



President's Report

by Ginger Paul

"They asked and an angel came"

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

General Convention 2003 is upon us. I need not remind you that: GC 1976 passed the canon for the ordination of women; that at every GC since 1976 there have been resolutions that we hoped would bring all dioceses into compliance; that today the dioceses of Ft. Worth, San Joaquin and Quincy are non-compliant; that the Executive Council Task Force, set up as directed by GC 2000 resolution A045 "...found that the intrusion of an unwelcome and uninvited group made it impossible 'to assist' and encourage Executive Council and General Convention to avoid such intrusive policies in the future."

At the Annual Gathering in October, members of the Episcopal Women's Caucus expressed angered disbelief and dismay over the report of the A045 Task Force following visits to the three dioceses still refusing to ordain or license priests who are women. The Task Force suggested a resolution at General Convention in Minneapolis calling for more conversation on the topic at the 2006 General Convention. The Annual Gathering passed the following resolution in response:

WHEREAS the Annual Gathering of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, meeting in Newton, MA, on October 26, 2002, read with dismay the report of the A045 Task Force to the Executive Council, and

WHEREAS the Episcopal Women's Caucus notes that the intention of A045—to assure that plans be developed and implemented to enable the full inclusion of women in the processes for ordination and deployment—were not accomplished, and

WHEREAS the Caucus is appalled that by the

time of the 74th General Convention yet another three years will have passed without any progress in implementing, in the dioceses of Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin, the canonical changes passed in 1976 and following, and

WHEREAS the Caucus believes that the conversations and dialogue proposed in the Task Force report would be fruitless, therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Caucus requests the Executive Council to continue to monitor the situation and seek to establish action plans for full compliance in all three dioceses; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Caucus requests Executive Council to oversee extended pastoral visits by female priests and bishops to all three dioceses, within the limitations of the canons, because in those dioceses there are people who are not "self-described traditionalists."

"They (the diocese of Ft. Worth) asked and an angel (the Rev. Barbara Schlachter) came" as a representative of the Angel Project, the EWC pastoral response to those who long for the ministry of ordained women priests denied by their bishops. Dialogue has gone on with some in both Quincy and San Joaquin who remain afraid, even to let their names be known. Intimidation of this sort is in fact violence, not just against women and girls, but against all!

The Angel Project will press forward and the Episcopal Women's Caucus, in concert with the Consultation, will again be at the forefront in Minneapolis. We won't ignore the cries of our sisters and brothers for a more just Episcopal Church.

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From the Editor. . .

It is inevitable. Every three years, as we begin the run up to General Convention, a discussion starts. It goes like this—do the actions of General Convention matter? Do they have any impact on the people in the pew?

The answer is yes. Resolution A045 was passed in Denver. It mandated a task force be formed to find ways to assist Fort Worth, San Joaquin and Quincy to comply with the canon on ordination. It has indeed had an impact in Fort Worth.

The resolution mandated that the task force meet not only with the bishops and diocesan leaders, but also with the people of those dioceses. In Fort Worth, the people invited to meet with the Task Force because they support the ordination of women attended knowing they were taking a risk—the clergy especially. If anyone doubted it, the revelation that a member of the Standing Committee was secretly recording the whole thing on orders from the bishop made it clear, even to members of the Task Force, just how oppressive things are in Fort Worth. Even so, people spoke with courageous clarity about why it is important that this diocese comply with the canon.

After the report was made public with its insulting recommendation that General Convention 2003 pass a resolution for yet *more* “conversation” on the ordination of women at General Convention 2006, it was as if one of those neutron bombs—you know, the ones that tidily kill people but leave property unharmed—had gone off here. Women and men began quietly disappearing from Episcopal churches in Fort Worth. Two of the five clergy present at the Task Force meeting because they supported the ordination of women have resigned and are working in other dioceses.

Every week since the report was published, more women and men, girls and boys, simply stop coming to church. But because it's two women here, or five men there, or 20 women over there, and some girls and boys here and there, spread out over time, no one seems to notice the loss. Even if the cumulative numbers of those leaving is large, their leaving simply doesn't have the impact of one bishop leaving.

If ever we needed more proof that we were on our own to deal with a bishop who refuses to ordain or license female priests, who demands total agreement on the subject and retaliates against those who publicly disagree with him, that report is it. We got the message loud and clear. Nothing is going to be done at the national level to bring this diocese or the other two into compliance with the canons of the church.

So what happens at General Convention does have an impact. And sometimes, what *doesn't* happen has even more of an impact.



General Convention 2003

Do Justice, Make Peace, Be Accountable

by Katie Sherrod

The Episcopal Church will come together for General Convention July 30 through August 8 in Minneapolis. The theme is *Engage God's Mission*.

The presiding bishop's staff works very hard in the years between General Conventions to convince everyone that the PB's idea of God's mission is what we all are to engage. The House of Bishops is generally on board with this, given as they are to forgetting that they are not "the church." In recent years, that unstated but very clear mission nearly always has been "Don't Rock the Boat."

This is because conservatives have become increasingly nervous about changes admitting women, minorities and lesbians and gays not only to full membership in the church but also to leadership roles once reserved for white men. First, women became deputies. Then women could be ordained, and the language in the prayer book began to acknowledge their existence, albeit timidly. What's worse, in their eyes, lesbians and gays have been getting increasingly uppity about wanting to participate fully in the life of the church, about having the church acknowledge and value them and their relationships.

Many conservatives have responded with threats to leave if these kinds of changes continue. Because no presiding bishop wants schism to happen on his watch, a relatively small but highly vocal group of conservatives has managed to influence a generation of nervous leaders who appear to be willing to make peace on the backs of women and lesbians.

Thus any issue that threatens the "unity of the church" is to be avoided at all costs. This means any-

thing dealing with the bishops who continue to refuse to ordain women, and any issue involving human sexuality.

But let's be clear here. What the conservatives are asking the church to do is close itself to any transformative workings of the Spirit. That they dare to clothe this in words such as "remaining faithful to the Faith as once delivered to our fathers" takes one's breath away with its arrogance.

Sadly, it seems to work with the PB and much of the House of Bishops. That's why we had a special committee in Denver to deal with resolutions having to do with same-sex blessing. That's why we have the mealy-mouthed report of the A045 Task Force and an Executive Council resolution urging yet more conversation about women's ordination. That's why we are seeing a ramping up of talk about "reconciliation" from the Presiding Bishop's office.

But to talk of reconciliation in the context of some simplistic union built by sacrificing one or two groups in the church is a betrayal of God's mission, not an engagement of it. To do so in Minneapolis seems particularly heinous.

When the church last met in Minneapolis twenty-seven years ago, the all-male leadership in the House of Bishops was still in high dudgeon over the irregular ordinations of the Philadelphia Eleven. These women had dared to act on their own. They had not asked permission. They had brought about change, Pamela Darling writes in *New Wine*, "on their own timetable."

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one or two groups in the church is a betrayal of
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At that 1976 General Convention, bishops opposed to the ordination of women threatened that people would leave in “huge numbers” if women’s ordination passed. The threat of schism was heavy in the air. But the amendment to the canon did pass—and the huge defections never happened. This was partly because the House of Bishops acted unilaterally to appease those bishops who were opposed with the infamous “conscience clause.” But by and large it was because most of the threats were nothing more than hot rhetorical air.

That Minneapolis General Convention em-

braced the watershed moment in which it found itself and allowed God to transform it.

By their prophetic act, those eleven women in Philadelphia set in motion a whole new way of “doing church,” a lesson not lost on their spiritual daughters and sons. Carter Heyward wrote of the journey toward that ordination: *A movement is in process—from “May I please be who I am?” to “Dammit, let me be who I am!” to “I am who I am.”*

Increasingly, all manner of people are saying, “I am who I am” to the church. They are claiming their

Women’s Work

the work of the Coalition at General Convention

by Colleen O’Connor

It’s not enough to sit back and expect women to keep progressing, experts say. “Women who went through the struggle in the secular world as well as the church world are very aware that it’s two steps forward, then slip away back in terms of leadership and status,” says the Rev. Jennifer Phillips. “You can’t ever take it for granted.”

If justice requires maintenance, then action is critical. Here is a roundup of the latest resources for promoting the equality of women.

- The Consultation, an alliance of progressive organizations within the Episcopal Church, is putting together a women’s section of its legislative platform to go out before General Convention.

- At General Convention there will be resolutions submitted about women’s issues such as the problem of trafficking in women and children.

- There will also be copies of a new report from the Committee on the Status of Women, called *Reaching Toward Wholeness II: the 21st Century Survey*, that documents the progress of women in the Episcopal Church since 1987 when the first report was compiled.

- A new video called *Women of the Table* that spotlights women’s ministries will debut at the Episcopal Church Women’s (ECW) Triennial Meeting in Minneapolis in July 2003. Including specific stories of women ministering in a post 9/11 world, the project was coordinated by the Rev. Susan Russell, ECW board member-at-large for multi-media, and produced by Katie Sherrod, an independent television producer from Ft. Worth, Texas. The video will also be shown at General Convention.

- A committee of lay and ordained women is working to create the first fully endowed chair of women’s ministries in an Episcopal seminary. The members include the Rev. Dr. Katherine Lehman, rector of St. Bede’s Episcopal Church in Menlo Park, CA, and as co-chairs, the Rev. Rosa Lee Harden, vicar of Holy Innocents’ Episcopal Church in San Francisco, and the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Lyman, the Garrett Professor of Church History at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSPP) in Berkeley, CA.

The women have raised more than \$500,000 for the St. Margaret’s Chair for Women and Ministry at CDSPP, a name that acknowledges the history of lay women’s ministry in the church through St. Margaret’s House, a training school for women that existed at CDSPP prior to the ordination of women.

“We want to reclaim the historical ministry of women and also to anchor a chair in women’s ministries in seminary, because feminist theology, methodology, and process are extremely important,” says Lehman. “It affects how we study and do academic work, how we relate in community, how we do church—and how that affects the world.”

Many women professors now teach in Episcopalian seminaries, but this will be the first endowed chair of women’s ministries. Nearly three decades after the ordination of women, what does this say?

“It says that the feminist approach has not been understood as its own methodology or discipline,” says Lehman. “To me, it says that even though this has revolutionized the church in the past 25 years, it has not been legitimated in that way.”

*“...if the church opts to protect unity rather than do justice,
it will doom itself to
institutional maintenance as its primary mission.”*

God-given selves, striving to grow into the fullness of their baptisms, not by closing themselves to the Spirit, but by being boldly open to becoming agents of transformation in the world. They have brought the church to another watershed moment.

That’s why the Consultation, of which the Caucus is a member, declares in its *Platform for General Convention* that the mission of the church is “Do Justice, Make Peace, Be Accountable.”

The Consultation asserts that this is a moment for courage and risk in the church, not a time to seek “a simplistic unity that includes some at the expense of others.” If the church opts to protect unity rather than do justice, “it will doom itself to institutional maintenance as its primary mission, a project that can only lead to eventual death.”

“While we welcome church growth, we reject a focus on it without a parallel emphasis on radical discipleship. Spirituality, evangelism and justice are co-equal partners in a Church striving for wholeness and a transformative witness.”

When justice issues such as racism, sexism and heterosexism continue to be contentious over long periods of time, as they have in our church, they become accountability issues.

“In order to do justice and make peace, both within the Episcopal Church and in the world, we are called to be accountable one to another,” the Platform states.

“This platform call to accountability is a call to take seriously the promises made by this church to engage in dialogue and conversation on divisive issues; to honor, respect and continue the empowering work done by the “ethnic” desks at the Church Center; to be mutually accountable with overseas partners, requiring budgetary accountability on the one hand and greater grant support on the other.”

The Consultation calls the church to carry out the mission of doing justice, making peace and being accountable in areas of civil liberties, a renewed commitment to anti-racism, and criminal justice reform.

It is in the spirit of this mission that supporters of same sex blessings proclaim that what they are ask-

ing for IS the work of the church. It is engaging God’s mission.

It is in this spirit that exhausted people continue to remind the church that the work started in Minneapolis 27 years ago with the ordination of women has yet to *begin* in Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin.

It is in this spirit that peace activists advocate that the curriculum “From Violence to Wholeness” be named a church-wide education project.

It is in this spirit that environmentalists push the church to reclaim stewardship of the earth with the same vigor they pursue parish stewardship campaigns.

