

The most-read *Century* articles

January 6, 2016

Here are the *Century* magazine articles that got read the most online this year.

- 1) **[A long obedience](#), by Katherine Willis Pershey.** There are many people with whom I have not had an affair. Billions. There is also one man in particular.
- 2) **[The people's preaching class](#), by William Brosend.** Fred Craddock let the word out that he would be available at no charge for preaching and teaching. Only non-seminary graduates should attend.
- 3) **[Holding each other loosely](#), by Peter W. Marty.** I knew life was a gift to be shared, not a possession to safeguard, even before my wife collapsed on the kitchen floor. But it was abstract knowledge then.
- 4) **[Sacred inwardness](#), by Marilynne Robinson.** Perhaps the real lack of faith in modern society comes down to a lack of reverence for the people around us.
- 5) **[A place for Camille](#), by Jason D. Whitt.** Calling my wife and me “special” suggests that there is an alternative—that it would have been acceptable to refuse to receive our child.
- 6) **[Shut up and learn](#), by Carol Howard Merritt.** Under Ruben Duran's leadership, the ELCA has started an array of worshiping communities in homes and bars and on the streets and in train stations.
- 7) **[What love can't fix](#), by Matt Gaventa.** At a chemical level, it didn't matter that we loved my dad. It couldn't penetrate the shield around his sense of self-worth.
- 8) **[What Bonhoeffer knew](#), by Samuel Wells.** After I gave a talk for the 70th anniversary of Bonhoeffer's death, I got a letter saying he's been drained of meaning. Here's what I replied.
- 9) **[Paying for seminary](#), by Sharon Miller and Christian Scharen.** Schools rely on tuition and are reluctant to turn students away. But if debt keeps students from

following their call, schools will have failed at their mission.

**10) [Why I went to seminary](#), by Chris Coons.** Long before I sat in Senate hearing rooms listening to witness testimony, I sat in lecture halls at Yale listening to professors dissect Paul.

**11) [Claims on Bonhoeffer](#), by Karen V. Guth.** People appeal to Bonhoeffer to justify a range of moral choices. They tend to ignore his emphasis on context and the need for constant discernment.

**12) [Cosmos from nothing?](#) by Karl W. Giberson.** Modern cosmology indicates that the universe cannot have been created without any constraints. So where do we find the elusive *nihilo*?

**13) [A letter to Thomas Merton](#), by Carol Zaleski.** It's been 100 years since your birth and almost 75 since you entered the abbey. You died with your story unfinished.

**14) [Scientists welcome](#), by David J. Wood.** The geophysicist's talk had none of the triumphalism of efforts to prove God exists. It was the testimony of experience—and it was unequivocal doxology.

**15) [A broader appeal](#), by Adam J. Copeland.** Decades ago, when a need arose at a church in rural Kansas, the finance chair would ask, "Who'll give 25 dollars?" Today, we have Kickstarter.

*This post was corrected shortly after publication—articles #1, #5, and #13 were originally omitted by mistake.*