

BOOKS, NONFICTION:

The Emergent Christ: Exploring the Meaning of Catholic in an Evolutionary Universe

By Ilia Delio, OSF

Reviewed by Lucy Slinger, FSPA

Synopsis: There is much food for thought in Franciscan Sister Ilia Delio's latest book. Scholarly yet speculatively she invites the reader to explore and define how the latest scientific understanding of cosmology links with scriptural convictions, both as Christians today and as the church in the future. Drawing deeply on the work of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and others like Merton and Thomas Berry she proposes a need for radical change in traditional Christian religions to fulfill the biblical "making of new heaven and earth." She believes that very aspect of creation provides influence in an evolutionary perspective of life. Most fascinating to me is her examination of the word "catholic" as it is rooted in "whole-making." She says, "Being catholic 'in the broad sense of this word... is to heal and make whole and thus help unify creation in love'" (p. 154). It is her proposition of what we are called to see this second coming of Christ, rooted in the evolutionary process of unifying all creation in love. She issues a call—to base our perceptions and actions on Franciscan love by doing our individual part for self, for Omni point, for Earth and for God—that Christ may again be present.

Environmental Science and Theology in Dialogue

By Russell Butkus and Steven Kolmes

Reviewed by Lucy Slinger, FSPA

This is a heavy, highly referenced theoretical presentation on the history of philosophical, theological and scientific/ecological thought in relation to sustainability practices needed today. Russell Butkus and Steven Kolmes argue well that all three disciplines invite and support each other and are not in conflict as long believed by folds of the Industrial and Information Ages. They present an integrated process for examining sustainability issues and apply it to relevant examples. My deepest appreciation is for the succinct new definitions of sustainability developed from the Franciscan-based ecotheology of Dennis Edwards, and also one of science and ecology, addressing key practices and principles required for something to be truly sustainable. These new definitions push sustainability into the realm of integral ecology developed by Sean Esbjörn-Hargens and Michael E. Zimmerman.

DVDs:

Back to Eden: Simple. Sustainable. Solutions.

104 minutes

Executive Producer: Michael Barrett

Reviewed by Lucy Slinger, FSPA

Back to Eden is a new feature documentary that follows one man's revolutionary

approach to organic gardening. "It's all about the covering!" says Paul Gautschi, enthusiastically describing his gardening method that mimics the self-sustaining design of nature. The film shows how gardeners and farmers worldwide can easily transform their agricultural practices into a simple and productive process of growing food. Revealing critical issues such as soil preparation, fertilization, irrigation, weed and pest control, crop rotation and pH issues, the documentary focuses on proactive solutions, leaving preceding documentary films like *Food, Inc.* and *Dirt!* to delve into background politics. *Back to Eden* offers not only a fresh perspective on critical environmental issues but digs deeper into true stories of experiencing faith, seeking relationship and the power of forming community. Highlighted interviews include specialists in human ecology, nutrition, horticulture and agriculture.

DISCUSSION COURSES:

Hungry for Change: Food, Ethics and Sustainability

Northwest Earth Institute, 2011

Includes self-guided group discussion materials. See

http://www.nwei.org/discussion_courses/course-offerings/hungry-for-change-food-ethics-and-sustainability

Recommended by Lucy Slinger, FSPA

As described by Northwest Earth Institute, "*Hungry for Change* explores the true meaning of the phrase 'you are what you eat.' In a flexible four to six session schedule, this discussion course challenges participants to examine their roles, not only as consumers of food, but also as creators—of food, of systems, and of the world we all live in. Each session includes readings, short assignments and accompanying discussion questions that address the impact of individual food choices on a range of issues, including ecosystem health, the treatment of factory and farm workers, and the global economy. Many sessions also include video clips, podcasts and websites to deepen the learning experience. *Hungry for Change* helps participants commit to lasting change by developing and sharing personal action plans with each session."