It is in this spirit that women and men ask again and again for prayer book revision with inclusive and expansive language to reflect the reality of our multicultural church.

It is in this spirit that men and women stand together to reject the Executive Council’s suggestion that the 2006 General Convention study the ordination of women. Instead the church should commit itself to the issues of inequitable pay, continuing deployment problems and the continued intransigence of bishops in Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin. The dearth of female candidates for Episcopal election should be the subject of a House of Bishops’ commission review of the election process. The House of Bishops should do an intentional inventory of its own sexism. The church should commit itself to highlighting the effects of fundamentalism on women and girls all over our world, including in our own church.

It is in this spirit that people ask that economic justice be recognized as the mission of the church, that living wages and campaigns for worker justice be top priorities all over the church.

Do Justice, Make Peace, Be Accountable: the words are stated in that order because only justice can make peace, and only those willing to be held accountable can be trusted to do justice.

Let us hope the Holy Spirit surprises us all once again this summer, and imbues this General Convention with the same transformative courage that was displayed in Minneapolis in 1976.

Katie Sherrod is editor of Ruach

*“Goodness is stronger than evil; Love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness; Life is stronger than death;
Victory is ours through him who loved us.”*

Desmond Tutu

When Delay Masquerades as Conversation

We've talked more than enough about ordaining women

by Gay Jennings

A resolution will come before General Convention this summer asking for a “national conversation” to “promote, explore and develop ways to facilitate the ordination of women in every diocese and their full and equal deployment throughout the church.” This is to be done with an eye towards a “day of dialogue and reflection” at the 2006 General Convention.

Does this mean we are going to talk in 2003 about whether to talk in 2006 about our abject and utter failure to uphold the canons?

When did canons get a bad name? There seems to be a breeze blowing through the church suggesting that canons are repressive and represent an unyielding approach to our lives as a community of faith. The Greek word “kanon” means a ruler or a measure. Canon law is the measure by which our actions—individual and corporate—are to build the unity of the church.

Canons are not intended to legislate belief. Bishops, of course, may hold a particular theological view on the ordination of women, and they have the freedom to exercise conscience. They have not and will not be required to ordain women. They have not and will not be required to receive the sacramental ministries of women. Furthermore, no parish is required to elect a woman as rector.

Nor must any bishop violate his conscience or resign. There always has been another way. In 1987, the House of Bishops commended Bishop James W. Montgomery of Chicago, saying, “He has been true to his conscience in the matter of ordaining women, has been faithful to his ordination vows, has upheld the canons of the church in his diocese and has safeguarded the discipline of the church as well as its faith and unity.” The bishops affirmed his example as “an appropriate

model for bishops who cannot yet in conscience ordain women.”

The bishops commended Montgomery because he found a way for the consciences of all parties to be honored by personally facilitating a process whereby women could be ordained and serve within the diocese. Bishops may be shielded from having to ordain a woman, but they must not be allowed to penalize an entire diocese, its congregations, its clergy, its men, its women and its children by preventing women from testing their vocation in their own dioceses, by refusing to license them, or by preventing parishes from calling them solely on account of their sex. The individual conscience of a bishop—and the individual consciences of members of commissions on ministry and standing committees—must not be used to prevent an entire diocese from what is canonically allowed. Fair and consistent consideration and treatment as provided by the canons should not be an accident of geography.

In terms of more discussion and conversation, there truly is nothing new under the sun—at least in this case. The General Convention first appointed a committee to study the role of women 132 years ago (Joint Commission on Reviving the Primitive Order of Deaconesses—1871).

We do not need another 132 years for discussion. In fact, we don't need another three.

Delay masquerading as conversation is unconscionable and cheap grace indeed.

The Rev. Gay C. Jennings served as canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Ohio until March 31, 2003. She is associate director of CREDO Institute Inc. a clergy wellness initiative

Canterbury Press Launches New Celtic Worship Resource

A new book, *A Celtic Primer*, has just been launched by Brendan O'Malley, Dean of Chapel at the University of Wales in Lampeter. The traditional meaning of a Primer is that it taught people their prayers and taught children how to read; its origin as a manual of devotion lies in the “Prayer of the Hours” chanted in early medieval monasteries.

This *Celtic Primer* is intended to be used as a companion to the Bible, encouraging people to use the Bible itself as the ideal Book of Prayer. Prayers within it have been drawn from Welsh, Irish, Scottish, and Breton texts. It is several books in one—a daily prayer book, a reader in Celtic spirituality and poetry and it

contains the complete Psalter, which was the prayer book of the Celtic saints. It also contains a Celtic Eucharist with three Eucharistic prayers, which would have been the ones used in the Celtic world.

“This collected text is very much a working liturgy. In common with the Stowe Missal, little in it is unique; I have employed these prayers because of their beauty and form and because they are the spiritual fount from which the Church of the Celts drew its inspiration,” comments Brendan O'Malley.

A Celtic Primer is published in the UK by Canterbury Press and will be released in the US by Morehouse Publishing in July.

From the Philadelphia Eleven to the Danube Seven

Women's Ordination Takes an Historic New Stride

by Sally Bucklee

Seven women were ordained to the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church on June 29, 2002. There are endless similarities to the Episcopal ordinations held in July 1974 and September 1975 but a major difference is the lack of interest on the part of the American press, although one of the seven was an Austrian-American from Ohio. I had been tipped off to anticipate the ordinations on June 29, but found nothing about it until Ginger Paul sent a clipping from England in mid-summer.

And then in April I was invited to meet two of the priests as they began a tour of the U.S., sponsored by Catholics Speak Out and the Women's Ordination Conference (WOC). Dr. Iris Mueller, a refugee from East Germany, believes she is the first Roman Catholic woman to argue that women should be ordained—and her professor allowed as how were that to occur, a woman would become today's Luther in the Roman Church. Surely nobody wanted that! Forty years ago, she and Dr. Ida Raming, from West Germany, petitioned the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) to halt the exclusion of women from the priesthood. A daunting feat!

Baptismal Parity

Armed with Galatians 3:27-28—"As many of you as were baptized in Christ have clothed yourself with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek—slave or free—male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus"—Mueller and Raming, then both in their 30s, argued the fundamental precondition for the validity of an ordination is baptism, not male chromosomes. Thus Canon 1024, in stating that only a baptized male can be ordained, "established heresy" and was illegal. Not only does the canon ignore the baptismal parity of women who have received the same baptism and confirmation as men, it is based on "a grave lack of respect for the dignity of women" and their contributions to the faith through the centuries.

The petition was ignored by the Second Vatican Council yet the Council did approve a proclamation that "every type of discrimination...based on sex...is to be overcome and eradicated as contrary to God's intent." Rebuffed but not beaten, Raming undertook a groundbreaking doctoral dissertation to document the long history of discrimination against women revealed in writings from the

early years through the Middle Ages. The church's exclusion of women from the priesthood, she posited, was based on a

"...the Code of Canon Law gives only nine offenses for which excommunication can be imposed, and being a woman who allows herself to be ordained is not on that list."

belief in the essential and ethical inferiority of women. To this day, the Orthodox and Armenian churches insist women are unclean and prohibit them from receiving the eucharist while menstruating. (One wonders just how this is policed!) Published in 1966, Raming's dissertation exposed how the Church teaches that women are not created in God's image but are biologically and morally inferior to men, are the cause of sin, have transgressed God's will and therefore, must be subordinated, prohibited from office and ordination.

In 1970, we now know, a Czech woman was secretly ordained to serve in the underground church formed to keep the Catholic faith alive during communist rule. We also know from recent research that women were ordained in the early centuries of the Christian Church. And in 1976, as the Episcopal Church was resolving the issue, Pope Paul VI found no biblical barrier to women's ordination; the U.S. Catholic Bishops "Call to Action Conference" actually endorsed it.

The following year, Pope Paul VI issued *Inter Signiores*, a Declaration Against the Ordination of Women, which purported that scripture and tradition do not permit women to "image" Jesus in the priesthood.

"The Papal No"

In the early 1990's, the U.S. Bishops' Pastoral on Women's Concerns went through four drafts, each pro-

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Danube 7: *an historic new step*

gressively more conservative with the final draft so strongly negative toward women's ordination, it was defeated. In 1994, the Pope issued *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, quickly nicknamed the "Papal No." It reiterated former teachings, claimed the Church had no "authority" to ordain women and that this "definitive" teaching was not open for further discussion.

Next year, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger responded to doubts about the "Papal No," by declaring the teaching on an all-male priesthood infallible and therefore unquestionable.

The subject was not to be discussed further—and in official Anglican-Roman relationships it is not. There are only two women on the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM)—an English laywoman and a Roman Catholic nun—plus 14 men, mostly bishops. Two consultants to the Committee are ordained males; two laywomen serve as administrative staff. Female clergy from the Anglican/Episcopal Church are never present when its bishops are received in the Vatican, although bishops' wives may be.

Three Year Gestation

Given the hierarchically centralized structure of the Roman Church—with no democratic process involving laity, clergy and bishops—no change in the legal status of women or the "Papal No" could be expected. Yet that church was beginning to have an abundance of women well prepared theologically and recognized as such by their communities.

Raming and Mueller, now in their 70s, had a sense of time running out for them. How to create a prophetic protest; directly challenge Canon 1024, and force the Vatican to defend itself solely on the basis that baptized women are not fit matter for ordination?

As in ECUSA, ordaining unquestionably well-qualified women was the only answer. Planning began in 1998. A declaration was crafted to explain why they were proceeding. It held Jesus up as their role model—not blindly obedient, and in trouble with the officials and the law more than once. Jesus' relationships with and treatment of women disproved any notion woman is a second-class gender. The women traversed Germany speaking to those in the reform movement. They were heartened to find 90 percent of every audience supporting them. They searched for women with a call to ordination and bishops to ordain them.

The Danube Ordinations

As in steamy Philadelphia 28 years earlier, it was sunny on June 29, 2002 in Passau, Germany. A small group of reporters, invited to witness the ordinations, were instructed to show up in a parking lot at 8:30 am on the

29th. Only then did they learn that the ordinations would take place aboard the *MS Passau*, thus fudging the issue of whether they occurred in Germany or Austria. Pressure on the ordinands to withdraw had been incredible. Several pulled out.

Despite precautions, the day had ugly moments. One conservative Austrian, who publishes a small newspaper, repeatedly challenged the women and bishops. Finally he blurted out to one ordinand, "You have nice breasts and I would like to see you sunbathe naked!" Security guards moved in.

Yet the event was exhilarating for the ordinands—four Germans, two Austrians and an Ohio woman with US-Austrian citizenship—plus 200 attendees, including Roman Catholic, Old Catholic and Lutheran clergy both male and female and many laity from across Europe and North America. At the awesome moment of the laying on of hands, the ship shuddered and turned around to return to Passau—was this a sign of a turn-about for the Roman Church? Was the Barque of Peter being moved to a new course? asked Maureen Fiedler, a Sister of Loretto and host of *Interfaith Voices*, a public radio show.

Each of the bishops who agreed to ordain the "Danube Seven" has had his differences with the Vatican. Neither is on Rome's list of recognized bishops, but each has a firm claim to apostolic succession and according to the Vatican's theology of ordination, it takes only valid ministers and proper sacramental action to make valid sacraments.

In the recent publicity about pedophile priests, the sacraments performed by them are considered valid. The well-known Bishop Marcel Lefevre, declared schismatic and excommunicated for refusing to accept liturgical reforms, was later welcomed back into full communion and those he had ordained are treated as valid priests.

Rapid repercussions

On July 10, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger threatened the women with excommunication unless they publicly recognized their ordinations were "null and void; they repented and asked pardon for the scandal they are causing believers in the Roman Catholic Church." However, the Code of Canon Law gives only nine offenses for which excommunication can be imposed, and being a woman who allows herself to be ordained is not on that list! The Vatican position also contradicts, first, the church's own Vatican II teaching, concerning discrimination based on sex and Galatians 3:27-28, the biblical basis for baptismal parity.

