

# “Supreme and Fiery Force”

BY CARMEN ACEVEDO BUTCHER

Always a pioneer, Hildegard of Bingen is one of the first writers to include illustrations with her text, not as “mere decoration” but as integral to her theology. The importance to her thought of the Holy Spirit—the “supreme and fiery force”—is most evident in these brilliant miniature illuminations.

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**D**eclared a Doctor of the Church in 2012, Hildegard of Bingen joined Augustine of Hippo, Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, twenty-nine other men, and the trio of Teresa of Ávila, Catherine of Siena, and Thérèse of Liseux, but she had held that title unofficially for centuries. Contemporaries respected her highly; for example, University of Paris Master Odo of Soissons asked her perspective on a scholastic theological debate: “O wise woman, . . . we would like you to resolve a certain problem for us. Many contend that God is not both paternity and divinity. Would you please explain to us in a letter what you perceive in the heavens about this matter.”<sup>1</sup> And Barbara Newman expresses most modern scholars’ view of Hildegard’s papal elevation: “It appears that the Roman tortoise has caught up with the dashing seer of Bingen at last.”<sup>2</sup> From the esteem of her twelfth-century contemporaries to us who cherish her transformative theology, Hildegard offers much spiritual nourishment because her life was a sustained “experience of God,” as Carl Jung describes our one necessity, and also because, as Avis Clendenen observes, her worldview is “basically therapeutic: humanity-in-creation has the purpose and mission

of being healed and saved and, in turn, of healing and saving,...an enterprise...mediated through the gift of Christ."<sup>3</sup>

Only a complex woman with a uniquely gifted voice could have flourished as an influential theologian in a world of church authorities who were largely suspicious of women's gifts.<sup>4</sup> This Benedictine-abbess-artist-cosmologist-composer-counselor-dietitian-dramatist-epistoler-healer-linguist-mystic-naturalist-philosopher-poet-political-consultant-preacher-prophet-and-visionary wrote theological, naturalistic, botanical, medicinal, and dietary texts, also letters, liturgical songs, poems, and the first known morality play, while supervising brilliant miniature illuminations.<sup>5</sup> Regarding these miniatures, Bernard McGinn explains that for Hildegard, "theology is as much visual as verbal – neither side can be neglected in trying to gain an understanding of her teaching."<sup>6</sup> Heinrich Schipperges describes her as "a celebrant of great mysteries" who is relevant today for her belief that "human beings are responsible not only for their own lives and personal happiness but for their fellow humans, for the environment, for the world of the future, and indeed for the universe as a whole."<sup>7</sup> In short, Hildegard can help us regain our empathy as humans.

The Trinitarian theme of salvation history unifies her diverse, vision-inspired oeuvre of prose, poetry, liturgical music, illuminations, and drama. Her *Ordo virtutum* (*Play of the Virtues*) reveals the heart of her work, dependent on Christ's grace and intimacy with the Holy Spirit. In it, the heroine Anima, the feminine soul, finds in the personified feminine virtues the strength to triumph over interior evil. Beverly Mayne Kienzle describes this Hildegardian focus:

Christ's redemptive power and grace allow the human to work toward her own salvation, and the Holy Spirit inspires and guides this process of collective and individual construction. The Spirit sends the virtues to assist humans in the battle against sin...and...moves...the human...in a heavenly direction [towards]...renewal.<sup>8</sup>

Living in the Information Age, we profoundly need renewal, so Hildegard's "particularly vivid...perception of the Holy Spirit"<sup>9</sup> gains new significance in our third millennium. By focusing primarily on two of her major works, plus her poems and illuminations, we can explore her expansive, organic *Weltanschauung* and discover that for this "Sibyl of the Rhine," orthodox Christian doctrine and mystical consciousness were never separate; instead, doctrine was an ongoing divine "encounter" for Hildegard, whose intelligent theology is thankfully not head-bound. Beginning in early childhood, her visions animated doctrine throughout her life, and her orthodox faith – fed daily through *lectio divina* Bible meditation and liturgical prayer – nurtured her mystical consciousness; as Pope Benedict XVI remarked when he proclaimed her a Doctor of the Church: "Theological reflection enabled Hildegard to organize and understand, at least in part, the content of her visions."<sup>10</sup>

Benedict XVI also delineates Hildegard's non-dualistic experience of doctrine and mystical consciousness:

In Saint Hildegard of Bingen there is a wonderful harmony between teaching and daily life. In her, the search for God's will in the imitation of Christ was expressed in the constant practice of virtue, which she exercised with supreme generosity and which she nourished from biblical, liturgical, and patristic roots in the light of the Rule of Saint Benedict. Her persevering practice of obedience, simplicity, charity, and hospitality was especially visible. In her desire to belong completely to the Lord, this Benedictine Abbess was able to bring together rare human gifts, keen intelligence and an ability to penetrate heavenly realities.

