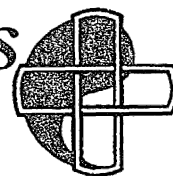


# History of Women Religious

## News and Notes



Volume 16—Number 1

February 2003

### HWR Network News

Carol Coburn, program committee chair, reports that a Call for Papers will be sent to HWR Conference members in February, inviting proposals for panels or single papers for presentation at the Sixth Triennial Conference, at the Atchison Heritage Conference Center in Atchison, Kansas, June 27-30, 2004. She and local arrangements chair, Judith Sutura, OSB, are also setting up a website linked to the Benedictine monastery and conference site in Atchison as a central source of information on the June, 2004, meeting.

A word of clarification for continuing and new members: HWR network membership is synonymous with the newsletter subscription list and now stands at 537 including 18 new subscriptions. HWR's purpose, to facilitate networking among persons interested in the history of religious congregations of women, is promoted through the newsletter and a triennial conference. Your subscription renewal date is indicated next to your name on the address label. Please contact the editor with any questions, or to secure 2004 Triennial Conference information if you fail to receive it by March of this year.

Material for the newsletter, and inquiries about contacting subscribers, should be sent to the editor at the newsletter address or by email <KKennelly33@hotmail.com> Publications being submitted for review, and inquiries about writing reviews, may be sent directly to book review editor, Regina Siegfried, at 3800 Lindell Blvd, P.O. Box 56907, St. Louis, MO 63156; email <siegfr@slu.edu>

### Publications

Two recent works develop various facets of the life and work of beguines in medieval Europe: *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565*, by Walter Simons (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); and *The Life of Saint Douceline, a Beguine of Provence*, trans. Kathleen

Garay and Madeleine Jeay (D.S.Brewer, Rochester, New York, 2001).

Linda Kulzer, OSB, and Roberta Bondi, *Benedict in the World, Portraits of Monastic Oblates* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 2002), have gathered stories of women and men Benedictine Oblates from 973-2000, including, from modern times, Jacques and Raissa Maritain, Dorothy Day, and Rumer Godden.

Moshe Sluhovsky, "The Devil in the Convent," *The American Historical Review*, December, 2002, pp. 1379-1411, analyzes and sets the episode of demonic possession of the Ursuline nuns of Loudun in 1633-1640, in the context of witchcraft accusations in early modern Europe.

Two recent biographies by Jo Ann M. Recker, SNDdeN, describe the life work of *Françoise Blin de Bourdon, Woman of Influence: The Story of the Cofoundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame* (Paulist Press, 2001); and 'Très affectueusement, votre mère en Dieu.' *Françoise Blin—French Aristocrat, Belgian Citizen, Co-Foundress of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (1756-1838)* (Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2001).

Marcel Launay, *Hélène de Chappotin (1839-1904) et les Franciscaines missionnaires de Marie, 'Oser sa vie'* (Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 2001), gives us the first biography of this founder of an international religious society today numbering 8,200 members from 72 countries.

Theresa Torres, OSB, *Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Society of the Guadalupanas in Kansas City, Missouri: An Empirical and Theological Analysis* (doctoral thesis, The Catholic University of America, 2002), uses ethnographic and ritual studies to interpret the devotion of a lay society of women to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Ellen Whelan, OSF, *The Sisters' Story: Saint Mary's*

*Hospital-Mayo Clinic 1889-1939* (privately printed, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Rochester, Minnesota, 2002) develops the extraordinary story of the Franciscan Sisters who teamed up with the doctors Mayo to found a medical complex of worldwide fame.

Mary van Balen Holt, *Meet Katherine Drexel: Heiress and God's Servant of the Oppressed* (privately printed, Servant Publications, 2002) provides a well documented biography from a contemporary perspective.

Mary J. Oates, CSJ, has a chapter entitled "Faith and Good Works: Catholic Giving and Taking," in *Charity, Philanthropy and Civility in American History*, eds. Lawrence J. Friedman and Mark McGarvie (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Suellen Hoy, "Ministering Hope to Chicago," *Chicago History*, Fall, 2002, pp. 4-23, continues to enlighten readers regarding the ministry of women religious in Chicago's African-American neighborhoods.

Barbara E. Mattick's "Ministries in Black and White: The Catholic Nuns of St. Augustine, 1859-1869," presented at a seminar on women in the New South, will be published as part of an anthology, *Lives Full of Struggle and Triumph: Southern Women, Their Institutions, Their Communities*, eds. Bruce Clayton and John Salmond (University of Florida Press, Spring 2003).

