

MISSION STATEMENT - *As women and men rooted in faith, we call for justice, equality, and full partnership in ministry. We are committed to Church renewal and to the transformation of a structure which uses gender rather than gifts as its criterion for ministry.*

HOLY THURSDAY THIS YEAR SOMEHOW DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE OTHERS

by Jim Ratigan

Each year in the springtime, Jewish people throughout the world gather in their homes for a special event, the Passover Seder. One of the four questions that is integral to the ritual, and is usually asked by one of the children, is: "Why is this night different from all other nights?" In response to this question the story of the Passover is retold, culminating in the event of the Exodus and the experience of new freedom.

For a number of years, in the springtime, I have also been involved in a special ritual, though not held in the home. Since I am not Jewish but Christian, my ritual is related to the Christian feast of Holy Thursday, which in turn, is directly connected to the Jewish Passover Seder. And this particular ritual is conducted in front of the Cathedral of Ss. Peter and Paul on Logan Circle in Philadelphia. It is the annual gathering of people, men and women, Catholic and non-Catholic, who support freedom in the Christian community, and on this day they focus upon a special expression of freedom, namely the invitation to ordained priestly ministry determined by inner appearance of the heart and not by the outward appearance of gender.

Over the years for me, there has come to be a certain "traditional way" of experiencing Holy Thursday morning. It begins by meeting with a few friends, and then carpooling together to the Logan Circle area. It usually entails a vigil in front of the cathedral, as clergy and some laity from around the diocese begin to gather for the Mass of the Christ, celebrated by the cardinal. Normally we have some banners proclaiming that the sacraments of the Catholic Church belong to all, and that discrimination based upon gender is not supported by either biblical scholarship nor the equality of all people before God. Usually many of those coming for the Mass in the cathedral smile and offer words of encouragement, but a few scorn and utter words that I will not repeat here. Then when the ceremony is finished, our friends gather together and during a late brunch at a deli on Spring Garden Street we have a debriefing session.

This year, however, as I reflected upon this Holy Thursday morning, it seemed that something was different. Hence it was that I recalled the question cited in the beginning of this article, but paraphrased to say, "Why was this Holy Thursday different, for me, from all others?" What follows are my own perceptions and interpretations of what was different about the Holy Thursday experience this year.

One small difference was that although we gathered in front of the cathedral, we gathered in the light, across the street, in the park; and not on the sidewalk directly under the shadow of the cathedral. Another small difference to the morning was the presence and the wonderful sound (thanks to Marquise) of a noble bell which has been present and sounded on many other occasions to proclaim a witness for justice. Another small difference was the pres-

ence of three women, dressed in mourning garb, symbolizing the women who remained faithful to Christ even unto the cross, and now mourning the lost gifts of countless present-day faithful witnesses to Christ who are denied their official ministry solely because of their gender. Another difference this year was a change I felt in the focus of the entire event which was not primarily upon the injustice caused by the present discriminatory policy. Rather the focus was upon creative liturgy developed and celebrated by a group of concerned Christians, women and men, Catholic and non-Catholic; a glimpse of what the future will be. While acknowledging the loss and the injustice (a Good Friday experience), there was an even stronger presence of the Exodus and eventual freedom (the Easter experience).

The differences, while small, are to me significant. I would like to digress for a moment with a different example before concluding.

Some time ago when I was first becoming acquainted with the Catholic Worker movement, I was struck by the fact that no gift to the Catholic Worker is tax deductible. Initially, I must admit that I was disappointed by this discovery. Like many other people, I am looking for any deductions that I can possibly find as the date of April 15 nears and I am still trying to complete my IRS form 1040.

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FEMINIST THEOLOGY INSTITUTE AT VILLANOVA

"Themes in Feminist Theology in the New Millennium II" is the title of Villanova University's annual theology institute, scheduled for June 18-20, 9 AM-4 PM daily, at the university's Connelly Center. Speakers and topics are:

Christian Feminism and Family Life

Helen Alvare, The Catholic University of America

Women of the Church and the New Millennium

Phyllis Zagano, American Academy of Religion

Women's Work and Justice in the Global Economy

Barbara Andolsen, Monmouth University

Christian Feminism and Popular Culture

Sheila Biggs, University of Southern California

Women in Early Christianity

PHEME PERKINS, Boston College

Who Will Be the Christian Feminists of the New Millennium?

Gaile Pohlhaus, Villanova University

HOLY THURSDAY

Continued from first page

However, my thinking on this point has changed; I am now glad that no gift to the Catholic Worker can be used as a tax deduction. I slowly began to realize that this tax deduction was influencing my thinking in ways of which I was not fully aware. It was creating a “we” and “they” approach to my view of the world. I (we) were offering a donation to “them,” and for this charitable work I should be rewarded (get a tax deduction). Soon it gets confusing as to whether I am more interested in the act, giving the donation, or in getting the reward, tax deduction. In either case, it is clearly a “we” and “them” situation, a divided world. And my so-called good act, my donation, is also helping to perpetuate the separation and helping to perpetuate the problem I presumably am trying to help resolve.

I also recall at a retreat a few years ago, in Cape May, the words of a courageous priest from a poor parish in New York City. He indicated that neither the Catholic Church, nor any other church in the United States, could properly fulfill its moral responsibility to the community as long as it retained a tax-exempt status. He claimed that the financial tie, expecting a reward from the government (pay no taxes) silently yet powerfully influenced both the vision and the actions of the Church so that it could no longer properly act from a really moral basis. Rather its thoughts and actions were always influenced, at times controlled, by the reward motivation.

Needless to say, no church has yet come forward to renounce its tax-exempt status. Likewise no church has yet begun to fulfill its moral and religious obligation to the larger society. I believe that this failure is tied not necessarily completely, but certainly directly, to the churches’ continuing dependence upon rewards (pay no taxes) from the government. In the Gospel there is a simple comment by Jesus, “Render to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” The churches in America have yet to heed this simple, yet most powerful, advice.

Part of what I find attractive about the Catholic Worker movement is that its houses precisely refuse to accept a tax-exempt status. In so doing, the Worker remains free to take a truly moral stance on a great variety of issues, even when the moral positions are not the politically correct positions. Also by their position, they were and remain a living indicator to me (and to others) that my goal is to join with the human family, to share, giving and receiving. It is a guide to me to avoid the “we” and “them” scenario that is so prevalent in our government, in our churches and in much of society.

Finally, let me bring this digression to an end and return to Holy Thursday. What I experienced this Holy Thursday was different from previous years. It was a movement from shadow to light. It was a movement from protesting to proclaiming. It was a movement from being outside the cathedral, to being inside the Church—the community of people, of believers, those who worship God in their hearts and in Spirit.

While the Church of power (those inside the cathedral) remains tied to the rewards of government, the words of Christ, “Render to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s” need the Church of the people to keep these crucial words alive in the world. So the Church of the people this year truly proclaiming, seems to me an important shift, bringing the word of God out of the shadow and into the light for all the world to see.

Is my perception accurate? Is it valid for others, as well as for me? Or am I reading too much into the signs I saw? I experienced a small but significant shift. People were more focused on proclaiming the role of ministry. Many of the people present were people who regularly throughout the year try to include others in their family and try to really understand themselves as part of the human family, surrendering whatever gets in the way of this bond of real solidarity. So will the reality that I experienced this Holy Thursday become more and more characteristic of the women’s ordination movement, and efforts to bring

BELL RINGER

I shivered in the shade across from the cathedral
on Holy Thursday morning
still—what more fitting time to gather ourselves together
rabble rousing followers of the greatest Rabble Rouser ever
shielded only by our hearts’ truth
boldly borne before us
on our banners and our signs
 (“Cardinal Belivacqua,” one announced
 “Your prayers for vocations have been answered.
 WE ARE HERE!
 Ordain women.”)
 come to tell truth to power
 —the riskiest of businesses as any prophet knows—
 and I shivered in the shade until Marquise rang the bell.
 The strains of “Steal Away, Steal Away to Jesus”
 unexpectedly powerful
 knifed clean as the morning through the chill air
 the words heavy with sorrow weighed down with longing
 the prayer of a people not allowed to be free
 three women in black behind a stark coffin
 facing the cathedral
 stir at the sound
 and bury their faces painted white masks of mourning
 deep in their hands and shudder and weep
 I turn to Marquise, slim and solemn at seven
 the song of his people now shared with us
 and give him the signal:
 he nods and he smiles
 swings back the clapper and Marquise rings the bell!
 Older now, and weary with less faith in my fellows
 (or perhaps in myself)
 I am not nearly as certain as when I was 20 (carrying
 my first sign “End apartheid,” it said at a ship
 docked in the harbor
 and I hadn’t an inkling what “apartheid” meant)
 that I will be here to see the things I’ve imagined
 (thank you John Lennon)
 the visions I’ve held in my heart and my hands
 come to be:
 Dr. King’s dream seems in some ways more remote now than ever
 while American bombs still rain terror all over the world.
 and the Church that seduced and inspired me so deeply
 in that time dearly remembered
 when windows were thrown open to let in the light
 has lost much ground since then
 but last Holy Thursday across from the cathedral
 surrounded by others who share some of my dreams
 I was sure it was coming—the day the Church ordains women
 and I only pray we will all be there to see it
 laughing and cheering as Marquise rings that bell!

...Karen B. Lenz

dignity and love to all the people of our community? That is still to be seen. Clearly my vote is in that direction.

But, for this Holy Thursday, I saw a glimpse of Easter, of the Church of the people, not the Church of power. I know the dark shadows still linger in a powerful way. But my spirit is lifted, for in that glimpse of the future revealed in the present, I know that my Savior lives!

