

# Thea News

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 10 MARCH 2007



*"Listen! Hear us!  
While the world  
is full of hate,  
strife, vengeance,  
we sing songs  
of love, laughter,  
worship, wisdom,  
justice, and peace  
because  
we are free.  
Though our  
forefathers bent  
to the heat  
of the sun,  
the strike  
of the lash,  
the chain of slavery,  
we are free.  
No man can  
enslave us.*

*We are too strong,  
too unafraid.  
America needs  
our strength,  
our voices,  
to drown out  
its sorrows,  
the clatter  
of war....  
Listen! Hear us!"*

—From *Sister Thea Bowman: Shooting Star*, page 44, as excerpted from an album, *The Voice of Negro America*, which was "dedicated to the promotion of brotherhood and universal peace."

## A Joyful Noise

by Lisa Mladinich

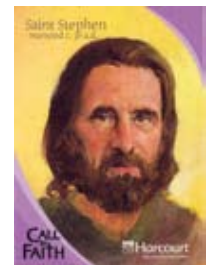
Lisa Robinson had a problem. The graphic designer had been providing hand puppet programs for her Mississippi parish for about three years, using Bible-based scripts she had purchased on the Internet. They had served her and her parish well, and she'd never actually had to write a script from scratch. But this time was different. It was just over two weeks before the start of her parish's summer program. The director was asking for something Lisa couldn't find in any collection: five 15-minute puppet shows based on the lives of four saints and one very exciting holy woman—a local heroine by the name of [Sister Thea Bowman, FSPA](#).

My free puppet ministry is hosted by the much beloved web site, [CatholicMom.com](#), complete with a link to my home e-mail. Religious educators write to me when they want to incorporate puppetry into their programs and need a little guidance. Usually I can suggest a script from among my existing shows, and the person behind the query is satisfied. But when I first heard from Lisa, I didn't have any scripts dealing with lives of the saints, and I hadn't even heard of Sister Thea.

I said a little prayer and hit the Internet. My research revealed a remarkable person whom I liked immediately. An African-American nun raised in the deep South, Sister Thea became a highly educated, accomplished teacher, speaker, and singer who helped bring black culture into mainstream Catholic worship.

I wanted to write the script but I had a problem. My style of writing puppet scripts for children can be summed up thusly: take a simple concept and whack it repeatedly with a large banana. But how, I worried, could I take the life of a beautiful, holy nun—the granddaughter of a slave who spent her life teaching racial pride and tolerance—and turn it into slapstick without treating Sister Thea and her life with disrespect? I didn't want to get bogged down in politics, and I didn't want to lose my sense of humor.

But what does a middle-aged white woman from the suburbs of Long Island know about black culture? What if it came off as preachy, or worse, condescending? The show would be performed for several racially diverse groups of children ranging from preschool to the fourth grade, and I didn't want to lose their interest either. This sensitive and terribly important material had to be funny. I prayed a little harder and went back over the details, trying to find a way in.



**Saint Prayer Cards — Series of 5**  
*Mary Magdalene, Thea Bowman,  
Peter, Stephen, and Paul*  
(Prayer cards available from Harcourt.)

"A Joyful Noise" continued on page 7

# From the TBL Coordinator

March 1, 2007



Photo: Joyce Grelman, FSPA

Charlene Smith, FSPA

Coordinator  
Thea Bowman Legacy  
912 Market Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601-8800  
Tel: 608.791.5618  
Fax: 608.784.7390  
csmith@fspa.org  
www.fspa.org

Dear Friends of Thea,

**In La Crosse.** Good-bye and thank you, Beth Erickson, for five years service as editor of *Thea News*. We will miss you. We wish you and husband Kevin well as you take on additional parenting responsibilities of a new baby daughter Josie Beth born July 20. We have enjoyed working with you and are grateful for the creative, professional way you have helped to hand on Thea's legacy.

Hello and welcome to Mary Pat Hill, OSM, who is our new editor. (See bio on page 7.) We are happy that you are with us, Mary Pat.

**In Pittsburgh.** On May 17, 2006, the 10th annual fundraiser dinner sponsored by the Thea Bowman Black Catholic Education Foundation took place in the club lounge at Heinz Stadium courtesy of Pittsburgh Steelers' owner Dan Rooney. The annual Thea Bowman Foundation award was presented to Mr. Rooney for outstanding support of Catholic education.

