
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

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NEWS AND NOTES

CONFERENCE NEWS

The second History of Women Religious Conference is being scheduled for June-July, 1992. This schedule allows for a three-year period between meetings and avoids a conflict with the Berkshire Conference which next convenes in summer, 1993. Site bids are being solicited: a poll of the Ad hoc Conference Committee indicates a preference for varying the conference site if an appropriate alternative to St. Paul can be identified. Qualities desired in a site are: resident/meeting accommodations for 250-300 persons; accessibility in terms of transportation; and moderate cost. A college campus accustomed to hosting conferences of this size is the most likely site. Please look over your area in the light of these criteria and contact the HWR editor by November 1 (this year!) if you can suggest a site.

You are encouraged to submit under HWR auspices any proposals you may have for panels at regional or national meetings. When the American Historical Association, the American Catholic Historical Association, and other groups accept panels organized by a group such as ours they give

credit in the program. This simple device would give us a little more presence in the profession while also strengthening your possibilities of having papers accepted for presentation. Contact the HWR editor before or after organizing a panel if you wish to take advantage of this offer.

The 1991 AHA annual meeting will be held in Chicago, December 27-30. The theme of the conference is the quincentenary of the voyage of Columbus to America. Panels emphasizing comparative approaches to the encounter of European, native American, and African peoples are encouraged. The Program Committee will hold its first meeting November 9-10, 1990; proposals, to be considered at that meeting, must be received by October 23, 1990. The final deadline for proposals is February 17, 1991. Guidelines are given in the September issue of the AHA Perspectives, or write Linda Hall, AHA Program Committee, Dept. of History, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131. The American Catholic Historical Association which meets concurrently has its own proposal process. Contact the Association Executive Office at the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.,

20064 for further information.

The U.S. CATHOLIC HISTORIAN will publish a selection of the 1989 HWR Conference papers in its first issue for 1991. This will be a double issue, as will also the fall, 1990 issue on Catholic Hispanics. For information on subscriptions and editorial correspondence write Editor, USCH, P.O. Box 16229, Baltimore, MD 21210. This journal deserves our support not only for bringing our work into print but for the many fine past issues which have contained articles pertaining to the history of women in religion.

Approximately 60 of the 220 conference participants from 1989 are not current subscribers to the HWR Newsletter. They are being sent this issue as an invitation to subscribe, after which conference and HWR subscriber lists will be amalgamated. Please write the editor if you desire any names and addresses from the conference. And non-subscribers, please sign up! We'd like to keep track of you and hear from you regarding your research interests and activities.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Judith Metz, SC, and Virginia Wiltse are the co-authors of SISTER MARGARET CECILIA GEORGE; A BIOGRAPHY. The work traces Margaret George's life through her early years in Baltimore in

the late 1700's and early 1800's, to being a companion of Elizabeth Seton during the establishment of the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg, to being a key figure in the beginnings of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati. The book can be obtained from the Sisters of Charity Communications Office, 5900 Delhi Pike, Mount St. Joseph, OH 45051 (\$7.00 plus \$1.50 postage/handling).

Sister Daniel Hannefin, DC, has authored DAUGHTERS OF THE CHURCH, A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY IN THE UNITED STATES, 1809-1987. The book is available from New City Press, 206 Skillman Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211 (\$28.00; plus 10% postal charge). Also available from the same press is a companion volume, THE AMERICAN VINCENTIANS, A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1815-1987 (\$35.00 plus postal charge).

A series of 16 reflective essays prepared by women and men religious throughout the United States in connection with the Quinn Commission has been edited by Laurie Felknor, THE CRISIS IN RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS: AN INSIDE VIEW (Paulist Press, 1989). Essays are written from the perspective of various disciplines, historical, sociological, theological and others.

Esther MacCarthy, SNDdeN, writes that the success of

Marie Augusta Neal's 1990 volume FROM NUNS TO SISTERS (HWR review, Febr., 1990) has increased demand for her 1987 volume, THE JUST DEMANDS OF THE POOR. Paulist Press no longer stocks the 1987 book but copies may be obtained from Esther MacCarthy, Emmanuel College, 400 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115 (\$8.95 plus \$2.00 postage/handling).

Florence Deacon's unpublished doctoral dissertation, THE CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES, INSTITUTION BUILDING AND COMMUNAL RELATIONSHIPS OF CATHOLIC SISTERS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICA, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1989, is a real ground-breaker so far as methodology and content are concerned. The February issue of the newsletter will include a special section on dissertations in progress and recently completed (1988--). Please forward abstracts for that purpose, along with other pertinent information (research plans, if still in progress; pending publication plans; availability in microfilm or other copy form).

WORK IN PROGRESS

Christine Athans, BVM, is on sabbatical leave fall semester at the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research in Collegeville, Minnesota. She is working on a volume on Jewish-Christian relations in the U.S. for the Paulist Press' series, Religion and American

Culture. Her recent article, "Mary in the American Catholic Church," U.S. CATHOLIC HISTORIAN (Fall, 1989) discusses the history of devotion to Mary including the cultural impact on women.

