

**CWO**  
**Challenging Institutional Sexism in the Roman Catholic Church**  
**E-news January 2012 issue 44**

Welcome to the edited edition of issue 44 of the e-news. Editor Pat Brown. Please visit CWO's website [www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk) News and previous issues can be seen there.

Please send items for February e-news by 15 February. Also contact me for further information about anything in this e-news where contact details are not given [editor.e-news@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:editor.e-news@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk)

### **CWO Annual Gathering**

Please make a note of the date 29 September at St Andrew's Waterloo.  
More details later

Our work on the anniversary of Vatican II is gaining momentum. Leeds group has met and a new Wales and West group has organised a meeting (see items below). Hopefully other people are thinking about this and have read the papers which went out with the last e-news. (They are also on the CWO website news page <http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk/news.htm> ) Also with this e-news is a leaflet from Stand up for Vatican II.

We are working towards a meeting flagged up last month on 12 May at St Andrew's, Waterloo which will be facilitated by Kathleen Walsh (see below)

### **New CWO group – CWO Wales and the West**

On Saturday 7th January, a new CWO group - CWO Wales and the West - was formed. We met at Ruth's house in Chepstow, and although we are as yet only four active members, our enthusiasm makes up for this.

Our first planned activity will be a day of workshops entitled Vatican II, Then and Now, to be held at the Salvation Army in Newport on Saturday, 17th March. The day will start with coffee at 10.30 a.m., and end promptly at 4p.m. The morning workshop will be led by members of CWO W & W, and the afternoon one by Myra Poole. There will be a buffet lunch for which we shall have to make a small charge.

Further details from Amanda, Ruth or Anna, on any of the following nos:  
02920711581, 01291624362, 01458831650

All CWO members in the area and their friends will be welcome

## Meeting 12 May 2012 St Andrew's Waterloo

Session outline:

Vatican II promised a new era for the Catholic Church, with more egalitarian attitudes and approaches, and a sense of true dignity for the laity. But these promises are a long way from being fulfilled, and many argue that the institutional Church is more authoritarian and paternalistic than ever. Drawing on recent work by Paul Lakeland, Ladislav Orsy and others, we will explore strategies for realising the true liberation of the laity, to enable the Church to fulfil its mission to the world.

**Facilitator Kathleen Walsh** was one of the first lay women to graduate, with a Bachelor of Divinity, from Heythrop College, London. She also has a Masters in Theology from King's College, London. She has worked in statutory education – mainly in inner London – and in University research and publishing. She worked for ten years as Adult Education Officer in the Eastern Pastoral Area of Westminster Diocese. She wrote the chapter on the Vatican II document on the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*) in *Modern Catholicism*, ed. Adrian Hastings, SPCK 1991. For the past ten years she has been a senior consultant with Cambridge Education, Islington and now works as a freelance education consultant.

## Leeds CWO meeting - Sunday 15 January

We discussed some of the matters raised by the Vatican II papers (sent out last time and the leaflet included with this e-news). We thought the main themes to emerge were

1. Collegiality – democratic process
2. Language i.e. it is about the vernacular, ordinary language of Vatican II (albeit perhaps a bit clumsy) rather than ICEL-speak with long sentences, exclusive language and words like "consubstantial."
3. Ecumenism
4. Overcoming discrimination
5. Primacy of conscience
6. Women's role in VII
7. Experiential (inductive) as opposed to fixed "male" (deductive) theology

We discussed an article in the Tablet (14.1.12 P. 27) headed "Catechism to be a major guide for Year of Faith." The article continues "... The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is urging diocesan bishops to issue pastoral letters on the 'importance' of Vatican II and the catechism"

We have members representing three dioceses in our Leeds group so we thought we would write to bishops asking them to include some of the above 7 themes in their letter.

We suggest other CWO members do the same, mentioning some of these (or others if you prefer) in your letter. You can sign yourself as a CWO member if you wish but that's not essential if you prefer not to.