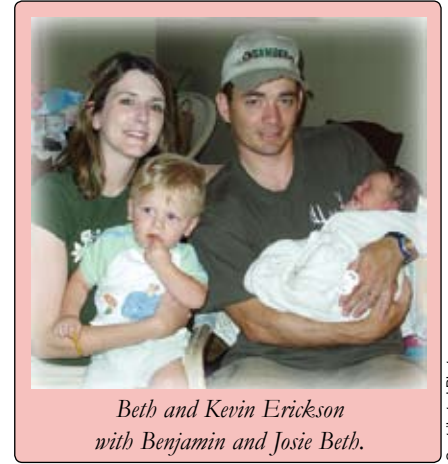
Assisted by Pittsburgh Friends of Thea, Mary Lou Jennings, foundation director, coordinated the successful event. Popular Super Bowl Champion Steeler strong safety Troy Polamalu co-chaired the occasion. Pittsburgh Bishop Donald Wuerl, having just been named Archbishop of Washington, DC, led the invocation.

Rooney met Sister Thea in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in 1985 when both of them received Viterbo College's (now University) prestigious John XXIII award. They became friends. When Thea's bones were ravaged by tumors and she could no longer walk, Rooney gave her a wheelchair that she christened her "Steeler-Mobile."

Currently, Thea scholars are working toward baccalaureate degrees at Catholic University, Duquesne University, Seton Hall University, St. Francis University, and the College of St. Mary's in Omaha.

The 2007 dinner is scheduled for April 19. Same venue, again courtesy of Dan Rooney. Join us.

**In Canton.** Congratulations to Holy Child Jesus School in Mississippi on its 60th anniversary! Alumni, faculty, and parents gathered Thanksgiving weekend for a picnic in the schoolyard, tour of the school, banquet, dance, liturgy, and continental breakfast to mark the occasion. The Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity and the [Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration](#) were saluted for their leadership and generosity to the mission.



Beth and Kevin Erickson with Benjamin and Josie Beth.

Contributed Photo



Photo: Dr. George Jennings

Sister Charlene Smith and Troy Polamalu, football star and co-chair of the Thea Bowman Foundation Fundraiser.



Dan Rooney (l) and Dr. John Murray, Thea Bowman Foundation president.

Photo: Dr. George Jennings

*Charlene*

# Thea Comes Alive through Artistry

by Father Frank Berna, OFM, Ph.D.

Through the artistry of Brother Michael McGrath, Sister Thea Bowman came alive in the chapel of La Salle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The June 28, 2006, evening program served as part of a course and as a public forum.

“Catholic in the USA” was the theme of this year’s special course in the Graduate Theology and Ministry Program at La Salle. Students considered Catholic history and pondered the church’s future. The four evening presentations focused on some of the “giants” of the twentieth century—Dorothy Day, César Chávez, and Thomas Merton. Thea Bowman’s story, the “fourth giant” as presented by Brother Michael, gave each participant the opportunity to believe that, in truly being faithful to one’s own blessings and talents, God will be able to work great things in the present moment.

Entitled “This Little Light,” the presentation is rightly described as a unique worship service. Finding something of himself



“This Little Light of Mine” by Brother Michael McGrath

in her story, Brother McGrath painted Thea’s life in nine scenes. They portray the excitement, color, and imagination that characterize his artistic style. Through his presentation, participants realized that these same characteristics reflected Thea’s life.

Each of McGrath’s paintings has a title of a Gospel spiritual. Ms. Valerie Lee-Jeter, director of worship at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Philadelphia, led the audience in singing the spiritual that served as the title of each print.

With the painting projected onto the chapel wall, Brother McGrath told the story of his first encounter with Sister Thea through an article in *St. Anthony Messenger*. While he never met this Franciscan sister face to face, he came to know her through her words, sisters, and friends. He knows her story so well that he told the segment related to each painting from memory.

