

**CWO**  
**Challenging Institutional Sexism in the Roman Catholic Church**  
**E-news March 2014 issue 68**

Welcome to issue 68 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](http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk) News and previous issues can be seen there. Please send items for April e-news by 20 April. Also contact me for further information about anything in this e-news where contact details are not given [info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk)

Our Annual Gathering now has a title. See below.

On the anniversary of the conclave in Rome, have a look at the video of the Pink Smoke vigil (see link below p. 6). Our own Miriam Duignan was there for CWO.

One year on, Pope Francis' papacy is being assessed. Peter Stanford wrote an excellent piece in the Independent on Sunday. Myra Poole contributed to this article. She writes "We regard Pope Francis as good news for the Catholic Church, but we are very aware that there is a long way to go as far as the place of women in the church is concerned." (See the whole article at the link below p. 6)

**CWO Annual Gathering**

**A Foot in the Door? Women Deacons.**

**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.

## Reflections on Tony Flannery's talk to on 22 February 2014

Tony Flannery, the founder of the Association of Catholic Priests in Ireland, spoke to a substantial number of CWO members in London last month. Some people had travelled over a hundred miles to hear him. Tony rose to fame in Ireland and beyond when the Vatican tried to silence him for expressing views which apparently differed from that of the 'magisterium' which included believing in the ordination of women. Tony was summoned to Rome where he was asked to refute certain of his views. He found himself unable in conscience to do any such thing. Consequently, he was barred from practising his ministry. As a result of all this he wrote a very clear book called 'A Question of Conscience' which has been read by several CWO members and recommended by them.

Tony decided to begin his talk with a comment by the well-known American Benedictine, Sister Joan Chittister in which she stated that she had grown weary in the struggle for transparency and justice in the Church. Tony said that he could resonate with that weariness but that he like, Joan was looking for seeds of hope and he was finding them in unexpected places. The arrival of Pope Francis was certainly a sign of hope too. He had not missed his ministry too much as he was finding outlets for ministry in other ways.

One of those ways was listening to the priests in his Association and finding out what was troubling them about the church and how they were seeking change. Apparently though, the ordination of women was a stage too far for some of them as they had no realistic expectation of that happening. Nevertheless, Tony supported the ordination of women even if his fellow priests were hesitant about it. Tony is now beginning to sense a different vision of church where community and hospitality are the main foci, reflecting solidarity with the poor and the display of Christian values by the Church. He envisioned a much more declericalised church where the baptised members took it upon themselves to lead liturgies, or at least have leaders who come from their own communities. Obviously women would be among such liturgical leaders or ministers.

In a strange way, Tony felt that a burden had been lifted from him in trying to conform to a model of priesthood in which he no longer believed. He, nevertheless, showed in his whole body the suffering he had been through to reach this point. He is a man of courage and conscience who is definitely performing a great witness in standing up for what he believes to be right. His courage gave others the courage to speak about they had been called to also, including the description given by a founder member of CWO as to how we do women's liturgies, sharing the role of priest.

Sue W

## Reflections on Tony Flannery's talk to on 22 February 2014

It was scandalous to hear Fr Tony tell how in the 21<sup>st</sup> century he was suppressed for his integrity in refusing to deny what he thinks. However, it was good to be reminded by him that other people now openly speak about women's ordination, and to know that in spite of his bitter experience, he is cautiously optimistic about the Church.

I should think that, like Fr Tony, many of us are daring to hope that the friendliness and down-to-earth simplicity of Pope Francis, the decision of the Cardinals to elect such a man and the honest reporting by some countries' bishops of the responses they have received to the Vatican questionnaire, are signs that the Church is undergoing a deep, Holy Spirit-inspired, change.

Pamela P



## Third WOW Conference 2015

*Gender, The Gospel, and Global Justice.*  
18 – 20 September 2015.  
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/>

Pat Brown  
[info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk)

## Supportive letter

Attached with this e-news is a letter from John Shea OSA to Cardinal O' Malley on the subject of women's ordination.

## WOW Campaign Write to Pope Francis

In preparation for the twentieth anniversary of *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, WOW is collecting letters from the faithful who

- support dialogue about women's ordination in the Catholic Church
- support the opening of doors to the ordination of women
- recognize that women, like men, are not only created in God's image but are also called to serve all God's people in all ways, including holy orders.

