

---

## Interview: Rt. Rev. C. Fitzsimons Allison

---

# Cathedral of St. John the Divine is an 'entry point for New Age'

*The Rt. Rev. C. Fitzsimons Allison announced earlier this year that he had decided to resign his position as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of South Carolina, in order to work full time to fight "the prevailing winds of strange doctrine without and within the Episcopal Church." In an interview with EIR's Kathleen Klenetsky, Bishop Allison singled out his fellow Episcopal bishop, Paul Moore, and Moore's Cathedral of St. John the Divine, as entry points for New Age beliefs into the Christian community.*

**EIR:** You made a statement several weeks ago that you were going to work full time against "the prevailing winds of strange doctrine without and within the Episcopal Church." What exactly were you referring to?

**Allison:** I've taught Church history for 19 years, at three different seminaries, including at Catholic University in Washington. I found myself back in the early 1970s predicting that the sort of conventional heresies then current within brand-name denominations—the Pelagian reductionist stripe, which maintains that "I don't believe anything I can't see, feel or touch," and came out of the rationalism of the 18th century—had run out of gas.

I warned my students, even then, that they were going to be beset not by that old kind of Arian and adoptionist Pelagian and Nestorian-type heresies, but by the rebirth of the old Gnostic heresies. I said that these heresies would deny the full humanity of Christ, or tend toward pantheism, and would try to add to the Scriptures with other claims of revelations and new Christs. I had no idea then how right I would be.

**EIR:** You were absolutely on target.

**Allison:** We have a very intelligent young woman here, who's rather sophisticated about what would have played 20 years ago. And she made the interesting observation, that if Shirley MacLaine would have said 20 years ago, the kinds of things she's saying now, she'd have been laughed off the stage. And now she's getting these huge honoraria, people are paying \$500 to hear her spout the kind of nonsense, that 20 years ago would have been laughed at.

**EIR:** Why do you believe that people are more willing now to believe this stuff than they were 20 years ago?

**Allison:** Well, I think that the hubris, the confidence, in reason, on an intellectual level, was badly damaged by Freud.

But this same lack of confidence in reason has now reached down to the popular mind. People don't trust reason anymore. They only want to trust their feelings.

This phenomenon isn't happening just in the churches. I've run into some astonishingly well-trained physicians, who are into all kinds of strange things, like "est," so that it's not just the Church that is being undermined, but the institutions of Western civilization. I think also that the Judeo-Christian basis—what was the center and foundation for the assumptions of the institutions of Western civilization—has been eroded. I think we're in a post-Christendom time.

**EIR:** Do you think that there are individuals or institutions deliberately fostering this sinister New Age movement?

**Allison:** Well, I really don't know. . . . I think human nature is such that people are looking for something to justify their own behavior. If you, as an individual, have an unconventional kind of lifestyle, you'll be in the market for a religion that will justify it. Any religious leader who says that those things are okay, is going to be listened to and followed.

I do think there has been a kind of capture of the Establishment—not only academic and ecclesiastical, but also in the media—that does not represent the clientele in mainstream America.

**EIR:** In terms of the Episcopal Church per se, I understand that you debated Bishop Paul Moore recently. The Cathedral of St. John the Divine has caused a great deal of concern because of some of the activities that take place under its aegis. Do you share that concern? Do you think that the cathedral is one of the points of entry for the New Age into the Christian community?

**Allison:** Oh, yes, yes. In fact, one of the things Paul Moore said in this debate, was that he thought that the Jews made a mistake in their wholesale condemnation of Baal worship. He insisted that the people who worshipped Baal had a grasp of the "oneness of creation."

**EIR:** He said that publicly?

**Allison:** Yes, yes he did. A symptom of that kind of thinking, of course, is that the transcendent experience one has in sexual intercourse, should not be relegated to the institution of marriage. But that flows out of this much more basic thing, which is that there is an identification of self and Creation

with God, all jumbled together. And that represents a denial between Creation and fallen creation. Now they're not consistent about this. They don't like capitalism to go unrestricted, and they don't like pollution. The Fortune 500 companies, they think, need to be restricted. And I agree with them on that. I think they need to be monitored. And if they're not monitored, people are going to dump poison in the streams. But I would say the same thing about our sexual lives that I would about our economic lives. They need to be monitored, too.

