

## CWO e-news January 2011 issue 33

Welcome to an edited issue 33 of the e-news. Editor Pat Brown. Please visit CWO's website [www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](http://www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk) News and previous issues can be seen there. To enquire about any item, please contact [info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk)

Please send items for February e-news by 15 February.

Our banner was on show outside Westminster Cathedral last Saturday when three Church of England bishops were ordained as Roman Catholic priests. Sue and Myra write about this below – please take action as requested.

Although they were filmed and interviewed, they were not on the television news or in the press except for the wonderful Observer. Having listened to Archbishop Nichols on Sunday on Radio 4 I was feeling quite low, as I imagine were others. The Observer editorial and article by Peter Stanford were inspiring and brave.

Editorial – *"The faithful lose in this victory for misogyny -many British Catholics who want no part of these power politics are left despairing"*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/jan/16/observer-editorial-anglican-catholic-ordination>

Peter Stanford *"Catholicism isn't that keen on women on the altar – to the pain of the demonstrators from the Catholic Women's Ordination movement protesting outside the cathedral's doors – and it doesn't usually countenance priests having wives."*

Read more at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jan/15/anglican-bishops-ordained-catholic-priests?intcmp=239>

The other side of this story is that, as the institutional Church works in these discouraging ways, Catholics can be moved to act. I received the following email via the website from Anne Waters:

*" This is just a message of support. After reading the articles in the papers today about the ordination of 3 Anglican Bishops, I am infuriated. It is a backward step, yet again reinforcing the inequality and further entrenching the unfair treatment of women.*

*I didn't know that your group existed and I am pleased that it does. I told my parish priest that I felt this inequality was unacceptable, his response " I have no issue with the ordination of women but we have to tow the line don't we?" My respect for him went out of the window with his comment."*

## **Witness on Westminster Piazza for the inauguration of the Ordinariate.**

In spite of looking forward to a day of rest, when Myra rang me to say the Anglican bishops' ordination to the Ordinariate was happening, I knew we had to be there. The fact that so many RCs around the country, as well as CWO members, were feeling sick about the whole affair meant that somehow a voice of protest had to be present.

Myra and I were inside initially to see how the whole extraordinary business was proceeding. There had been very heavy security. When I arrived, the closing entrails of the performance were taking place with a lot of men kissing each other, once three black clad Anglican nuns had been warmly welcomed into the church also. Bizarre, if not nauseating was the scene before us. We were glad to be able to breathe the clear, cold air of the Piazza before a general exodus occurred. The press were present and keen to photograph and interview us, although very little of their work appeared in the media later. They were very sympathetic and one Jewish woman from the Sunday Express said that she could not believe that misogyny was so alive and present in this, the twenty-first century. She said her niece, aged 5, wanted to be a rabbi, and probably would be able to do so. This was after she had asked Myra and I if we were priests and I pointed out that as RCs, we could not be.

An interesting couple who had left the Cathedral early after being very bored expressed strong support and will definitely be joining CWO. Others showed interest but were going to look up the website. We had a lot of thumbs up signs and photos taken of the banner. This was after Vincent Nichols waved to us as he led the procession out of the Cathedral. It is impossible to believe that he did so in solidarity with us, however!!

Peter Stanford was supportive as he came out and he has written excellently in the Observer today.

It is good to know this after some of the comments we had to endure. One woman came up to me and questioned how I dared to disagree with the Pope. When I pointed out that I was trying to follow Christ, this did not seem to interest her at all. Myra, meanwhile was having abuse from many of the Anglicans. One shock I had was when I saw a good friend from my parish emerge from the cathedral. She went out of curiosity she said, but also had been persuaded to accompany a very traditional friend of hers who was outraged when my friend had any communication with us. My friend assured me that a dialogue with this woman would be out of the question, as with many of those who passed by. It is unfortunately the reality for many.

This morning after mass, several people expressed dismay at what had taken place yesterday with what seems, as Peter Stanford put it, a takeover, not a merger. They were glad someone had shown a dissenting voice, and we were glad that the CWO banner and its message were seen by many.