So Hildegard's theology knows no divide between orthodoxy's grace and orthopraxy's action; thus, when she was writing her first major theological work, *Scivias*, she was also founding the Rupertsberg convent, engaging in the pastoral intensive vocation of a Benedictine abbess, working on poems and musical compositions later collected in her *Symphonia*, drafting the *Ordo virtutum* (an early version of which concludes *Scivias*), and writing letters to secular and religious leaders and lay-people. For her, no gap existed between "praying" and "doing." All was one in God's love.

But how can a modern reader grasp the visions of a medieval woman? The short answer is—by embracing their beautiful spiritual truths until they become practice. Hildegard begins *Scivias* with a vibrant invitation: "Look with me!" and its twenty-six recorded visions show that her basic premise is Augustinian: God is merciful and creation is good (if fallen). She improves, however, on Augustine in her persistent articulation of a glass-half-full, God-is-love theology.

Illuminating the intense visions that became Hildegard's *Scivias* are thirty-five equally striking miniatures. Hildegard knew the art of illumination and probably supervised the design and creation of these in her own scriptorium at the new abbey of Rupertsberg. The illuminated paintings are done in a fresh naïf style, not unlike Hildegard's own peculiar, powerful, and grammatically loose Latin. What the miniatures lack in formal polish is more than compensated by their bright colors and numinous designs. Always a pioneer, Hildegard is one of the earliest writers to include illustrations alongside the written text, not as "mere decoration" but as integral to her theology.<sup>11</sup> In *Scivias*, Hildegard puts her original visions to concrete use in creating an orthodox handbook for good Christian living; she wants to teach followers of Christ how to live in love. So while her visions are stunning, Hildegard's theology is always grounded—literally so in images of planting and growing, making the sensitive reader imagine her as an avid gardener.



**Figure 1:** Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *Scivias*, plate 1: THE VISIONARY. Photo: Wikimedia Commons, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard\\_von\\_Bingen.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard_von_Bingen.jpg). Public domain.

In her *Scivias* preface, Hildegard shares how the divine Voice commanded her to articulate what she had seen and heard in her visions, to help others come to know God:

I'm the living Light. I make the darkness day and have chosen you to see great wonders, though I've humbled you on earth. You're often depressed and timid, and you're very insecure. Because you're conscientious, you feel guilty, and chronic physical pain

has thoroughly scarred you. But the deep mysteries of God have saturated you, too, as has humility. So now you must give others an intelligible account of what you see with your inner eye and what you hear with your inner ear. Your testimony will help them. As a result, others will learn how to know their Creator. They'll no longer refuse to adore God.

Hildegard sees adoring God as the foundation of knowing and trusting the Holy Spirit for healing, forgiveness, and new life. She announces her theology's singing heart in *Scivias*:

Don't let yourself forget that God's grace rewards not only those who never slip, but also those who bend and fall. So sing! The song of rejoicing softens hard hearts. It makes tears of godly sorrow flow from them. Singing summons the Holy Spirit. Happy praises offered in simplicity and love lead the faithful to complete harmony, without discord. Don't stop singing.

In the miniature that accompanies the *Scivias* preface (figure 1), the Holy Spirit's five-tongued orange beam of divine Pentecostal inspiration pierces the roof, descending on Hildegard's head where she is sitting in her cell writing the visions she receives, stylus in hand and wax tablet balanced on her knee; pillars on her left and right represent the Old and New Covenants, and her loyal friend Volmar stands on her right, ready to help.<sup>12</sup>

In this preface, Hildegard voices her nervousness as she faces the task of writing her first book. In one of the most famous examples of "writer's block," she prays for further instructions:

That voice made me—a heartbroken, fragile creature—begin to write, though my hand was shaking and I was traumatized by more illnesses than I could even begin to name. As I started this task, I looked to the living Light, asking, "But what should I write down?" and that Brightness commanded, "Be simple. Be pure. Write down what you see and hear!"

