



New Women New Church

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A Voice for Women in the Catholic Church

To Say Nothing of Women and Children

By Faye McDonald Smith

Note: This article was first printed in the Winter 2006 issue of the Parish Connection, the publication of the Office for Black Catholic Ministry in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

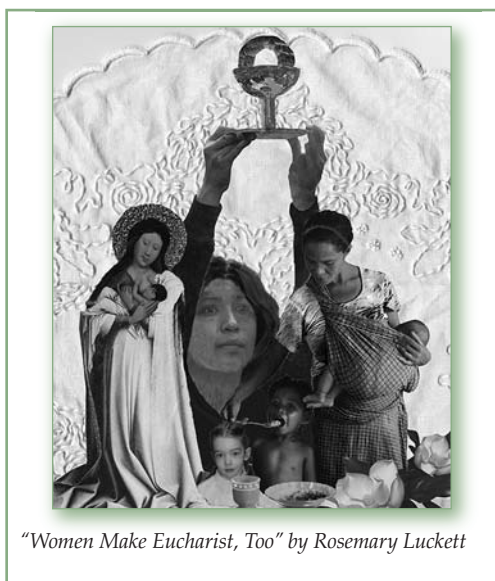
Matthew's gospel describes two instances where Jesus fed thousands of people with only a few loaves and fish. In the first incident, from five loaves and two fish, about 5,000 men shared in the meal, to say nothing of women and children (*Matthew 14:21*). In the second instance, Jesus turned seven loaves and a few small fish into enough food to feed four thousand men, not counting women and children (*Matthew 15:38*).

The readings beautifully illustrate Jesus' abundant and miraculous power to make a lot out of a little. Yet every time I hear or read these passages, I cringe a bit at the last part: *To say nothing of women and children.*

What? I want to protest. Why weren't women and children included? Don't we matter? Don't we count?

Like those gospel stories, it often appears that today's women in the Catholic Church don't count either, at least not as much, as the men. Consider the church's immovable stance about the role of women as it relates to ordination. Ordination, the church insists, is for men only. This sends the unintended yet perceived message that women are somehow less than; that they are unworthy to serve as priests and deacons and to minister through Holy Orders.

Papal encyclicals speak eloquently about the special gifts of women and the need to respect women, especially for their roles as mothers. But the bottom line remains that women are not permitted to be ordained in the Catholic Church. Those who attempt ordination, such as the new group of Roman Catholic women priests, are labeled heretical, radical feminists and deemed excommunicated.



"Women Make Eucharist, Too" by Rosemary Luccett

Several years ago I was honored to attend the ordination of a dear friend who became a Presbyterian minister. Lydia has remarkable gifts as a preacher, spiritual advisor, and pastoral counselor. She has since put those gifts to work and the Presbyterian Church has greatly benefited from the fruits of her labor.

I was proud and happy to be at her ordination. But I remember thinking how this would not happen in the Catholic Church, in *my* church, because it does not grant women the right to be ordained. What a sad and sobering thought.

Some Catholics respond to the idea of women priests by stating, "Not in my lifetime!" This reminds me of the "Not in my backyard" mentality of those who recognize a concern but want someone else to deal with it—at another place, in another time.

Personally, I never had any desire to be a priest, but shouldn't women at least be afforded the option?

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Women's Ordination Conference at CTA Conference

At this year's Call to Action Conference, November 2-4 in Milwaukee, WOC will host the following:

Friday, Nov. 2, 5:00pm-6:00pm:
Caucus — Women's Ordination Conference members and supporters

Saturday, Nov. 3, 11:45am-12:45pm:
Caucus — Young Feminist Network members and supporters

**Saturday, Nov. 3,
1:00pm – 2:00pm & 2:30pm – 3:30pm:**
Presentation — "Renewing Ourselves,
the Movement and the Church:
Toward an Inclusive, Anti-Oppressive
Priestly Ministry

Visit us! WOC's booth will feature our resources and merchandise. Take care of your Christmas shopping list, and give gifts that support women's ordination.

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Dear WOC Members,



To illustrate this focus, we have included many articles about the specific work happening in WOC and around the world. On page 6, Diana Wear describes the work the Ministry of Irritation has done to use the Vatican's own words to advocate women's ordination. On page 8, Yanet Zeballos from Peru writes to us about her ministry of working for optional celibacy and women's ordination in Latin America. On page 9, Jane Via tells us the story of how the thriving, inclusive Catholic community in San Diego, Calif. was formed and how it has blossomed. On page 11, Johanna Hatch, a member of WOC's Young Feminist Network, gives us a preview of the book she hopes to publish that will be a compilation of essays by and about young Catholic feminists.

I am also excited to include the article on the front cover by Faye McDonald Smith, which was originally printed in a publication of the Archdiocese of Atlanta. A positive view of women's ordination in an archdiocesan publication—there is hope! I am sending my appreciation to Marian Ronan, for bringing this article to my attention.

Your feedback is critical in making *NewWomen, NewChurch* a forum for public discussion about the women's ordination movement and the church and world we envision. Please send your thoughts and suggestions to ataylor@womensordination.org. I hope you enjoy your summer reading and vacations!

Sunny Blessings,
Aisha S. Taylor

This issue is all about you—our members and our ministries. The spring issue of *NewWomen, NewChurch* motivated more than a few of you to write to us about your thoughts regarding Sr. Kate Kuenstler's article and the name change for the Ministry of Irritation. In response to your letters, we have dedicated two pages to your thoughts and perspectives.

The second focus of this issue is on our ministries, including the Three Ministries and Young Feminist Network. In the past few months, our ministries have been actively recruiting WOC members to be an integral part of shaping and implementing our programs. We have also been moving toward making connections with larger social justice issues by highlighting the difference women priests would make—and are making—in the church and the world. We are focusing on what Catholic women are doing right now to live out their calls to ordination and spiritual leadership.

“Quotable Quote”

“At the moment, we know that dialogue on the possibility of ordaining women is closed within the Church. But that does not mean that it cannot be opened.” ~ Bishop Antonio Celso Queiroz of Catanduva, Brazil, making the observation that Pope Benedict had acknowledged the debt that the Church owes to women during his visit to Brazil in May.

Source: *Catholic News Service, May 15, 2007*

Final Issue of Women-Church: An Australian Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion

By Elaine Lindsay of Women-Church Australia

After 20 years of publication, the final issue of *Women-Church: An Australian Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (vol. 40, 2007) is coming out in July. It will be a more-than-double issue and feature a significant amount of first-hand historical material on feminist theology and spirituality in Australia since the 1970s. Copies of

the final edition are available for \$30 AUD (includes postage) in July. Checks in AUD should be made payable to Women-Church Inc and orders sent to Women-Church, GPO Box 2134, Sydney NSW 2001, Australia. For more information, contact Elaine Lindsay, elindsay@dodo.com.au.

NewWomen, NewChurch is published quarterly by the Women's Ordination Conference (WOC). WOC works for the ordination of women as deacons, priests and bishops into a renewing priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic Church.

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In principle and practice WOC values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

A subscription to *NewWomen, NewChurch* is included in the WOC membership fee of \$45. WOC is incorporated under 501(c)(3) as a nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax deductible accordingly.

WOC archives, including microfilms of *NewWomen, NewChurch*, are held at Marquette University. For more information, contact Philip Runkel at the Department of Special Collections & University Archives, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI 53201-3141, 414.288.5903, or phil.runkel@marquette.edu.

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Pope Recognizes Colonial Injustices

By Tracy Wilkinson - *The Los Angeles Times*,
24 May 2007

Confronted with continued anger in Latin America, Pope Benedict XVI on Wednesday acknowledged that the Christian colonization of Indian populations was not as rosy as he portrayed in a major speech earlier this month in Brazil. The pope did not apologize, as some indigenous and Latin American leaders have demanded. However, he said it was impossible to ignore the dark "shadows" and "unjustified crimes" that accompanied the evangelization of the New World by Roman Catholic priests in the 15th and 16th centuries. "It is not possible to forget the sufferings and injustices inflicted by the colonizers on the indigenous population, whose fundamental human rights were often trampled upon," the pope said. "Certainly, the memory of a glorious past cannot ignore the shadows that accompanied the work of evangelizing the Latin American continent."

Benedict was addressing pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square for his weekly public audience.

Benedict made his first papal voyage to the Americas this month, visiting Brazil. In his final and most important speech of the five-day visit, he gave what many saw as a revisionist account of history. Indigenous populations, he said at the time, welcomed their European colonizers because they were "secretly longing" for Christ "without realizing it." Conversion to Christianity "did not at any point involve an alienation of the pre-Columbus cultures, nor was it the imposition of a foreign culture," he said. The pope made no mention of forced conversions, epidemic illnesses, massacres, enslavement and other abuses that most historians agree accompanied colonization. Indigenous rights groups, plus the presidents of Venezuela and Bolivia, were incensed.

