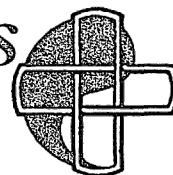


History of Women Religious News and Notes



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HWR Network News

The program for the Seventh Triennial Conference of the History of Women Religious network is now posted on the University of Notre Dame Cushwa Center web site: www.nd.edu/~cushwa/. The program, organized around the theme of "Local Cultures/Global Church: Challenge and Mission in the History of Women Religious," promises to be an exciting convergence of speakers and interested persons eager to share their research and to probe future directions. The Conference is set to convene at UND June 24-27, 2007. Registration materials will be available by early February. More information may be obtained from the web site or by contacting local arrangements chair, Kathleen Cummings, kcummings@nd.edu or telephone 574-631-8749.

Publications

Ann M. Little, "Cloistered Bodies: Convents in the Anglo-American Imagination in the British Conquest of Canada," in *Eighteenth Century Studies* 39: 2 (Winter 2006), 187-200, contributes an interesting piece of intellectual history helpful for understanding the context from which nineteenth-century stereotypes of the nun emerged.

Rebecca Rogers, *From the Salon to the Schoolroom: Educating Bourgeois Girls in Nineteenth-Century France* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), analyses social and familial changes behind evolving approaches to the education of bourgeois girls. Female religious congregations played a minor, though significant role: the new girls' schools were established beginning in the late 1790s. Of 45 such schools in Paris by 1800, some were created by female religious congregations but the majority conducted by seculars. By 1855 there were twenty-two religious girls' secondary schools in Paris, and three hundred and twenty secular schools. Religious values structured life in both secular and religious schools.

Ellin M. Kelly is pleased to announce completion of her edition of the series, *Elizabeth Bayley Seton Col-*

lected Writings, with publication of Vol. III, parts a. and b. (2006). For more information on this and prior volumes (I, 2000; and II, 2004), contact Kelly either at the Vincentian Archives, DePaul University or at her home address of 822 Judson Ave., Evanston, IL 60202.

Therese Currie, SHCJ, reports the approaching completion of the history project begun by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus over ten years ago. An initial team of historians outlined the plan for a nine-volume series to cover the highlights of the twelve decades following the death of the foundress, Cornelia Connolly (d. 1879). Approximately 100 Sisters from Europe, Africa and the U.S. contributed to the series which is set to conclude with publication of the ninth issue (including an index to all nine issues) in autumn of 2007. For more information contact Helena Meyer, SHCJ, American Province Archives, 1308 Wendover Rd., Rosemont, PA 19010.

Fernanda H. Perrone, "A Well-Balanced Education: Catholic Women's Colleges in New Jersey, 1900-1970," in *American Catholic Studies* 117:2 (Summer 2006), 1-32, explores the curricular and extra-curricular education characteristic of a particular segment of colleges conducted by women religious in the U.S.

Nadine Foley, OP, *Adrian Dominican Sisters History 1924-1933: Seeds Scattered and Grown* (Privately printed, Adrian Dominican Congregation, 2006) traces the history of the Adrian Dominican group from its beginnings as an independent congregation through the death of Mother Augustine Walsh (1874-1933). This carefully researched monograph offers a model of its kind, building on the work of earlier community historians, in this case, Mary Philip Ryan, OP (1901-2002), and focusing on a key gestational period in the life of a congregation. For more information contact Adrian Dominican Congregation, 1257 East Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, MI 49221. Web page www.adriandominicans.org.

Irene Callahan, RSM, *Catherine's Sisters: A Memoir 1935-2005* (Privately printed, Sisters of Mercy, Baltimore Regional Community, 2006) recounts the story of one

congregation's journey from pre-Vatican II through the changes of the sixties and seventies and into the post-modern world. Beautiful archival photographs and personal interviews with 175 sisters bring this story to life. The book will appeal to anyone interested in the Sisters of Mercy, and to women and men who have shared the experience of vowed life during those tumultuous times. Hardback, 272 pp. To obtain a copy or for more information contact the author at tel. 410-377-2247, or sisterma02@yahoo.com.

Angelyn Dries, OSF, is guest editor for the Summer 2006 issue of *U.S. Catholic Historian*. The issue features a number of articles highlighting the role of women religious in mission history: Edward T. Brett, "African-American Missionaries in Central America: The Sisters of the Holy Family in Belize," pp. 75-94; Susan Fitzpatrick Behrens, "Knowledge is Not Enough: Creating a Culture of Social Justice, Dignity, and Human Rights in Guatemala: Maryknoll Sisters and the Monte Maria 'Girls,'" pp. 111-128; Regina Siegfried, ASC, "The Great Mission Work: The Influence of the China Mission on the Adorers of the Blood of Christ," pp. 129-148; and Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC, "The Death of Five Adorers of the Blood of Christ and the Changing Meaning of Martyrdom," pp. 149-164.