Short for the Latin *Scito vias Domini*, "Know the Ways of the Lord," *Scivias* is organized into three books, reflecting the medieval notion of perfection in the Trinity. Book one has six visions covering creation, the Fall, and God's relationship with humanity and the world; book two has seven visions concentrating on the Savior and the process of redemption, describing salvation through Christ's incarnation and its presence in the contemporary world through the Church's sacraments; and book three has thirteen visions exploring the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation history.<sup>13</sup> As Elizabeth A. Dreyer points out, no reader finishes *Scivias* without experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit: "It is through persons like Hildegard that the Holy Spirit is brought down to earth."<sup>14</sup> In *Scivias*, God reminds us how this happens: "[I]f you love Me, I'll hug you to Me. I'll warm you with Holy-Spirit fire."



**Figure 2:** Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *Book of Divine Works*, I.1: ON THE ORIGIN OF LIFE. Photo: Wikimedia Commons, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard\\_first\\_vision.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard_first_vision.jpg). Public domain.

"Holy-Spirit fire" also informs Hildegard's poetry, sung liturgically. In it, she praises the Holy Spirit's life-sustaining strength and wisdom:

You soar, sustain, and stir,  
climb, dive, and sing  
Your way through this world,  
giving life to every beating  
heart.

You never end.

You keep circling, crossing over us

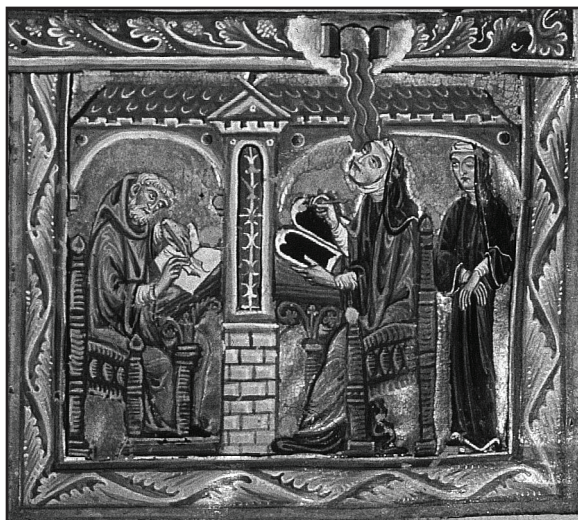
on three wings—

one speeds through heaven,

one holds the earth together with a kiss as light as dew,

and one whispers over, under, and through our lives.

We praise You, Wisdom!



**Figure 3:** Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *Book of Divine Works*, I.1: ON THE ORIGIN OF LIFE, COMPANION IMAGE. Photo: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard-reading-and-writing.jpg>. Public domain.

This poem shows, as Newman states, that Hildegard sees God flowing through nature as the “living, fiery force that...breathes divine spirit into all creation.”<sup>15</sup> This “fiery force” appears in Hildegard’s cosmological text *Book of Divine Works* as a dazzling winged female figure, Caritas, whose iconography associates her specifically with the Holy Spirit. Caritas opens Hildegard’s book with this bold assertion:

I am the supreme and fiery force who kindled every living spark.... As I circled the whirling sphere with my upper wings (that is, with wisdom), I ordered it rightly. And I am the fiery life of the essence of God: I flame above the beauty of the fields; I shine in the waters; I burn in the sun, the moon, and the stars. And, with the airy wind, I quicken all things vitally by an unseen, all-sustaining life.... I am Life.... Mine is the blast of the resounding Word through which all

creation came to be, and I quickened all things with my breath.... I am Life, whole and undivided – not hewn from any stone, nor budded from branches, nor rooted in virile strength; but all that lives has its root in Me.<sup>16</sup>

As the female figure Caritas shows, Hildegard's experiences with the quickening and sustaining Holy Spirit convinced her that the feminine should not be excluded from the life of the Trinity.<sup>17</sup> In this text's accompanying miniature (figure 2), we see the full equity of the winged female Spirit of Love with the Father and the Son: "The figure of Love, surmounted by fatherly Goodness, carries the Lamb, symbolizing tenderness. Love has exerted itself and produced the creation, which it now protects with its encircling wings while trampling evil underfoot."<sup>18</sup> Based on Acts 17:28 – "in God we live and move and have our being" – this daring speech by Caritas shows that Hildegard saw "no buffer zone between Creator and creature"; instead, Newman explains, feminine metaphors of the Creatrix (such as Caritas) "place the accent on immanence" (while masculine imagery of the Creator "tends to stress God's transcendence").<sup>19</sup>

