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Harriet Jackson Scarupa

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Continuing Historic Role Under New Name

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Divinity School

By Harriet Jackson Scarupa

It is often said that Howard University began in prayer. If so, the Howard University Divinity School is the direct descendant of that prayer.

On November 14, the school will hold dedication ceremonies to mark its renaming (from the "School of Religion"), its new facility in northeast Washington (acquired in 1977), and to launch a five-year, \$5 million fund-raising drive.

The name change, approved by the university's Board of Trustees last July, was designed to bring the school into conformity with other major university-related divinity schools, such as those at Harvard, Yale and Duke, and to more accurately reflect the school's educational purpose.

"The name 'School of Religion' does not really denote what we in fact do. Our major thrust is the professional preparation

of persons for ministry rather than offering courses in religion or religions," explains Lawrence N. Jones, dean since 1975.

"We are trying to broaden the concept of what ministry is. If you look at Jesus' example, his customary approach to people was to say, 'Who's sick here?', 'Who's hurting here?', 'Who's hungry here?', 'Who's crippled here?'. . . . Then he would try to minister to their need and having done that he would say, 'Now this is what God is about.'

"And so, we have been trying to say to the student, 'You have not exhausted your ministry when you preach on Sunday or lead worship. You may have to take up advocacy roles. You may have to be a community organizer. You may have to be involved in politics. You may have to do any number of things that are aimed at improving the quality of life and of humanizing existence for people in the communities that you serve.'"

Historically, the expression of the Black impulse for freedom has often been tied to that primary vehicle of Black religious expression in this country—the church. Abolitionists in the mid-1800s and civil rights activists in the mid-1900s both found a forum, support, inspiration—as well as leaders and followers—within the church. Examples abound of Black leaders for social justice who were (or are) also clergymen, with Martin Luther King, Jr., being the most obvious.

The linkage of the church with the freedom movement is, of course, but one of the indices of the impact of the Black church upon the Black community. Jones, who teaches a course on Afro-American church history, readily shares some others: “The only stable institutions in the Black community—owned, controlled, directed by Black people—are the Black churches. . . . Black churches represent the largest concentration of wealth generated in Black communities that is extant today and if you look at most Black communities you will see that the churches are the chief sponsors of day care facilities, senior citizens centers, Head-Start projects, Meals-on-Wheels, housing projects. . . . Sixty-two percent of the Black people of this country acknowledge affiliation with some religious institution. . . . The churches are the only place where the overwhelming majority of Black people have a face in a society where Black people are still largely faceless. . . . Whatever their drawbacks and deficiencies, the churches continue to be the dominant institutions in the Black community that have persisted through time and that’s just really the case.”

One is tempted to add “amen,” but then Jones directs the conversation back to the subject at hand, the divinity school. “The existence of the divinity school at Howard University,” he adds, “is recognition on the part of the university of the critical role that churches and church leader-

ship play in the Black community.”

In a sense, that recognition has been there from the beginning when on November 19, 1866 some concerned members of the First Congregational Church in Washington, D.C., first raised the idea of finding some mechanism to train Black preachers to serve the country’s newly-emancipated citizens. The following evening, 10 of them got together in a prayer meeting to further explore the idea. Among them, the devoutly religious Gen. Oliver O. Howard, the Civil War hero who was commissioner of the Freedmen’s Bureau. The meeting resulted in a formal proposal to establish “The Howard Theological Seminary” (named in honor of Gen. Howard.)

“In regard to this meeting,” read the minutes of that 114-year-old gathering, “it may be remarked that the movings and guidance of the Holy Spirit seemed to be plainly recognized, and that every consideration and procedure was characterized by a most profound sense of Christian obligation and privilege, especially in view of the Southern-Harvest field.”

Later, the concept for an institution bearing the general’s name was broadened to become “a University for the education of youth in the liberal arts and sciences.” Yet the university’s founders never abandoned their concern with training Black preachers. This need was especially urgent, Jones observes, “because after the Civil War, Blacks abandoned white churches in overwhelming numbers. So the demand for leadership [in Black churches] was just tremendous.”

On January 6, 1868, formal instruction in religion began at Howard University for those “accredited as preachers and others looking forward to the work.” In 1870, a plan of organization for a full-fledged theological department was adopted by the university trustees. The aim of the department, as stated in the organizational plan, was “to train men to be preachers of the Gospel, especially such preachers as the colored people of our country require. The effort therefore will be to cultivate

earnest piety, sound scholarship and right habits of thought and expression.”