The Vatican carried out its excommunications on July 22. Ratzinger's "action degrades the spiritual

*“...a beacon of hope and light for our church
in this dark and troubling time.”*

value of more than half of the members of our faith and demonstrates that Vatican teachings on ‘unity of the faith and communion with the church’ are built upon the oppression of women,” the Women’s Ordination Conference protested. “It is time that we, as church, ponder the seemingly unrelated problems of clergy sexual abuse, the growing priest shortage, and the glaring absence of women in decision-making, ecclesiastical and procedural roles in the church, for they are all evidence of an unhealthy and sexist institution that seeks to serve itself rather than the People of God.”

WOC viewed “the ordination of these brave and gifted women as a beacon of hope and light for our church at this very dark and troubling time” and called on the Vatican to “withdraw the excommunication order, recognize the true priesthood of these seven courageous women, and open priestly ministry to all of God’s faithful so that our church can be rebuilt with a foundation of justice and equality established by the life and

teachings of Jesus Christ.”

But I could not help but wonder how these two quiet women in pantsuits—no black suits, clergy shirts or Roman collars for them—were going to create a revolution. As in 1975-76, the altars of the world are closed to them, although Raming was setting out to speak at Harvard Divinity School, Drew University and many other prominent theological centers. Women who feel called by God to the priesthood face a situation of “grave conflict of conscience,” she told me. “On one hand they face the position of church leadership. On the other hand, God is calling them to priestly service in the Church. It is Christ’s love that drives us.”

For more information, check out:

www.virtuelle-dioezese (scroll through
the German for the English text);
press@womensordination.org;
grassroots@womensordination.org;

Israeli-U.S. Women’s Group Fails in Struggle for Equal Access

A 15-year struggle by women’s group for equal access to Jerusalem’s Western Wall ended in failure when Israel’s Supreme Court ordered that women should pray at a site near—but not in—the broad plaza that fronts the wall, the *Los Angeles Times* reported recently.

The ancient wall is revered by Jews as the remnants of the biblical Second Temple. Men are allowed to pray aloud in front of the wall wearing shawls but women are not. Anat Hoffman, one of the leaders of an Israeli and U.S. group called Women of the Wall, began a crusade in 1988 for women to be allowed to read from the Torah and wear the “tallit” while praying at the wall. Hoffman told reporters that she was devastated by the ruling. It was, she said, an unexpected setback for the women after a court had found in their favor nearly three years ago—a decision that was swiftly appealed by the state and in effect overturned by Israel’s Supreme Court.

“What a sad, sad day,” said Hoffman, an Israeli-born graduate of the California State University of Los Angeles, and a former member of the Jerusalem City Council. “This sets women apart, treats us as second-class citizens. . . I truly wish our court had been more brave,” the *Los Angeles Times* quoted her as saying.

Women are allowed to pray at the Western Wall, but in a separate section. And they are expected to pray silently or inaudibly, lest the sound of their voices

prove a distraction to male worshipers nearby.

Over the years, efforts to change the status quo led not only to legal battles but to ugly confrontations in the shadow of the wall. Women who prayed aloud together faced a barrage of catcalls from fellow worshipers and sometimes a hail of hurled objects. Perhaps with such scenes in mind, the court accepted the government’s argument that the women’s prayers posed a threat to public safety.

The women had sought the right to pray aloud for only an hour on the first day of each new month of the Hebrew calendar, and on the Jewish New Year. But tradition-minded Jews—including the rabbi who oversees the wall, which is considered an open-air synagogue—defended the rule that female worshipers’ activities strictly conform to Halakha, or Jewish law, at all times.

“Any woman can come to pray,” Rabbi Shmuel Rabinovich told Israel Radio International after the court ruling. “And I urge them to come and pray—according to Jewish tradition. The wall is open to every religious and nonreligious Jew who prays according to Jewish tradition.” [WOMENSNEWS]

Visit our New Website!

www.ewc-ecusa.org or
www.episcopalwomenscaucus.org

VTS Celebrates 26 Years of Women in the Priesthood

More than 150 women clergy, Virginia Theological Seminary students and staff recently filled the Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Auditorium to hear the first woman Supreme Court Justice speak.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor kicked off the "Conference for Women in Ministry," hosted by the Center for Lifetime Theological Education at Virginia Seminary, and spoke on the subjects of women in power and leadership, infusing the speech with stories of her own personal struggles to the top of the judicial system.

Some of attendees and conference leaders were pioneers in the struggle for the ordination of women within the Episcopal Church. Such women included the Rev. Alison Cheek (VTS '69), who was one of the first two women to enter the MDiv program at the Seminary, and the Rev. Nancy Hatch Wittig (VTS '72). Both were among the 11 women ordained in Philadelphia in 1974, setting in motion a chain of events that led to the ap-

proval of the ordination of women in 1976.

Jane Holmes Dixon, recently retired as Suffragan Bishop and Pro Tempore Bishop of the Diocese of Washington, attended and led a workshop on "Women and the Episcopate." Bishop Dixon was the second woman to be elevated to the office of bishop in the Episcopal Church and the third woman bishop in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Justice O'Connor, a woman who knows something about breaking open doors, ended her speech with some advice to the audience. "It's all well and good to be the first," she said, "but just don't be the last."

Virginia Theological Seminary is the largest of the 11 accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church and was founded in 1823. The school prepares men and women for service in the Church, both as ordained and lay ministers, and offers a number of professional degree programs and diplomas. [ACNS]

Pressure Grows for Church of England to Accept Women Bishops

Divisions between traditionalists and supporters of women bishops could be widened by a recent vote, which calls on the Church of England's General Synod to end the bar to women in the episcopate.

An overwhelming majority backed a motion at the Ripon and Leeds diocesan synod on March 29, asking General Synod "to bring forward legislation to permit consecration of women to the episcopate in the provinces of Canterbury and York without further delay."

The successful motion was tabled by Canon Penny Driver, the diocesan director of ordinands and a member of General Synod, who told delegates that it no longer made sense to decide who could be ordained as bishops along gender lines.

"Many of us believe that an all-male episcopate can no longer properly fulfil the role of Christian leadership--we need both male and female bishops just as we have male and female priests, deacons and laity." Others speaking for the motion said that the church could not delay on an issue which was one of equality and "basic human rights."

Among those backing the motion was the Rt. Rev. John Packer, bishop of Ripon and Leeds. While he said that he was keen to see legislation brought forward, he stressed that it was important that provision

be made for those who oppose such a move. "I'm very optimistic that we shall find ways, as we did over the ordination of women to the priesthood, in which we can live together within a single church respecting each other's conscientious provisions," he said.

A General Synod Working Party, chaired by the bishop of Rochester, is due to report back in July 2004, and it seems unlikely the church would include women in the episcopate until the end of the decade.

Opponents of women bishops had hoped that moves would not be fast-tracked so that breathing space might be given to find a compromise, but the vote could bring the issue back on to the agenda sooner than expected.

The Rev. Timothy Lipscomb, area dean of Armley, was one of a number of speakers who opposed the motion on the grounds that it would cause further division and hurt, demoralizing further an already "demoralized church." Many traditionalists, opposed to the move would, he said, "either resign, become Roman Catholics or disappear into obscurity, disillusioned and broken."

Driver said that the vote would allow the General Synod to hear the overwhelming support of the Church of England for women in the episcopate.

"You must do the thing you think you cannot do."

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

Mothers of Invention: *Women, Power, and the Church*

by Colleen O'Connor

Some wept tears of joy and others staged vehement protests when General Convention finally approved the ordination of women in Minneapolis on Sept. 16, 1976. Nearly 30 years later, General Convention heads back to the site of that legendary vote. So how have women fared since then?

Women comprise a growing number of all active clergy—nearly 25 percent in 2000. In some dioceses, kids now ask if men are allowed to become priests. But when it comes to money and power, women are lagging badly.

Churches pay women priests an average of \$5,000 to \$9,000 per year less than their male counterparts, and reaching the top of the clerical ladder is still a rare event: only 2.5 percent of the bishops are women. Then there's power and politics: when women strategize about it, some men, even deputies on the House of Bishops and Deputies email list, get uncomfortable.

"We've made great strides," says Marge Christie, who has served as president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus, chair of the Task Force on Women, and chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. "But there is still work to be done."

Her perception is based on a new report from the Committee on the Status of Women. Called *Reaching Toward Wholeness II: the 21st Century Survey*, the report documents the progress of women in the Episcopal Church since 1987 when the first such report was compiled.

In some places things are pretty good, says Christie, who now serves as consultant for the Commission on the Status of Women. "But even in New York and California, where women have made significant strides, every one of those diocesan reports said there's more work to be done."

Fundamental problems include pay equity. "Across the board—regardless of whether a woman is rector, vicar, associate or assistant—the disparity is between \$5000 and \$9000 a year," she says.

The glass ceiling is another reality. "Not very many women are called as rectors to major or cardinal parishes," she says. "They tend to find positions with smaller congregations and as associates or assistants." As we head again to General Convention in Minneapolis,

now is a good time to take stock: how effective have women been in transforming leadership and power in the Episcopal Church?

"Does it matter that women have been ordained?" says the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Lyman, the Garrett Professor of Church History at the Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP) in Berkeley, CA. "Has it changed ministry at all? I'm not sure how much it's changed in the corridors of power. When you talk to women, they're doing things differently, but it's not clear how much of that has really influenced things at the diocesan and national levels."

The higher you go up the church's ladder of power, for example, the fewer the women. Women comprise 45.8 percent of the deacons, but only 2.5 percent of the bishops.

This April, a lively debate over women bishops

sprang up on the House of Bishops and Deputies email list, triggered by the fact that nearly a dozen dioceses were in the process of electing bishops.

"All of a sudden someone noticed that there were very few women nominees, and we said, 'What's going on?'" says Christie.

The answer turned out to be familiar: justice requires maintenance. Back in the late '80s a group of women kept an active list of all women qualified to become bishops, promoted it in the right places—and tasted success, particularly in New England, where a number of women were suddenly named bishops.

"It was rather stunning for a small part of the country," she says. "So we felt it was happening, and we

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It's not a dirty word
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Mothers of Invention

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got lax. But now everyone is caught up short, saying it hasn't happened, and we need to reactivate the issue."

The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Phillips, vicar of St. Augustine's Chapel in Kingston RI, jumped into the email debate brandishing details of that successful political strategy. She told how a group of women in the Diocese of Massachusetts had developed a list of women candidates to give to the nominations committee, then interviewed the candidates, decided which to support, and lobbied hard for their choices. The result: a slate with more than one woman, and the election of Barbara Harris in 1988.

"Women, get out there and lobby for one another, continue to be pushy and uppity and don't assume that times have changed all that much!" she posted on the House of Bishops/Deputies list. "And let's tell the good news widely about capable women clergy in our midst who would make wonderful bishops. Why not send letters of recommendation about women to the national deployment office? Then if the same names keep drawing mail, they'll know to start putting them on lists?"

About five women responded with enthusiastic support, but a few men were quite critical. "They had a negative response," says Nancy Lee Ziese, a member of the Episcopal Diocese of Iowa Standing Committee, who was also part of that debate. "They said she was being political. Well, men do that. The good old boys' club has existed everywhere. I hate to say things like that, because I don't want to be thought of as a man-hater. I just think we all have a place in the world."

Ziese agrees with Phillips about successful political strategy. "I think in our time together as women, we should be looking at who has qualities that would cause someone to call them to be bishops," she says, "and make sure people are aware of them."

Women and power are still controversial topics—and not just among men. In women's groups there's a familiar mantra: "Not power over, but power with." It's about the use of power, not the abuse of power. Naturally, this conflict cropped up in interviews for this story.

"I don't feel a strong need to have power," says Ziese, who's served as chair of the Iowa Women's Political Caucus.

"I want to talk about power, and do an analysis of power, and I also want to say I don't want it," says the Rev. Margaret Rose, the new director of Women's Ministries.

"Power is the way you get things done in the world," says Phillips. "It's not a dirty word, but there is much discomfort for women in using that language, because we've had power used against us. The first thing we get accused of—when you make statements like the one I made—is being manipulators of power."

It's not that women don't want power. They just don't want old-style power.

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Rose started doing what feminist education has long advocated: monitor power-sharing at the highest levels by counting the number of women and minorities on the front pages of newspapers, noticing whether this number is equal to that of white men. "I can tell you that, since then, the increase in the number of white men has been astronomical," she says. "There's a kind of power exercised in a way that's just despicable"

Just as the world is in a time of danger, fraught with factions and war, so too is the Episcopal Church in a time of difficult transition. But Rose applauds the positive changes, even if incremental. "There's a new understanding that, 'Gosh, I don't have any power unless everyone else does.' I'm seeing glimpses of this. The Office for Women's Ministries is about that—not wanting power for women, but changing the church's understanding of power in a new way."

