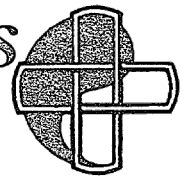


History of Women Religious News and Notes



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HWR Network News

The Atchison Heritage Conference Center in Atchison, Kansas, will be the site for the Sixth Triennial Conference, June 27 – 30, 2004. Judith Sutera, OSB, has accepted the position of Local Arrangements chair; Carol Coburn has agreed to serve as Program chair. Both will be seeking committee members as they collaborate on conference planning, and will be sharing more information by means of this newsletter and electronic media later this year.

Participants in prior triennial conferences can attest to the value of the sharing, networking, and mutual critique of research methodology and outcomes afforded by these gatherings. The meetings also enable those who attend an opportunity to become better acquainted with religious congregations in the locality, in this case, with the Benedictine women of the Atchison monastery. For those with internet access, the Benedictine website, <mountosb.org>, is very informative concerning the monastery and (through links) the area.

Please mark the 2004 conference on your calendars, share this advance information with interested colleagues, and plan to attend.

Publications

Frances Andrews, *The Early Humiliati* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), provides a scholarly and convincing argument for viewing the Humiliati as primary contributors to the evangelical renaissance of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Nancy Bradley Warren, *Spiritual Economies: Female Monasticism in Later Medieval England* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) uses the term “economies” as a metaphor for the producing and distributing of female monastic identities in fifteenth-century England. See Jo Ann McNamara’s

review in the *American Historical Review*, February, 2002, for a critical perspective on this volume’s contents and methodology.

Jutta Gisela Sperling, *Convents and the Body Politic in Late Renaissance Venice* (University of Chicago Press, 1999) relates ecclesiastical history and political theory in an illuminating way in her exploration of such topics as imposition of rules of cloister and the escalating number of girls from the Venetian patriciate being placed in convents in the Tridentine and post-Tridentine era.

Ole Peter Grell, Andrew Cunningham, and Jon Arrizabalaga, eds., *Health Care and Poor Relief in Counter-Reformation Europe* (Routledge, 1999), bring together twelve essays that speak to the emergence of many service and healing orders in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, concluding with a discussion on how Vincent de Paul’s efforts opened the way for women in medicalized nursing and for the engagement of nonaristocratic women in caregiving for the poor.

Constance Berman’s *Women and Monasticism in Medieval Europe: Sisters and Patrons of the Cistercian Reform*, is due off the press in fall, 2002 (Medieval Institute Publications, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo).

Project Opus (Order of Preachers in the United States) has published the first of its projected three-volume series on the Dominicans in the U.S.: *Dominicans at Home in a Young Nation: 1786 – 1865*. An integrated narrative of all four branches of the Order, the account follows the chronological order of establishment beginning with the Spanish friars in the colonial era and moving up to the Civil War (Editions du Signe, Strasbourg, available from Project OPUS, 5082 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60644).

Elizabeth Hellwig, OP, ed., *Up she gets for up she must: An account of a journey from Kingstown, Ireland, to Maitland, Australia in 1867 during the Age of Sail* (privately published, Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands, Strathfield. NSW, 2001) comprises a collection of archival material relating to the "Martha Birnie" journal, itself a compilation by one of the first sisters to come to Australia by sailing ship.

Marie Crowley, *Women of the Vale: Perthville Josephites 1872 – 1972* (Spectrum Publications, Melbourne, 2002), situates the history of this religious congregation in the broader context of Australian social history.

Beyond the Adobe Wall, the story of the Sisters of Loretto in New Mexico 1852 – 1894, will be available in late June when this congregation celebrates the 150th anniversary of the Sisters' departure for Santa Fe from Independence, Missouri (Two Trails Press, Independence). Patricia Jean Manion, SL, received grants for her research from The Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, University of Notre Dame. She may be contacted at pjisl@juno.com for more information.

