
HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

News and Notes

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CONFERENCE '98

Plans are progressing for the fourth assembly sponsored by the History of Women Religious Conference, to be held at Loyola University Chicago from June 21 through June 24, 1998. Thank you to those who have volunteered to be on one of the committees (Program, Local Arrangements, Awards) being formed to prepare for the conference. Florence Deacon, OSF, who will chair the Program Committee, will confirm membership for this group within the coming few weeks and seek its help formulating the call for papers to be issued in January or February, 1997.

The business meeting held in conjunction with the triennial assembly will be unusually important as it will give participants an opportunity to discuss and act on recommendations regarding the purposes, structure, and mode of operations for the HWR Conference. The ad hoc committee formed at the '95 conference met under the chairmanship of Mary Roger Madden, SP, in June and has submitted recommendations which would lend somewhat more structure to what now exists. Recommendations will be publicized in *News and Notes* in 1997 issues as a more immediate preparation for action at Conference '98. Please write the editor if you wish a copy in advance.

PUBLICATIONS

Jo Ann Kay McNamara's *SISTERS IN ARMS: CATHOLIC NUNS THROUGH TWO MILLENIA* (Harvard University Press, 1996), offers an authoritative and fascinating guide to the lives and works of

nuns in the Christian tradition from classical to contemporary times. A professor of history at Hunter College at the graduate center of the City University of New York, Jo Ann has been an active HWR member since its inception.

Ellin M. Kelly, professor emerita at DePaul University, Chicago, has just seen through publication the second volume of *NUMEROUS CHOIRS: A CHRONICLE OF ELIZABETH BAYLEY SETON AND HER SPIRITUAL DAUGHTERS*. The first volume, *THE SETON YEARS, 1774-1821*, came out in 1981; the second, *EXPANSION, DIVISION, AND WAR, 1821-1865*, is a 1996 publication (Abbey Press, St. Meinrad). Both are available through the Vincentian Heritage Department, DePaul University Bookstore, 2419 N. Sheffield Ave., Chicago, IL 60614, @\$20 (Tel. 800-700-8086; fax 312-362-5716). As compiler and editor, Kelly has included a large number of original sources with the minimal sort of interpretation implied by the chronicle format.

The current issue of the *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, with HWR member Marge Reher as guest editor, is devoted to essays honoring Cornelia Peacock Connelly and the congregation she founded 150 years ago, the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. Essays include an abridged reprint of Tourscher's pioneer biography of Connelly and an historiographical survey of subsequent biographies; an assessment of Connelly's formation and career as an educator; and an examination of the Society's activity 1846-1996 in the archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Carole Garibaldi Rogers, *POVERTY, CHASTITY, AND CHANGE: LIVES OF CONTEMPORARY NUNS*, (Twayne Publishers, 1996), is a collection of 50 oral histories based on interviews of 94 women from 14 states and over 50 religious congregations. Grants from the Lilly endowment and the New Jersey Council for the Humanities assisted this research.

Mary C. Sullivan, RSM, *CATHERINE McCAULEY AND THE TRADITION OF MERCY* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), is a collection of significant writings by and concerning Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, including ten manuscripts written by her close associates in the congregation and the text of the original rule. (Note: the Four Courts Press edition, Dublin, 1995, is available outside the U.S.).

Brigid Puzon, ed., *WOMEN RELIGIOUS AND THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE: THE NORTH AMERICAN ACHIEVEMENT* (International Scholars Publications, 1996), is a series of essays prepared for the Brookland Commission's 1992 conference, at which the record of religious women in the United States with respect to intellectual endeavor was explored. Puzon's foreword; a preface by Jeanne Knoerle, SP, of the Lilly endowment, which supported the Brookland Commission's work; and contributions by Karen M. Kennelly, CSJ, Maria Riley, OP, and others, develop salient aspects of the topic.

Margherita Marchione, MPF, *YOURS IS A PRECIOUS WITNESS: MEMOIRS OF JEWS AND CATHOLICS IN WARTIME ITALY* (Paulist Press, 1996), uses the relatively untapped resource of oral history to assess the role of numerous priests and nuns in the evolution of Jewish-Catholic relations during the German occupation of Italy. A professor emerita at Fairleigh Dickinson University, Marchione is an internationally respected writer in the field of Italian literature whose scholarship illuminates the controversial topic of the Roman Catholic church and the Holocaust.

Mary Elizabeth Brown's study, *THE SCALABRIANS IN NORTH AMERICA* (1887-1934) (see *News and Notes*, February 1996), is now off the press. Contact Center for Migration Studies, 209 Flagg Place, Staten Island, NY 10304. Tel. 718-351-8800; or FAX 718-667-4598.

Dana Greene's biographical study, *THE LIVING OF MAISIE WARD*, is forthcoming with the University of Notre Dame Press.

Kaye Ashe, OP, has her manuscript, *THE FEMINIZATION OF THE CHURCH*, with Thomas More Press.