Over the past 30 years, she's seen a change of theological thinking, including a new understanding of power. A good example is her husband, the Rev. Mark Baker. "He was vicar of a parish with mostly the mentally ill and the poor, and success for them was really a different thing. As a leader he would get a lot of affirmation simply by showing up and being with them. Relationship mattered to them, not building campaigns."

Theology is key to this shift in consciousness, she believes. "I think women need to think theologically so that we can articulate with others what it is we're talking about, which has to do with authority, leadership, and politics. There is some theological work that we can do to be transformative—not just for women, but for the entire church."

*I get out my work and have a show for myself
before I have it publicly.
I make up my own mind about it—how good or bad or indifferent it is.
After that, the critics can write what they please.*

GEORGIA O'KEEFE

Executive Council Wraps Up Triennium

Reflection on the Past, Preparation for the Future

by Jan Nunley for ENS

Winding up the business of the last three years and moving on towards this summer's General Convention was the dominant theme of the last Executive Council meeting of the triennium, held at a conference center in Ellicott City MD, April 28-May 1.

The council spent a day evaluating its performance and "graduated" 19 of its 38 members, who will be replaced in elections held in Minneapolis this summer. But the "class of 2003" left continuing members with plenty to do and think about, including revisions to a handbook for the next Council and preparations for renovating the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

Members also passed resolutions calling for opposition to expansion or extension of the USA PATRIOT Act and other curtailments of civil rights and adopting a policy of disinvestment from U.S. defense contractors.

House of Deputies president George Werner opened the meeting with a call to reject what he called the "conventional wisdom of the gated community" as a model for the church. "The 'conventional wisdom' is not the Gospel," Werner admonished. "Christianity must never be a 'gated community.' The ultimate figure of vulnerability in all of art is that of our savior with his arms extended on the cross."

"As we prepare for the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church we are called outside... to meet the challenges of the pandemic of AIDS, of global debt, of genocide, of the blocking of immigrants, to the potential loss of habeas corpus and other values, which once made us the hope of the world," Werner said. "This General Convention has an opportunity to lead the daring and the vulnerable, wisely risking as the wounded loving hands of Christ....Therefore, if there is tolerance, if there is grace and generosity of spirit between our houses, if we trust our system and allow our committees to do their work, if we allow the drama to play out, I truly believe that we can rise above the 'conventional wisdom' of our wider community and this moment in history and be the church at its best."

In his opening remarks to the council, Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold related a question asked by Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams at a private dinner following his Trinity Institute presentation in New York: "Are we [Anglicans] a communion or a federation?" The answer given to that question, he said, has a lot to do with how we view the work of reconciliation in the church: as "God's work accomplished in Christ" or as "human getting-along." To live a "resurrection life," he continued, is to experience the "healing and transformation of our desires" so that "the

structure of our desire is to conform to God's desire."

"When we last met I didn't know how much I was going to be in the public eye," he continued wryly, reporting on the aftermath of critical comments he had made in a January interview about the way Americans and American foreign policy are viewed abroad. "Everything has been in ab-

absolute terms" in response to his statements, he said, and many of those responses reflect a view that "the only reality is the United States and its public policies" and have overlooked the fact that the question of "global citizenship" is a vital one for Christians. "How can we, by virtue of our citizenship in the body of Christ, help our fellow citizens to see globally?" he inquired.

Griswold's concern was reflected in two resolutions received from the council's National Concerns subcommittee. The first expressed "deepening concern" with "emerging policies and practices of our government" that target immigrants from the predominantly Muslim countries of South Asia. Specifically, the measure opposed "any further expansion or extension" of the USA PATRIOT ("Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism") Act, passed in October, 2001. The act was originally due to "sunset" in 2005, but moves to extend it indefinitely and further expand it (the so-called "Patriot Act II") are underway in Congress, said the Rev. Richard Parkins, director of

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Executive Council Wraps Up Triennium

Episcopal Migration Ministries.

"This is an area in which I work every day," said council member and federal magistrate James E. Bradberry of Southern Virginia, who with other federal judges has been critical of the government's legal treatment of criminal suspects with Middle Eastern backgrounds. Last September, according to news reports, Bradberry blasted government officials who sought to detain an Egyptian without bond for lying on government forms, and in February he repeated his criticisms in a case where government agents sought to detain a naturalized Jordanian on charges that Bradberry said might not have resulted in the same request for an Anglo-Saxon."

"The PATRIOT Act has had damaging effects on our civil rights, and what all of us need to understand is that the actions in [it] cover us as well as the people that we're aiming to get out of the terrorism business," Bradberry continued. "The problem is that we cannot afford to give up so many of these rights or we wind up literally worse than the people we're pursuing...The second version of the PATRIOT Act would allow secret arrests with no requirement for accountability. It ought to send a chill over your heart."

Bishop Catherine Roskam of New York agreed with Bradberry, adding that she "cannot tell you how offensive it is to New Yorkers that 9/11, which we experienced and which we suffered through, is consistently used as an excuse for this kind of oppressive legislation." The council passed the resolution unanimously.

Divestment from military industries

The second National Concerns committee resolution, aimed at disinvestment from companies that manufacture military goods, generated more debate—mostly over the difficulty of determining which companies make what products.

Prepared by the council's Social Responsibility in Investments Committee, the resolution was a response to frustration with the ineffectiveness of shareholder resolutions filed with defense contractors. Such resolutions, asking for actions such as the adoption of ethical criteria for military contracts and reports on foreign military sales, seem to have little impact on company practices, and few receive enough votes to be refiled at subsequent shareholder meetings.

The solution, according to the Rev. Brian Grieves, director of Peace and Justice Ministries, is to set up a so-called "social screen" that would obligate the church to disinvest from companies that are among the top five US defense contractors and listed among the top 50 that receive more than half their revenues from military contracts.

The top five military contractors are Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and General Dynamics. Among the other firms affected are BAE Systems and Engineered Support Systems; BPAmoco, also on the list, is subject to divestment because of its business ventures in Sudan.

Corporate mergers and diversification make it difficult to link individual manufacturers and specific munitions. "It's probably the case that one company is not the sole producer of land mines," explained council member Rebecca Snow of Alaska. "One company produces the hardware and another the trigger and another some wire that goes into it. That is the problem with military contracts—they could be for uniforms or food or thousand-dollar toilet seats."

Bishop Francisco Duque of Colombia also pointed out that chemical manufacturers are frequently involved in military-related tasks, such as the fumigation of coca fields in his country, that result in the deaths of animals and food crops, pollute water supplies, and cause disease in children.

But some members cautioned that a blanket policy of divestment from defense contractors would raise further moral dilemmas for the church—questions of lumping the peacekeeping missions of the military with its warfighting functions, of the peacetime benefits of military-funded research, and the effects of divestment on defense industry employees.

After a pause for prayer, the measure passed 24-10 with two abstentions on a roll call vote.

Home office improvement planned

While a good portion of the past year's council deliberations were taken up with the question of whether to proceed with moving the Episcopal Church Center's operations to the campus of the General Theological Seminary in New York, Church Center management still had to tackle the question of what to do with the current headquarters, now more than 40 years old. When agreements on the seminary project fell through in December, the question of what to do with the building at 815 Second Avenue, just a block from the United Nations, moved to the front burner.

The major problem with the building, according to treasurer Ralph O'Hara, is the presence of asbestos in the flooring and ceiling tiles. No renovation of the space can be done until the asbestos is safely contained and removed—and that means gutting the space, O'Hara explained.

"The need for it is unquestionably there, and we are, in effect, behind the times in doing it," he said.

The present Church Center was built to accommodate a staff of more than 300, plus other agencies of

the church, but now houses 100 fewer staff members.

Potentially, a renovated and reorganized Church Center would free up to three floors worth of space, which could be rented out, providing what O'Hara called 'a sizeable income stream' for the church. Potential uses under consideration include commercial retail space on the first floor and a conference area and computer training space on the mezzanine level. O'Hara said consultants have told Church Center management that a year-and-a-half long "phased renovation," which would not require moving operations out of the building, is possible.

Total cost of the renovation project is currently estimated at \$20-24 million. The council unanimously passed a resolution authorizing \$750,000 to hire an owners' representative and an architectural firm and continue with plans for the renovation.

Wounds healed but identified

The council heard from director of communication Dan England about the upcoming Episcopal Ad Project and an update on progress towards offering church documents translated into Spanish and other languages. Archdeacon Helena-Rose Houldcroft of the Diocese of Qu'Appelle brought an update on issues facing the Anglican Church of Canada, including the native schools settlement and the New Westminster controversy.

Members took half a day to complete anti-racism training and an entire day, most of it in private meetings, to evaluate the council's performance during the last triennium. Encouraged to reflect on what assumptions and unspoken norms they encountered, members spoke of communications breakdowns and the frustrations of unclear relationships of accountability between

the council, its officers, and national staff members. Some of those concerns also emerged in conversations about a revised handbook for council members, put into its final form at the meeting.

Hopeful signs identified for the future included "the ability to learn from history and move on," the spiritual leadership of the presiding bishop, the inclusiveness of diversity in worship, and the caring exhibited by council and staff members alike. "The first thing the resurrected Jesus does is to show the disciples his wounds," Roskam pointed out during the evaluation. "There is no divine 'cosmetic surgery'—his wounds are healed, but identified, and we need to move to the same place." Other items addressed by resolution at the meeting included:

- acceptance of audited financial statements for the past fiscal year;
- a call for a task force to investigate financial problems at St. John's School in Guam;
- establishment of a committee to evaluate a request from the Episcopal Church Foundation for money to expand its gift planning program;
- a request for the Director of Research to provide an annual update on the ordination and deployment of women clergy;
- support for an educational resource and video on cultural diversity in the ordination process;
- support for the establishment of an endowment fund for the Episcopal Church in the Philippines.

The council's next meeting is set for October 24-27 at the Lake Geneva Conference Center in Wisconsin.

The Rev. Jan Nunley is deputy director of Episcopal News Service

Episcopal Church's Resolution on Diversity Defeated at Stockholders Meeting

A resolution presented by the Episcopal Church and the Church Pension Fund asking Werner Enterprises to consider diversity on its board was defeated at a stockholders meeting May 13.

A long-haul freight carrier, Werner's board includes the founder, Clarence Werner, his three sons and five other white men. "In this day and age an all-white male board is just an anachronism," said Harry van Buren, who introduced the resolution on diversity. "In the economy that we have today, companies need to take advantage of different perspectives and different kinds of talents." Van Buren is a consultant for the church on social responsibility in investments and corporate ethics. The company argued that it provides equal em-

ployment opportunities and that the resolution would limit the board's ability to select the most qualified candidates. The vote was 71 percent against and 27 percent in favor, with some abstentions. "We hope we've raised the company's consciousness of this issue," said van Buren.

The church has monitored the social responsibility of its investment portfolio since 1972. Board diversity resolutions have been proposed for about 20 companies, van Buren pointed out. Only twice have the resolutions been brought to a vote. Two others were withdrawn after the companies agreed to include language on board diversity in their proxy statements.

[ENS/Omaha World Herald]

‘Claiming the Blessing’ Statement is Distributed to House of Bishops

Organizers of Claiming the Blessing announced in early March that copies of their completed *Theology Statement* were distributed to all members of the House of Bishops in advance of its March meeting in Kanuga.

Along with a “Theology of Blessing,” the publication includes scripture and tradition perspectives by noted scholars Walter Bruggemann and Bill Countryman, a “Message to the Church” by Michael Hopkins on behalf of the CTB Steering Committee and answers to the questions most frequently asked about the issues surrounding same-sex blessings by the church at large.

In her cover letter, CTB Executive Director Susan Russell introduced the publication saying, “We invite you to join with us in discussion and in dialogue. And we assure you of our prayers for all four orders of ministry in this beloved church of ours, including your work together as the House of Bishops when you meet this month in Kanuga—as we journey together toward Minneapolis and into God’s future.”

Claiming the Blessing, the national collabora-

tive initiative working to secure the approval of liturgies for the blessing of same sex unions also be distributed the *Theology Statement* to all members of the House of Deputies, as well as holding regional educational gatherings around the church in the months before and General Convention. Copies of the *Statement* are currently available online on a variety of sites, including www.integrityusa.org and www.everyvoice.net.