*Sue W*

## **Ordinariate urgent response required**

These were a few of the remarks that were thrown at me- must have been my face as I received considerable abuse. Sue must have looked kinder than me. The one thing that struck me was the sheer male egos on the Piazza, they talked to us as though we were children and knew no theology whatsoever. In the end I turned on one of these so called Anglican priests and said "if you cannot treat me and other women like human beings please do not talk to me" and I turned my back on him. One kept going on saying they have come over on the question of authority. That is utter rot. It was sheer misogyny writ large. Remarks such as – 'why do you always spoil our party' said by a woman but the general gist was said with glee on their faces, laughter and trivialisation: 'no hope ever to have women priests you are wasting your time' followed by derisive laughs.

One Nigerian woman was extremely rude and tried to divert me from talking to the press. I turned my back on her. I deliberately spoke to the Assistant Anglican Bishop of the Anglican Bishop of London. He was so pompous and full of himself and abusive in both approach and words. To make him really angry as he moved away I gave him my blessing and said 'God bless you !!!!!'

Pen to paper – it is urgent, please make time for this

It is urgent that all members of CWO put pen to paper and write as many letters as possible. It is very important that those who do not live in the south do so because this affects the whole church. I understand there is nothing about it in Liverpool. Is there anything in Wales and Scotland? There are real RC divisions in this country and this affects us all very deeply.

Suggested places to write letters besides Tablet and Observer: Catholic Herald, The Universe, any local Diocesan paper, Catholic Pictorial, Liverpool, Anglican papers, Church Times etc. It is important we write individually not as a group, the more letters the better. We also need to write to the Papal Legate in Wimbledon, to Archbishop Vincent and your local Bishops. And anyone else you think should know your views. We can also write to the Anglican Bishops who were ordained on Saturday – John Broadhurst, Keith Newton, Andrew Burnham. For their addresses [info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk](mailto:info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk) Sally Barnes from London WATCH suggests writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury. You can always write one letter and then send copies to others.

Local media - contact local radio and ask to speak about it. It can be done on the phone. We need to respond and show our unease. If we don't who will? This is part of our prophetic vocation

*Myra P*

## **CWO weekend of Reflection at Noddfa**

You may have read in last month's e-news about last year's weekend at Noddfa. We are repeating it again this year.

Friday 5 – Sunday 7 August

Open to all CWO members. Accessible venue. Cost £85. Deposit £50 required by 31 May. No bookings after that date.

You can join CWO via our website

## **Burns night @ the kitchen table**

Traditional Burns night fun with haggis, piper, poetry and song!  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 7pm  
£7 Adults £5 children

The Kitchen Table Cafe  
*catering for community conversation*  
St. Bart's Church Community Centre  
292B Barking Road  
London E6 3BA  
0208 586 7979

## **Christmas angel**

Many of you commented on the Christmas angel sent out just before Christmas.

This photograph was taken by Angela H a few years ago. The ribbons are CWO purple stoles and magenta for rejoicing. Angela wanted us to celebrate and rejoice in the great and dedicated work of CWO.

Many thanks to Angela

## **More on the Ordinariate**

A Canon Lawyer who is also involved in a marriage tribunal in a southern UK diocese said how difficult planning for the ordinariate was and how much heartache it was causing.

He explained that there had been no consultation between the Pope and UK dioceses, and they were being left very much in the dark. Another major concern for him is that Anglican clergy coming over may differ from the Church of England on Women Bishops but many of them differ from the Catholic church on divorce, and the heartache ahead for couples where there has been divorce and remarriage, as he said that the usual rules on annulments will apply.

He said, "These people are in for a rude awakening when they realise that other Catholic doctrines will not be waived for them." No-one had apparently given any thought to divorced and remarried Anglo-Catholic priests!

*A cleric whose fondness for Rome  
Made him leave both his church and  
his home.  
As he said his farewells  
His church rang the bells  
But the Romans let out a loud groan*

Anon!

***The Secret Life of Bees.***  
**Friday 6<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2011**

**A weekend event at Holy Rood House, Thirsk, North Yorkshire  
exploring and using Sue Monk Kidd's bestselling novel – led by Rosie Miles**

Since its publication in 2002 Sue Monk Kidd's first novel, *The Secret Life of Bees*, has become an international bestseller. It has sold more than four million copies and been translated into more than twenty languages. Set in South Carolina, USA, in 1964, amidst growing racial tensions and the emergent Civil Rights Movement, the novel is a powerful and moving story of one young woman's 'becoming' – in both personal and spiritual terms – which is absolutely grounded in the feminine and the maternal.

