

Marcella Althaus-Reid recounts her dreams from the afterlife

Who I'd invite to my writers' dinner party

by [Mark D. Jordan](#) in the [May 10, 2017](#) issue

Only three invitations? The obvious choice would be authors I've read for decades—say, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, and Michel Foucault (steadiest companions)—to hear at last what they really thought and whether they were surprised to find themselves together. Yet Thomas was a famously distracted dinner guest (ask the king of France) and Plato liked his banquets punctuated by the loud arrival of drunken gods (ask Alcibiades, who had to play one). Foucault suffered moods of rapid-fire monologue, leaning forward in his chair as others leaned farther and farther back. And what common language could my guests use—these masters of narration as unnaming—other than the patois of bad English translations?

No, I would call up friends I've lost, like Marcella Althaus-Reid, whose death stole the books she promised after publishing *Indecent Theology* and *The Queer God*. Over dinner, Marcella could make her very theological jokes once again and recount her latest dreams of incarnation. Near the hour for vigils, with plates cleared and glasses mostly empty, I could ask, "So, what are you writing now?"