

CWO
Challenging Institutional Sexism in the Roman Catholic Church
E-news January 2015 issue 77

Welcome to the edited version of the January 15 issue of the e-news. Some personal details have been removed. Editor Pat Brown. Please visit CWO's [website](#) News and previous issues can be seen there. Please send items for February e-news by 20 February. [Email](#) further information about anything in this e-news where contact details are not given. Many thanks to Ruth W for proof reading the e-news.

We have lost two wonderful members this month. Rev. Canon Pam Skelton died on Sunday 7th December 2014. She was one of the first women in Scotland to be ordained as a priest in the Scottish Episcopal Church and who was a member of the Edinburgh CWO Group almost from its beginning. The quarterly magazine of the Diocese of Edinburgh in the Scottish Episcopal Church, The Edge, featured a piece about Pam. It's called [Twenty Years On](#). We hope to have an obituary next month.

Robert Kaggwa died on 12 January. Sue has written about him on page 2. He was a great supporter of CWO and will be missed by so many of us. Our thoughts are particularly with the many young people whose lives he touched and who will be so upset at his passing. His funeral will be at Ealing Abbey on Thursday 29 January at 1100am.

We thank all our members who are no longer with us for their many gifts.

"The strawberry on the cake"

The Pope noted that "the increased presence of women" on the theological commission, which currently has the most women it's ever had serving at one time in its ranks. Five of the 30 theologians are women. That number, the Pope said, is "not so many." The women, he said, "are the strawberry on the cake, but we want more."



You can read Joshua J. McElwee's article [here](#)

We are half the cake, half the icing and half the strawberry!

"Rabbits"



Read the full transcript of Pope's press conference on flight from Manila [here](#)

In memory of Robert Kaggwa MAfr RIP.

Robert first got in touch with CWO members through some of his contacts at the Mill Hill Missionary Institute and indeed some CWO members had been taught by him there.

He then started to come to events held by CWO, but especially the WOW Conference in Dublin where his presence was much appreciated. Not long after that, he was invited to preside at Eucharistic picnics held in Ianthe's garden at Dulwich and through these contacts, he then became a chaplain at various Catholic People's weeks where he was also much loved.

In due course he also became the chaplain at Roehampton University where he also taught some theology. Many of the students there remember him with much affection and love as a gentle and wise pastor and outstanding lecturer. Over the years, Robert also became a personal friend of myself and many others as we found ourselves struggling with an institutional church which was not always compassionate and visionary, although Robert ran counter to that in his own way. As a post-doctoral theologian he had much to offer in academic circles although that was not always as recognised as it should have been, especially among RC academic circles. Robert also wrote his own liturgies or used those of others that he found meaningful so that experiencing a Eucharist led by Robert was always a deeply participatory and sharing experience. Robert actually believed that we all participated in making the Eucharist happen. Consequently, when a group of nuns waited for him to appear to say mass when his train was delayed, Robert felt quite strongly that they should have got on with the Eucharist themselves. Like many of us, Robert saw that community was a vital ingredient in the Eucharist and who better to lead a Eucharist than someone from their own community. Robert essentially believed that we should all get on with our ministries.

The fact that Robert was an ordained priest gave him a special access to that ministry for which many newlyweds and baptised people are no doubt very grateful. He was also highly valued as someone who was a sensitive celebrant at funeral masses. As a friend of the Sacred Heart nuns in Roehampton, he often led their funeral masses for them, among them being the funeral of Prue Wilson who was an incredible character and former provincial. Robert would have been the first port of call for those of us looking for a trusted priest to lead a rite of passage. It is very sad that we now have to look to others to try to fill Robert's shoes. In many ways, no one can. There are very few who have the same understanding of issues of globalisation and African theology or of making liturgy meaningful or of enabling others to fulfil their ministries. May you rest in peace, dear Robert. You have led the way and we must follow on.

Sue W January 2015

An open letter to Cardinal Lorenzo Baldisseri and the Bishops of the World asking synod leaders to widen the circle of invitees at the 2015 Family Synod

As faithful Catholics, we are deeply concerned that the perspective and experience of a large number of Catholics will not be represented at the upcoming Synod. Therefore, we are writing to urge you to widen the circle of people invited to participate in the upcoming Family Synod 2015.