On September 15, 1871, the department opened with John B. Reeve, a Black minister-scholar, as the first dean. He and John M. Langston of the law department, in fact, were the only two Black deans in Howard’s earliest history.

As one reads accounts written by some of the university’s early white religious educators, one is struck by the (unconscious) chord of paternalism that often seems to run through their perceptions. These men frequently refer to themselves as “devoted friends of the colored people” and repeatedly stress the need to “uplift” the poor dark “heathen” both in the South and in Africa (which they refer to as “The Dark Continent.”)

Jones acknowledges this paternalistic chord but argues that it be viewed in perspective. “There was some ambiguity that surrounded the whole Abolitionist movement,” he observes. “There were some people, for example, who opposed slavery and wanted to see it abolished but who did not at the same time affirm the equality of Blacks with whites. They saw their mission to elevate Blacks by exposing them to the ‘civilizing’ effects of Christianity. So, yes, there was a lot of cultural imperialism involved. But what you have to see, though, is that the perception of Blacks about what was going on was quite different than that of such whites. Blacks were taking their cues from the Declaration of Independence and the Bible and from both of these sources they drew support for their own knowledge of their full humanity.”

Any lingering paternalism was wiped out after 1926, Jones believes, with the appointment of Mordecai W. Johnson, as Howard’s first Black president. By then, the Department of Theology had already evolved into the School of Religion.

Later, under Benjamin E. Mays, who served as dean from 1934 to 1940, a vigorous campaign was launched to get the school accredited. The school moved to the more spacious quarters of the Carnegie building, increased its library holdings

⁸ and generally upgraded its academic programs.

In 1939, a year before Mays left for Atlanta to become president of Morehouse College, the school received accreditation from the American Association of Theological Schools. "That," says Jones today, "was an important milestone. It was as if the school were saying, 'We want to be measured by the same standards that any other theological school is measured.'"

But the added prestige accreditation status brought couldn't erase some of the serious problems plaguing the school since its inception. Foremost among them was money—or the lack thereof.

Rayford W. Logan, in his book, "Howard University, The First Hundred Years," refers again and again to the financial problems faced by the department and its successor, the School of Religion. At one point, he calls the Department of Theology "the poor cousin in the University." At another point, he describes the School of Religion as "the weakest of the professional schools, in part because of the general lack of financial support" and still again he characterizes it as continuing "in the doldrums."

The two main reasons for these financial difficulties have not disappeared from the present scene. The first is that the school's non-denominational status—which provides such a rich intellectual milieu for students and faculty—complicates its ability to attract funds. Because the school is non-denominational it cannot harness large amounts of funds from any particular denomination the way denominationally-affiliated divinity schools can.

The second reason for the school's money problems relate to the issue of separation of church and state. Since 1928, Howard has received a good share of its operating budget from the federal government through annual Congressional appropriations. Yet, because of the principle of separation of church and state, no federal funds can be earmarked for the divinity school. [From the substan-

tive law of Congress on December 13, 1928, which amended Section 8 of the Act of Incorporation of Howard University: "Annual appropriations are hereby authorized to aid in the construction, development, improvement, and maintenance of the University, *no part of which shall be used for religious instruction.*"] What this means is that the school's budget is totally funded through fees, gifts, grants and income from the university's own modest endowment fund.

III

Though the Howard University Divinity School is probably at its strongest point in history today, its financial needs continue to press. The school, for example, wants to be able to increase the amount of student financial aid, erect a learning resource center, set up extensive continuing education programs, launch an undergraduate program in religion (in conjunction with the College of Liberal Arts) and establish endowed chairs in honor of two of the giant figures associated with the school: Benjamin E. Mays and Howard Thurman.

These two names point out something important. Despite its financial problems, the school has attracted (and continues to attract) a highly influential faculty. Thurman, who served as dean of the chapel and professor of social ethics in the School of Religion during the '30s and early '40s, has been called "a 20th century holy man" and "a living saint." His ideas on the possibilities of experiencing a direct and intimate relationship with God and of the unity and sacredness of all life have found passionate believers from all races, creeds and walks of life. Likewise, Benjamin E. Mays' writings on the Black church, and the late William Stuart Nelson's philosophical formulations on non-violence and pacifism, have left indelible marks on the religious and social canvas of America. And these are just three examples.