“Keeping the conversation happening is our primary goal at this point,” said Russell. “Presiding Bishop Griswold has said many times that it is conversation which is the vehicle for conversion, and so our prayer is that our work might become a vehicle for the Spirit’s work of reconciliation in the Episcopal Church.

“Our goal is to resource the whole church—bishops and deputies, clergy and laity, vestries and dioceses—through this accessible document exploring the issue in front of us through the lenses of scripture, tradition and reason—and to find a place of compromise that will both advance the Gospel and maintain our unity as a Church.”

Integrity USA Blasts ‘Gift of Sexuality’ Statement

Members of the board of Integrity, the Episcopal Church’s affinity group for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members and their friends and families, strongly criticized a theological statement from the House of Bishops theology committee entitled *The Gift of Sexuality: A Theological Perspective* following a March meeting in Portland OR.

In a statement, board members declared themselves “struck by the scant amount of theology” contained in the report and “deeply distressed” by what they termed a “condescending, dismissive, clinical tone,” including the decision to refer to gays and lesbians as “homosexual persons.” “It is abundantly clear to us that this is a political statement, designed, we suspect, to build on the fragile foundation of collegiality which has been carefully constructed in the House of Bishops over the past few years,” they said. “That it

did not result in a ‘Mind of the House Resolution’ is, perhaps, its sharpest criticism and, in our view, the most significant failure of this document.”

The statement went on to announce a May gathering of members of the steering committee of the coalition known as “Claiming the Blessing,” in which Integrity is a partner, and members of the American Anglican Council and other conservative groups at St. James in Wilshire, California, in the Diocese of Los Angeles for a “national reconciliation conversation” on sexuality. “We are very clear that we are not meeting to negotiate a settlement,” the statement said. “In the end, however, this is not about theology or politics. Neither is it about legislative action. It is about relationships. It is about behavior. It is about being known as followers of Jesus by the love and respect we show each other.” [ENS]

Member Alert!

We need your memories! The Episcopal Womens’ Caucus has begun a concerted effort to gather and archive the history of women as they move toward full parity in the church. Both oral and written histories are needed.

Please help us preserve our valuable heritage! Send your story, or perhaps interview another member, then send it to Bill Fleener, Katie Sherrod or Anne McConney. Addresses may be found on the inside front cover. Emails and downloads are especially welcome.



Journey to Iraq: *the Faces of Children*

by Ginger Paul

*"A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be
comforted for her children, because they are no more."*

(Jeremiah 31:15)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

My trip to Iraq at the beginning of 2003 with the delegation representing the National Council of Churches of Christ is never far from my thoughts. I have seen on television the faces of some leaders with whom we met who have been captured or who have surrendered, including Tariq Aziz. I have not seen, nor am I likely to see the children, men and women, ordinary Iraqi citizens we talked with. Where is beautiful little Caroline? I had a wonderful visit with three generations of her family on New Year's Eve following a prayer service for peace in Our Lady of Our Hearts Chaldean Catholic Church. Are they still alive or are they among the thousands who have died?

The purpose of the trip, led by NCCC General Secretary, Dr. Robert Edgar was to hear the concerns of the Iraqi people and to better understand how churches in the U.S. and Middle East could work together to strengthen the humanitarian response given the sanctions and ongoing threat of war; to offer pastoral support to Christians and other faith communities; to meet with religious leaders to discuss the ongoing threat of war. We were very clear that we did not support the Iraqi government. The goal was to bring back to the people of the United States, "The Faces of Children" through pictures and stories we witnessed in the hope that they too would join those of us working to stop the rush to war.

President Bush has declared the hostilities at an end. Today's local newspaper says that Mr. Bush has announced the end of sanctions against the old Iraqi government by the United States and chided the U. N. Security Council to do the same. "No country in good conscience can support using sanctions to hold back the hopes of the Iraqi people," he said. Did not the Iraqi people have "hopes" during all those years when sanctions and war caused untold suffering and death for all but the most elite!

We didn't stop the rush to war but I believe we did accomplish our other goals.

When we met with deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, I asked him what the Iraqi government did to alle-

viate the suffering of the many malnourished women and children. He laid off most of their misery to the sanctions but told me we should talk with the Women's Federation, a ministry of the Iraqi government. Unfortunately, on such short notice we were not able to schedule a meeting but did learn much about their endeavors from the UNICEF officer who often works with and through the Federation. There are 16,000 women who are paid staff and more than a million members throughout the country. They are primarily concerned with health and education but increasingly advocate for the rights of women and children. I learned in a one-on-one conversation with a mother at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church that the group was really making a difference and growing rapidly. My hope and expectation is that the Federation is and will be at the forefront of the new Iraq, especially as it relates to women and children.

A 316 bed maternity and children's hospital was home to many very sick babies and young children. In the first ward mothers and grandmothers smiled and seemed glad to have visitors. As one little boy held tightly to my finger and tried to smile through the pain of dysentery and pneumonia, I thought of my two year old granddaughter, Caroline, the picture of health and wanting for nothing. Life is so unfair! This little boy may be dead by now. On another floor a young mother adjusted the oxygen flowing into a more than 10-year-old incubator that only partially worked. She was eager to have her picture taken with her two-month-old baby now weighing less than three pounds and losing weight daily. Mothers and grandmothers who supplied their own food also provided much of the care. UNICEF estimates that more than 100,000 Iraqi children have died needlessly each year. As we left that hospital and drove to our next meeting I reflected on the warm welcome we received from doctors, nurses, patients so small and sick and their anxious families. Would I hold out my very sick child to someone I hated or considered my enemy? I pray that much needed medication, up to

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Journey to Iraq

date medical equipment and continuing training for doctors is now available through relief agencies so that many lives of the innocent children are now being saved.

The singing and laughter were hearty and loud in the school in the very poor neighborhood where we distributed pictures drawn by children in the United States and Switzerland. Why are there so many windows with broken or without panes? Why do all of the children wear heavy coats and gloves? Why does the floor seem so damp? Why do several children share the same books? Why do 31% of girls and 17.5% of boys not attend primary school; 50% of boys and 60% of girls not attend secondary school? Why do teachers make \$3-\$5/month? Why do 70% of the schools need rehabilitation? We, of course, knew the answers but found the cruelty of the realities a bitter pill to swallow while our necks were stiffened!

New Year's Eve we watched hundreds of beautiful young children holding a silent demonstration in the streets of Baghdad. They carried olive branches and candles along with signs, which read, "No to sanctions! No to war! Hands off the children of Iraq!" Those who spoke English talked with us and were even more eager to have their pictures taken. I wonder how many have been killed or orphaned just as I hope that sanctions will quickly be completely lifted so that these children, the hope of the future of Iraq, may grow up believing that there is the possibility of a better future.

We traveled south into Shiite country, where there was a marked difference in the way we three women were treated. When we stopped at the first of three mosques, we were each handed a chador, the black covering all women must wear. Unlike our welcome in

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mosques in Baghdad we were not allowed to ask questions or to shake hands. We had been told that we might be isolated from the men at the feast we were to have. I resolved to fast. As I sat, fighting back tears, at the humiliation I felt from this garment and all it symbolized, I looked out into the area surrounding this mosque and realized with shame how privileged I am and under what miserable circumstances these my sisters live every day of their lives. Even in Sunni country we were granted the privilege of eating from the same table as men minus the yards of black cloth that I had clutched under my chin to keep the chador in place. Life is not fair.

A group of about 80 interfaith religious leaders, many of whom opposed the war recently gathered to consider the consequences of the military action in Iraq and to consider next steps in the healing process. In a joint statement, "An Urgent Call for Reflection, Hope and Action," the Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders argued that American society is "at a moment of choice even more urgent than before the war began. We are faced with choices between hope and courage or fear and violence; between a future characterized by global solidarity, international cooperation and multilateral action or one characterized by unilateralism and wars by choice rather than necessity; continuing terrorism; unfettered efforts to extend U. S. power and the exploitation of fear."

My sisters and brothers, pray for a just and peaceful future for our sisters and brothers in this ancient land called Iraq, the cradle of civilization.

Ginger Paul is president of the Episcopal Women's Caucus

Episcopal Relief and Development Launches Fair Trade Coffee

Episcopal Relief and Development is launching Bishops Blend, a premium line of certified Fair Trade roasted coffees from Central America and Indonesia. Through the sale of Bishops Blend, Episcopal Relief and Development will be able to further its mission of responding to the needs of the poor, hungry, homeless, and sick worldwide.

Episcopal Relief and Development is working with Pura Vida Coffee to sell Bishops Blend throughout the Episcopal Church. The product line will include three blends: Bishops Blend, Bishops Blend Decaf, and Bishops Cinnamon Spice. Individuals, dioceses, parishes,

and other organizations can order Bishops Blend on a regular basis or may also purchase the coffee at wholesale prices for church fundraisers. Shipping is free on the first order.

To learn more about ordering coffee, visit www.er-d.org or call Bishops Blend customer service representatives at Pura Vida Coffee (877) 469-1431.

Pura Vida Coffee is a Seattle-based company committed to partnering with organizations such as Episcopal Relief and Development. One hundred percent of its net profits benefit at-risk children and families in coffee-growing countries.

We are entering the adult phase of human evolution

PATRICIA MISCHÉ

Church Leaders Dismayed by Encyclical Pope affirms traditional exclusion of Protestants; ecumenical leaders “disappointed and discouraged”

by James Solheim for ENS

Church leaders and ecumenists around the world are expressing various degrees of dismay and disappointment over an April 17 papal encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (The Church of the Eucharist) that offers no hope of sharing the sacrament with other Christians in the near future.

Saying that he hoped to rekindle the “amazement” of Roman Catholics with the “real presence” of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine, Pope John Paul II made it clear that members of other churches were not welcome to communion in the Roman Catholic Church, nor were Roman Catholics free to take communion outside their own church, except in highly unusual situations.

The encyclical, an authoritative explanation or teaching on important church doctrine, also reminded church members that divorced Roman Catholics who remarry may not receive communion. In the encyclical the pope did, however, restate a “burning desire” to join other Christians in celebrating the Eucharist, and paid tribute to “significant progress and convergence” in ecumenism.

Still, the Rev. Ishmael Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), in a statement issued in Geneva, regretted that “many years of ecumenical dialogue” had not resulted in a new stance by the Vatican on the issue of the Eucharist. Roman Catholics, “while respecting the religious convictions of these separated brethren, must refrain from receiving the communion distributed at their celebrations,” according to the encyclical.

Some leaders of the Lutheran federation hoped more progress might have been made on this issue after the LWF and the Roman Catholic Church signed, in 1999, a joint declaration on the doctrine of justification, one of the most divisive issues at the time of the Reformation.

Many Protestants see inter-communion as a means of fostering the ultimate unity of the church. Traditional Roman Catholic teaching, however, holds that the sharing of the Eucharist is something that is appropriate once Christian unity has been reestablished, a view affirmed by the pope.

Pain or joy?

“It is clear that for some the encyclical’s reiteration of our still existing disunity will give pain. Some have hoped that as we have been able to articulate greater unity in our understanding of the apostolic faith it would

be possible for greater openness in sharing of the Eucharist among the Christian communities,” said Dr. Ann Riggs, director of the NCC’s Faith and Order Commission, in a reflection on the NCC website (<http://www.ncccusa.org>).

“For some it will give pain as the Pope reiterates here that for the Catholic Church Eucharistic openness, beyond the needs of specific individuals in particular cases of urgent need and under specific conditions, there are limits which cannot be transgressed and from which it is not possible to give dispensation,” Riggs wrote.

She added, “In reading this Paschal message, in the ecumenical community we can choose to be discouraged by how long the path is before us. Or we can join with Pope John Paul as he reiterates his own reflections from *Ut unum sint*: ‘And yet we do have a burning desire to join in celebrating the one Eucharist of the Lord, and this desire itself is already a common prayer of praise, a single supplication. Together we speak to the Father and increasingly we so ‘with one heart.’”

“I must say I fail to see how *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* takes notice of the enormous progress made by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) or our Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue here in the United States (ARC-USA),” said Bishop Christopher Epting, the Episcopal Church’s deputy for ecumenical and interfaith relations. “That is particularly disappointing, given all the years of work by these bodies since the Second Vatican Council.”