Jim Raigan is a college administrator, co-founder of the Time Out Center, and a member of the Philadelphia Catholic Worker Circle of Friends

DIALOGUE BOX

We at Equal wRites firmly believe that one of the most important functions of the newsletter is to serve as a forum to stimulate thought and discussion on the many issues of crucial importance to those of us who love our Church at the same time we sometimes despair of it. To that end we often print articles examining a subject from different points of view. It is our hope that the dialogue will sharpen our vision and strengthen our efforts in the cause we all share.

We invite our readers to join in the dialogue. Send your typewritten letters—copies of letters sent elsewhere are fine—to Karen Lenz, editor, at 430 W. Jefferson St., Phila., PA 19122. Letters must be signed (names withheld upon request) and include a phone number for verification.

ADVICE FOR THE CARDINAL

Following is a copy of a letter sent by a member of the SEP/WOC core committee to Cardinal Bevilacqua.

May 2, 2002

Dear Cardinal Bevilacqua:

The current crisis in the Church presents us with a great opportunity. Please make the best of it.

Your move to exclude gay men from the priesthood threatens to undermine much of the hard-won progress of Catholics in places like Germantown, where gays and lesbians are just beginning to enjoy the level of participation Christ intended for all his people.

Whatever your intentions are, the implications and timing of your announcements are offensive, destructive and ill-informed. What are you thinking? Are you suggesting that it would more acceptable for a priest to abuse a girl than a boy? Would it be less offensive for a pastor to coerce a parish woman than a parish man? Do you really believe that homosexuals are more horny or for some reason less able to control their actions?

Cardinal Bevilacqua, you and other Church men have created a crisis with your arrogant, self-protective 'good ol' boy' approach to the problem of abuse by men. Please do not make things worse by trying to blame gay men for your bad judgments. Crisis creates an opportunity for change. Make it positive. You have the door to the priesthood open, poised to throw out gay men. Don't do it. Rather, keep it open and let in women, lesbians included.

Everyone will win. The priestly work force will swell at once. The incidence of abuse will decline immediately both because known abusers will no longer be sheltered and women are, in fact, less likely to be abusive in any manner. The Church will benefit from both retaining the talents of the gay men you are proposing to exclude and including the many women, who have been unfairly excluded from full participation in Church life, will have the opportunity they deserve and Christ intended. And last, but far from least, the inclusion of women in the priesthood will presumably lead to their presence in the hierarchy, resulting in the marked deepening of a very unnecessarily shallow talent pool.

Everyone will win. Christ will rejoice!

Sincerely
Bernard J. McBride
Philadelphia

VATICAN VETOES INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

To the Editor:

This morning I read the headline in the 4/26/02 edition of the *National Catholic Reporter*, "Congregation Blasts Liturgical Translation." The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments rejected the book of prayers for the Mass prepared by the embattled International Commission for English in the Liturgy. They tore apart practically everything we presently use and have asked to use. This translation was prepared over an eleven-year period and submitted for approval in 1998. Some ten years ago, when I was active in SEPA/WOC, we had a letter-writing campaign to American bishops throughout the United States advocating the use of inclusive language in the proposed revised lectionary. We received some very favorable responses from these men who encouraged us at that time saying that changes were in the works. I always thought that this small thing was achievable.

Two-thirds of the American bishops and other English-speaking bishops approved this new book of prayers that was submitted. The head of the Congregation for Divine Worship, a Chilean, expressed the Vatican's deep disapproval. The Congregation's statement characterized our translation as "faddish" and "inadequate." The proposed book was described as embodying the ethos of "consumerist societies." Ironic, isn't it? The ethos that drives our consumerism keeps the Vatican afloat financially, not to mention the money and missionaries that Americans send to practically every third-world country in the world including Chile. I am frankly sick and tired of everybody biting our hand that feeds them.

Today at Sunday Mass, our pastor said that the cardinals who were called to Rome regarding the sexual abuse scandal came back and seemed just as confused as when they went over! Nothing was solved! Our pastor had the courage to say from the altar that anyone who abuses our children...be he priest, bishop, cardinal or pope, should get out immediately. We live in the Diocese of Palm Beach where the last two of our bishops in three years have had to step down for sexually abusing children.

And so those cardinals came home from Rome with no clear direction on how to deal with clerical sexual abuse of our children. But the Vatican has been very clear on how we should pray in English. And, here we go again, we'll do as we're told. Italians know better!

Marguerite Groves
Stuart, Florida

THE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH

AND WHAT IT HAS TO DO WITH US: FOUR VIEWS

The following statement was issued by Catholic Organizations for Reform and signed onto by SEPA/WOC, as well as a number of other national and local Church renewal groups. For more on SEPA/WOC and COR, see the article "SEPA/WOC, COR and the COR Statement" in this issue, on p. 7.

1. THE COR STATEMENT HEALING AND HOPE: ANALYSIS OF A CRISIS

The fuel that lit the fires now burning in the Catholic Church is the desire to preserve the childhood of our children. No one should have to choose the safety of a child over allegiance to a church. A reformed and renewed church will not oblige us to decide between the church we love and the children we cherish.

In the voiceless victimization of our children, we have found our voice. In their suffering, we have found the wounded places in our own lives and in our church. We have been led to a land more promising than the bondage in which we lived too long a time. We shall never return to where we once were.

We believe that the root cause of all the evils of these latter days is the abuse of power. We know that Jesus condemned severely such abuse in the religious leaders of his time. We are all too flawed to flourish in an environment where no accountability is required, where people are made passive before authority, where pretension to infallibility and wisdom is not justified or tested. In such a system, children are the early victims, but sooner or later, all of us, even those in power, are damaged and destroyed.

When abuse of power is uprooted, a tree of life will grow in the church again and we shall find safety in its branches. We believe that abuse of power bears evil fruit, poisoning all of us. We demand that this fruit never again be offered to God's people.

1. We demand justice for the victims of sexual abuse by clergy. Women and children have been sexually abused in numbers we can no longer calculate. Since the Gospel has not restrained the perpetrators of such violence, we demand that they be brought to justice in full compliance with civil law. Victims do not need reconciliation with the church; it is the church which must be reconciled to them. The church must be ready with the spiritual, emotional, and financial resources to help the healing process whenever victims are ready. There are no statutes of limitation on healing. We observe, in passing, that many priests do not abuse others and are themselves abused by a church system which often oppresses and silences those who love the church the most. We celebrate good priests and we invite them to join us in our demands.

2. We demand structural reform and renewal. A collegial church is the only cure for the pathology and secrecy, patriarchy and privilege that have made us ill. Monarchy and aristocracy are not evangelical values. The church of Christ has been starved in all of its ministries for too long a time, malnourished by the exclusion of all women and married men from the priesthood and decision-making. It is clear that were the baptized given voice in the church, an

inclusive priesthood would be overwhelmingly endorsed. Structural reform will deny a haven to abusers of sex or power, to those who require secrecy for their actions and immunity for their crimes.

3. We demand a community of God's people. The fires of Pentecost do not burn for a few but for all of us. We were not summoned to a church where some have titles and deference and privilege at the expense of the community's very life and spirit. The church is God's people, not a corporation of executive officers or a medieval fiefdom. Only a church out of touch with the Gospel could boast that there is no democracy in its structures. A church of privilege for the few impedes social justice and impoverishes all of us.

4. We demand that sexuality be celebrated by the church as a source of life. The demonization of sexuality, its repression and renunciation, is an abuse of life. The focus of church teaching on sexual conduct and its relative neglect of abuse of power distort the Gospel. A church in which male celibacy is a precondition for authority and all other sexual choices are marginalized is a church that has lost not only the Gospel but also common sense. Abuse of women, abuse of children, and mandatory celibacy are different forms of sexual abuse, each reinforcing the other in a dance of death.

5. We demand financial accountability. Just wages and financial fairness must prevail in the house of the church. We must overturn the tables that block the way to full financial disclosure. The coins of the poor must not be bartered for the comfort of church leaders. We must know why there was money for cathedrals but not for those working in church institutions, for hierarchical excess but not for pensions, for papal visits and even cover-up compensation but not for teachers and ministers.

6. We demand the end of discrimination in the church. The present attempt to scapegoat homosexuals is symptomatic of a system that blames everyone except those in power. The list of those denounced as a source of evil in the church is a sign of the dysfunctionality of the system: married priests; all the divorced and remarried; homosexuals; those who call for a collegial church; indeed, the contemporary world in which we live. The suffering of those most in pain is intensified by excommunication for abortion, denial of Eucharist for remarriage, prohibition of lay ministries for married priests, and legal harassment of sexual abuse victims. Discrimination exists in the church; it is racial and sexual at different times. At the moment, it is focused on sexual orientation. It also is class and caste-driven, preserving from blame and granting immunity from resignation those with clerical privilege.

Let this analysis stand as our sense of why we are now in crisis. Let it be known that we Catholic reform organizations from North America join in the calls for a Continental Congress of the Catholic People. Let this document be received as our contribution to the agenda of such an assembly. Let it come quickly.

It is time, long past due, to make the church a community of healing and hope for all of us. Only such a church dares to call itself the church of Christ.

It was not power over one another Jesus encouraged. The church is meant for love. Jesus abused no one, least of all those whose trust he sought.

II. RETHINKING THE CRISIS: ARE WE OVERREACTING?

by Marian Ronan

Perhaps by the time *Equal wRites* goes to press, responses to the cover-up of the sexual abuse of minors by Catholic priests will have shifted somewhat. But today, on the Feast of St. Patrick, it's hard to pick up a newspaper or a magazine or turn on the radio without encountering the subject. This crisis seems to be the biggest thing that has happened in the American Church since Vatican II.

