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# HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

## *News and Notes*

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### CONFERENCE '98

The fourth assembly sponsored by the History of Women Religious Conference will be held at Loyola University Chicago from June 21 through June 24, 1998. Ann Harrington, BVM, is in charge of local arrangements. Florence Deacon, OSF, chair of both program and local arrangements for Conference '95 in Milwaukee, has agreed to continue on with the program committee which is now being formed. If you are interested in serving on the program committee, please let the HWR editor know. This group will begin its work during the 1996-1997 academic year, and will be responsible for setting the Conference '98 theme, issuing the call for papers, and screening proposals. The Ad hoc Conference Committee listed at the end of the newsletter names the program committee and provides guidance concerning general features and goals of the triennial conference.

### PUBLICATIONS

Five papers presented at Conference '95 are published in U.S. Catholic Historian 14:1 (Winter 1996). They are: Mary Anne Foley, CND, *We Want No Prison Among Us: The Struggle for Ecclesiastical Recognition in Seventeenth-Century New France* (pp. 1-18); Judith Metz, SC, *The Founding Circle of Elizabeth Seton's Sisters of Charity* (pp. 19-33); Jeanne Hamilton, OSU, *The Vunnery As Menace: The Burning of the Charlestown Convent, 1834* (pp.35-65); Carol K. Coburn and Martha Smith, CSJ, *Creating Community and Identity: Exploring Religious and Gender Ideology In the Lives of American Women Religious, 1836-1920* (pp. 91-108); and Linda

Marie Bos, SSND, *Empowered by a Shared Story* (pp.109-120).

The same issue of the USCH includes an article presented by Florence Deacon, OSF, at Conference '92: *More Than Just a Shoe String and a Prayer: How Women Religious Helped Finance the Nineteenth-Century Social Fabric* (pp.67-89); and M. Shawn Copeland's, *A Cadre of Women Religious Committed to Black Liberation: The National Black Sisters Conference* (pp.123-144). To purchase single issues or to subscribe, write U.S. Catholic Historian, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750, or call 1-800-348-2440.

Elizabeth McGahan's recent publication, *The Sisters of Charity of the Immaculate Conception: A Canadian Case Study*, in the Canadian Catholic Historical Association Historical Studies, 61(1995), 99-133, was also a Conference '92 presentation.

Ann Kessler, OSB, has published *BENEDICTINE MEN AND WOMEN OF COURAGE*, based on her wide teaching and lecturing experience. Biographical treatments bring Benedictine history alive from the beginnings of Benedictine life to the present, in the persons of women and men in America, Australia, Europe, Africa and Asia. Printed by Pine Hill Press; available in hardcover only, \$35 donation, from Kessler at Sacred Heart Monastery, 1005 W. 8th St., Yankton, SD 57078.

Mary E. Penrose, OSB, has added to our knowledge of Church teachers, monastic founders, and medieval mystics with publication of *ROOTS DEEP AND STRONG: GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE CHURCH*, Paulist Press: 1994.

MEDIEVAL WOMEN MYSTICS: WISDOM'S WELLSPRINGS, by Miriam Schmitt, OSB and Linda Kulzer, OSB, editors; and Mary Michael Kaliher, OSB, illustrator (Liturgical Press, 1996), features the rich monastic legacy of women religious by gathering the life stories of outstanding medieval women monastics.

Cheryl Clemons, OSU, recently completed her doctoral dissertation on *The Relationship Between Devotion to the Eucharist and Devotion to the Humanity of Jesus in the Writings of Helfta*. Further information available from Clemons at Ursuline Sisters, Maple Mount, KY 42356.

David N. Bell continues his contributions to the study of literacy in medieval monasteries with WHAT NUNS READ: BOOKS AND LIBRARIES IN MEDIEVAL ENGLISH NUNNERIES, Cistercian Publications of Kalamazoo, Michigan State University, Kalamazoo (1995).

Contributions to the forthcoming ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN CATHOLIC HISTORY (Liturgical Press) by HWR subscribers include those by Christine Athans, BVM, on *Mary in the American Catholic Church*; and by Janice Farnham, RJM, on *French-Canadians in U.S. Catholicism*, and on *Religious of Jesus and Mary in the United States*. (For other contributions, see News and Notes February, 1996.)

