

Tsunami encourages peace in Aceh

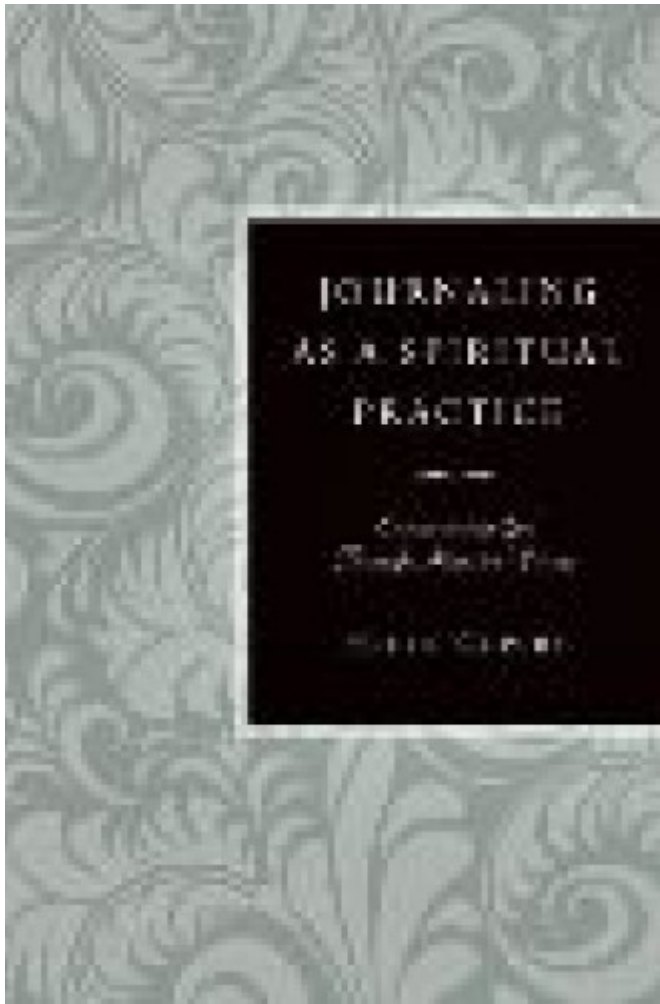
Books in the [October 7, 2008](#) issue

In Review



Thrift: A Cyclopedia

David Blankenhorn, ed.
Templeton Foundation Press



Journaling as a Spiritual Practice: Encountering God Through Attentive Writing

Helen Cepero
InterVarsity

In an era of rampant consumerism, *thrift* is hardly a word that rolls off the tongue, and younger people hardly know what it means. But Blankenhorn makes the case that “for so many of the problems now ailing us—from shameful wastefulness, to growing economic inequality, to independence-killing indebtedness, to runaway mindless consumerism—. . . the philosophy of thrift is the closest thing we have to a miracle cure.” With the economy in the doldrums for the foreseeable future, Blankenhorn might just be on to something. He gathers a rich collection of quotes relating to thrift, including religious voices like those of John Wesley (“Gain all you can. . . . Save all you can. . . . Then give all you can”), William Penn (“Frugality is good, if Liberality be join’d with it. The first is leaving off superfluous expenses; the

last bestowing them to the Benefit of others that need”), Cotton Mather (“This may be said of all our estates: what God give us, is not given us for ourselves, but, ‘for the Lord’”) and George Herbert (“Who cannot live on twentie pound a yeare, / Cannot on fortie; he’s a man of pleasure”).

Cepero, director of spiritual formation at North Park Theological Seminary, views journaling as a means of writing ourselves into self-understanding and of discovering the presence of God in our lives. A strength of the book is Cepero’s intentionally focused journaling exercises that can jump-start neophytes who don’t know how to journal or revivify the practice of those with considerable experience. She encourages readers to pay attention to particular themes and patterns in their journaling. An appendix includes guidelines for journaling groups.