

**CWO**  
**Challenging Institutional Sexism in the Roman Catholic Church**  
**E-news April 2014 issue 69**

Welcome to the edited issue 69 of the e-news. Editor Pat Brown. Some personal details have been removed from this edition which goes to non-members of CWO. 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 May e-news by 20 May. 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) Many thanks to Ruth W for proof reading the e-news.

You may have read in this week's Tablet that Archbishop Martin is "open to married priests" but that the subject of women's ordination "is not on the table at the moment". We can only be hurt and bemused by this. I offer you this quote sent in by Therese K

"This teaching that 'women are not fully in the likeness of Jesus' -- qualifying, as it does, as a theological explanation -- is utterly and demonstrably heretical. This teaching says that women are not fully redeemed by Jesus.

This teaching says that women are not made whole by the saving favor of our God.

This teaching says that the 'catholic' church is only truly 'catholic' for males..'

- Fr. John Shea

<http://ncronline.org/news/people/augustinian-priest-teaching-women-are-not-jesus-heretical>

**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.

LATE NEWS: lifting of restrictions on ACP priest

<http://www.rte.ie/news/2014/0429/613166-marist-priest-restrictions-lifted/>

## **Translation of Teresa Forcades` chapter on Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz and the Struggle Against Ecclesiastical Censorship**

In the same year that Maria de Agreda was accused of making apparitions in Mexico, another future nun, who also stood out for her intellectual prowess and transgressions on the limits imposed on women of her era, was being born in these lands. We are talking about Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz (cir. 1650-1695), known as *the phoenix of America and the tenth muse*.

The exact date of her birth is not known because she was an illegitimate daughter- her father was a Vasco military man and her mother, a Mexican native. Sr. Juana Ines learned to read when she was four years old and when she was eight, after having devoured the library of her maternal grandfather, including works in Latin, she asked to be dressed as a boy so she could enrol at the university. As a teenager, realizing that her talent would not open doors to the university, as access to higher levels of study for women was forbidden, Sr. Juana entered the service of the Viceroy`s wife and so was able to educate herself there. At eighteen years of age she entered a Discalced Carmelite convent, but left it ill and horrified a few months afterwards on account of the severe discipline and auto flagellation practiced there, which had nothing to do with the spirit of its founder, Saint Teresa. When she was nineteen years old Sr. Juana Ines became a Jerome nun.

Her literary works- poems and theatrical pieces- were as well celebrated among the townspeople as among the nobles with whom she had lived at Court (she wrote many carols and other songs mixing, with great creativity, her Baroque Spanish with words and expressions in Nauhatl, her Aztec tongue. However, as her fame grew, so did the indignation of some of the ecclesiastics in her immediate surroundings. The Marchioness of Laguna was a great friend of hers and protected her between 1680 and 1688, a period during which her husband was Viceroy of New Mexico. Thanks to her Sr. Juana was able to dismiss her confessor following his public defamation of her. In 1688 the Marquises returned to Spain- where the Marchioness successfully published Sr. Juana`s poetic work - and the administration of New Mexico passed to Archbishop Aguiar Sojias, known for his misogyny.

During the time Aguijar Sojias was the maximum civil and religious authority in New Mexico, there came about an intense political and theological debate about the freedom of expression and the role of women in the church and in society, which took Sr. Juana to the limits of her capacity for resistance. Sr. Juana was the focal point of this debate and the target of the devastating criticism and profound ire of some ecclesiastics. Most people kept silent. Some took Sr. Juana`s side and, like her, paid a high price for this. The start of the crisis was the *Athenaegoric Letter* (1690), written by Sr. Juana, after a request by her supposed friend, the Bishop Santacruz de Puebla and published by him without Sr. Juana`s consent- he himself gave the letter this title to give the impression that it was a letter worthy of the Goddess of Wisdom. In this document Sr. Juana defends St. Augustin`s, St. Jerome`s and St. John Chrysostom`s theologies against the critical thesis that the eminent Portuguese Jesuit Antonio Vieira

## **Translation of Teresa Forcades` chapter on Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz and the Struggle Against Ecclesiastical Censorship (continued)**

had developed forty years before in his *Sermon of the Mandate*. Vieira's fame had no equal in his time, so much so that when someone stood out in theology, it was said of him that he was "the Vieira of Mexico" or of Peru, or of the place where the theologian in question resided. Vieira had been a politician in Portugal and a diplomat in France, Holland and Italy. Such was his arrogance that in the Sermon in which he states the thesis that Sr. Juana was rebutting he allows himself to talk like this:

