

— a&e —

Resurrecting Spirituality

REVIEW BY DONOVAN ANDREWS

Putting on the Mind of Christ? The title alone is enough to call forth memories of church masses that left me squirming in my seat, practically breaking out in hives, wanting to just stand up and say "No, no, no! You've got it all mixed up!" And right along with those memories comes that defensive tendency many develop in the face of an ideology that says that their sexuality is nothing short of an abomination to God.

I thought long about the opportunity to review this book, and finally decided that I could, knowing that after much personal spiritual work, my relationship with Spirit could no longer be shaken. I thought I could get my feet wet from an academic standpoint before I took the full plunge into graduate school.

What I didn't realize was that in my hands was a book that would not only shake my relationship with Spirit, but refine it.

To claim that one book is capable of single-handedly reviving the truth of the entire Christian religion is a strong statement, but Jim Marion may well have written that book. A former monk and current public policy lawyer, Marion is considered by many to be a modern day mystic, the kind of Christian that historically would have eventually become a saint.

His application of Jean Piaget's seven-level model of consciousness development to the spiritual development of individual and society is interspersed with scriptural quotations and personal anecdotes. This alone would have been enough to open my mind and

deepen my spiritual understanding, but Marion goes on to tackle subjects such as reincarnation, psychics, channeling, chakras and the body's energy system, the problem of Jesus' last name, and other theological briar patches the average Christian encounters.

Perhaps most importantly (and most potentially controversial) is Marion's revival of the idea that the Kingdom of Heaven is not something achieved after death if we follow all the rules laid down by Scripture and those that interpret it. He posits that the Kingdom is the highest state of consciousness, which we all may achieve here in this life.

Marion argues that Jesus tried in many ways to convey this, but was attempting to describe a level of awareness that cannot be understood through words. In this misunderstanding of Jesus' teachings, the early church started on a track that carried it further away from the truth that lay at the core. To some, including myself at first, this may seem obvious, but Marion takes what for most is an intuitive revelation and builds upon that foundation with scriptural citations and counter-arguments for common Church positions.

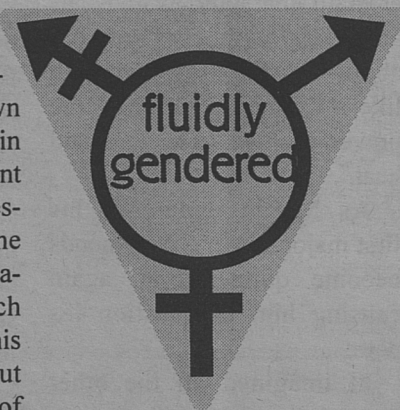
Marion also addresses, with a decided note of finality, the subject of his own homosexuality and its place in his faith. He, like many, went through long periods of depression, guilt, struggle, and shame over the idea of same-sex relations. However, after much inner work, he decided that his sexuality was anything but wrong, and was in fact part of

his journey in accepting his "dark side" and bringing about psychic wholeness. He cites other traditions that "deliberately make use of sexuality to heal psychic wounds and build the psychic power to make breakthroughs into higher levels of consciousness."

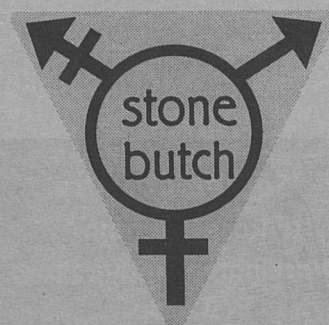
I could discuss the concepts, teaching and spiritual guidelines laid out in this book for hours on end, but it would in no way compare to the confidence and clarity of Marion's words. Drawing from sources as diverse as St. Theresa of Avila, Gary Zukav, and Carlos Castaneda, Marion does indeed succeed in creating a book "concerned with the development of human consciousness." Reading it has done nothing short of transforming my own spiritual awareness and helped to bring about a reconciliation and healing of a long-estranged relationship with Christianity.

This alone should make this required reading for not just Christians, and not just the gay community, but for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of what this life, this planet, and our souls are all about.

Donovan Andrews lives in Cornwall ▼




Putting on the Mind of Christ
Jim Marion
Hampton Roads Publishing Co.
296 pages



Ben Franklin
Creative Crafts & Framing
Monday-Saturday 9-9
Sunday 11-5
518 Shelburne Road
Next to Mall 189
862-0646
www.benfranklin.baweb.com
**Get discounts
join our Craft Club!**

frame it
If it's got anything to do with frames and framing, we've got it.


"The Best Restaurant in Town!"
-John Powers, *The Boston Globe*



Selected as a "Best Restaurant" in **WHERE THE LOCALS EAT.**

A warm, welcoming, special place.

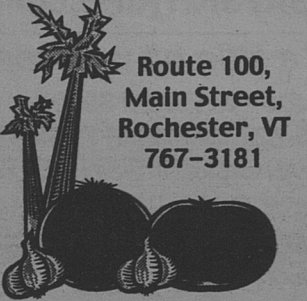
Great feasts from Thailand, Vietnam, Burma, China, Indonesia!



Five Spice Cafe
175 Church St.
Burlington
864-4045


Local delivery through Four Star Delivery Express • 865-FOOD

The STORE of Rochester
Rochester's friendliest fresh market and state liquor store!




Route 100,
Main Street,
Rochester, VT
767-3181

What do you take to bed?



Whatever you take along for pleasure, consider this: We may feel safe in Vermont, but we're not immune to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

Don't take a chance...
take a condom



Vermont AIDS Hotline 1.800.882.AIDS
TTY 1.800.319.3141