## Sharing your Sorrow

From 1966 to 1980 I was a member of the Church of England Liturgical Commission. During much of that period I was also a member of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches (WCC). It was a wonderful and exciting time in the life of the Churches. The Ecumenical Movement was alive and vibrant and co operation between the churches was increasing. It was also a time of great liturgical renewal. To me one of the most exciting aspects was that in liturgical renewal many churches were experiencing a common mind.

So we agreed on the shape of the Eucharistic liturgy and the elements which should be continued in every Eucharistic Prayer. We also agreed on texts we could hold and use in common- The Lord be with you, Creed, Gloria Angus Dei etc. These were the common liturgical texts agreed by ICET and ICEL.

Now we are in an ecumenical winter. The Archbishop of Canterbury only seems interested in unity with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches and those churches become louder and louder in their demands on the Church of England. Many of you grieve about the so called revised or new Roman liturgy which in fact takes huge steps backwards. I share in your grief. Gone are the texts we held in common and back goes the Roman church to translations we all agreed to abandon half a century ago.

It seems that many of the English Roman Catholic bishops do not like the 'new' liturgy but dare not say so.

I see another sad parallel to this in the Church of England. The majority of Bishops hate the proposed Anglican Covenant but because ++ Rowan Williams sets such store on it, they dare not say so. They are pushing it through their Diocesan Synods without allowing the opposite point of view to be presented. They are impelled by a false sense of collegiality. As someone said a few weeks ago.' Bishops need remember that they swore an oath of obedience to the Archbishop and not an oath of sycophancy.'

So I share your sadness. Yet we can rejoice that the unity which has grown up between churches at grass roots level cannot be destroyed. Nor can ecumenism between women. So we struggle on.

*Jean M*

*We are all here for some special reason. Stop being a prisoner of your past.  
Become the architect of your future*

Robin Sharma

## **CWO Retreat 3-5 August**

Once again we are holding a retreat for all CWO members at Noddfa. Cost £88. To reserve a place, please send deposit (non refundable) of £50 to Noddfa, Conwy Old Road, Penmaenmawr, North Wales, LL34 6YF . Please book by 31 May and state any dietary or other needs.

## **Call for Papers - Liturgy as muse**

Religious institutes as protagonists in renewing liturgy, sacred art and music and church material culture (1903-1962)

International conference of the European Forum on the History of Religious Institutes in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (RELINS-Europe) Leuven, Belgium, 8-9 November 2012

The intended focus of the 2012 Relins conference is the role – to which still too little attention has been paid – played by religious and religious institutes in the reform and renewal of religious art and the material culture of church architecture and of worship between 1903 and 1962, along three main themes.

1. Religious Institutes and national/international networks
2. Motives, ideas and significance of the religious protagonists
3. Conflicts and public perception

All these questions and themes will be discussed at the 2012 RELINS-Europe conference. RELINS-Europe ([www.relins.eu](http://www.relins.eu)) is an international forum that aims to foster international, comparative research on religious institutes in (Western) Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries. Previous conferences were organized in 2001 (Rome – Historiography of Religious Institutes), 2002 (Vallendar – Legal Position of Religious Institutes), 2004 (Rome – Religious Institutes and the Roman Factor), 2005 (Fribourg – Religious Institutes and Catholic Culture), 2006 (Rome – Missiology, Science and Modernity), 2008 (Leuven – Patrimony, Business and Management of Religious Institutes) and 2009 (Ravenstein – Educating a Catholic Elite).

The conference is scheduled to take place in Leuven (Belgium) on 8 and 9 November 2012 and will be hosted by KADOC-KU Leuven ([www.kadoc.be](http://www.kadoc.be)). Proposals for papers (max. 500 words, including a title), together with a curriculum vitae and a list of publications, should be addressed to Kristien Suenens ([kristien.suenens@kadoc.kuleuven.be](mailto:kristien.suenens@kadoc.kuleuven.be)) before March 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. Replies will follow no later than May 1<sup>st</sup> 2012.