*"I will first refer to the opinions of the saints and afterwards to mine; but with this difference, that no praise of the love of Christ given by the saints will be any higher than the one given by me. And to the praise of love of Christ given by me, no one will give another to equal it"*<sup>1</sup>

The fact that Juana demolished the thesis of the most preeminent ecclesiastic of his era, with such efficacy and solidity, was not tolerated. After receiving the admiring congratulations for her work from some professors of theology from Portugal, the attacks were not long in coming. They were mild at first, in the guise of theological discussion, but, in view of the solidity of the arguments of Sr. Juana in this field, they progressed to direct personal disqualification and to attacks for daring to talk about theology and discuss it with men. Sr. Juana replied publicly with an open, prudent and at the same time forceful defence regarding the right of women to higher education and to the study and practice of theology.<sup>2</sup>

Let us remember that, as a result of the Council of Trent, not only was strict enclosed convent life imposed upon nuns (Sr. Juana had not even once gone out of her monastery since she was nineteen years of age) but it was considered illicit for a nun to study Latin, which was the official language of the Church and of theology. In her reply, Sr. Juana talks about the importance of dissenting voices; she analyses the causes of the exclusion of women and suggests some practical proposals in order to solve this problem.

After the publication of Sr. Juana's reply, Archbishop Aguiar forbade her categorically ever to write again. The danger of the Inquisition was very present, especially since the principal censor of the Inquisition in New Mexico at this time was the same confessor that Sr. Juana had dismissed some years before, whilst protected by the Viceroy's wife who was no longer there to defend her. Two years after having written her "*Reply*", Sr. Juana Ines repented publicly for having considered her intellectual pursuits more important than her religious observances; she donated her library (which contained forty thousand books and was the biggest private library in America) and her collection of musical and mathematical instruments and she stopped writing in order to devote herself to the care of the poor. After two years she died of an infection while taking care of the sick nuns in her monastery. She was forty five years old. The Mexican poet Octavio Paz (Nobel literature laureate in 1990) dedicated his book *Sr. Juana Ines de la*

## Translation of Teresa Forcades' chapter on Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz and the Struggle Against Ecclesiastical Censorship (continued)

*Cruz or the Snares of the Faith (1982)*, where he defends the fact that Sr. Juana never retracted what she had written and he demonstrates that the title of her declaration was added after she had signed it. In one of her poems, Juana had written:

*I am not who you think I am  
Only that you have given me there  
Another being among your quills  
And another breath with your lips.*

It is said that after her death, an unfinished poem was found hidden in her cell. Throughout the entire XX century new documents have been appearing which credit the two year struggle before the public retraction of Sr. Juana as a conscious battle pursued in favour of freedom of expression. Among the documents found there is the full inquisitorial process instituted against the priest Javier Palacino, who in 1691 took the side of Sr. Juana and her thesis. In 2004 a new document from her era defending her thesis and her person was discovered in the Peruvian National Library.

1. Antonio VIEIRA, *Sermon del Mandato*, cited in *Revista de Indias*, vol II, num. 43\_44 (January-June 1951), pp. 61- 87.
2. *Replica a Sor Filotea de la Cruz, 1691*. Sor Filotea de la Cruz was the pseudonym used by Bishop Santacruz to praise and criticise Sor Juana at the same time in an ambiguous document which accompanied the publication of the *Carta atenagorica*

Many thanks to Ines P for the translation and to Mary L

A few days left to sign the petition below – deadline 2 May

Catholic Bishops of England and Wales: Publish the results of your pre-Synod consultation on the family

[http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Catholic Bishops of England and Wales Publish the results of your preSynod consultation on the family/?cdhMBfb](http://www.avaaz.org/en/petition/Catholic_Bishops_of_England_and_Wales_Publish_the_results_of_your_preSynod_consultation_on_the_family/?cdhMBfb)

## **Easter Reflection**

We stand at the door.  
It is locked.  
No key, no answer.  
The stone step is hard.

Jesus gave Peter a rock and a key.  
Peter finally understood, learned to stand firm and invited people in.

We read today's headlines.  
In, out, right, wrong.  
Women priests are heresy.  
Door closed.

Jesus gave us a call and a key.  
We begin to understand, learn to stand firm and invite people in.

