

CWO e-news May 2010 issue 27

Welcome to issue 27 of the e-news. Editor Pat Brown. Please visit CWO's website www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk News and previous issues can be seen there.

Please send items for publication in the next e-news by 10 June 2010. Also for further information about anything in this e-news where contact details are not given - info@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

The campaign moves on. In Notebook of this week's Tablet, there is an item about "Catholic Voices for Reform" which is a CWO initiative involving other groups working for a renewed Church. This is in direct response to the "Catholic Voices" group set up by a rather conservative sector of our church. The press release has now gone out and, hopefully, requests for interviews from the media will follow. The press release is shown in full later in this e-news.

The campaign will develop as follows:-

Until June: prayer and reflection – see below for reflections on John 21: 3 – 6, and new reflection for this month.

A letter has been sent to Archbishop Vincent Nichols (see below) and copies sent to all the bishops of England and Wales and the Papal Nuncio.

July to the actual visit: action including a presence at **Greenbelt festival 27 – 30 August. We need people to volunteer for our stall.** Please consider giving up a day for CWO to be on our Greenbelt stall. This year is really important because the Pope's visit has created interest in us. **I need to have numbers by end of June** so please let me know if you would like to come for a day. I can get you a ticket to the festival and CWO can help with travel costs if necessary.

There will be a weekend for prayer and reflection **Friday 6 to Sunday 8 August at Noddfa** <http://www.noddfa.org.uk/> . **This is open to all members.** The cost is £80. There is wheelchair accessibility.

Places are limited so please send £20 to me (cheque payable to CWO) to reserve a place by **31 May. No bookings can be accepted after this date.** (My address is on the merchandise form at the end of this e-news.)

CWO Annual Gathering

Last month's e-news gave advance notice that this year's CWO Annual Gathering will be on 2 October 2010, St Andrew's, Waterloo, London.

There is no more to add since last e-news but please put it in your diary.

Catholic Voices for Reform press release – May 2010

This group has been formed for the purpose of the Papal visit and includes many of the RC Reform Groups in Britain. All groups have ecumenical, European and worldwide connections. The word 'reform' is to differentiate ourselves from the recently formed official Catholic Voices group. From Catholic Voices For Reform you will hear a section of the ordinary members of the RC Church, not necessarily the well known theologians etc., but people deeply concerned at the present state of the Church, who are influential with others in daily life. These people, women and men, have formed the backbone for the call for change in the Church some for many years but others more recently. They are its loyal opposition who have remained within the Church calling for reform.

All the contacts named below know different people who can speak on a variety of topics – e.g. women in the Church and the ordination of women, sexual abuse within the Church, the lost principles of Vatican II, lesbian and gay issues and the need for Papal and Church Governmental reform. If you contact these people they will direct you to different speakers in various parts of the U.K. and contacts for newspaper interviews.

This is our first press release as Catholic Voices for Reform, to let you know we are here. We will try to fulfil any commitments you ask us. We are open to talk on issues and collaborate in discussions on national and local radio and TV. All our members are people with different experiences who have found a conflict between these life experiences and the official teachings of the Church. Contacts listed below can find speakers on all issues. We look forward to working with the press and media in the next few months.

Contacts:

Myra Poole: Catholic Women's Ordination - CWO: Tel. 0208 874 7364
email: *email omitted*

Pat Brown: Catholic Women's Ordination - CWO : Tel. 0795 0048628
email: *email omitted* www.catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

Bernard Wynne: 'Stand Up for Vatican II' : Tel. 0208 8750133
email: *email omitted* <http://standup4vatican2.org.uk>

Simon Bryden-Brook: Catholics for a Changing Church - CCC and European Network of the Church on the Move: Tel.0207 235 2841
email: *email omitted* <http://ccc4vat2.co.uk>

Reflections on John Chapter 21: 3-6

This text was considered by Oblates of Douai Abbey at their weekend retreat when this was Sunday's Gospel. It was agreed that Peter and his followers were unsuccessful until they did what the unrecognised Lord commanded them to do. Until Peter recognises Jesus in women's ministry, the nets will continue to come up empty - or at least full of jellyfish and other undesirable catches!