Jeanne Schweikert, SSSF, *Standing at the Crossroads: Religious Orders and Reconfiguration* (Convergence, Inc., Chicago, 2002) assesses the experience of union, merger, or reunification involving 15 congregations in the United States over the past several decades.

Ann Kessler, OSB, notes that her publication, *Benedictine Men and Women of Courage: Roots and History*, out of print for several years, is now available in an updated and slightly revised version, in print or CD ROM, from the author at the Monastery, 1005 W. 8th St., Yankton, SD 57078.

The first Colloquia organized by the Australian Catholic University Women's History, Theology and Spirituality Research Project Team, held in June, 2002, included presentations by Kerrie Hide, "The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich," drawn from her

acclaimed book on the subject, *Gifted Origins to Graced Fulfilment-The Soteriology of Julian of Norwich*; and Marilyn Kelleher, CGS, on the social work of the Good Samaritan Sisters in Sydney and Parramatta in the nineteenth century. Details on this and forthcoming colloquia are available from Dr. Sophie McGrath, RSM, WHTS Research Project Coordinator, Australian Catholic University, Locked Bag 2002, Strathfield NSW 2135.

Numerous papers relating to women religious over a wider range of periods and countries than the title might suggest, were presented at the symposium, "Brides of Christ: Towards a History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland," organized by Carmen Mangion and Caroline Bowden in October, 2002, at St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham. For a report and abstracts, contact the organizers at [manwag@freeuk.com](mailto:manwag@freeuk.com) or by regular mail: Carmen Mangion, 491 Liverpool Road, Flat 7, London N7 8NS.

## Research in Progress

Leslie Hughes is completing her doctoral thesis at the University of New South Wales in the field of women and philanthropy.

Caroline Bowden, Associate Research Fellow at the Centre for Religious History at St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, London, is developing a prosopographical research project on English and Irish convents in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Those interested in the topic may contact Caroline at [cbowden@sas.ac.uk](mailto:cbowden@sas.ac.uk)

Mary J. Oates, CSJ, has received a Spencer Foundation grant of \$35,000, for 2002-2003, to support her book-in-progress, "Education, Gender, and Religion in America: The College of Notre Dame of Maryland, 1895-2002."

Joan Mickelson Gaughan has undertaken a research project, at the invitation of the Sisters of St. Francis of Rochester, on the history of the College of St. Teresa, with an expected publication date of August, 2004.

Cindy Yik-yi Chu, assistant professor in the department of history at Hong Kong Baptist University, is engaged in research on the Maryknoll Sisters in Hong Kong. Her project focuses on the education, social

services and welfare which the women provided for the local people 1921-1969. An article highlighting parts of her larger topic, "From the Pursuit of Converts to the Relief of Refugees: The Maryknoll Sisters in Twentieth Century Hong Kong," appears in *The Historian*, December, 2002.

Ilana DeBare, a journalist in Oakland, California, is writing a book on the history of all-girl schools (K-12, not colleges) in the United States. She is currently working on the section on Catholic girls' schools.

Hildegard Pleva, a novice with a contemplative monastic community, Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists), is in the beginning stages of research on Maria Celeste Crostarosa (1696-1755), founder of the women's congregation and close friend of Alphonsus Ligouri who founded the Redemptorist priests' congregation.

## Book Reviews

*Catholic Women's Colleges in America*, eds. Tracy Schier and Cynthia Russett (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002). Pp.vi + 439.

*Mundelein Voices: The Women's College Experience, 1930-1991*, eds. Ann M. Harrington and Prudence Moylan (Loyola Press, Chicago, 2001). Pp. xiv + 311.

Anyone who has researched the role of Catholic women religious in the United States is acutely aware of their absence in the historical accounts of the church in America. Indeed, even in accounts of the history of Catholic education in which the Catholic nuns were for so long the sole teachers, they are frequently not even mentioned and certainly not credited with their success. Recent books such as *Sisters in Arms* by JoAnn McNamara, *Spirited Lives* by Coburn and Smith, *Building Sisterhood* by The Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters of Monroe, Michigan, among others, have certainly made fine contributions to the history of women religious. Happily, both books under review continue these recent beginnings in research and publication on the extensive history of American women religious.