Women's Justice Coalition Releases Report Card on U.S. Dioceses



**Women's
Justice
Coalition**

A report released by the Women's Justice Coalition illustrated the wide disparities between women's and men's roles in 23 of the nation's 146 Roman Catholic dioceses and archdioceses in the US. Men make up the majority of members on diocesan pastoral councils, Catholic Charities boards, and diocesan finance councils.

"Pope Benedict XVI has said that it is 'theologically and anthropologically important for women to be at the center of Christianity,' but our study shows that women are relegated to the margins when it comes to positions of influence within the Catholic Church," says Prof. Susan Farrell, a lead analyst of the report. "We've issued an 'F' to the dioceses when it

comes to representation of women in religious education and a 'D' in hiring women for top jobs."

The good news is that the bishops got an "A" for providing tuition assistance and scholarships for men and women preparing for lay ministry. The Coalition has sent its study to the USCCB and to each bishop individually with the request that the bishops address the recommendations in the report at their November meeting.

For more information visit www.womensjusticecoalition.org.

Canadian Ordinations a First of their Kind

By François Brassard, Media Coordinator for RCWP, Canada

On Sunday, May 27, 2007 at West Hill United Church in Toronto, Ontario, five women and one man were ordained as Roman Catholic priests and deacons by Bishop Patricia Fresen of Germany. This ordination ceremony was significant because it was the first public ordination ceremony of the Roman Catholic Womenpriests (RCWP) movement to take place on land and in a church. It was also the first time in North America that a married man was ordained in a public ceremony within the RCWP movement. There are currently 16 women priests in the U.S. and two in Canada. Worldwide there are over 150 candidates in training.

At the Toronto ceremony, two women from the state of Michigan were ordained to the priesthood, Cheryl Bristol from Detroit and Mary Ellen Robertson from Muskegon, alongside Marie Bouclin from Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. Three others were ordained to the diaconate, Alice Iaquina of West Bend, Wisconsin, Monica Kilburn-Smith of Calgary, Alberta, and Jim Lauder of Victoria, British Columbia.

When asked what kind of priestly ministry she would like to offer, Bouclin said that she wanted to help women who have been abused by clergy. In this respect, it was very moving when Irene Deschesne, a well-known abuse victim in Ontario, asked for Marie Bouclin's priestly blessing at Communion time.

First Anglican Woman in Latin America, The Reverend Canon Cot, Ordained a Bishop in Cuba

By Jan Nunley - *Episcopal News Service*

"Así lo haremos—We will!" thundered the standing-room-only congregation at Havana's Episcopal Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, when asked if they would accept as Cuba's first bishops suffragan the Reverend Canon Nerva Cot Aguilera and Archdeacon Ulises Mario Aguero Prendes.

The Reverend Cot—the first woman Anglican bishop in Latin America—and Archdeacon Aguero were consecrated in a nearly three-hour service Sunday, June 10 that blended Anglican dignity and Cuban spontaneity.

Anglican and Episcopal bishops from Europe and North, Central and South America joined representatives from a number of Cuban faith traditions, including Greek Orthodox and Afro-Cuban clergy, along with the head of the Religious Affairs Office for the Communist Party of Cuba, Caridad Diego, who told the BBC her government was proud that the country had a woman bishop.

Since 1992, Article 8 of the Cuban Constitution has stated that the country's communist government "recognizes respects and guarantees freedom of religion."

Also present were bishops from Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, and Spain, among other countries.



Bishop Patricia Fresen blesses the hands of Marie Bouclin during the ordination ceremony in Toronto on May 27, 2007.



Dear WOC,

In response to your question about changing the name of the Ministry of Irritation in the spring issue of *NewWomen, NewChurch*, perhaps “Phoenix Ministry” or “The Phoenix Ministries” or “Ministry of the Phoenix” would be worth considering. Let people puzzle over it a bit, as long as it catches their ear and their imagination. Let them ask what that is. First, set the “hook,” then reel them in.

I like names that are not straight-forward factual, names that are not so loaded with theological history (e.g., “resurrection,” etc.). Quirky names often intrigue us more than names tinged with theology do.

Phoenix is, of course, the mythical bird that arises from its own ashes. Women deacons, priests and bishops were an integral part of the early church, and now women priesthood is arising from those ashes as WOC’s “Ministry of Irritation” lights matches, huffs on sparks, brings flames from the embers long thought (incorrectly) extinguished.

Blessings,
Jim Burch
Clifton, Va.

Dear WOC,

Although I like the “Irritation” name, like an ineluctable intractable mosquito in your ear at night, I can see the point of changing the name of the ministry. I just read the article in the spring issue of *NWNC* asking for ideas. I thought of *MAGDALENE MINISTRY*. Thinking of Mary Magdalene as a woman in need of healing who was healed and heals; a woman who is able to turn away from the tomb and find new life in other ways, i.e. not stuck and future-oriented; also a woman who proclaimed truth to an incredulous bunch of air-heads; and a symbol for me of the ongoing need for justice and equity in the Church (world too) as many folks still think poor Mary Magdalene was a whore. Imagine! And surely as first apostle she was a change agent, an initiator of transformation.

The other one I thought of is *MINISTRY OF TRUTH—IN LOVE*. This from Paul re: speaking the truth in love. I think of this as a call to a kind of tough love, one which requires steadfast perseverance, teeth-gritting patience, assertiveness without aggression, community, constant prayer and a good dollop of compassion for self and others.

Much peace,
Lyn Brakeman
Glouster, Mass.

Dear Wonderful Women of WOC,

Thank you for supporting me with your friendship and prayers as I journeyed toward priesthood. May you be richly blessed.

Marie Evans Bouclin, RCWP
Sudbury, Canada

Dear Editor,

Congratulations on a great spring issue! Each time it gets better and better. I’m glad the plan for an inclusive WOC was published, so members can see the dedication and commitment to authentic diversity. The critical issue of sexism (gender discrimination plus power) needs to be seen too, as essential in the distorted relationship of those in power and those with less power.

Regarding the name change for the Ministry of Irritation, I like the “Ministry of Transformation,” but unfortunately I think this word is somewhat overused. What about Ministry of Attention to Change, Ministry of Calling Forth, or Ministry of Inspiration?

The majority of my comments, however, relate to the article by Sr. Kate Kuenstler. I met Sr. Kate in Cleveland when she gave an update on canon law for *FutureChurch*. When I spoke with her she mentioned the *NWNC* article and said I probably would not agree with her, since she would say that women’s ordinations on the riverboats may have been premature.

Though I appreciate her candid views, my response was, premature in relation to what? Do we need yet more “steps” as she says? The Church itself had a Biblical Commission in 1976 that declared there is no impediment in Scripture to ordaining women. And the Church *can* do it, as evidenced by the ordinations of several women in the underground church of Czechoslovakia, so the “male only” requisite does not seem to have any real weight.

But as Sr. Kate says, women still suffer around the world from lack of basic needs and intolerable conditions, and their first issue is survival. But would they not survive better with women in ordained positions around the world, respected as equals and accepted for their gifts and talents? Her very phrase that “until women are seen and valued as human beings, ordained women clergy will not be possible in the global Church,” makes my point! Her argument does not hold, but only delays the relief of thousands of women everywhere; just as the sexual abuse crisis would not be so widespread if the empathy and good sense of women were present in the priesthood to intervene and temper the male-only atmosphere.

Her comments that the ordinations so far may be pulling “more neutral people into opposing camps and thus the wedge within the Church could become wider and deeper” may, in itself, only serve to harden views. My hope is that a conversation can continue on the issue of women’s ordination with less of a two-sided, and “us and them” stance, and more of a partnership/collaborative model in our community of discourse.

Kudos for including such a thought-provoking article! I hope to see more discussions as we dialogue on the important issue of women’s equal partnership in the Church.

Summer blessings and love,
Evelyn Hunt
Cleveland, Ohio



Dear Editor,

The well-meaning spring essay by Sr. Kate Kuenstler urging a halt to unauthorized-by-the-Vatican ordinations of women sets impossible conditions for the church to be "ready" for women priests. The author indicates that only after global poverty and vice are ended (or perhaps drastically reduced) will people in developing countries become enthusiastic for women's ordination, and that until most or all nations are ready for it, no nation should have it.

There was much poverty and vice in the days of the early church, which evidently allowed women to function as priests and bishops. Indeed, if women anywhere nowadays become socially accepted as bishops and priests, that increases the likelihood that women elsewhere will receive increased respect and less abuse and impoverishment. Developing countries often imitate American cultural practices, both good and bad.