We stand on the step.  
Outside is the new inside.  
The margins the new centre.  
This was Jesus' place.

We asked for welcome and find others to welcome.  
We sought nourishment and learned to eat with others.  
We were poor and found new wealth.  
We were excluded, found others shut out, and we invited each other in.

The stone rolls from the door.  
We all have keys and no longer need them.  
Those behind the door come out.  
The Garden is for all.

Pippa B

## **From our Facebook page**

"My prayers and support to you in the U.K. May we all be recognized as the priestly people we all are. Yes to the ordination of Roman Catholic Women to the priesthood. All my love - Donnieau, U.S.A."

### 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)

I've learned so much from my mistakes,  
I'm thinking of making a few more

Anon (unsurprisingly)

### From Kate Conwy's (WOC) blog – airbrushing of St Catherine

On Saturday, we travelled the San Clemente Basilica, a church of truly layered history, and incidentally, just cross the street from the shrine to Pope Joan. Archaeologically speaking, the structure shows how 1st century Roman religion became a 4th century Christian church and finally a 12th century basilica. While on the tour, Dr. Ann Brock pointed out that while a fresco to on the side of the basilica shows St. Catherine teaching, the guide book shows only the male philosophers with St. Catherine completely cut out. Sometimes I am still surprised at the tedious lengths of institutional sexism our Church not only sanctions, but celebrates.



