

do the work of Christ and build Christ's kingdom in the midst of such spiritual suffering is truly amazing. ... Her works are almost more amazing now in light of her personal suffering and spiritual suffering."

— **Lani Candelora**, Sacred Heart-St. Francis de Sales Parish, Bennington, Vt.



**Elizabeth Mitchell**

"The revelation that Mother Teresa suffered a spiritual drought, or 'dark night of the soul,' simply validates, on a hidden spiritual plane, the work, which the world saw her accomplish on a visible level. In order to do the work to which she was called, Mother Teresa had to join Christ, as it were, on the cross. From this vantage point, as we know, she identified with Christ's physical sufferings."

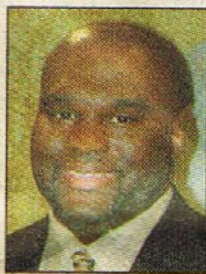
— **Elizabeth Mitchell**, Trinity Academy, Pewaukee, Wis.

"I have come to view her as a much more 'heroic' spiritual person than anyone ever thought. I believe that God calls most souls to eventual consolation in their spiritual journey, but to some special souls he sends the grace of spiritual aridity, emptiness, dryness, because for some reason this is the 'way' that will draw them closer to God. ... Mother Teresa's vulnerability now makes her truly human."

— **Ken Giovanelli**, St. Mary's Church, Lancaster, Pa.

louder than our words. I don't think she could do the things that she did without God's presence in her life."

— **Diane Dowd**, St. Vincent's Catholic Church, Salt Lake City, Utah



**Harold Burke-Sivers**

that all of us experience a struggle, a darkness, and it's from that darkness that we grow in our faith. If you look at the lives of other saints who have gone through dark periods, like St. Therese of Lisieux, for example, they experience this more intensely than many of us do because of their sanctity and because of their intense closeness to God."

— **Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers**, Immaculate Heart Church, Portland, Ore.

"I find it very comforting to know how human she was. Some people might look at the glass as half empty and think that if she doubted God how could I ever not doubt God. She had moments of struggle, but she never gave in to it. Her trust was far greater than any doubt. She allowed herself to suffer because she wanted to unite herself so intimately to Christ's suffering."

— **Mary Dornbush**, St. Margaret's Church, Pearl River, N.Y.

"A couple of things struck me. The first is that she wouldn't have a struggle if she didn't believe in God. The second is

on hysterical.

The secular media grapple with the experience of the "dark night of the soul," often miscasting Teresa's spiritual struggles as a complete lack of faith or even as a form of atheism. One news show far as to label their coverage of the issue: "Saint or Sinner?"

But to many Catholics, Teresa's spiritual struggles seemed to the secular world to be devastating at best and delusional at worst. Yet her life was so comforting and even heroic in the length and depth of her spiritual struggles that, even without Teresa apart, she is in good company when it comes to the demons of doubt that plagued so many of the great saints. Perhaps to Catholics she is a shock as a sign that this world is more holy, albeit more than we believed her to be during her lifetime.

## No shock to man

The media frenzy was in the days before the release of "Mother Teresa: Be My Light" (Doubtful, \$22.95), a collection of Teresa's correspondence with confessors and spiritual directors over several decades. The book was compiled and edited by Father Kolodziejchuk, postulator of Mother Teresa's canonization. Father Kolodziejchuk was in Rome at the time and unavailable for an interview. He has previously released her letters in a 2003 study, "The Soul of Mother Teresa: Hidden Aspects of Her Interior Life."

So for many people in Church circles, the re-