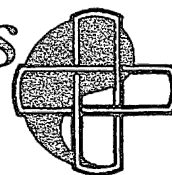


History of Women Religious News and Notes



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HWR NETWORK NEWS

The program committee for the coming Triennial conference has extended the deadline for submitting paper and session proposals to **October 15**. The conference theme, "Confronting Challenges: Women Religious Respond to Change" invites a wide range of studies exploring such issues as the impact of change on congregational leadership, structures of governance, mission and ministry, membership, inter-congregational collaboration, relations with other organizations, and the creation of new modes of affiliation. Proposals consisting of no more than 250 words accompanied by a one-page C.V. may be sent to Margaret McGuinness, La Salle University, 1900 W. Olney Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19141, or by email to mcguinness@lasalle.edu. See the web page, WWW.CHWR.ORG, for the complete call for papers.

Nominations are invited for the awards customarily announced at the Triennial conference. The Distinguished Book Award is given for outstanding books on any aspect of women religious published since the last (2007) conference. The Distinguished Historian Award is given to recognize lifetime achievement for research and publication in the field of the history of women religious. Past recipients of the latter award are Evangeline Thomas, Marie Augusta Neal, Karen M. Kennelly, Mary Ewens, Jo Ann Kay McNamara, Mary Oates, Hermenia Muldrey, Elizabeth Rapley, Suellen Hoy, and Irene Mahoney.

We encourage you to participate in the nominations process by sending a one-page summary of your reasons for nominating individuals for either award by **February 15, 2010** to Awards Committee chair, Elizabeth Kolmer, ASC, at 7607 Teasdale Ave., St. Louis, MO, or by email KOLMERE@SLU.EDU. Committee members are Carol Coburn, carol.coburn@avila.edu; Angelyn Dries, driesa@slu.edu; and Karen Kennelly, KKennelly33@hotmail.com. Feel free to contact any of them to try out your nomination ideas.

Subscription information: our new enlarged label should

indicate your subscription due date by month/day/year. If the date does not appear we would appreciate hearing from you at KKennelly33@hotmail.com.

PUBLICATIONS

Thomas Foley, *Faces of Faith: A History of the First Order of Indian Sisters* (Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions, 2009), capitalizes on the discovery (at age 12, in his Aunt Mame's closet), of a shoebox containing the personal journals and papers of Father Francis Craft, missionary to American Indians who died in the arms of Foley's father in 1920. Craft's inspiration to found a community for Lakota Sioux women, the Congregation of American Sisters, found its ultimate expression in Katharine Drexel's Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament after growing to number about a dozen women in the 1890s.

Joseph M. White, *Worthy of the Gospel of Christ: A History of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Diocese and Catholic Life in Northern Indiana* (Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, 2007), begins his account with the early nineteenth-century century evangelization of Native Americans, particularly the Pottawatami Indians. Among women religious whose missionary efforts are traced are St. Mother Theodore Guerin and the Sisters of Providence.

FlorenceMae Waldron, "Re-evaluating the Role of 'National' Identities in the American Catholic Church at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: The Case of Les Petites Franciscaines de Marie (PFM)," *The Catholic Historical Review* (45: 3, July 2009, pp. 515-545), sheds new light on the attitudes of female religious regarding ethnic distinctions. In so doing, she challenges prevalent interpretations of nationalism among ethnic Catholics and underlines the importance of incorporating women's views into our understanding of church history.

Margaret A. Hogan has completed a doctoral dissertation on a little studied congregation in pre-Civil War Kentucky, *Sister Servants: Catholic Women Religious in Antebel-*

lum Kentucky (University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2009).

Dolores Enderle, OP, *A Time to Grow (Racine Dominicans)* (Racine, Wisconsin Dominicans, 2009) recounts in this third volume of the congregation's history, *A Time to Grow*, the story of Dominican women with their roots in Racine from 1901 to 1964. Visit their web page for more information, www.racinedominicans.org.