The collected essays edited by Schier and Russett contain comprehensive information on women's colleges founded by religious from historical, sociological and ethnographical perspectives. The authors consistently place their topics into the larger context of church and society. The work is excellently re-

searched and includes detailed references, along with two helpful appendices, the first of which lists the names of colleges and universities founded by women religious for the education of lay students, and a second which lists those founded for the education of sisters only. These appendices are useful to anyone doing further research. Unfortunately, compiler Thomas Landy did not include the dates of foundation in either case, data which would be useful to someone studying the topic.

The first two essays by Jill Ker Conway and Monika Hellwig put the topic in the context of the larger history of religious life as well as that of education of women. That there were 142 women's colleges and universities founded by nuns in 1968 attests to the ingenuity of women religious who managed to do this with no endowment other than their own lives and labor, and with little encouragement from church and society. Hellwig discusses the spirituality that underlay these endeavors and examines the five elements of celibacy, community, the vow of poverty, contemplation and charity, that made the sisters willing and ready to take on the ministry of higher education. (17)

Essays by Kathleen Mahoney on "Historical Origins," Thomas Landy on "Colleges in Context," Karen Kennelly on "Faculties and What They Taught," Mary Oates on "The Sisterhoods and Catholic Education, 1890-1960," Dorothy Brown and Carol Green on the "Stories of Persistence and Success," and Melanie Morey on "The Present Relationship of Religious Women to the Colleges They Founded," focus primarily on different aspects of the history of these institutions up to the present. Interesting bits of information surface in their discussions, most of which reflect the climate of the time in church and society regarding women. For example, Bishop McQuaid of Rochester threatened the Catholic women who attended Cornell with excommunication if they did not withdraw from the University. He did not enjoin the same on Catholic men who studied there. (49-50)

Also we learn that many in the church, clergy and faithful alike, deemed the education women received at the numerous Catholic academies as sufficient education for women, making college education unnecessary. It was only when Catholic women in numbers enrolled in secular colleges that the church took notice, as Mary Oates notes in her essay. (163) And so did the nuns who geared up their expertise.

Though they had begun much later than the male religious in founding institutions of learning, they quickly caught up with their male counterparts, so much so that in the last one hundred years there have been at least 200 colleges founded by nuns to educate women, and more than half of the Catholic colleges and universities in America today were begun by sisters. (55) Most of these were established in the twentieth century, particularly from World War I to the 1960s, though some predated these years beginning in the late nineteenth century. There were trials, economic problems, struggles, and closures, but overall one can see from these essays that the women religious who entered into the apostolate of higher education were successful.

The remaining chapters of the book deal with remembrances of alumnae as told by Jane Redmont in her essay on "Live Mind, Yearning Spirits." Redmont interviewed an ethnic and culturally diverse group of graduates of nine selected institutions. Her findings include the alumnae's awareness of a commitment to the intellectual excellence of women, an emphasis on the life of the mind and its importance in the lives of Catholic women, and the planting and nurturing of their spiritual life. (196) One essay in this work focuses on student life at specific schools—three colleges founded in Philadelphia—to examine the similarities and differences of the three institutions founded by three different orders.

*Mundelein Voices* complements Schier and Russett's book in that it details the life and personalities of an individual college. Mundelein College which became a part of neighboring Loyola University in 1991, is commemorated in this volume mostly by memories of those who attended the college or served as faculty or administration. Although most of the authors are women alumnae, several essays by male faculty and administrators give a perspective that aptly reflects similar sentiments regarding the institution. The essays in Part I set the context for these remembrances first with an essay which tells the story of the founding of the college and a second on the building of its signature structure, the Skyscraper Building, now on the historic register. Part II presents a series of individual remembrances which though arranged chronologically do not comprise a history in the traditional sense. The stories recall each author's initial encounter with Mundelein, her or his experiences with the religious faculty, the forming of friend-

ships with fellow students and personnel, experiences with the curriculum and with life and classes on the campus, all of which initially were held in the famous Skyscraper Building.

Many of the sentiments found in Schier and Russett are exemplified in *Voices*, especially the essay by Jane Redmont. What comes through loud and clear in *Voices* is the concern for academic excellence, the joy of learning, the desire on the part of the faculty to develop strong and intellectual Catholic women. Even when speaking of the stern and demanding teacher the authors of the essays reveal the strong influence these sisters had on them for life. The story of Mundelein is told from its inception to its merger with Loyola. The editors planned the essays well to show how the school was started and completed with great courage and struggle as the Great Depression settled onto the nation, how it developed from basically a one-building institution designed initially as a commuter campus and grew into a residential campus, how it adapted to meet the needs of a changing church and society especially in the 1960s, how it responded to new clientele as in the opening of the weekend college which included male students, and how it inspired and prepared some six thousand women for successful lives based on Christian principles. It is the story of one of this country's highly respected and academically excellent colleges for women. It is the story of strong women who made it a reality from its inception to its closing in 1991.

Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC  
St. Louis University

*Shanghai Sacred Heart, Risk in Faith, 1926-1952* by Madeleine Chi, RSC (Privately printed, Society of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis Province, 2001). Pp. 183

This monograph, as the author calls it, opens with a survey of the early work of the Society of the Sacred Heart in China from 1926 when Pope Pius XI (and Jesuits seeking to refound their nineteenth-century missions, destroyed when the Society of Jesus was suppressed), asked religious orders of women to begin missions in that country.

The six numbered chapters, pp. 15-152, detail the foundation and progress of the Aurora educational enterprise that developed at elementary, secondary, and university levels as it functioned during the

political difficulties of that era. These chapters are preceded by a chronology and an introduction focusing on Shanghai with particular emphasis on World War II and the Sino-Japanese War as well as on the apostolic ministry of the Sisters in this pivotal city. A conclusion summarizes and evaluates the congregation's achievements. Statistics are given for Sacred Heart Primary School, the Aurora Middle School for Girls, and Aurora College for Women, of which the author, a native of Shanghai, is a graduate.

Sacred Heart convent in Shanghai served as an internment camp from March to September, 1945, its 18 RSJC residents having been sent to Japan for safety. There is no indication that religious of other congregations were held there.

While this book does a good job describing the RSJC

presence in China, reference to other missionary communities there during the same period might have enlarged the picture and facilitated a more nuanced interpretation of the significance of the Sisters' China mission.

Pauline Grady, ASC  
Springfield, Missouri

## Announcements

The Second Annual Conference on the History of Women Religious of Britain and Ireland will convene in London, England, 11 October 2003. Submissions from all disciplines with an interest in the topic, for short papers, group sessions with chair, or contributions to workshops, should be sent in the form of abstracts of 250 words by Friday, 28 February 2003, to Dr.

---

## Subscription Information

***HWR News and Notes*** is published three times a year, **February, June and October**. To subscribe or renew (note expiration date on your mailing label), complete form below and enclose a check for \$10/1 year, \$18/2-year, or \$24/3-year payable to ***History of Women Religious*** to:

Karen M. Kennelly, Editor  
HWR News and Notes  
2311 So. Lindbergh Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63131

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

New Subscription ☐      Renewal ☐      Amt. Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

News item for ***HWR News and Notes***, Recent Publication, Research, Interests, etc.

2401 Karen M. Kennelly, CSJ, Editor

***History of Women Religious***  
***News and Notes***

2311 So. Lindbergh Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63131

---

Caroline \ Bowden at bowdenc@smuc.ac.uk or Carmen Mangion at carmenmangion@freeuk.com

The Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism at the University of Notre Dame will hold a conference entitled "Rethinking U.S. Catholicism: International and Comparative Frameworks," March 14-15, 2003. For more information, contact the Center director, Timothy Matovina, at cushwa.1@nd.edu

The next conference of the Western Association of Women Historians is scheduled for June 6-8, 2003, at the Clark Kerr Conference Center, Berkeley. Information is regularly posted on the website [www.wahw.org](http://www.wahw.org)

The American Catholic Historical Association will hold its 84th annual meeting January 8-11, 2004, in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact program committee chair Professor Bernard McGinn, at [bmcginn@midway.uchicago.edu](mailto:bmcginn@midway.uchicago.edu)

**Newsletter Deadline**

Please have copy for June, 2003, issue to the editor by May 1, 2003.

**The HWR Newsletter**

Published by the  
Conference on History of Women Religious  
2311 So. Lindbergh Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63131

ISSN: 1054-545X

**Subscription:** \$10.00/1 year

**Coordinating Committee**

COORDINATOR/EDITOR: Karen M. Kennelly  
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR: Regina Siegfried  
AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR: Elizabeth Kolmer  
PROGRAM CHAIR 2001: Elizabeth McGahan  
PROGRAM CHAIR 2004: Carol Coburn  
AT LARGE MEMBERS: Mary Hayes; JoAnn McNamara; Mary J. Oates; Judith Sutera