We know our Church would benefit from listening to representatives of the many constituencies present in the church community and from engaging in the dialogue Pope Francis has been calling for since the beginning of his papacy. The Lineamenta points out, "In Evangelii Gaudium, Pope Francis advocates for engaging in pastoral activity characterized by a 'culture of encounter' and capable of recognizing the Lord's gratuitous work, even outside customary models."

We urge the Vatican Synod office to make every effort to include a wide diversity of Catholics, especially those from the constituencies being discussed including divorced and remarried people, cohabitating couples, interfaith families, impoverished families, single parents, families with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members, same-sex couples, and families torn by the violence of war and abuse. These women and men can share their lives and stories in a way that creates greater understanding among the bishops who will, in the end, make critical recommendations about the Church's priorities and pastoral practices for years to come.

We ask that Synod planners reach out to those on "life's periphery" (Evangelii Gaudium), those who have not felt welcome in our church. Their invaluable perspectives will greatly enrich and enlighten discussion at the Ordinary Synod on the Family in October.

As stated in Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church (2014): "The baptized....are endowed as members of the body of the Lord with gifts and charisms for the renewal and building up of the Church....Not only do they have the right to be heard, but their reaction to what is proposed as belonging to the faith must be taken very seriously. . . " (#74).

We assure you that the mission of the Family Synod is in our prayers.

Sponsored by American Catholic Council, Call to Action, CORPUS, DignityUSA, Federation of Christian Ministries/Roman Catholic Faith Community Council, FutureChurch, Loretto Women's Network, National Coalition of American Nuns, New Ways Ministry, RAPPORT, Roman Catholic Womenpriests RCWP-USA, Southeastern Pennsylvania Women's Ordination Conference, Voice of the Faithful, Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual, Women's Ordination Conference, Women's Ordination Worldwide

[Sign the open letter asking synod leaders to widen the circle of invitees at the 2015 Family Synod!](#)

My Sister's Song by Rosemary Allix

The author says this book is inspired by Hildegard of Bingen. She was planning to write a serious biography of her but this novel demanded to be written instead. It was as if it were dictated to her by the long-dead nun. Whether you believe that or not, much of the writing is certainly inspirational and spiritually uplifting.

The story is set in a 12th century abbey where the abbess is in charge of a community of both monks and nuns. She is a visionary: *'Songs come to me with the voices of the angels. Sacred singing beats against the air; trees quiver and vibrate with sound; music overwhelms me.'* but is also well respected for her guidance and authority in both spiritual and practical matters. There is though the ever-present problem of resentment by men that an inferior woman should have such power. She has powerful enemies who seek to destroy her.

The book has not been well copy edited but it is well worth ignoring the errors and immersing yourself in a remarkable woman's world.

Claire S-J

**Published [Hanover Books](#)
ISBN: 0954429966**

Still and Silent We Wait

Holy, glorious and majestic God,
Still and silent we wait;
Empty, we long to be filled
With your true and gracious Word.

Plant the seed of your Word
In the rich soil of our minds;
Let Him root, grow and flourish;
His wisdom others to find.

Holy, glorious and majestic God,
Still and silent we wait;
Empty, we long to be filled
With your true and gracious Word.

Plunge the sword of His Spirit
To the core of our hearts;
Let Him cut out sin's torment;
His love for all, to us impart.

Holy, glorious and majestic God,
Still and silent we wait;
Empty, we long to be filled
With your true and gracious Word.

Breathe the fire of His love
To consume our self-will;
Let Him set us all-blazing
To speak and to vanquish Earth's ill.

Still and silent we wait; ...
Still...silent...silent...
silent...silent...

Peter D

Catholic Church Reform have launched a petition to support Pope Francis in the face of thraditional Catholic criticism

[Read more and sign here](#) if you wish to



This picture has been offered for sale to raise money for WOW. It is a very beautiful purple candle (very CWO!)

The measurements are 19"/48.5mm X 23"/58.5mm with a light coloured wooden frame. It is ready to hang.

Please [email](#) offers for this picture

Catholic Women Speak

Tina Beattie has set up a Facebook group called Catholic Women Speak.