Francis Bernard O'Connor, CSC, a Guest Scholar at the Kellogg Institute for International Studies at the University of Notre Dame, is conducting a three year study investigating "The choices Catholic women are making in order to achieve full participation in the Church." The research is being conducted jointly by and for lay and religious women in four countries: the U.S., Brazil, Bangladesh and Uganda, in an effort to ascertain what women in these countries are doing in their Church and what they would like to do. The research will also seek to discover the efforts women are making to become recognized and accepted as equal persons in the institutional Church.

Maureen McCarthy, a doctoral student at Rutgers, is working on a dissertation relating to nativism and anti-Catholicism with a special focus on nuns and convents in nineteenth-century Massachusetts. She would like to hear from anyone doing similar work, and can be contacted for this purpose at 217 - 61st Street, Brooklyn, NY 11220.

Mary Lou Anderson, Dean of Graduate and Continuing Education at Assumption

College, Worcester, MA is interested in any recent articles or dissertations on Catholic Feminism or on Catholic women's colleges to help in her dissertation work.

Regina Siegfried, ASC, is now editor of SPIRITUALITY TODAY, located at Aquinas Institute in St. Louis where she also teaches half-time.

Patricia Byrne, CSJ, is working this year on sabbatical leave from Trinity College, Hartford, in the Religious of the Sacred Heart archives in St. Louis preparing to write a history of that congregation. She has also agreed to be the principal researcher-writer for a history of the Sisters of St. Joseph in North America, a major project involving over 30 congregations in Canada and the U.S.

Nancy Bowden, CSJ, is in the early stages of her doctoral studies in history at the University of Washington in Seattle. She will shortly be considering dissertation ideas relating to the European background of religious congregations of women with special attention to France. Pass along your ideas to her at 543 North 80th St., Seattle, WA 98104.

Geraldine Anthony, SC, Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is writing a biography of Irene Farmer, General Superior of the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul from 1962 to

1972.

M. Olga McKenna, SC, Mount Saint Vincent Motherhouse, Halifax, Nova Scotia, is writing a history of the Sisters of Charity, Halifax, which she hopes to have completed by 1992.

Eldon Hay, Chair, Department of Religious Studies, Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada, is engaged in work on Protestant individual women.

Eve Dargyay, formerly of the University of Calgary but now at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is researching sacred biographies in Tibetan literature, dealing in particular with the female figures in these texts.

BOOK REVIEW

THE DÉVOTES: WOMEN AND THE CHURCH IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE, by Elizabeth Rapley, (Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990). Cloth 0-7735-0727-2 \$29.95

Elizabeth Rapley has produced a clearly-written and broadly conceived account of women's struggle to develop a social service mission within the context of the religious life. After centuries of effort to gain a place in the public sphere through charitable work, women in reformation Europe,

notably the Italian Ursulines and the English Ladies organized by Mary Ward, were making some headway. Multiple social, economic and religious upheavals left rents in the social fabric wide enough to allow some women to widen their traditional spheres. Men in the seventeenth century were determined to mending of that fabric, to restore traditional patriarchal order. Women striving for a public role were therefore frustrated by growing male fear and misogyny. The Council of Trent's refusal to recognize any female religious life outside of the strict confines of the cloister was a crucial part of that pattern. The aspirations and failures of sixteenth century religious women to organize female counterparts to the Jesuits, to organize vocations based on teaching, nursing and other charitable work into autonomous orders directly under papal authority, form a prologue to Rapley's account of the "serious and unexpected" achievements of women in seventeenth century France and French Canada. She emphasizes that these were the fruit of women's own efforts to work outside and around the demands of an unsympathetic hierarchy, giving the undoubted help and sympathy of individual clergymen second place to the initiative and ardor of the women who strove so persistently to force their services upon an unwilling institution.

The tale follows the development of the two areas of service, nursing and teaching, which emerged by the end of the century as fully recognized female professions, shaped for centuries to come by their origins in post-Tridentine religion. It is presented primarily in terms of the personal adventures of the founding mothers but their individual stories are well buttressed by broader evidence presented in tables in the appendix. Institutional changes in the cloistered life are traced in some detail balancing the necessary compromises that the sisters were forced to make under pressure from their secular patrons. A particularly interesting chapter on the development of a feminine pedagogy rooted in Jesuit methods but adapted to the broader needs of primary education provides practical insight into the achievements of women who have all too frequently been criticized for their shortcomings by people who have not recognized the originality and the difficulty of their project.

In summary, Rapley offers her reader an inspiring story, covering a crucial period of transition in the history of women religious. It is told from a firmly feminist viewpoint, placing the protagonists squarely in the center of their own lives, and supported with an impressive

array of scholarly evidence. There is also a valuable glossary for people unfamiliar with the subject and both a bibliography and an essay on the use of the primary sources.