---

---

*The hubris, the confidence, in reason, on an intellectual level, was badly damaged by Freud. This same lack of confidence in reason has now reached down to the popular mind. People don't trust reason anymore. They only want to trust their feelings.*

---

---

**EIR:** One of the things I understand Bishop Moore has been criticized for, was his ordination of a lesbian to the priesthood. I've followed the work of Rosemary Reuther and some of these other so-called Catholic feminist theologians. And it seems that under the cover of feminism, they are attempting to reintroduce goddess worship back into religions.

**Allison:** Yes, I think that's a real problem. And I think that Rosemary Reuther and others have really gone around the bend on this.

**EIR:** This "womanchurch" movement accepts Wicca, witchcraft, and that is only one example of a frightening upsurge in Satanism. How far do you think that overt paganism, witchcraft, have begun to make themselves felt? Have you come across it much?

**Allison:** Of course, when I was in New York I was aware of it. For example, I used to stop in at the Strand bookstore, and there were yards and yards of books on witchcraft and the occult. Now, the book stores aren't not-for-profit outfits, so they're obviously selling these books. And then there was a coven on the corner of Ninth and Fourth, that was going on, and I had to pick up some of the pieces of that.

Here in Charleston, the police chief has told us that he has to send his detectives off to a special school, to find out and understand what's going on with this Satanic upsurge. No police chief has ever had to do that kind of thing in the history of Charleston. You'd have to go back to the 17th

century to find that kind of stuff going on.

**EIR:** Do you think that the activities of Bishop Moore or Matthew Fox, the Dominican priest who was recently criticized by the Vatican for defending Wicca, are fostering this resurgence of witchcraft?

**Allison:** Yes, I think so. I think that what they're saying can be used in all sorts of ways by the New Age people. I'm not saying they're causing witchcraft, but it blossoms in that kind of soil.

**EIR:** There was a similar situation in Massachusetts, where Governor Dukakis appointed Laurie Cabot, a self-avowed Wicca practitioner, as the Official Witch of Salem, Mass.

**Allison:** He did what?!

**EIR:** Yes, he gave Cabot a state award, and named her the Official Witch of Salem. Several religious leaders in the Salem area have told us that, whether Dukakis intended to or not, his elevation of Cabot gave an official imprimatur to Satanism, and that Satanic activities have really mushroomed in the state as a result. Are you familiar with the work of the Lucis Trust and the Temple of Understanding, which are affiliated with the Cathedral of St. John?

**Allison:** No. Is that something else going on up there?

**EIR:** Yes. We've put out detailed information on these groups' activities.

**Allison:** I'd be so grateful if you could send me that material.

**EIR:** What are you working on right now?

**Allison:** I'm working on a manuscript, which I hope will come out this fall, called "The Cruelty of Heresy." It's an affirmative view of orthodoxy, in its pastoral implications. It's something of the same thing that Chesterton did so well. Of course, I'm not putting myself in that category. But if you could get anyone to read Chesterton, you'd see that orthodoxy is not some kind of narrow thing that journalistic views would portray it as.

The reason that heresies are condemned, is that they're cruel, and that there is a connection between sin and heresy. That's what I'm trying to show.

**EIR:** You mentioned before you had predicted that there would be a revival of Gnostic heresies, and a move to deny the human dimension of Christ.

**Allison:** Yes, we'd been denying the divinity of Christ in the whole Unitarian drift. But now we're going in the other direction.

**EIR:** What kind of sin does that specific kind of heresy lead people to?

**Allison:** It leads people to retreat from the incarnational dimension, in that it causes them to think, "I don't want to be involved in the risk that love entails."