## Websites

[www.womenwordspirit.org](http://www.womenwordspirit.org)

Women Word Spirit

[www.ccc4vat2.org.uk/ccc](http://www.ccc4vat2.org.uk/ccc)

Catholics for a Changing Church

<http://www.gras.org.uk>

Group for rescinding the Act of Synod

<http://womenandthechurch.org/>

Campaign group for women's equality in the Church of England

<http://ncronline3.org/drupal/>

National Catholic Reporter –

<http://lgcm.org.uk/>

Lesbian and Gay Christians

[www.womenpriests.org](http://www.womenpriests.org).

Sign up for their regular newsletter

[www.spirituschristi.org](http://www.spirituschristi.org)

A truly inclusive Catholic Church

[www.womensordination.org](http://www.womensordination.org)

More news of Rome Petition, Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

## CWO Litany

Please send me more saints like Jean whose lovely poem is on the right.

[editor.e-news@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:editor.e-news@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk)

## Carousel

*We all enter the circle  
At a given point of light  
We all join the ride  
At a moment born of fright  
The carousel is turning  
The music loud and fast  
The pace depicted by our pain  
Round and round and round again*

*Can we ever leave it  
Must we travel on  
Can we sing the same song  
On and on and on  
Something has to change now  
Break the circle bright  
Slow the movement down now  
So we can alight*

*Change the pattern slowly  
Sing a brand new song  
Round and round we travel  
Is it really wrong?  
Christ our inspiration  
In the circle round  
Hand in hand we travel  
Faster now than sound*

*Move towards the centre  
Where the heart is found  
Jesus our redeemer  
Round and round and round  
Can we change direction  
Ride a different course  
Pulled into the centre  
Centrifugal force*

*Drawn into her heart now  
Gathered to the source  
Women now as equal  
Get to join the course  
Mother now and Father  
Swallowed up as one  
No more separation  
In God's glorious song*

Jean Palmer

## **An Invitation to consider in 2012**

*Are you Jewish, Buddhist, or of some other spiritual background? Do you love being part of Spiritus Christi Church even though your spiritual beliefs sometimes differ from Christianity? Do you appreciate the homilies, message and music at Mass, but are not as clear regarding your connection to some of the words and/or rituals of other traditional Christian elements? If so, we invite you to a gathering of those who attend Spiritus Christi yet have a personal theology or spiritual practices that differ from those of Christianity (or are on a journey to create their own path). The purpose of this gathering is to see how many of you there are, share thoughts and feelings about how Spiritus can help you meet your spiritual needs, and explore whether you would like to participate in an ongoing Small Christian Community designed for those with alternative spiritual approaches.*

I read this in a recent Spiritus Christi Parish Bulletin, from a parish in New York State which has male and female priests. (I send it to e-news not in order to have a discussion about ordination within a parish "excommunicated" from Rome because it has ordained women, as they would say "illicitly", or whether we wait until the RC Church ordains women as well as men into a reformed RC Church, which is the official CWO view.) It is rather to ask has anyone seen such an invitation recently in our Parish Bulletins. It seems such an inclusive, generous, interesting invitation to everyone to explore ideas together and see whether Spiritus Christi, in this case, can help people to meet their spiritual needs. How enriching! How enabling!

In 2012, we are marking 50 years since the Second Vatican Council gathered for the first time. As the Council progressed, ecumenical and inter-faith doors were opened in our minds, underpinned by some of the conciliar documents and thinking that led to individual, local and national initiatives. As a child, pre Vatican II, I was "forbidden" from going into non-Catholic churches in our Scottish town, without the Parish Priest's permission, and we were not allowed to say the Our Father with non Catholics because of that "extra" statement at the end. I didn't know about other denominations and other faiths. Within a very few years it became natural and mutually enriching to pray with each other and explore ideas of each other faiths and denominations.