Recent publications on the history of women religious in Australia are John Scally, *TO SPEED ON ANGEL'S WINGS: THE STORY OF THE SISTERS OF ST. JOHN OF GOD* (Dublin, Columba Press, 1995); Ruth Marchant James, *CORK TO CAPRICORN: A HISTORY OF THE PRESENTATION SISTERS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA 1891-1991* (Perth, Congregation of the Presentation Sisters of Western Australia, 1996); Carmel Leavey, OP, *GATHERED IN GOD'S NAME: NEW HORIZONS FOR AUSTRALIAN RELIGIOUS LIFE*, and Rosa MacGinley, PBVM, *A DYNAMIC OF HOPE: INSTITUTES OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN AUSTRALIA* (both published by Crossing Press, Darlinghurst, NSW, 1996). Comments on these publications appear in the April 1996 edition of *History Newsletter*, a monthly distributed by the Institute of Religious Studies, PO Box 280, Strathfield NSW 2135. The Institute conducted its third biennial history conference last June.

The Archives of the Archdiocese of Seattle has recently published *A GUIDE TO COMMUNITY RECORDS OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE*. The 60-page text describes holdings regarding women religious in archdiocesan archives, as well as the holdings of local and provincial archives of communities of women religious in western Washington. Available for \$5.00 from Christine Taylor, Archivist, Archdiocese of Seattle, 910 Marion St., Seattle, WA 98104. Tel. 206-382-4857.

In the area of electronic media, a documentary on women religious commissioned by the Catholic Communication Campaign, A Different Path, began airing on ABC television affiliates in the U.S. in winter, 1995-1996. HWR member Judith Sutera, OSB, was technical consultant for the program which features two communities—one engaged in social ministries in New York, and the other a contemplative Benedictine group in Missouri. Video cassette and accompanying discussion guides available for \$29.95, call 800-235-8722.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Kathleen M. Joyce has underway a study of Catholic health care in twentieth-century U.S., tentatively entitled "Science and the Saints: Catholic Hospitals and the Challenge of Modernization." Her focus is on trends from 1880 to 1940. Joyce can be reached at Duke University where she is assistant professor of American religious history.

European health care developments are the focus of Susan E. Dinan's current research, represented in her paper, "Nursing Establishments of the Daughters of Charity in Ancien Régime France," presented at the August, 1996 annual meeting of the American Historical Association Pacific Coast Branch. Dinan can be reached at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Anne M. Butler plans a book-length manuscript based on her recently completed research for a project on Roman Catholic sisters in the American West. Archival research at some 40 motherhouses form the basis for her findings, one part of which (an essay on Mother Katherine Drexel) has been published in an anthology on western women, WITH GRACE AND GRIT, edited by Glenda Riley and Richard Etulian. Butler can be reached at Utah State University where she is professor of history and coeditor of the Western Historical Quarterly. The Cushwa Center, University of Notre Dame, provided partial support for Butler's work on this multi-year project.

Patricia Wittberg, SC, is working on chapter titled "Catholic Religious, Catholic Schools," for a new history of the archdiocese of Indianapolis, the only prior history having been published in 1898, covering the period from the 1834 founding to 1878.

Suellen Hoy's article on Chicago's Sisters of the Good Shepherd has been accepted for publication in the Journal of Urban History, January, 1997, issue. She is currently working on a related topic, the integration of Catholic high schools on Chicago's South Side from 1950 to 1970, with particular attention to Loretto Academy and the Loretto Sisters; St. Thomas the Apostle and the Sinsinawa Dominicans; and Mercy High School conducted by the Sisters of Mercy. Hoy can be reached these days at the department of history, University of Notre Dame.

Barbara Speas Havira is working on a paper on the Osage Manual Training School, conducted jointly by the Sisters of Loretto and the Jesuits between 1847 and 1871 in what is now St. Paul, Kansas. Although Havira has not yet published on women religious, she is a long-time HWR member and has been teaching courses on women in America since 1972 at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, where she is an associate professor of history.

Susan Perschbacher Melia, assistant professor of sociology at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, is beginning a life review study of elderly nuns (defined as age 75 and older) in order to better understand the aging process in older women.

BOOK REVIEW

THE RISE AND DECLINE OF CATHOLIC RELIGIOUS ORDERS: A SOCIAL MOVEMENT PERSPECTIVE, by Patricia Wittberg, SC (Albany: The State University of New York Press, 1995), 423pp.

PATHWAYS TO RE-CREATING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 266pp.

In the first of these books, Wittberg selects the social movement theory, among the many available to her as a trend analyst, to account for the historical experience of religious congregations in the Roman Catholic tradition. According to this theory, congregations are seen as intentional communities or normative organizations. Their growth cycles are social movements; factors and motivations supporting growth are seen as resource mobilization. The dominant spirituality or ideology of congregations is what social movement theorists call frame alignment. Members are termed religious virtuosos; decline in membership occurs as a result of resource deprivation and frame disalignment—the state, Wittberg concludes—most congregations find themselves in today.

