

CWO e-news March 2009 issue 14

Welcome to issue 13 of the e-news. Please visit our website

www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

Joint editors Pat Brown and Myra Poole

Stop press – you may have seen reports of the excommunication of the mother of a 9 year old Brazilian girl who had been repeatedly raped by her stepfather. (The child escaped excommunication as she was too young!)

See Tablet p. 35 & Editorial <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/article/12796> Also

<http://ncronline.org/news/women/vatican-lip-service-women-womens-history-month>

CWO Annual Gathering 2009

Please put this date in your diary now!

Saturday 10 October 2009

10.3am to 4.00pm

St Olave's Church York

Morning - AGM

Lunch provided

Afternoon - On the occasion of her relics being in Yorkshire, we will be looking at the spirituality of St Therese especially her vocation to ordained ministry and understanding of the need for a reformed priesthood

The Seminar for the Lisieux Trust led by The Ven. Dr. Joy Tetley on Sat 28th Feb

The Lisieux Trustees would like to thank everyone who came to this day.

We particularly thank Joy Tetley, who gave some fascinating insights into the letter to the Hebrews.

She also generously donated her fee to the Trust.

Help still needed!

I have not been overwhelmed by offers of help – less than one actually! Please think about this and at least enquire if you think you can take on a job for CWO.

We need people to take over the following jobs because the person doing them (me!) would like to feel she could shed them over the next two years. There is plenty of time to work together so volunteers needn't feel they are being dropped in at the deep end.

1. **Membership secretary** – This involves working closely with the treasurer. You will need to be able to keep a database up to date, and send reminders when subs are due.
2. **Treasurer** – This involves keeping the accounts for Lisieux Trust and CWO.

Both the above jobs take quite a lot of time and would suit someone who knows about data bases and Microsoft Excel.

3. **E-news editor** - This involves chasing people for items for the monthly e-news, assembling it and sending it out to members. You also need to produce a version for the website with personal contact details removed
4. **Website link person** - This involves working with our website person and getting new items into our CWO news section

Pat Brown

Women's Ordination Worldwide (WOW)
Annual Meeting of International Steering Committee 14th – 17th May 2009

The Royal Foundation of St Katharine
2 Butcher Row London E14 8DS

During this meeting, on Saturday 16th May, the WOW Steering Committee will host an afternoon event at which Dr. Paul Collins, Australian theologian and broadcaster, will speak on "*The Legacy of Vatican 2 Down Under: Recent reform movements in the Australian Roman Catholic Church.*"

The event will include time for discussion and refreshments and the opportunity to meet and talk informally with Dr. Collins and the international representatives of Women's Ordination Worldwide.

Time approx 2.30 – 5.30pm

All CWO members are warmly invited and representatives from regional groups are particularly welcome, as are ecumenical friends and supporters.

As last year, we hope CWO members will remain for dinner and a social evening. There are some rooms available at St. Katharine's for anyone who needs to stay overnight.

Cost as follows:

Afternoon event	£5 (including refreshments)
Dinner	£15
Overnight stay	£42.50 (bed and breakfast)

Please contact Pat Brown, WOW Treasurer, by 31st March if you wish to attend.

Places for dinner at St Katharine's are limited but guests can also eat in the neighbourhood and come back for the evening.

Dr. Paul Collins is a historian, writer and broadcaster. He has worked in varying capacities for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and other TV and radio stations and has published eleven books, including several on papal history and modern Roman Catholicism and more recently, religion and ecology. Ordained in 1968, he resigned from active priestly ministry in 2001 due to a dispute with the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith over his book *Papal Power*. He has played a leading role in recent campaigns in Australia to mobilize opinion in support of Vatican II, including a petition in support of married and women priests.

Women's Ordination Worldwide (founded in 1996) is an ecumenical network whose primary mission at this time is the admission of Roman Catholic women to all ordained ministries.

Fourth Plinth Trafalgar Square

You may have heard about Andrew Gormley's idea for the Fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square. It's even been mentioned on the Archers! You can read about it and watch his video on <http://oneandother.co.uk>

Some of us have applied in the hope of using this, if lucky enough to be selected, to publicise women and the Church in some way. If you think you could do this, please apply at the website. There would be a large CWO support group to help you!

At the moment you only have to give your name, email address and region so you're not committing to anything as yet.

Response to Myra Poole's piece

'The Big Questions'

I was very moved by Myra's article. Her frustration at not being able to contribute properly was very understandable. Has she contacted the BBC about it I wonder?

She did at any rate express herself very eloquently for the benefit of us readers. The fact that women cannot be celebrants at the altar is tragic, to say nothing of the wider exploitation of women in so many religions. I personally take a small amount of comfort from my role as a Eucharistic Minister. In my parish the majority of us are women and I feel a great sense of privilege standing and administering the sacrament, particularly when distributing the host alongside the priest. People have readily got used to our presence. You wonder how we 'mere women' get away with it! In fact females seem to be in the majority as altar servers, readers and children's catechists. I wonder if this is the case in most RC parishes?

How can we women make our voices heard in the Catholic Church apart from quiet regular ministries and prayers? I was just thinking that Amnesty International achieve a great deal by letter-writing campaigns. Members bombard governments with letters about particular political prisoners and some are freed as a result of all the pressure. How about every member of CWO and allied organisations sending personal letters to the pope? They could be anonymous if people wanted. How many letters would it take to make a difference?

Clare Shelton-Jones

What Unity does the Incarnation reveal?