Ephrem Hollerman, OSB, "Love Stern as Death: Benedictine and Cistercian Women in North America," *American Benedictine Review* (59: 4, December 2008, pp. 375-395) provides a valuable overview of two branches of Benedictine women whose U.S. history stretches back into the mid-nineteenth century.

Karen M. Kennelly, CSJ, *Speaking the Language of Love: Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Japan 1956-2006* (St. Paul, MN: Good Ground Press, 2009), places the missionary efforts of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet in Japan in the context of the five other U.S.-based women's congregations with foundations in Japan: the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur 1924--; the Maryknoll Sisters 1937--; the School Sisters of Notre Dame, St. Louis Province 1948--; Benedictine women from St. Joseph, Minnesota 1950--; and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Wichita, Kansas 1950-- in her account of the establishment, growth, and inculturation of the Carondelet mission in post-World War II Japan.

Marie Brinkman, SCL, *Emerging Frontiers* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008) relates the history of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, founded in Indian Territory in 1858, with a special emphasis on the congregation's experience of renewal from 1955 to 2005. Easily the most comprehensive of the recent publications seeking to interpret the meaning of the last half-century for religious congregations of women (compare *Eyes Open on a World*, on Carondelet Sisters of St. Joseph; *With Hearts Expanded*, on St. Joseph, MN Benedictine women; *Uncommon Trust* on Springfield, MA Sisters of St. Joseph; *The Way We Were*, on Erie, PA Benedictine women; and *Staying in the Fire*, on Dayton, OH Sisters of the Precious Blood), this lengthy volume (574 pp. + appendices and index) probes the motivations, nature, and impact of renewal efforts by a large congregation with a major presence in health care, education, and pastoral ministries in the Midwest and Western states. HWR promises an extended review in a forthcoming issue.

Phyllis Kittel's analysis of change and renewal among the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton, Ohio, from the 1960s to the present, is in press: *Staying in the Fire: A Sisterhood Responds to Vatican II* (Boulder, Colorado: WomenWord Press) with publication anticipated in October 2009. Her extensive interviews of some 40 sisters lend a unique personal quality to the account. For more information contact her at pkittel@sbcglobal.net.

The documentary, *Interrupted Lives-Catholic Sisters under European Communism*, a project initiated by Margaret Nacke and Mary Savoie, Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, is due to be released by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to ABC television September 13. Produced as part of the Vision & Values series by the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission of which the USCCB is a member, the program will be distributed to the ABC-TV stations and affiliates as a public service. Scheduling is at the discretion of local stations, within eight weeks of the release date. Interested persons are encouraged to call their local stations and inquire first about the Vision and Values series, and then about *Interrupted Lives*, as the series title is more likely to be recognized by local personnel than is the individual program title.

HWR subscriber Geralyn Hollingsworth has published a novel about sisters' lives, *Convent, A Novel* (BookSurge, 2009). Set in Kansas City in the early 1960s, it is one sister's story, offering a glimpse into some of the issues that prompted many women to leave congregations in the 60s and 70s. Information is available on www.booksurge.com.

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Mary Ann Zrust, SLW, is in the process of writing the history of her congregation, the Sisters of the Living Word, founded in 1975. Begun by some 90 women under the leadership of Annamarie Cook after her efforts as a provincial superior to persuade the leadership of her international congregation to adopt renewal initiatives failed to gain acceptance, the group, located in the Midwest and Southern parts of the U.S., presently sees as its mission "to reflect and affirm the Word in the world, the Word who continually frees the oppressed and gives new life."

Mary Elizabeth Brown writes that while processing papers for the Province of Saint Charles of the Society of Saint Charles-Scalabrinians, she and another archivist, Maria Del Giudice, discovered the original handwrit-

ten account of the founding of the Missionary Sisters of Saint Charles, penned in the 1890s by one of the order's co-founders, Father Giuseppe Marchetti. The processed collection also contains correspondence with the Missionary Sisters who staffed two homes for the elderly and who provided support services for the Scalabrinians' seminary. For access to this intriguing collection, please contact the archive via email at archives@cmsny.org.

