

# New in the Library

December 2011

In *Invoking the Scribes of Ancient Egypt : The Initiatory Path of Spiritual Journaling*, Call Number 299.314 Inv 2011, a group of spiritual women, including our Parish Administrator, Kathryn Ravenwood, share their personal impressions and meditations at the religious sites of ancient Egypt. This collection of journal entries and poems is a good model for travel, pilgrimage and spiritual writing. Thank you Kathryn, for sharing this book with the Library.

We have a new translation and commentary on the second century gnostic text of the Gospel of Judas, which was discovered in Egypt in 1970. *The Gospel of Judas*, call number 229.8 Gos 2006, has been translated into English from the Coptic text by Rodolphe Kasser, Marvin W. Meyer and Gregor Wurst. The Gospel of Judas is a mystical account of Jesus' teachings, cosmology and the second coming. It contains a private dialogue between Jesus and Judas: "[b]ut you will exceed all of them. For you will sacrifice the man that clothes me." In addition to its early Christian mysticism, the Gospel of Judas has a very different view of Judas' role in Jesus' Passion from the traditional story.

Robert N. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age*, Call Number 200.89 Bel 2011, is not a book about the conservative Christian objections to the science of biological evolution. Rather, Bellah studied ancient societies to see how humans developed religious practices and ideas. Bellah starts with tribal groups which used rituals and narratives to honor the memory of their remote ancestors. He then describes "archaic" civilizations where regional kings made sacrifices to divine beings and, often, were worshiped as gods themselves. The final stage, which Bellah labels "axial," involves universal concepts of good and a theology which goes beyond the rule of the regional king. Bellah's examples, which he describes in detail, are the Hebrews of the Old Testament, the Greek philosophers, Chinese Confucianism and Taoism, and the origins of Hinduism and Buddhism in ancient India. Bellah is well-read and not shy about discussing his readings. *Religion in Human Evolution* has over 100 pages of footnotes. It also has many new ideas about multi-cultural religions, and is well worth a difficult reading.