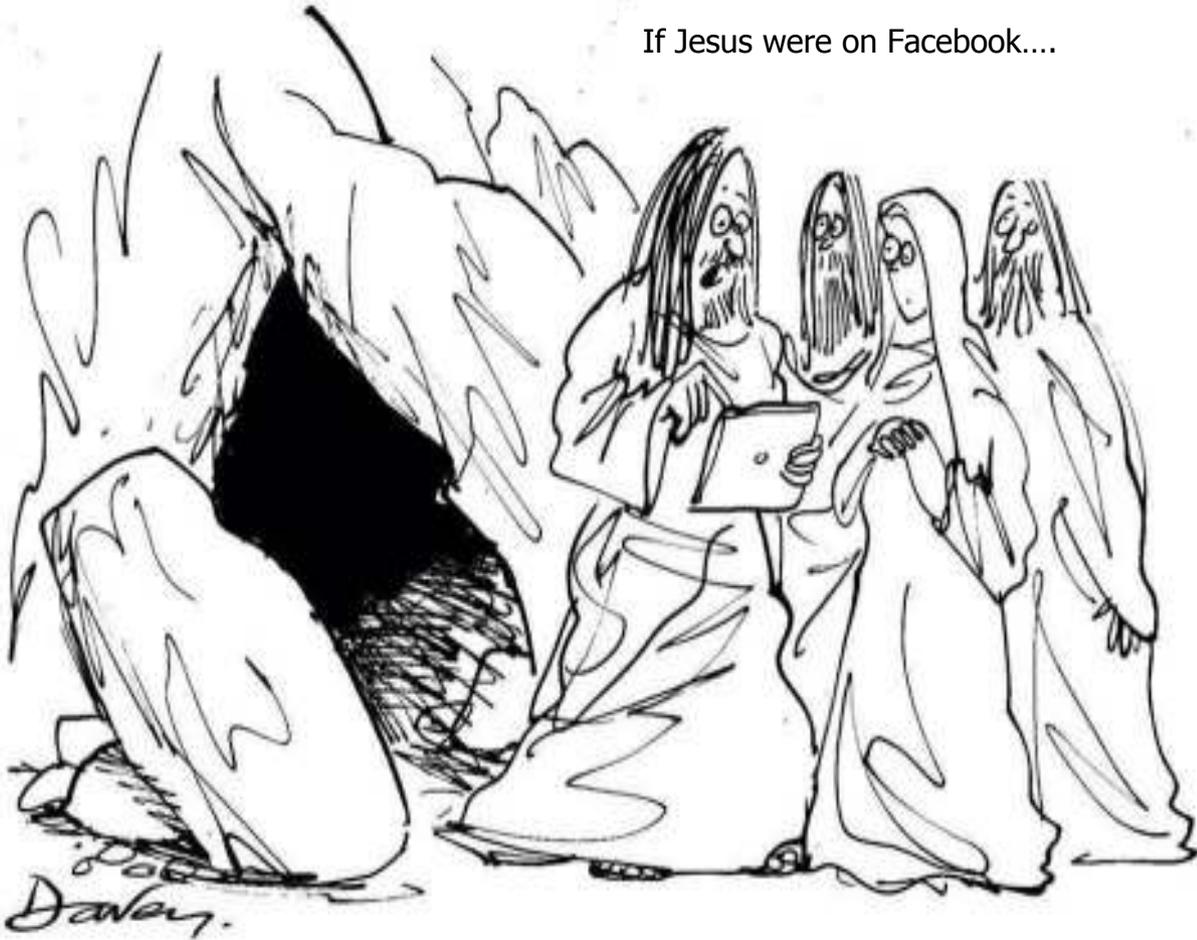
Now you see her



Now you don't!

Thanks to Deb Rose-Milavec for the photos and to Colette J

If Jesus were on Facebook....



"He's not in there! Oh, wait - he's changed his status to 'risen' "

### **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>

## **Gary Macy: The Hidden History of Women's Ordination**

Gary Macy's book is a scholarly account of the history of women's ministry that has often remained hidden within the church. It is very readable, but also soundly academic, with plenty of footnotes and appendices containing the ordination rites of abbesses and deacons. I found it particularly useful that Macy explains and clarifies the ministries of women as they were, and does not try to argue how certain ministries should relate to the current debate. It is clear that the Roman Catholic Church in the first few centuries after Jesus tried very hard to conceal some of the roles given to women, yet liturgies and evidence from paintings and mosaics in basilicae remain. It is also helpful to understand from the cultural context why some roles were only open to women and others to men. The powerful nature of some of the abbesses, like Hilda of Whitby, is evident, with their roles having some overlap with episcopal roles. It also highlights the point in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries where many roles disappear, and gives useful material in how to challenge the portrayal given by Rome. It may provide a lot of helpful background for those of us preparing to discuss the diaconate, (permanent and as a step on the way to priesthood) at the CWO AGM, and think through some of our responses to these questions.

Katharine S

## **Pop Up Monastery Taster Day Forum Day 2014**

Saturday May 10th 10am – 6pm

The Swiss Church in London 79 Endell Street London WC2H 9DY

FREE – Donations to support the work of EFECW

The Swiss Church in London and The Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women invite you to a day of contemplation and challenge. A one day 'pop up monastery' will be appearing in the Swiss Church London on Saturday May 10th. Come and join us for the whole day or for a shorter time. There will be silence, music, dancing, guided meditation, an opportunity to be creative, to chat and to be still. Tea and Coffee will be available all day and vegetarian soup from 12 – 1.30 or bring your own sandwiches. As part of seeking a fairer and more equal world we welcome men who support the aims of the EFECW to join us, there will also be a women only space available all day, with a programme of meditation and discussion.

There is no need to book. We would love to know if you are coming please visit <http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/pop-up-monastery-taster-day-tickets-10639251287>, email [antheasully@gmail.com](mailto:antheasully@gmail.com), phone Dorothy 01684561358, or 07815314555

## **One Spirit Interfaith Foundation; a little more of the story**

I thought I would share very briefly a little more information about the One Spirit Interfaith Foundation (OSIF), who has so kindly offered CWO their support. Also I include a few words about a visit to the United Reformed church (URC) prompted by my visit to OSIF last August.

The connection between OSIF and the URC is that on my visit last year to OSIF'S ordination and graduation ceremony I learned from a first year at the seminary, that URC allows OSIF the use of its facilities; building and library and URC are 'the most open and welcoming.'

OSIF has over 500 ordained ministers – men and women – who serve their communities in the UK, Irish Republic, Europe and beyond. They serve 'those of all faiths or none within their spiritual journey,' (Quotes from their information leaflets). There is no set text or job description for an individual minister. They are 'supported to find their way of offering their own ministry expressing their purpose in the world.' They create with their clients 'ceremonies for life's major transitions' and offer spiritual counselling, gatherings, retreats, contemplation and worship, all tailor made for personal beliefs and needs. This is where their real beauty shines forth for me; it is focused entirely on what means most to the individual, to what the individual requires in what might be a life enhancing, life changing event. Yet, you are not required to relinquish your own position or beliefs, to care for and serve others. Rather, your own spirit is enriched and enhanced, learning about, and serving others in a special way. OSIF reminds us, 'Many Ways, One Spirit,' so the ethos lies in its inclusive and serving nature, regardless of creed, gender or sexuality.

