

2009 *Inaugural* MAHLE LECTURE IN PROGRESSIVE CHRISTIAN THOUGHT



Saving Paradise

A Life-Affirming Christianity for the 21st Century

quest lecturer **Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock**

Tuesday, March 10, 2009 7:30 p.m.

Hamline United Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Ave., Saint Paul 55104

Free to the public, parking available in church lot



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In her lecture, Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock will offer a new lens on the history of Christianity by asking how its early vision of beauty evolved into one of torture. Tracing the medieval emergence of images of Christ crucified, Dr. Brock will address imperial strategies embedded in theologies of redemptive violence. As the church turned to holy war, it lost a spiritual understanding of paradise here and now. Through early Christian art and architecture, Dr. Brock will reconstruct the idea for twenty-first-century Christians that salvation is paradise in *this* world and in *this* life. "Saving Paradise" thus provides a life-affirming theology, lived in openness to justice and redemptive beauty.



REV. RITA NAKASHIMA BROCK, PhD, is director of Faith Voices for the Common Good, an organization dedicated to educating the public about the values and concerns of religious leaders and organizations. A licensed minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), she also works with The New Press in New York as senior editor in religion.

Dr. Brock's latest book, *Saving Paradise: How Christianity Traded Love of This World for Crucifixion and Empire*, co-authored with Rebecca Parker, was selected as one of the fifteen best books in religion of 2008 by *Publishers Weekly*.

Dr. Brock has lectured widely and is a member of the U.S. Group of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, the leading global organization of liberation theologians. Her work continues to interweave religious questions with issues of justice in the U.S. and international contexts.

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