The author worries that opponents of discussing women's ordination will become hardened by unauthorized ordinations. Some opponents of U.S. legalized racial integration became more hardened against integration by seeing civil-rights activism, but that hardening of a faction didn't preserve legal segregation.

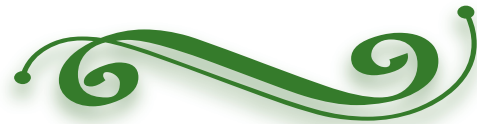
Martin Luther King once wrote a long essay on civil rights entitled "Why We Can't Wait." Perhaps women's ordination advocates need to write an essay with that title, hoping to influence the canon lawyer who implied that the Catholic Church won't be "ready" for women's ordination for several more decades, at least. Remember this legal maxim: Justice delayed is justice denied.

M. Holasek
Milwaukee, Wisc.

Dear Editor,

I have a remark about the article in the spring edition by Nancy Olivas and Theresa Yugar. They state that because they are young adults they are somehow freer "to observe and question, the antiquated practices of the church" ...and that the participants being young "demonstrates progress in the women's ordination movement." I think most of the men and women who have been active in WOC and other worldwide organizations for more than 30 years might take exception to those remarks. I know I do! We older folks, active in church reform, have not shown any shyness about expressing our observations. Nor does the mere presence of youth indicate progress. On the contrary, I suspect that the presence of these young women in theological programs is a direct result of the difficult work that has gone on for the last generation or two.

Sharon Danner
Dumfries, Va.

*To say nothing of women and children...continued from page 1*

Faced with dwindling numbers of priests and seminarians, the church chose to re-institute the diaconate rather than open dialogue about ordaining women. But in many areas, parishes remain without priests or deacons. If women were ordained, there would be more priests to go around. But, even if the rules were to bend, married men would be eligible for the priesthood before single women. In a few instances, the church has already ordained married Protestant clergy who converted to Catholicism. Evidently, being male supercedes celibacy.

For many Catholic women (and men) the church's stance on male-only ordination poses no problem, and they see no reason to change. Why, they ask, does it matter?

It matters because we're losing people. Good people. We're losing remarkable leaders who, after much angst and pain, elect to go to other faiths where they are more fully embraced. We're missing out on tremendous talents and gifts that would help expand and strengthen our beloved Catholic Church.

It's difficult to reconcile the hard-line policies of the church with my own personal philosophy about equal rights and women's rights. Why have I stayed? For many reasons. Because of tradition and heritage. Because of the times when the Catholic Church "gets it" right on social justice issues, as manifested through the Campaign for Human Development, the

courageous work of Dorothy Day, and the compassionate humility of Mother Teresa. I stay because of the phenomenal Catholic women and men, rooted in faith and community, who've helped me in my Christian journey. And I stay because of the central and resounding belief that the Eucharist really is the embodiment of our Lord and Savior, a remarkable gift of grace that is available to us every day, should we choose to take it.

So, for me, the struggle continues, as it does for many Catholic women, and especially black Catholic women. Just as black Catholics in the recent past addressed the question from non-Catholic friends, "Why belong to a church that relegates you to the back pew?"—in the same vein, black Catholic women often wrestle with a similar question, "Why belong to a church that not only has a history of racial intolerance but even now doesn't fully recognize women?" And then there's this: "Why belong to a church that seems to disproportionately close black churches and schools and that has a predominately white leadership that often is not reflective of its multicultural parishioners?" These are questions that not only outsiders ask but that we ask. Why, indeed?

Somehow, though, we find answers. They may not be totally satisfying but they're enough so that we hold on. We pray for better days. We hope for a softening of hearts. We envision a time when all peoples' gifts within the church will be fully shared.



Faye McDonald Smith

If women and children were counted during those hilltop gatherings with Jesus, the reported numbers of those fed would have doubled, tripled, or quadrupled, giving a more accurate picture of the total impact of Christ's miracles. In the same way, if the Church were to wholly incorporate women into its mosaic, imagine how much more spiritually rich we would all be.

Fully celebrating the gifts of women by allowing women to excel to their maximum potential is one way that the Catholic Church can become more catholic—in the truest sense of the word.

Faye McDonald Smith lives in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, Ga. A writer and communications manager, she is a parishioner at St. Paul of the Cross Catholic Church.

Connecting to Social Justice Using Church Documents

By Diana Wear



The vision of the Ministry of Irritation at this juncture is to focus on the connections of our goals to larger movements for social justice. Some of us in the women's ordination movement are asked why we work on this issue when there are so many pressing crises in our world—war, poverty, torture, lack of health care, the environment, and the like. We respond that we must work on those issues too, and that women's ordination is also a social justice issue. The Roman Catholic Church is a very powerful institution whose impact is felt around the globe. When the hierarchy stands on the world stage and calls forth women as spiritual leaders, there will be a ripple effect that will be nothing short of a revolution. With women as recognized spiritual leaders, many social justice issues will be addressed with women's voices and experiences levied as part of the solutions. Further, the ban on women's ordination is a justice issue in the Catholic Church and the world.

So to begin making the connections more explicit, the members of this ministry are currently reading some key church documents with new eyes—to uphold those parts with which we find merit and hope and to critique those parts that need updating or correction. The following is a snapshot of a few of these documents.

First, we read Canon 1024 and all the encyclicals on women. Canon 1024 states that "Only a baptized male validly receives sacred ordination." The canon is based on Jesus being male, and then it follows that Eucharistic representation needs to be in *persona Christi*, which originally meant *in the presence of Christ*, not in the person of Christ. Subsequently, the ban on ordaining women has been profoundly affected by this assertion. Secondly, at the heart of this canon is the assertion that women are inferior in nature to men. From there subsequent documents have been interpreted incorrectly by the institutional arm of the church.

The encyclicals about women (*Inter Insigniores* [1977], *Mulieres Dignitatum* [1988], *Ordinatio*

Sacerdotalis [1994], and *Responsum dubium* [1995]) have even greater problems. They have been written by men and for men without women's input. The substance of these documents also ignores the *sensus fidelium*. In addition, Scriptural exegesis used in each of the documents is seriously outdated, as are the understandings of what it means to be a woman—biologically, psychologically, theologically, and philosophically. The documents generally ignore other church teachings as well, that is, on how to regard the human person, which includes women, as people of dignity and agency.

We are also looking at a number of documents of the Second Vatican Council, for example, Church in the Modern World: #2 (Council Addresses All Humankind); chapter 1, #12, "Dignity of the Human Person (image of God); #15

"Human beings have the right to choose freely the state of life which they prefer, and therefore the right to set up a family, with equal rights and duties for man and woman, and also the right to follow a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life."

In the Vatican document, Pacem in Terris, Part 1, # 15, Pope John XXIII.

Dignity of Intellect; #16 Moral Conscience; #27 Respect for Human Person; #28 Love for Enemies; #29 Essential Equality; #35 (Regulation of Human Activity: "to harmonize with the authentic interests of the human race, in accordance with God's will and design, and to enable people as individuals and as members of society to pursue and fulfill their total vocation"; and #75 Participation By All in Public Life. These documents call on all women and men of the church to be treated as people of dignity and worthy of respect. They point to us, as women and men, in the image and likeness of God as part of church and the world, called to be holy and good. There are statements about the importance of following one's conscience and the freedom needed to be able to do that (which directly relates to women's ordination).

The U.S. bishops' Peace Pastoral of 1983 and the bishops' "Economic Justice for all" (1986) are two other places where we find ourselves filled with hope and yet left out of the conversation. In the peace pastoral, elements of the letter addressed the reality of the nuclear arms

race (and actually relates to the current war in Iraq) and brought up the moral choices of war. They affirm that peace happens through dialogue (would that they might enter into dialogue in other areas of church life...), and many other hopeful statements about peace and the dangers of war. But this document too, is woefully lacking in the voices of women and children, who are often most affected by the ravages of war.

The letter from the bishops on economic justice states that the human person is sacred and that human dignity comes from God, not nationality, race, sex, economic status or any human accomplishment. It also iterates that as Christians we are called to help the greatest in need. The document affirms that those with the greatest needs require the greatest response. This is definitely a letter we want to hold up to the light and extend it to how raising up women as spiritual leaders and following their calls to priesthood will also uplift our people and our churches.

The crème de la crème, however, comes in a quote from *Pacem in Terris* from Pope John XXIII (Part 1, #15): "Human beings have the right to choose freely the state of life which they prefer, and therefore the right to set up a family, with equal rights and duties for man and woman, and also the right to follow a vocation to the priesthood or the religious life."