Some commentators suggest that this whole sorry business will issue, ultimately, in something worthwhile. That the Church will be forced to be more open and accountable. That never again will the institution engage in such shameful cover-ups. That the harm done to so many, now that it is seeing the light of day, may be healed. Already a diocesan newspaper, the *Boston Pilot*, has called for a rethinking of priestly celibacy and women's ordination, something few of us could have imagined until recently.

Others are less sanguine; are, in fact, outraged by these scandalous offenses. We have heard multiple demands for the resignation of Cardinal Law, and for Catholics across the country to withhold money from the collection plate. The massive legal settlements alone—a billion dollars by some accounts—are simply too much to be borne. I myself have been thinking about clergy sexual abuse for a long time now. In the summer 1994 issue of *Equal wRites* I argued that the Catholic community ought not to so quickly excuse Cardinal Bernardin because Stephen Cook, the gay man who had accused him of sexual abuse, had retracted his accusation. The legal maneuvers Bernardin undertook to sever his case from that of the seminary professor who did abuse Cook, a priest under Bernardin's supervision when he was Bishop of Cincinnati, seemed rather more judicious than Christian to me. We now realize that shrewd legal maneuvers by bishops have been standard operating procedure for years.

Nonetheless, I continue to be deeply wary about the long-term implications, not so much of the crisis itself, as of the response to this crisis by the liberal Catholic community. I fear our enraged, dare I say even in some cases gleeful, response, is digging us deeper into the very hole we most need to climb out of.

My concern has to do with the key role of sexuality, and specifically sexual transgression, in this crisis. In my dissertation work on late 20th century American Catholicism I argue that the greatest problem currently facing the Church is the hyperattention accorded sexuality and gender. Whatever happy notions some of us have about liberation and social justice being the most significant part of the Gospel message, the Church operates as if sex and gender regulation were the single most important part of its teaching. Those inclined to dispute this should ask themselves if they have ever heard of a Catholic being excommunicated for serving on a jury in a capital murder case, or for going to war. As Supreme Court Justice and Opus Dei member Antonin Scalia argues, the Catholic condemnation of abortion and contraception is infallible, whereas Catholic teaching against the death penalty and nuclear war is optional.

The magisterial Catholic hard-line position on sexuality, along with the parallel right-wing evangelical position, buttresses widespread sexual hysteria in the United States. Such hysteria results in events like the murder of Matthew Shepherd but also in the systematic violation of the civil rights of individuals indicted and convicted for a wide range of sexual offenses including not only pedophilia but also statutory rape and the sexual abuse of teenagers. As Alexander Cockburn reports in the March 11, 2002 issue of *The Nation*, a woman high school teacher in Arizona is now facing a

sentence of 100 years in prison for having an affair with a 17-year-old student, while an 18-year-old boy in Kansas was sentenced to 17 years in prison for having oral sex with a 15-year-old schoolmate, a sentence upheld upon appeal. Furthermore, sex offenders who have served out their prison sentences here in California can, on the advice of a panel of experts, be incarcerated *indefinitely* as sexual predators.

If, at this point, you feel little sympathy for these individuals, you are not alone. The vast majority of our fellow citizens favor this kind of treatment; that's why it continues. Sexual offenses with minors are so heinous that the perpetrators should have their civil rights abrogated. Lucky nobody we know is such a person.

Let's return now to the current crisis over the clergy sexual abuse of minors. I will set aside the apparently trivial point that the press describes the vast majority of sexual offenses allegedly committed by priests as pedophilia, although a very small percentage of these cases actually involve children. Many of us are so enraged at the Church that the difference, say, between a seven-year-old and a seventeen-year-old is dismissed as insignificant. I will, for the sake of argument, let this point go, though I do note that there is nothing worse you can call someone than "pedophile" at this time in US history.

Let us turn, instead, to the actual structure of most of the articles about the current crisis. Repeatedly these articles describe the offenses of which priests and bishops have been accused and for which they are not infrequently convicted. And then they argue, almost without exception, that the real issue is not these sexual offenses but the shameless deception and legal maneuvering that have attended the cover-ups that have gone on for so many years. This lack of institutional accountability is the real offense, we are told, far more than the sexual offenses themselves.

But this is a patent falsehood. The institutional Church has consistently demonstrated a lack of accountability for as long as any of us can remember. Consider, for example, the closing of inner-city schools and parishes. Repeatedly commissions of laypeople have recommended against closing these centers of care in the Black and Hispanic communities, but the men in power have gone on closing them while building new parishes in the suburbs. The abandonment of the inner city by the institutional church has done as much serious and extensive harm as has the abuse of minors by the clergy. But have we liberal Catholics been unable to stifle our outrage over this abuse of our Black and Hispanic brothers and sisters? Are we considering withholding money from the collection plate over this?

Many readers will be dismayed that I could even mention these two failures of Catholic institutional accountability in the same breath. Sex abuse, after all, is a crime. Closing inner-city parishes is an unfortunate but necessary business decision.

Before you dismiss my comparison out of hand, however, ask yourself this: would the institutional Church's lack of accountability have captured the attention of the press and of the reform community in anything like the same way if it had not been explicitly linked to sexual scandal? But if the only way we can get ourselves sufficiently outraged to bring about the reform of the Church is in response to sexual transgression, how different are we, actually, from the institution we ostensibly oppose? The Catholic fixation on sexuality and gender has resulted not only in the exclusion of Catholic women from ordination but also in the trivialization of the racism and classism that taint the women's ordination movement as well as a good deal of the rest of liberal American Catholicism. If we too are in its clutches, how will we ever change it?

Marian Ronan ended her term as national president of the WOC Board of Directors on Sunday, May 2, 2002, but hey, who was counting?

III. CLERGY SEX ABUSE SCANDAL: SURGERY NEEDED FOR HEALING

by *Marguerite Sexton*

I certainly do not believe that the current clergy sexual abuse scandal is exaggerated or blown out of proportion at all. Those of us who are lifetime Catholics have long known about this dirty little secret. I, for one, am greatly relieved that it is finally begun (and yes, it has only begun) to be out in the open. This scandal is certainly something that will not and should not go away quickly. Indeed, I recently wrote a prayer of petition for my parish liturgy that said this, "We pray that this Church, founded in Jesus' name, will be blessed with courage and humility to listen until all the scandalous stories get to be told and all the truths find their way into the light." How else can or should the Church proceed?

There are some who would claim that this scandal is somehow the work of an anti-Catholic media or others who wish to exaggerate it for their own purposes. To be honest, I would feel better if I thought that were the case. I am certainly aware of anti-Catholic bias and it pains me. I just wish we wouldn't give those people so much fuel for their fire.

But the question to people who would wish to believe that all of this is somehow exaggerated is this: How do you know that there is exaggeration? Were you there, in the privacy of the rectories, when these child victims were alone with priests? How dare anyone dismiss the abuse of even one child as less than a great tragedy for the entire Church? Behind every terrible charge a life lies decimated. Who should ever say that any church, any diocese, indeed any individual priest is more important than the pain inflicted on even one child?

What is clear is that something is wrong in the institution. Something is terribly, horribly awry. It is ironic to note that the Church, ever preoccupied by sexual sins, created a system that generated many hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of sex offenders. The Church never seemed to understand that God created two genders for a purpose, that both are integral to the life of the world. Who could ever believe, even for a moment, that a Church where men and women had equal status would be going through this current upheaval? Does anyone seriously think that the male-dominated Church isn't wholly and totally responsible for this? Think in terms of family. Imagine what family life would be like where all the men made all the decisions in secret from the women and then told the women and children what to do; a system where there was no female oversight. Such patriarchal systems in families, churches and governments have set the stage for the political and moral corruption in our Church and in our world. In God's world everything is connected to everything else. Pedophilia is not separate from male domination. Sexual abuse didn't just happen out of nowhere. It happened because of male power and domination of an institution that lives secrets and lies.

I believe we had better hold onto our seats because we're likely in for a rough ride for many years to come. The scandal that has erupted is more than likely akin to the first layer of the skin of an onion. When that layer gets peeled away, perhaps we will learn about the women in active relationship with priests. Then maybe we will learn about the children fathered by priests and supported by the Church. Is there anyone who would dismiss the rape of nuns in Africa as anything less than an incredible human tragedy? I suspect that the worst stories are yet to be told because many of

the victims, especially the females, are too embarrassed or ashamed to come forward.

Initially I admit to being somewhat critical of WOC because of what I believed to be its refusal to capitalize on the scandal issue. (I come from a business background that teaches that it's smart to connect your cause with whatever the public is focused on in the moment.) I now believe that the scandal is so much larger than any of us could have anticipated, it just takes time to figure out how to move around within it. The connection between women's ordination and this situation is just so obvious it's hard to know where to even begin.

Just as Jesus told an unbelieving Thomas, "Put your hand into my side," the hands of the victims have found their place upon the wound on the Body of Christ and have discovered it filled with malignant tumors. In order for healing to take place surgery will be required. To believe in God's grace is to believe that the body will be raised to new life. This is a moment of profound grace for the Church.

So, sisters, get ready. Let us tell our daughters and granddaughters that we are at the cusp of a new time for our Church. It won't be easy and it won't be quick. The old Church is passing away and the corpse will stink for a while. But out of it will spring new life and, eventually a Church where there will be no discrimination based upon gender. Then finally perhaps we will be the people that Jesus envisioned in his prayer that all may be one.

Marguerite Sexton, founder and president of Journeys of the Heart, is a lifetime Roman Catholic activist.

JOIN US IN DEMANDING A FREE AND OPEN SYNOD

Are you, like us, discouraged by the lack of free discussion and the tightly controlled agenda at planning meetings for the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Synod scheduled for October? Were you discouraged (but not surprised) at the dearth of meetings held in poor sections of the city?

