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# History Of Women Religious

## News and Notes

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### **HWR NETWORK NEWS**

Network membership has reached 618, up from an initial membership of under 200 a decade ago. Members will have their next opportunity to gather in conference in **June, 2001**, when the fifth triennial meeting is scheduled to take place. Marquette University in Milwaukee is the top contender for hosting the 2001 meeting with the final decision on site to be made by November 1. Inquiries regarding the site selection process may be sent directly to newsletter editor, Karen Kennelly.

Elizabeth McGahan, program committee chair for the fifth triennial conference, can provide advance information about the proposal process. If you have an interest in presenting a paper or forming a panel for this conference, please contact her at the University of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 5050, St. John, New Brunswick Canada E2L 4L5 (Telephone 506-633-2997; email [emcgahan@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:emcgahan@nbnet.nb.ca)).

### **PUBLICATIONS AND TALKS**

Margaret A. Slowik, OSF, has authored the first general outline of U.S. third order institutes in the Franciscan tradition, The Franciscan Third Order Regular in the United States: Origins, Early Years, and Recent Developments (privately printed, Sisters of St. Francis of Tiffin, Ohio, 1999). 129 pp. including an appendix summarizing founding and membership data for the 94 congregations included in the study, keyed to the OCD. The Franciscan Institute facilitated

duplication and initial distribution of this thesis. Copies may be ordered for \$15.00 plus postage and handling from the Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY 14778.

Kathryn Burns, Colonial Habits: Convents and the Spiritual Economy of Cuzco, Peru (Duke University Press, 1999) provides an illuminating study, analogous to Asunción Lavrin's analysis of the role of convents in colonial Mexico, of the role convents played in the elaboration of Spanish colonialism in the Inca stronghold of Cuzco.

Jeanne Ruth Merifield Beck, To Do and to Endure: The Life of Catherine Donnelly, Sister of Service (Dundurn Press, Toronto, 1997), provides the first biography of the woman whose concerns regarding the needs of immigrant children in the Canadian West in the early twentieth century led her to found a new congregation with a more flexible rule than that of existing women's congregations, with an inconspicuous habit and freedom to live and work among the poor. The book marked the Sisters of Service' 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1922-1997).

Dolores Liptak, RSM, and Grace Bennett have edited Seeds of Hope (privately printed for the Sisters of Providence, 1999), a collection of essays tracing the history of the Sisters of Providence of Holyoke, Massachusetts from 1873 to the present. The congregation's consistent focus on the care of sick and elderly people and orphaned children affords insights into the particular contribution of women's congregations in health care ministry and policy development. Copies may be ordered for \$12.00 plus \$3.00 per

copy for shipping and handling, from Bennett at 5 Gamelin Street, Holyoke, MA 01040.

Mary C. Sullivan, RSM, has edited a collection of letters involving Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, and Mary Clare Moore, founder of the Roman Catholic Sisters of Mercy in Bermondsey, London. Entitled The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), the collection may be ordered from Kate's Tea and Gift Shop, 1437 Blossom Rd., Rochester, NY 14610, at a discounted price of \$35.95 plus shipping cost of \$3.20 priority mail or \$1.50 library rate. Sullivan's research interests focus on Sisters of Mercy founder, Catherine McAuley, and the nineteenth-century history of the congregation.

Three HWR members, Anne Butler, Carol Coburn, and Regina Siegfried, ASC, formed a panel for the Communal Societies Association conference held in St. George, Utah, in September. Papers, in order of preceding panelist names, were "African Americans, Native Americans, and Mother Katherine Drexel: The Impact of Money and Vision;" "The Vowed Life: A Woman's in [nineteenth-century] Colorado;" and "Go Ask the Catholic Sisters . . . They'll Help You," on the topic of women religious in the West in the twentieth century.

Dolores Liptak, RSM, presented "Married Vows, Solemn Vows: The Vocation of S.M. Austin Barber, VHM," at the Georgetown Visitation bicentennial conference, June 22-24. A symposium, 200 Years of Visitation Presence, 1799-1999, held June 24-26, focused on women and education and included a talk by Wendy Wright, authority on the spirituality of Visitation co-founder, St. Francis de Sales, entitled "Salesian Spirituality: A Gentle Presence in a Violent World."

Mary S. Donovan, Hunter College, CUNY, presented a paper on "Episcopal Clergy Women" at the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the

graduation of women degree candidates from the General Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in New York City.

Rima Lunin Schultz, Chicago Area Women's History Conference, presented on the work of the Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVMs) for the June meeting of the congregation's Heritage Society at the Mount Carmel motherhouse, Dubuque, Iowa.

## ***RESEARCH IN PROGRESS***

Marian E. Harris, DHM, asks subscribers to contact her ([meharris@bu.edu](mailto:meharris@bu.edu)) regarding any information they may have on American religious orders (other than the Medical Mission Sisters), or Americans in international orders, involved in Vietnam before or during the years 1960-1975.

Peronne Marie, VHM, member of the Georgetown Visitation community, is deciding among several publishers for her translation of a rare first-hand account of the Lyons Visitandines' experience during the French Revolution. Her next research project will relate to one of two eighteenth-century French women, the Duchess of Montmorency who died as a Visitandine sister in Moulins; or Louise-Angélique de LaFayette, connected with both the French court during the time of Louis XIII and with the English court through Louis XIII's sister, Queen Henrietta-Maria.