Tina writes: This group is intended to serve as a forum where Catholic women can share their visions, hopes, struggles and stories in anticipation of the Pontifical Council for Culture's Assembly on 'Women's Cultures' in February 2015, and the Synod on the Family in October 2015. It is important that this page remains a genuinely open forum for those across the Catholic spectrum, so I hope that we will express ourselves and engage with one another in rigorous but also respectful and dignified conversation, even in areas where there might be profound differences and disagreements. For the time being group membership is restricted to those who self-identify as Catholic women.

If you're on Facebook and would like to be part of the group, please [email](#) and we can invite you to be a member.

Boko Haram has massacred 2000 people and used a 10-year-old girl as a bomb-detonator.

There is a reign of terror in Northern Nigeria but Nigerian President Jonathan has said almost NOTHING about this in his election campaign, and his brutal army, instead of protecting civilians, is fuelling the insurgency. The world has put this crisis in the 'too hard to solve' box -- the UN Security Council hasn't even issued a Presidential Statement on Nigeria! The only good news: escalating violence has renewed pressure to act. Let's multiply that pressure now and persuade our leaders and the United Nations to convene an emergency Security Council meeting and prioritise this crisis. Join this urgent call -- for the sake of that tiny, innocent girl, and all those like her at risk. [Sign here](#)

Third WOW Conference 2015

Gender, The Gospel, and Global Justice.

18 – 20 September 2015

Marriott Hotel

Philadelphia PA



Will you be there?

Women's Ordination Worldwide (WOW) invites you to submit a workshop proposal for the 2015 WOW International Conference: **"Gender, Gospel, and Global Justice"** to be held in Philadelphia, PA from September 18-20, 2015 at the Philadelphia Downtown Marriott. We encourage workshops that address the theme of the conference through multicultural, international, feminist, and intersectional lenses.

Submit a Workshop proposal

Deadline for submissions is April 15th! Please share widely!

Speakers list: We can now add Tony Flannery to this list. Speakers already announced include Teresa Focades, Tina Beattie, Sr Mary John Manzanan, Christina Rees, Dr. Mary Hunt, Dr. Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza, Barbara Blaine, Kristina Keneally, Ursula King, Sister Genny Dunnay, Sister Christine Fernando

Priest panel includes Paul Collins and Roy Bourgeois

You can Google to find out about speakers but I'll try to provide a bit of info each month.

You can see Sr Teresa Focades [here](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1UoVdAncUEc>

Register for the conference here

When you book you have the opportunity to donate to help someone from the developing world to get there. You can also donate via the [website](#) if you're not attending **Donate here**

Or you can send me a cheque made out to WOW. My address is on the merchandise form at the end of this enews.

If you know anyone who might be worth approaching for a donation please [let us know](#) about that too. We desperately need financial backers for this event.

Pat Brown

From Tina Beattie's blog *Marginal Musings*

JE NE SUIS PAS CHARLIE. Without in any way wanting to mitigate the horror, grief and shock of the murders in Paris, I am growing weary of the disingenuity of so many in the media disclaiming the potentially violent power of the pen and the image. Public intellectuals are queuing up to present themselves as the peaceful advocates of freedom of speech, bravely defending western values of tolerance, respect and democracy against Islamist extremists - which often seems to include all Muslims who haven't publicly and repeatedly denounced their co-religionists. (See, for example, Ian McEwan and David Aaronovitch on [Newsnight last night](#)).

The use of violence by rational, cold-blooded, educated people always begins with the pen - with an idea, with a book, with an image. Look at images of Jews in [1930s German cartoons](#). Look at those [crude, provocative images of Muhammad](#) and ask yourself if our 'free' societies would tolerate such images if they were anti-Semitic, sexist, homophobic or more overtly racist than they already are. Ask a French Muslim woman who would choose to wear the niqab if she could what she thinks of freedom of expression.

Writers write because they know the power of the pen. I wonder what has happened to our understanding of freedom when the power to provoke, to offend and yes, to knowingly and willfully arouse murderous rage simply through insult and provocation has become the ultimate expression of freedom. Isn't freedom more complex and dignified than that? If one is going to die for freedom, are there not better ways of expressing what freedom is than the freedom to ridicule, mock and belittle?

David Aaronovitch said on Newsnight last night, "We want as much free speech as we can possibly get". May I suggest that he starts by offering to satirise red poppies on the BBC next November, and see how far he gets? Consider [this report in The Guardian](#), about a Muslim who was fined £50 for burning a poppy during a protest because, said the judge,

The two-minute chanting, when others were observing a silence, followed by a burning of the symbol of remembrance was a calculated and deliberate insult to the dead and those who mourn or remember them.