Elizabeth M. Smyth and Linda E. Wicks, eds., *Wisdom Raises Her Voice: The Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto Celebrate 150 Years, An Oral History* (privately printed, Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto), draws on oral interviews to describe such topics as Families and Time of Discernment, Initial and On-Going Formation, Social Services and Pastoral Ministries, Our Missionaries: Home and Abroad, and others, over the 150-year span of the Sisters presence and ministry in Canada.

Omer Bartov and Phyllis Mack, eds., *In God's Name: Genocide and Religion in the Twentieth Century* (Berghahn Books, 2001) includes an essay by HWR member, Jessica A. Sheetz-Nguyen, "Transcending Boundaries: Hungarian Roman Catholic Religious Women and the 'Persecuted Ones.'"

Eileen Leindecker Gimper has written a history of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God, based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (1922). Formed to serve Lithuanian immigrants, the congregation eventually established a province in São Paulo, Brazil, and maintains a presence today in Lithuania

where the sisters are assisting with the process of re-evangelization. For more information contact Mary Jaskel, OSF, Archives Dept., 3603 McRoberts Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234.

Catholic Women's Colleges in America, ed. Tracy Schier and Cynthia Russett, is off the press (Johns Hopkins, 2002). See *HWR News and Notes* February 2002, p. 3, for a list of contributing authors.

M. Adolorata Watson, OSM, reports that the Servants of Mary have completed an archival project, *Remembrance . . . is the Sweetest Word*, a collection of biographical reflections with photographs, on the lives of 145 deceased OSM Sisters. The techniques used very successfully for visual materials involved isolating Sisters' pictures from group photographs, when necessary, enlarging by means of an HP Scanner; and then sending it to Adobe Film and finally to Adobe PageMaker. For more information contact S. Adolorata at 7400 Military Ave., Omaha, NE 68134.

Dorothy Trosclair, OP, reports that the Eucharistic Missionaries of St. Dominic have published the first history of this community: *These Sisters Are My Friends*, by Emilie Griffin (privately printed, 2001; The Eucharistic Missionaries of St. Dominic, 3801 Canal St., Suite 400, New Orleans, Louisiana 70119).

Mary Lethert Wingerd, *Claiming the City: Politics, Faith, and the Power of Place in St. Paul* (Cornell University Press, 2001), contains numerous interesting reflections on the role of sisters in the development of a city in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Anne Hartfield's talk, "'Sisters of Mercy, Mothers of the Afflicted': Catholic Sisters and Female Created Space in San Francisco, 1854 – 1898," given at the April, 2002, conference of the Western Association of Women Historians, explores the role of sisters in another urban setting.

Talks at several sessions of the Spring meeting of the American Catholic Historical Association, March, 2002, addressed topics pertaining to women religious: Evangela Bossert, OSB, "From Swiss Cloister to American Frontier;" Alberta Dieker, OSB, "A Different Voice;" Mary Beth Fraser, "Sewing Circles and Sodalities: The Sisters of Charity and Catholic Gender Lessons of the Santa Maria Institute (in Cincin-

nati)." A session with HWR member, Ephrem Hollerman, OSB, as chair and commentator included a paper by another member, Laura Swan, OSB, "Tenacious Journey Toward Autonomy." Other relevant papers included Roberto Trevino, "Facing Jim Crow: Catholic Sisters and the 'Mexican Problem' in Texas;" and Anne Butler, "Pioneer Sisters in a Catholic Melting Pot: Juggling Identity in the Pacific Northwest."

Marian J. Morton, "The Transformation of Catholic Orphanages: Cleveland, 1851 – 1996," *The Catholic Historical Review*, January, 2002, pp. 65-89, traces the history of the institution founded by Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine from its early days of staffing by 30 sisters and funding by diocesan collections and orphans fairs, through its evolution into the Parmalade System of Family Services.

Paula Kane's "'She offered herself up': The Victim Soul and Victim Spirituality in Catholicism," is published in *Church History*, March, 2002.