In London, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams said, “I welcome the affirmation of the Eucharist as a place of God’s presence and action and also welcome the Pope’s reaffirmation of his ‘burning desire’ for common Eucharistic celebration. This is an area of work which continues to be important for relations between Anglicans and Roman Catholics and we continue to work theologically on this together.”

A somewhat hopeful statement from the Anglican Communion Office (ACO) in London said that the pope “has chosen an appropriate moment to draw the attention of all Christians to the central place of the Eucharist in the life of the Christian faithful, and eloquently expressed afresh the Roman Catholic understanding of this Sacrament. He speaks of his personal experience of the celebration of this Sacrament as a

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Dismay at Encyclical

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way of introducing a theological exploration of its importance in the life of the Church, and of the boundaries of its proper celebration, which include a restatement of the existing limitations on Eucharistic sharing as defined by the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church.”

The statement, signed by the Rev. Gregory Cameron, ACO director of Ecumenical Affairs, said that “we very much hope that this encyclical will be adopted for study by the instruments of dialogue set up mutually by the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church—namely, the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) and the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM). From this study, we hope to understand more fully the way in which the ecumenical commitment expressed in this encyclical, and by both our churches, may be carried forward to the point where a fuller eucharistic sharing may be initiated between Roman Catholics and Anglicans.”

Prof. J. Robert Wright of the General Theological Seminary in New York, a veteran participant in the official dialogues with Roman Catholics for many years, said in an interview that he was “delighted to notice that the pope still has a burning desire for communion with the separated Christians in separated churches, but I look forward to seeing tangible evidence of the leadership that he will give in seeking that goal.”

Wright said that it was “significant that the pope has issued this particular encyclical at this point in the ecumenical movement when, in so many ways, the Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue with other churches is not proceeding with much speed.”

He said that the encyclical might even “accelerate that dialogue among leaders of his church who are obliged to follow his lead, no matter what their personal feelings may be.” He hopes that the pope’s commitment would “translate into a fire among those who are leaders in Roman Catholic ecumenism in his name.”

Yet Wright said that he fears that “the prohibitions in encyclical will simply reinforce the impression that this particular pope has nothing new to contribute to the momentum for church unity across the spectrum of the churches; if anything, it could dampen even the hopes of those in his own church who have worked so hard for this. Unfortunately in text the burning desire is dampened if not almost extinguished in the restrictions he places on that desire, with regard to his own church and other churches with regard to communion.”

The Rev. Finlay Macdonald, moderator of the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, said that the pope “is simply reinforcing the traditional view that those who do not accept Catholic teaching should not receive the mass. In this sense he is not saying anything new.”

James Solheim is director of Episcopal News Service

Enthusiastic Intercommunion? British Church Leaders are Worrying

Rome is worried that ecumenism is creeping along the ground much faster than it is being given permission at the top. The Pope’s tightening of the Church’s stance on who can receive Roman Catholic Communion came as a major blow to Christian worshippers in Britain. There has been a significant increase in the number of Roman Catholics and Anglicans who regard each other’s churches as interchangeable, particularly among inter-church families such as that of the Anglican Tony Blair and his Catholic wife, Cherie.

The move towards unity at the grass roots is not, however, reflected in the church hierarchy.

John Wilkins, Editor of the Catholic journal *The Tablet*, said that it was this schism between the laity and the establishment that was proving alarming to the Pope.

“The Pope is worried because the point is that people are voting with their feet. At a local level, there is an awful lot of inter-communion and it is growing.

“People just do it because they want to,” he said. “Rome is worried that it is creeping along the ground much faster than it is being given permission at the top.

“This adds to the trouble this issue has given to inter-church families, when one is Catholic and the other is not, such as the Blairs.”

In 1998, the Catholic Bishops of Britain and Ireland issued a teaching document called *One Bread One Body*, in which they set forth the rules on when a non-Catholic could receive Catholic Communion were actually tightened over an earlier version released in 1993.

It was a retreat from unity that saddened the Church of England; its House of Bishops released a response in which the Archbishops of Canterbury and York described the fact that Roman Catholics were banned from receiving Anglican Communion as “hurtful and unhelpful.”

The Rev Paul Avis, general secretary for the Council for Christian Unity at the Church of England, said: “The personal pain caused by the sacramental chasm represented by *One Bread One Body* cannot be overestimated.

“It cuts across marriages, families and ecumenical communities.” *[London Times]*

EWC and the Episcopal Women's History Project

by Bindy Snyder

Our two acronyms are not acrimonious, but very harmonious indeed; and we share even more than a complementary sound. The Episcopal Women's History Project was begun by women who sought to preserve the stories of Episcopal women and their ministries; the Episcopal Women's Caucus was begun by women seeking to improve the opportunities for women's life and ministries in the Church.

The Rev. Fran Toy, who has served on both boards, states, "Both EWC and EWHP would not have been formed had there not been sexism in ECUSA."

TIMELINES editor

Lucy Germany states, "There is a strong connection: both organizations were begun by small groups of women who felt strongly about specific needs: a lack of justice and holes in the agenda of the Church that would, or could, only be rectified by women. Women's voices were easily dismissed—How many times have we heard the expression 'women's work'?"

Eleanor Smith adds, "Women's actions were not heeded until a committed few got together and *pushed*. The Caucus had the issue of ordaining women; whereas, EWHP had the issue of saving the records of women's lives. The Caucus was able to include men in seeking justice and together all worked to gather force and funding. But it was hard work, and that work continues to call for incredible commitment. EWHP is much smaller and remains a single focused body. EWHP is still unique, still minimally funded, still a largely volunteer Board."

Only recently has EWHP been included in the history meetings and conferences, where the undeniable scholastic achievements of many of our distinguished members have been recognized. And according to Dr. Joanna Gillespie, it continues to be hard work. EWHP works in order to give all of its funding away, to men and women researching and writing valuable papers detailing the lives of church women, records that might ordinarily be lost.

Dr. Gillespie describes how EWHP has a lovely way of *bribing* parishes to tell the stories of parish foremothers by giving prizes for essay contests. EWHP, like CAUCUS has had to fight for its unique vision.

The Episcopal Women's History Project's history reveals how EWHP was a first untried effort to begin to capture the whole, as opposed to male and partial,

history of our church. Dr. Gillespie states, "There is something invigorating about naming and claiming a place in the historical sun—many Episcopal women have been too polite and self-effacing to find this out, until

the changes in the world outside the church began to seep into the church. As one woman said, 'the stained glass windows haven't changed, the words of the hymns mostly haven't changed, but the awareness that women are there, and crucial—THAT's what has changed.' And EWHP was a critical partner in all the changes."

Women's foundational role

in the church is very much entwined with the goals and identity of EWHP. If women today know what women of the past had to face, how they faced it, sense their courage and intelligence they cannot help but be inspired and strengthened.

The works of EWHP are varied and notable, including conferences, workshops and grant giving. The work of the historical order of Deaconesses, an astounding saga in which Dr. Patricia Page has been instrumental through the Southern Episcopal Womens History Project, will continue to be recorded through preservation work in the archives of the Diocese of New York. We are building our own repository of oral and written histories of women. We assisted with preserving the Windham House story. Our members present papers at the joint historical conferences. We are sponsors of the Anglican/Lutheran History Conference being held in Chicago in September, 2004. A superb book that could be used in classes, such as Sheryl Kujawa's *Freedom is a Dream: A Documentary History of Women in the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing Inc. New York, 2002) just might not have existed had we not started the ball rolling!

EWHP is not in any Church budget nor in the budgets of the Church's Historical Society, nor NEHA. Although recognized as a specific entity by the National Episcopal Churchwomen, EWHP is not represented on that Board. Our own Board members often pay their expenses to meetings.

"The women of the past are with us every step of the way," says Lucy Germany. "Their spirit still very much surrounds us and gives us hope and clarity about

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*"The women of
the past are with us
every step
of the way"*

Massachusetts Celebrates the Making of a New Bishop Suffragan

by Tracy J. Sukraw for ENS

Nearly 1,500 bishops, clergy members, lay persons and ecumenical guests from across the country braved Boston's bitter cold to gather for the three-hour liturgy at which Gayle Elizabeth Harris became the 981st bishop in the Episcopal Church on Saturday, January 18 at Trinity Church in Boston.

Harris, formerly of Rochester, New York, will serve as a bishop suffragan in the Diocese of Massachusetts alongside diocesan bishop M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE and bishop suffragan Bud Cederholm.

Gayle Harris is the 11th woman--and the second African-American and third woman of color--to be ordained a bishop in the Episcopal Church, out of a total of fourteen female bishops in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

In the weeks preceding her ordination and consecration, the bishop-elect said she hoped that the day would be a celebration of "all of us coming together as the people of God who is in the midst of us, who loves us and forgives us, who calls us to do justice and love mercy."

Before the service began, the 450-person procession stopped traffic and turned a few heads in Boston's Copley Square as it made its way from the vesting area at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel, through the adjacent shopping mall, then across a busy intersection and plaza into Trinity Church. The Rt. Rev. Arthur B. Wil-

liams Jr., recently retired bishop suffragan of the Diocese of Ohio and the vice president of the House of Bishops, was the chief consecrator.

In his sermon, Bishop Suffragan Chester L. Talton of the Diocese of Los Angeles, preached of a faithful God who "desires to put things right for God's people."

"Nations are at war with one another, it seems almost as never before, and we are preparing to engage in what I believe is an immoral war against a small nation whose leader is himself immoral towards his own people," Talton said to applause from the congregation. "Gayle, I think that God calls you to a time such as this, to speak to the powerful on behalf of those who hold little or no power."

Perhaps the service's most poignant moment came when the Anglican Communion's first woman bishop, Barbara C. Harris—Massachusetts' recently retired suffragan, whom Gayle Harris succeeds—gave the bishop-elect her charge, speaking sister to sister of a shared heritage and of the joys and challenges ahead.

"Your best efforts...will not always be understood or welcomed. Yet you must proclaim in word and action redemption, liberation, hope and love, but also judgment, reminding us that we cannot go back to the garden of Eden but that we must embrace the new age, not knowing what its final shape will be," Barbara Harris said.

"But we have come this far by faith and we trust our God for the next step of the journey. You must not demur from urging us out of the comfortable pew and challenging us to seek the welfare of the city and suburbs alike. For the problems of the city quickly become those of suburban communities.

"In this complex and diverse diocese, on some days you will see your role with great clarity and you may be tempted to paraphrase Professor Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady* and say: 'I've got it, by Jove I think I've got it.' And on others, probably more numerous I suspect, you will feel like you are trying to put pantyhose on an octopus."

The bishop's ring, mitre and crozier are only symbols, Barbara Harris said. "Remember, my sister, it is prayer that is your life and prayer that is your lifeline."

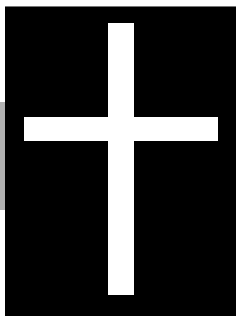
Tracy J. Sukraw is editor of the Episcopal Times, Diocese of Massachusetts.

History Project *cont. from previous page*

our own roles in today's world. We understand this great church of ours better for the part women have taken in its formation. The respect we must have for the ever-present courage of our women (and that is sometimes all they had) brings us to a new awareness of the possibilities for the young women of today. Their future derives much from the past. We must have that knowledge to pass on to them!"

The goals of the Caucus, and our vision for the future is to continue to keep before women perceptions of their strength and power, their uniqueness. Our common motif perhaps is summed up on the cover of EWHP's brochure, most clearly by Dr. Fredrica Harris Thompsett's statement, "Through our memories we can convert understanding of past events into insight that

By the Rev. Bindy Snyder is president of the Episcopal Womens History Project and a member of EWC



Aeveternitas

*...Born of the sun, they travelled a short while toward the sun
And left the vivid air signed with their honor*

STEPHEN SPENDER

+ Paul Moore Jr.

1919-2003

The Rt. Rev. Paul Moore, Jr., the XIII Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, died Thursday, May 1 after a long illness. He was 83 years old.

