
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

NEWS AND NOTES

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CONFERENCE NEWS

The Program Committee for the Conference, "Women Religious and the Social Fabric," being held at Marymount College, Tarrytown, New York June 28 to July 1, 1992, will be completing its task in January-February. HWR subscribers and others who have requested more information can expect to receive a preliminary program and registration form in March.

PUBLICATIONS, TALKS

Mary Anne Foley, CND, recently completed her dissertation on the origins of the Congregation de Notre Dame of Montreal. Entitled "Uncloistered Apostolic Life for Women: Marguerite Bourgeoys' Experiment in Ville-Marie," it can be ordered on microfilm or in book form from UMI. HWR readers may recall the brief paper Mary Anne presented at the 1989 Conference under this same title. She will be presenting one of the theological sections of the dissertation, "Gathering the Drops of Christ's Blood: Seventeenth-Century Women as Evangelizers," at the Notre Dame History of Christianity conference in March.

Michael Grace, SJ, will be chairing a session entitled "Who will administer the archives of religious orders and communities in the future?" at the May 20, 1992 Mid West Archives Conference. Several other HWR members will be represented on the panel which includes Ann Donnelly, CSC; M. Campion Kuhn, CSC; Elizabeth Yakel; John J. Treanor; and Barbara Misner, SCSC, commentator.

Katherine E. Zappone's recent volume, THE HOPE FOR WHOLENESS: A Spirituality for Feminists (Twenty-Third Publications, 1991), examines the emergence of various feminine spiritualities over the past two decades.

Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, expects publication of her book, MOTHER CABRINI: "ITALIAN IMMIGRANT OF THE CENTURY", to be published by the Center for Migration Studies of New York in April, 1992. The study, which draws on previously unresearched documents in Italy, the Vatican, and the United States, reveals much about Frances Cabrini's struggles and accomplishments before coming to America in 1889, and details her work among Italian immigrants with the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (founded by her in Italy in 1880) across the United States.

Talks given by Doris Gottemoeller, RSM, "Religious Life," and Marie Augusta Neal, "Church in America," given as part of "The Impact of Vatican II: Looking Back, Moving Forward, Twenty-Five Years Later," held in 1991 at Mount St. Mary's College, are available for \$10 a topic from the College at 10 Chester Place, Los Angeles, CA 90007. Each talk consists of two 90-minute tapes; must be prepaid.

Margaret Susan Thompson's essay, "Women, Feminism and the New Religious History: Catholic Sisters as a Case Study," appears in THE NEW RELIGIOUS HISTORY, ed. P. VanderMeer and R. Swierenga (Rutgers University Press, 1991).

Another facet of history pertaining to the Sisters of Charity and the missions is told in Mary Charita Pendergast, SC, HAVOC IN HUNAN (St. Elizabeth Press, 1991). The account spans the years from 1924 to 1951 during which the Sisters of Charity served the people of Hunan. It may be purchased from the press at 2 Convent Road, Morristown, NJ 07960 for \$14.95 plus \$1.50 postage and handling.

A TIME FOR KEEPING . . . A TIME FOR LETTING GO (Marianist Press, 1990) by LaVerne Frietsch, OSF, recounts the history of the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg, IN from 1945-1975.

BOOK REVIEW

ODYSSEY IN FAITH; THE STORY OF MOTHER ALFRED MOES, by Carlan Kraman, OSF (Rochester, MN: Published by the Sisters of Saint Francis, 1990). 250 pp. paper \$6.95.

An 1883 tornado in the small farming community of Rochester, Minnesota, swirled together an elderly doctor, his two medically-minded sons, the injured and dead, and the Sisters of St. Francis, who turned their school into a makeshift hospital. The experience prompted Mother Alfred Moes, the superior of the teaching community to recognize a need for a hospital. She proposed the idea and financial resources to the doctor though he thought the city too small to support a hospital. Not one to be daunted, Mother Alfred countered, "Just promise me to take charge of the hospital and we will set that building before you at once. With our faith and hope and energy it will succeed." Thus, St. Marys[sic] Hospital was opened in 1889; Dr. William Mayo and his two doctor sons were in charge, and the world-famous Mayo Clinic had its simple beginning.

The graphic description of the tornado which begins Sr. Carlan's life of Mother Alfred Moes, the foundress of two Franciscan congregations and of St. Mary's hospital, might

well symbolize Mother Alfred herself. Born in 1828 in Luxembourg, Maria Catherine Moes along and her older sister Catherine, by a fascinating series of twists and turns, eventually became members of four separate religious congregations in America where they went in 1851 with initial dreams of teaching the Indians.

