions."

www.eni.ch/

FIRST PAPAL TRIP: ITALY'S EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

On May 29, on the shores of the Adriatic Sea, Pope Benedict XVI celebrated his first Mass outside Rome as Pope, encouraging Catholics to demonstrate to the world the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, "the sacrament of his love." In scheduling this as the first trip of his pontificate, the Holy Father underlined the importance of the Year of the Eucharist, declared by Pope John Paul II to run from October 2004 to October 2005. www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/0503237.htm

AN INTERFAITH DELEGATION FROM THE MIDDLE EAST PROMOTES SOCIETY OF EQUALITY AND PLURALITY


Arab-American Muslims are positioned to present a "good and real impression of Islam," a delegation of Middle East Christians and Muslims told Chicago's Muslim community. Last month, the delegation of Mideast academics and interfaith advocates met with Arab-American Muslims and Christian groups in major cities from Los Angeles to Washington, DC, with the intention of building bridges and clearing up distorted stereotypes of Christian-Muslim relations in the Middle East. www.churchworldservice.org/news/

HOW DOES GOD LISTEN?'

How Des God Listen? written by Kay Lindahl, a lay Eucharistic minister, is geared towards opening up conversations about God with children. Lindahl, who practices centering prayer, says that it has been an important part of listening and dialoguing with peoples of different beliefs. Her book focuses on helping children explore the ways that God is always present and always listening. www.episcopalchurch.org/3577_6185_ENG_HTM.htm

On the Passing of Pope John Paul II, *continued from page 3*

The image of believers in Allah who, without caring about time or place, fall to their knees and immerse themselves in prayer remains a model for all those who invoke the true God, in particular for those Christians who, having deserted their magnificent Cathedrals, pray only a little or not at all." [p. 93]...

We pray that [Pope Benedict XVI] will continue furthering Christian-Muslim relations, and will use the power of his Papacy to urge for social justice, moral welfare, political freedom and self-determination that Muslims in many parts of the world long for so much. The Quran informs Muslims that the nearest in friendship to Muslims are Christians; and that the reason for this is because there are among them priests and monks, i.e., those who have given themselves humbly up for the cause of God. We can think of no greater cause today in the way of God than that Pope Benedict will continue the legacy of Pope John Paul II, and work towards a greater understanding of the positive role that religion—all religion—can play in a shrunken global society, in order to build the "kingdom of heaven on earth," the Biblical "City on the Hill" that has space in it for adherents of all faiths, including those who in their spiritual journey, are still at the stage of finding no need for faith at all. May God's peace, mercy and blessings be upon us all. 

HOLY FIRE DESCENDS ON HOLY SEPULCHER

In April the Holy Fire descended on the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem... as it does each Holy Saturday in the tomb chamber where it is believed that Jesus Christ was buried. Christian Orthodox worshippers passed candles to fellow worshippers around the tomb during the ceremony, which is part of Orthodox Easter; the flame symbolizes the resurrection of Christ. Candles in the congregation's hands were miraculously lit the instant the Patriarch emerged from the chamber, carrying a lamp lit by the Fire. <http://en.rian.ru/>

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK IN MAY

In May, religious leaders encouraged faith organizations and congregations to learn more about why 45 million Americans -- including 10 million children -- have no health care coverage. *Cover the Uninsured Week* was the beginning of an extended effort to achieve health care coverage for all Americans. "We are morally bound to advocate for our uninsured neighbors, many of whom needlessly suffer because they don't get the medical care they need," says Dr. Eileen Lindner, Deputy General Secretary for the National Council of Churches. www.covertheuninsuredweek.org and www.nccusa.org

FREE LAND IN KANSAS

Marquette, Kansas, has struggled to stay alive since a tornado flattened much of it a century ago. Marquette is one of eight small towns listed at www.KansasFreeLand.com offering free land and other incentives and drawing a new wave of settlers. The town's Methodist church, is helping redevelopment efforts by giving furniture to settlers.

PAGAN PRIDE DAY FESTIVALS WORLDWIDE


The Pagan Pride Project was founded to foster pride in Pagan identity through education, activism, charity and community, and religious tolerance by introducing the Pagan faith to the outside world. Each year Pagan Pride Day Festivals are hosted nationally and internationally, including in Canada, England, Brazil, Italy, Australia, Portugal and South Africa, the weekend closest to the Autumn Equinox. For more info. about the Pagan Pride Project and Pagan Pride Day Festivals in your area *visit* www.paganpride.org.

WOMEN, FAITH AND ACTIVISM USHER NEW MOVEMENT

Organizers of the Harvard University-based Pluralism Project, which documents America's changing religious landscape, say there is growing grass-roots activism led by women who seek to enact social change and who carry their deep faith into every aspect of their lives. Although there is no way to quantify the increased involvement, scholars say more women are combining faith and activism all over the world. www.pluralism.org/news/index.php

Board Message, *continued from page 3*

A second goal is to reconnect with all of our Alumni through The New Seminary Alumni Association, which will be launched in 2006. We will look to our Alumni — stakeholders in the mission and vision of The New Seminary — to help us realize these goals by supporting them to the best of their abilities.