Today, the school is one of three predominantly-Black theological schools in the country that is fully accredited by the American Association of Theological Schools. The other two—Virginia Union School of Theology and the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta—are both members of clusters or consortia and their accreditation rests on their membership in such groupings. While Howard's school is a member of the Washington Theological Consortium, its accreditation is not dependent on that fact. The school, then, is the only predominantly-Black theological institution in the country that is accredited solely on the basis of its own educational programs.

The school offers areas of study leading to three advanced degrees. The Master of Divinity program prepares men and women for the ministry of the church as pastors and in such related fields as chaplaincies, Christian education and staff positions within denominations. The Doctor of Ministry program meets the needs of those who wish to engage in an advanced level of preparation for the ministry, while the Master of Arts in Religious Studies program is designed for those interested in teaching, in continuing studies in religion and theology or in preparing for further advanced degrees.

In addition to these programs, the school's Institute for Urban Religious Studies offers non-degree courses for clergy and lay persons who want to strengthen their ministerial skills and theological understandings.

Throughout the degree programs runs a dual purpose. On one hand, the school's curriculum reflects that of major predominantly-white theological schools and it seeks to turn out graduates whose academic knowledge is on par with graduates of such institutions. On the other hand, the school recognizes its special responsibilities to the Black communities from which most of its students come and in which most of its graduates serve. And that's where the whole idea of "broaden-

ing the concept of ministry," as Jones puts it, comes in.

"Most of the communities in which most of our graduates will go are going to be urban and will be characterized by all of the social pathologies and economic and educational disabilities that afflict the masses of Black people," Jones observes. "Our view is that somehow the Black pastor, who often tends to be the only 'professional' in the community, has to be equipped to assist in addressing these problems and to be or to empower others to be agents for social change.

"A quotation we frequently cite around here is that 'while you are sentenced to death, you are also sentenced to life.' I think so often we can get so consumed with our thoughts about death and our preparation for life after death that we tolerate conditions in life that are in themselves contradictions of God's intention in creating people. But what we try to communicate to our students here is that they must use their skills to try to improve these conditions." One of the means: the development of a curriculum within an urban focus (a development that was enhanced by a \$150,000 grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.)

A glance through the catalogue provides ready examples of how the academic offerings of the school seek to connect with the needs of urban underserved poor Black communities. Thus, a course on "Educational Ministries with Youth" "explores the dynamics of urban life that contribute to the formation of healthy or unhealthy youth, with emphasis on sensitizing congregational leadership to creative methods." Another "The Church and Social Welfare," is described as "a comprehensive review of public and private service resources available to persons ministering in an urban environment, with particular emphasis given to those programs established to aid minorities and the poor." Still another on "People Pastor Police" examines "the operations of the criminal justice system from a Biblical/Theological perspective" and imparts "in-

formation and skills to students on how to interact with the police, courts, jails, and prisons so they might help people who become caught up in the criminal justice process."

The urban focus is readily apparent not only in courses but in the fieldwork students pursue in inner-city churches, hospitals, jails and detention centers. "We send them there as 'learner-practitioners,' Jones explains. "I sometimes say to them, 'You're trying on the garment.'"

Paul Sadler, a second-year student in the Master of Arts in Religious Studies program who plans to go into the pastorate, has "tried on the garment" in several settings. Last year, he served as a chaplain-intern at the D. C. Children's Center in Laurel, Md., where he did individual counseling and ran "rap sessions" for groups of youth. He continues to work with inner-city youth as an assistant pastor at an independent church in northeast Washington, a job that sometimes sees him practicing his calling on the basketball court.

Susan Newman, a second year student in the Master of Divinity program, hopes to teach on the university level and to pursue theological writing. As an assistant pastor at two inner-city Baptist churches, she too works with young people. "I try to get them to stop thinking about themselves so much," she explains. "I try to show them what I've found myself and that is, 'When you start feeling depressed, reach out to help someone. In helping someone else, you also help yourself.'"

Last summer, she took a course on "Prophetic Witness of Cultural and Political Situations in Third World Countries" at the Ecumenical Institute in Geneva, Switzerland. The intent of the course, she found, served to reinforce both her own beliefs on the role of the church and the intellectual underpinning she's found at Howard. "The prophetic voice of the church is speaking out about injustices," she observes. "The church's role is to help the total human being—physically, mentally, spiritually. If you have a member of

your church whose daughter is a drug addict, you have to do more than pray for her soul. It's like the Book of James says, 'Faith without works is dead.'"