The limits of toleration are narrow and the right to insult is seriously curtailed when it comes to abusing the dominant culture's sacred symbols. The dichotomous representation of tolerant secularism versus intolerant religion blinds us to the deeply rooted intolerance and growing limitations on freedom of speech in our own societies, for in truth, this mantra is invoked most frequently with regard to the right to offend religious people - usually Muslims.

From Tina Beattie's blog *Marginal Musings (continued)*

The violent killing of one human being by another is always a profound and incurable wound to our humanity, for no person is an island. But that is true of every child, woman and man butchered in the name of a cause - any cause. Until we join the dots and acknowledge the complexity of this spiraling conflict, there will be no end to the violence and the killing of innocents by and on all sides in the name of their gods - God, Allah, Yahweh, Jesus, France, Britain, America, Freedom of Speech. When an idea demands blood sacrifice, it is an idol. When it enables us to reach out to one another and ask 'who art thou?', it is a god worthy of worship.

I mourn the deaths of those defiantly brave journalists, and I mourn the further wounding of our increasingly fragile and threatened democratic freedoms. But the greatest threats to those freedoms are not a small minority of religious conservatives (and not all offended conservatives are violent extremists). The enemy which most threatens the future of our values and institutions and indeed of our very planet is a ruthless political and economic system undergirded by western militarism and the powerful corporate interests of the arms trade. Long before radical Islamism conquers the world, we will be drowning in the suffocating fog of our own polluted environment, victims of a ruthless and inhumane secularist ideology colonised by the politics of greed and exploitation. Let our intellectuals, artists and comedians satirise the real enemies of freedom, so that we might become societies that reasonable people of all religions and none might agree are worth living in - and maybe even dying to preserve.

[Tina's blog](#)

Why is it that countries which we call strong are so powerful in creating wars but are so weak in bringing peace?

Why is it that giving guns is so easy but giving books is so hard?

Why is it that making tanks is so easy but building schools is so hard?

Mala Yousafzai, [Nobel Prize acceptance speech](#)

The Last Supper painting

The “Last Supper” painting includes 6 women and 2 children at the Passover celebration in Jerusalem. It is historically more accurate than Leonardo Da Vinci’s famous “Last Supper” which is great art but terrible history. It was painted in 1998 by Bohdan Piasecki.

Copies of this inclusive “Last Supper” are available from [WAC Ireland’s website](#) where you can order online and delivery is worldwide.

The 3 different sizes of the “Last Supper” now available are:

Large print	38” x 19”	(97cm x 48cm)
Medium print	16.5” x 8”	(42cm x 20cm)
Postcards	8” x 4”	(21cm x 10cm)

We Are Church Ireland is a Not For Profit organisation working for reform of the RC Church and especially for the full equality of women, including all ordained ministries. And of course we are members of WOW.



The Words of God Do Not Justify Cruelty to Women

Discrimination and abuse wrongly backed by doctrine are damaging society, argues the former U.S. president Jimmy Carter

This editorial was published in the July 12, 2009, edition of The Observer.

[Read the whole article](#)

Correction

Clarification of a point in the review of Mary Grey's talk at ACTA which appeared in last month's e-news.

The review stated that "One woman theologian she quoted saw clericalism like 'leprosy in the church'." Actually it was Pope Francis!! Which makes the argument stronger!



"If we do not mean that God is male when we use masculine pronouns and imagery, then why should there be any objections to using female imagery and pronouns as well?" -Carol P. Christ

www.thegirlgod.com



They came. They created. They conquered.

15 Badass Art World Heroines Over 70 Years Old

Read about these women and see their work [here](#)

Open letter to Archbishop Vincent Nichols

Dear Archbishop, I listened to your letter of Sunday 3 February in which you asked us as a matter of urgency to either send a postcard provided or write to our local MP to request him to vote against the government's proposed legislation to legalize same-sex marriage. I came out of the church with two thoughts and one resolve.

Firstly I thought 'Lord pity and help any gay person sitting listening to that letter', because not a word of charity or understanding did it contain.