A delegation of women's ordination advocates from around the world will, during prayerful vigil hand deliver these letters to the Vatican; letters from women who are called to priesthood and from all those who stand up for justice in the church. Please send your views so they have lots to tell Pope Francis.

And tell your friends to do the same!

<http://womensordinationworldwide.org/discussion-guides/2014/3/6/dear-pope-francis-ordain-women>

You can also post a letter to Pope Francis by May 15, 2014 to

c/o WOC PO BOX 15057 Washington,  
DC 20003 USA

or

c/o John Wijngaards Catholic  
Research Centre, 111a High St,  
Rickmansworth, WD3 1AN, UK

## **Prayer for International Women's Day**

Women are a reflection of the glory of God. Today we honor the women of all times and all places:

Women of courage.

Women of hope.

Women suffering

Women mourning.

Women living fully.

Women experiencing joy.

Women delighting in life.

Women knowing the interconnectedness of the human family.

Women honoring the sacredness of the relational, the affective.

Women quietly tending the garden of human flourishing.

Women boldly leading the transformation of unjust global structures.

Women seeking Wisdom.

Women sharing Wisdom.

Women receiving Love.

Women giving Love.

Women: life-giving.

Women: the image of God.

Loving God, we celebrate your faithfulness and love. On this day we commit ourselves to the promotion of the full humanity of all women everywhere. We know that whatever denies, diminishes, or distorts the full humanity of women is not of God.

Help us to be faithful to your call to love.

Amen.

From Education for Justice

## **A Liberating Spirit?**

An exciting conference being held from 14th to 17th July at High Leigh Conference Centre in Hertfordshire.

We shall be asking: What might be a "liberal" approach to spirituality? We have a fascinating range of speakers and the chair is Canon Professor Martyn Percy.

<http://www.modernchurch.org.uk/conference/conference.html>

## Click here!

A year on from the Pink smoke vigil during the conclave in Rome

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VxrU0p62g8>

Peter Stanford writes on Pope Francis' first year. Myra Poole is quoted – you need to scroll down.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-popes-first-year-have-we-created-ourselves-a-fantasy-francis-9179092.html?origin=internalSearch>

Paul Collins ask whether Pope Francis is serious about reforming the curia

[http://www.catholica.com.au/gc1/pc/007\\_pc\\_130214.php](http://www.catholica.com.au/gc1/pc/007_pc_130214.php)

Pope Francis Anniversary Interview

<http://ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/francis-marks-anniversary-interview-family-women-contraception>

Mary McAleese affirms Pope Francis' encouragement of women in the Church

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=24269>

I have always tried to be optimistic, because optimism is, I believe, the fuel of progress. Cynicism is encouraged by people who don't want anything to happen or to ever change. If you can persuade people that whoever they vote for doesn't matter then that discourages them from making progress. You have to keep hope alive. And I have drawn comfort from looking at historical examples of how we have got rid of slavery, how women got the vote and how it was all achieved when people organised and campaigned.



When you do that you go through various stages. First you are ignored. Then they say you're mad, then dangerous and then finally you win and then you can't find anyone at the top who doesn't claim to have thought of it in the first place. That's how change happens. That's why however bleak things might appear, I do still believe if people organise and if the streets were full of people demanding different policies then something would happen.

Tony Benn R.I.P.

## A visit to: One Spirit Interfaith Foundation

I met three ministers from *One Spirit Interfaith Foundation* at a retreat day in London last May (2013). After interesting conversations with them and having learned that to be one of their ministers you embark on a two year training course at their seminary, I decided to visit their ordination and graduation ceremony on August 3<sup>rd</sup> (2013). This was held at the Second Church of Christ Scientist in Notting Hill London.

I arrived at lunch time on a beautiful, warm sunny day, was greeted at the church gate by a lady, sitting, and greeting everyone as they arrived. Having already booked to attend I was astonished to find that as I gave my name she knew who I was, (no, she didn't have a list!). She checked I knew where to go, the time the event started, and, where the loos were! (A lady always knows these things!). Entering the building I was greeted with the warmest of welcomes, (by a group of people), on what was quite obviously, the happiest of occasions. Again, when I gave my name they knew who I was, and made sure I was comfortable with where to go, and that my journey had been easy. I then had a wonderful conversation with a gentleman – a first year student at the Foundation's seminary, who, with infinite patience answered a myriad questions, and, was smiling and polite throughout what was, nearly an hour! (Nope! He didn't have a glass in his hand!).

