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Author Mary Rourke Offers Feminist Side of Bible Story

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 20, 2006 – Author Mary Rourke, a journalist turned theology student and, now, writer of a biblical novel, will lecture at Chapman University on Monday, Nov. 6 at 7 p.m. in the Irvine Lecture Hall. Her topic: “Two Women of Galilee: A Feminist Perspective on the Biblical Narrative.” Introductory remarks will be given by Dr. Marvin Meyer, Chapman’s Grisct Professor of Bible and Christian Studies, author of *The Gospels of Mary* and co-author of *The Gospel of Judas*. The lecture will be moderated by Father Rafael Luevano, Chapman professor of religious studies. Admission is free and open to the public; call (714) 532-7758 for more information.

Rourke’s novel, *Two Women of Galilee*, published in March 2006, focuses on the story of Mary, mother of Jesus, and her distant cousin Joanna, who is married to a member of Herod’s court. Joanna turns to Mary’s mysterious miracle-worker son to heal her physical ailments, and is rewarded with health and a new faith. But her growing closeness to Mary and Jesus puts her husband’s career in jeopardy. Joanna, caught between her Jewish roots and her luxurious Roman life, follows the arc of Jesus’ life as he moves toward his death and resurrection.

Booklist said, “Rourke tells the Crucifixion story, but her perspective on it, derived from human relationships rather than politics or doctrine, is fresh and affecting.” *Publisher’s Weekly* said *Two Women of Galilee* is “sure to put a smile on the face of readers fond of cozy historicals.”

Mary Rourke is a journalist who has written extensively about religion and the arts. Currently residing in Los Angeles, she has master’s degrees in religion from Yale Divinity School and art history from Queens College, and she is the author of *Amazing Grace in America: Our Spiritual National Anthem*. *Two Women of Galilee* is her first novel.