Obviously there is a great deal of information about the history, personnel, Seminary courses and training on line; just google "One Spirit Interfaith Foundation" and enjoy enlightenment, introductions via media interviews, videos as well as an interesting read.

Since my day with them last August I have thought a good deal about their connection to the URC. So, mindful of my ignorance, I set off for a URC service and learned a great deal. I had a lovely welcome, by name (that shook me up a little!) at the beginning of the service. The next thing to set me praying was the sight of a covering over what were obviously the necessities required for communion. As a Roman Catholic (RC) I knew of course that I would be bound by obedience not to receive communion in another church. Now, I'm a real liturgy fan, and the more ritual the better; I like to be well and truly prepared for my communion but I am not a robot for blind obedience. I think and pray and like the rest of us I have a conscience.

## **One Spirit Interfaith Foundation; a little more of the story (continued)**

The service at the URC is not wrapped up in the ritual and liturgy I am accustomed to. However, there were surprises in store! The liturgy came in the prayers, 'I come to the Lord's table in obedience,' and, 'open our hearts Lord.' In the hymns (er ... five of them!), 'and that a higher gift than grace should flesh and blood refine.'(H. 71). It came in the readings; 'man does not live on bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God.' (Roman Missal). It came in the brilliant sermon with familiar theological and spiritual themes; 'thoughtful consideration,' 'forgiveness,' 'confession,' 'repentance,' (yep! A little long!). I was wrapped up with an emotional, spiritual experience; shared reverence and peace.

Canon Law tells us Christ's faithful are those who, since they are incorporated into Christ through baptism, are constituted the people of God. (Can. 204). So here we all were, baptised, Christian and most important, together. One of the great glories (for me) of Canon Law is the insistence – throughout – of being 'properly disposed' (a right intention) for the sacraments (even if not, a Catholic!), (can. 843; can. 844: ss. 3; ss. 4) in times of danger or spiritual need. And when 'a genuine spiritual advantage commends it' (can. 844. ss. 2) we have the flexibility of provisions in subsections to a given law. What we must do is avoid, 'the danger of error in indifferentism.' (can. 844. ss. 2). There was no indifferentism here in this service.

The liturgy continued in the hymns; 'Our hearts, if God we seek to know, shall know Him and rejoice.'(H. 386). And, 'Hail sacred feast, which Jesus makes, rich banquet of his flesh and blood.' (H. 297). So here I was, welcomed, known by name, by those committed to 'Loving the Lord,' 'properly disposed,' together. The absence of Roman authority, and its forensic legislation did nothing to remove God from this experience. I shared communion with my fellow Christians. I was peaceful, happy; it was right, simple, kind and most important, accepting.

It is quite another and long story as to why I am Catholic, (you just might be wondering!), but just one day with OSIF, and I am still continuing to learn, to connect with others, and gaining from new experiences. The important lessons from OSIF are, to care, to respect, to be open to the needs of others; these are universal Christian messages; we learn them all surely when we care to love.

Olly D

## **Hold Out Your Hands - a day of reflection for LGBT Catholics, their parents and families**

Saturday, 24 May 2014 10.00 -16.30,  
114 Mount Street Mayfair London W1K 3AH.

Pre-booking required before 22 May

Suggested donation to cover costs -£10.00

Keynote speaker: Sue Haley - Co-Founder of Called To Be One, an informal network for Catholic parents of LGBT people

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales Marriage & Family Life Office highlights, in one of its Everybody's Welcome leaflets, the pastoral needs of lesbian and gay people, parents and families.

This reflection day is an opportunity for parents and families, including LGBT daughters and sons:

- to come together to share experiences
- to learn what support is available in our Catholic community
- to celebrate our diversity and unity

In this way we can respond to Pope Francis' oft-quoted question:  
"Who am I to judge?"

LGBT Catholics Westminster Pastoral Council  
PO Box 24632 London E9 6XF  
lgbtcatholicswestminster@gmail.com  
www.sohomasses.com



Women vote in Afghanistan defying threats from the Taliban.

"We have to vote to show the enemies we are not afraid of them. We should give our enemies a jaw-breaking answer by casting our ballot."

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.johnwijngaards.org/>

All previous housetop websites can be reached via this address

<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/>

Campaigns against and 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. They offer pastoral support for LGBT Catholics friends and families  
Sign up for quarterly newsletter

<http://82.70.116.125/index.html>

Women Word Spirit

<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.