The focus for this part of our work has been to speak to the beauty and goodness of the documents that *are* part of the Catholic teaching. We want to point out what should be praised as well as speak in the language of the hierarchy, that is, to be "on the same page." We also realize that these documents are written by humans, they're not of God, so we need to point to what is missing, particularly the voices and experiences of women. Our next steps include critiquing the documents as Catholic feminists using the methodology: "what's wrong with this picture?" For example, Canon 1024 uses an outdated and mistaken understanding of "man," and therefore "woman." How do we go about changing the one problematic word *vir* for man, to the word *anthropo* for human person? Our second question, "whose voices are not being heard?" That is, these documents are written by a certain group of men without internal or external critique. And lastly, "how might this be transformed?" For starters, ordain women.

Diana Wear is chair of the Ministry of Irritation. Helpful comments and suggestions for this article came from Nidza Vázquez and other members of this ministry; Amy Scanlon and Theresa Yugar. And Janice Sevre-Duszynska gave commentary on the bishops' peace and economic justice pastorals.

Sneak Peak at WOC's Membership Survey Results

The complete report of the WOC membership survey conducted in fall 2006 will be available online soon, but for now, we wanted to give you a little taste of the results. We sent the survey to 1,377 WOC members, and 272 responded, which is a nearly 20% response rate. Eight surveys were completed online.

Major Highlight: The majority of respondents attends Mass weekly or more (71%), are part of a Catholic parish (73%), and are part of an active faith community (88%)

Preferred Strategies

- A majority of respondents stated the following strategies should be **top priority**:
 - Advocating women's ordination into both the diaconate and the priesthood (84%)

- Educating Catholics about women deacons, priests and bishops in the early church (73%)
- Promoting gender inclusive language as the norm for church preaching, liturgy and documents (69%)
- Working to change the word "man" to "person" in Canon 1024 (69%)
- Incorporating diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism into all aspects of WOC (66%)
- Creating and promoting new egalitarian forms of church where the ministries of all the baptized are respected and encouraged (59%)
- Publishing *NewWomen*, *NewChurch*, the unfiltered voice of the women's ordination movement (57%)

- Organizing the Young Feminist Network, for Catholics in their 20's and 30's to work for women's justice in church and society (57%)

General Attitudes

- 46% said they have *not* lost hope in the possibility of any official changes to benefit women in the church, while 26% say they have lost hope
- 68% said they would *not* encourage their son to be a priest in official Roman Catholic Church structures, while only 11% said they would

Women Called to Priesthood

Are you called to be a priest?		Females	
Yes	22%	51	
No	67%	154	
Maybe	6%	14	
No Response	5%	11	

Are you called to be ordained into a renewing priestly ministry?		Females	
Yes	17%	38	
No	63%	144	
Maybe	13%	29	
No Response	8%	19	

Demographics

Gender		
Female	82%	230
Male	17%	47
Age		
26-45	6%	16
46-55	8%	22
55-65	34%	94
66-75	37%	103
76+	16%	45
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian/White	85%	237
Other/Mixed	3%	8
No Response	11%	32

Holy Land

BIBLICAL WOMEN
Inclusive Biblical History
Dr. Carolyn Osiek, RSCJ



"Theodora, Episcopa"

Rome

EARLY CHRISTIAN WOMEN
Women in Antiquities
Dr. Janet Tulloch

Franciscan Spirit Tours is sponsoring two special pilgrimages exploring the roles of women in biblical times and early Christianity. These pilgrimages will include visits to sites where women preached, ministered and served as spiritual leaders in their communities. View centuries-old depictions of women being anointed, presiding over religious services and holding office in the early Christian church. These journeys, led by biblical scholars Dr. Carolyn Osiek, RSCJ and Dr. Janet Tulloch, co-authors of *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity*, are scheduled for the last week of May and first week of June, 2008 (final dates by late July, 2007). They may be taken either separately or combined for one incredible experience. Independent study credit is available. For information, contact John at 646-736-7964 or email at info@FranciscanSpiritTours.com.

*** PLEASE INDICATE YOU WERE REFERRED BY THE WOC NEWSLETTER and WOC will receive a contribution.***

Ministry Seeking "STARS"



The Magi, Harriet Tubman, and any child who wished upon a star... All knew the importance of stars. They knew the dangers, disorientation and loss of hope when one is in the

darkness alone. Each found that a "star" helped them; one to fulfillment, one to freedom, and one to wish on so that dreams might come true.

Walking with Women Called ministry is asking you to be a star. We will be launching our national network of support for women called to ordination in November with the training of ten Regional Representatives for our five identified regions of the country. In 2003, this ministry was born from the recog-

nition that women called to ordination set out on dark, lonely and sometimes dangerous roads. Their stories tell us of the pain of hearing their call but not knowing where to turn for direction on this path few women have traveled. As women contacted the WOC office, we tried to connect them with places to look for support and institutions that might be friendly.

With the onset of ordination options for Catholic women, we knew that a coordinated, national network was needed. We have divided the country into 5 regions, with two Regional Representatives each. We hope to identify state coordinators and local contacts creating a 'constellation' of resources and support.

Here's how *you* can help. Perhaps you could be one of the "stars" helping guide a woman to resources in your region. We need at least 6 more volunteers who will allow for two representatives in each region.

Star Qualities: good communication skills, networking ability, passion for women's ordination, ability to attend training November 1-2 in Milwaukee, Wisc. (the day before CTA conference), leadership skills.

Benefits: pleasure of networking with coordinators across the country, free training session in Milwaukee, satisfaction of being a light in the darkness, being part of the exciting time of change in our church.

We are very excited about this initiative, and we hope you consider volunteering.

Perhaps you have been looking for a ministry. If helping women on the road to live out their ministry seems like a way you might "shine," contact Program Director, Nidza Vázquez at (888) 476-9196 or nvazquez@womensordination.org.

Peruvian Woman Priest's Story

By Yanet Zeballos

Translated by Nidza Vázquez



Peruvian woman priest Yanet Zeballos presides at Mass in Huancayo, Peru.

I grew up surrounded by a deep sense of community in my church, participating in youth groups and, in many cases, leading them. Several times, I was invited to join a religious community, but it was very clear to me that it was not my vocation to be a nun. I saw the religious orders for women as subordination to the male clergy class, and I came to believe that women were called to do more in our church than maintain the chapel and act as catechists.

I understood Mary's commitment as a part of the plan of salvation. I also understood that the task for women then, and what it means to me now, is to bring Jesus' presence to our people (in the Eucharist). That was the fundamental mission of Mary, our first priest. In addition, many women in the Old Testament like Ruth, Esther and Judith, dared to work for

their people's liberation. Similar missions appear in the New Testament with women like Phoebe, Aquila, Priscilla, and Mary of Mag-

dala, who contributed to the exaltation of the existing and newly formed Christian communities.

Catholic and Apostolic Church Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe

Mission Statement

We are a branch of the Church, which is holy, catholic and apostolic from Our Lord Jesus, not Roman.

Our mission is to help renew the Catholic Church according to the paradigm presented in the New Testament. With this goal in mind we make efforts to live out the evangelical values, and to model our communities to the image of the Apostolic Church, described in the Acts of the Apostles. We also use as guidelines the Epistles, the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the Episcopal Latin American conference in Medellin (CELAM), Puebla and the Dominican Republic.

Our vision is to be a Church where each small community has a priest to offer the Eucharist and other sacraments. We believe that a community without the Eucharist is a body without a heart. The community is a family and families always have dinner together when there is a celebration.

We look forward and actually offer Communion openly to all branches of the Catholic Church, because we believe that barriers are not part of Jesus' commandment "to love each other."

We are open to each and every community or person, and everybody is welcome to our Eucharistic Table. "Who is not against us, is for us."

Following Jesus' teachings, we believe that our two main ministries are to "Proclaim the Good News" and "heal the weak in the name of Jesus."

Generally, our liturgy follows the ritual of Catholic churches, with adaptations inspired by the Holy Spirit in each community and celebration.

The Spirit Leads a Vibrant Community in Sunny San Diego

By Jane Via

I was ordained a deacon at the end of June 2004. I announced my ordination in July 2005 after my younger son graduated from Catholic high school. Two weeks later, I explained to my ordained friend, Rod Stephens, former liturgist from the diocese of Orange in California, what I hoped to accomplish someday as a priest: "I would like to start a Catholic Community for fallen away Catholics like my children, driven away Catholics like my husband, divorced-and-remarried-without-annulment Catholics like my colleagues at the office, gay and lesbian Catholics like so many of my friends, and progressive Catholics like myself who have no place to worship with integrity." From that moment, Rod insisted that I needed to do it and do it then. I protested. I'm not even a priest yet! I can't preside at Eucharist! "I'll help you," he said. And he did.

