
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

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NEWS AND NOTES

CONFERENCE FIRST

251 participants including historians, archivists, and other interested persons from Canada, Australia, the Philippines and France as well as 31 of the United States took part in the June, 1989 meeting, the first conference of its kind to be devoted solely to the history of women religious. Publication of the principal addresses is under consideration at this time. An archive has been established at the HWR Network office (same address as this newsletter). Requests for copies of individual papers will be honored upon payment of \$3.00 to cover costs of copying and mailing, and providing that the author has the paper and a distribution release form on file.

Actions taken by those assembled for the conference included enthusiastic endorsement for a second conference to be held in 1991 or 1992. The Network Coordinating Committee will be responsible for implementation of this recommendation through a Conference Committee. Please forward your name to Karen Kennelly if you desire

to serve on this Committee or if you wish to propose a site for the Committee's consideration. We would like to hear from you by November 1 in order to facilitate site selection and planning. Summer timing is preferred, chiefly to facilitate moderately priced campus housing.

A Distinguished Historian Award was presented to Sister Evangeline Thomas in recognition of her historical research and teaching, her administrative accomplishments, and her comprehensive bibliography, *WOMEN RELIGIOUS HISTORY SOURCES*. Congratulations, Evangeline!

A list of the names and addresses of archivists who attended the Conference was prepared and distributed by Sister Josephine Kennelly, Archivist for the Incarnate Word Generalate in San Antonio. Our thanks to her for this service. The list is available from the HWR Network office if, as a non-archivist, you did not receive it and would find it helpful to have a participant list segregated by archivist category.

LIAISONS AND NETWORKING

Regina Siegfried, ASC, currently with the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, has been invited onto the board of the National Historic Communal Societies Association as a part of our networking efforts. One of the new ideas emerging regarding communal societies has to do with "developmental communalism" or the adaptation of such groups over time. Those interested in the concept and its applications to the history of religious life may want to peruse Donald E. Pitzer's chapter, "Developmental Communalism: An Alternative Approach to Communal Studies," pp. 68-76 in UTOPIAN THOUGHT AND COMMUNAL EXPERIENCE, ed. Dennis Hardy and Lorna Davidson (Middlesex, England: Middlesex Polytechnic, 1989). We owe this reference to Donald E. Pitzer, Executive Director of the NHCSA, and we look forward to the interactions which Regina's role on the board will make possible. Jane Klimish, OSB, presented a paper at the Association's recent conference in Yankton, South Dakota.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

OUR BELOVED UNION: A HISTORY OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY OF THE UNION, by Regina Werntz, RSM,

was released by Christian Classics in August. NEWS AND NOTES would like to begin a book review section to get timely reviews of publications like this to readers. If you would like to do some reviewing for us, please let us know. We are also looking for a book review editor, so please indicate if you would like to be considered.

THESE WOMEN? WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN THE HISTORY OF AUSTRALIA, by Sophie McGrath, was recently published by the New South Wales University Press (P.O. Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033). The book charts the history of the first Australian convent, the Sisters of Mercy, Parramatta, within the broader history of the Church and Australian society. The author, a member of the Sisters of Mercy, Parramatta, since 1951, currently teaches history at the Catholic Theological Union, Hunters Hills.

TRANSFORMING PARISH MINISTRY: THE CHANGING ROLES OF CATHOLIC CLERGY, LAITY, AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS, by Jay P. Dolan, R. Scott Appleby, Patricia Byrne, CSJ, and Debra Campbell, was recently published by Crossroad Press, New York. Pat Byrne's chapter, "In the Parish but Not of It: Sisters," contains provocative and informative material on

women religious and education from 1930 to the present.

THE CRISIS IN RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS: AN INSIDE VIEW, ed. Laurie Felknor, is a series of 16 papers selected from among presentations at a 1987 symposium on the future of religious life (Quinn Commission) and recently published by Paulist Press, New York.

CONVENT CULTURE

Among items appearing during the last year on material artifacts, rituals, prayers, etc. expressive of traditional convent life are two volumes edited by the Immaculate Heart of Mary congregation in Monroe, Michigan; Mary Jo Maher, Diane McCormack, and Margaret O'Shea are responsible for A COLLECTION OF HYMNS FROM OUR HERITAGE, and A COLLECTION OF PRAYERS. The IHM History/Heritage Committee is commemorating the death of St. Alphonsus Ligouri (1787-1987), founder of the Redemptorists; and anticipating the sesquicentennial of the founding of the IHM's by Redemptorist missionary, Louis Florent Gillet (1845-1995).

Also of interest is GRACE BEFORE MEALS: FOOD RITUAL AND BODY DISCIPLINE IN CONVENT CULTURE by Patricia Curran (Champaign-Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989). The

subject of material culture caught the attention of participants and press at the June Conference (one newspaper headline read "From Mangle to Microwave" with the subtitle "History of religious sisters--like, say, 'fluters'--fits right in with American women's experience and should be preserved"). We owe it to Mary Ewens, OP, with her interest in Americana and nuns, for bringing this aspect of the history of women religious to the fore at the meeting.

PIOUS ASSOCIATIONS, SECULAR INSTITUTES

Some important research activity is being furthered by the Centro Mericianum in Brescia, Italy. As a study and conference center under the auspices of the diocese and the Company of St. Angela Merici (the original 1535 foundation by Angela Merici), the Centro supports members' efforts to study and publicize the history association of lay women known canonically as a Pious Union or Association of the Faithful.