Angelyn Dries, OSF, author of the ground-breaking account of Catholic missionary work in the U.S., *The Missionary Movement in American Catholic History* (Orbis, 1998), is writing the history of the Maryknoll Society (i.e., the Fathers and Brothers). The critical and analytical methodology being used in this centenary history project is of interest to all who are concerned with research on the history of religious, both women and men, in the context of American social and religious history. Her approach involves examination of the Maryknoll impact on churches and other institutions in the U.S. and the order's contributions to local churches in other parts of the world; a study of whether and why theology affecting Maryknoll practices changed over time, and of the influence of Maryknoll mission education and publications on the wider American church. Themes and issues from the past that carry implications for Maryknoll's future direction will be highlighted. Clearly, this study has the potential for delineating many areas held in common by the Society and the Congregation, with particular significance regarding the impact of Maryknoll Sisters and lay missionaries on the development of the Society. Dries is currently working on a key chapter: the 1960s and 70s.

Amy Hereford, CSJ, is beginning work on her thesis in Canon Law at KU Leuven, on the process of transferring from one religious community to another (Canons 684-685), treating the subject in four sections: historical, sociological/personal, theological/spiritual, and juridical (civil and canon law). She is presently collecting data by means of a two-part survey of transfer-members of U.S. congregations and leaders of communities from or to which members transfer.

BOOK REVIEW

Ann Denham and Gert Wilkinson, *Cloister of the Heart: Association of Contemplative Sisters*. XLibris Corp, 2009. Pp. 129. \$19.99.

In this period of merging and of creating new forms, and

in this time of expanding the boundaries of religious life, it is instructive to read *Cloister of the Heart* to see how a group of cloistered Sisters came together, formed an organization, determined a common purpose, and then expanded the original mission of the group to include others who felt the call to contemplative living.

The beginnings of the Association of Contemplative Sisters (ACS) go back to the seminars with contemplative communities of women conducted by Agnes Mary Burkard, SSND, an educator and psychologist, who worked with cloistered women across the United States beginning in 1963. In 1968, she submitted a written report to Pope Paul VI describing her work. Citing the harmful effects that an "enclosure mentality" could have on the very nature of contemplative life itself, she recommended establishing broader educational opportunities, encouraging self-determination, and associating with other contemplative communities for "educational, inspirational, and functional purposes."

Some preliminary meetings with the Poor Clares and Paul Boyle, CP, then head of the Canon Law Society, and meetings of several contemplative communities in New York, who formed the Metropolitan Association of Contemplative Communities (MACC) as well as the findings of Burkard's report all served as the catalyst for the Woodstock, MD Seminar in 1969, where the planners had a dream of bringing contemplative women together to "explore their vocation in relation to the life and mystery of the Church."

Even though Cardinal John Carberry of St. Louis who was heading a group of American bishops to look into the needs of cloistered women had "respectfully requested" that the sisters not attend the seminar, 135 sisters from over 50 communities came for two weeks of listening to significant speakers, including Bernard Haring, CSSR, George Wilson, SJ, Margaret Brennan, IHM, and Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN in the areas of theology, Scripture, psychology, and communication skills. By the end of the seminar, the input from the speakers, the many group discussions, and the consensus papers all culminated in the formation of ACS, where the contemplative communities could organize for self-determination in decisions that affected their lives.

The slim volume is divided into two sections- the first of which narrates the evolution of the ACS as the group developed its governing structure through a general as-

sembly and regional sections that generated two major projects: a summer program consisting of a six-week summer course from 1971-1974 to provide educational and spiritual opportunities; and the *Contemplative Review* magazine, 1968-1996, as they sought to bring to fruition their dream of understanding the call to contemplation in the aftermath of Vatican II.