It is not about becoming spiritual beings nearly as much as about becoming human beings. The biblical revelation is saying that we are already spiritual beings; we just don't know it yet. The Bible tries to let you in on the secret, by revealing God in the ordinary. That's why so much of the text seems so mundane, practical, specific and, frankly, unspiritual! We have created a terrible kind of dualism between the spiritual and the so-called non-spiritual. This dualism precisely is what Jesus came to reveal as a lie. The principle of Incarnation proclaims that matter and spirit have never been separate. Jesus came to tell us that these two seemingly different worlds are and always have been one. We just couldn't see it until God put them together in his one body (see Ephesians 2:11-20).

Richard Rohr

Letter from CNWE to Pope Benedict

The Catholic Network for Women's Equality (CNWE) calls on you to lift in a gesture of reconciliation toward women in the Church the May 29, 2008 decree of automatic excommunication issued against all Roman Catholic Women priests or bishops. We are aware that the Congregation for Bishops, instructed by the Pope, removed the excommunication of four dissenting bishops on January 21, 2009 for the same reason of promoting Church unity.

Rescinding the decree of automatic excommunication would be an act not of charity but of justice. By showing this leadership, the Pope would be taking a great step forward in promoting the full dignity of women. The current practice of saying there is no discrimination against women, and that women cannot be ordained 'because this is Christ's will' tragically shifts blame for injustice onto Christ, presenting him as one of the worst discriminators against women in history. It is not Christ who bars women from sacred ministry, it is Canon Law. Grave injustice is done not only to women but to the entire Body of Christ every single time an authentic vocation is discriminated against on the basis of one's sex. This is contrary to St. Paul's teaching that "In Christ there is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." It is also a gross violation of women's human rights as Vatican II declares: Any kind of social or cultural discrimination in basic personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design. **Gaudium et Spes**, art. 29, 2

Respectfully,

The National Work Group of Catholic Network for Women's Equality

Michele Birch Conery, Marie Bouclin, Therese Koturbash, Paula MacQuarrie, Jocelyn Rait.

European Network Study Day - Sat. May 9th

The theme of the day is 'Eco-feminism' and the main speaker is Dr Anne Primavesi. Place- St Katherine, 2 Butcher Row, Limehouse, E14 8DS.
Time 9.00am - 5.30pm
Cost £15, no lunch, £25- includes lunch. There are only seven places available so it will be on a first come, first serve basis. Please contact Myra Poole if you want to come as soon as possible.

Prayer Link

Every Wednesday between 6.00 and 7.00pm, please pray for CWO, its members and its mission.

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

The Petition "For the full recognition of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council"

is now available in 14 languages and has become a great international success within a very short time. This Petition emphasises not only the Auxiliary Bishop Williamson and his denying of the Holocaust, but the full recognition of the decrees of the Second Vatican Council. Especially now, this positive approach of the Petition is getting more and more important, as several authorities are now trying to downplay this scandal.

Having continuously improved our IT-system and our website, we are now aiming at an international snowball effect. So may we ask you to forward this petition to as many people as possible (at work, university, church community, friends and relatives) and ask them to forward it as well.

http://www.petition-vaticanum2.org/pageID_7374805.html

Many thanks for your strong and enduring support.

Christian Weisner

"Petition Vaticanum2"

presse@petition-vaticanum2.org

Please donate to our special account "petition":

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Bishop Williamson's views on women

The Tablet published a letter from Jennifer Stark on 28 February.

After concurring with previously discussed views on the Bishop's remarks about the holocaust, Jennifer pointed out that Bishop Williamson's views on women are also not precisely in line with conciliar or indeed, papal teaching.

She quotes the Bishop thus:

"because of all kinds of natural reasons, almost no girl should go to any university... true universities are for ideas, ideas are not for true girls, so true universities are not for true girls ... Europe, centre of Christendom, is collapsing because European girls are all being taught to go to 'university' and to 'put off ' having babies! Woman and family are in desperate crisis – do we want to follow the swine over the cliff ?"

Williamson's writings on women have been removed from the SSPX website but are available at www.womenpriests.org website.

The link for the letter is

<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/pdf/2823/bookmarks/#pagemode=bookmarks> but you can only access this if you are a subscriber. We can't reprint the letter for copyright reasons so try to access a copy.

Websites to visit!

<http://ncronline3.org/drupal/>
National Catholic Reporter - Joan Chittester is a regular contributor

www.womenpriests.org. You can sign up for their regular newsletter

www.spirituschristi.org An inclusive Catholic Church where all are welcome

www.womensordination.org
More news of Rome Petition, Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

Optimism is the fuel of progress

Tony Benn

When visiting Bethlehem in 2007 we promised that we would act in solidarity with the women there. Living under occupation and imprisoned by the Wall they felt that they were forgotten by the rest of the world. I have just returned from there again and the situation is even worse – so am asking if you would join in an act of solidarity for World Women’s Day of Prayer next week.

Pax Christi has produced a postcard that shows women peacemakers and invites us to send cards to women peacemakers – some are listed and includes the women’s group in Bethlehem. But the choice is ours.

The cards can be seen and downloaded from the link below or can be ordered from the Pax Christi office on 0208 8203 4884

http://www.paxchristi.org.uk/Images/WomensDay_Card09.pdf

It would be really good if you could order several and give them to others as well as sending them yourself.

Ann Farr

Media Day

It was suggested at the last CWO Annual Gathering that NatCog organise a media day. Could anyone interested contact Myra? myrapoole@aol.com
Can you say in what aspects of media you’re particularly interested and any suggestions you might have. A day can then be arranged in line with demand and in a convenient location for those interested in attending. Please respond by Easter