In August 2005, we met with Methodist minister Carolyn Bohler, an old friend whose first congregation consisted of a small community in a central location in San Diego. Rod and I told her we wanted to rent space to start a Catholic community dedicated to gender equality, democratic governance, financial transparency, renewing priestly ministry, and the radical inclusivity of the gospel. We asked Carolyn to recommend us to the Board of Trustees of the church so they would accept us as serious reformers. She did; and after some delay, the Board of Mission Hills United Methodist Church agreed to rent us their sanctuary, twice a month on Sunday evenings, despite our lack of organizational status and insurance.

Rod and I prepared an e-mail invitation that I sent to about 75 people in the San Diego area I thought might be interested. There was no request for an RSVP.

On the first Sunday of the liturgical year, November 27, 2005, Rod and I met at the church for our first liturgy. We wondered if 10 people might come or maybe even 20. We didn't know if anyone would come. One hundred

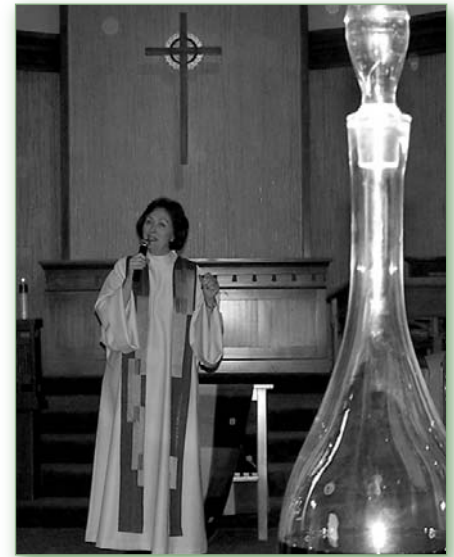
people came, and the majority stayed for a planning meeting afterwards.

Since then, the community has worked toward the goal of becoming a "full service" parish, naming itself Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community (MMACC). A few months later, we obtained non-profit incorporation, which is necessary in order to continue renting space and for obtaining insurance. Then we assembled a Board of Directors, followed by an Interim Parish Council and that gave way to an elected Community Council in 2007. A pianist stepped forward to play at liturgy. Committees were formed: Liturgy, Hospitality, Finance, and Education. Rights to music use were purchased. Several special events heightened our enthusiasm, such as a pre-ordination community retreat, discussion groups, guest speakers and homilists. From the very beginning, people gave enough to cover our expenses. Rod came faithfully, from 90 miles away, twice a month, to preside at liturgy and taught me the rubrics for presiding.

On June 24, 2006, I was ordained a priest on the Bodensee off Swiss shores. The community celebrated in a big way when I returned—with a liturgy in honor of the "Restoration of Women's Ordination to the Roman Catholic Church," at which I presided for the first time. The event was advertised, and 250 people came to share the joy and excitement. It was standing room only, and quite an event to remember. It was history in the making.

The next time we met, I was on my own. From then on, Rod only came occasionally. I was nervous and uncertain, but he had taught me well. By September 2006, we were meeting every Sunday for Eucharist.

The heart of the community is worship. Liturgy at MMACC is inspiring and liberating. Our language is thoroughly and pervasively inclusive whether it is Scripture readings, songs, or liturgical prayers. Eucharistic prayers follow the structure of approved Eu-



Jane Via preaches at the Mary Magdalene Apostle Catholic Community in San Diego, Calif.

charistic prayers but are contemporary, thematic, and poetic. For our worship we develop our own inclusive lectionary, selecting readings about women who have been systematically excluded from Sunday worship. My role as pastor is more and more advisory and less and less that of a primary decision-maker. We strive for complete transparency and authentic communication, even though it can be painful. And we have grown. From a worshipping congregation of 40, we have become a worshipping congregation of 60-75, with a total of about 125 members. This year we celebrated our first Holy Week. We've baptized a toddler and two babies. We have four young girls studying for their first Eucharist. I will witness the wedding of two members of our congregation this summer.

We live, we pray, we celebrate, we worship. We strive to model a renewing Catholic community. Our ministry is a ministry of hope to alienated and disillusioned Catholics. We are the church! We are taking responsibility to "be the change" we want to see in the church.

Jane Via is a womanpriest with RCWP. She lives, prays, celebrates, and worships in San Diego, Calif.

Peruvian Woman Priest's Story...continued from page 8

In Lima, Peru, I took evangelization and catechism courses. I studied theology in the Catholic University and went to a seminar called "Christ the Pilgrim" from the Catholic and Apostolic Church "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe."

In 1989, I decided, together with my husband—a male, ordained Roman Catholic priest who had more than seven years experience in a parish setting—to work for church reform in two aspects: optional celibacy and women priests.

My professional studies in education, including educational research, and my work experience in private schools, institutes, and universities have led me to advocate for women's rights and equality. I currently work in "La Casa de la Mujer" and devotedly mentor women who are preparing themselves for the ordained ministries.

After my community called me forth to be ordained, God granted me the grace of my ordination to the priesthood on August 5, 2006. During my ordination, I was surrounded by

bishops and priests at the closing Mass of a large theological congress of our church in Huancayo, Peru. Currently, our diocesan seminary is preparing three women for ordination. May the Holy Spirit continue inspiring us!

Yanet Zeballos writes to us from Chimbote, Peru. Nidza Vázquez serves as WOC's Program Director.

Latest Developments in the Ministry

By Laura Singer



The Ministry of Prophetic Obedience (MPO) has renewed its commitment to promote and support the ministries of women who have answered their call to spiritual leadership. We are working on concrete ways to demonstrate the difference that these women priests and feminist ministers are making in the Catholic Church and our world.

The Ministry of Prophetic Obedience is one of the Three Ministries that guides WOC programming. The purpose of this program is to support and promote the ministries of Catholic women who have answered their call to spiritual leadership and that are making a positive difference in the Catholic Church and the world. The ministry is focusing on the following projects right now.

System of Communication among Groups that Ordain Women

It is exciting to witness all the initiatives and activity among the groups ordaining women. These groups exist, not just in the United States, but throughout the world including Central and South America and Europe. In order to increase the public awareness of these faith communities and to support them as they strive to model justice and equality, we are creating a system of communication between WOC and the groups that are ordaining women, such as Roman Catholic Women Priests, Ecumenical Catholic Communion, and the Catholic Diocese of One Spirit. Regular communication between WOC and these groups will help us coordinate our efforts and share resources and information to accomplish our mutual goals. If you know of a group with which WOC should be coordinating, contact the WOC office (703) 352-1006 or Victoria Rue at victoriarue@cruzio.com.

Online Directory of Women Priests and Feminist Ministers

With the number of women priests and feminist ministers increasing, demand for their services is also growing. An online directory will be available in August that will enable people to search for women priests and ministers in their area who are celebrating liturgies and offering sacraments, providing counseling, offering retreats and seminars, advocating for social justice, and various other ministries. You will soon be able to find this directory at WOC's website, www.womensordination.org. If you are interested in being listed in the directory, contact Laura Singer at LTS72@aol.com or (773) 736-2562 or send the form on this page to the WOC office.

Building Ecumenical and Interfaith Partnerships and Relationships

Many other Christian denominations and faiths embraced women ministers and priests years ago. At WOC, we want to build rela-

tionships with women of different denominations and faiths so we can learn from their experiences and share resources to support one another in our spiritual journeys. We are contacting professional and networking organizations of different denominations and faiths to explore activities such as staff to staff or board to board meetings, sending WOC representatives to their conferences, publishing articles in each other's newsletters and links to each other's web pages. If you know of an organization that we should contact, contact the WOC office at (703) 352-1006 or Chava Redonnet at chava@localnet.com.

As you can see, there is much work to be done to develop resources to assist the ministries of women priests and feminist ministers to thrive. If you are interested in assisting with these projects or have additional ideas, please contact Laura Singer (see above).

Laura Singer is chair of the Ministry of Prophetic Obedience committee and serves as the Secretary of the WOC Board of Directors. She is active in a parish in Chicago where she lives with her husband and two children.

WOC Feminist Minister and Priest Directory ENTRY FORM

Please complete the following and email to LTS72@aol.com or mail to WOC – P.O. Box 2693, Fairfax, VA 22031-0693. Directory will be available online.

Name _____

Description of who you are as a women priest/feminist minister
(i.e., Faith Community/Title/Affiliation/Certifications – whatever you think is relevant)

Education _____

Email / Webpage _____

Phone _____

Mailing Address (if appropriate) _____

Location of services (if different than a mailing address) _____

Description of Services and/or Ministry (i.e., Mass, Faith Sharing Groups, Counseling, Baptism, Weddings, Hospice, Social Justice, Peace Activism, Academic Activities) _____

Other Information _____

Making the Connection: Young Catholics and Feminism

By Johanna Hatch

Sometime in the Minnesota winter of 2006 and 2007, after many late night conversations and glasses of wine, a group of young women, both deeply Christian and deeply feminist, came to a conclusion: we could not be alone. After all, five of us, by random chance, were living together in Minneapolis as volunteers with the St. Joseph Workers. Throughout the preceding fall, we had grown both as individuals and as a community, sharing our experiences, our joys and frustrations with our communities and our church.