SEPA/WOC is working on formulating an appropriate contribution to the synod plans, and perhaps a response to the synod itself. Join us to brainstorm and demand open discussions of the Philadelphia Church's many pressing issues, and not just more of the same old party-line stuff. Information: 215 843-9565.

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IV. DIGNITY AND THE CARDINAL: WHAT THE CRISIS IS NOT ABOUT

The following is a statement issued by Dignity/USA, the nation's oldest and largest organization of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered Catholics, their families, friends and supporters. SEPA/WOC is proud to count itself among those friends and supporters.

On Friday, April 26, 2002, Cardinal Anthony Bevilacqua, Archbishop of Philadelphia, made the following statement: "We feel a person who is homosexual-oriented is not a suitable candidate for the priesthood even if he had never committed any homosexual "act".

Bevilacqua added that when a heterosexual man accepts celibacy to become a priest "he's giving up a very good thing, and that is a family and children," Bevilacqua said. "That would not be true about a homosexual-oriented candidate... By his orientation he's not giving up family and marriage. He's giving up what the church considers an aberration, a moral evil."

These remarks come on the heels of statements made by US Catholic Bishops Conference President Bishop Gregory, Cardinal George of Chicago, Cardinal Maida of Detroit and Vatican spokesman Dr. Joaquin Novarro-Valls, all blaming the US clergy sexual abuse scandal on gay priests. These comments are outrageous and represent the worst kind of bigotry. They are not consistent with authentic Catholic teaching. They are dehumanizing and could incite some people to antigay violence.

EXPRESS YOUR OUTRAGE!

Here's what you can do to let Catholic officials know this kind of homophobia will not be tolerated:

- 1) Call the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at (215) 587-3800, and/or send email to webmaster@adphila.org and let Cardinal Bevilacqua know what you think of his comments. Demand an apology and a retraction of these statements, and an end to the policy barring gays from seminary admission in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.
 - 2) Call Bishop Wilton Gregory, President of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops at (202) 541-3000, or send email to kschrage@diobelle.org. Let them know what you think of Cardinal Bevilacqua's statements. Repeat demands for an apology, and insist that the Bishops stop blaming the Church's sexual abuse scandal on gay priests.
 - 3) Call your bishop. For contact information for Catholic dioceses in the US, go to www.usccb.org. Demand that the bishops accept responsibility for their own role in the cover-up of clergy sexual abuse, and demand an end to the scapegoating of gay priests.
 - 4) Spread the word. Ask your friends, family members and coworkers who share your outrage to join you in these actions.
- The Catholic Church should stand for love and justice, not hate. End the bigotry now!**

For more information, contact: Dignity/USA, 202-861-0017, www.DignityUSA.org, Dignity@aol.com.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

SEPA/WOC, COR, AND THE COR STATEMENT

by Regina Bannan

The energy at the April meeting of Catholic Organizations for Reform was palpable—that's not papabile but it could be. Twice a year, usually, representatives of 24 national and local Church renewal organizations gather to discuss what actions each is taking and to develop positions that each organization can sign onto if it wishes. Such a good model, especially in these times! You'll see the statement developed at the meeting on page four of this issue of *Equal wRites*; the SEPA/WOC core committee eagerly signed on.

COR is ten years old this year, and Southeastern Pennsylvania WOC has applied for membership. Staying in touch with what other organizations are doing is important, but even more important is the strategy and dialogue that can occur around the papabile or the meeting of cardinals, which was just about to happen when we met, or anything else. I felt as if the best minds in American Catholic reform were gathered, and it was exciting to be a part of it. Two representatives can come to each meeting, so I hope that other members of the SEPA/WOC core committee will be able to go once our membership is officially approved.

The June meeting of the American bishops in Dallas will be a

major focus of action; many national groups will have experts ready to lead the press to structural reform issues beyond the scandals, in addition to having prayer services for victims and healing. FutureChurch is sponsoring a national day of prayer for hope and healing on Corpus Christi (June 2), and doing a green ribbon campaign. There will be a large gathering July 20 in Boston, which feels like the epicenter of this earthquake; the focus will be on how a local group starts to move, something that might be very useful to Philadelphians. World Youth Days with the Pope will occur July 23-28 in Toronto, with groups there prepared to "challenge the Church" for justice. Also in July the steering committee for Women's Ordination Worldwide will meet in Austria. WOC billboards, sponsored by CTA groups, will go up in Detroit and Pittsburgh. And all this is not counting the regular national conferences of many organizations!

There were two presentations at the April meeting, one by Bill D'Antonio of Catholic University applying the insights of his most recent book on Catholic identity to the current crisis, and the other by Joanna Manning of CFFC Canada about the 1990 Winter Commission Report for the Archdiocese of St. John's, Newfoundland, an inquiry into the clergy sexual abuse of children after a scandal there.

Why should SEPA/WOC be a part of COR? Challenging ideas, new approaches, deepened knowledge. We are leaders in Philadelphia Church reform. We have as much going on as many national organizations, with *Equal wRites*, our many witnesses, our purple stoles, our web page (www.sepawoc.org), and our visibility in the media. We need to share our success as well as to continue to grow.

Regina Bannan is a member of the SEPA/WOC core committee and teaches at Temple University.

HEY, LOOK US OVER:

GUESS WHO'S ON THE WEB

Be sure to check out SEPA/WOC'S new web page—at www.sepawoc.org.



WHAT WE'RE UP TO

Above is the banner two intrepid members of SEPA/WOC gleefully hung on the fence of archdiocesan St. Charles Borromeo Seminary on March 21, the International Day of Prayer for Women's Ordination. The message, facing Lancaster Avenue during the morning rush hour, stayed up for some 50 minutes until two contingents of ground crew were dispatched to take it down

ESCAPE OF THE CARDINALS: WHAT WAS THE MESSAGE?

by Eileen DiFranco

George Bush would have walked across the street. So would have the governor, Pennsylvania's two senators, or Philly's mayor. Although their politics might differ from ours, these elected officials would likely have shaken our hands and maybe even smiled. They would not have been afraid of the perhaps 15 largely female, middle-aged, conservative-looking protesters who stood at the back entrance of the cathedral at the tail end of SEPA/WOC's demonstration on the occasion of the visit to Philadelphia by most of the United States cardinals on April 26.

But the cardinals were afraid of us. They were afraid of what we might say. Afraid that they might have to answer to us for their sins as we must answer to them for ours. They didn't want to face a Body of Christ which does not conform to their fantasies. Showing that fear, they hired a touring bus to drive the perhaps 200 yards from the exit of the cathedral to the entrance of the hotel where they would dine on lobster and roast beef. This way they could pretend that we didn't exist. **NONE OF THE MEDIA COVERED THE FACT THAT SIX OR SO CARDINALS TOOK A BUS 200 YARDS TO AVOID TALKING TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE LIVED THEIR LIVES IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH!** The leader of the western world would have been less afraid.

The escape of the cardinals from the cathedral occurred about 5:30, when there were only a few of us left. People began to assemble about 3:30 in the front of the cathedral. Contrary to media reports, there were perhaps 60 or so people from different groups. Carloads of people were due to show up at 5:30, after they left work. The media didn't know about that either.

We were swamped by reporters who came from Washington, Baltimore, Lancaster, and New York, who wanted to talk to as many of us as they could. We were also surrounded by the police; plainclothes detectives wearing safety like arm bands, as well as uniformed police officers. This was not shown on camera either. I really think that had any of us dared to enter church, we might have been arrested, even though we had no plans to disrupt the service.

As the crowd began to thin, some of us went to the back of the cathedral when we realized that the cardinals would never exit through the front door after Mass. At first we were assured of our place at the side of the driveway by an avuncular plainclothes officer. As the cardinals prepared to leave, however, a uniformed police officer told us that we would have to move to "the back of the bus," per orders of Captain Somebody.

(There was a bus parked right behind where we were standing.) Those were the wrong words to use. I sat down and informed the officer that we were not moving, regardless of his orders from Captain Whoever, and told someone to go and get the cameras. The

kindly officer rescinded the captain's order and told me that I could get up off the ground; he would not make us move. Then the cardinals rolled by in their touring coach, their faces carefully turned away from us. It was a sad moment. To what lengths will the cardinals go to avoid hearing the truth.

With us was Janice Sevre-Dusynska who presented herself for ordination in Lexington, Kentucky four years ago. Janice has been banned from every church property in the Diocese of Atlanta for quietly sitting in the back of their cathedral during an ordination ceremony this past February. The presence of this diminutive woman dressed in an alb, cincture and stole in church was more problematic, more disconcerting, and apparently more criminal than any of the sexual crimes committed by ordained priests. The archdiocese had her arrested and banned from church. They have not extended the same forgiveness to her that Cardinal George said on "Nightline" on April 25 should be extended to a priest "who might have had a couple of drinks and then felt up a sixteen-year-old 'woman.'" Janice's case remains active in Atlanta. Guys like the ones Cardinal George mentioned remain in good standing, protected and hidden by a dysfunctional system which obviously still doesn't get that a 16-year-old is not a woman and should not be "felt up" by any adult, most especially an ordained Roman Catholic priest, even once.

There was one final irony. Although several of the media people told us that no press or cameras were allowed into the dinner, shots of the dinner appeared on the 11 o'clock news. What was shown proved that the cardinals either don't get it or just don't care. Each of these elderly men, dressed in their red beanies and robes, was escorted into the dinner with a voluptuous young woman on either arm. Perhaps they were trying to convey the message that they weren't gay, since Philadelphia's cardinal had stated publicly the same day that gay men are not accepted into the diocesan seminary since what they give up to be a priest is "intrinsicly evil," even if they remain celibate.

