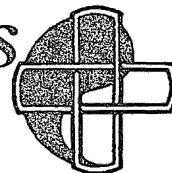


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# History of Women Religious

## News and Notes

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### HWR Conference News

The fifth triennial conference held at Marquette University, Milwaukee, June 17-20, featured 30 panel sessions on a wide variety of topics pertaining to the history of religious life for women. Copies of papers are available at cost (copying and postage), depending on availability and authors' permission to copy. Presenters are encouraged to submit their papers with accompanying usage form if they have not already done so.

Additional copies of the Conference program and a list of participants' names and addresses are also available. Corrections or additions on lists distributed in June are: Claude Auger's email is <claudauger@sympatico.ca> Linda Marie Bos' address is 2900 No. Menomonee River Parkway, Milwaukee, WI; email <bosl@mtmary.edu> Brendan Fay's address is 22-22, 28th St., Astoria, NY 11105; email <brendan@stpatsforall.com>. Noreen Jutte's correct email is <sharchives@donet.com>. Margaret Reher's email is <mnreher@op.net>. Please forward inquiries regarding Conference papers, programs, and lists to the editor/coordinator email <KKennelly33@hotmail.com>

The fifth Distinguished Historian Award was bestowed on Mary J. Oates, CSJ, for her lifetime achievements in the field. The Distinguished Book Award, given for the first time by the Conference, was bestowed on Martha Smith, CSJ, and Carol K. Coburn, for *Spirited Lives: How Nuns Shaped Catholic Culture and American Life, 1836-1920* (University of North Carolina Press, 1999). The Oates citation is reprinted in this issue.

Action was taken at the business meeting to formalize the structure of the Conference, and to

adopt a logo. The logo used here reflects suggestions made at the meeting. Selection of a site for the Sixth Triennial Conference, to be held in June, 2004, is pending. Site proposals must be sent to the editor/coordinator by November 1, 2001, in order to be considered.

### Publications

*Women Building Chicago 1790-1990: A Biographical Dictionary*, eds. Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast (Indiana University Press, 2001), is a pathbreaking reference work featuring biographies of 400 women, including 18 women religious from 11 congregations. Essays in another urban study, *New York Glory: Religions in the City* (New York University Press, 2001), edited by Tony Carnes and Anna Karpathakis, are illuminating regarding the general topic but make no significant reference to the contributions of women's congregations to the religious history of that city.

Suellen Hoy examines the role of Catholic sisters, "the largest group of white women" who persisted as members of Chicago's South Side community after the Great Migration, in "Illinois Technical School for Colored Girls: A Catholic Institution on Chicago's South Side, 1911-1953," *Journal of Illinois History*, Summer, 2001, pp. 103-122. Individual copies of the *Journal* are available at \$5 each from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Springfield, IL 62701.

Anita Specht, "The Power of Ethnicity in a Community of Women Religious: The Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ in the United States, 1868-1930," *U.S. Catholic Historian*, Winter, 2001, pp. 53-64, explores the importance of German ethnicity for an immigrant German community. (Note: the USCH is now published by

the University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IN 46556.)

Mary J. Oates builds on her earlier studies of philanthropy in her recent biographical essay, *Saint Katherine Drexel: Salvation, Education, and Philanthropy* (Center on Philanthropy, Indiana University, 2001). Copies are available for \$5 from the Center at 550 West North Street, Suite 301, Indianapolis, IN 46202.

Frances M. Gimber, RSCJ, *Woman of the Word: A Life of Marie Louise Schroen, A Religious of the Sacred Heart* (privately printed: Society of the Sacred Heart, 4389 West Pine Boulevard, St. Louis, MO 63108; \$17.50 includes postage), contributes another fine biography to the literature. Schroen (d.1991) was a significant figure in the Society in the U.S. and abroad.

Suzanne L. Bunkers, ed., *Diaries of Girls and Women: A Midwestern American Sampler* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2001) makes some valuable unpublished sources readily available, including annals written by the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Iowa, 1865-86; and by the Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Family, also in Iowa, 1962-73.

Suzanne Noffke, OP, announces release of the second volume of *The Letters of Catherine of Siena* (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, Arizona, 2001). The 808-page volume is composed primarily of the letters written by Catherine from 1376-77.

Barbara Misner, SCSC, has completed the second part of her work, *The Living Love of Christ Among Us: The History of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross. Part II: The Era of Consolidation, 1888-1938* (privately printed: Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, Merrill, WI 54452).

David Hertz, "New Institutions in the Village Kirdorf Endorse the Traditional Order: The New Church, Workers' Insurance and Vereine, the Sisters, the Library, and Religious Practice," *The Catholic Historical Review*, April, 2001, pp. 229-51, situates a new women's congregation, the *Schul-und Kranken-Schwestern von der göttlichen Vorsehung*, in the context of Bishop

von Ketteler's efforts to promote social reforms in mid nineteenth-century Germany.