Two of us, Rebecca (Becky) Chabot and I, decided to begin the search with an invitation to conversation. Since both of us are writers, we decided to collect essays from other young people who identified themselves as feminists and Catholics (or deeply influenced by the Catholic faith) with the ultimate goal of publishing them in a book.

We began sending our call for essays to Catholic colleges and friends and contacts around the country, including WOC's Young Feminist Network (YFN). Before we knew it, essays began arriving in our e-mail inbox, each with a unique perspective to share about the church and the world. The most common topics among those essays are two of the most contentious issues in the church today: ordination and sexuality.

The most common topics among [the essays by young feminist Catholics] are two of the most contentious issues in the church today: ordination and sexuality.

Young women responded to the question of women's ordination in diverse ways. Allison Frank, the author of the first submission, wrote of her frustration at how her women's college and the sponsoring order of religious women are dependant on a male priest for the administration of sacraments, even with a convent full of qualified women on campus.

Joy Barnes, former executive director of WOC, shared her thoughts on our evolving understanding of women's ordination. Joy asks difficult questions of readers, such as, how will we move forward with women's ordination in such a way that ensures a true discipleship of equals and resists recreating the hierarchy and clericalism of our current church?

We also had the honor of bringing forth the journey of a young woman who is called to ordination, Katharine Salmon. She is from Eng-

land and she writes of her call to ordination in the Roman Catholic Church, her struggle with her religious community, and where to best live out her call. As Katharine answers the invitation to ministry in a local Anglican church, it is a clear indication of the loss our church suffers by refusing to ordain women.

Young feminist men and women are actively responding to the church's restrictive teachings on human sexuality. We are speaking out against the injustice and inequality faced by our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender sisters and brothers as well as in the restrictions against women making their own reproductive health decisions.

Young feminist men and women are actively responding to the church's restrictive teachings on human sexuality.

Our first contribution from a male writer, Adam Greteman, explores the tension of discussing issues of GLBT equality at a Jesuit university. While in classrooms at Catholic colleges and universities around the country we are free to speak out strongly against violence based on sexual orientation or gender identity, our rights are shaky outside the classroom when we support same-sex relationships on campus. As Adam writes, we can see the difficulty Catholic institutions of higher education (indeed, all Catholic institutions) are placed in "when asked to examine issues of real life in relationship to Catholic doctrine."

It is this tension between issues of real life and their relationship to doctrine that Christina Cann illustrates in her essay. Christina writes about growing up Catholic and her struggle with restrictive doctrine and her emerging feminism. Christina's story reflects a desire to live authentically as both a Catholic and a supporter of women's reproductive rights.

In my own essay, I take the opportunity to explore my Catholic identity and my experience as a volunteer escort at a clinic that provides abortions. Many of those who are on the picket line that I escort patients across identify as Catholic as well. I feel a certain kind of isolation when I am escorting, both from those I escort and those on the picket line, because of my dual Catholic and pro-choice identity. However, I see this work as a ministry of companionship to those in a difficult and often lonely situation.

We have also received essays that tackle "traditional" feminist issues such as the objectification of women and the global HIV/AIDS



epidemic from a uniquely Catholic perspective.

Our current essay authors include women and men, and are international in scope. We are still seeking essays, so if you or someone you know is between eighteen and thirty years old (we can be flexible on the age) and self-identifies as Catholic and feminist, we would love to hear from you. Send your essay, between five and twenty-five pages, double-spaced, to youngcatholicfeminists@yahoo.com.

The project is still in its preliminary phase. We are in the process of seeking a publisher, and we appreciate any wisdom members of the WOC community are willing to share. We thank the WOC community for what has already been an outpouring of support for this project.

Johanna Hatch lives in Waite Park, Minn., with her spouse Evan. She will begin graduate school in pastoral studies in August.



High School Graduates Wear Stoles to Claim Priestly Symbol

By Theresa Yugar

Symbols are an important part of religious experience. They inform underlying values that a community of faith affirms. In this regard, symbols can either model inclusion or exclusion of individuals. In the Roman Catholic Church, there are many symbols that have excluded women from the sacred because of their gender. The stole worn by priests is one such symbol. Not only does this symbol attempt to affirm men's exclusive call to ordination, it also attempts to affirm male authority and power in the church; power women subsequently lack because of their exclusion from this symbol. For this reason, there is a need for re-understanding and re-imagining symbols to be inclusive of women and affirm their leadership in the church.

In this spirit, five seniors in my feminist theology class in a Dominican high school called Sacred Heart in East Los Angeles, Calif., graduated this June wearing black stoles, each with a Dominican saint that they chose to have on it. Among the saints to choose from were St. Dominic, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Martin de Porres, St. Rose of Lima and St. Thomas Aquinas. I designed the stoles and helped sew them together, and the embroidery and saint patches were made by a parent. Before the graduation, I blessed them for the students.

*"What I will never forget is that preaching is not just expressed by words, but also by action."
Priscilla González,
Sacred Heart, 2007*



Five students from Sacred Heart High School in East Los Angeles, Calif., Natasha Gallardo, Vanessa Gutiérrez, Isabela Rand, Priscilla González, and Maira Sánchez, wore the stoles their teacher, Theresa Yugar (pictured furthest to the right), made for them to claim their identity as preachers.

As freshmen, these students participated in a nation-wide Dominican High School preaching conference, initiated and organized by the Adrian Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Mich. There they were challenged to think of preaching in broader terms. They learned that preaching includes prayer, song, dance, the arts, and service. They also learned that each of them was a preacher and thus a living pulpit. Priscilla González, one of the Sacred Heart students who wore the stoles, recently stated, "What I will never forget is that preaching is not just expressed by words, but also by action."

As women, we need to re-imagine with ourselves and the younger women in our lives their rightful call to priestly ministry in our church. The act of wearing these stoles empowered them as pastoral leaders in our church. A renewed priestly ministry in the Roman Catholic Church must include renewed images and symbols that are inclusive of all God's people, including women.

Theresa Yugar teaches feminist theology at Sacred Heart High School in East Los Angeles and she is a first year graduate student at Claremont Graduate University. She serves on the WOC Board of Directors and she writes to us from Temple City, Calif.

WOC Congratulates the Bishop Murphy Scholarship Winners

By Nidza Vázquez

WOC is pleased to announce the winners of the Bishop Frank Murphy Scholarship for Women in Ministry for 2006-07: Rebecca Chabot and Mahri Leonard-Fleckman. Eight years ago, WOC established this scholarship fund in honor of Bishop Frank Murphy, who was a public supporter of women's ordination and long-time friend of WOC. We view these scholarships as a fitting way to honor Bishop Murphy and as a much needed financial resource for women in graduate ministerial studies.



Rebecca Chabot is a young woman with a strong commitment to social justice. Her experience in ministry and leadership, in addition to the way she integrates the analysis of oppression with action, are admirable. During her studies in theology, she has received leadership awards as well as an award for her outstanding service to theology.

"Because I intend to pursue doctoral studies and eventually teach at the college level, my academic goals are to learn and teach in a manner that is empowering to my own voice and the voices of those around me," Chabot wrote in her personal statement. "I want to continue to make the argument for women's ordination, from a variety of perspectives, and to encourage those around me at my seminary to actually discuss the issue, rather than leave it to others."

The coordinator of the St. Joseph Worker Program expressed in her letter of recommendation for Chabot that "her undergraduate experience at Creighton University was clearly transformational and she found many mentors and spiritual leaders among the Jesuits and in the Center for Service and Justice. Through these mentorships and influential relationships (as well as traveling in developing nations), Rebecca grew into an understanding of herself as an agent of change within the Church and society."

WOC supports Rebecca's academic pursuits at the Weston School of Theology and blesses her

as a justice-centered scholar who adds new energy to feminist theology and activism.



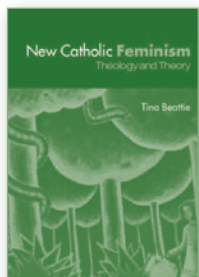
For Mahri Leonard-Fleckman, education has become her ministry. Working with young women from the margins of the Roman Catholic Church, she inspires them to pursue justice, their passions, and their deepest dreams and callings.