Thus, Hildegard's attitude towards nature is rooted in the feminine, as Newman notes: "Hildegard's keen sense of divine immanence led her to envisage the creative power not as a force propelling the world from without but as an ambience enfolding it and quickening it from within.... [She sensed the] affinity between Wisdom and the cosmos so strongly that she identified the two"; thus, Sapientia is also Creatrix.<sup>20</sup> Tellingly, from the bottom of the winged-Caritas miniature illumination, a blazing stream of divine inspiration flows through a tiny window and into a companion miniature below, where it touches the upturned face of Hildegard, holding stylus and wax tablet.<sup>21</sup>

We witness this divine immanence in another of Hildegard's liturgical hymns:

The Holy Spirit animates  
all, moves  
all, roots  
all, forgives  
all, cleanses  
all, erases  
all  
our past mistakes and then  
puts medicine on our wounds.  
We praise this Spirit of incandescence  
for awakening  
and reawakening  
all  
creation.

The Holy Spirit who “animates all” and “forgives all” is responsible for the most well-known aspect of Hildegard’s theology – *viriditas*, that “feminine life principle of moist greenness, fertility, and lushness”<sup>22</sup> giving Hildegard’s vision of creation verdancy (Latin *viridis*). In *Scivias*, she describes the “greening” power of the Holy Spirit in the Incarnation, saying Christ was made incarnate “in the ardor of charity, miraculously and without the stain or weight of sin, through the Holy Spirit’s sweet greenness in the dawn of blessed virginity.”<sup>23</sup> In one hymn, she calls Mary “the greenest twig” on whom the sun of God’s Holy Spirit shone to produce the miraculous “flowering” of God’s divine-human Son, revealing that for Hildegard the “fiery but not arid” Holy Spirit is “life-giving, inundating and hydrating the soul, bringing greenness and fruitfulness,” as Anne Hunt articulates in *The Trinity: Insights from the Mystics*.<sup>24</sup>

This celestial *viriditas* is the “green” energy of agape love pulsing as God’s Spirit through the entire universe. Hildegard’s unique use of this Latin word makes it something of a neologism in her work. She perceives *viriditas* as first found in Eden’s green garden but also as the green of any twig we see in this present moment. The opposite of “greening” energy is spiritual desiccation, for in *Ordo virtutum* she says that sin made “[t]he original abundance of green...shrivel up.” Her concept of *viriditas* is ripe with meaning because she recognizes life’s interconnectedness, as she says in *Scivias*: “The soul circulates through the body like sap through a tree, maturing a person the way sap helps a tree turn green and grow flowers and fruit.”

This nurturing greenness of God’s Spirit flows through Hildegard’s music:

Spirit of fire,  
Paraclete, our Comforter,  
You’re the *Live* in *alive*,  
the *Be* in every creature’s *being*,  
the *Breathe* in every *breath* on earth. ...

Holy Life-Giver,  
Doctor of the desperate,  
Healer of everyone broken past hope,  
Medicine for all wounds,  
Fire of love,  
Joy of hearts,  
fragrant Strength,  
sparkling Fountain,  
in You we contemplate  
how God goes looking for those who are lost  
and reconciles those who are at odds with Him.  
Break our chains!



**Figure 4:** Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *Scivias*, plate 11: *THE BLUE CHRIST*. Photo: Wikimedia Commons, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister\\_des\\_Hildegardis-Codex\\_003\\_cuted.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_des_Hildegardis-Codex_003_cuted.jpg). Public domain.

You bring people together.  
 You curl clouds, whirl winds,  
 send rain on rocks, sing in creeks,  
 and turn the lush earth green.  
 You teach those who listen,  
 breathing joy and wisdom into them.

We praise You for these gifts,  
Light-giver,  
Sound of joy,  
Wonder of being alive,  
Hope of every person,  
and our strongest Good.