Paul Lee, Nunneries, *Learning and Spirituality in Late Medieval English Society: The Dominican Priory of Dartford* (York Medieval Press, 2001), is a fine monograph on a little-known subject.

## Research in Progress

Patricia Wittberg is writing a chapter summarizing sociological, organizational, and historical research on U.S. religious orders and their colleges, to be included in a forthcoming reference book entitled *A Handbook of Research on Catholic Higher Education*. Suggestions of books, journal articles, dissertations, and other works to be included in a bibliographic summary of this kind should be forward to Wittberg at Sociology Department, IUPUI, 425 University Boulevard, Indianapolis, IN 46202; or email <pwittber@iupui.edu>

Mary E. Seematter is researching the history of lay associate programs in women's religious congregations. She invites ideas on resources and contacts, and can be reached at 3763 Upton St., St. Louis, MO 63116; or email <seematter@yahoo.com>

Regina Coll, CSJ, is studying the creation of new ministries based on recognition of unmet needs. Author of *Church and Ministry in the United States* (Crossroad), and, most recently, *The Heart and Soul of Parish Ministry* (Twenty-Third Publications, in press, 2002), she intends to explore the influence of congregations' charism and history on decisions to begin new ministries; and on support they may have received from dioceses or congregations. She may be contacted at the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

Chris Baker, RN, Ph.D., a qualitative researcher, is conducting a grounded theory study with women religious. Her emphasis is on the women's understanding of the meaning of health; on strategies they develop to promote and maintain health; and on barriers they encounter both within and outside the formal health care sys-

tem. She may be contacted at St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, Madison, WI 53715, or email <Christine\_Baker@ssmhc.com>

Regina Siegfried, ASC, is preparing for the tenth anniversary of the deaths of several of her congregation's members in Liberia (1992) by writing an article of what has transpired in Liberia over the past decade, and on what the congregation and its sisters have experienced. She can be reached at the Dept. of Theological Studies, St. Louis University; or email <siegfr@slu.edu>

## Book Review

*Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings*, eds. Regina Bechtle, SC, and Judith Metz, SC. Vol. I (Hyde Park New York: New City Press, 2000). Pp. xxx+563. Illustrations, index.

According to the volume's editors, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings* is "focused on making the Seton writings accessible in as close a form as possible to the original manuscripts while at the same time providing adequate information to situate the works in context." If that was the editors' objective, they have succeeded admirably; this book stands as a first-rate collection of primary materials, compiled with scholarly rigor and with the usefulness of the volume always in mind.

In their brief but helpful introduction to this collection, Bechtle and Metz explain that it is the first half of a projected two-volume compilation of Elizabeth Bayley Seton's writings, sponsored and facilitated by the North American Sisters of Charity Federation in the Vincentian-Setonian Tradition. This volume contains Seton's correspondence and journals through mid-1808—that is, prior to her move from New York City to Baltimore, and her subsequent settlement in Emmitsburg, where she established her Sisters of Charity. The period from June 1808 through Seton's death will be covered in Volume II. Thus, what is available now treats the years of Seton's marriage, trip to Italy, widowhood, conversion, and decision to relocate in Maryland.

The editors also indicate the difficulties they

encountered in attempting to collect materials that "have found their way by circuitous routes into numerous archives," as well as their efforts to make sense of fragments, variously copied documents, and other less-than-pristine items. Although they do not dwell on what was involved, anyone who has conducted research involving historical manuscripts can fill in what the editors did not say about what they had to do. In any event, the result of their labors is a meticulously annotated piece of work that, for the first time, enables Seton's story to be told in her own voice.

The result is fascinating; readers of this volume are in for several treats, as they accompany Seton on a journey both intensely spiritual and completely human. Here is a woman who experienced the happiness of marriage and maternity in the United States' era of "republican motherhood." She also suffered the loss of her husband, the agonies and joys of a difficult but absolute religious conversion, and the uncertainties associated with her rejection by many friends and relatives. Through all of these developments, we come to know a woman of both strength and vulnerability, a woman of intelligence, passion, humor, and grace.

The Bechtle and Metz volume contains much that will be of interest to students of the history of religious life, but it is to be hoped that their audience will extend more broadly than that. The writings of Elizabeth Bayley Seton comprise a rich resource for those interested more generally in U.S. women's history in the era of the Early Republic, and in the history of American religion, including, but not confined to, Catholicism.