It saddens me that many of our RC Parishes are turning inwards and currently more concerned about getting the responses to the "new" liturgy "right." rather than valuing ecumenical and inter-faith issues. I have spent 30 years as an RC representative on Churches Together in two parishes I attended. I eventually resigned because I was embarrassed that the RC Church was apparently persistently spelling out very deliberately that it did not recognise Anglican priestly orders, and went to the extent of writing "One Bread One Body" to forbid RCs and Anglicans sharing the RC Eucharist, except in prescribed special cases. I believed this made respectful dialogue between the churches more difficult and I was constantly feeling the need to apologise about the pronouncements coming from Rome.

## **An Invitation to consider in 2012 (continued)**

This exclusive development has continued and I don't hear of significant inter-denominational and inter-faith dialogue these days. I hear an RC monologue that gets louder and less responsive to its own followers, let alone others.

As we remember some of the legacy of Vatican 11 in this fiftieth year would it not be a wonderful development if we re-awakened to the spiritual approaches of others in our communities and explored these prayerfully together. We all might benefit from this and grow spiritually. Blessings and Peace to all in 2012!

*Pippa B*



### **Another CWO saint Elizabeth Rendall 1924 – 2011**

Taken from a tribute given at her funeral on 1 December by Ellen Teague

Dear Elizabeth, we will all miss your wisdom, kindness and solidarity. As a longer-standing friend than I has said, "I have rarely met a person of such integrity, with such a large heart". You were in fact a person with enormous power, but it was a gentle influence – not of power OVER but power WITH.

You accompanied so many of us on our mission regarding justice, peace and ecology and that is why so many have travelled from around England and Wales to bid farewell to you today. You loved that quote from Tom Cullinan where he talks about the staying power needed to hang on to a vision and work towards it. He calls it 'patient endurance' and says "that staying power calls on deep spiritual resources, on a deep peace within ourselves". Well Elizabeth you had these in abundance and we give thanks to God for your life.

*Have faith; and try and change the world*

Philip Gould

## RCWP - Roman Catholic Women Priests

On Saturday, the 29<sup>th</sup> of June, 2002, the ordination of the first seven women priests took place on a ship on the river Danube near Passau. In 2012 there will be a celebration to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this event. You are invited you to participate in the festivities on this occasion.

Date: **Friday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012.**

Venue: **Passau, Germany.**

Schedule: 09:00  
Foregathering  
10:00 Service -  
followed by a ceremonial act.

After lunch: a trip on a Danube ship.

Enquiries or to register:  
[priesterinnen@utanet.at](mailto:priesterinnen@utanet.at)

## Prayer Link

Wednesday between 6.00 and 7.00pm, please pray for CWO, its members and its mission.  
Saturdays at noon, join with women and men all over the world to pray for the work of Women's Ordination Worldwide (WOW!)  
Please take part in one or both of these prayer networks if and when you can

### *The CWO Prayer*

*Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit,  
we cannot remain ignorant of this injustice in our midst.  
We long for all humanity to be acknowledged as equal,  
particularly among your community of the church,  
so we pray grieving for the lost gifts of  
so many women.  
We ask you, God of all peoples,  
to bring insight and humility  
to all those in positions of dominance,  
and an understanding that the ascended Lord  
called us all to act  
doing Christ's work here and now.  
We ask this of you, God our Creator,  
Jesus our Redeemer, Spirit our Sustainer*

### Events @ the kitchen table

#### catering for community conversation

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>  
January 7pm

**Quiz Night @ the kitchen table  
with a Scottish flavour!**

£7 including supper

If you have any ideas for conversation events, community nights or anything else that we could do @ the kitchen table please come along to our  
**Kitchen Cabinet Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm**  
Everyone welcome!

For more information about this events & to book please call or email  
[anne@thekitchentable.eu](mailto:anne@thekitchentable.eu) / 0208 586 7979