Simon Bryden-Brook

Simon Peter and the others are fishermen. They work together for their livelihood. They have an acknowledged leader who takes the initiative. They have skills, experience and previous success. They have resources in their boat and a lake to fish in. Before they were called to follow Jesus, presumably this way of life was enough, meeting their material and spiritual needs, and their need for belonging and community.

But being on the road with Jesus has been an unsettling experience. They do not know what to make of it, now that Jesus has been put to death. So they have left Jerusalem and gone back to Galilee to pick up their old life. Community is holding, as is the leadership and decision making structure. The need to eat, the fish in the sea, the boat and nets are to hand. Yet their work is in vain. Perhaps it is no longer satisfactory because their time spent following Jesus has opened up new possibilities, new visions of how to live. They are at a loss. "That night they caught nothing."

As day breaks, unrecognised by them, Jesus stands on the shore. He calls out to them in the familiar vernacular: Hi Guys! His name for them is equal, affectionate, colloquial, addressing them as colleagues, neighbours, friends. He redirects their efforts and leads them to such a plentiful catch they barely have the strength to haul it in.

And now they recognise the Risen Lord. All that they aspired to as they accompanied Jesus on the road to Jerusalem can be lived in full as was promised. Jesus, Lord and Teacher, is still with them, still shows them the way, still cares for them. They are still entrusted with Jesus's mission to be the "fishers of men."

How is the Risen Lord present?

Where do we, who would follow him today, go to meet him?

How do we recognise him?

And how do we deal with the patriarchal language as well as the social and economic structures which render women invisible if not excluded?

Alexina Murphy

Reflections on John Chapter 21: 3-6 (continued)

'Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some'. So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, for the quantity of fish.

For me this means that we can work as hard as we like on improving the position of women in the church and Church Reform but we are only doing God's work and without that deep realisation everything else is futile. We often have to take insults, pain and contradictions in working at such important work but that is God's way of modifying our own egoism and self interest.

Myra Poole

For next month - please send in your thoughts on John 14:1-7

Letter sent to Archbishop Nichols 10 May 2010 copies sent to Papal Nuncio and the Bishops of England and Wales

Dear Archbishop Vincent,

We write this letter to you from a deep love of the Church and as a part of its loyal, but often uncomfortable opposition, to those who hold leadership roles in the Church. Catholic Women's Ordination has a membership made up of many ages and walks of life but many of us in Catholic Women's Ordination have served this Church faithfully, for many years, but have watched its gradual decline in morals and leadership with great concern.

It is widely held that much of the lasting success of the visit of Pope John Paul II to Britain in 1982 was due to the way the bishops of England and Wales and of Scotland briefed him. What he said to Ireland was rather different to what he said in Britain. It is to be hoped that the current briefing by the hierarchy will be equally fruitful. It is important that the Pope's talks to various elements of the community are positive and inspiring rather than negative and chiding. One aspect of the 1982 talks was that highly controversial issues like the means of responsible parenthood were not touched on (in all the talks there was only one reference to "a contraceptive mentality", which is not the same as discussing forbidden means).

One of the main aims of the British government's invitation to the Pope, with which all other parties agree, is to show the importance of faith based communities working together.

Letter to Archbishop Nichols 10 May 2010 (continued)

We would like to suggest that the following points need to be raised by the bishops to the Pope because they are at the heart of re-gaining the trust of the Catholic community at this time of deep crisis in the Church: -

The recent apology of the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales for the many cases of sexual abuse worldwide is the beginning of a move in the right direction. We hope this will be followed by practical help to all victims of abuse as appropriate. There are also many other areas of theological default that require open and free discussion. The days of muzzling different viewpoints by refusing discussion are over. No one of us and no one church has all the truth. This culture of covering up seems largely to be derived from a distorted understanding of "the perfect church" whose imperfections must be hidden at all costs!

The Beatification of Cardinal Newman gives the Church in Britain a great opportunity to discuss Newman's concept of the development of doctrine. In most parishes, there is a considerable lack of knowledge of the history of the Church. As a result, many still believe that the Church has never changed. 'Ecclesia semper reformanda' is a central concept in Church history. If we deny our people an education, which is theirs by right, we will not pass on to our young people a thinking mature church in which they will feel at home. We would like the Pope to put emphasis on this point in any of his sermons.