“Paul Moore was a great man, who lived his whole life fighting for justice and for the rights of the oppressed,” commented the Rt. Rev Mark S. Sisk, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of New York. “He was a man whose passion for life grew out of his love for people—a love returned by so many who cherished him deeply.”

In many respects, Bishop Moore was a pioneer on a number of fronts. He advocated for social causes and peace until the last weeks of his life. He helped open the Episcopal Church to the ordination of women. He was known for his social activism, deep religious convictions and dedication to welcoming all to the church. He was also a war hero and the recipient of the Purple Heart, the Navy Cross and the Silver Star.

At the end of his life, when he was barely able to mount the steps of the pulpit in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Bishop Moore was outspoken against President Bush and the war in Iraq.

“Over and against that force of millions of people of all faiths is one solitary man named George W. Bush, alone in a room, telling his staff he needed to be alone for a few minutes of prayer,” Bishop Moore said at an Evensong for Peace on March 23, 2003. “I think it’s strange the whole world—literally millions of people, little children, people in the jungle, people in the city, people outside here, you—that your fate will be determined on the power of millions of people of all faiths against the war, and one solitary Texas politician being alone with Jesus.... This has to do with two different kinds of religions. The religion that says ‘I talk to Jesus and therefore I am right,’ and millions and millions of people of all faiths who disagree.”

When WWII ended, Moore, who had served with the U.S. Marine Corps on Guadalcanal, returned to New York City and studied at General Theological Seminary, graduating in 1949. He was ordained on December 17, 1949 and his first church as rector was Grace Van Vorst in Jersey City, NJ, where he served until

1957, when he was called as Dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis.

In 1963, he was elected Suffragan Bishop of Washington, DC and was consecrated on January 25, 1964. He served as Suffragan for five years, continuing his work with inner city churches. He again came back to New York City when he was elected as Bishop Coadjutor in December 1969 and was installed as XIII Bishop of New York on September 23, 1972, succeeding Bishop Horace Donegan. Bishop Moore retired as bishop in 1989, but never slowed; he maintained an active interest in the church and other causes important to him.

Bishop Moore was the author of three books: a study on the urban work of the church, *The Church Reclaims The City* in 1965; *Take A Bishop Like Me* in 1979, in which he chronicles his ordination of a lesbian and describes the struggle for women’s ordination and gay rights in the church; and his memoir, *Presences: A Bishop’s Life In The City* in 1997.

In 1944, Bishop Moore married Jenny McKean, and they raised nine children. In 1973 Jenny died. In 1975, Bishop Moore married Brenda Hughes, who died in July 1999. Also predeceasing him was his first great-grandchild, Tallulah Moore Gerety, who died at two weeks of age in April 2003.

Bishop Moore’s life epitomized dedication and service to a wide range of causes and institutions. He was a member of Yale Corporation and a trustee of GTS, Berkeley Divinity School, Bard College, and Trinity School, and served on the National Board of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

In 1968, then Bishop Suffragan of Washington DC, Bishop Moore answered a call from the Presiding Bishop to direct a project called Operation Connection. This interfaith coalition was aimed at involving black and white leadership in the area of urban economic development. In the summer of 1970, Bishop Moore led a peace mission to South Vietnam. In 1982, he was part of a delegation of the Institute for Policy Studies to Moscow to discuss nuclear disarmament with Society leaders. His international work included visits to Nica-

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Aeveternitas: *Paul Moore*

ragua and South Africa. He visited East Timor three times and served as chairman of the Timor Project, focusing on Human Rights. He was also a member of a committee to memorialize the battlefields of Guadalcanal. He was chairman of the project for Relations and Human Rights 1993-1994; member of the Legal Defense Fund of the NAACP 1956-1992; a trustee and adjacent professor at GTS 1957-1989; and served on the Advisory Council to the Anglican observer at the United Nations.

For his work for urban justice, he received the Social Science Award and the New York Urban League Award. In 1991, he was the recipient of the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Freedom Medal honoring his lifelong commitment to social justice. He also received the Margaret Sanger Award of Planned Parenthood, the Alumni Medal from St. Paul's school and the General John Russell Leadership Award of the United States Marine Corps.

Bishop Moore watched over several Anglican religious communities, as Protector General of the Society of St. Francis and Bishop Visitor of the Order of the Holy Cross, the Order of St. Helena, and the Brotherhood of St. Gregory.

He was also president of the Episcopal Mission Society, the social service arm of the Episcopal Diocese of New York, and honorary president of Seamen's Church Institute, the Youth Consultation Service, and chairman of the Governor's Council on AIDS. He served on the Asia Committee of Human Rights Watch, an organization concerned with human rights internationally.

He served as president of the national "Church

and City Conference" and also co-chaired a special advisory committee on church and society, which was charged with the development of social polity and program for the Episcopal Church.

In the July 12, 1970 *New York News* he was quoted: "The ministry of unity and reconciliation is not an easy one. It's what put Christ on the cross. But if we can witness to this kind of unity within the church, then we would perhaps be giving the greatest possible example to a world that is torn."

On Christmas two years later, *Newsweek* was his forum: "I still think the church should take the initiative whenever possible in social ethics. But right now there don't seem to be any well-defined movements which I can relate to except peace."

He shared his reflections concerning September 11, 2001 with the clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of New York: "We are still confused in our emotions about that day, and we may well have the grief revisit us for many years. It would be easy to try to put these feelings behind us, but please do not let them go just because they are difficult. It's important that we remain motivated to deal with the months and years ahead.

It seems to me that we are called to proceed, step by step, in this difficult project ministry, with sensitive timing, to be sure, but with iron willed determination. For this is a ministry of love. Peace and Justice are Love distributed...I believe that most Americans are decent compassionate people as we saw here in New York in September. If they realize truth they will come around and eventually influence the foreign policy of the USA to become a true reflection of who we are."

Monica Furlong

author and equal rights advocate

1930-2003

Monica Furlong was a writer on spirituality, a committed and active member of the Church of England, a poet, novelist, biographer, travel writer and journalist, writing for *The Spectator*, *The Guardian*, and the magazine *Truth*, and then going on to the *Daily Mail*. From 1974 to 1978 she was a producer for the BBC.

All this time her interest in church matters and in feminism was growing; the two subjects intertwined, and she was moderator of the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW) from 1982 until 1985, where her voice was strong and influential.

From the time she became vice-moderator in 1981, she was always aware of the great gifts women could bring to Christian life. Her day-long "Festival of Women" at St. James' Piccadilly, with her *After Eve—A Happening*, exposed both the cruelty and absurdity

in the misogynist sayings of the early Fathers—and also familiar present-day sexist pronouncements.

Furlong introduced a witty encouragement which relieved those struggling to release women to be priests in the Church of England. Her first book, *With Love to the Church* (1965), had expressed her confidence that the Christian community had the resources of spirit and laughter to resolve its tensions. She embodied warm-hearted spiritual growth, able to discover new ways of dealing with disagreement, and her irreverent sense of humor was refreshing.

When her ideas became known in America, she was made an honorary Doctor of Divinity by the General Theological Seminary in New York in 1986.

She was considered a bold, often controversial writer on church and spiritual matters, and books of

hers such as *The Church of England: The State It's In* (2000) ruffled feathers a good deal. Much of her writing on religion and spirituality, however, approached her subjects more obliquely, for instance, through biographies. Of these, her best known were of Thomas Merton and Teresa of Lisieux; and her *Visions and Longings: medieval women mystics* (1996) was in tune with the current interest in feminism, mysticism and the medieval past.

Not surprisingly, all her writing was imbued with her ideas on spirituality and the numinous, and it covered a wide field. There were three novels; a book of poems called *God's a Good Man* (1974); a reflective book called *Flight of the Kingfisher: a journey among the Kukatja Aborigines* (1996); and an attractive memoir called *Bird of Paradise* (1995). There were also several books with religious themes, often controversially treated: *Puritan's Progress* and *Christian Uncertainties* (both 1975); *Feminine in the Church* (1984) and *Mirror to the Church* (1988), both of which she edited; and *Reflections on Forgiveness and Spiritual Growth* (2001), which she co-edited. Her illumination of life as a journey, *Travelling In* (1971), was considered by the *Times Literary Supplement* to be "well worth brooding over."

Her attitudes to religion were liberal and ecumenical: in the Eighties and Nineties she wrote and reviewed for the Roman Catholic weekly *The Tablet*, where her robust views were well liked. She also had some literary success. In 1995, Bristol University made her an honorary DLitt.

Furlong felt, in her words, "the despair and anger" of those barred from testing their vocation as priests. In 1987 she helped to organize the St Hilda's Community, meeting regularly at the Chaplaincy of St Mary's College, Mile End Road. There the congregation could experience the priestly ministry of a woman

ordained abroad, and in 1991 Furlong wrote the introduction to *Woman Included*, a collection of liturgies brought together by the Community in which God is referred to as "She."

Furlong was a leader in organizing the "Thanksgiving for the Ministries of Women," in Canterbury Cathedral in 1988, and was disappointed that Archbishop Runcie, after initial encouragement, declined to attend. Later the Bishop of London brought a legal threat of trespass against the St Hilda's Community, though it was wholly composed of devout worshippers, so that Furlong transferred it to the Methodist Church across Bow Road, where it continued undaunted.

One of her last books, *Act of Synod—Act of Folly* (1998), was a broadside against the measures taken to preserve the unity of the Church of England after its 1992 decision to ordain women priests: the result, she believed, was nothing more or less than legalized division in the Church.

Her devotion and spirituality were lit by her intuition of the freshness of God. She could make gentle fun of church journalists who missed this. "Their claim is that we are out to wipe out God and replace him with earth goddesses, to destroy the Church and replace it with, if I read them aright, dancing in sacred groves and celebrating Beltane . . . The revolution I at least have in mind is a very different one, in which the Church might genuinely treat women as equals . . . allowed to stand at an altar and hold the Body and Blood of Christ in their hands."

At a MOW Service, Rowan Williams spoke about the possibility of fresh life for the Church in these terms: "The Church finds it so hard to believe that there can be a new future that is truly faithful to what has been already given. Yet that is what resurrection is." He was expressing Monica Furlong's deepest convictions. [Times of London, January 16, 2003]

South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls for Reparations

As he presented the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to South African President Thabo Mbeki, Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu recommended that \$270 million be paid to the 20,000 victims who, he said, had waited "too long." He called on big businesses, which had been beneficiaries of the apartheid policies, to contribute to the reparations process. The commission gathered the testimonies of about 21,000 people in an effort to reconcile victims and perpetrators of human rights abuses. It granted amnesty to 1,200 people. Mbeki promised to respond to the recommendations quickly.

Tutu said that the state could not afford to prosecute those who were not granted amnesty because "the burden on our system would be quite intolerable . . . and the cost astronomical." He added that "there are very many who should have applied for amnesty and who didn't."

Any future investigations are hampered by the fact that the government cannot use testimonies already presented to the commission. Tutu said that there was some solace to be found, even if perpetrators are not prosecuted. "This is a moral universe. You may walk as if you were free, but there is no doubt whatsoever you are going to have a trial living with yourself." [BBC]

Old North Church in Boston Challenges Government Policy to Get Restoration Grant

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton made a trip to Boston's North End on May 27 to announce a federal grant to Old North Church from the Save America's Treasures Preservation Fund. One of Boston's most familiar landmarks, Old North Church is known for its steeple, from which sexton Robert Newman on April 18, 1775, hung the two lanterns associated with Paul Revere's ride and the beginning of the Revolutionary War. The church receives more than 600,000 visitors a year.

The \$317,000 grant is significant because the much-needed funds will go toward the cost of restoring its 280-year-old windows. But the award is also getting significant public attention because it is the result of a change in federal policy against government funding of religious sites.

Old North's original grant application, made last fall, was rejected. Because the church is a significant historic site as well as home to an active Episcopal congregation of 150 people, Old North Church risked wading into the debate over separation of church and state by appealing for reconsideration. The appeal led to a legal review which found that the government's policy discriminated unfairly against historical sites used for

religious purposes, Secretary Norton said in her announcement. She said of the policy change: "It ends discrimination against religion. In essence we have to deal with places only with historic value."

Among the host of officials joining Secretary Norton for the announcement were Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Secretary of State William Galvin and the White House's director of faith-based and community initiatives, Jim Towey.