Though the details of their early experiences are almost non-existent, Kraman has meticulously examined extant records and offers details of Luxembourg and of early Wisconsin to provide a context for the Moes' early life and their three year experience in the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Milwaukee. Though more details are available after their entrance in the Marianite Sisters in 1856, the circumstances of the ultimate separation of Mother Alfred, her sister, and two other Marianite sisters from the community in 1863 remain murky.

In any case, in 1865, Mother Alfred with ecclesiastical approbation, officially began the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate in Joliet, Illinois. During the next eleven years, the Joliet Franciscans grew rapidly, and Mother Alfred was able to start schools in the Midwest and respond to other local needs. Early records acknowledge that she had an

impetuous nature which often caused her to act rashly, withdrawing sisters from the parish schools when she or they did not agree to the pastor's "wishes and whims." Though Mother Alfred was loved by the majority of her sisters, these actions and her strong personality which enabled her to direct and develop the community caused a clash with Chicago Bishop Thomas Foley, who, like most diocesan bishops of the 19th century, controlled the womens' communities. By ordering an election for a new superior and stating that Mother Alfred was not eligible, he triggered events which eventually caused her and 25 sisters to separate from the Joliet community and to establish the Rochester Franciscans in 1877.

In spite of Kraman's fine efforts to fill in the background of Mother Alfred's experiences, the reader, like the author, is left with tantalizing questions. Because of the complexity of events, the chronology of Mother Alfred's life at the end of the book is especially useful. The volume is also enhanced by maps and photographs; however, there is no index.

The book begins and ends with attention to the founding of St. Mary's Hospital, thus focusing on Mother Alfred's role in the beginning of the Mayo Clinic and her

contribution to Catholic health care. Yet, the turmoil and conflicts of Mother Alfred's life, her frequently difficult relationships with pastors and bishops, and her movements in and out of different religious communities offer contemporary women religious, who often struggle with new directions, authority questions, and painful decisions, a thoughtful guide for religious life which is always an odyssey of faithful response to the Lord's call.

Mary Denis Maher, CSA
Ursuline College, Ohio

WORK IN PROGRESS

Cynthia Brown, Ph.D. candidate at Brandeis University, will shortly complete her dissertation "Leading Women: Female Leadership in American Women's Higher Education 1880-1940," which profiles women leaders at two Catholic and two secular women's colleges (College of New Rochelle; Trinity, Washington, D.C.; Bryn Mawr; and Wellesley). She would welcome correspondence on this topic or from anyone researching either Catholic colleges or their sponsoring orders, Ursuline and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

Anne Marie Knawa, a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago (motherhouse Lemont, Illinois) is developing a Heritage Room in the

motherhouse outlining the congregation's Marian and Franciscan roots. The project, based on her history of the congregation 1894-1987 (published 1989), is scheduled for completion in October of 1992.

Sue Schrems at the University of Oklahoma is working on her dissertation, "Lady Black Robes: Establishment of Indian Mission Schools in Montana, 1860-1900." Significant for this study are two Catholic women's communities, the Sisters of Providence and the Ursulines.

Mary Jane Losier, M.A. student at the University of New Brunswick, is researching the Sisters of Charity (Halifax) and their work in the Province of New Brunswick.

Helen Delaney, RSM, successfully defended her dissertation for a doctorate in canon law at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. The dissertation, "The Evolution of Governance Structures in the Sisters of Mercy of Australia, 1846-1990," grew out of the author's experience in Australia where she has resumed her affiliation with the Australian Catholic University.

CONFERENCES, OPPORTUNITIES

The Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Monroe, Michigan) are searching for an

editor for a collection of feminist essays which is in the planning stages. Starting date July 1992; project fee negotiable. Cover letter, resume, and portfolio samples were due January 31, 1992; to inquire whether or not the search is still open contact the COR Search Committee, 610 W. Elm Ave., Monroe, MI 48161.

The Women's History Landmark Project has as its purpose to increase public awareness and appreciation of women's history by identifying significant sites in women's history and preparing nomination forms for consideration for National Historic Landmark status. If you have suggestions of properties that should be considered, please contact Page Putnam Miller, NCC, 400 A St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.

Correction: The ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WOMEN AND WORK is being published by Garland Press and not, as mistakenly announced in HWR News and Notes October, 1991 issue, by Jossey-Bass. The single-volume reference investigating subjects relevant to women and work from 1890 to 1990 will be cross-disciplinary and will include perspectives from the social and behavioral sciences. Topics of interest are: family, education, race and ethnicity, religion, social class, jobs and careers, cross-cultural issues, etc. For information contact Dr. Kathryn M. Borman, University of Cincinnati, College of Education - ML 02, Cincinnati, OH 45221.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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