

# Author invites all to dance with Divine Partner

*May I Have This Dance?*, by Joyce Rupp; (Ave Maria Press, 1992); 182 pages; \$8.95.

By Dr. Christine M. Bochen  
Guest contributor

Readers of Sister Joyce Rupp's earlier book, *Fresh Bread*, will be pleased to learn that she has just published another book in the same vein.

In *May I Have This Dance?* Sister Rupp invites us — month by month — to reflect on dimensions of our relationship with God in prayer. The book takes its title from the metaphor the author uses to describe prayer as "a time to dance with our Divine Partner, to let God take the lead, and to enjoy the true delight and source of life that God is for us."

## BOOK REVIEW

Each month Sister Rupp develops a theme she introduces with a poem, a Scripture passage, and a brief reflection. She also offers a variety of suggestions for prayer, which include writing exercises and guided meditations in a journal.

Daily Scripture readings related to the monthly theme appear in an Appendix. The monthly themes, such as "Leaning on God," "Dry Bones," "Watered Gardens," "A Rushing Wind," and "Hearts on Fire," are keyed to the seasons of the liturgical year and the seasons of nature, as well as the seasons of our inner lives.

In December, for example, Sister Rupp focuses our attention on "Homecoming." Our God is "a God of exiles and strangers" who calls us home. This theme is especially right for Advent, which is after all "a season for exiles. It is a time of waiting, a time of yearning for light to dispel the Darkness."

The terms of exile, Sister Rupp reminds us, are different for all of us. For some, exile takes the form of spiritual or psychological separation; for others, a sense of exile from their bodies of their true selves. Some are exiled from others: from the church because of who they are or how they think, or from society because of their color or creed. Still others find their homes have become a place of exile, as they find themselves imprisoned there by fear of violence.

In one way or another we are all exiles, but we are not alone. The God who spoke words of consolation and strength to Israel continues to speak to us today. God does not abandon us; He calls us home. This is the message we hear each Advent. "Advent is a time of homecoming, a time of joy and enthusiasm as we hear again God's promises to be with us and to resettle us in love." This, too, is the gift of Christmas: God-with-us.

Sister Rupp's reflection for January, titled "The Road of Life," is very appropriate for the beginning of a new year. "Our life," she writes, "is a journey. We are always 'on the road.' Each time another January greets us we have the opportunity to pause, to see where we have been, to notice how far we have come, and to ponder how that

journey has been for us."

The Scriptures are full of accounts about people on journeys: Sarah and Abraham; the Exodus people; Mary and Joseph on the crowded road to Bethlehem; the prodigal son on his troubled way; Jesus on the road to Jerusalem, to Bethany, to Gethsemane; the couple on the road to Emmaus. Each story reminds us that, as we enter the unknown of the new year, there is risk, pain and joy ahead. But we do not travel alone for God goes with us on our life journey.


Sister Rupp, a member of the Servants of Mary and a spiritual director, draws from the gifts of her ministry in this book by helping us to see ourselves more clearly; by inviting us to hear God speaking to us through the Scriptures and the events of our lives; and by reminding us again and again that our lives are the stuff of our prayer.

In fact, we might think of *May I Have This Dance?* as a kind of prayer book. It is not a book to read at a sitting, but rather a book to return to time and again throughout the year. One might, as Sister Rupp herself suggests, use it for a monthly mini-retreat, a time to stop and pay attention to the rhythm of our lives, or the lack of it, and to notice whether we are in tune or out of step.

Then we might return to that theme during the month in reading Scripture and in prayer. I sense that if we did we would find ourselves saying a resounding "Yes!" to the God who asks "May I Have This Dance?"

Bochen is a professor at Nazareth College of Rochester.

# The Community Is Our Strongest Asset.

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## St. Mary's in Waterloo seeks information on school's alumni

WATERLOO — The newly formed Alumni Committee at St. Mary's School is currently seeking information about alumni. The committee eventually hopes to publish news about graduates and individuals who attended the school for any period of time.

The committee has also scheduled a Mass in memory of all deceased school alumni on Sunday, Feb. 28, 1993, at 2

p.m. in the church, 25 Center St.

For information about the committee or to provide news about alumni, members of the classes from 1920-60 should call Isabelle Young at 315/539-3544. Individuals from the classes of 1961-92 should call 315/539-5210.

Alumni may also call the rectory at 315/539-2944.

## Sister Gannon marks jubilee

HAWTHORNE, N.Y. — Sister M. Andrew Gannon, OP, a Seneca Falls native, is celebrating 50 years as a Dominican Sister of Hawthorne.

Sister Gannon joined two other congregation members during an Oct. 24 celebration at the community's motherhouse in Hawthorne, N.Y.

She has earned degrees from New York's Barnard College, Columbia University and Fordham University. Sister Gannon currently serves at St. Rose's Home in New York City, where she cares for incurable cancer patients.

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shown.*

Isaiah 9:1

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