Just as the philosophy of the school embraces the idea that "Faith without works is dead," so does it embrace the idea that any theological education that ignores the Black religious heritage would be deficient. For in addition to its urban focus, a second major characteristic that helps account for the uniqueness of the Howard University Divinity School is its strong streak of Black consciousness.

IV

Evans E. Crawford, dean of the chapel and professor of social ethics, who has taught at Howard for the past 22 years, is in a good position to offer a historical perspective on the development of this rising Black consciousness. "We can always feel that Howard by the nature of its faculty would tend to be aware of the Black heritage. But the intellectual ferment that swept across all of America in the '60s, particularly as it focused on the issues of the Black presence in this country, could not help but have an impact on the school. One of the ways in which we attempted to reflect this focus was by looking at the curriculum and *more consciously* including the dimension of the Black American and the African heritage. So you saw the emergence of courses like 'The Old Testament and the Black Experience' and 'The New Testament and the Black Experience' and you saw the rephrasing of our statements in the catalogue along the lines of 'Our purpose is to consider the whole field of theology with appropriate recognition to the role of the Black church' and that sort of thing."

Perhaps one of the earliest courses to reflect the Black presence within a theological realm, Crawford believes, was James D. Tym's "The Spiritual (Religious) Values in the Black Poet." Tym, who also has written a book bearing the same title, focused in the course of those he calls the

10 "old timers," Langston Hughes, James Weldon Johnson, Countee Cullen, Sterling Brown. . . . "Part of my reason for doing this," he explains, "was to show that the 'old timers' were just as much concerned about Black awareness, even more so and on a deeper level, perhaps, than some of the more recent poets."

Tyms was a student at the School of Religion from 1934-39, taught there from 1947 until his retirement in 1973 and continues to offer occasional courses at the school. During his student days, he remembers reading two books by Benjamin E. Mays [then dean of the school] on "The Negro's Church" and "The Negro's God" in some of his courses. But in general, he says he found little in the curriculum that was different from that of predominantly-white theological schools. In contrast, during his faculty days in the '60s, he found that he and his fellow teachers "had to come together to make adjustment to the demands of the students that the Black presence in theological education be raised to high levels."

Tyms is regarded by some as a pioneer in the whole Black awareness thrust, having worn an "Afro" and studied in Africa before the recent vogue. But his concern went beyond style. "I think that long before there was very much being said about 'Black awareness' I found myself giving a very special emphasis to the need for the teacher to help growing Black children to become aware of themselves. In a course like Religion in Childhood and Adolescence, I found myself saying to students training for the ministry that they should communicate to those who mold children that they must say to the Black child, in effect, 'You must learn to accept yourself and to reverence yourself for these are the given conditions for your fulfillment.'"

One formulation of the Black awareness/consciousness movement that Tyms found himself initially opposed to, though, was the whole issue of Black theology.

While the interpretations and variations of Black theology are many, they share in their linkage of Christianity to Black libera-

tion. In his book, "A Black Theology of Liberation," James H. Cone, perhaps the more prominent proponent of Black theology, defines Black theology as "a theology of liberation because it is a theology which arises from an identification with the oppressed blacks of America, seeking to interpret the gospel of Christ in the light of the black condition. It believes that the liberation of black people is God's liberation." Similar is this excerpt from a 1969 statement by the Committee on Theological Perspectives of the National Committee of Black Churchmen: "Black theology is a theology of 'blackness.' It is an affirmation of black humanity that emancipates black people from white racism thus providing authentic freedom for both white and black people. The message of liberation is the revelation as revealed in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Freedom is the gospel. Jesus is the Liberator!"

The Howard theologian most engaged in exploring and formulating Black theology was J. Deotis Roberts, who recently resigned from the faculty to become president of the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta. In the spring-summer 1976 issue of *The Journal of Religious Thought*, the influential scholarly journal the school has published since 1944, Roberts seemed to link Black theology to the "broadened concept of ministry" espoused by the divinity school. In an article on "Black Liberation Theism," he wrote:

"I am pleading for a theology of the Black experience which grows out of the soil of our heritage and life. For us faith and ethics must be wed. There can be no separation of the secular and the sacred. Jesus means freedom. He is the lord of all life. His healing touch makes us whole in mind, soul and body. The church is the agent of social change as well as the ark of salvation. Material goods and services are a part of our quest for our humanity. Our people are to be equally devout as leaders of prayers and precinct captains. Our churches must no longer be comfort stations where we administer spiritual

aspirins or hospitals where we administer salves to wounds that require surgery. The Black church, a sleeping giant, must become a household of power supporting those social, economic and political programs that make life more human for our people. To this end we need a theology emerging out of our experience of the Christian faith which informs our worship, our life and our witness in the world."

