



Thea's Song: The Life of Thea Bowman

By Charlene Smith, John Feister

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The authorized biography of a modern-day heroine, one of the most significant figures in modern American Catholicism.

Thea Bowman was a Black girl born in civil-rights-era Memphis, Mississippi who joined a convent of white Catholic sisters in Wisconsin, and went on to inspire millions of all faiths and none. She fought prejudice, sadness, and brought joy to others even during her struggle with cancer and long after her untimely death in 1990.

Thea's motto, Let me live until I die! comes alive in this enlightening and moving work that includes never-before-seen archival writings, interviews, and photographs.

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Editorial Review

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Sister Thea Bowman gained world renown as a scholar, singer, and speaker, promoting intercultural awareness and connectedness in the Catholic Church, which had been fairly cool to African Americans. Born in 1937, she was raised in the small black town of Canton, Mississippi, converted to Catholicism at the age of 10, and joined the Franciscan order at age 15. Despite the culture shock of white La Crosse, Wisconsin, and the racism and sexism within the broader church, Bowman found confirmation of her calling and eventual acceptance of her exuberance and push for inclusion. She was resistant to social injustice and insistent on the healing power of religion and music. As a teacher and a founder of the Institute for Black Catholic Studies at Xavier University in New Orleans, she helped to promote the black Catholic identity movement before she died of breast cancer at the age of 52. Thea's own writings, interspersed throughout the book, give the reader a sense of her lively voice. Personal stories and family photographs add to the warmth of this recollection of the life of an extraordinary woman. --Vanessa Bush

Review

Captivating . . . This is a story that will rivet your attention from beginning to end. --Fr. Joseph F. Girzone, author, Joshua

Read this marvelous new biography and meet a woman who will show you what it means, even in the midst of death, to live. --James Martin, SJ, author, My Life with the Saints

The authors have chosen a very appropriate title for Thea's biography, for in the words of the psalmist, God put a new song in her mouth which she continues to sing today, challenging us to be instruments of God's peace and love. --Sister Antona Ebo, FSM, National Black Sisters Conference

About the Author

Charlene Smith, FSPA, was a friend of Thea Bowman for 35 years and served as Coordinator of the Thea Bowman Legacy and executive editor of Thea News. She is currently Treasurer of the Thea Bowman Black Catholic Education Foundation.

John Feister has been an editor at St. Anthony Messenger Press since 1989, and is founding editor of AmericanCatholic.org. He has written several books with Richard Rohr, including their most recent, Things Hidden.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Judith Joiner:

Do you have favorite book? When you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to understand everything in the world. Each book has different aim or goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They can be reading whatever they take because their hobby will be reading a book. Consider the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man feel need book after they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you'll have this Thea's Song: The Life of Thea Bowman.

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Jack Murray:

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