We can also learn much about Hildegard's understanding of the Holy Spirit from the second vision in *Scivias* book two, where we encounter the unforgettable "Man in Sapphire Blue: A Study in Compassion," as Matthew Fox names it; also called "True Trinity in True Unity," "The Blue Man," and "The Blue Christ," this beautiful illumination represents the Trinity, whom Hildegard says is "One light, three persons, one God."<sup>25</sup> To fully appreciate The Blue Christ (figure 4), we must know that in her writings Hildegard associates sky-blue with God's love and that sapphire, one of her favorite gems, is what we now call lapis lazuli, the very expensive precious stone crushed to form the blue pigment prized by artists.<sup>26</sup>

Anne Hunt describes this illumination well:

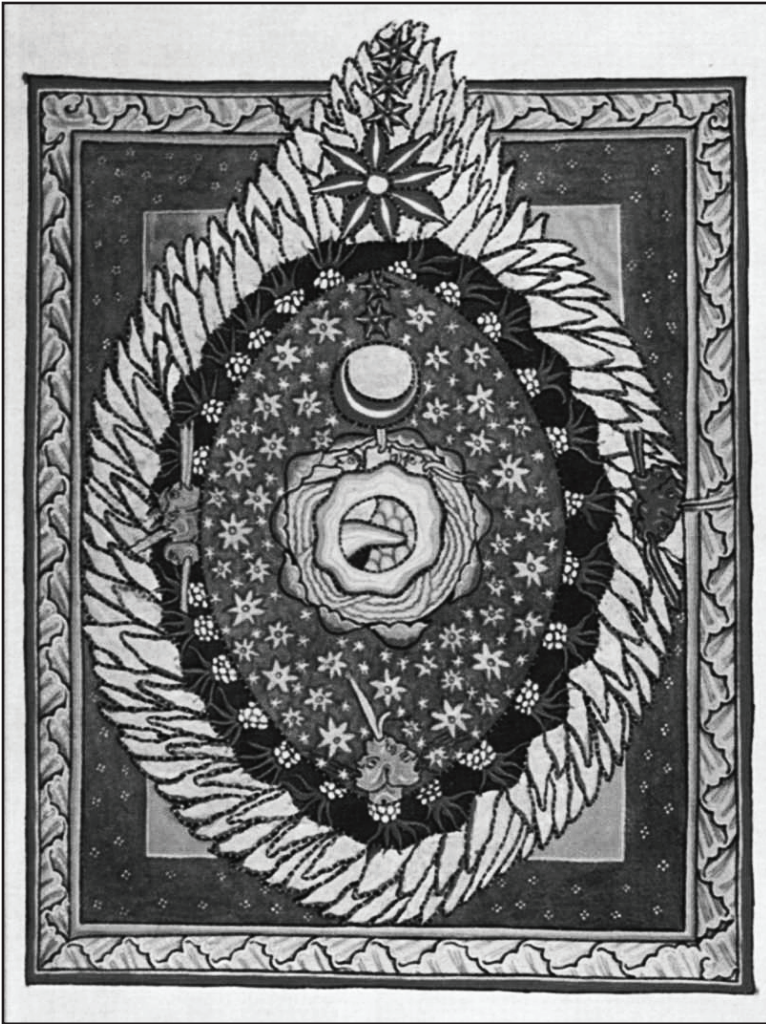
The figure is very simply dressed and has long hair. With neither beard nor veil, the figure is not obviously male or female. Its hands are raised in what would seem to be a gesture of prayer or blessing.... The figure is surrounded by two concentric halos of light, the inner one a bright fiery flame-like color, the outer one a brilliant shimmering silvery white. The same watery sapphire blue surrounds the outer circle and fills the exquisite border of the illumination. The composure of this central figure exudes a sense of humility, gentleness, compassion, and serenity. The illumination as a whole radiates an energy and vitality. The quivering lines in the circles of light heighten this effect.<sup>27</sup>

Hildegard recalls her Blue Christ vision in this way:

Then I saw a bright light, and in this light the figure of a man the color of sapphire, which was all blazing with a gentle glowing fire. And that bright light bathed the whole of the glowing fire, and the glowing fire bathed the bright light; and the bright light and the glowing fire poured over the whole human figure, so that the three were one light in one power of potential.<sup>28</sup>

Hildegard's use here of the bathing motif emphasizes the reciprocal nature of this flowing bright light and glowing fire pouring over the central human figure in *perichoresis*, the mutual indwelling of the three divine persons who is the heart of Christianity's relational nature.<sup>29</sup> Then Hildegard interprets her Blue Christ vision:

You see a bright light, which without any flaw of illusion, deficiency or deception designates the Father; and in this light the figure of a