Research in Progress

The fifth annual conference of the History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland, held in Ireland for the first time, attracted a group of 120 scholars, archivists, religious and students from Australia, West Africa, Denmark and the United States as well as from Britain and Ireland, to share research in progress on a broad range of topics. Thematic panels highlighted parallel and contrasting developments, such as the use of the visual image to guide perceptions of nuns' ministry to the sick and dying in the seventeenth and twentieth centuries; and the evolution of nuns' authorship from medieval amanuensis practices to present-day autonomous publication. Recurring themes were the purpose of work and its evangelical elements, controversies provoked by women religious working in the public sphere, and the impact of social change on the lives and work of religious.

Rosa MacGinley, PBVM, is engaged in research on Irish women religious in nineteenth-century Australia and their convent schools. She delivered a paper on the subject at the Empires of Religion Conference held in Dublin in June 2006. She and other Conference

presenters have been invited to expand their papers for publication in a conference proceedings volume.

Joan McBride, SM, will be sharing research on her forthcoming book, "When we are weak then we are strong", *A History of the Marist Sisters in Australia, 1907-1984*, at the Golding Centre Colloquia, set to convene at the Mount Saint Mary Campus, Australian Catholic University, Strathfield, April 21, 2007. For more information contact Sophie McGrath, RSM at s.mcgrath@mary.acu.edu.au.

Margaret Preston continues her research on the American foundations of the Presentation congregation founded by Honoria (Nano) Nagle in eighteenth-century Ireland. Attracted to the topic by a faculty appointment to Augustana College, Sioux Falls, South Dakota several years ago, Preston is uncovering much little-known information concerning the Presentation sisters who came to Dakota Territory in 1880. Her paper, "From the Emerald Isle to Little House on the Prairie: Ireland, Medicine, and the Presentation Sisters on America's Northern Plains," was warmly received at the spring American Catholic Studies Seminar, Cushwa Center, University of Notre Dame. Highlights of Seminar discussion appear in the Fall 2006 issue of the *American Catholic Studies Newsletter*.

Book Reviews

Venture into the Unknown: Loretto in China 1923-1998, by Patricia Jean Manion, SE (Independent Publishing Corporation, St. Louis, MO, 2006). Pp. 345. (\$20 donation to Sisters of Loretto, China Book, Nerinx P.O., 515 Nerinx Road, Nerinx, KY 40049).

As China takes a more and more prominent role on the world scene, this narrative account gives the reader a sharp contrast to ponder. It provides an even more important background as Loretto plans a new establishment in Pakistan, caught between ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The six women who docked at Wuhan in the fall of 1923 were responding to the invitation of the Columban Father Edward Galvin to assist his mission in Hupei Province in central China. He was keen on educating young girls, convinced that the future of Chinese Christianity depended on women of faith and the children they would mother. Galvin was clear that Hanyang, the site of their work, was going to present a cultural shock—a city of some 200,000 very poor people with

narrow, dirty streets and low, badly built houses, little boys running quite naked in the summer. But, he added, "the people are simple and inoffensive, and the sisters will be as safe in the streets of Hanyang as they would be in any city in the U.S." But political events were stirring even then that were to belie his prediction.

Those selected from the more than 90 who volunteered for this work (Loretto's first overseas mission) were themselves an international community. Only one was actually born in the United States. One was born in Canada, one in Holland, one in Bohemia, one in New Mexico when it was still a territory, and one in Ireland. Galvin had wanted young women between the ages of 25-35 who could easily learn Chinese but those who assigned the sisters wisely valued other qualifications more highly. Only one (29) fitted the age category; the others ranged in age from 36 to 59. Several were experienced teachers; some had nursing and sewing skills; all had courageous hearts.

During the first year, spent largely in language training and getting accustomed to new surroundings, the little group moved ahead with Galvin's project of an embroidery school, a means to help country girls gain the skill to earn a living by making church vestments and to acquire the rudiments of an education. Still, scarcely a year had passed before the sisters found themselves in the maelstrom of local unrest, stemming from China's move from "two thousand years of imperial dynasties" to a nationalism with Communism as its guiding ideology.

A fine introduction by John G. Blair of Beijing Foreign Studies University sets the political and cultural background against which this story plays out. It is difficult to follow the various stages of the armies of Chiang Kai-shek, Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists, the struggle with foreign concessions, the Japanese incursion, the riots and strikes of workers, and tactics of powerful regional warlords that kept life in turmoil. The author warns us of these complexities at the beginning of the book, and she provides historical sign posts in bold print to give the reader information that the sisters, students and household employees had no way of knowing at the time. She chooses to tell us of Loretto's endeavor as seen through the eyes of the principal characters and reflected in their letters and journals.