We look forward to more information on this work from Anne Strogarek who is translating some of the Centro's many periodicals into English.

Moureen Coulter is currently engaged in researching and writing the history of the Grail in England, 1932 to the present.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Edna Marie LeRoux, RSM, director of archives for the Mercy province of Detroit, is dealing with some interesting topics as she explores the history of the Sisters of Mercy in Alma, Michigan. Among her sub-topics is the work of the Sisters among the lumberjacks and in railroad hospitals.

Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, has in its early stages a comprehensive project on congregations founded outside the U.S. after 1850 which came to this country between 1880 and 1910. She would welcome a call at (215)472-5223, or a letter to her at Cabrini convent, 67th and Callowhill Streets, Philadelphia, PA 19151, if you have information on such congregations.

Paschala Noonan, OP, has been appointed to write the history of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catharine, Kentucky. Her history is to encompass the development of the congregation from its founding in 1822 to the present.

Helen Kelley, IHM, has completed most of her research on the history of the Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Los Angeles. We wish her good fortune in the writing stages.

Norman H. Murdoch, associate professor of history at the University of Cincinnati, is

studying the life of Suzie Forest Swift (Sister Teresa), who moved from being an agnostic student at Vassar to conversion to the Protestant Episcopal church in upper New York state, to Salvation Army officership in England, to Roman Catholic sisterhood. She died in the Dominican motherhouse in Sinsinawa, Wisconsin. Murdoch's observation as he explores the life of this woman is that her life represents a network of religious sisterhoods that may have been crossed by other educated women in the late nineteenth century.

Regina Werntz, RSM (archival research) and Mary Ann Brady, RSM (photography) are working through RSM Creative Services on a series of slidetape programs on the U.S. Catholic church. The six programs they are producing include biographical studies of two women religious, Mother Austin Carroll and Mother Katherine Drexel. Their work is supported by several private grants and an award of \$19,000 from the McGivney Fund (administered by the National Catholic Educational Association). Creative Services, located at 954 S. Wheeling Street, Oregon, Ohio, 43616, has produced other community-related print and slide tape materials. Contact Regina Werntz who is the co-founder for more information.

WOMEN RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATION

It was evident at the June Conference that a great deal of interest exists in the work of women religious in education. Elizabeth Smith, on the faculty of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Northwestern Centre, has just completed a doctoral thesis which explores the involvement of the Sisters of St. Joseph in education: THE LESSONS OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE: THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH AND ST. JOSEPH ACADEMY, TORONTO, 1851-1911. The study utilizes quantitative and qualitative techniques to present a composite picture of the order and the culture of the school and the roles which the school and the order played in the larger Catholic and secular community of Toronto at the turn of the century.

The College of Notre Dame of Maryland, the first Catholic college for women chartered in the United States (1896), is making preparations for the celebration of the college centennial by commissioning the writing and publication of the history of the institution. A team of historians is presently working as a steering committee to guide this important project.

Jane Mowrer, OP, reports progress on the oral history archives at Sinsinawa. The collection now numbers 438

tapes all of which are indexed; to date, 64 of the tapes are transcribed.

CONFERENCES, GRANT PROSPECTS

Subscribers interested in joining the Berkshire Conference for Women Historians, or in attending and getting information on presentation of papers at the June 1990 Conference being held at Douglass College, should write to Marilyn Williams, Social Science Department, Pace University, Pace Plaza, New York, NY, 10038.

Those who read French may be interested in joining CERCOR, Center Européen de Recherches sur les Congrégations et Ordres Religieux. The address is: Maison Rhône-Alpes des Sciences de l'homme, 35 rue du Onze November, F 42023 Saint-Etienne Gedex 2, France. For \$12.00 a year (most recent exchange rate), members receive a triennial newsletter with bibliographies of members' work and contents of other journals, notice of CERCOR'S annual conference, and other items of general interest for religious history.

The History of Education Society's annual meeting, to be held October 27-29, 1989 at the Bismarck Hotel in Chicago, will include a panel on "Catholic Sisters in American Education, 1860-1980."

Call for papers: The Cushwa Center, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, In 46556, solicits proposals for papers to be presented at a major conference on "American Catholicism in the Twentieth Century" to be held at Notre Dame November 1-3, 1990. Proposals for complete sessions including chair, speakers, and commentators are preferred, but single papers will also be considered. Each proposal should be described in a one- or two-page resume summarizing its thesis, methodology, and significance, and be accompanied by a short recent vita for each proposed participant. The deadline for all proposals is January 15, 1990. Proposals going beyond the usual boundaries of history, including interdisciplinary approaches, material culture, literature, and film are encouraged. There will be a special session for doctoral candidates to discuss their dissertation research. Proposals and resumes for this session are also due by January 15.

December 15 is the deadline for applications for Research Travel Grants to assist post-doctoral scholars of American Catholicism who need to use Notre Dame's archival and library collections, as well as for several other research awards available through Cushwa Center. January 15 and April 15 are the deadlines for the Center's Research

Fellowship Program. Write the Center at the above address for further information, or call (219)239-5541.

December is the next review month for applications to the Abigail Quigley McCarthy Center for Women's Research, Resources and Scholarship, the College of St. Catherine, 2004 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105. Grants of \$250 to \$2,000 are available to support research projects having Catholic women as their particular focus. To apply, send a brief but specific description of proposed research together with a current resumé to the Director at the above address.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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

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