**Figure 5:** Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179), *Scivias*, plate 4: THE EGG OF THE UNIVERSE. PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Eibingen,\\_Benediktinerinnenabtei\\_Sankt\\_Hildegard\\_manuscripts#mediaviewer/File:Meister\\_des\\_Hildegardis-Codex\\_001.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Eibingen,_Benediktinerinnenabtei_Sankt_Hildegard_manuscripts#mediaviewer/File:Meister_des_Hildegardis-Codex_001.jpg). Public domain.

man the color of sapphire, which without any flaw of obstinacy, envy or iniquity designates the Son, Who was begotten of the Father in Divinity before time began, and then within time was incarnate in the world in Humanity; which is all blazing with a gentle glowing fire, which fire without any flaw of aridity, mortality or darkness designates the Holy Spirit, by Whom the Only-Begotten of God was

conceived in the flesh and born of the Virgin within time and poured the true light into the World.<sup>30</sup>

In other words, the compassionate, incarnate Son stands at the center of this image, hands open in prayer and blessing; around Christ is a fiery inner circle of flaming orange ever pulsing, cohering, and enlivening, which represents the Holy Spirit;<sup>31</sup> the shimmering outer rim of radiant silvery-white light represents God the Father; the aperture above Christ's head and thin white outline surrounding his body symbolize Christ's begottenness of the Father, and the illumination's womb-like quality reminds us that Christ is God the Father's child "Who washed and dried our wounds" and "exuded the sweetest balm."<sup>32</sup> Thus we see that Hildegard chooses orange for the blazing, glowing, non-arid, gentle "fire of the Holy Spirit" as binding and sustaining all life together; blue, color of water and sky, as the dominant hue in her image of the loving Word; and white light for the Father.<sup>33</sup>

The importance of the Holy Spirit in Hildegard's theology is even more evident in "The Egg of the Universe" (figure 5), the illumination for the third vision in *Scivias* book one, considered the most "astonishing" of her startling visions.<sup>34</sup> Hildegard visualizes the universe as a cosmic egg where God, humanity, and nature enjoy the interrelatedness of interdependency, and the egg's wholeness represents "the majesty and mystery of the all-powerful God, the hope of the faithful."<sup>35</sup> This miniature depicting the universe in the ur-form of the world egg, illuminated by stars and planets and refreshed by winds, has the human home at creation's center.<sup>36</sup> Hildegard's cosmic egg also resembles a nest, symbolizing God's Alpha-and-Omega nature, and when we recall how Abelard suggested that the Holy Spirit's divine goodness gives life to the world like a bird warms its egg,<sup>37</sup> we see that the miniature's outermost ovoid of shining fire signifies God's Spirit holding the cosmos together with all-embracing divine love, bathing the world in the celestial fire that incubates new life.<sup>38</sup> As Newman writes, "Nothing is more distinctively Hildegardian than this sense of universal life, of a world aflame with vitality."<sup>39</sup>

In everything Hildegard did, she followed Benedict's advice in his *Rule*: "Listen with the ears of your heart." We can be thankful that her twelfth-century prose, poems, hymns, and illuminations survived into our twenty-first century hearts, who need the renewing love of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

## NOTES

1 Joseph L. Baird and Radd K. Ehrman, translators, *Letters of Hildegard of Bingen*, Volume I (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 110 (Letter 40).

2 Barbara Newman, "Behind the Elevation of St. Hildegard," *History of Christianity* blog, American Society of Church History, [www.churchhistory.org/blogs/blog/behind-the-elevation-of-st-hildegard/](http://www.churchhistory.org/blogs/blog/behind-the-elevation-of-st-hildegard/) (accessed February 26, 2015).

3 Avis Clendenen, *Experiencing Hildegard: Jungian Perspectives* (Wilmette, IL: Chiron Publications, 2012), viii; 90.

4 Anne Hunt, *The Trinity: Insights from the Mystics* (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2010), 31. See also Avis Clendenen, *Experiencing Hildegard*, 6, for an excellent description of the twelfth century's "prevalent misogyny."

5 Some material in this article is adapted from Carmen Acevedo Butcher, *St. Hildegard of Bingen, Doctor of the Church: A Spiritual Reader* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2013), in particular, several selections of Hildegard's quoted prose and hymns to the Holy Spirit, found translated in that volume; see xvi, 12, 52, 50, v, 26, 31, 36, 92, 5, 59, 35, 28, 18, 92, and 141. Thus, any unattributed quotations are understood to be from this source.