Jo Ann McNamara
Hunter College

OPPORTUNITIES

The Women's History Grants Program administered through the Minnesota Historical Society (690 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101; telephone (612)297-4464 or -2221) makes available grants of up to \$1000 to support specific research expenses, and grants of from \$1000 to \$5000 to support both research and writing during a limited period of time. The purpose of the program, which is funded by the state legislature, is to promote the investigation and publication of information on the roles and experiences of diverse women throughout the history of the Minnesota region. Application deadline is December 28; further information available at the above address.

The Cushwa Center (University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556) makes available travel grants to help defray expenses of coming to Notre Dame to use its collections for the study of American Catholicism. The application deadline is December 15. Research fellowships (deadline January 15 and April 15) are also

available; they include library privileges, an office, and secretarial help but no stipend.

Are you qualified, or do you know someone who is qualified to provide some inservice training or conduct a workshop for sisters who are being asked to serve as resource persons for provinces of a congregation engaged in an ongoing process of researching its history? The Felician Sisters (36800 Schoolcraft Road, Livonia, Michigan; telephone (313)591-1730) are seeking such a person. It looks as though practical archival experience is needed, to brief resource people on historically reliable ways to collate and preserve data vital to the work of a future historian. If interested or if you have suggestions, contact Sister M. Janice Ziolkowski, CSSF, at the above address.

The program for the conference on "American Catholicism in the Twentieth Century" due to convene at the University of Notre Dame under the auspices of the Cushwa Center Nov.1-3, 1990, indicates several sessions of direct interest for the history of women religious. Registrations are being accepted up to October 15.

Plans are taking shape for a large gathering in August 1992, of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, to celebrate the centennial of their foundress, Mother Caroline Friess (d.

1892). The principal celebration, which is to take place in Milwaukee, is being planned to have a distinctly international flavor, reflecting the SSND presence today in 33 countries. Further information will be published as available.

REPORTS

The newly formed Archivists of Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) met for the first time on September 1, 1990 at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Seattle. Gathering as a Roundtable within the SAA, some 30 archivists and a few historians of women religious congregations across the United States rectified the proposal "Organizing An Association of Archivists of Congregations of Women Religious" (ACWR). The mission of ACWR is:

- active and effective collaboration with Network of History of Women Religious and all historians who conduct research and publish writings in the field of women's studies and church history

- enhancement of professional service to researchers and writers by archivists of women's religious congregations through collaborative archival efforts

- collaboration with Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) in long-range planning for preservation of archival

resources

- development of documentation strategies to assure access to historical resources maintained by women religious congregations for women's studies and church history

- mutual sharing of archival and records management expertise within ACWR as well as in broader archival circles

- encouragement of professional growth and development and commitment to archival profession of ACWR membership.

The ACWR is established as a Roundtable within SAA and will have Associate status within LCWR. It will work closely with the HWR network to achieve its mission.

If you are interested in joining ACWR, please get in touch with Rosalie McQuaide, csjp, chair of the Ad Hoc Committee. Her work address: Catholic Relief Services, 209 W. Fayette St., Baltimore, MD 21201, (301) 625-2220.

Carmel 200: Contemplation and the Rediscovery of the American Soul-History and Spirituality, a symposium to commemorate the Bicentennial Celebration of the Carmelite Sisters in the United States, took place in Baltimore August 12-14, 1990. Approximately 700, including 193 men and women Carmelites, participated in this closing event in a year-long celebration.

From the perspective of history and spirituality, the conference emphasized Carmelite tradition and contemplation as interpreted in music, poetry and song. The Baltimore Choral Arts Society presented a musical interpretation of the experience of two great mystics, the Jewish prophet, Elijah, and the Spanish Teresa of Avila, to open the public phase of the closing celebration.

The Baltimore Carmel is the repository of approximately 250 cubic feet of records the community has preserved throughout its long, continuous history. Included are documents pertaining to life in colonial Maryland, the original land grant with the seal of Lord Baltimore, financial documents of early Catholic facilities, as well as bills of sale for the purchase of slaves.

A recent grant from the National Historical Publications Commission has allowed the community to preserve, arrange and intellectually control this valuable collection and make it available to the research scholar. During the conference, 186 items were on exhibit, funded in part by the Maryland Humanities Council, Inc., through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Of particular interest to the readers of the HWR News and

Notes is the significance of this event in the history of women religious in American life. Among recent bicentennial celebrations of nation, constitution and church, this is the first to celebrate the impact of women religious on American society.

Evangeline Thomas, CSJ

AMERICAN NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY

The American Council of Learned Societies is funding this new biographical dictionary which is to contain sketches of approximately 20,000 persons. Already under consideration for inclusion are all persons in the DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, NOTABLE AMERICAN WOMEN, and other important collections. But the editors are eager to locate significant people whose careers have not been described in these reference works. Nominations should be sent to: John A. Garraty, General Editor, AMERICAN NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY, Center for the Social Sciences, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, along with a brief explanation of why each nominee merits inclusion.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please have copy for the
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