This weekend event for women aims to use *The Secret Life of Bees* as a starting point for our own personal and spiritual exploration. The weekend will offer a number of sessions which will explore the novel and its themes in a variety of different ways. These will include:

- Discussion of the novel and its main themes.
- An introduction to Sue Monk Kidd's own writings about her spiritual journey and her move from Christian tradition to a spirituality that embraces the feminine divine.
- The opportunity to reflect on how any of the themes of the book resonate in your own life.
- Some creative responses to the novel.
- Reflection upon women and ritual making ... and the opportunity to participate in creating some of our own.

It will hopefully be a warm sunny weekend and there will also be free time on the Saturday afternoon to allow you to sit in the gardens of Holy Rood, go for a walk, explore the area, have a sleep, etc.

The only requirement of those who are intending to come is that you **read the novel in advance of the weekend** and are willing to learn more about the novel and yourself, and are open to working creatively with the other people who attend.

[enquiries@holyroodhouse.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@holyroodhouse.org.uk)

01845 522580

**Error in last month's e-news** - Kristina Keneally is the premier of New South Wales. The Australian Prime Minister is Julia Gillard. However, it's still worth having a look at <http://www.homepagedaily.com/Pages/article10853-kristina-keneallys-rational-catholic-conscience.aspx>

## **From Husetop - Publicising the abuse of power in the Catholic Church**

John Wijngaards -

We are focusing on one issue - the ordination of women but find through contact with other groups the same obstacle - abuse of authority.

We feel that reform groups need to document problems with church authority. Authority *is* necessary in a large organization such as the Catholic Church but at the moment the structure through which authority is channelled is feudalistic not gospel based.

At an international meeting recently instigated by the Marienburg Movement in collaboration with various Catholic reform groups, all participants came to the conclusion that there was one single obstacle that all experienced. This was identified as the abuse of authority in the Church.

Ecclesiastical abuse of authority cuts off the normal avenues through which healthy reform in the Church could emerge. Abuse of authority lies at the root of hierarchical resistance to moving forward from problematic positions on matters like women's ordination, married clergy, homosexuality, adaptation of the liturgy, proper prosecution of clerical child abuse cases etc.

Representatives from the groups which included among others; COR, CORPUS and the Federation of Christian Ministries from the US agreed the need to set up a central documentation of authority abuses. <http://www.womenpriests.org/> website is hosting this accord and we feel this will serve as:

- a resource for Catholic reform movements in their own campaigns
- inspiration to concerned Catholics and others who are browsing the internet
- a source of reliable information for the media
- a research tool for high school and college students (we estimate that 30% of womenpriests.org visitors are students!)

The documentation is presented under five headings -

- the suppression of lay authority in the Church
- the suppression of free speech for theologians and experts
- the suppression of the rights of Bishops' Conferences
- the appointment of 'party-line' bishops
- the top down structure of the current Church.

### **You can help**

Send us relevant documents or references to documents. [jos@womenpriests.org](mailto:jos@womenpriests.org) )

## Prayer Link

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

Saturdays at noon, join with women and men all over the world to pray for the work of Women's Ordination Worldwide (WOW!)

Please take part in one or both of these prayer networks if and when you can

### *The CWO Prayer*

*Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit, we cannot remain ignorant of this injustice in our midst.*

*We long for all humanity to be acknowledged as equal, particularly among your community of the church,*

*so we pray grieving for the lost gifts of so many women.*

*We ask you, God of all peoples, to bring insight and humility to all those in positions of dominance, and an understanding that the ascended Lord called us all to act doing Christ's work here and now.*

*We ask this of you, God our Creator, Jesus our Redeemer, Spirit our Sustainer*

## Websites

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

Women, word, Spirit  
(formerly Catholic Women's Network)

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

Group for rescinding the Act of Synod

<http://womenandthechurch.org/>  
campaign group for women's equality in the Church of England