This imposition of sociological concepts onto a religious phenomenon may strike those familiar with the history of religion as being fatally flawed, slighting as it does the unpredictable factor of the role of the individual on historical events. However, if we can suspend initial skepticism, the sociological analysis here proposed can help us understand how seemingly unrelated decisions and events, when magnified by the corporate action of religiously motivated people, can provoke trends such as the growth and decline of religious congregations.

Neither the fantastic growth which occurred in nineteenth-century France when over 500 women's congregations were founded, and in nineteenth- and twentieth-century United States; nor the decline—evident in Europe since 1945 and in the States since 1965—are readily comprehensible. Both the histo-

rian and the sociologist have something to contribute as congregations seek to understand their past and take responsibility for their future.

Having concluded RISE AND DECLINE on a pessimistic note, Wittberg seeks in PATHWAYS to provide a practical guide to the revitalization or refounding of religious congregations. Her method

is again sociological, proceeding by way of an application of theory to past “cycles of religious virtuosity,” on to an exploration of how contemporary religious seekers might make the journey from seemingly inevitable decline to new growth. An appendix stimulates the imagination of potential refounders and strengthens their resolve by recounting four “journeystories” or fictional accounts of refounding efforts based on the author's observations. Although there is no bibliography, fairly extensive endnotes document publications on this subject from Lawrence Cada et al., SHAPING THE COMING AGE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE (Seabury, 1979), through more recent works by Mary Jo Leddy, REWEAVING RELIGIOUS LIFE: BEYOND THE LIBERAL MODEL (Twenty-Third Publications, 1983); Sandra Schneiders, IHM, NEW WINESKINS: RE-IMAGINING RELIGIOUS LIFE TODAY (Paulist Press, 1986); and David J. Nygren, CM, and Miriam D. Ukeritis, CSJ, THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN THE U.S. (Praeger, 1993).

Sister Karen M. Kennelly, CSJ
Mount St. Mary's College
Los Angeles

NOTICES

The American Catholic Historical Association's annual Spring meeting will be held April 4-5, 1997, at the University of Virginia. Proposals are due no later than January 15, 1997, to Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., Department of Religious Studies, Cocke Hall, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903.

4-10-
The Western Association of Women Historians will hold its annual meeting May 30-June 1, 1997, at Asilomar conference center near Monterey, California. Proposals, preferably for complete panels, due by November 30, 1996. For further information, contact WAWH newsletter editor, Jacqueline R. Braitman, 23250 Mariano Street, Woodland Hills, CA 91367

The Coordinating Council for Women in History and the Berkshire Conference on Women Historians announce the seventh annual competition for a \$500 Graduate Student Award to assist in dissertation work. Applicants must be women graduate students in U.S. institutions, but may be in any field of history. For applications, write Professor Janice M. Leone, Award Committee, Dept. of History, Middle Tennessee State University, Box 23, Murfreesboro, TN 37132.

An Irish Studies Seminar program is being initiated in September, 1996, at the Chicago Historical Society. Five sessions are planned, September through May. For information contact Suellen Hoy, Tel. 219-787-8082; or Lawrence J. McCaffrey, 847-475-7693; or write McCaffrey at 1227 Maple Avenue, Evanston, IL 60202.

The Cushwa Center and the Department of History at the University of Notre Dame are co-sponsoring a conference, "Understandings of America: Ethnicity, Intellectual History, and American Catholicism," April 25-27, 1997. For information, contact the Center director at 614 Hesburgh Library, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

ELECTRONIC NEWS

A request for subscribers' e-mail number has been added to the Subscription Information form. We are planning to circulate timely information by e-mail in the near future as a supplement to News and Notes which will continue to be issued, as at present, in print form. For this reason, you may wish to send your e-mail number now, even though your subscription renewal is not due.

Margaret Thompson is in the process of setting up a website for Sister-List in October or November. Although she plans to "start small," she hopes this website will be a place where people can post drafts of work in progress in order to get feedback, as well as other material. HWR may make limited use of this website for its business, pending establishment of an HWR website.

PERSONAL NOTICES

Sister of Notre Dame de Namur, Columba Mullaly, died in March, 1995. Those who have consulted her comprehensive volume, TRINITY COLLEGE, WASHINGTON, D.C.: THE FIRST EIGHTY YEARS 1897-1977 (Christian Classics, 1987), will appreciate the extent of her labors toward bringing the achievements of women religious into the mainstream of the history of higher education in the U.S.

The Sisters of St. Benedict are looking for an experienced archivist, preferably a woman religious, who would enjoy the challenge of bringing the Sisters' archives from infancy to adulthood. For information, contact Lucille Kester, Sisters of St. Benedict, PO Box 5070, Madison, WI 53705-0070; tel. 608-831-9303; fax 608-831-9304.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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