The 45th anniversary year of Vatican II gives the Pope a great opportunity to re-visit the values and spirit of Vatican II during his time here; a spirit that the bishops of England and Wales re-visited in their inspired documents "the Sign we Give", particularly for its endorsement for collaborative ministry, and the findings of the new update of The Common Good. It would be helpful if these could get papal commendation, coupled with further encouragement to all the parishes to continue supporting CAFOD's campaign to 'live simply'.

We urge a re-examination of the meaning of women being made in the image of God (Gen 1.27) and its implications for ministry so that women may fulfil their rightful vocation in the Church.

We look forward to your response; we see this Papal visit as opening the way for true and free discussion in our Church in Britain.

Sincerely in Christ,

Myra Poole SND, (Westminster Archdiocese)

on behalf of the National Coordinating Group of Catholic Women's Ordination, CWO

Mary Anstey

Diana Edwards

Pippa Bonner and Pat Brown

Catherine Wareing and Maureen Roche

Mary Leslie

Ianthe Pratt and Susan Williams

Jillian Dempsey

Cardiff Archdiocese

Glasgow Diocese

Leeds Diocese

Liverpool Archdiocese

Shrewsbury Diocese

Southwark Archdiocese

Westminster Archdiocese

Pope Benedict's visit to England and Scotland from 16-19 September 2010

<http://www.thepapalvisit.org.uk/2010-Visit/Visit-Information/Itinerary>

Thursday 16 September – Scotland

When Pope Benedict arrives, he will go firstly to Scotland where he will be received by Her Majesty The Queen, members of the Royal Family and people representing British society in the Palace of Holyrood House.

Having met the Queen, the Pope will travel to Glasgow where he will celebrate an open-air Mass in the evening and then he will fly from Glasgow to London. The Holy Father will then be based in London for the remainder of the visit.

Friday 17 September – London

On the second day of the visit, Pope Benedict is going to St Mary's University College, Twickenham, where there will be three aspects to his visit. The first is that he begins the day praying with representatives of religious congregations - particularly those who have a charism for education and a history of education. He will then go and meet about 3,000 young people - schoolchildren, students - to celebrate Catholic education. From there he will then meet with religious leaders and people of religious faith. He will discuss with them religion and belief in our society. Later in the day, the Pope is scheduled to meet with the Archbishop of Canterbury to speak with him in front of the Anglican diocesan bishops and the Catholic diocesan bishops of England and Wales.

He has then been invited, as part of the State visit, to address British society. Representatives of British society will be invited to Westminster Hall to hear the Pope's address.

He will finish off the day with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Christian leaders at Westminster Abbey to celebrate Evening Prayer.

Saturday 18 September – London

On the third day of the visit, Pope Benedict will celebrate Mass in Westminster Cathedral where he will also, from there, greet the people of Wales.

Later in the day he will visit a home for older people, giving the Pope an opportunity to go to those who cannot meet with him, and then be present at a Vigil of prayer which again will be in the open air in London.

Sunday 19 September - West Midlands

The final day of the visit is focused very much on the beatification of Cardinal John Henry Newman, and the Pope will celebrate that beatification in the West Midlands. He will conclude the day by meeting with the bishops of England, Scotland and Wales in Oscott College before returning to Rome from Birmingham Airport.

Any ideas around this visit or if you know of any changes to this itinerary please send to NatCog. natcog@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

The maternal face of God

All this "women-stuff" is not only important; it is half of conversion, half of salvation, half of wholeness, half of God's work of art. I believe this mystery is imaged in the Woman of the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse: "pregnant, and in labor, crying aloud in the pangs of childbirth...and finally escaping into the desert until her time" (Revelation 12:1-6).

Could this be the time? It is always the time! The world is tired of Pentagons and pyramids, empires and corporations that only abort God's child. This women-stuff is very important, and it has always been important; more than this white male priest ever imagined or desired! My God was too small and too male. Much that the feminists have said is very prophetic and necessary for the Church and the world. It is time for the woman to come out of her desert refuge and for the men to welcome her.

