

CWO
Challenging Institutional Sexism in the Roman Catholic Church
E-news February 2014 issue 67

Welcome to issue 67 of the e-news. Editor Pat Brown. This edition is edited to remove information which is only for CWO members; e.g. personal email addresses and some surnames. Please visit CWO's website www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk News and previous issues can be seen there. Please send items for February e-news by 20 February. Also contact me for further information about anything in this e-news where contact details are not given info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

We had a wonderful afternoon on 22 February with Fr Tony Flannery. He is an inspiration to us all. Hopefully, reflections from some of those present will be in next month's e-news. In the meantime, there is a report below from Pippa.

Preparations for our forthcoming Annual Gathering continue. You will know that we were featured in the Tablet because this time we will be at a RC Church. The theme will be the Diaconate. We are preparing a document to inform discussions about this subject. Please put the date in your diary.

Saturday 4 October

11.00am – 5.00pm.

St Nicholas of Tolentino, Bristol

The AGM (members only) will be in the morning and the Annual Gathering which is open to all will be in the afternoon.

CWO videos

There are now a number links all over the CWO website to all the videos. Have a look and see if you can spot them! If you can't, you can find them all on the video page <http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk/Video.html>

Pat Brown

Fr Tony Flannery's talk to CWO and friends on 22 February 2014

He was welcomed by Pat Brown and introduced by Sister Myra Poole SND who quoted Mary McAleese, past President of Ireland, who wrote about Fr Tony on the dust jacket of his book "A Question of Conscience." These are some of the points he made.

Sr. Joan Chittister has written about weariness: worse than anger and more stultifying than indifference. For those who are in Fr Tony's position there is a large sense of disappointment and a loss of the energy to care.

Vatican II - women's ordination was not really mentioned. Now the subject has moved from the fringes to the heart of the discussion in the RC Church. This is significant, effective and not subject to being overcome by weariness.

He did not think that women priests would be/want to be, priests in the existing structures. He seemed to agree with CWO's aim that women would be priests in a renewed church.

Fr Tony helped to form the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland three and a half years ago. One of the aims is "the equality of all baptised." ACP is not about a single issue.

Since the third century the Church has been affected by misogyny. There are no origins of this in the Gospel.

The work of Augustine, Greek philosophers and others has been described as tradition. Is it not possible to challenge tradition if it is wrong?

What is the Eucharist of the future? Referring to the Eucharist the original idea was that the gathering of the people and priest had the power together. Gradually the power was transferred to the priest alone. Fr Tony challenged the idea of the "ontological change" in the nature of the priest at ordination.

Pope Francis, when he discovered he had been voted as Pope, described a moment of panic which became clarity. Fr Tony believes this was the Holy Spirit. The first part of "Evangelii Gaudium" is amazing. Pope Francis is strategically wise. To have reformed too much too quickly would have been unwise/ineffective. He is wisely taking some time to work at it. The fruits of the Synod of the Family in October will show us how much influence Pope Francis has in the Church.

Fr Tony said he no longer felt weary and is looking forwards.

Pippa B

Third WOW Conference 2015

Contrary to what was reported in the last e-news, the conference title is *Gender, The Gospel, and Global Justice*. The dates are 18 – 20 September 2015. It will be held at the Marriott Hotel, Philadelphia PA

WOW currently includes representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Malta, Poland, and the United States.

Some of our longer serving members will remember being instrumental in setting up a travelling fund for previous WOW Conferences to help people from the developing world attend. We need to do this again so I am asking for anything you can spare for this fund. All contributions will be very welcome. There will be an account set up for this and I will have the details soon.

I hope to be producing a monthly WOW e-news as well as this CWO one to keep you up to date with developments. CWO has sponsored the conference, as all members of WOW will be doing but individuals can sponsor it as well. Please see WOW website for inspiration – this is being added to daily.

<http://womensordinationworldwide.org/>



Priscilla

Rome's catacombs are now accessible thanks to Google Earth.

Interesting images have been found there. Read about it at

<http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/women-priests-delighted-google-vatican-catacombs-tour>

Hallelujah!!

Canterbury Cathedral is to have a girls' choir for the first time since it was founded more than 1,000 years ago.

The Quality of Mercy

There is a very important word in the article *German bishops' head defends Communion plan for divorced*. (<http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/german-bishops-head-defends-communion-plan-divorced>) The word is 'mercy'; we really do not hear it, and have it, enough. One of the things that the faithful seem to have been deprived of by the forensic attitude of the Curia is mercy. They are so involved with the ramifications of congregations, councils, tribunals and myriad committees that the Pope is showing a serious distaste for 'clericalism'.

The curia have a career not a vocation; they should rule the Church much, much less and the Pope listen far more to the foot soldiers on the ground who really work in their parishes, where many - I have heard them say so - would welcome a more humane exercise of faith, including women priests. Our local parish priest and all his skills and connections are very neglected in our Church rule.