Believe me, this event was a totally inspiring experience, from the greeting at the gate, to the warmth expressed, and vision of so many happy families together, celebrating in the most positive way, a triumph of love over difference, there are no exclusions from their ministry. The service was beautiful, extremely happy, the hymn singing was enthusiastic, there was a good degree of humour (some of it even mischievous), with mums, dads, grannies, grand pa's, friends, and lots of children all supporting their own ordinand. *Happy together* was what the experience spoke of to me, and, as I write, I would like to have a little cry to celebrate their triumph!

I truly believe that one day, they, as is their inclusive ethos, will celebrate with us, the day we can celebrate our own ordination! I went home, in a daze, for days! I will write further about this world wide ministry who offer us their support and I urge you to look into this. You will, I am sure, be inspired!

Olly D

*Olly wrote to the One Spirit Foundation to check out her article with them and received this lovely reply (below)*

## **One Spirit Foundation reply**

*That is a beautiful, and for me a very heart warming piece, I am so glad you had a welcoming experience with us, and that you want to share that experience with your friends and colleagues.*

*On behalf of the One Spirit Foundation and our community of ministers and students I can assure you that you are not wrong, we would fully support your work and your aims at CWO, and want to see the day when all are accepted and welcomed as equals in all areas of life. We send you our blessings and prayers, and if we can be of practical help at any time we will gladly do what we can.*

*Many of our Ministers have come to us because they felt unwelcome in their own faith, either because of gender, sexuality or some other difference, and as far as possible we want to support the healing of those splits, not to deepen them.*

*With love and blessings*

## **Kevin Roberts CEO of the ideas company, Saatchi & Saatchi writes**

The media, who are never afraid to cut anyone down, still hasn't worked the Pope out. They don't know how to position him. Because, put simply, he's not a Pope. He's first and foremost Jorge Mario Bergoglio. He's the man he's always been, and he's refused to let the pomp of his title change him.

His leadership style is simple. He believes in setting the example through his actions. That doesn't explain his popularity though. In my view, he's popular because he's real. He's approachable. Responsive. Impulsive. Kind. Genuine. He entered the Vatican with a goal to return it to the people. After all, its people that make up the Church. Not buildings. Nor robes.

Undoubtedly, his popularity has been closely tied to the swiftness with which he has transformed the battered image of the Catholic Church. These were the hallmarks of an institution Pope Francis inherited. So he dealt with them and changed the conversation. It's an illustration, and lesson, for any leader. Particularly in business. Some firms are simply toxic, in practice or culture. The best leaders aren't shaped by the environment they enter; they seek to change that environment for the better.

Too many managers, at all levels, believe they have to adopt a new persona to be effective or respected. Pope Francis shows exactly why that's a fallacy. He's his own man, and the world loves him for it.

Thanks to Pippa B

York Pilgrimage Group - A Quiet Day led by

The Very Revd Keith Jones O Carm

31<sup>st</sup> 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 reserve .....place(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

## **Prayer for Lent**

Time to make the desert journey and renew our way to life

Time for testing and for changing

Time to trust the word of God

Time to recognise holy presence and to share Cyrene's work

Time for forgiveness and for healing and to repent our broken lives

Time to build God's dwelling with us and proclaim full life for all

Time to watch and wait with Jesus and to prepare the upper room

Time to turn our lives again to God

and to transform our world with love.

Pat Pierce CAFOD

## **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 (apologies for smaller print – that’s to fit them in!)**

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

News of Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

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

Sign up for their regular newsletter

<http://womenandthechurch.org/>

Campaign for women’s equality in Church of England

<http://ncronline.org/>

National Catholic Reporter

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

Catholics for a Changing Church

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

Challenges homophobia and transphobia, especially within the Church and faith based organisations, as well as working to create and praying for an inclusive church.

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

Proclaims the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ so as to sustain and increase Christian belief among homosexual men and women. Click here to read quarterly newsletter

<http://82.70.116.125/index.html>

Women Word Spirit

<http://christianfeministnetwork.com/>

Christian Feminist Network - exploring faith and feminism

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

Sign the Jubilee Declaration

<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.