The message I got was that they didn't care. That they were in their element, sitting in a fancy hotel with adoring fans wealthy enough to put up a thousand bucks to eat crab and lobster with them. These were their people, not those of us outside who dared to disagree, dared to dissent and rain on their parade. We were beyond their pale both economically and doctrinally. We remain the poor slobs in the pews who have been told to pay, pray, and obey.

I am ashamed of my cardinal; of all the cardinals. They have made the Church of Jesus Christ an embarrassment. They are the architects of the scandal. They continue to carry it forward. May God have mercy on their souls. May God help us all.

Eileen DiFranco is a nurse and a part-time seminarian. She is a core committee member of SEPA/WOC.

DID YOU KNOW?

Compiled by Marguerite Groves

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

Redemptorist Fr. Francis X. Murphy: "You have to continually stand up to the guys in Rome, or they'll plow you right under. If 25 American bishops were to gather together and issue a statement proclaiming that Rome would no longer dominate them, it would be over. They would have their autonomy, instead of allowing the ecclesiastical twerps, the sycophants in their midst, to have such a disproportionate say."

Bread Rising, October 2001

•"I learned that women were smart and capable, could live in community together without men, and in fact did not need men much."
...Anna Quindlen, essayist and novelist, on the feminist fringe benefits of attending parochial school and being taught by nuns.

NATIONAL NETWORK FOR U. S. WOMEN

U. S. Women Connect (USWC) is a national network focused on holding the US government accountable to the promises it made in the Beijing Platform for Action at the UN Fourth World Conference in 1995. USWC was formed by a group of women who began meeting informally after the Beijing conference and committed to promoting women and girl's rights.

The USWC and other women's groups have been actively promoting the Beijing Platform for Action with US government agencies since 1995. Their ability to do so is now compromised, since the President's Interagency Council on Women (PIAC) established by President Clinton in 1995 is now defunct under the Bush Administration.

ABOUT MORE THAN BURKAS

In the plans to put together a new Afghanistan government that would represent all sectors of the society, women are still being ignored. Recognizing the danger that they will be sold out in impending negotiations, more than 50 Afghan women from different organizations have issued an appeal to the international community. Calling for an immediate end to the military action in their country, they condemned the waging of an anti-terrorism campaign at the expense of the human rights of Afghans. Such a campaign should be carried out through international law and tribunals, they said. They demanded that any new nation-building effort respect all ethnic and religious groups, as well as women and children. Finally, they demanded that "Afghan women's participation in the peace process must be assured."

To support this important petition, e-mail the Muslim women's organization, "Women Living under Muslim Laws," wluml@wluml.org.

Rosemary Radford

REUther

LOCAL REFORMER

Fr. Andrew Cifieri, liturgy director at Daylesford Abbey in Paoli, PA, is one of a three-person executive committee steering the Catholic Academy of Liturgy, whose aim is to promote liturgical reform in line with the principles of the Second Vatican Council. The academy's purpose is "to engage in research, publication and dialogue concerning the Christian liturgy...in order to promote...the principle of full conscious and active participation, and to promote leadership that embraces these principles." This is in direct response to the recent decisions from the Vatican that some liturgists believe do not reflect adequate consultation with pastors and the academic community.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE *NIV* BIBLE

The International Bible Society has announced plans to publish an edition of the Bible called *Today's New International Version* of the popular *NIV* that will include some gender-neutral references.

For example, "sons of God" will become "children of God" and "brothers" will be translated as "brothers and sisters" when scholars determine the original text did not intend any specific gender reference. References to God and Jesus will remain masculine.

(Note: Priests for Equality has already published *The Inclusive New Testament*, *The Inclusive Psalms* and *Hebrew Scriptures, Vol. III—The Writings*. All references to God are gender-neutral and sexually balanced language is used throughout. Contact: Priests for Equality, P.O.B. 5206, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE VOCATIONS GONE?

Young adults are less likely to consider ordained ministry today. Only four percent of clergy in the Episcopal Church and the United Church of Christ are 35 or younger. That age group makes up only six percent of clergy in the Evangelical Lutheran and Roman Catholic Churches, seven percent in the United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church (USA) and eleven percent in the Southern Baptist Convention. Experts say there are many reasons, one of which is: "The trendsetters in our society—the media and academic institutions—are secular. As a result, religion is privatized or trivialized."

Philadelphia Inquirer

BREACH OF FAITH

One of the worst parts of the tragedy of the seemingly never-ending sex abuse scandal of the Catholic priesthood may be the body blow it deals to Christianity itself, all denominations and dimensions. Religion is tarred and tainted. Dan Thomasson, a former editor of the Scripps Howard News Service, writes that he like many Protestants has tried to avoid commenting on the whole issue on the theory that it really is none of their business. The steady assault of horror stories has made that stance increasingly difficult for him, if not impossible.

Thomasson states that it would be wrong for Protestants to regard the entire priesthood as hopelessly corrupt. What they can safely condemn is the disclosure that those in charge did nothing to stop the abuse. Crimes against thousands of youngsters, both male and female, were not only tolerated but also in many cases aided and abetted by a callous disregard at the highest levels of the Church. He asks, "Was all this done in stubborn refusal to concede the fallacy of a medieval edict to protect the church's property from the claims of the heirs of married prelates?"

HOMILY ABUSE

Eighty percent of the Catholic laity in the US give priests poor marks on preaching. Many priests seem to be content with poor professional performances in this area, notes well-known author Fr. Andrew Greeley. The name of such professional sloppiness is amateurism, he continues. Few, if any, parishes have feedback committees, he notes. Few, if any, dioceses have homiletic improvement programs. Enormous demands are made on priests. Yet, if one has to choose between staff meetings and homily preparation, there is no question as to how the priest should be spending his time, according to Fr. Greeley. Very few things a priest does in his weekly work are as important as homily preparation, the priest notes. Still, homilies continue to be bad, the laity continue to complain and the amateurism of the priest continues to be a scandal, he concludes.

AS IF THAT WEREN'T ENOUGH

"I always find that statistics are hard to swallow and impossible to digest. The only one I can ever remember is that, if all the people who go to sleep in church were laid end to end, they would be a lot more comfortable."

...Mrs. Robert A. Taft, spouse of an Ohio senator on the demographics of dozing in peace.

Marguerite Groves is the proud grandmother of eight (including a new set of twins). She is now in dry dock with her husband Charlie in Stuart, Florida. Her e-mail address is cfmdgroves@aol.com

Book Reviews

The Silent Cry: Mysticism and Resistance. Dorothee Soelle. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001. 325pp. \$20.00

Reviewed by Joyce Minkler

This is a difficult book. It is difficult in its content, in its intellectual challenge, in its language (a translation from the German). It is also difficult in its analytic approach to subject matter more often approached poetically and in its passionate insistence that we open our ears to “the silent cry” of God that has “often become almost inaudible among us.” The author says:

I am neither professionally anchored nor personally at home in the two institutions of religion—the church and academic theology. It is the mystical element that will not let go of me...What I want to live, understand, and make known is the love for God. And that seems to be in little demand in those two institutions...My questioning is focused on social reality. This means that for the sake of what is within, I seek to erase the distinction between a mystical internal and a political external.

Dorothee Soelle knows whereof she speaks. She has been a sought-after professor and author in the academic world, articulate in feminist and liberation theology, and a committed activist in the peace and ecological movements. *The Silent Cry* traces the history of mysticism through various traditions and cultures, mapping universal human experiences of amazement, letting go, and struggle as the mystic encounters the Holy.

In the book’s final section, “Mysticism is Resistance,” Soelle is compelling in her analysis of the contemporary first-world prison in which 20 percent of the world’s population lives, a prison determined by globalization and individualization. The more globally the market operates, the more social and ecological webs of life are destroyed; and the more the first-world individual, personally unaffected by the devastating political and ecological consequences of consum-

erism, dwells in deepening ignorance of the unity of all life, God’s own life. Who are the bearers of hope in this prison? Those groups and communities who are egoless, possessionless and nonviolent, Soelle says, can be part of the “nothing that wants to be everything among us....What happens in mystical union is not a new vision of God but a different relationship to the world—one that has borrowed the eyes of God.”

The depth of her own experience leads Soelle to resonate with a Quaker description of the mystical life: life characterized by boundless happiness, absolute fearlessness and constant difficulty. This is a difficult book.

Joyce Minkler is a member of the Grail Movement and a psychotherapist living in rural central Kentucky. The intersection of contemplation and action is a life long interest.

CALENDAR

If you would like to submit an item or updated information for the Autumn edition of the *Equal wRites* calendar, please contact Cassie MacDonald at 215-467-8898 or by email at kgalalelo2001@yahoo.com. You may also mail information to Cassie at 2938 S. Sydenham Street, Philadelphia PA 19145. Please send information by July 15 for programs in September, October, and November. Thank you!

Ongoing Programs

Southeastern Pennsylvania Women’s Ordination Conference/ Core Committee Meetings. For the date of the SEPA/WOC monthly business meetings and liturgies, which are held at 430 W. Jefferson St., call 215-843-9565.

A Safe Place

Continuous open-ended support group for women confronting problems with divorce, employment, bereavement, relationships, drugs and alcohol. Women’s Center of Montgomery County, 101 Washington Lane, Benson Manor, Jenkintown. Mondays from 7-9 pm and Tuesdays from 1-3 pm. Call 215-885-5021 for times and dates. Pre-registration is required.