6 Quoted in Hunt, *The Trinity*, 34.

7 Heinrich Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen: Her Life, Times and Visions*, translated by John Cumming (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 7.

8 Beverly Mayne Kienzle, "Constructing Heaven in Hildegard of Bingen's *Expositiones euangeliorum*," *Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages*, edited by Carolyn A. Muessig and Ad Putter (New York: Routledge, 2007), 34, 36. Popular, *Ordo virtutum* is often performed today.

9 Hunt, *The Trinity*, 45.

10 For both quotations here, see Benedict XVI, "Proclaiming Saint Hildegard of Bingen, professed nun of the Order of Saint Benedict, a Doctor of the Universal Church" (*The Vatican*, October 7, 2012), [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_apl\\_20121007\\_ildegarda-bingen\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_letters/documents/hf_ben-xvi_apl_20121007_ildegarda-bingen_en.html) (accessed February 26, 2015).

11 Hunt, *The Trinity*, 24.

12 See this illumination in Schipperges's *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, plate 19, page 41; see it also on the cover of Bruce Hozeski, *Hildegard of Bingen's Scivias* (Santa Fe, NM: Bear & Co., 1986). To see all of the *Scivias* miniatures, visit the website of Benedictine Abbey of St. Hildegard (also called Eibingen Abbey) at [www.abtei-st-hildegard.de/?page\\_id=4721](http://www.abtei-st-hildegard.de/?page_id=4721) (accessed February 26, 2015). To see the Rupertsberg manuscript itself, see [www.abtei-st-hildegard.de/?p=554](http://www.abtei-st-hildegard.de/?p=554) (accessed February 26, 2015).

For a taste of Hildegard's music, see *A Feather on the Breath of God: Sequences and Hymns by Abbess Hildegard of Bingen*, with Gothic Voices, directed by Christopher Page (Hyperion DCA 66039, Compact disc, 1981) and Linn Maxwell, *Hildegard of Bingen and the Living Light* (Alto, MI: Alto Productions, 2012), [www.hildegardthemovie.com](http://www.hildegardthemovie.com) (accessed February 26, 2015).

13 Elizabeth A. Dreyer, *Passionate Spirituality: Hildegard of Bingen and Hadewijch of Brabant* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005), 79.

14 Elizabeth A. Dreyer, *Holy Power, Holy Presence: Rediscovering Medieval Metaphors for the Holy Spirit* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2007), 83.

15 Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 88.

16 Newman, *God and Goddesses*, 88-89, combined with Barbara Newman *Sister of Wisdom: St. Hildegard's Theology of the Feminine* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 66, 69-70.

17 Clendenen, *Experiencing Hildegard*, 130.

18 Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, Plate 33, 66.

19 Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, 68; Newman, *God and Goddesses*, 138-139; Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, 64-65.

20 Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, 65, 64.

21 Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, Plate 24, 50.

22 Clendenen, *Experiencing Hildegard*, 128.

23 William Harmless, S. J., *Mystics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 59-60, 74-75.

24 Hunt, *The Trinity*, 45.

25 Matthew Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen* (Rochester, VT: Bear & Co., 2002), Plate 1, 33, 35, see also the cover of *Illuminations*; Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, Plate 35, 72.

26 Hunt, *The Trinity*, 43, 38.

27 *Ibid.*, 38

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*, 38-39.

31 *Ibid.*, 39.

32 *Ibid.*, 44.

33 Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen*, 33.

34 Frances Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages*, Library of Medieval

Women (Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 1995), 43; see the cover for Hozeski, *Hildegard von Bingen's Mystical Visions*; Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen*, Plate 4, 48ff.; and Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, Plate 48, 49.

35 Nancy Fierro, *Hildegard of Bingen and Her Vision of the Feminine* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 1994), 25; Beer, *Women and Mystical Experience in the Middle Ages* 45.

36 Hozeski, *Hildegard of Bingen's Mystical Visions*, xii; Schipperges, *The World of Hildegard of Bingen*, 97.

37 Constance Mews, "Religious Thinker: 'A Frail Human Being' on Fiery Life," *Voice of the Living Light: Hildegard of Bingen and Her World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998), 59.

38 Hozeski, *Hildegard of Bingen's Scivias*, 26-36; Hozeski, *Hildegard of Bingen's Mystical Visions*, xii; Fox, *Illuminations of Hildegard of Bingen*, 53.

39 Newman, *Sister of Wisdom*, 67.

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