

Thomas, The Caterpillar and I

Donna Gibbs, C.S.J.

Donna Gibbs, C.S.J., is a Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet who has taught elementary school for 30 years. A member of Sisters of Earth, she narrated and illustrated the children's book *The Seamless Universe: A Discovery Guide Through Our Great Heritage* (unpublished as yet).

Every September, my elementary school students and I re-discover the Universe through story...*The Universe Story*. It shapes our learning throughout the year and infuses each lesson with great history. Wonder, beauty and imagination fill our souls. Last May (2008) with a heart brimming in gratitude, I journeyed to Greensboro, North Carolina, and met Thomas Berry. I consider him the apostle who wrote *The Gospel According to Earth*.

The following memory of our visit will remain with me forever as a sacred image. We were discussing how humans have a distinct relationship with the Divine through the natural world, and a lasiocampidae crawled up Thomas's leg. At his knee the small creature paused, stretched into the air and spoke silently of that Divine nature. We both listened in delight. Our time together is pure gift to me and continues to ripple out into the classroom as my ordinary life continues with an extraordinary pulse from the touch of one exceptional man.