Mary E. Seematter, an adjunct faculty member at Washington University, St. Louis, is working on an article scheduled for publication in spring, 2000, on three religious orders of women whose primary ministry was among the African American community in St. Louis. Subscribers who may have done similar research for another urban setting are asked to contact her ([mseematt@artsci.wustl.edu](mailto:mseematt@artsci.wustl.edu) or [seematter@yahoo.com](mailto:seematter@yahoo.com)).

Marie Paula Holdman, SC, from the College of Mt. St. Vincent, New York, is putting her German language expertise to work on a translation of G. Mehnert's biography, Ansgar, Apostel des Nordens, as part of an ecumenical publishing project relating to St. Ansgar, missionary and first bishop of Hamburg. The city is being raised once more to the status of an archdiocese after a 1,000-year interval. Ansgar, who brought Christianity to northern European countries and paved the way for the many religious orders of women and men who followed, served as archbishop of Hamburg from 831 until the Vikings destroyed the city in 845.

Dorothy Ann Blatnica, VSC, associate professor in the religious studies department at Ursuline College, is beginning research on the history of her congregation, the Vincentian Sisters of Charity of Bedford, Ohio. Please contact her at Ursuline College, 2550 Lander Road, Pepper Pike, OH 44124 with information relating to her research topic and with current information on any list-serves that might facilitate her research. She may also be reached at [starlite@en.com](mailto:starlite@en.com)

Mary Ewens, OP, back from Italy and resident at 3015 W. Michigan St., Milwaukee, WI 53208 ([Opmary@aol.com](mailto:Opmary@aol.com)) is working with an Italian collaborator on a book to be called Catholic Schindler's of Italy.

## BOOK REVIEW

Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Cultures and American Life, 1836-1920 by Carol Coburn and Martha Smith, CSJ (University of North Carolina Press, 1999), Pp. xii +327. Paper, \$19.95.

Focusing on the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph from 1836-1920, this book is a masterful blend of history, feminist interpretation, and intelligent writing. The book itself is a model of the best that is possible when women collaborate. The opening chapter, "The French Connection:

Founders, Origins, and Early Activities," situates the community within the larger historical context of seventeenth-century France and the aftermath of the French Revolution with its devastating results for religious communities.

The remaining six chapters discuss creating an American identity, educating the sisters, expanding into the Trans-Mississippi West, parochial schools, secondary and higher education, and nursing, hospitals, and social services. Each chapter is a solid rendition of methodology from history and feminist studies. The timeframe of 1836-1920 offers the authors the freedom that same period gave religious women to create, shape, and explore new possibilities for religious women in this country. Coburn and Smith comment that "after 1920 communities of women religious calcified under the weight of ecclesiastical hegemony" (p.225).

Extensive use of archival material, primary sources, and photographs illustrate the scholarship and research that went into the creation of this book. Personalities such as the three Ireland sisters, Monica Corrigan, and Agatha Guthrie come to life. While Spirited Lives focuses on the CSJs, it is a model for other communities who want new histories and new ways to interpret their histories. An appendix of the many branches of the original Carondelet foundation would have been helpful and clarifying. That's the only less-than-positive critique I have of this excellent book.

Regina Siegfried, ASC  
St. Louis University  
St. Louis

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Servants of Mary (Servite Sisters) of Omaha are now on the WEB: <http://osms.org/america/>  
HWR is pleased to publish WEB addresses when forwarded, to enhance networking.

The Sisters of the Holy Family were featured in the LA Times last summer on the eve of Vatican action on the next stage of canonization proceedings for their founder, Henriette Delille, and in the midst of a film production for Lifetime cable network featuring the Creole woman who founded the Holy Family congregation to work among slaves and other poor people in antebellum New Orleans.

Wilson College in south central Pennsylvania is sponsoring a conference, "Gaudy Night: Celebrating Women's Colleges," November 12-13, 1999. The deadline for papers is past (**July 15**), but for more information on registration contact Dr. Lynne Woehrle, Dept. of Sociology, Wilson College, 1015 Philadelphia Avenue, Chambersburg, PA 17201 ([lwoehrle@wilson.edu](mailto:lwoehrle@wilson.edu)).

The Center for the Study of Religious Life, established in 1998 to foster reflection on religious life in the U.S. and to implement efforts that will strengthen this way of life in the church, has begun publishing a newsletter, **KINDLING** for the Future of Religious Life. To subscribe, contact editor/Center director Barbara Kraemer, OSF, at 5401 South Cornell Avenue, Chicago, IL 60615.

The Organization of American Historians announces annual competition for the Lerner-Scott Prize, awarded for the outstanding dissertation in U.S. women's history completed during the period July 1, 1998, through June 30, 1999. Deadline is **November 1, 1999**. For more information contact OAS executive director at [oah@oah.org](mailto:oah@oah.org), or Robyn Muncy, committee chair, Dept. of History, 2115 Francis Scott Key Hall, University of Maryland at College Park, College Park, MD 20742.

The Sisters of Loretto archivist, Nerinx, Kentucky, is Katherine Misbauer, SL ([lorarchives@kih.net](mailto:lorarchives@kih.net)), not, as incorrectly given in the HWR News and Notes June issue, Patricia Manion, SL.

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please have copy for the **February 2000** issue to the editor by **January 1, 2000**.

## THE HWR NEWSLETTER

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