The Board, Directors, Advisors, Staff and Faculty are all deeply grateful to each of you who has supported the seminary, and look forward to deepening this partnership next year. Your support now ensures that The New Seminary remains a preeminent force for positive change in the world for the next 25 years. 

As The New Seminary begins counting down to the celebration of a quarter of a century of bringing faith traditions together, and to the launch of a new, and vital and productive Alumni Association, you can support your seminary today. Here's how:

SHOP!...AND SUPPORT THE NEW SEMINARY

Purchase your books and movies and Interfaith jewelry online from The New Seminary Interfaith Store. As Alumni of The New Seminary you are entitled to a 10% discount on all Interfaith jewelry when you shop at The New Seminary store.

Books. The New Seminary Bookstore stocks sacred texts as well as other titles recommended as reading to current students. Select books by topic or follow the link directly to Amazon.com, where your purchase benefits The New Seminary. So, buy your next book through our bookstore and encourage your friends to do so as well.

Movies. Build your film and video collection about world religions, spirituality and spiritual practice at a 10% savings by shopping at the seminary's Interfaith Store.

SUPPORT THE FUTURE OF INTERFAITH

Each year, the size of our classes grow larger and more diverse. Individuals who have heard the call come through our doors wanting to be of service to the world. But some don't have the financial resources to make the journey. As an Alumni, you can help us nurture and guide promising individuals by contributing to The New Seminary Scholarship Fund. Any amount you can afford is helpful, whether it is \$50, \$100 or \$1,000. Also, consider making a special Silver Anniversary gift to Scholarship Fund. Your tax-deductible gift may make the difference in someone becoming part of the growing Interfaith movement.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION LIST

Help build our Silver Anniversary Celebration list. If each of you contributes just five names, we will have a formidable list of over 10,000 people to help us celebrate our 25th Anniversary. Who should be added to that list? Acquaintances interested in spiritual practices of the world's religions. Anyone in your "universe of contacts" who might be interested in receiving the newsletter. Friends who might want to attend events and workshops. Send those names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses to us at info@newseninary.org or to The New Seminary, 2565 Broadway, PMB 344, New York, New York 10025. Thank you!

CALENDAR

JUNE, 2005

Saturday, June 11, 1:30-4:30 PM: RECEPTION AND BOOKSIGNING HONORING DR. LEONARD FELDER, PH.D.; Chelsea Studios, 151 West 26th Street, 6th Floor, New York City. **LIMITED SEATING**

Sunday, June 12, 2:00 PM: GRADUATION AND ORDINATION OF THE CLASS OF 2005; The Synod House, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, West 116th Street & Amsterdam Avenue, New York City. **BY INVITATION ONLY**

Sunday, June 26, 3:00 PM: OPEN HOUSE*; TRS Studios, 44 East 32nd Street, 11th Floor, New York City. Hear more about The New Seminary's Training Program for Interfaith Ministers.

JULY/AUGUST, 2005

Thursday July 21, 7:00 PM: OPEN HOUSE*; TRS Studios, 44 East 32nd Street, 11th Floor, New York City. Learn more about The New Seminary's Training Program for Interfaith Ministers and the new semester that starts in September 2005.

Wednesday August 17, 7:00 PM: OPEN HOUSE*; TRS Studios, 44 East 32nd Street, 11th Floor, New York City. Join us and hear more about The New Seminary's Training Programs.

**Personal interviews will be conducted at all of the seminary's Open Houses for those who have submitted a completed application and questionnaire.*

Saturday, June 11, 2005, 1:30 PM
2005 Graduation Reception and Booksigning
The New Seminary Honors Dr. Leonard Felder, Ph.D.

Chelsea Studios
151 West 26th Street, 6th Floor
New York City

Name: _____ Class of _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State _____ Zip Code: _____
 Telephone: (day) _____ (evening) _____
 Email: _____

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____, made payable to **THE NEW SEMINARY.**
 I would like to pay by credit card as follows:
 American Express MasterCard Visa
 Name on Card: _____
 Address: _____
(if different from address on the left)
 Card Number: _____ Exp.: _____
 Signature: _____

- Yes, I/we would like to attend with _____ guests at \$25 per person.
- I/We are unable to attend but have enclosed a contribution of \$ _____ to help support the work of The New Seminary and provide scholarships to students who will help shape the future of Interfaith.

Mail completed form and payment to The New Seminary, 2565 Broadway, PMB 344, New York, New York 10025

Space is limited to 70 people, so secure your place early. For more information contact The New Seminary at 212-222-3711, toll free at 888-688-4884.