<http://ncronline3.org/drupal/>

National Catholic Reporter –  
Joan Chittester is a regular contributor

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

Lesbian and Gay Christians

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

You can sign up for their regular newsletter

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

An inclusive Catholic Church where all are welcome

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

More news of Rome Petition, Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

*I realize how important it is to constantly remind ourselves of last weekend's gospel lesson: "You are beloved sons and daughters of God, in whom God is well pleased." We are not bad people. We are not an accumulation of our past mistakes. We are perfect extensions of God. God is love and so are we. God does not make junk. Children need to hear this from their parents. They need to know they are beloved and beautiful. So many carry around wounds, especially "father wounds," from not getting that message from their parents. Religions, too, have fallen short of delivering that message. Racism, homophobia, sexism, anti-Semitism, militarism--- are all based on the heresy that some people are children of God and others are not.*

Fr Jim Callan, Newsletter of Spiritus Christi parish, NY State USA

## **From Ann Farr - Happy Christmas from Bethlehem 2010**

On a visit to Bethlehem last week we were able to walk round some of the wall that surrounds it. Celebrations are taking place within but very few of the people there are able to get out to visit friends or family elsewhere and although international visitors will be coming in for the church services and celebrations, Palestinians from nearby Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank are not allowed in past the checkpoint at its entrance.

In the small village of Yanoun, near Nablus further north in the West Bank, where I am based we maintain a permanent presence because there are Israeli Settlements on all the surrounding hills (settlements are illegal according to International Law). These ones are outposts and not full grown ones yet but the villagers' land has been appropriated and they have been told that they are no longer allowed to go to their olive trees on the hills and cannot grow crops, except in the lower fields. The poverty in the village is very obvious and the hospitality to us very warm.

Reading of the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem in a time of occupation, we are reminded that now the same journey could not take place. Nazareth is in Israel and Bethlehem is in the Occupied Territories. No Israeli family can pass through the checkpoints near Nazareth and into the West Bank. For Palestinians there are a huge number of checkpoints within the West Bank that they cannot pass through for any reason, without a permit. Even with a permit for a specific journey on one day, at one time, they may not get through if the Israeli soldiers refuse to accept the permit. Permits have also been required for tractors and donkeys! So a journey by a small family with a pregnant woman riding a donkey the 90 miles the length of Palestine/Israel is not possible today.

We have learnt that the forebears of the families here in the village lived in the caves in the hills behind and it seems more like the original nativity scene – unlike the “fluffy” crib scenes of Christmas cards. People here would certainly welcome passing travellers who needed shelter.

Later today we shall be going into Nablus to join the people there for their celebrations and taking part in the procession that goes to each of the four churches there and ends up in one of them for the Christmas Service and will be thinking of friends everywhere.

Happy Christmas, Ann

I work for Quaker Peace and Social Witness as an Ecumenical Accompanier serving on the World Council of Churches' Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI). The views contained herein are personal to me and do not necessarily reflect those of my employer (QPSW) or the WCC.

## *The Creed of Hope*

*I believe in God*

*Who rises from the dead words to become part of life.*

*I believe in God who accompanies me on every step of my path on this earth,  
Many times walking behind me, watching me and suffering with my mistakes  
Other times walking beside me, talking to me and teaching me,  
and other times walking ahead of me, guiding and marking my pace.*

*I believe in the God of flesh and blood, Jesus Christ*

*The God who lived in my skin and tried on my shoes*

*The God who walked in my ways and knows of lights and shadows.*

*The God who ate and starved,*

*who had a home, and suffered loneliness,*

*who was praised and condemned, kissed and spat on, loved and hated,*

*the God who went to parties and funerals,*

*the God who laughed and cried.*

*I believe in the God who is attentive today, who looks at the world and sees the  
hatred that segregates, divides,*

*sets people aside, hurts and kills*

*who sees the bullets piercing the flesh and the blood of innocent people flowing on  
the earth,*

*who sees the hand that dips into another's pocket,*

*stealing what somebody needs to eat,*

*who sees the judge that favours the highest bidder,*

*the truth and justice of hypocrites,*

*who sees the dirty rivers and the dead fish,*

*the toxic substances destroying the earth and piercing the sky,*

*who sees the future mortgaged, and man's debt growing.*

*I believe in God who sees all this and keeps on crying.*

*But I also believe in God who sees a mother giving birth -a life born from pain,*

*who sees two children playing - a seed growing –*

*who sees a flower blooming out of the debris, a new beginning,*

*who sees three crazy women clamouring for justice, an illusion that does not die,*

*who sees the sun rising every morning, a time of opportunities,*

*because in spite of it all, there is hope.*

Gerardo Oberman (from Argentina)