Research in Progress

Kathleen Lynch, a student in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership at Johnson and Wales University, Rhode Island, is focusing her doctoral dissertation research on teacher training programs in teaching orders of women religious, through a case study of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield, Massachusetts. She would be grateful for any assistance or suggestions HWR subscribers may be able to offer. She may be reached at Dean College, Franklin, MA 02038; or klynch@DEAN.edu

Michel Paret, chaplain at the Hôpital des Diaconesses, the only Protestant hospital in Paris, France, has begun research under the supervision of Jean-Paul Willaime at l'École Pratique des Hautes Études in La Sorbonne University, on the topic of "The Reuilly Diaconesses, a Protestant religious community in France, between social action and religious vocation," covering the period from World War II to the end of the century. He would welcome contact with researchers on similar topics in Catholic, Episcopalian, and Anglican traditions. Pastor Paret may be reached at 17 Avenue Jeanne d'Arc, F – 92160, ANTONY, FRANCE fax international +33 1 44 74 10 60, or mparet@ch-diaconesses.fr

Correction: the Center for the Study of Religious Life in Chicago will be using the \$35,000 grant from Our Sunday Visitor Foundation (see HWR February 2002 issue) to collect *studies on* (rather than *stories of*) of religious life.

Book Reviews

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, by Barbara Misner, SCSC (Privately printed, Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross, 1999), Pp. v + 167.

This small book is the second in a projected three-part history of the Sisters of Mercy of the Holy Cross; it covers the fifty-year period between the death of the community's founder, Mother Theresa Scherer, in 1888, and the beginning of World War II. When completed, the three volumes will be the first English-language history of this religious congregation which has over 9,500 members in twelve provinces spread throughout Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the Balkan Peninsula as well as the United States, India, and China.

The first two chapters chronologically cover the activities of the various Mothers General and the establishment of provinces during this time period. This method of organization means that the reader is conducted through the entire 1888 – 1938 period twice—once in each chapter. Chapters three and four are devoted more to the daily life of the sisters: their various ministerial works and professional training (chap. 3) and their spiritual practices (chap. 4). The third chapter also briefly reviews the beginning of the congregation's overseas ventures in India, China, and the United States.

After this the author returns to the time during and immediately preceding World War I (chap. 5), describing the various nursing activities of the sisters. A final brief chapter chronicles the difficulties of the 1920s and the rise of Nazism. The book ends somewhat abruptly with Hitler's annexation of the Sudetenland. This would be a weakness in a single volume, but, in the context of a three-volume series, it entices the reader to wait for the sequel.

In all, the book is well-written and well-researched, and fills a gap in existing research. That the story

of such a large religious congregation is relatively unknown in the United States is undoubtedly due to the lack of an English history which this series, when completed, will remedy.

Patricia Wittberg, SC
Indiana University at Indianapolis

Madeleine Sophie Barat: A Life, by Phil Kilroy, RSCJ (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000). Pp. x, 550.

Writing the biography of a congregational founder is a difficult task. For a scholar charged with such a task for her own congregation, the task becomes even more formidable. Writing with the knowledge that the work will appear in seven languages raises the stakes even higher. In *Madeleine Sophie Barat: A Life*, Dr. Phil Kilroy, RSCJ, meets these challenges and provides historians of women religious and biographers an example of a first-rate scholarly work that demonstrates how one can be both respectful of the subject and scholarly critique. Drawing extensively on archival holdings in Italy and France, supplemented by provincial archives of the Society, and the 14,000-letters penned by Barat herself, Kilroy creates a work that is painstakingly documented and very readable.

Madeleine Sophie Barat (1779 – 1865) was the founder of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Born in Joigny, France, to a lower middle class family, Barat was the youngest of three children. She lived through troubled and troubling times. Raised in a society shaped by Jansenism, which Kilroy describes as “a dark, heavy religion [that] gave clergy great power over the inner lives of men and women” (11), Barat had to constantly negotiate a world whose political and spiritual boundaries were shifting. To seek inner peace, Barat had to liberate herself from the influence of her older brother, Louis. As a clerical student, Louis Barat directed and shaped his intellectually gifted sister’s educational and spiritual development. Kilroy presents Louis as a troubled young man who sought “to destroy [Sophie’s] nature and replace it with grace” (23). In the name of spiritual development, he inflicted upon his sister a repressive physical and psychological regime that permanently damaged her health and caused her to live with continual self-doubt. Kilroy concludes: “Louis Barat

cast long shadows in Sophie’s life even when he was miles away” (25).