Charles F. Mann's MADELEINE DELBRËL: A LIFE BEYOND BOUNDARIES (New World Press, San Francisco, 1996), traces the life of an unconventional Frenchwoman whose conversion from atheism to Catholicism on the eve of World War II led her to live and work with other small communities of women in the French Communist Paris suburb of Ivry-sur-Seine until her death in 1964. Steadfastly opposed to accepting any official status for the religious community which she inspired (and which survives her), Delbrël spoke eloquently to the questions of the adaptation of traditional forms of religious life to the twentieth century.

## ARCHIVES

"Story Time in Kentucky's Holy Land: In Our Keeping VI," A conference for archivists, historians & secretaries general, will convene in Nazareth, Kentucky October 24-27, 1996. It is co-sponsored by Parable Conference for Dominican Life and Mission and Project Opus, a collaborative history project relating to the history of the Order of Preachers in the U.S. For information write Parable Conference, 7200 West Division Street, River Forest, IL 60305; or call (708) 771-0088. FAX (708) 771-4520.

The next membership meeting of the Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious will be held in conjunction with the annual Society of American Archivists meeting in San Diego, August 27-September 1, 1996. Preparations will be made at this meeting for a second ACWR national conference to be held in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin, August 21-24, 1997. For more information, contact the ACWR national office, Srs of Mercy Archives, 3333 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (note: this corrects erroneous information on location of the national office, given in the February, 1996 issue of HWR News and Notes).

## NOTICES

The committee formed at Conference '95 to evaluate the HWR Network structure and recommend changes will meet June 21-23, 1996, under the direction of Mary Roger Madden, SP. The October issue will carry a committee report. For information, contact Madden at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876.

The biennial convention of the American Benedictine Academy will be held August 8-11, 1996, at Monastery Immaculate Conception, 802 East 10th Street, Ferdinand, IN 47532. Papers center on the topic of "Monastic Work: Challenge and Change." Artists from many Benedictine houses will display their work during the convention.

The Sisters of Charity of New York and Mount St. Vincent College are initiating a Center for Leadership and Spirituality as a joint effort marking the sesquicentennial celebration of the College's academy beginnings. The Center, which will open officially on August 19, 1996, will support research on spiritually based leadership particularly as it has been reflected in the practices of religious and lay women.

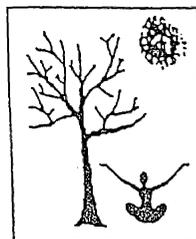
The Adrian Dominican Sisters dedicated their new historical area, "Adrian Dominican Sisters: History and Mission," in October, 1995. Located in the congregation's main administration building, the Center's three rooms are devoted to successive periods of congregational history and are equipped with motion sensors that activate light and music. Two of the rooms have video equipment for viewing tapes pertaining to the period represented. Picture display areas include a directory of deceased members of the Congregation with reference to a series of books containing a profile of each sister, product of work by a task force of historians, artists, and communications people.

The National Association for Women in Catholic Higher Education will hold a two-day symposium July 12-13, 1996, at Boston College (see description for details).

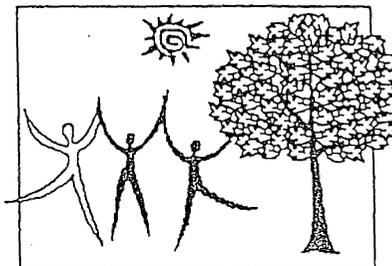
The Communal Societies Association is moving its headquarters from Southern Indiana University in Evansville, IN to Historic Amana in Amana, IA, according to Regina Siegfried, ASC, board member of Communal Societies Association. Regina encourages HWR members to join CSA, since women religious have much to offer the study of communal societies.