The second section "Members' Stories" offers vignettes from 11 members ranging from Baltimore Carmelite Connie Fitzgerald, a significant early founder, to Deborah Gephardt, president of ACS, from 2002-2006, and the first wife, mother, and grandmother holding that position. In addition, there is an appendix with a list of 41 significant people, Sisters from both contemplative and active communities, clergy, and lay women who were very important in the 40 year history of ACS as well as a list of presidents, and the location and important actions of general assemblies. From the beginning, ACS was gifted with outstanding help and understanding from key figures in the cloistered communities such as Thomas Merton and others such as Thomas Clarke, SJ who supported the fledgling group.

The authors of the book, Gert Wilkinson, originally a Redemptorist nun and a significant figure in the founding and development of ACS, and Ann Denham, a former United Methodist minister, whose gift of contemplative prayer brought her to ACS and to the Catholic Church, tell the history with an insider's appreciation.

The evolution of ACS from a group of cloistered sisters only to the organization of about 300 members today encompassing cloistered and active sisters and both single and married lay women, some of whom have never been in a religious community, is a fascinating story in which the primacy of the call to contemplation, "the cloister of the heart," enabled the group, though not without difficult struggles to define membership, to expand and remain alive for forty years.

Mary Denis Maher, CSA
Archivist, Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are saddened to note the death on May 20 of longtime HWR member and recipient of its Distinguished Historian Award, JoAnn Kay McNamara. Author of a major book on women religious, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic*

Nuns through Two Millennia, and generous contributor to many HWR conferences and planning sessions, JoAnn will be sorely missed by her many friends and colleagues.

We are also sorry to note the recent closing of the Center for the Study of Religious Life as of July 1. Created in 1998 by the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men to promote study, reflection and writing on the experience and significance of religious life in the U.S., the Center initiated many valuable inter-disciplinary studies, forums, and publications relating to religious life. Congratulations and thanks to the CSRL's second and final director, Mary Charlotte Chandler, RSCJ, for her outstanding work.

The traveling exhibit on the contributions of women religious to U.S. society closed at its opening venue, The Cincinnati Museum Center, in late August. The future schedule includes The Women's Museum: An Institute for the Future (Dallas, Texas) September-December 2009; the S. Dillon Ripley Center at the Smithsonian (Washington, D.C.) January-April 2010; the Statue of Liberty National Monument/Ellis Island Immigration Museum (Liberty Island, New York) September-December 2010; and the Mississippi River Museum (Dubuque, Iowa) February-April 2011. Other sites are under consideration. Go to www.womenandspirit.org for more information.

The Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate heart of Mary (IHMs) of Monroe, Michigan announce a seminar by member, Sandra M. Schneiders, IHM, "Buying the Field: Ministerial Religious Life in the 21st Century." A working seminar, sponsored by the Jesuit School of Theology, will be held January 11-15, 2010, at the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. It is intended for experienced religious in ministerial congregations, with the aim of providing input, opportunity for discussion, and time for reading, reflection, and prayer as well as relaxation. Sr. Schneiders will use material from the forthcoming third volume of her trilogy, *Religious Life in a New Millennium*, and other reading as appropriate. For more information, contact Bruce H. Lescher, Associate Academic Dean at the Jesuit School of Theology, blescher@jstb.edu or 510-549-5055.

The University of Notre Dame became the archival repository for the Carmelite Sisters of Indianapolis as of October 2008 and has now received 44 linear feet of records, including documentation on their inclusive

language psalter, their religious typesetting business, web site, and annual interfaith prayer service for peace. Numerous other files touch on historical data on Carmelites in America and on national organizations such as the Association of Contemplative Sisters and Carmelite Communities Associated. For more information contact archivist and curator of manuscripts Wm. Kevin Cawley at <archives.nd.edu>.

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