A charming modesty and matter-of-factness characterize the sisters' story. They love the Chinese people. They take danger at gunpoint, famine, flood, and ultimately a long internment in their stride with great good humor,

always finding some way to stay at their post during riots and nearby military operations even as they are being called home by their nervous U.S. religious superiors.

The Loretto women were above all educators. A certain tension runs through the earlier years as Galvin and the Maynooth mission stress the importance of the Embroidery School as a means of financial support versus the sisters' intent to open fine schools to provide a strong religious and academic foundation for Chinese girls. Ultimately they were able to achieve this goal with flourishing schools in Hanyang and Shanghai until it became clear in 1952 that under the Communists in China, all foreign priests and sisters would have to leave the country.

This is not an easy read. Maps and pictures do help to get a hold on the complicated comings and goings of many characters, not just the Sisters of Loretto, but Columban Fathers and Brothers, Columban Sisters, Canossian Sisters, Jesuits, Sisters of Charity, Religious of the Sacred Heart, and a host of employees, dear to the sisters and essential to their safety. There are subordinate tales about kidnappings and executions, imprisonments and ransoms, and finally betrayal by their own pupils to the Communist authorities—all a part of the unstable conditions that made this venture an excursion into the unknown as well as an exhibition of dauntless courage.

Ann Patrick Ware, SL
St. Louis, MO

Pioneer Spirit: Catherine Spalding, Sister of Charity of Nazareth, by Mary Ellen Doyle, SCN (Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 2006). Pp. xvi, 286. \$45 cloth.

Pioneer Spirit relates the triumphs and trials of Catherine Spalding, whose gifted leadership provided the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (SCN), Kentucky, a sure foundation in the community's founding years. The biographer, Mary Ellen Doyle, a contemporary member of the SCN community, sought "to know more of [Spalding's] personality, her spirituality, her driving motives" (ix). Mother Catherine Spalding emerges from these pages bearing striking similarities to many nineteenth-century women religious whose leadership proved critical in establishing the Catholic Church in the U.S. Spalding's actions demonstrate a willingness to take risks in founding schools and orphanages, perseverance through financial difficulties and personal conflicts, and ingenuity and practical wisdom in establishing institutions especially

in the caring for and educating of children amidst the uncertainty of the western frontier of Kentucky.

Doyle proceeds in ten chronologically ordered chapters to tell the story of this resourceful woman determined to live out her commitment to God in a community of women dedicated to works of charity. The opening chapter provides an important framework in Doyle's pursuit of Spalding's "driving motives." Born on December 23, 1793 into one of Maryland's extended Catholic families, Catherine came in 1797 to Kentucky. Her mother died a year or so after the move. In 1803 or 1804, her father, deeply in debt, abandoned his second wife and family. Catherine and her four siblings then depended upon relatives' benevolence to provide a home. Doyle suggests that the experience of loss and upheaval coupled with her relatives' kindness inspired Spalding's deep commitment to the care and educating of children, especially orphans.

The remaining nine chapters are organized around the changing leadership roles that Catherine Spalding played in the communal life of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. The second describes how less than a year after she volunteered to join the fledgling community, in 1813, at the age of 19, Catherine Spalding became the community's first superior. Subsequent chapters describe her continuation as superior first until 1819 and then again from 1824 to 1831, once more in 1838 to 1844, and finally from 1850 to 1856. During her time as superior, she oversaw the founding of Nazareth Academy, served as mistress of novices from 1815 or 1816 until 1823, completed major building projects at Nazareth in her second and third term, resisted Bishop Flaget's attempt to unite the SCNs with the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg, and finally guided the changes required to welcome into the community young women from the families of recent immigrants. The intervening chapters make very clear that Catherine served in a leadership role even when not superior. She opened a school near Lexington in 1823, founded an academy and then an orphanage in Louisville in 1832, and in that same year assisted in the care of the sick and dying during the cholera epidemic. Doyle suggests that of all her accomplishments in the name of charity the orphanage held a special place for Spalding. She died in 1858, only two years after completing her fourth term as superior.

Doyle gives additional insight into Catherine's personality by tracing her relationship with two Sulpicians, Jean Baptist David, local clergyman, and Benedict Joseph Flaget, bishop of Bardstown and then Louisville. Doyle presents these two men primarily as the community's

allies but also traces tensions and conflicts, with the community in general and with Catherine in particular. David provided the necessary clerical support that made possible the community's founding and served as spiritual director with only a brief period of estrangement between the community's founding and the priest's death. While a strong SCN supporter, Flaget did contribute to major crises for the SCN community. His failure to secure legal rights to the first Nazareth Academy property forced the struggling community to relocate. More serious was his attempt to place SCNs under the Emmitsburg Sisters of Charity. Catherine, in her role as superior, remained firm in her refusal to merge and compromised only on minor changes to the habit. One does sense from this account and many others that Catherine understood the SCNs unique qualities that required protection and was adept at dealing with her own superiors and others when threats arose to the community's life. Other glimpses into her personality come from the relatively few extant letters, particularly those to Sister Claudia Elliot. This correspondence reveals a person full of warmth and humor with a willingness to express her affection for another SCN.