Secondly I thought or asked 'Where in that is the love of Christ for all humankind?' My resolve was not to contact my MP. That decision was not made because of the tone of your letter however. I do not find it at all easy or even possible to uphold the church's teaching on homosexuality. Among gay people of my acquaintance are those who have a deep spiritual life. To have one's sexual orientation, an orientation that one is born with, described as an 'objective disorder' and to hear homosexual acts described as 'intrinsically evil' surely makes it almost impossible to feel at home or welcome in the church.

It is utterly unrealistic to expect homosexual people to live celibate lives (We all know that many priests find this very difficult and sometimes impossible). The revelations of clerical sex abuse have led many of us to look with a very critical eye on the so-called celibate life and to realize that it has all too often led to warped and destructive behavior. To return to same-sex marriage, can it be abhorrent that two people of the same sex would wish to experience that emotional and physical closeness that marriage offers? We believe that God is love and so it must follow that in every loving and committed relationship God must be present – or does this, in your understanding, only apply in heterosexual relationships?

Article and rest of the letter [here](#)

CWO Retreat 2015

This is for all CWO members.

Noddfa is a lovely place. It would be good if more people could make it next year. Some of those on the retreat offer various activities or reflections but no-one has to do anything. You will enjoy beautiful, calm surroundings and have the most wonderful food. You can take yourself off to the sea for a paddle, climb a mountain, read a book or just be still in a quiet, beautiful place.



Please think about booking soon. The dates are:-

Friday 31 July to
Sunday 2 August 2015.

Cost will be £100 per person

Please send £50 deposit to Noddfa to reserve your place. (Cheques to Noddfa)

Bookings will close on 31 May 2015

[Noddfa website](#)



CWO welcomes Libby Lane
First woman bishop in the Church of England

She will be consecrated as the 8th Bishop of Stockport at a ceremony at York Minster on Monday 26 January 2015

We wish her well and pray that God will bless her ministry



Less pope, more Jesus.
 Less Canon Law, more living the Beatitudes.
 Less excommunication, more compassion.
 Less secrecy, more transparency.
 Less pomp and luxury, more concern for the poor.
 Less exclusion, more welcoming at the table.
 Less power-over, more empowerment.
 Less allegiance to the pope, more obedience to the Spirit.
 Less lording it over us, more servant-leadership.

Rev. Patricia Fresen, Th.D

www.womensordinationworldwide.org
 #wow2015



Harrogate School of Theology and Mission

St Peter's Church Harrogate HG1 1RW

Forthcoming events

Saturday 7 th February	Bishop Nick Baines <i>Flesh made word: communicating the Gospel in a digital age</i> (live lecture)	St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate 9.30 am – 12.00 noon
Saturday 14 th March	Dr Graham Tomlin <i>The Death of Christ Faithtrack seminar</i> (DVD & facilitated discussion)	Mowbray Community Church, Westmorland Street, Harrogate 9.30 am – 12.00 noon
Saturday 18 th April	Professor Richard Bauckham <i>The Gospels and the Eyewitnesses</i> (live lecture)	St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate 9.30 am – 12.00 noon
Saturday 16 th May	Mark Roques <i>Celebrity, theology & Mission</i> (live lecture)	St. Mark's Church, Leeds Road, Harrogate 9.30 am – 12.00 noon

[More info](#)

A thought for the New Year

Time, the wag wrote on the wall, is nature's way of preventing everything from happening at once. Maybe all philosophy in the world was graffiti once upon a time. If not, this piece of graffiti qualifies as high philosophy nevertheless. The truth of it stills the soul for a moment, gives us pause, awakens us to the truth of the temporal in the spiritual development of a person. Time carries us from situation to situation in life, one by one, until eventually we have lived them all. The measure of a life, however, is not whether we have spent our particular number of allotted days but whether in the spending of them we have lived life to the fullest as we went along. But what, precisely, does that mean?

Living life well is akin to paddling a rowboat in an ocean. We have a choice. We can go into the water and fight each passing wave, resist each undertow, confront each swell, fight each current until we break apart, or we can give ourselves to the water to be tossed by it and swept along by it and massaged by it and pummeled by it until, exhausted, we find ourselves beached at the place we had hoped to arrive.