Although she was not raised in a religious environment, her Peace Corps experience in the Dominican Republic enabled her faith to develop among the parishioners of a tiny Catholic Church where strong, wise women led liturgy. The personal devotion, liberating wisdom, and pastoral leadership of the women in her community inspired her to encounter God in a new way.

Working at Marymount Catholic School inspired in her a strong desire to influence young women to exert their baptismal right. Watching how the faces of the eleventh-

Reviews of New Books and Resources

Reviewed by Susan Roll



For theologians the roots of the Church's prohibition of women priests lie breathtakingly deep: in ancient blood taboos, fear of women's bodies, the theology of sacrifice at the altar as a male-bonding act, and more. It's never

enough to say, "Oh this is nonsense, nobody with half a brain believes that anymore" because the effects not only continue but resist all attempts at discussion. An excellent new contribution to digging around the base of these roots, so to speak, is Tina Beattie's *The New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006, paperback ISBN 0-415-30148-3).

Beattie, an English Catholic theologian, takes on the "New Feminism" promoted by conservatives and John Paul II's Theology of the Body, as well as a favorite theologian of neo-orthodox Catholics, Hans Urs Van Balthasar. Beattie not only reveals the logical fallacies at work in the backlash against feminism but brilliantly illustrates the necessity of taking seriously the gendered nature of imagery in sacraments and theology. About the ordination of women she writes,

Resistance to women's ordination is having a highly distorting effect on Catholic theology, producing an incoherent and contradictory range of arguments which belie the reconciling promise of the story of salvation. The result is a process of denial which ... leads Catholic theology to reproduce the "necrophilia" and violence ... associate[d] with the western intellectual tradition, in its understanding of death, sex and immortality. ... [I] argue that the denial of female sacramentality ultimately leads to the symbolic identification of the sexual female body not only with death and hell, but also with all forms of otherness which have historically threatened the Catholic Church, including pagans, Jews and heretics. ... In unmasking this violence I seek to demonstrate that the liberation of theology cannot come about without the liberation of the female body from the silence and animality to which men have consigned her, in order for them to perform their feminine parodies as brides of Christ and women before God (pp. 14-15).

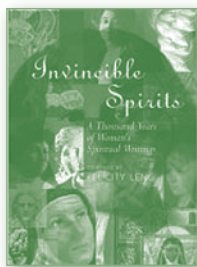
This is not particularly light reading but engaging, energizing, and definitely worth the

effort. North Americans will be challenged by Beattie's contention that Anglo-American feminist theory leaves no room for theological perspectives.

Mary T. Malone, retired professor at the Toronto School of Theology and St. Jerome's University in Ontario, Canada, is best known for her three-volume historical survey *Women and Christianity* (published by Orbis Books and Novalis Press). Her newest book, although very different in approach, provides the reader with a smooth and graceful entry into the insight and visions of gifted women mystics. In *Praying With the Women Mystics* (Toronto: Novalis, 2006, ISBN 978-2-89507-846-3), Malone gives voice—elegantly, eloquently, with rich imagery—to the writings of primarily the medieval women mystics, then adds the voices of other women as ancient as Perpetua of Carthage, and as contemporary as Dorothy Day and Jean Donovan. Her book is divided into subject categories such as "Who Am I?," "Naming God," "Praying Pain," and "Staying the Course." Here's an example, a text of her own inspired by Hildegard of Bingen:

I am the secret fire in everything,
and everything smells like Me.
The living breathe in my sweet perfume
and they breathe out praise of Me.
They never die, because I am their Life.

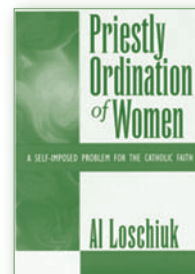
I flame out intense Godly life
over the shining fields of corn.
I glow in the shimmer of the fire's embers.
I burn in the sun and the
moon and the stars.
My secret life breathes in the wind
and holds all things together soulfully.
This is God's voice (p. 106).



Another new book of the same genre is Felicity Leng's *Invincible Spirits. A Thousand Years of Women's Spiritual Writings* (Toronto: Novalis, 2006, ISBN 978-2-89507-872-2). While basically an anthology of various texts in previous

translations, this book's scope encompasses a wider variety of women, not only mystics but poets and writers from the Middle Ages until now. Its chapter headings include for example "Love and Fulfillment," "Cosmic Christ and Natural World," and "Direction and Counseling." Both books could be used equally well as source books of readings for planning women's liturgies and meditations, or as personal books of meditations. Both de-

serve to be savored for richness and depth, not skimmed for content.



I wish I could recommend *Priestly Ordination of Women. A Self-Imposed Problem for the Catholic Faith* by Al Loschiuk (New York: Vantage Books, 2006, ISBN 0-533-15358-1). At first glance this modest book seems promising: a loyal lifelong

Catholic layman with a distinguished career in the military and the police behind him, logically and critically examines the Vatican's position on women priests and articulates the reasons why he finds himself compelled to disagree with the Vatican. All fine and good. The problem with this book is ... well... there are many problems, all of which diminish its credibility. Awkward writing style. Misspellings. Explaining in the footnotes such obvious expressions as *a priori* and *modus operandi*. Mistakes such as the authorship of the Letter to the Hebrews (it wasn't Paul). Muddled reasoning. Oh, and sentence fragments.

The more irritating barrier to taking this work seriously is simply the constant repetition of "I, I, I," and more "I." By page 20 even the most sympathetic reader would be screaming, "Get over yourself!" The author speaks often of his "research" for this book, but clearly he has had no research training. The sexist language jumps up and bites you, and so do many inflammatory references to feminists working for church reform: "there is an outspoken fringe of disaffected feminist Catholics ... [who] believe that the Catholic Church became and is still so oppressive and misogynistic toward women that it sees women contemptuously ... the well-known view of dissidents that the church is intensely anti-feminist is now so outdated, resentful and false that it is not discussed in-depth in this discourse." (pp. 4-5) Save your \$8.95.



Make your own vestments? Or make a vestment as an exquisite personal gift for a newly-ordained priest? What a great idea for combining creativity, color, texture, visual imagery and meditation. Barbara Dee Baumgarten's book *Vestments for All Seasons* (Harrisburg, New York and London: Morehouse Publishing-

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Continuum, 2002, ISBN 0-8192-1866-9) is not new but deserves to be better known, particularly with the growing number of hobby sewers who know someone ordained or may be ordained themselves. You will find not only careful directions, clear diagrams and design ideas, but a section entitled "Sewing Room Spirituality." Don't let the wealth of historical detail alarm you: today a Roman Catholic priest needs only an alb, a stole and/or a chasuble, all of which are easy to make because of their simple styling.

Finally, I am delighted to announce that the teaching tool on women's liturgies that many of us have awaited for years has been produced by none other than Teresa Berger, the most preeminent feminist liturgical scholar today. Berger holds two doctorates (in liturgy and in ecumenism) and is now Professor of Liturgy at Yale University. Her most recent books are *Fragments of Real Presence*. Liturgical

Traditions in the Hands of Women (New York: Herder and Herder/Crossroad, 2005) and *Dissident Daughters. Feminist Liturgies in Global Context* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001).



type examination of women's creative worship, answers why women create our own liturgies, and presents interviews with participants as well as clergy. The DVD also includes live footage of a liturgy in honor of Hildegard of Bingen, excerpts of which appear in the documentary. The commentary is clear and to the point, and the DVD admirably captures

Berger's DVD "Worship in Women's Hands" (Durham, NC: Firestream Media, 2007, www.worshipin-womenshands.com) provides a half-hour long documentary-

the beauty and meditative quality of good feminist liturgy, although the sound quality varies.

Those of us who have been doing these liturgies for many years should not underestimate how unsettling, not to say upsetting, the whole idea of women creating liturgy can be at first contact. I recently showed this video to a class of upper-division undergraduates, mostly over 30, affiliated with Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Pentecostal churches. Many students were stunned, uncomfortable and did not know how to react, even those whose denominations had been ordaining women for decades. I will continue to show this DVD in classes, but will take care in setting up the discussion beforehand and allow enough time for processing afterward.

Susan Roll teaches liturgy, sacraments and feminist theology in Canada.

Barbara J. MacHaffie, *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006, 384 pages, \$17.00
Reviewed by Nicole Sotelo



For those moments when you feel like justice for women in the church is a distant hope, Barbara J. MacHaffie's *Her Story: Women in Christian*

Tradition, offers a magnifying glass to moments in Christian history that remind you that change does occur.

Divided by epochs, chosen for the interplay of grand shifts in Christian history and women's lives, readers may choose from such chapters as "Women and the Early Churches" or "Women in an Era of Reformation." In each chapter, MacHaffie provides a summary of women's experience during the chapter's chosen historical era, illustrated with stories of specific women's lives and concluding with source texts from that era, including many written from the souls and pens of the women themselves. Suitable for church groups, classroom use or individual study, the book may be approached from a standpoint of historical inquiry or prayerful seeking.