We also need to have a little mercy towards those elderly 'old school' Catholics, who find change hard to handle. Much more 'tea and sympathy' politics is needed I feel, so the rest of the world can see we are human and really care.

Olly D

Links

Check out the story of Irena Sendler. A true heroine.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/13/world/europe/13sendler.html?_r=0
and many other sites

Vatican response to theologians' plea

<http://www.johnwijnngaards.org/statement/PopeFrancis.asp>

Holy See Permanent Observer to UN speaks on woman's rights

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24124>

Dr Geraldine Smyth OP shares her story with Martin O'Brien

<http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/%E2%80%98church-has-begin-listen-women%E2%80%99#sthash.bvC3ABEU.xRCIYEzU>



Prayer used to open National Coordinating group meeting

We will not allow our gifts and talents to be hidden
We will enter the Kingdom through the door marked "Create".

We will encourage all to contribute. Our ideas are a gift offered to God
we will enter the Kingdom through the door marked "Participate".

We will be hospitable and supportive to one another, to visitors and to the wider church. We will engage with everyday life and connect with culture
We will enter the Kingdom through the door marked "Engage".

We will not be afraid to fail but will push at our boundaries and try new things
We will enter the Kingdom through the door marked "risk".

We will go through these doors in the power of the spirit, knowing that Jesus has gone through them all first.

Thanks to Jillian D

The Church has to accept this unruly freedom of the word, which accomplishes what it wills in ways that surpass our calculations and ways of thinking.

Pope Francis Evangelii Gaudium 22.

CWO Weekend Retreat at Noddfa, Penmaenmawr 27-29 June 2014

- All CWO members welcome – female and male.
- Come and recharge your spiritual batteries...
- As participants we arrange the informal programme ourselves and choose to take part in all or some of the sessions.
- All sessions aim to help us in CWO to enrich our lives through reflection, prayer, liturgy, song, creative activity and fun!
- Enjoy the companionship, delicious food, beautiful gardens, sea and mountains of Noddfa on the North Wales Coast.
- Share the group retreat and enjoy the space too...
- Noddfa can be reached by road or rail. We arrive during Friday afternoon or early evening (27th) for supper at 6.30pm. We finish Sunday (29th) after lunch.

If space permits, it may be possible to book extra days on an individual basis before or after our weekend.

Enquiries to info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

The full cost is £100. The remaining £50 (cheque or cash) is required by Noddfa during our weekend.

Please contact me as soon as possible to book a place. You must book by 31st March at the latest.

If we don't have enough people, the event will be cancelled and we need to give Noddfa this much notice.

Noddfa means refuge, a place of welcome and peace. www.noddfa.org.uk

Pippa wants to hear from CWO members who are interested NOW please! She doesn't need your money until the end of March but so far she knows some people are interested but not many have emailed yet to say they wish to go! Please email her now to express an interest and your name is on the list. If there are too many she'll take the names of those who emailed first! Please email info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

Open letter to Pope Francis from Roy Bourgeois February 2014

Dear Pope Francis,

I have been inspired by your humility, love, and compassion. I was especially moved when you said, "I see the Church as a field hospital after a battle." You said the Church must "heal the wounds, heal the wounds."

And so I ask that you reach out to the women and gay people in our Church who have been wounded by Church teachings that demean and discriminate against them. I ask this as someone who was expelled from the priesthood after 40 years because of my public support for the ordination of women in the Catholic Church (this happened just four months before you became pope).

You once said of your own priestly vocation: "God left the door open for me for a few years." Pope Francis, our Church teaches that God creates men and women as equals. Couldn't God open the door to the priesthood for women, too?

Isn't our all-powerful God, who created the cosmos, capable of empowering a woman to be a priest? Who are we, as men, to say that our call from God is authentic, but God's call to women is not?

Our last two popes, Pope John Paul II and Benedict XVI, maintained that the all-male priesthood is "our tradition" and that men and women are equal but have different roles. I believe that your predecessors were speaking from – *and for* – an all-male clerical culture that views women as lesser than men, as separate and not-really-equal.

Our Church also teaches about the primacy and sacredness of conscience. Conscience is our lifeline to the Divine, always urging us to do what is right and just. The consciences of many Catholic women have moved them to claim and act upon their vocations to the priesthood with active ministries. Similarly, I have been compelled by conscience to speak out in solidarity with them.

My pain at having been kicked out of the priesthood has allowed me to glimpse the exclusion and discrimination that people of color, women, and gay people in our Church have experienced for centuries. I will never forget how Blacks were restricted to the back pews of my childhood church in Louisiana. While the Church has made great gains in valuing and

Open letter to Pope Francis from Roy Bourgeois February 2014 (continued)

Respecting Catholics of all races, we continue – with flawed theology and dogma – to make God our unwilling partner in discriminating against women and gays.