Life is a wild and mesmerizing melody. To live life well, we can join the dance of life, move to its magical music, be moved by its rhythm for us, sing its plaintive songs, or we can sit sullen and watch it all go by, forever a stranger to the cadence it requires of us and the multiple keys it challenges us to reach. In either case we can go with the flow or we can resist it all the way to the bitter end. We can learn from it or reject it completely. There is only one thing we cannot do in life; we cannot ignore its lessons.

Life is a relentless teacher. And life teaches relentlessly.

—from *For Everything a Season* by Joan Chittister (Orbis)

One Tweet from J.K. Rowling Perfectly Shuts Down Rupert Murdoch's Anti-Muslim Rhetoric

I was born Christian. If that makes Rupert Murdoch my responsibility, I'll auto-excommunicate.

See this and the rest [here](#)

Catholic Groups Applaud Vatican Report as "First Step" in Reconciling with U.S. Sisters

From WOC - While the report is a positive first step, reconciliation will not be fully accomplished until the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith removes its unjust mandate against the Leadership Conference of Women Religious.

We renew our call to Cardinal Müller, prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), to immediately rescind the mandate and apologize to LCWR sister leaders, especially in light of Pope Francis' recent praise for diversity of theological views, pluralism and reading the "signs of the times." Until the mandate is removed, the faithful and creative leadership of U.S. sisters remains under unjust Vatican scrutiny.

[Read the whole article](#)

Call For Papers - Translating Christianity: *Word, Image, Sound & Object in the Circulation of the Sacred from the Birth of Christ until the present day*
28-30 July 2015, Humanities Research Centre, University of York

Christianity today is a religion of over 2,000 language groups in the world. Moreover, more people pray and worship in more languages in Christianity than in any other religion and it has been the impulse behind the creation of more dictionaries and grammars of the world's languages than any other force in history. Behind this lies the fact that Christianity is a translated religion without a revealed language. Translation is its second nature: 'the Church's birthmark as well as its missionary benchmark' in the words of Lamin Sanneh. Accordingly, the transformation of Christianity into a world faith is the direct result of 'the triumph of its translatability'. However, Christianity is also a translated religion in a very different sense. For much of its history (and in the majority of its variants), its ritual practice has been predicated upon the translation of material objects - relics. Their movement in time and space has traced shifting lines of power and influence in illuminating ways, as well as making a significant contribution to the eventual global spread of Christianity. In turn, missions have been the spur to what, cumulatively speaking, must be the greatest campaign of cultural translation (and description) ever attempted, which even its not infrequent blunders and tragic misunderstandings cannot gainsay. Finally, translation can be understood not only linguistically and physically but also metaphorically, as in the case of the handing on of authority from one place or person to another. This theme and plenary speakers have therefore been chosen with the intention that they might encourage papers which address the issues raised by:

- the challenge of translating or editing scripture, catechisms and related literature from one language to another (to be sung and spoken as well as read)
- the quest for linguistic common ground (by means, for example, of 'Jesuit Slovak' or of other so-called 'general languages' such as Quechua in Latin America).
- relics, (their discovery, identification, transportation, collection, display and reception)
- the translation of the Christian message as shaped and impacted by various media: from papyrus to the pdf via print and the print/woodcut as well as painting, sculpture and architecture
- missionary narratives as history, hagiography and ethnography
- the challenges of attempting religious dialogue and mediation
- the construction (and deconstruction) of textual canons
- the emergence and practice of vernacular worship.

Confirmed plenary speakers (to date): Joel Cabrita (Cambridge) for the Winter Conference, Simon Ditchfield (York), James Grayson (Sheffield, emeritus), Anne Lester (Colorado at Boulder), Joan-Pau Rubiés (ICREA, Barcelona) all for the Summer Conference; Simon Ditchfield (incoming President)

[More information here](#)

Wise Women Also Came

Wise women also came.

The fire burned in their wombs long before they saw the flaming star in the sky.
They walked in shadows, trusting the path would open under the light of the moon.

Wise women also came, seeking no directions, no permission from any king.
They came by their own authority, their own desire, their own longing.
They came in quiet, spreading no rumours, sparking no fears to lead to innocents' slaughter,
to their sister Rachel's inconsolable lamentations.

Wise women also came, and they brought useful gifts:
water for labour's washing, fire for warm illumination, a blanket for swaddling.

Wise women also came, at least three of them,
holding Mary in the labour,
crying out with her in the birth pangs,
breathing ancient blessings into her ear.