The Annual CSA conference is being held at Amana from October 10-13, 1996. HWR members Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC, Pat Wittberg, SC, and Regina will be giving papers. For information, write: Communal Societies Association, P.O. Box 122, Amana, IA 52203.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS III



*Listening to Women:  
A Challenge to Change*



A Two-day symposium for faculty, students and administrators at Catholic Colleges and Universities

July 12 & 13, 1996  
at Boston College

FEATURED PLENARY SPEAKER:  
*Multicultural Voices: Agents of Change*  
Sister Kathleen Kelly, C.S.J  
Mount St. Mary's College

KEYNOTE ADDRESS:  
*Gender and Cultural Politics*  
Trihn T. Minh-ha  
University of California, Berkeley

We will be addressing the ways in which we can make diverse voices from Catholic higher education heard in order to address the needs and concerns of women students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Paper, panel, and workshop sessions on four tracks (Administration & Policy, Research on Women, Women's Studies, and Women's Academic Lives) include how-to discussions on building women's studies programs, affecting curriculum change, and feminist pedagogy, speak-outs on sexual assault, and being an outsider at a Catholic institution, and hands-on interactive workshops on strategies for empowerment and managing conflict.

Sponsored by The National Association  
for Women in Catholic Higher Education

For registration materials, please contact:  
NAWCHE, Women's Studies Program, Department of  
Sociology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA 02167,  
(617) 552-4198, email NAWCHE @hermes.bc.edu.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

Susanna Garroni has written on behalf of a group of Italian women who are studying Italian immigrant women religious in the United States. The group is particularly interested in three orders, the Pallottine missionaries, the Pie Madre Filippini, and Sisters of San Giovanni Bosco, from 1880 to 1940. If you have suggestions or information, you can contact Garroni at Vicolo Vicinale 5 B/ 00152 Rome, Italy.

The Diocese of Cleveland, Ohio is celebrating its sesquicentennial in 1997. A history sub-committee for the celebration is compiling information on articles, chapters, books, or works in progress dealing with any aspect of the diocese since its foundation. A volume of essays is being considered. Please refer information or questions to Dorothy Ann Blatnica, VSV, Ursuline College, 2550 Lander Rd., Pepper Pike, OH 44124. Telephone: (216) 449-4200.

Debra Campbell, department of religious studies, Colby College, is working on a volume called *Leavings* which examines Catholic and ex-Catholic women's departure narratives, that is, about leaving the church and/or leaving the convent, and the "leavings" that remain in women's lives after their departures.

Janice Farnham, RJM, is preparing for publication a manuscript on nineteenth-century Lyon "providences" for girls, with the tentative title of *SILK AND SOULS*. Her current research interest is in French-Canadian women religious in the U.S.; she would welcome information on resource materials or persons especially related to the ethnic conflicts and parish confrontations of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. She can be reached at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, 3 Phillips Place, Cambridge MA 02138.

Michael Engh is preparing a history of social reform in Los Angeles through the life and activities of Mary Julie Workman (1871-1964),

Catholic social activist and graduate of the Academy of the Holy Names, now known as Holy Names College in Oakland.

Tracy Schier is general editor for a collaborative history of colleges founded by women religious. HWR subscribers participating in the project, which is expected to result in a one-volume publication in 1997, are Alice Gallin, OSU, and Jeanne Knoerle, SP; Karen Kennelly, CSJ; Mary Oates, CSJ; Melanie Morey; and Carol Hurd Green. Other contributors are Kathleen Mahoney; Tom Landy; Monika Hellwig; David Contosta; Jane Redmont; and Dorothy Brown. Anyone with information regarding the education and achievements of faculty at these colleges, both lay and religious, or with suggestions concerning significant archival or published material relating to curriculum or faculty, is asked to contact Karen Kennelly at the newsletter address.

Dana Robert has a forthcoming book, *THE MISSION THEORY OF AMERICAN WOMEN: A SOCIAL HISTORY*, Mercer Press. Six chapters are on Protestants, and two on American women religious. The author's intent is to integrate Protestants and Catholic women in mission into a single narrative.

## BOOK REVIEW

*MONICA MAGINNIS: A LIFE*, by Joan Brosnan, OSU (Cincinnati: Kahny Printing, 1995), 203 pp.