With over seventy participants, Thea’s story of courage and hope fell like seed into rich soil. Picture, story, and song engaged everyone intellectually and emotionally. •

## Father Frank Berna

*Father Berna is a Franciscan from the Assumption BVM Province, Franklin, Wisconsin. A native of Philadelphia, he received his BA from Marquette University, MA and MDiv. from Aquinas Institute, and Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Fordham University. Ordained in 1980, he has taught high school at Archbishop Ryan (Philadelphia), been a faculty member and department chair at St. Bonaventure University, and served in administration at Alvernia College. He is beginning his tenth year at La Salle University as director of the Graduate Theology and Ministry Program.*

## Fond Memories from Twins

by Mary Pat Hill, OSM

Liz and Margaret—the Hill Twins as they were known in school—remember their favorite teacher, Sister Thea, with great fondness. Sharing memories of their 6th grade teacher at Blessed Sacrament School, La Crosse, Wisconsin, took Margaret right back: “I can feel her. She had an aura, a presence to you like no one else. It is hard to put into words what drew you to her. She made you feel special.”

Liz recalled, “In all my years in school, Sister Thea was the only teacher who made a connection on a personal level. Her personality was kind and generous. She was unusual. It was her person that kept me drawn to her. She had a warmth and strength that emanated from her.”

Margaret greatly enjoyed music class. “She had a beautiful voice and laugh. She called us her ‘little ones,’ and I loved that. She seemed to take us under her wing.” Another special memory for Margaret was

recollecting that, when she was in high school, she and her former teacher met by chance, and “Sister knew me, even my name.”

Reading was and still is a favorite time for Liz, who remembered how Sister Thea read. “Her voice and inflection mesmerized us. Something in her speech was musical. The boys settled down, too. You could hear a pin drop.”

The Hill Twins agreed that they “loved going to school in sixth grade.” They feel very blessed to have been taught by Sister Thea years before thousands of others were also deeply touched by her presence and gifts. •



*The Hill Twins — Liz (l) and Margaret.*

# Sister Thea Bowman

by Lisa Mladinich

*This puppet show, second in a series of 5 shows (see page 1), follows the one on St. Mary Magdalene.*

**Billy** (*flying around again*)  
Take that  
EVIL! I am  
a follower  
of Jesus  
Christ! I  
am the great,  
the fast, the BRAVE  
Saint Marvin Magdalene!!!!

- Susie** Um, excuse me, Billy?
- Billy** Oh. I didn't see you there. Er... how long have you been standing there listening – er, watching me?
- Susie** Long enough, MARVIN Magdalene!
- Billy** Well, you don't expect me to pretend to be a GIRL, do you?
- Susie** I guess not. Marvin Magdalene. It has a ring to it. Okay. Resume superhero behavior.
- Billy** I can't NOW.
- Susie** Why not?
- Billy** The moment has passed. I'm not inspired any more.
- Susie** Do you need me to tell you another inspiring hero story?
- Billy** You have ANOTHER one?!!!
- Susie** Oh, our Catholic history is FULL of great hero stories.
- Billy** No way.
- Susie** Way.
- Billy** Okay. But let me guess this time.
- Susie** Okay.
- Billy** Is he really big and strong, like me?

- Susie** Nope. Not even a HE. But she was considered tall.
- Billy** Oh, man. Why can't you tell me about some BIG GUYS?
- Susie** Because I think you still could use some work on appreciating the women of our Catholic history, and I've got a great one, and I'm not changing my mind. If you want to travel through time you've got to go where I SAY!
- Billy** Okay. Who is she?
- Susie** Sister Thea Bowman.
- Billy** Sister?
- Susie** Yes, she was a religious nun, a sister.
- Billy** Why isn't she a saint?
- Susie** Somebody's working on that. She probably will be. I think they're already throwing a big party for her in heaven.
- Billy** No way.
- Susie** Way.
- Billy** So, who was she?
- Susie** Maybe I'd better start at the beginning. Sister Thea was born right here in Mississippi almost seventy years ago.
- Billy** Here in Mississippi?
- Susie** Yes, in Canton, to very good Christian parents.
- Billy** They weren't Catholic?
- Susie** Nope. Her father was a Methodist and her mother was an Episcopalian. And her grandfather had been an actual SLAVE.
- Billy** No way.
- Susie** Way. He was a slave, bought and sold in the days when it was legal to buy and sell human beings.
- Billy** That's HORRIBLE.
- Susie** Yeah. Horrible.

