

Health Reach moves office to new location

ROCHESTER — Health Reach, a community health program of St. Mary's Hospital, has relocated its offices to 265 Warwick Ave., just off Arnett Boulevard.

Now in its second year of operation, Health Reach provides inner-city residents with programs in health education, and the prevention and detection of disease. To date, more than 11,000 people have participated in community screening programs sponsored by Health Reach, which is funded by a state grant.

Ongoing programs include disease screenings, diabetes education, substance-abuse counseling, and breast-cancer screening and education.

For information or a schedule of community screenings, call 716/464-5800.

Nursing service seeks meal program workers

ROCHESTER — Visiting Nurse Service, 1609 E. Main St., needs volunteers for its Meals on Wheels program.

Workers are in extra demand at this time of year because summer volunteers have either returned to school or gone south for the winter. Currently, volunteers are especially needed on Thursdays and Fridays to deliver meals to frail, elderly and homebound city residents. Volunteers can serve on a weekly or monthly basis.

Call Carol Zoltner at 716/482-0120, ext. 415 or 425 for details.

Parish solicits bulletins

FRANKLINVILLE — Catholic Courier readers are asked to send copies of their parish bulletin to: Father Michael O'Hara, St. Philomena's Roman Catholic Church, Plymouth Avenue, Franklinville, N.Y. 14737.

Members of the Franklinville parish are perusing various bulletins for new ideas about liturgies, fundraising and activities.

Author's focus too narrow for broad topic

The Web of the Universe: Jung, the "New Physics," and Human Spirituality, by John Hitchcock; Paulist Press (New York, N.Y., 1991); 243 pages; \$14.95.

By Father Sebastian A. Falcone
Guest contributor

For two generations now, physicists have wrestled with the mind-boggling dimensions of relativity and quantum theory. This major revolution in human thought — more so, this dauntless interpretation of the universe, its origins, and basic structure — still eludes the non-scientific mind. The cosmos' essential spiritual meaning even eludes most physicists.

Such is the basic premise from which Hitchcock begins.

The Web of the Universe, written by physicist John Hitchcock, is the author's third published work. It is also the sixth work to appear in Paulist's "Jung and Spirituality Series."

The book has for its agenda the convergences of Jungian psychology, contemporary physics, and the spiritual quest of human beings. The project is a splendid and even creative one. But the outcome undercuts the promise of exhilaration with a ragtag, inadequate pleading.

One welcomes assertions such as: "It is consistent with my point of view, which sees physical reality as a form of the 'word of God,' to make the same claim for factuality." (p. 172)

Another claim he makes: "In thus encountering the unity of spirit and matter, we have taken a major step toward a unified worldview and a unified God-image." (p. 206)

On closer analysis, however, more is asserted than demonstrated. The book evolves — rather than develops — out of a juxtaposition — rather than a correlation — of symbols and patterns. The result is a "lazy susan" of analogies relating to consciousness and spiritual growth through its qualities of circumambulation, oscillation, opening and deepening, transformation, and integration.

By way of summary, Hitchcock regards the universe as a process of growing consciousness. The primary function of spirituality and religion is to guide humanity in the cosmic process of "awakening." Such a cosmos is not a dualism of matter and spirit, but rather a complex web of different manifestations of "spirit-matter" (the hyphenation is critical), shaped by an overarching "Patterning."

Since spirit is always interlinked with matter, the science of physics — especially in its high-energy phase — must be invited to broaden its horizon so as to encompass the universe's

spiritual and material dimensions.

Jung's psychology has a role to play in the transformation of physics into an all-encompassing science. Jungian psychology affords both the right spirituality and good physics.

Overall, Hitchcock works within the purview set in motion in 1975 by Fritjof Capra's *The Tao of Physics* and followed by at least another half dozen books since.

Three crucial questions are apropos: Is the agenda for physics writ too large by Hitchcock? Are the parallels between spirituality and physics too tenuous? Will the thesis find disfavor from colleagues? This reviewer is inclined to look for an affirmative answer in all three instances.

In the final analysis, the point at issue is not whether "spirit-matter" — even within the appealing argument the author presents for "the spiritual imperative of physics" — is valid. The flaw consists in trying to redefine physics as a science whose speculations identify with the whole world of reality and with the entire range of spirituality.

Here overstatement looms large.

Father Falcone is on the faculty of St. Bernard's Institute.



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