ANCHOR (A Non-Denominational Community Harvesting Our Resources)

Anchor is a group of Christians committed to living their faith creatively and reflectively. Their mission is to engage in the holistic exploration of contemporary spiritual/religious/moral issues. ANCHOR networks with individuals and group of diverse faiths, addressing perennial religious questions and social concerns and is founded on the belief that God is dynamically present to the human search for meaning. General programs are scheduled the last Friday of each month, September through May, 9:30 am - noon. Communal prayer days, one each in the fall and the spring and discussion groups, also one each in the fall and spring address relevant topics of religious and social concern. The “Universe Story” Study Group meets on the third Wednesday of the month, September through May, 9:30 am-11:30 am. Discussions focus on the inter-

face between science and faith, with an emphasis on ecology; cosmology; and the increasing urgency of mutuality, sustainability and justice from a planetary perspective. For particulars on any of the above programs, call 215-233-4929 and request a Calendar of Events. A \$3-5 donation is requested to help cover the costs of printing the calendar.

Brandywine Peace Community

2nd Sunday of the month except August, 4:30 pm
Brandywine Peace Community monthly potluck supper and program at University Lutheran Church, 3637 Chestnut St., Philadelphia. Bring a main dish, salad, or dessert to share at the potluck.

Call to Action/New Jersey

2nd Wednesdays at Xavier Center at St. Elizabeth’s College, Convent Station, NJ
New Jersey CTA organizational meetings and programs. For information, email rhain@worldnet.att.net.

Call to Action/Philadelphia Region

Philadelphia Region CTA, serving Southeastern Pennsylvania, South Jersey and Delaware. For information on organizational meetings and programs, call Joe Boyle at 610-446-5143.

Dignity Sunday Liturgies

Sundays 7 pm at St. Luke and the Epiphany Church.
Church is wheelchair accessible. For information, call 215-546-2093. Other Dignity programs ongoing at 330 S. 13th St. in Philadelphia. For information on these programs, call 215-864-0770.

Book Reviews

Lesbian Rabbis: The First Generation. Edited by Rebecca T. Alpert, Sue Levi Elwell, and Shirley Idelson. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2001. 224 pp. \$24.00

Reviewed by Leora Gubkin

The invitation to write this review came with a post-it note. "The question: Why would liberal Catholics who favor women's ordination want to know about lesbian rabbis?" Several reasons came to mind as I read *Lesbian Rabbis: The First Generation*.

Lesbian Rabbis is a collection of 18 essays by lesbian women who reflect on their experiences. One reason to read this collection is to celebrate the very fact that it can exist. Hebrew Union College (HUC), the seminary for Reform Judaism, ordained the first American woman rabbi, Sally Priesand, in 1972. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), the seminary of the newest branch of Judaism, ordained Sandy Eisenberg Sasso in 1974, and the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), the seminary of Conservative Judaism, ordained Amy Eilberg in 1984. By the year 2000 the number of women ordained by these institutions totaled more than 500.

The increasing presence of women includes the increasing presence of lesbians. In 1985 Rabbi Linda Holtzman came out as a lesbian when she joined the faculty of RRC. In 1987 Rabbi Stacey Offner was promoted to associate rabbi at a large Midwestern Reform congregation. Six months later she was offered a substantial severance package after she confirmed "what was assumed to be 'a false and malicious rumor' about her lesbianism" (23). That same year, Julie Greenberg became the first openly lesbian mother preparing for the rabbinate.

The ordination of gays and lesbians by the various movements has a tumultuous history. In 1979 an openly gay man applied for admission to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and was denied admission. RRC reversed its decision in 1984 but did not publicize it. Over the years, however, the Reconstructionist movement has welcomed gay and lesbian rabbis and teachers, as well as the performance of gay and lesbian marriages. Throughout the 1980s the Reform movement admitted a small number of gays and lesbians through an unspoken "don't ask, don't tell policy" (24). While there are increasing numbers of openly gay and lesbian Jewish professionals in the Reform movement today, "they face lay leaders who are largely unprepared to hire them" (63). Lesbian and gay rabbis are not yet welcome at JTS or in the Conservative movement.

The past ten years have shown a dramatic increase in the number of visible lesbians in the rabbinate whose sexuality informs their

Jewish thinking. They work for their denominational movements, within congregations both straight and gay, on college campuses, and "at the margins." Their texts and lifework are infused with Jewish ways of writing, thinking, and seeing the world. Thus, some chapters in *Lesbian Rabbis* have Hebrew titles: *Shlichut* (mission) and *Ger V'toshav* (stranger and resident)." Others structure their reflections around biblical themes: wandering in the wilderness; bondage and liberation. Still others use rabbinic themes such as *shlemut* (wholeness) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) to think through what it means to be both a lesbian and a rabbi. This should come as no surprise. After all, they are rabbis! But it is worth taking a moment to reflect on the fact that 30 years ago this would not have been possible.

A second reason to read *Lesbian Rabbis* is its reminder of the work still left to be done. Most of the stories are marked by the painful presence of homophobia. The closing section of the book recounts the ongoing situation within the Conservative movement where openly gay and lesbian men and women are banned from ordination. "Anonymous," author of the final essay, writes, "hiding is hurtful to the soul. It cuts away at the spirit. It is insidious."

Third, *Lesbian Rabbis* adds to our critical analysis on issues of gender, sexuality and power. The authors challenge us to think about what constitutes a family. They remind us of the existence of both blatant and subtle forms of homophobia especially as many of them have been and still are forced to make choices between job and family. The irony is profound as these women, leaders of a tradition that holds family as one of its highest values, hide their family life. The lack of representation by bisexual rabbis, none of whom, the editors tell us, were willing to write openly about their sexuality, suggests the continuing cost of dualistic thinking about sex and gender. Finally, *Lesbian Rabbis* makes clear that homophobia against lesbians continues as an "acceptable" form of misogyny.

If, as the editors maintain in their introduction, "The Jewish people is enriched by these strong, articulate testimonies of faith and faithfulness," I feel certain that "liberal Catholics who favor women's ordination" will be enriched by them as well.

Liora Gubkin is a Jewish feminist scholar teaching in the School of Religion at the University of Southern California.

Community of the Christian Spirit

Committed to peace and social justice, CCS welcomes you to join in our Sunday morning celebrations, liturgies in the Roman Catholic tradition which explore Scripture and contemporary readings.

For information, call Roberta Brunner or Margaret McLaughlin, (215) 572-5623, or write P.O. Box 353, Abington, PA 19001

House of Grace Catholic Worker

House of Grace is engaged in a year-long study of the Gospel of Mark, using the text *Say This to the Mountain*, by Ched Myers with other supplemental texts. The study will take place three Mondays each month. Contact the house for details: 215-426-0364. House of Grace is also part of an on-going faith-based, peaceful response to the current state of war. Please call for details.

Lourdes Wellness Center

A ministry of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegheny, New York, the Lourdes Wellness Center is sponsored by Our Lady of Lourdes Health System. The Center hosts a wide variety of wellness workshops, offering programs on yoga, meditation, feng shui, hypnosis, aromatherapy, guided imagery for pain management, Feldenkrais method, reiki, shiatsu and reflexology. The Lourdes Wellness Center is on 900 Haddon Avenue, Suite 100 in Collingswood, NJ. Please call 856-869-3125 for information, or check the website at www.lourdeswellnesscenter.org.

Martha House Catholic Worker

Martha House is at 459 E. Walnut Lane in Germantown. For information about activities in support of peace and non-violence at Martha House, call Liz at 215-849-3938.

Outreach to Homeless Needs Volunteers

The Philadelphia Committee to End Homelessness seeks volunteers for people living on the streets. Two to four people with an experienced leader are sent out four nights and two days each week to share information with homeless persons. In emergency situations the outreach teams contact police or city-contracted personnel who transport people to shelter or treatment facilities. Call Amy at 215-232-2300.

Philadelphia Catholic Worker Liturgy and Potluck

Wednesdays at 6 pm, (except during August) 430 W. Jefferson Street
Philadelphia Catholic Worker is a community striving to follow in the footsteps of Dorothy Day. A newsletter, "Common Life," is available upon request. For information, call 215-232-7823.

Women of Faith

Women of Faith, a ministry of the Metropolitan Christian Council, is an ecumenical community in the Greater Philadelphia area that celebrates women's gifts in Christian ministry and seeks justice and equality for all women in church and the broader society. Women of Faith endeavors to foster Christian unity through worship and education, bringing together persons from diverse cultures and backgrounds for mutual nurture, support and service to the larger community. Join Women of Faith for a monthly potluck supper or for special programs or for seasonal Liturgies. For information, contact the Metropolitan Christian Council at 215-836-7784.

Seasonal Programs

June 6 at the Franciscan Spirituality Center, 7-8 pm

Taize Prayer

Join in songs, readings and shared silence in an atmosphere of simplicity and tranquility. We bring the needs of our loved ones and our world to this prayer in the Our Lady of Angels Chapel. Taize prayer is held every first Friday of the month.

June 6-9 at Kirkridge

Christian People of the Rainbow: Coloring Outside the Lines

Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender identity has made many lives a challenge to the dominant world view. This year participants will explicitly question the many assumptions of our society and seek liberating responses and ways to implement them at the personal, local and community levels. People who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or who simply love liberation, are invited to join us for fun, singing, lectures, interactive workshops, small group sharing, and creative worship. Led by Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Dale English, Robert Goss and Erin Swenson. \$310.

June 9 at Temenos, 1:30-4:00 pm

Walking a Path with Heart

Walking the labyrinth path with intention allows us to tend to our inner selves and return to our daily lives with renewed insights and wisdom. Workshop participants will have an opportunity to learn about and walk the labyrinth, a walking meditation that focuses their hearts on their personal and communal journey assisting them to tend to their inner selves and focus their hearts to return to their lives with renewed insights and wisdom. Led by Janine Mariscotti, MSW, LCSW & Lynne A. Texter, Ph.D. \$65.

June 9 at Temenos, 2-3:30 pm

Interfaith Worship

We gather to cultivate spiritual unity and to enrich our individual faith journeys. We seek to deepen our understanding and appreciation of the diversity of spiritual traditions as we acknowledge and honor the Divine Source of all life in worship. Led by representatives of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions. Free.