- Billy** But that must have made her Grandpa feel just TERRIBLE.
- Susie** It made a lot of people feel terrible. But Thea's father became a doctor and her mother became a teacher.
- Billy** Wow. They started out with big problems and ended up doing very well.
- Susie** Yes. They must have been people of great faith and strong character.
- Billy** Dude. (*nodding his agreement*)
- Susie** Well, because of slavery, things were hard for black families in this country. It set them back, you might say.
- Billy** They needed a superhero to fly in and bop those bad guys...those people-buyers and sellers... right in the... (*catches a look from Susie, remembers*) er... I mean, they needed a superhero to follow Jesus' way of love!
- Susie** Now you're talking, brother Super-dude!
- Billy** Righteous! So this little girl, this girl named Thea... did she follow Jesus' way of love?
- Susie** Boy, did she ever!
- Billy** How did she do it?
- Susie** She was a teacher.
- Billy** Yeah? What did she teach?
- Susie** She taught regular school, but she especially taught joy and love. And she taught people of all colors to respect each other. She taught black people to bring their culture into the Catholic Church and celebrate with Jesus in their own special way! You want to go back in time and listen to her?

## Lisa Robinson

*Lisa Robinson, who lives in Tupelo, Mississippi, is a graphic designer, web designer, and an art teacher in the summer months. Her web site is <[www.lisaovertonrobinson.com](http://www.lisaovertonrobinson.com)>. As volunteers, Lisa and a group of teenagers performed the 5 puppet shows at Saint James Catholic Church in Tupelo.*

# man Puppet Show

**Billy** I sure do! She sounds like a ton of fun! Let's go!

**Susie** Okay. Take my hand, brother Marvin.

**Billy** Hey, cut that out.

**Susie** *(laughs)* Okay. Come on, Billy. Sister Thea, we'd like to hear... the words you spoke to cast out fear!!!!

*(They fly backwards and disappear—Sister Thea appears and speaks to the children in the audience—it might help to have some back-up characters repeating her statements Gospel-style, chanting hallelujahs and singing with her. Here is a suggested rhyme-chant conversation with some puppet characters and with the children in your audience...)*

**Sr. Thea** *(with great joy and humor)*  
Hello out there! My name is Sister Thea. And I am here to speak to you about letting your light shine to the GLORY of God!!!  
Glory hallelujah! Can anyone tell me who the light is that shines inside each one of us?

**Kid 1** Superman?

**Sr. Thea** No, little one. It is not superman. Any other guesses? *(Take guesses from the audience until someone*

ask you: do you have to be WHITE to shine with Jesus' light?

**Kid 1** No way!

**Sr. Thea** You're right! You don't have to be white to shine with Jesus' light. It is all right to shine with that light if you are black or red, brown, yellow or white!

**Kid 2** Amen, Sister Thea!

**Sr. Thea** Now does that light have to be a huge shining light? Does your light have to be very, very, very bright?

**Kid 1** Yes! Like a supernova!!!

**Kid 2** Or a volcano or a humongous light bulb!

**Sr. Thea** Not so, little children, not so! But I see that YOU both have a glow! Your light can be small, not big at all. You can shine with a flicker, you can shine with a glow, but shine you must! It's the only way to go!

**Kid 1** But Sister Thea, HOW do we shine?

**Sr. Thea** You shine when you are kind, you shine when you are good, you shine when you do the things you know that you should. You are pleasing to God when you sing and when you pray, so let's all be candles lit up with love today!!!!

**Kid 2** Sister? Is my light shining when I put my toys away?

**Sr. Thea** Yes, child, that's so right after you play.

**Kid 1** Is my light shining brightly when I listen to a sad friend?

**Sr. Thea** Yes, my precious baby, so that a broken heart can mend. Share the Good News of Jesus Christ by listening, praying, working,

and playing with love in your heart. Bring the Good News to all.

**Kid 2** But Sister, what if they've already heard the Good News?

**Sr. Thea** Tell it to them again! **Do you know anybody who has heard too much good news?** *[actual quote]* And if you teach one person, they will teach another and another. Repeat after me: **EACH ONE TEACH ONE!** *[actual quote]* Wonderful. Louder! **EACH ONE TEACH ONE!**

Very nice! We must spread the news to ALL people and rejoice for it is our greatest gift.

**Kid 2** Then if my friends and I work together, each with our little light....

**Sr. Thea** You've got it, child of Jesus! You'd all be burning bright!

**Kid 1** Sister, what colors can shine again? I can't remember. Was it purple and blue and orange, too?

**Sr. Thea** Listen up, my children, I will teach a game to you. Take the fingers of one hand, hold them up spread out and strong... Now learn the people colors and we all will sing along!