In addition, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton: Collected Writings* can serve as a model for persons in other religious congregations and "families" who are interested in collaborative work with the primary sources of their traditions. Based upon information in the introduction and acknowledgments, it is clear that Bechtle and Metz benefited from the assistance and collaboration of literally dozens of individuals, as well as numerous Vincentian-Setonian communities and other interested parties. Those who, in turn, benefit from the

result of the editors' efforts can only hope that more scholars choose to follow in *their* footsteps: to learn from their experience so as to enable other founders and pioneers in religious life—especially women—to share their stories in their own voices with readers of the present and future.

Margaret Susan Thompson  
Syracuse University

## Announcements

Christine Wolker, OSU, archivist and former superior of the Ursuline Sisters of Paola (Kansas), died unexpectedly February 15, 2001.

Evelyn Marie Augustyn, CSFN, province archivist for the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Pittsburgh Province, Pennsylvania, died suddenly May 11, 2001.

June Conference participants learned of the death of Mary Emil Pinet, IHM, Monroe, Michigan, just prior to the Conference, June 15, 2001. Pinet will be remembered especially for her pioneer work with the Sister Formation Conference.

Stephanie Morris, Ph.D., and holder of a Certified Archivist degree, has been named director of archives for the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. She reports that interest is still increasing regarding recently canonized St. Katherine Drexel; their 100th visitor for 2001 signed the archive guest book July 3, compared to 98 for 2000-2001. Paulist Press recently issued a children's book, *Kate from Philadelphia*, by Patricia Edward Jablonski, FSP, featuring color illustrations drawn by the late Mary Julius Hausmann, SBS.

Applications for Radcliffe Institute Fellowships must be submitted by October 15, 2001. For more information, visit the Institute website at <[www.radcliffe.edu](http://www.radcliffe.edu)>

*American Catholic Studies* (formerly *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society*) is soliciting manuscripts in the area of American Catholic History. Six issues a year are planned, beginning with September, 2001. Send two copies

of manuscripts to: Rodger Van Allen, Dept. of Theology and Religious Studies, Villanova University, Villanova, PA 19085. Questions? email <[Margaret.McGuinness@Cabrini.edu](mailto:Margaret.McGuinness@Cabrini.edu)> or Marge Reher <[mmreher@op.net](mailto:mmreher@op.net)>

Topics dealing with Catholicism in the western U.S. and Canada are especially welcome at the American Catholic Historical Association spring meeting, March 15-16, 2002. Proposal and a brief CV are due by November 1, 2001, to Rev. James Connelly, CSC, Dept of History and Political Science, University of Portland, 5000 N. Willamette Boulevard, Portland, OR 97203; email <[connelly@up.edu](mailto:connelly@up.edu)> The conference will be held at the University of Portland.

## Distinguished Historian Award

Whereas Mary J. Oates, C.S.J., Research Professor of Economics at Regis College, Boston, Massachusetts, committed herself to the religious life as a Sister of St. Joseph of Boston and has served with distinction as a teacher in the schools sponsored by her congregation as well as by the Society of Jesus; and

Whereas she earned advanced degrees in the field of Economics at Yale University and authored a doctoral thesis, *The Role of the Cotton Textile Industry in the Economic Development of the American Southeast: 1900-1940*, subsequently published by Arno press; and

Whereas she subsequently published numerous essays and edited primary documents reflecting an integrated economic, religious, and feminist critique, including "Organized Volunteerism: The Catholic Sisters in Massachusetts, 1870-1940;" "The 'Good Sisters': The Work and Position of Catholic Churchwomen in Boston, 1870-1940;" "Women in Massachusetts History Before 1920;" "Lowell': An Account of Convent Life in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1852-1890;" and "Catholic Women in the Labor Force, 1850-1950;" and

Whereas she addressed with scholarly expertise the subject of women's education in such books and articles as "Professional Preparation of Parochial School Teachers, 1870-1940;" *Higher Education for Catholic Women: An Historical*

*Anthology*; and "Catholic Female Academies on the Frontier;" as well as in the forthcoming "Sisterhoods and Catholic Higher Education, 1890-1960;" and *Religion and Gender in American Higher Education: The College of Notre Dame of Maryland, 1895-2000*; and

Whereas her prize-winning volume, *The Catholic Philanthropic Tradition in America*, integrates women religious into the history of philanthropy in the United States Roman Catholic church; and

Whereas her stature as a researcher, author, and teacher has been recognized by the awarding of grants by prestigious foundations and institutional symposia; therefore

Be it resolved that the Conference on the History of Women Religious here assembled present the Distinguished Historian Award to MARY J. OATES, in deep appreciation and esteem for her distinguished contribution to the history of women religious.

Given the nineteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand and one, at the conference, "Individuals in Community: Women Religious and Change, Past, Present, and Future," gathered at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

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### Subscription Information

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2401 Karen M. Kennelly, CSJ, Editor

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