June 9 at University Lutheran Church, 4:30 pm

Brandywine 25th Anniversary

Brandywine Peace Community will celebrate 25 years of faithful witnesses for peace at its monthly potluck. Program will feature music, theatre, and speaker Philip Berrigan.

June 11 at Kirkridge

Beyond Violence: An Interfaith Dialogue

People of diverse faiths face a common challenge: Will we pursue war or peace? Can we learn to respect one another and one another's traditions? Is there a significant link between our disregard for stewardship of the earth and violent discord between branches of the human race? Kirkridge hosts our fourth interfaith dialogue with Buddhist, Muslim, Jain, Jewish, Christian, and Native American leaders from our region. Listen to and participate in the discussions on what our sacred teachings say to us about violence. We will come to better understand the spiritual ideals of each other's traditions, and we will pray together that these ideals might prevail over evil. \$40

June 14-16 at Temenos

Getting the Love You Want

This intense weekend workshop is for couples to rediscover the joy of being together and the potential of using their relationship for personal growth and change. It is based on Imago Relationship Therapy developed by Harville Hendrix. To register or for a brochure, call Walt Ciecko at 302-429-0195, extension 1.

June 14-15 at Temenos

Women's Nurturing Retreat: Learning to Live Creatively in Times of Uncertainty

We will gather as a group of women to care for ourselves with quiet time, writing exercises, meditation, yoga, swimming, movement, music, and presentations on self-care and nutrition. There will also be conversation and sharing of how to build faith, trust, and hope in the intricate balance of our world's environment. Led by Lisa Schad, Betsy Friend, Doreen Hardy, & Sarah Aschenbach. \$145.

June 17-21 at Kirkridge

Parables as Mirrors of Possibility

We will explore several of Jesus' parables as mirrors reflecting the world during his ministry and the world as we experience it today. Those listening with ears to hear will be invited into a greater consciousness of their religious, social, political and economic situation as a way of becoming more responsible for re-imagining and re-creating their world. The exploration includes discussion, role playing, art, mime, journaling, and silence. Led by psychologists Bill Dols and Caren Goldman. \$450.

June 21-23 at Kirkridge

Tending the Flame: A Retreat for Women

To find and regain balance in the midst of the “changes and chances” of our lives is a challenge. Through reflection, journal exercises, silence and sharing we will consider the four life rhythms, a gift from the Hindu life phase tradition, to recover ways to tend the flame of their true being in the familiar of their lives. Led by author Joan Borton. \$235.

June 24-27 at Kirkridge

You Really Should Publish That: A Writing Workshop

A writing workshop especially for clergy but open to all who have heard the words, “You really should publish that.” We will teach and learn the formula for turning sermons into op-eds, prayers into poems, and good stories into radio or written features or memoirs. Led by author Donna Schaper. \$295.

June 24-July 1 at Cornelia Connelly Spirituality Center

Directed Retreat

The directed retreat calls for receptivity to the movements of the Spirit. A director will meet with you daily to assist you in processing your prayer and discerning the movement of the Spirit. Within an atmosphere of silence, there is time for personal prayer, reflection and liturgy. Led by Center Staff. \$300 for 6 days or \$400 for 8 days; \$50 deposit. Directed retreats will also be offered from July 8-15 and August 4-11.

June 28-30 at Kirkridge

Creative Space: Tending Inner Wisdom

In the beauty of Kirkridge’s hills and valleys, take time to claim or be claimed by that creative spark which desires manifestation. Use this weekend to enter into the Spirit of God expressed through creativity. Through the use of guided meditations and art-journaling you will be led into spacious time periods during which you might choose to paint, draw, write, craft, photograph or gaze. Bring whatever art, craft, or writing supplies will enhance your open, creative time; simple art materials will be provided. Led by Marianne Hieb, RSM, D.Min. \$225.

July 6-7 at Temenos

Oral History Workshop

As elders of our family and community enter their years of life review, it is an invaluable exercise for all to give that process focus by recording oral histories. The artifact of sound touches us in a host of ways. Participants will learn how to listen deeply and go about recording the memories of those who have had a remarkable impact on them. Led by Dr. Charles Hardy. \$170, lunch included. Overnights available for \$50.

July 7-12; July 21-26; August 18-23 at Pendle Hill

Spiritual Life Enrichment

Do you long for a quiet spiritual center for your life and a deeper relationship with God, yourself and others? Does your spirit need refreshment? Join us for one or more sessions of retreat. The gently structured days will include meditation, wise writing (ours and others’), presentations and exploration of prayer, discernment and spiritual practices which deepen our journeys, and spiritual direction. Limited to 10 each session. Led by Nancy Bieber. \$540/session (Sunday dinner through Friday lunch); commuter rate: \$360 including meals and program.

July 8 at Temenos, 7:30 -9 pm

Spiritual Seekers Group

Do you long to sit with other spiritual seekers and discuss the eternal questions? Who am I? Who is God? What am I here on earth to do? How do I find the path to happiness, peace and spiritual contentment? Come and explore these questions and bring some of your own to this informal ‘meeting of the minds’ sponsored by the Swedenborgian Church. Drop-ins are welcome. Free.

July 10-17 at the Franciscan Spirituality Center

A Heart Renewed

During this preached retreat, participants will be praying for a heart renewed in order to step into their real selves and “to know” that each of us is a child of God. Participants will be entering into their hearts through storytelling in order to consider transforming, healing and caring for their hearts. Please bring Scriptures and materials for journaling. Led by Stanley Smith, OSA. \$310 (\$50 deposit.)

July 14 at University Lutheran Church, 4:30 pm

Brandywine Potluck and Program

Freda Berrigan will be the featured speaker at the Brandywine Peace Community’s monthly potluck and program. Her topic will be “Bush Whacking the Planet: Bush’s Nuclear Weapon Strategy.”

July 12-14 at Kirkridge

Leaping Upon the Mountains: A Men’s Abuse Recovery Weekend

This weekend workshop is for non-offending adult male survivors of sexual child abuse, rape, physical violence, emotional abuse, abandonment and/or neglect. Our goal is to offer a recovery experience in a safe, encouraging, powerful environment of shared healing through a variety of activities. This event for men actively engaged in recovery work is not a substitute for therapy. A letter of recommendation from a therapist must accompany registration. Registration deadline is June 28, 2002. Led by Mike Lew, M.Ed. \$295.

July 14-18 at Pendle Hill

Kado: The Way of Flowers

Kado, more popularly known as “Ikebana” or Japanese flower arranging, is an ancient contemplative art practice which uses natural materials to help us see ourselves and the natural world with new eyes. Each session will begin with a simple meditation. Traditional flower arranging allows us to meet ourselves and nature in a gentle way through the beauty and quiet of the floral world. Limited to 24. Led by Marcia Shibata. \$445/double; \$495/single; \$345/commuter (includes cost of materials and flowers.)

July 14-19 at Pendle Hill

Handweaving: A Joyous Meditation

Come join us for this hands-on workshop where participants will explore different fibers, looms, techniques and teaching styles. There will be opportunities to weave several simple items (scarves, shawls, belts, hand towels and/or placemats). Their time will be spent in group demonstration, one-on-one instruction and whole class sharing. This class is geared towards beginners but intermediate weavers are welcome. Led by Mary Barnes and Robyn Josepfs. Limited to 12 \$550/double; \$600/single; \$390/commuter (includes cost of materials.)

July 15-21 at Temenos

Beyond the Postures: Yoga Workshops

A retreat exploring the larger context of yoga. Each day will be balance of hatha yoga postures, meditation, exploring core topics in yogic philosophy, and free time for hiking, swimming or just enjoying the beautiful Chester County countryside. Massage is offered by appointment. Come for all or part of the week. Led by Doreen Hardy, M.Ed. \$165 per day with a \$30 discount for 3 or more days. Commuters: \$115 per day.

July 16 at Lockheed Martin Aegis Warship Site, Moorestown, NJ, 7 am
Peace Witness

Witness for peace on the anniversary of the detonation of the first atomic weapon, code-named Trinity, in 1945. At Lockheed Martin, world's largest manufacturer of weapons today. Sponsored by the Brandywine Peace Community.

July 19-21 at Kirkridge

Making a Difference While Making a Living

Career transitions are opportunities for healthy risk-taking, fast-track learning, and breakthroughs that may or may not be directly connected to work. Whether you're unemployed, working in an organization that's in transition, or simply restless, you have much to gain by looking at your options systematically. Led by career consultant Melissa Everett. \$225.

July 21-25 at Pendle Hill

Painting for Joy

To paint for process is to move into the unknown – to move into the mystery of yourself – to be alive and free without worrying about the result. Discover the “automatic” painting method through guided sessions of meditation. Participants will give birth to their own imagery and use their own paintings as a source of reflection. Beginners welcome. Bring a willingness to risk! Limited to 22. Led by Helen David Brancato. \$415/double; \$465/single; \$315/commuter (includes cost of materials.)

July 21-25 at Pendle Hill

Seeing Our Way Clear: Photography as a Healing Art

Photography is an act of looking that can lead to flashes of surprising insight and open doors to a deeper knowing. This workshop, incorporating photographs and videos, poetry and music, illustrates dramatically the power of images to alter our inner space, heal our brokenness, and change our state of being. Participants are welcome, but not required, to bring a camera. Limited to women, but not to photographers. Led by Jan Phillips. \$380/double; \$430/single; \$280/commuter.

