

posed to keep the moral precepts of Buddhism better than monks or lay men do! The fact that women have not yet organized results in further degradation. Some Buddhist sisters, especially the elderly sisters, have no financial support from their family or any other means of livelihood. The source of recruitment for Buddhist nunneries has also disappeared.

In Hong Kong, maybe because of the Chinese and British cultural background, women have more freedom and less pressure. The concept of equality of women and man is more acceptable on the one hand, and, on the other hand, women of these countries have more opportunities or have been allowed to organize themselves better than the women in Thailand or Sri Lanka.

Much research still has to be done on the disappearance of women's orders in Thailand and Sri Lanka and the difficulty of organizing in these countries. As far as the Abbess knew, there was a Thai woman who wished to revive the female order in Thailand. So she went to Taiwan to have her ordination. Then she returned to Thailand and with some public support she established a nunnery. Because Thailand recognizes only one denomination (Theravada Bsun) and hers was another (Mahayana Bsun), her starting an order was made almost impossible. For the last eleven years now she has been the only nun in Thailand, and it has been impossible for her to recruit others and create a movement in Buddhism. The Reverend Wing Ming thinks that the reason also may be, as some perceive, that women in Sri Lanka and Thailand have low status. There is some assumption that, as suppression gets stronger, the ability of women to organize becomes more and more difficult and they cease to try.

Nancy Jackman is an active feminist and is particularly interested in the implications for women of the Charter of Rights.

The Journey*

*I listen to the agony of God —
I who am fed,
who never yet went hungry for a day.
I see the dead —
the children starved for lack of bread —
I see and try to pray.*

*I listen to the agony of God —
I who am warm
who never yet lacked a sheltering home.
In dull alarm
the dispossessed of hut and farm
aimless and transient roam.*

*I listen to the agony of God —
I who am strong
with health and love and laughter in my soul.
I see a throng
of stunted children reared in wrong
and wish to make them whole.*

*I listen to the agony of God —
But know full well
That not until I share their bitter cry —
earth's pain and hell —
can God within my spirit dwell
to bring the Kingdom nigh.*

*I was hungry not just for food
but for peace that comes from a pure heart.
I was thirsty not for water
but for peace that satiates the passionate
thirst for war.
I was naked not for clothes
but for that beautiful dignity of men and
women for their bodies.*

*I was homeless not for a shelter made of bricks
but for a heart that understands, that covers,
that loves.*

*I was hungry; I was thirsty; I was naked;
I was homeless.
Yet I found peace, peace and dignity and
a heart that loves.*

Nancy Telfer
Toronto, Ontario

This poem is an excerpt from a major choral work commissioned by Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada for its conference, "The Female Connection."

*Reprinted from *No Longer Strangers: A Resource for Women and Worship*, ed. I. Gjerding and K. Kinnamon. Ecumenical project of Lutheran World Federation, World Council of Churches, World Student Christian Federation, and World Young Women's Christian Association, 1983.