Despite the intellectual ferment inspired by Black theology and the eloquence of Roberts and its other proponents, not everyone in the Howard faculty was enamored with the concept. Recalls Crawford, "There was a lot of debate on the part of the faculty—responsible debate—as to whether or not theology should properly have that kind of adjective. Some felt the adjective 'black' committed us to the same kind of fallacy that existed when anybody else wanted to call it 'white' theology."

"No," he answers in response to a question, "the divisions within the faculty didn't clearly break down on racial lines. My perception was that some of our Caucasian faculty were much more open to the possibility of a Black theology than some of the Black faculty because we Blacks were in a rather existential situation. That is, many of us felt that by the nature of our very being we were open to exploring the Black resources and insights as they illuminated theology. We just had never felt there was any need to make it so visible."

Tyms, for instance, says that at first he found himself arguing, "Theology is theology—neither Black nor white; it is a discipline that transcends race." But his opposition to the concept of Black theology softened when he began working on a book called "The Black Church as Nurturing Community." "I found I could not complete the task until I gave some attention to what the Black theologians were saying, he recalls. "And in so doing I found that they were saying some of the same things that I had been trying to say for a long time, especially as they related to self-awareness. Today, he sees Black theology as "a



12 legitimate emphasis in theological discipline."

Today, students enrolled at the Howard University Divinity School find such courses as "Black Theology," "Theologies of Liberation" and "The Theology of Martin Luther King, Jr."

After successfully completing courses like these (as well as more traditional theological and ministerial fare) and after successfully meeting all the school's other requirements, students are ready to join the ranks of the alumni. And influential ranks these are. The school's 450 living graduates include 7 bishops, 190 active pastors, 18 church administrators, 23 chaplains in the military, in hospitals or in correctional institutions, 55 educators in colleges, universities, public schools and other educational settings, and many others who continue to inject a spiritual dimension into a wide range of pursuits. Consider the stories of two.

Marion C. Bascom is a prominent Baltimore minister and civic leader. His 800-member Douglass Memorial Community Church sponsors numerous community programs, including a summer camp for inner-city children, Meals-on-Wheels service to the housebound sick and elderly and a block-long 48-unit housing renovation project. Senior minister at the church for 31 years, Bascom says his tenure at Howard made him "more competent" to deal with the problems of his church, made him feel like "a member of a union with a card" and gave him "guidance and stimulation." "The school does what any good institution does," he adds, "and that is, it gives to its students a sense of being and a sense of meaning and out of that gift and cultivation of that gift a person moves out to do what he has to do."

In 1978, a dozen years after earning his degree, Bascom received an alumni award for postgraduate achievement in religion and community service at Howard's annual Charter Day dinner. Today, he serves as the divinity school's alumni president, a role he performs most enthusiastically. "It needs to be said," he states,

"that the Howard University School of Religion is the booster and the stronghold of the Black church in America."

James Farmer, currently executive director of the nearly four-million-strong Coalition of American Public Employees, was graduated from the School of Religion in 1941. While he has never served as "a minister" in the sense of having a church, he considers himself "a minister" in a larger sense. "My ministry was the lay ministry, really, and in social action," he explains, "and I consider it not inconsistent with my studies in theology. In seminary and even before that I was interested in the social gospel. I was primarily interested in improving the life of people on earth. I saw that as my ministry and that is precisely the reason I declined to seek ordination upon graduation. I didn't feel I needed it [ordination] to do the things I wanted to do."

One person who helped steer Farmer in working out the direction of his lay ministry was Howard Thurman. "Dr. Thurman influenced my thinking on non-violence since he had visited India and met with Gandhi on several occasions and it was that influence which led me to found CORE (the Congress of Racial Equality) upon graduation from Howard." CORE, of course, pioneered in the application of non-violent direct action techniques to the civil rights struggle through sit-ins, stand-ins, jail-ins and those dramatic Freedom Rides through the segregated South. Had it not been for those many conversations about non-violence he held with Thurman and his fellow Howard students, Farmer says today, "it is very probable that I would not have gone and founded CORE."