July 21-28 at the Franciscan Spirituality Center

Mirror of My Unseen Face: the Parables and the Journey of Conversion

This retreat will use the parables as a guide in understanding the ongoing life-changing invitation of Jesus to those who follow in the Christian way. These parables tease, puzzle and challenge retreatants to deep reflection on their lives. Bring Scriptures and writing materials. Led by Nancy Schreck, OSF. \$300 (\$50 deposit.)

July 26-28 at Kirkridge

Awakening to Nature

In this workshop we'll begin to increase our receptivity to nature's extraordinary gifts, while laying the groundwork for an ongoing relationship with her that can transform our lives. We'll practice attuning to nature, expanding our sensory awareness, explore our feelings about the natural world, walk or hike along the Appalachian Trail, journal, engage in group discussion, and spend some solo time in nature's embrace. Led by author Charles Cook. \$225.

July 26-30 at Pendle Hill

Creating Extraordinary Books and Prints

Explore spiritual discernment using journal writing, printmaking, painting and collage to create one-of-a-kind books. Discover a vitalizing pause in life's frantic pace with time to quiet the mind and go inward. Within the group structure, participants will support each other in exercises for self-exploration, nurturing and growth. Traditional and alternative methods in printmaking and bookmaking will be taught. Beginners to experts are encouraged to participate and make extraordinary books. Led by Judy Derickson. Limited to 23. \$405/double; \$455/single; \$305/commuter (includes cost of materials.)

July 26-30 at Pendle Hill

Notes From a Diary: Living Your Creative Journey

Do you want to be more of a player and less an observer of life? Would you like to make things happen today rather than later? Participants will join a multi-media workshop designed to reveal many dimensions of creative expression and to nurture and support their personal creativity. This workshop will include music, writing, automatic drawing, use of color, presentations and group sharing. Led by Richard Watson. \$380/double; \$430/single; \$280/commuter.

July 26-30 at Pendle Hill

The Ministry of Writing for Publication

Do you feel led to a writing ministry but need help with your next step? In this workshop you will learn how to prepare three different kinds of work for publication: devotional pieces, essays and persuasive articles. Each participant should bring a short manuscript and will have the opportunity to review it in an individual consultation with the leader. Limited to 16. Led by Tom Mullen. \$425/double; \$475/single; \$325/commuter.

The Time Out Center

PO Box 643

Berwyn, PA 19312

(610) 695-9780

Consistent with the mission of helping people learn to respond to the many issues in daily life, the **Time Out Center** is now offering workshops on **Spirituality and Healing: Interfacing the Spiritual and the Physical**. These daylong workshops explore mind/body connections through the familiar themes of spirituality, faith, and healing. Demonstrations illustrate powerful effects of simple practices of *breathing, laying on of hands and healing touch*. Workshop leaders are Jim Ratigan, M.A. and Jenny Ratigan, Ph.D.

To set up a workshop for your community or for further information, call: **(610)695-9780** or e-mail, **jratigan@aol.com**

July 29-August 1 at Kirkridge

Summer Sabbath: Rebalancing Your Life

For centuries monks and nuns have balanced their lives according to a rule, or way of life, lived out in monastic settings, and their methods have much that can help us balance daily life. We'll explore how the Desert Fathers, the Celts and many others set up ways of living that balanced work, play, prayer, hospitality, and much more. Led by author Debra Farrington. \$310.

July 31-August 4 at Pendle Hill

From the Mountain: Transformation in Stone

Using hand tools and natural alabaster and soapstone, we will coax forth amulets, figures, small sculptures and animate and inanimate forms of our own imaginings. With a deepening awareness of our non-human memories, we will transform old earth through the work of our hands, ultimately transforming ourselves. We will also explore together the origins, properties and possibilities of stone from a collection of readings, meditations, poems and the workshop reflections. No previous experience in art or stone work is necessary for this workshop. Led by Barbara Tam. Limited to 18. \$400/double; \$450/single; \$300/commuter (includes cost of materials.)

July 31-August 4 at Pendle Hill

The Sacred Ordinary: Honoring the Sacred in Our Daily Lives

Using songwriting and creative writing, The Sacred Ordinary will guide you through exercises, discussions and practical applications toward a renewed sense of mindfulness and appreciation of God's presence in our daily lives. Each participant will have the opportunity to have an individual session with the workshop leader sometime during the workshop. Led by Carrie Newcomer. \$380/double; \$430/single; \$280/commuter.

August 6 at Lockheed Martin, Valley Forge, 8 am—noon

Hiroshima Day Vigil and Civil Disobedience

Vigil sponsored by the Brandywine Peace Community, followed by *hibakusha* ceremony and nonviolent civil disobedience at Lockheed Martin, world's largest weapon manufacturer, directly behind the King of Prussia Mall.

August 9 at Lockheed Martin's Aegis Warship Site, Moorestown, NJ, 7 pm
Nagasaki Day Witness

Sundown ceremony on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of the Japanese city of Nagasaki. Sponsored by the Brandywine Peace Community.

CONTACT INFORMATION

ANCHOR (A Non-denominational Community Harvesting Our Resources) Fiat Connect, 2025 Church Road, Wyncote, PA 19095

Brandywine Peace Community

P. O. Box 81, Swarthmore, PA 19081
619-544-1818; Brandywine@juno.com, www.genocities.com/brandywinepeace

Cornelia Connelly Center for Spirituality

1359 Montgomery Avenue, Rosemont, PA 19010
610-527-4813; ccsc@shcj.org

Franciscan Spirituality Center

609 S. Convent Road, Aston, PA 19014
610-558-6152; fsc@osfphila.org; www.osfphila.org

Kirkridge

2459 Fox Gap Road, Bangor, PA 18013-6028

Mary's Vineyard

1812 Haddonfield-Berlin Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
856-428-5495; <http://members.aol.com/marysvine>;
MarysVine@aol.com

Pendle Hill

338 Plush Mill Road, Wallingford, PA 19086
610-566-4507; www.pendlehill.org

Sisters of Saint Joseph (SSJ) Center for Spirituality

9701 Germantown Avenue, Chestnut Hill, PA 19118 215-248-7231

Temenos Conference and Retreat Center

1564 Telegraph Road, West Chester, PA, 19382
610-696-8145; www.temenosretreat.org;
programs@temenosretreat.org

**National Women's Ordination Conference
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I am enclosing the following membership fee:

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SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS

Matt 13:33

by *Judith A. Heffernan*

On April 26 most of the US cardinals gathered in Philadelphia for a liturgy and afterwards a fundraising dinner at a hotel literally across the street from the back door of the cathedral.

On April 26 most of the members of SEPA/WOC gathered across from the cathedral to witness for the ordination of women. We decided to move around to the back door in order to dialogue with the leaders of the US Church as they walked across the street after the liturgy.

To our great surprise and disappointment the cardinals took a touring van literally across the street, and, once again, meaningful dialogue was avoided with women who are called to ordination and with women and men who support—and are in need of—women's ordination.

Long-haul faithfulness to the cause of women's ordination in the Roman Church is not an easy vocation.

Then I received the April issue of *US Catholic*—published by the Claretians who have had a long-haul faithfulness to the cause of women in the Church—and there was an interview with Rosemary Reuther!

Q: “Has feminist theology had as much of an impact as you would have liked?”

A: “No, absolutely not. (Yet) it's part of the whole movement of women in leadership, renewal and theology... I have a commitment to supporting...reform. Bishops rarely talk to me.”

Still—Rosemary Reuther has not been silent.

Then, as I read the Scriptures for the coming season I see, “The reign of God is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened.”

In the same issue of *US Catholic* Patrick McCormick reflects on feminist theology. He tells of Anne Clifford who writes that feminist theology is fashioned from women's daily bread and salted with their tears. It is a leaven, a reforming and liberating theology that seeks to awaken and free women and men from sexism and patriarchy.

McCormick adds that one of the greatest sins of patriarchy has been forgetting and distorting the stories of women and offering our children a theology where women are wrapped in silence.

We cannot be silent any longer.

Judy Heffernan has a Master of Divinity degree from a Catholic seminary. A member of the Community of the Christian Spirit, she is an original member of the Women's Ordination Conference.

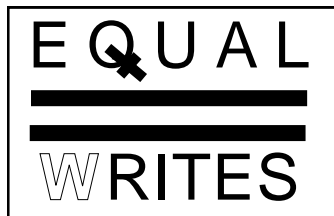
FINE POINTS

SUBSCRIPTION: To receive *Equal wRites*, send a contribution and your name and address to our Treasurer, Marianne Jann, 49 Driscoll Drive, Ivyland, PA 18974. We deliberately did not set a specific fee because we wanted people to feel free to contribute what they felt they could afford: \$5, \$10, \$15, or more. If that's really impossible for you, just send in your name and address and we will start your subscription. Renewals for all subscriptions will be processed in December. When you join WOC as a national member, you do not automatically join us, so if you want to support us both, you need to contribute to us both.

AFFILIATION: *Equal wRites* is published by the core committee of the Southeastern Pennsylvania chapter of the Women's Ordination Conference. We are inspired by but independent of the National Office of the Women's Ordination Conference.

MANUSCRIPTS AND CORRESPONDENCE: If you would like to contribute an article, letter, or anything else to *Equal wRites*, please send it double-spaced, with your name, phone number, and a short biographical note. The next issue will be September 2002. The calendar will be through November 2002. Final deadline for submissions is July 15. Send to the editor: Karen B. Lenz, 430 W. Jefferson St., Philadelphia, PA 19122 - 215-232-7823.

ADVERTISING: Advertising helps us support *Equal wRites* and helps you find people who support us. Our ad rates are \$25 for a quarter-page (\$75, four issues) and \$15 for a business-card size (\$45, four issues). Additional rates on request. If you know businesses, professionals, schools, groups, or faith communities which might be interested, contact Karen Lenz, 430 W. Jefferson St., Phila., PA 19122, 215-232-7823.



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