*(Demonstrate the five fingers and count them off as "red, brown, yellow, white, black." It might be funny to have an actual human hand rise up next to Thea for her to count on. Have the children count off with you until they have the order, and then sing this song to the tune of "Glory, glory hallelujah!")* **Sing:**

**Red, brown, yellow,  
white and black,  
Are the colors of our people,  
Everyone is made from God's love,**



**Lisa Mladinich**

*Lisa Mladinich is a Catholic wife and mother, writer, and religious education teacher living in Huntington, New York, with her husband and seven-year-old daughter. Her motto is: "If teaching the faith isn't thrilling, it isn't truthful!" She is currently at work on her first novel, a Catholic murder mystery romance.*



Contributed Photo: Tupelo, Mississippi Production

*guesses Jesus.)* Yes! You have got it right! You have got it right! It is JESUS. Jesus is the LIGHT! Now let me

*"Sister Thea Bowman Puppet Show" continued on page 6*

# “Sister Thea Bowman Puppet Show”

continued from page 5

His truth is marching on!  
Red, brown, yellow, white, and black,  
Each one is so good and lovely,  
Make God smile  
with your bright color.

His truth is marching on!  
Glory, glory hallelujah!  
Glory, glory hallelujah!  
All the colors of our people are  
made in the image of God!

**Kid 2** Sister, what color are you?

**Sr. Thea** I am black, my child.

**Kid 2** I like your dark skin.

**Sr. Thea** Thank you! **I like being black. I like being myself, and I thank God for making me my black self.** [actual quote] I like your skin, too!

**Kid 2** Thanks, Sister! But what if someone tells me that I’m the wrong color and won’t play with me?

**Sr. Thea** You tell that person that THAT’s just bunk because almighty **God does not make junk!** [actual quote]

Come, let’s sing another song. Sister Thea loves to sing. Did you know that Saint Augustine said that when you sing you pray TWICE? It’s true! Songs are a very special way of praying. Now let me teach you to sing my favorite song: *This Little Light of Mine*. Do the gestures with me, okay?

**This little light of mine**  
[index finger up like a candle]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**This little light of mine**  
[index finger up like a candle]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**This little light of mine**  
[index finger up like a candle]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine**  
[arms still open, wave them back and forth]

**Won’t let anyone (blow) it out**  
[mime blowing and shaking head “No”]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**Won’t let anyone (blow) it out**  
[mime blowing and shaking head “No”]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**Won’t let anyone (blow) it out**  
[mime blowing and shaking head “No”]

**I’m gonna let it shine**  
[arms opening up and out in an arc]

**Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!!**  
[arms still open, wave them back and forth]

(note: do not say the word “blow”—  
actually make a blowing sound)

**Sr. Thea** Very nice, children! Praise God.

**Kid 1** Sister Thea, why do you like to sing so much?

**Sr. Thea** I sing because I’m happy! I sing because I’m free! His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me! [sing this, if you know the tune]

**Kid 1** And me?

**Sr. Thea** Yes! He watches all of us! Now I want you to repeat after me: [one line at a time; actual quotes edited from her talks with children]

**“I am somebody. / I’m somebody special. / I’m God’s child. / I can change things. / I can make life better for myself, / for my family, / for my community, / for the church, / for the world. / I make life better when I say yes to God’s will in my life. / And I want to say yes to God. / I want to say yes to life, / yes to hope, / yes to love, / yes to you, / yes to eternity.”**

Sing with me! **Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so!**

Now go out, children, and make a joyful noise unto the LORD!!!!

(She and the others fade back and Susie and Billy reappear.)

**Billy** Wow! Sister Thea is a great hero! And what a joyful NOSE she had!

**Susie** What?

**Billy** She said something about her joyful nose.

**Susie** No, Billy, she said make a joyful NOISE unto the Lord. Noise. She means singing and shouting for joy.

**Billy** Oh. (pause) Well, I thought she had a joyful nose.

**Susie** Oh good grief.

**Billy** And her ears were pretty joyful, too.

**Susie** (mildly disgusted) All right. I’ll see ya later. (more cheerfully) I gotta go share the Good News! (exits)

**Billy** (calling after her) And her eyelids! Definitely joyful! (to the audience) Didn’t you think so? And what a smile. (sighs) She made me happy to just be me, alive in God’s loving hands. Yeah, that Sister Thea is one great hero. (singing, dancing and exiting) He’s got the whole world in His hands.... •

Tell us your Thea news:

**Thea News**

912 Market Street  
La Crosse, WI  
54601-8800

or  
e-mail  
[csmith@fspa.org](mailto:csmith@fspa.org)



Contributed Photo: Tupelo, Mississippi Production

# Thea Notes . . .

## Anniversary

The **Thea Bowman House** in Utica, New York, is celebrating 20 years of “love, growth, and compassion.” A special anniversary dinner took place on November 16, 2006.