Pope Francis, you famously said, "*If a homosexual person is of good will and is in search of God, who am I to judge?*" I appreciate that you do not judge people for being gay, but our Church certainly does judge them. The official teaching of the Catholic Church states that [the acts of] gay people [expressing love sexually] are "intrinsically disordered." This teaching is cruel and offensive, and it implies that, somehow, God has made many mistakes in Creation.

For many gay people, this teaching has instilled confusion and shame and caused grave harm. Gay people have lost their homes and jobs. Just recently, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote members of Congress expressing opposition to the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, a bill promoting LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) equality. Even worse, some LGBT people have been despised and murdered; others have despaired and committed suicide.

Pope Francis, I have some urgent requests.

- First, talk and listen to the women who have been called. I'm confident you will understand that our loving God is indeed calling women to be priests. Let us welcome them to the priesthood and give thanks to God for answering our prayers for more vocations.
- Second, I ask that you declare that the Catholic Church will accept and value LGBT people as equal persons – *made fully in the image of God* – and recognize gay marriage.

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Any movement rooted in love, justice, and equality is of the Divine and cannot be stopped. And so one day our Catholic Church will have women priests and marriage equality. I do hope, Pope Francis, that you will implement these changes as soon as possible.

In your own words, "Heal the wounds, heal the wounds."

In solidarity,
Roy Bourgeois

York Pilgrimage Group - A Quiet Day led by

The Very Revd Keith Jones O Carm

31st May 2014

at Thicket Priory, Carmelite Monastery, Thorganby York YO19 6DE



"The Story of a Soul" - not just the title of the Autobiography of St Therese, but your soul and mine.

The Very Revd Keith Jones

Keith was ordained in the Southwark Diocese and served in a number of parishes. He was appointed Dean of Exeter in 1995 and then Dean of York in 2004, from which post he recently announced his retirement in May 2012. He now lives in Ipswich.

He is married to Viola and they have 3 daughters and 1 granddaughter. His hobbies include gardening, reading, and playing the piano.

Cost - £15 per person. Please bring a picnic lunch

Registration form next page

REGISTRATION FORM

Please reserveplace(s) on the Thicket Priory Quiet Day 2014.

I enclose a cheque for(£15 per person) made payable to **York Pilgrimage Group**

Please send this form with your cheque **to :-** C. J. Holland, 5 The Rowans, Skelton, York. YO30 1YX

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Post code.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

Please tell us if you have any accessibility issues

For further information contact:

Jo Holland 01904 470519 or 07761223023

Katharine Salmon 0114 2671733

Blessed are you, my God, my air, who is there, as sure as the air I breathe.
Blessed are you, my God, my wind, who encourages, pushes, and steers me.
Blessed are you, my God, my water, essence of my body and my spirit,
who makes my life cleaner, fresher, and more fertile.
Blessed are you, my God, my healer, always near to me, closest when I'm feeling the
sickest.
Blessed are you, my God, my shepherd, who finds good fresh pastures for me,
who leads me through the darkened canyons, who comes for me when I am lost in
the shadows.
Blessed are you, my God, my mother, who loves me as I am, who is able to give your
life for me, my refuge, my safety, my trust.
Blessed are you, God, blessed are you

Thanks to Jillian D

CWO Saints

Mary MacKillop
Ruth Norton
John Hatfield
Celia Greenwood
Michael O’Gara
Sheila Houlihan
Mary Daly
Estelle White
Pat McGarron
Marcella Althaus-Reid
Astrid Klemz
Jean Palmer
Elizabeth Rendall
Maureen Brown
Tissa Balasuriya
Jack Sutcliffe
Pat Regini

Pray for us



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

Websites

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

Catholics inspired by Vatican II.

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

Group for rescinding the Act of Synod

www.we-are-church.org.uk

We Are Church in the UK is a call to recognise that all the Baptised, are part of the Church.

<http://womenandthechurch.org/>

Campaign for women's equality in Church of England

<http://www.womensordination.org/>

News of Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

www.churchauthority.org

Sign the Jubilee Declaration

<http://www.ccc4vat2.org.uk>

Catholics for a Changing Church

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

Lesbian and Gay Christians

<http://82.70.116.125/index.html>

Women Word Spirit

<http://www.womenpriests.org/index.asp>

Sign up for their regular newsletter

<http://ncronline3.org/>

National Catholic Reporter

<http://christianfeministnetwork.com/>

Christian Feminist Network - exploring faith and feminism

<http://www.spirituschristi.org>

A truly inclusive Catholic Church

<http://www.stcuthbertshouse.co.uk/>

Rachel is a professed hermit of the R C Diocese of Nottingham.