Barat felt a call to religious life—a challenge in her times since organized religion was buffeted by revolutionary winds. Beginning on 20 November 1800, she and three women began a four-year journey which ultimately led her to develop the foundation upon which the Religious of the Sacred Heart was established. Barat’s vision for her new community was “to dedicate ourselves to the education of youth, [and] renew in souls the solid foundations of a living faith in the Blessed Sacrament” (38).

Kilroy traces the evolution of the community from this nucleus to an international network, which at Barat’s death numbered some 3,359 women in 89 houses located in Europe, Africa and the Americas. She details the personal, professional, political and spiritual struggles undertaken by Barat and those around her as she sought to actualize her vision. What emerges from the text is a vivid portrayal of a very human woman who possessed tremendous drive and vision and lived a life punctuated by periods of almost-paralyzing illness. Kilroy does not gloss over the challenges experienced by the evolving community as Barat and her colleagues attempted to create governance structures that addressed emerging issues in race, class, and ethnic identities as the community moved across the globe. Kilroy’s Sophie (as she is called throughout the work) is a complex woman. Her struggles to become her own person and to actualize her own vision provide the reader with insights as to how gender was constructed and reconstructed within the experience of a nineteenth-century woman.

This book is a significant contribution to the history of women religious, social history, theology, the history of education, and the art of biography. Both methodologically and interpretatively, it challenges the reader’s assumptions on many levels. It applies an intellectually rigorous analysis to the founding spirit of one religious congregation and, as such, serves both as a model for the biographies of other congregational founders and as a comparative study useful for analyzing the roles of other key figures within the history of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Both Dr. Kilroy and the RSCJs should be congratulated on this fine biography.

Elizabeth Smyth
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
University of Toronto

Announcements

The History of Women Religious Conference notes with regret the death of two leaders in religious life for women in the U.S. Margaret Traxler, SSND, long-time social and political activist in the arena of women's rights and racial equality, one of the founders of the National Coalition of American Nuns (1969) and founder of the Institute of Women Today (1974), died February 12 at her Mankato, Minnesota motherhouse. Lora Ann Quiñonez, CDP, executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious 1979 – 1986, and co-author, with Mary Daniel Turner,

SNDDeN, of *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters* (1991), lecturer on the women's movement and social justice issues, died April 29 at her congregation's motherhouse in San Antonio, Texas.

We also are greatly saddened to announce the death of George Stewart, Jr., on April 30, at his home in Fayetteville, North Carolina. Dolores Liptak, RSM, who "mentored" George in his authorship of his comprehensive account of religious congregations of women in the U.S., *Marvels of Charity* (1994), writes of George that he was "a loyal and committed Catholic who chose to live and worship in the Bible Belt. He had not only a great love for the church but for Jesuits (his brother is a Jesuit . . .) and for all sisters (an aunt was a sister; and many of his friends)."

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

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The Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, California, are seeking an archivist to organize and make available for researchers the records of their congregation and of the St. Joseph Health System. For more information, contact Anne Hennessy, CSJ, 480 S. Batavia, Orange, CA 92868. anhennes@corp.stjoe.org

Reminders: there is still time to register for the international conference, "Christianity and Native Cultures," to be convened 19-22 September, 2002; contact conference chair, Cyriac K. Pullapilly, at Saint Mary's, Notre Dame, IN 46556; and for the conference, "Brides of Christ: Towards a History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland," to be convened at the Centre for Religious History, St. Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, London. For more information contact Carmen Mangion at manwag@freeuk.com or see www.smuc.ac.uk/hscs/rh/brides.html

Newsletter Deadline

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