## Dedication

On September 3, 2006, **Christ Our Hope Catholic Church** in Lithonia, Georgia, *dedicated its hall* to Sister Thea Bowman. Atlanta’s Archbishop, Most Rev. Wilton Gregory, led the celebration.

The naming of the hall was proposed by parishioner Etta Herriot, who believes that “Sister Thea lived her life as if a light in darkness. She was an inspiration for so many people, not the least of all, for me.” Etta shared these reasons with Kysa Daniels, a journalist who wrote about the dedication.



Painting by Jim Effler

## In Print

**St. Anthony Messenger’s** feature article “Holy People Walk the Talk” by Carol Ann Morrow (February 2007 issue) highlights holy persons that are included as models of faith in the U.S. Bishops’ 2006 *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. The inspiring modern trio—Sister Thea Bowman, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, and Dorothy Day (in Jim Effler’s beautiful painting; left column)—are featured in the *Catechism*. In the section on the The Creed: The Faith Professed, Thea powerfully opens Chapter 8 on Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Bruce Nieli, Paulist priest, in “Uniting America Spiritually” in **America** (April 24-May 1, 2006), writes about the legacy of Isaac Thomas Hecker, the founder of the Paulists. Describing contemporary examples of U.S. Catholics “in the Hecker camp,” Nieli raises up Thea as “a veritable icon of the spirit of jubilee.”

## Stained-Glass Window

**Holy Redeemer Catholic Church** in San Antonio, Texas, has a beautiful stained-glass window with three modern church leaders: Archbishop James Lyke, OFM, Sister Thea, and Father Clarence Rivers. Their spirits are reflected with the major heading on the window: “We’ve come this far by faith.” •



Mary Pat Hill, OSM

*Mary Pat Hill is a member of the Servants of Mary of Ladysmith, Wisconsin. She has been an elementary grade school teacher and a staff member of social justice organizations. Currently, her freelance work includes computer training and assistance, social justice projects, and the Hill Connections web site <hillconnections.org>, linking Contemplation and Social Justice, faith with action.*

## “A Joyful Noise” *continued from page 1*

I started writing and longed to speak with someone who had known Sister Thea. I could write about her, but I didn’t have a sense of her. I logged on to her order’s web site and contacted Sister Charlene Smith, FSPA, the coordinator for the Thea Bowman Legacy in La Crosse, Wisconsin, and a friend of Thea’s. She was a font of details, full of affection for Thea’s cause, and very kindly put me in touch with another Thea friend, Sister Dorothy Ann Kundering, FSPA, in Jackson, Mississippi.

I reached Sister Dorothy Ann in the early morning hours before her long day of working with AIDS patients. Sister Dorothy Ann had actually lived with Thea during her final years and bubbled over with an easy joy and quiet good humor in her memories of their time together. In the course of our conversation, I realized something: Thea would not have liked the pedestal I had placed her on. She was funny, she sang like a house on fire, she was full of light and life, and the kids would have adored her. I discovered that my problem wasn’t finding a way to make Thea and her cause entertaining; it was that there was far more material than I had time to address and not enough space to do justice to her mission, her personality, and, above all, her faith in Jesus. I was galvanized by the encouragement and faith of Sisters Charlene and

Dorothy Ann. Neither seemed the least bit protective in the artificial sense; they would project no image of sterile piety or fragile saintliness on their friend who once told an inquiring child, “A saint is a sinner who just keeps on trying!” Thea was strong. Thea was family. And Thea was a hoot. I changed course in my writing and began to let Thea speak for herself.