Pioneer Spirit succeeds in revealing something of the "personality, spirituality, [and] . . . driving motives" of Catherine Spalding, Sister of Charity of Nazareth. Doyle's extensive use of archives is effectively integrated with the broader historical context of nineteenth-century Catholic Kentucky. Doyle's writing style makes the work readable with enough details to hold one's interest without being overwhelmed. The limitations in the nineteenth-century sources remain evident in Doyle's occasional speculations on Catherine's motives or point of view. Since it remains a sympathetic history of her community's founding superior, the speculations tend to the more positive even when dealing with the difficult topic of the community's owning of slaves. The biography relies very little on feminist or liberationist hermeneutics frequently used in contemporary renderings of women's religious history though one understands clearly the agency of Catherine Spalding in the formative years of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth. The book's accessibility and Catherine's interesting life makes the text a potential choice for an undergraduate U.S. religion course or U.S. women's history. Graduate students exploring nineteenth-century women's history or frontier religion might also find this book useful. University libraries should add this text to their women's history or U.S religion collections.

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Announcements

The eighty-eighth annual meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association will be held in Washington, D.C. January 3-6, 2008. The deadline for proposals, for individual papers or complete sessions, including a brief abstract of each paper, was January 15, 2007. For more information, contact the program committee chair, The Rev. Joseph P. Chinnici, OFM, Franciscan School of Theology, 1712 Euclid Ave., Berkeley, CA 94709; fax 510-549-9466; tel. 510-848-5232, ext. 29; email jchinnici@fst.edu.

The fourteenth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, "Continuities and Changes," will be held June 12-15, 2008, at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, MN. Paper proposals and applications to participate in seminars are due by midnight, February 1, 2007. Full instructions are available on the web page www.umass.edu/history/berks/berks.htm. Submissions should be sent to <http://berks.pop.umn.edu/berkshire.jsp>.

A conference on the theme of the spiritualities of women's religious orders, "The Spirituality of Religious Women's Religious Orders," will be held at the University of

en: From the Old World to the Antipodes, 1400-1900," will be held May 11-12, 2007, in Melbourne, Australia; Co-convenors Dr. Claire Renkin and Dr. Katherine Mas-sam have planned the conference to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the canonization of Ursuline founder, Angela Merici, and the 150th anniversary of the arrival of Ursulines in Australia. For more information contact Renkin at Claire@betterlink.com.au.

The Catholic Library Association and the Center for the Study of Religious Life are co-conveners of the first biennial Introductory Archives Workshop for Religious Communities, to be held July 15-20, 2007 at the National Shrine of Our Lady of Snows in Belleville, IL, located across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, MO. The five-day intensive program is directed toward individuals who are interested in learning about archival theory and practice or who wish to update their archival training. The Workshop focus will be on the unique types of records found in the archives of men's and women's religious communities. Directed by professional religious archivists, the program will include lectures, tours, and opportunities for sharing experiences. Complete program and

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registration information are posted on the CLA website at www.cathla.org/preservation.php, or contact the CLA at cla@cathla.org. Tel. 413-443-2252.

The documentary, *Sisters of Selma*, is premiering on PBS stations as part of Black History Month, February 2007. Since individual stations have a choice of programs, you are invited to contact your local PBS affiliate and ask the programmer there to look for *Sisters of Selma*. The PBS Home Video release is planned for simultaneous release.

Mother Theodore Guerin, founder of the Sisters of Providence of Saint-Mary-of-the-Woods in Terre Haute, Indiana (1841), was canonized in Rome by Pope Benedict XVI on October 15, 2006. Guerin's vice-postulator, Marie Kevin Tighe, SP, gave a talk later that month recounting highlights of the canonization, "Mother Theodore Guerin: Celebrating Indiana's First Canonized Saint," at the invitation of the Cushwa Center and the Office of Campus Ministry at the University of Notre Dame.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart in the U.S. (1818) and until Guerin's canonization one of only three persons from the U.S. to be so honored, also made news recently when she was chosen to join twenty-six others in the Hall of Famous Missourians in the rotunda of the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City. A newly-created bronze bust was

unveiled in November for the installation. For views of the bust and related ceremonies, see the Society's web page www.rscj.org/news/province/philippine_bust_bound_for_missou...

Newsletter Deadline

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