Wise women also came, and they went, as wise women always do, home a different way.

By Jan L. Richardson from [*Night Visions: searching for shadows of advent and Christmas*](#), 1998: United Church Press

Glyzelle Palomar – the girl who asked:-

“Why is God allowing such things to happen, even if it is not the fault of the children? And why are there only very few people helping us?”

Jamie Manson asks whether the Church is complicit in Glyzelle's suffering.

Read article in National Catholic Reporter [here](#)

Exclusion of women is not in the spirit of the Gospel

Cardinal Marx on Francis, the Synod, Women in the Church and Gay Relationships.

Cardinal Reinhard Marx, archbishop of Munich and Freising, is head of the German bishops' conference, a member of the Council of Cardinals that advises Pope Francis on church governance, coordinator of the Vatican's Council for the Economy and author of *Das Kapital: A Plea for Man* (2008)

Read the America National Catholic Review Article [here](#)

To further inform our discussion on women deacons

Since the beginning of our Church, there have been women deacons alongside the first male deacons (Acts 6:1ff). Lydia in the Christian community of Philippi and Priscilla with her husband Aquila, put in charge of the Church in Corinth by Paul. Also in the Old Testament, the figures of Deborah, the Judge, and Queen Esther stand out. Women have played very important parts among the People of God in the plan of salvation.

In these times, it's crucial to have within our Church worthy women who can perfectly assume the ministry of the diaconate and who, in fact, perform it "unofficially." Examples that stand out we can see in our women "parochial vicars." The women vicars are in fact "women pastors" in their territories and perform diaconal roles daily. They lead catechesis, tend to the sick and even confess them (the only thing they lack is the ability to give them absolution), and bring them Communion. Why couldn't they convey forgiveness in the Spirit and administer Holy Unction at the same time? They celebrate [Liturgies of] the Word and distribute Communion to the faithful (all they lack is the ability to consecrate). They could also baptize and witness marriages and home blessings. They are helping the needy and the widows, and taking in the orphans. In short, they're doing everything that the "male deacons" do. So I'm wondering: Why can't they be deacons, officially? Isn't this clerical chauvinism?

By Fr. Pablo Urquiaga (English translation by Rebel Girl)
[Redes Cristianas](#) November 29, 2014

[Item removed]

It is for members only but please get in touch if you would like to join us

Visit our [website](#)

More information [email](#)



Honour Peshawar Children

Please join the campaign to honour the memory of the children of Peshawar. A petition will be delivered by Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy on Education, to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, and leaders who can make it a reality.

[Please sign](#)



Chester Theological Society 2014-15

2:00pm, Saturday 7th February 2015 - The Nave, Chester Cathedral

Whatever Happened to the Laity?

Professor Elaine Graham - Canon Theologian at Chester Cathedral ANNUAL CATHEDRAL LECTURE

In the first of her annual lectures as Canon Theologian, Professor Graham will address the role of lay people in the Church. Fifty years after the Second Vatican Council, which emphasised the secular calling of the laity as the embodiment of the Church in the world, are we any closer to really affirming the priesthood of all believers, or does the Church remain largely clericalised in its understanding of ministry? This lecture will survey some of the main thinking over recent years across the denominations regarding the relationship between ordained and lay ministry, and consider what the future prospects may be for the laity in Church and society.

Elaine Graham, appointed the Samuel Ferguson Professor of Social and Pastoral Theology at the University of Manchester, joined the University of Chester in 2009 where she is the Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology. Her publications include: *Theological Reflection: Methods* (SCM 2005), with Heather Walton and Frances Ward; *Words made Flesh: Writings in Pastoral and Practical Theology* (SCM 2009) and *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-Secular Age* (SCM 2013). She is a former president of the International Academy of Practical Theology, a member of the BBC Standing Conference on Religion and Belief, an occasional broadcaster and a contributor to the *Church Times*.

Admission Free

7:30pm, Tuesday 10th March - The Nave, Chester Cathedral

“For the Honour of God and for the Reform of our Realm”:

Magna Carta, Church and State, 1215-2015

The Revd Robin Griffiths - Master of Temple Church

King John sealed *Magna Carta* ‘from reverence for God and for the salvation of our soul and those of all our ancestors and heirs, for the honour of God and the exaltation of Holy Church and the reform of our realm’. His advisors included two archbishops, seven bishops and the Master of the Temple. The Charter challenges today’s faith communities to examine the part they might play in the development of a liberal democracy. The landscape has changed beyond recognition, from the universality of the ‘English Church’ in 1215 to the religious diversity and multi-culturalism of the 21st century; but ‘the honour of God and reform of the realm’ are still close to the heart of every religious community.