When the time finally arrived on that sunny Tuesday morning in June, the children sat cross-legged on the tile floor of their parish center; their eyes lit up with expectation, chins craned forward, smiling eagerly. The curtains trembled a moment, and then the puppets made their madcap entrances, provoking belly laughs and giggles all around. For fifteen minutes of rhythmic speech, songs and wordplay, slapstick and Gospel truth, the children laughed, called out answers, and rejoiced in the antics of Lisa Robinson and her merry band of volunteers. The applause was heartfelt. Thea’s powerful life had been celebrated in a way the children would not soon forget. But above all, her Lord had been glorified in word and song—a tender message and a joyful noise to which Thea herself would have said “Amen.” •

*For more information on Lisa’s free puppet ministry, click on [www.catholicmom.com/puppet.htm](http://www.catholicmom.com/puppet.htm) or e-mail her at [lisamladinich@optonline.net](mailto:lisamladinich@optonline.net).*

*Now available: Spanish translations of Lisa’s scripts by Catholic writer and professional translator, Maria M. Rivera!*

# Thea Resources Are Readily Available

Learn more about Thea.  
Share her inspiring story with others.



Regina Dick, FSP © Daughters of St. Paul

## Art

**Sister Thea Bowman Series** by Michael O'Neill McGrath. Five paintings inspired by the life of Thea. Pictured at right: "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" poster (20"x26"). **Bee Still Studio**; beestill@aol.com; 215.836.0343.



## Books

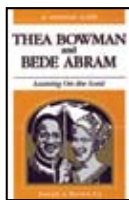
**Blessed Among All Women: Women Saints, Prophets, and Witnesses for Our Time** by Robert Ellsberg. Thea is included with the section: "Blessed Are the Meek." Crossroad Publishing Company; \$19.95; store.cpcbooks.com; 800-707-0670.



**Great Women of Faith: Inspiration for Action** by Sue Stanton with illustrations by Charlie Craig. Thea is one of the women featured. Paulist Press; \$12.95; paulistpress.com; 800.218.1903.



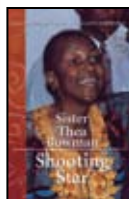
**(A) Retreat with Thea Bowman and Bede Abram: Leaning on the Lord** by Joseph A. Brown, SJ. St. Anthony Messenger Press; \$9.95; search.americancatholic.org; 800.488.0488.



**Saints to Lean On: Spiritual Companions for Illness and Disability** by Janice McCrane, SSJ. "Thea: Our Companion in Joy-Filled Suffering." St. Anthony Messenger Press; \$13.95; search.americancatholic.org; 800.488.0488.



**Sister Thea Bowman Shooting Star** edited by Celestine Cepress, FSPA, and with a forward by Mike Wallace, this book has selected writings and speeches of



Thea's. \$9.95. **Viterbo University Bookstore**. 800.482.8398.

**Sweet, Sweet Spirit: Prayer Services from the Black Catholic Church** by Joseph A. Brown, SJ, with Fernand Cheri, III, OFM. A prayer service in honor of Thea is included. St. Anthony Messenger Press; \$9.95; search.americancatholic.org; 800.488.0488.



## Icon

**Thea, Joyous Troubadour of God.** Icon created by Maryam Gossling, FSPA. Greeting cards for \$1 per card; 11"x14" posters, \$15; 4"x5" plaques, \$12.50; 11"x14" plaques, \$25. Add \$3.50 for shipping and handling for orders up to \$15—\$4.50 for larger orders. Send to Maryam Gossling, 2733 Lindale Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402; e-mail gosslingmaryam@mcleodusa.net; or call 319.360.2559.



## Videos

**Almost Home: Living with Suffering and Dying.** A Gabriel Award, Wilbur Award, and Silver Angel Award winning video, it shares Thea's own words about her personal experience of living with a terminal illness. Liguori Publications; 30 minutes; \$39.95; www.liguori.org; 800.325.9521.



**Sr. Thea: Her Own Story.** Made shortly before her death, this video explores Thea's childhood, religious calling, and aspirations for humanity. It contains interviews with Thea and her friends. Oblate Media and Communications; 50 minutes; \$19.99; www.videoswithvalues.org; 800.233.4629.



## Thea News

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## Thea News

912 Market Street  
La Crosse, WI 54601-8800  
Tel: 608.791.5618  
Fax: 608.784.7390  
www.fspa.org

*Executive editor:*  
Charlene Smith, FSPA  
csmith@fspa.org  
*Managing editor:*  
Mary Pat Hill, OSM  
info@hillconnections.org

Limited number of printed copies available. Inquire:  
csmith@fspa.org