Monica Maginnis, an Ursuline of Brown County, St. Martin, Ohio was recognized outside her community in the 1930s and 1940s as a scholar who published extensively. Among her sisters she is remembered as an outstanding teacher who bequeathed to them "a delight in education that endures even as schools closed and ministries shifted." (P. 44) In writing this biography, Joan Brosnan describes the process through which Sister Monica's joy in teaching and in learning gradually extended to a full-time ministry in research and writing. More significantly, she shows the

relationship between Sister Monica's life and the themes revealed in her scholarship.

From the time of her profession in 1892, until 1930 when she was released from her teaching responsibilities to continue her research and writing on a full-time basis, Sister Monica had served in traditional roles as a teacher in the secondary schools of her community, as an administrator, and from 1910 to 1917 as Director of Education. These familiar tasks nurtured her creativity, enlarged her vision and prepared her to make the most of her formal education, earning her B.A. at Catholic University in 1917 and her M.A. in 1918, and Ph.D. in 1926 from Notre Dame. Brosnan devotes two chapters to the years Sister Monica studied at Catholic University and at Notre Dame and rightly emphasizes the liberal intellectual environment that informed both campuses, at Catholic in the first decade of the Sisters College when it was still influenced by its founder, Thomas Shields, and at the Notre Dame of the 1920s which benefitted from the progressive leadership of successive UND presidents. The analysis in these chapters also suggests a fascinating research agenda about the extent of the formative influences these schools may have exercised on the sisters who earned graduate degrees before 1930.

Sister Monica's graduate work at Notre Dame provided a natural progression from teaching to writing but not without cost. As she made the transition she struggled to balance the requirements of community living with the professional demands of research which increasingly kept her away from the community. Thus from 1930 until her death in 1958, she experienced the tension between the centripetal forces of the "closely knit mother house community" and the centrifugal forces of the "mission beyond." (P.21)

This conflict intensified in the 1930s and 1940s when her research required extensive travel in Europe and when her publications invited frequent interviews and lectures; the more her work was recognized outside the community, the more she

was misunderstood within. Ironically, her superiors of the 1950s, women influenced by the early stirrings of the Sister Formation Movement, feared her creativity and independent spirit far more than the superiors of the 1920s and 1930s who recognized her gifts and according to Brosnan "let her be herself." (P. 181)

Brosnan describes Sister Monica's interior conflict within the context of an extended discussion of her writings, presenting in nine chapters a close textual analysis of her published works and unpublished manuscripts. The published works include the revision of her doctoral dissertation, *ANGELA MERICI AND HER TEACHING IDEA, 1474-1540* (1927); *THE CROSS IN THE WILDERNESS* (1930), a history of the founding of the Brown County Ursulines; *LA GRAN CONTROVERSIA DEL SIGLO XVI* (1940), the Spanish translation of the unpublished English manuscript, *I THE KING*; two meditation books; and finally, *AND THEN THE STORM* (1939), a popular account of her reflections on life in Spain just before the outbreak of the Spanish civil War. In addition to *I THE KING*, her unpublished manuscripts include a biography of Magdaleine de la Peltrie, a companion of Marie of the Incarnation. She also published in newspapers and periodicals such as *Commonwealth* and *Catholic World*. Unfortunately, the bibliography does not include a complete listing of these articles. In reviewing these texts, Brosnan follows Sister Monica's narrative organization; but she illuminates the connections among these works by suggesting that Monica Maginnis wrote from a mission-centered perspective both in her choice of research topics and in her identification with her subjects, imaginative, risk-taking women who constantly had to choose between strengthening their roots or moving on.

By having chosen to write about Monica Maginnis, Brosnan retrieves the story of a woman who made unique contributions both within and beyond her community even though she was never selected for major leadership positions. She thus provides a

model and an approach that more of us might use in attempting to understand the dynamics of religious life during the first half of the twentieth century.

Mary Hayes, SND  
Trinity College  
Washington, D.C.

#### NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please have copy for the October issue to the editor by September 1, 1996.

#### THE HWR NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Karen Kennelly, CSJ  
Book Review editor: Mary Hayes, SND  
Ad hoc Conference Committee:  
Kaye Ashe, OP; Florence Deacon, OSF;  
Mary Ewens, OP; JoAnn McNamara;  
Mary J. Oates, CSJ; Judith Sutera, OSB;  
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