For potential WOC readers, the book offers an entry point into the lives of their sisters in faith, and, in turn, readers come to better appreciate the long struggle for equality of which they are a part. In the final chapter, titled "Agents of Transformation," MacHaffie documents some of the past 50 years of women's activism for justice through ministry, theology and worship among Christian denominations. The chapter includes a brief paragraph about WOC's advocacy for women's ordination and mentions names and historical moments familiar to many within today's Catholic women's equality movement.

It must be noted, however, that the sisters in faith about which MacHaffie writes are predominantly European or Euro-American. While the sweeping sub-title of the book infers a global view of Christian women, its pages restrict the historical overview to mainly white women. While there is passing mention of women outside of these racial confines, the few sentences penned in their honor do not justify the book's broad sub-title "Women in Christian Tradition."

Although it appears that MacHaffie set out to tell the story of women in Christian tradition, by writing predominantly about white European and Euro-American women she has replicated the pattern of male historical writers that she sought to correct who have a narrow definition of who counts as Christian. Nonetheless, MacHaffie has begun a piece of the work that must be done to bring to historical consciousness and individual understanding the lives of women in Christian tradition. In this light, she has succeeded in writing about a representational sample of some women in Christian tradition and has helped to expand our understanding of Christian history through *Her Story*.

Nicole Sotelo, M.Div. has been a member of WOC for five years. She currently works as the Acting Co-Director of Call to Action in Chicago.

WOC Congratulates the Bishop Murphy Scholarship Winners...continued from page 12

graders would shine as they served as eucharistic ministers for the first time, she realized what it meant to honor their deepest humanity. Leonard-Fleckman stated, "I realized that if we are not careful, those glowing faces would soon hit a glass ceiling and realize that the leaders of their Church did not honor who they are. I do not want that to happen, and I will continue to work to promote WOC's goals in the hope of creating change within our Church."

"Mahri works with young women at Marymount high school in the same way as the women in the Dominican Republic nurtured her. She teaches them to believe in their full humanity, to practice that sense of themselves, even though it is not affirmed yet by the institutional church. She is guiding them to be leaders to make something happen," said Janet Walton, professor of worship at the Union Theological Seminary.

WOC supports Mahri's academic pursuits and welcomes her efforts to continue advocating women's ordination and a renewed priestly ministry not only on the margins, but also from the core of our beloved Church.

Thank you for following the example of Bishop Murphy with your vision and perseverance!

Nidza Vázquez serves at WOC's Program Director and Coordinator of the Bishop Murphy Scholarship.

Upcoming events

July

Roman Catholic Womenpriests summer ordinations, ceremonies in the northeast and west. Twenty three women will be ordained: nine priests and fourteen deacons. For more information visit www.womenpriests.org.

July 22: Feast Day of St. Mary of Magdala, national events around the country! For resource packets to plan a celebration, contact Emily Hoag at Future Church: Emily@futurechurch.org.

August

August 12: Roman Catholic Womenpriests Midwest Regional Ordinations, Minneapolis, Minn. Five women will be ordained: two to the priesthood and three to the diaconate. If you wish to attend, contact Judith McKloskey at gabriellemck@comcast.net or call 952-937-1569.

August 16-17: Young Feminist Network National Leadership, Diversity and Inclusion Training Retreat: "Creating Justice with Joy in our Church and Society," Chicago. Contact Nidza Vázquez at nvazquez@womensordination.org or call 703-352-1006.

August 17-19: Women-Church Convergence 2007 Conference, Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago. For more information visit www.women-churchconvergence.com or call 415-381-7144.

September

September 7: Ecumenical Catholic Communion Ordination, St. Louis, Mo. Jessica Rowley will be ordained to the priesthood at the Eden Theological Seminary Chapel. For more information contact Jessica Rowley at jjrowley@eden.edu.

November

November 1-2: WOC Regional Representatives Training, Milwaukee, Wisc. WOC's Ministry of Walking with Women Called will launch a national network of support for women called to ordination with the training of ten Regional Representatives for our five identified regions of the country. Contact Program Director, Nidza Vázquez at nvazquez@womensordination.org or 888-476-9196.

November 2-4: Call To Action 2007 Conference, Milwaukee, Wisc. "From Racism to Reconciliation: Church Beyond Power & Privilege" For more information visit <http://www.cta-usa.org>.

To have your event listed here, contact woc@womensordination.org or 703-352-1006 or 888-476-9196.

Women's Ordination Conference — Membership Form

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Type of Membership

Individual: \$45 Regular (\$25 Student/Limited Income) \$50 International (USD)

I am also enclosing an additional gift of: \$20 \$35 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 Other \$ _____

I am paying by: Check (payable to WOC) Credit Card US Money Order

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Signature _____

I am called to ordination. Yes No Maybe I have included names and addresses of friends who might be interested in WOC.
 I am in my 20's or 30's and would like information about Young Feminist Network.

Can we trade your name with other church organizations for use in direct mail campaigns? Yes No

Can we give your name and contact information to WOC members in your area who are trying to do grassroots organizing?* Yes No

** Only requests from WOC members and donors are honored. In addition, the data shared will be limited to a reasonable geographic region solely for the purpose of local organizing.*

Please send with check to:

Women's Ordination Conference, P.O. Box 2693, Fairfax, VA 22031

T-Shirts – 100% Sweat Shop Free! Baseball Hats

NEW!

Front: "Good Catholic Girls..."

Back: "Stand Up for Women's Ordination!"

Mini Tees: \$20

(Ts3, Pink S, M, L, XL; Blue: S, M, L, XL)

Regular Tees: \$18

(Ts4, Black or Lavender: Youth M, L

Adult S, M, L, XL, XXL; Pink: S, M, L)



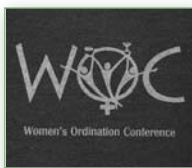
NEW!

Front: Small WOC Logo

Back: Priestly People Come in Both Sexes

Regular Tee: \$18 (Ts5 Black or Purple:

all Ts4 sizes available [see above])



Women's Work - Inspiring scene of 12 historical women celebrating the Last Supper, short sleeve (Item Ts7, White, L, XL \$18), long sleeve (Item Ts10, White, XL, XXL, \$5)

Great Quality, 100% Sweat Shop Free!

One size fits all purple hat with WOC logo embroidered on front (H1 \$15)



Purple Stoles

Made by women in Nicaragua

The purple stole was adopted as the international symbol for women's ordination in 2001. The women who made these stoles are a part of a sewing cooperative in Nicaragua called Taller de Corte y Confeccion Mujeres (Women's Workshop of Cutting and Sewing). WOC thanks Mary's Pence for connecting us to these women. (Item St1, \$15 ea.)

Rainbow Purple Stoles

Made in Mexico, these handwoven stoles are brilliant purple with touches of all colors of the rainbow. (Item St2 \$30 ea.)

Bumper Stickers - Guaranteed to turn heads! (\$1 ea., 6/\$5, 20/\$15)

- Ordain Women or Stop Baptizing Them (Item Bs1)
- Ordain Women or Stop Dressing Like Them (Item Bs3)
- Priestly People Come in Both Sexes (Item Bs4)

Books

- Angela Bonavoglia. *Good Catholic Girls: How Women are Leading the Fight to Change the Church*, 2005 (Item Bk1, \$15)
- Miriam Therese Winter. *Out of the Depths: The Story of Ludmila Javorova, Ordained Roman Catholic Priest*, 2001 (Item Bk3, \$10)
- *Prayers to She Who Is*, by William Cleary, 1997 (Item Bk4, \$6)
- WOC. *Liberating Liturgies*, 1989 (Item Bk2, \$5)

Buttons - Great for stimulating conversation!

- Ordain Women (Item Bt1) \$2
- Equal Rites - Ordain Women (Item Bt2) \$2
- Priestly People Come in Both Sexes (Item Bt3) \$2
- Poped Out (Item Bt5) \$1
- Women's Ordination, Yes (Item Bt6) \$1



Cards

- Women's Work Note cards: A ten pack of cards featuring 12 historical women throughout history presiding at the Eucharistic table responding to Jesus' call to "Do this in memory of me." (Item Cr1, \$12/pack)
- Equal Justice Reserve Note: WOC's "funny money" calls for the equality of women and men as "common currency" in the life of the Church. (Item Cr3, \$5/10 bills)

To view WOC's merchandise online, visit www.womensordination.org under "Merchandise"

To place your order, call 703 352-1006, email woc@womensordination.org or visit our website to print an order form. Standard shipping and handling costs are not included in the price of the merchandise. Please allow up to 3 weeks for delivery.

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