Richard Rohr

A series of talks by Dr Dorothea McEwan

Supported by filmmaker Brek Taylor and writer Penelope Middelboe

St Ethelburga's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation
78 Bishopsgate (near Liverpool Street Station)
London, EC2N 4AG

What is equality?

Discussion exploring modern interpretations of social and sexual theology.

Monday June 28th 6.30-8.30pm

What is leadership?

An examination of the existing pyramid structure and ways of moving towards an inclusive Church.

Monday September 20th 6.30-8.30pm

There are half a billion women Catholics.

Women are excluded from all decision-making as well as from ordination. The discussion of women's ordination has been banned by the Vatican.

"Catholicism and tradition subjugate women to 'second class citizens'. It's extraordinarily important religious leaders understand they must change and there must be equal status in the home, in religious expression and in the political sphere."

Mary Robinson, Irish President 1990-97, Former UN Commissioner for Human Rights

Dr Dorothea McEwan is a well-travelled lecturer and academic and editor of *An A-Z of Feminist Theology* (with Lisa Isherwood), *Cymbals and Silences: Echoes from the First European Women's Synod. Women for Change in the 21st Century* (with Fanny Martin and Lucy Tatman) and *Making All Things New* (with Myra Poole).

There is no fee to attend this workshop, though contributions will be welcomed. Refreshments will be served.

To book your place now or for more information please email Brek Taylor at cwolondon@gmail.com

WATCH (London): Good News Items

Canon Lucy Winkett to be Rector of St James's Piccadilly

It has just been announced that Canon Lucy Winkett has been appointed as Rector to St James's Piccadilly. On making the announcement the Bishop of London, Dr Richard Chartres said;

"Lucy Winkett is among the most talented priests in her generation in the Church of England. I am delighted that after such a fruitful ministry at St Paul's Cathedral she will be moving to Piccadilly to work with a gifted and diverse congregation."

We too would like to send our heartiest congratulations to Lucy on her appointment. We wish her well and much joy in her new role.

Visit of The Presiding Bishop of the USA to Southwark Cathedral

Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori will be celebrating the Choral Eucharist and preaching at Southwark Cathedral on Sunday June 13th at 11.00.a.m. The Dean of Southwark, The Very Reverend Colin Slee, sends an invitation to all who would like to attend the Eucharist and welcome Bishop Katharine. It would be so good to see members of WATCH (London) at that occasion.

Revision Committee Report On Women in the Episcopate

The Revision Committee is shortly to publish its final recommendations for the admission of women to the Episcopacy. Let us hope - and pray a great deal - that the recommendations contain the positive news WATCH and so many others have worked for over so many years. This would make our third piece of Good News!! We will keep you updated on the recommendations and the reaction of WATCH as soon as we have absorbed the contents of the Report.

With many good wishes

Sally on behalf of the WATCH (London) Committee

There has not been a printed CWO Newsletter for some time but one will be posted out soon except to those who have expressed a wish to receive it electronically. Just to emphasize, **this is separate from e-news**. It has longer, more "meaty" articles and has always been sent by post up till now.

If you do not require a physical version please let me know (unless you have already done so.) pat@patbrown-at.co.uk

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*

You can now contact the National Coordinating group of CWO (NatCog) should you wish to.

natcog@catholic-womens-ordination.org.uk

Advance Notice of Richard Rohr weekend

Richard Rohr is leading a weekend at St James' Piccadilly on 3-4 Sept "The greatest vocation is not the contemplative, nor is it the active, but the utter art form of putting the two together." Some of the input will come from his Franciscan Tradition, and the event is sponsored by the Society of St Francis.

Price £40

Bookings as follows:

www.oxfordplayhouse.com/ticketsoxford

Phone 01865 305305

Websites

www.womenwordspirit.org

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

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

Group for rescinding the Act of Synod

www.womenandthechurch.org

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

National Catholic Reporter - Joan Chittester is a regular contributor

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

Lesbian and Gay Christians

www.womenpriests.org.

You can sign up for their regular newsletter

www.spirituschristi.org

An inclusive Catholic Church where all are welcome

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