

## WILD MERCY: Women's Wisdom Across the Spiritual Spectrum

At last! Women's voices are rising as they never have before – rising above dominant religious and political paradigms, rising above the panic of current events and the fractiousness of the human family, rising from the ashes in which the feminine has been buried alive for millennia. Yet it is not all about ascent to some heightened realm of detachment. It's also about fully descending into the terrible beauty of this world and making friends with embodiment.

It is our time – our time to open to the cries of the world, to pause and take the pain into our hearts where it is transformed by love and then, from a space of deep listening, step up. This is not a solitary task, enacted by a slew of individual women jostling for their place at the table. This is an expansion of generosity, an affirmation of mutual belonging, a collective cry for women's wisdom and a shared response of caring, of tending, of community.

It is also our time to flourish. To take refuge in our companionship, to make art, write songs, grow food and flowers, raise conscious children. Engaging in life-giving practices resources us so that we may be resources for each other.

The women mystics and goddesses of all spiritual traditions are connected to an aquifer – a deep wellspring of wisdom and vitality – that not only does the world urgently need but for which the world is at last ready. Thirsty. On fire. From these timeless sources we can draw cups of mercy, of healing, of intelligence and humor and hope, and pass them around in a spirit of celebration and inclusiveness.

We are embracing key issues that many women are carrying in their hearts – matters such as care for the earth, standing with those on the margins, sexuality and relationships, cultivating contemplative life, and longing for the divine. We are exploring the wisdom of women mystics and goddesses who serve as way-showers for navigating that particular soul-terrain. We are claiming our power and courage, yes, and also affirming the holiness of our vulnerability and unknowingness.