Following in the footsteps of the Farmers, the Bascoms, et al, the divinity school's current students find themselves enrolled in the school at a time of strength. In 1977, the School of Religion moved from the main campus to a larger facility at 1240 Randolph St., N.E., about three miles away. Formerly home of the Society of Missions to Africa, a Roman Catholic

Order, the current quarters seem to symbolize a bright future for the school.

Last year, enrollment in degree programs reached an all-time high of 158 (about double that of five years ago) while the faculty numbered 18 full-time and part-time teachers, with 31 lecturers from the community called in from time to time to share their expertise.

The increase in the size of the student body has not diminished the school's quality, Jones says. "We're attracting a high caliber student," he observes, and cites as evidence of this: the designation of seven divinity school students as Fellows under the Fund for Theological Education's highly competitive Benjamin E. Mays Fellowship in Ministry Programs.

The student body is also exceptionally diverse. While the largest denomination represented is Baptist, others represented include Methodists, Pentecostals, Presbyterians and Catholics. Also enrolled is one Muslim student and the pastor of an independent African religious group. The average student age (36) reflects the fact that many are pursuing second careers. "That is," explains Jones, "they may be completing assignments in government or industry or in higher education and they have long harbored the desire to be ministers."

In recent years, an especially noticeable trend in the school has been the increase in the number of women students. Last year, for instance, 23 women were enrolled, and they have not proved shy about injecting their own consciousness into the milieu of the school. Remarks Susan Newman, "In class, if someone says something about 'man of God,' we [women] will call out 'people of God.'"

While Newman realizes that prejudice against women in the ministry is still strong, she says, "I don't sit around and get upset about it. I just go ahead and move in the freedom that God has given me." Another student, Cecelia Bryant, agrees. "Many women have allowed discrimination and prejudice to make them bitter," she contends. "If they have this

kind of attitudinal barrier they cannot perform their ministry the way they should. You have to be able to see the larger view and that may include ministering to people who may believe God has not called women."

Bryant, who is beginning an interdisciplinary program between the divinity school and the political science unit of the Graduate School, is interested in "global ministry." Currently, for instance, she is working on an upcoming convocation entitled "Behold the Woman." "We hope to show women how our faith serves as a background—whether you're in Kenya or Harlem—as an enabling, liberating force in terms of self-development. The spiritual realm is not an opiate but a mobilizing force. Some of the most productive women in our history—Harriet Tubman, Fannie Lou Hamer, Coretta Scott King—to take three very different examples—are spiritual women."

Bryant's present adviser is Rena Karefa-Smart who last year became the first woman professor of Christian ethics in the history of the school. Trained at Harvard, Yale and Drew, Karefa-Smart brought with her to Howard a wide background in ecumenism as well as a thoughtful feminist perspective. Women who hope to be ministers, she cautions, must realistically face the problems they are likely to confront. "All denominations are sexist to some extent," she says. "Often they justify excluding women from the ministry on Biblical grounds." A course she taught last year, "Women, Church Ministries and Liberation Ethics," examined the Biblical and theological arguments for excluding women from full participation in the church and dealt with strategies to combat these arguments.

As for Karefa-Smart, she says, "I affirm young women going into the field. The church needs the participation of everyone. One voice cannot be missing. The more you have women incorporated into churches as equals of men, the more effective will be the churches in the community and the more democratic will be

their organization. Churches today are not only male-oriented in their practices but patriarchal in their hierarchical structure. Women have a perspective that is necessary."

Last year, Karefa-Smart also taught a course entitled "Contemporary Issues in Christian Social Ethics." It dealt with the responsibility of the churches for political change, using as three case studies: the situation in Zimbabwe-Rhodesia; health care in an urban, underserved community (inner-city Washington, D.C.); and the Bishop's resolution in the Episcopal church on homosexuality.

The founders of the university, looking at such a course or at any number of others being offered these days at the Howard University Divinity School, might be surprised about the way the theological school for freedmen then envisioned 114 years ago has turned out. But then, again, maybe they wouldn't be surprised at all.

As Evans Crawford observes (with full homiletical flourish), "Rayford Logan says that Howard came out of a prayer meeting in the sense that those who were significant in its beginnings—men who belonged to the First Congregational Church and who were concerned about the southern situation—acknowledged prayer. Well, we're *still* concerned about the southern situation, the 'southern situation' as a symbol of injustice whether it's in the South or in South America or in South Africa—or even if it's in the North." □