Chester Theological Society 2014-15 (continued)

Robin Griffith-Jones has been 'the Reverend and Valiant Master of the Temple' at the Temple Church since 1999. The Temple was King John's London headquarters and the setting for vital negotiations, 1214-5. He is also Senior Lecturer in Theology at King's College London. Writings on the New Testament and early Christianity include *The Four Witnesses* (2000), *The Gospel according to Paul* (2004) and *Mary Magdalene* (2008). Fostering the Temple's natural interest in law and religion resulted in *Islam and English Law: Rights, Responsibilities and the Place of Sharia* (editor & co-author, 2013) and *Magna Carta, Religion and the Rule of Law* (co-editor & co-author, 2014).

Admission at the door: £3.00 (Students: £1.00)

7:30pm, Friday 1st May – Binks Lecture Theatre, University of Chester **Pope Francis and the Future of Catholic Social Thinking**

Paul Vallely CMG FRSA - Inaugural Lecture as Visiting Professor

Pope Francis has issued some powerful condemnations of the operations of the contemporary global economy. He has called for "a poor Church, for the poor". But do his trenchant criticisms merely reiterate the critique of "savage capitalism" developed by Catholic Social Teaching throughout the 20th Century? Or is he developing that teaching in new Ways?

Paul Vallely CMG FRSA is a writer, broadcaster and consultant on international development and business ethics. He is Visiting Professor in Public Ethics and Media at the University of Chester and Senior Research Fellow at the Brooks World Poverty Institute at the University of Manchester. He was co-author of the report of Tony Blair's Commission for Africa (2004-5). He writes regularly in *The Independent on Sunday*, *Guardian* and *New York Times*, is a director of *The Tablet* and a columnist for the *Church Times*. His publications include *The New Politics: Catholic Social Teaching for the 21st century*, (SCM 1999) and *Catholic Social Teaching and the Big Society* (CBCEW 2011). *Pope Francis – Untying the Knots* (Bloomsbury 2013)

Admission at the door: £3.00 (Students: £1.00) Wine and Refreshments

[Visit website](#)



University of
Chester



An ecumenical partnership of
the University and Cathedral

CWO Saints

Mary MacKillop
Ruth Norton
John Hatfield
Celia Greenwood
Michael O’Gara
Sheila Houlihan
Mary Daly
Estelle White
Pat McCarron
Marcella Althaus-Reid
Astrid Klemz
Jean Palmer
Elizabeth Rendall
Maureen Brown
Tissa Balasuriya
Jack Sutcliffe
Pat Regini
Mary Ann Schoettly
Pam Skelton
Robert Kaggwa

Pray for us



Prayer Link

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

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

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

The CWO Prayer

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

We long for all humanity to be
acknowledged as equal,
particularly among your community of
the church,
so we pray grieving for the lost gifts of
so many women.

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

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

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

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

News of Fr Bourgeois and many other issues

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

All previous housetop websites can be reached via this address

<http://www.catholicchurchreform.com/>

A global network seeking renewal of the Church

<http://womenandthechurch.org/>

Campaign for women’s equality in Church of England

<http://ncronline.org/>

National Catholic Reporter

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

Catholics inspired by Vatican II.

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

Group for rescinding the Act of Synod

www.we-are-church.org.uk

We Are Church in the UK is a call to recognise that all the Baptised, are part of the Church.

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

Catholics for a Changing Church

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

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

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

Proclaims the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ so as to sustain and increase Christian belief among homosexual men and women. They offer pastoral support for LGBT Catholics friends and families Sign up for quarterly newsletter

<http://82.70.116.125/index.html>

Women Word Spirit

<http://christianfeministnetwork.com/>

Christian Feminist Network - exploring faith and feminism

<http://www.spirituschristi.org>

A truly inclusive Catholic Church

<http://www.stcuthbertshouse.co.uk/>

Rachel is a professed hermit of the R C Diocese of Nottingham.