Old North's vicar, the Rev. Stephen Ayres, took advantage of his captive audience of city, state and federal government officials to give them his own policy reminder: "The question of the appropriate separation of religion and government is raised not only by the state, but within religious communities as well. Many are concerned that religious institutions may lose their moral and prophetic voice if we become too dependent on government support. We must always ask ourselves whether receiving government grants will compromise our vocation to remind our representatives of God's concern for peace and for the care of the poor and marginalized." [ENS]

by Tracy J. Sukraw, editor of The Episcopal Times in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Native American Group Honors Retiring Dubuque Professor

His friends often tell stories on him, because they love him and he's a good sport. This year they honored him as well. He's Henry Fawcett, of the Tsinshian tribe, now of Dubuque, IA, whose 40-year ministry among Native Americans has taken him from his Metlakatla, Alaska home village on Annette Island to the faculty of Dubuque Seminary.

Fawcett served pastorates in Nebraska, Minnesota and Washington before landing in Dubuque. The honors came at his retirement celebration during the 215th General Assembly. Fawcett will retire in July after two decades as pastor of students at the University of Dubuque and director of the Native-American program at Dubuque Seminary.

Because of the program—and Fawcett's devotion to it—the seminary can claim more Native-American graduates this year than any other Presbyterian seminary. Fawcett is also a member of the board of trustees of Cook College and Theological School in Tempe, AZ. He served a lengthy term as moderator of the Native American Consulting Committee and in 1974 was a candidate for moderator of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the US.

Among the numerous gifts presented to Fawcett during a dinner meeting of the Native Ameri-

can Consulting Committee was a plaque from the Dubuque seminary and a ceramic Communion set crafted by a Laguna Pueblo potter. The program also featured Native American musicians.

The Native American Consulting Committee is composed of representatives of eight synods, plus eight at-large members. It includes persons of Choctaw, Cherokee, Laguna-Navajo, Nez Perce, San Felipe Pueblo, Seneca, Sioux and Tsinshian heritage. After retirement, Fawcett plans to remain in Dubuque and continue his one-on-one counseling with Native American students.

Synod of the Church of Melanesia Approves Ordination of Women

The 10th General Synod of the Church of Melanesia, which met 20-31 October 2002, has agreed to the amendment of the Church's Constitution in order to allow women to enter into any of the ordained ministry of the Church, be it as deacons, priests or bishops.

The decision was passed without dissent by the General Synod when it met in Honiara. The amendment, however, must first be approved by the eight diocesan synods of the church before the constitution can be changed.

Rite of Blessing Authorized in Diocese of New Westminster, Canada

Bishop Ingham Declares a 'Clear Biblical Imperative'

Clergy in six parishes within the Diocese of New Westminster have been authorized to perform a rite of blessing of committed same sex unions. In so doing, all provisions of the motion passed by Diocesan Synod in June, 2002, are now fulfilled.

That motion requested that Bishop Michael Ingham authorize a rite of blessing of homosexual couples. The bishop issued the rite to the parishes on Friday May 23, in advance of the Diocesan Synod held May 30-31.

In a letter accompanying the rite, Bishop Ingham distinguished between the blessing of gays and lesbians and marriage and stated that couples who seek the blessing must receive preparation and instruction, and be supported and sustained by the parish throughout their lives together.

"The church recognizes that homosexual couples face the same challenges and share the same responsibilities as other people in living out the costly demands of love," said the bishop in his letter.

"Our purpose is to encourage and strengthen fidelity and mutual supportiveness in family life on which the stability of our wider society depends."

The synod's motion last year required that blessings will take place only after a favorable vote of the parish Vestry, and the agreement of the priests involved.

To date, the six parishes (of 80 in the diocese) are the only ones to have held Vestry meetings and requested that their churches become a place where same sex blessings occur.

The bishop noted that two days after he had issued the rite of blessing, a statement by the Primates of the Anglican Communion meeting in Brazil stated that "as a body" the Primates could not support a blessing of same sex unions.

He said he was not surprised that the Primates could not agree on the matter, since divisions within the Communion have been in evidence since the last Lambeth Conference in 1998.

"The Primates are faithfully reflecting the lack

of theological consensus in the Communion," he said, "And yet they are also recognizing that gay Christians are part of the church and are not going away."

Bishop Ingham said that he and his diocese agreed with the Primates that there is a "duty of pastoral care...to respond with love and understanding to people of all sexual orientations." In a letter sent to the six parishes, he wrote:

"This is not a marriage ceremony, but a blessing of permanent and faithful commitments between persons of the same sex in order that they may have the support and encouragement of the church in their lives together under God.

The bishop, quoting the *Canadian House of Bishops Guidelines*, added: "In taking this step, the diocese is affirming our belief 'as Christians that homosexual persons are created in the image and likeness of God and have a full and equal claim, with all other persons, upon the love, acceptance, concern and pastoral care of the church. The gospel of Jesus Christ compels Christians to guard against all forms of human injustice and to affirm that all persons are brothers and sisters for whom Christ died.'

"Homosexual persons, like all persons, take strength and comfort from the overwhelming witness of Scripture to the unconditional love of God. The Bible urges the church to put into practice the compassion of Jesus towards all who suffer prejudice, discrimination and rejection because of their particular human differences and uniqueness. This Rite of Blessing is one response to that clear biblical imperative."

The rite of blessing of homosexual couples is the pastoral response which the Synod of the Diocese of New Westminster had requested three times and to which he gave his consent last year.

The rite and other materials will be posted on the diocesan web site at www.vancouver.anglican.ca or contact:

*Neale Adams, Communications
Officer, Diocese of New Westminster
Email: nadams@vancouver.anglican.ca*

As we go to press...

Ruach has learned that on May 28, in what may be the first same-sex blessing in the Anglican Communion, the Rev. Margaret Marquand blessed the 21-year relationship of Michael Kalmuk, 49, and Kelly Montfort, 62, at St. Margaret's in Vancouver.

Workshop on Christian Unity Celebrates the Spirit of Ecumenism

The 2003 National Workshop on Christian Unity drew over 400 participants to its May 10-13 meeting in Savannah, Georgia, where they celebrated the spirit of ecumenism—and some progress on the road to unity. The meeting also sought to “widen the table” by including denominations that haven’t participated in the movement over the years.

Plenary sessions, for example, focused on the classical Pentecostal traditions and the ways in which their growth around the world has impacted and influenced the ecumenical movement. Pentecostals in the U.S. have moved through a period when they did not participate in ecumenical discussions into a new period where their influence has increased on the ecumenical scene. The main question for Pentecostals now, according to some participants, is whether the ecumenical movement is really serious about building a new ecumenical table with them as partners in the building process or merely “adding leaves to the existing table.”

In the opening plenary address, Dr. Robert Franklin of Emory University in Atlanta spoke of the power of the Holy Spirit to break apart neatly constructed vessels of parochialism and of the need for the church to have a broom ready to sweep up those shattered fragments, study them, and seek to shape them

into new and unexpected arrangements of great beauty and utility. “Tradition is the living faith of the dead while traditionalism is the dead faith of the living,” he said. He challenged participants to become, in the words of Martin Luther King Jr., a creative core of non-conformists seeking dialogue and cooperation among churches and the great religions of the world.

Dr. Anthea Butler emphasized local partnerships and dialogue between Pentecostals and mainline churches in addition to the national and international ones. The Rev. Carmelo Alvarez traced the history of charismatic renewal in the churches of Latin America, pointing out that Roman Catholic and historic Protestant churches have a charismatic flavor that makes cooperation easier and more fruitful.

Workshops and seminars provided an overview of the various ecumenical dialogues as well as a focus on interfaith listening, racism, grassroots ecumenism, and the office of deacon as an ecumenical opportunity. One of the Eucharists was celebrated by Lutherans and Episcopalians with Bishop Henry Louttit of Georgia presiding and Bishop Ronald Warren of the Southeastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America preaching on the mission challenges facing the two churches today as “full communion” partners. [ENS]

Iraqi Christians Worry about Freedom of Religion, Rise of Fundamentalism

While most Iraqi Christians joined the celebrations following the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, they are now expressing concern and anxiety that freedom of religion will be curbed in favor of Islamic fundamentalism.

Fearing a Shiite-dominated government, Christian leaders are calling for a new constitution that will guarantee minority faiths the right to “profess our faith according to our ancient traditions and our religious law, the right to educate our children according to Christian principles, the right to freely assemble, to build our places of worship, and our cultural and social centers according to our needs,” the Chaldean Church said in a statement.

“I’m afraid for my people,” said Bishop Ishlemon Warduni, leader of the Chaldean community that represents about 80 percent of Iraq’s 800,000 Chris-

tians. (The remaining 20 percent is comprised of Syrians, Assyrians and Armenians.) “During the war we were not afraid like we are now. All Christians are in danger,” he said in an article in Religion News Service. “We have a 2,000-year history in Iraq—and that is now threatened. The fanatics would see us gone,” he said.

The danger seems most pronounced in Shiite strongholds in southern Iraq where Muslim clerics are calling for an Islamic republic.

Under Saddam Hussein Christians were allowed freedom of worship but not to seek converts or give their children Christian names. There are increasing reports of Christian girls and women being harassed on the streets for not wearing veils and liquor stores, usually run by Christians, have received threatening notes. [ENS]

Planning to be in Minneapolis...?

*Make reservations for the Caucus Breakfast on our new website:
www.ewc-ecusa.org or www.episcopalwomenscaucus.org*

Methodist Bishop Calls for 'Transcendent Christian Community'

Describing Christian community as “our DNA,” the president of the United Methodist bishops called on her colleagues to lead the church in creating a community that overcomes divisions and gives hope to a world gripped by fear. “Christian community is embedded in our United Methodist identity,” Bishop Sharon A. Brown Christopher told the international Council of Bishops. “It is our DNA. The practice of our Christian faith, Wesley style, is all about connection.”

In her president’s address April 28, she emphasized the need for building “transcendent Christian community” as an antidote to the anxiety and division she sees in the United Methodist Church and the fear at large in the world. Her remarks came in the opening business session of the bishops’ weeklong, semiannual meeting, being held in the Dallas suburb of Addison.

“With the United States engaged in a global war on terrorism that apparently has only just begun, with international

relationships defined by shock and awe, and for many other reasons...I believe our human family is scared to death,” she said. “Fear has found us, and we are not prepared. Our fear is jeopardizing our faith.”

People around the world are searching for a sign of hope, she said. “We long for another way that pulls the human family together in a manner that leads to life, not death.” The Christian movement offers such hope, she said. “I believe that the antidote is Jesus Christ, given and shared in transcendent Christian community.”

She described personal experiences of being ‘profiled’ by others—as both a liberal and a conservative—and then ‘pushed aside.’ She noted that incidents of profiling based on skin color or other characteristics are increasing around the world for the sake of “international security.”

Profiling, she declared, is “judgment not based in reality....Throughout our church, as I listen and watch, I am observing a fierce hardening of mental and spiritual categories that leads to behavior that is brittle and rigid and causes assuming, judging, controlling, closing,”

she said. “This behavior is filled with the spiritual malaise called arrogance—‘my way is the right way,’ or more to the point, ‘my way is God’s way.’” That, she said, “smells like anxiety.” When insecurity and anxiety take charge, encounters become confrontations, and the other person becomes an enemy who must be discounted or changed, she said. “We attempt to secure ourselves

and maintain control of our own lives by diminishing others, by reducing their threat to us through profiling.

“Profiling is a sign of the smoke and fire within our world and church and emblematic of the deeper issues facing us in the church,” she said. “I note that this behavior is not the exclusive property of one side or the other.”

The church’s malaise centers on “our faith having gone to our heads, resulting in battles of ideologies as if our lives depended on them, while forgetting our hearts that shape our relationships with one another.” Drawing on biblical

accounts of Jesus and the early church, the bishop said that “life in God begins in relationship.”

It begins in Christian community, she said, one not defined by the absence of disagreement but characterized by how the members love one another as Jesus loved.

“How do we so order the life of the church that the anxiety that binds us and sets us against one another is transformed into the courage, confidence and hope required for us, as one body, to engage and defeat the powers and principalities of our world that hold the human family hostage?”

The bishop said she prayed that the bishops would lead the church “so that conditions for transcendent Christian community are set, our church touched again by the transforming power of Jesus Christ, and our splintered world given a fresh...sign of the hope that we know in God through Jesus Christ.”

Christopher leads the denomination’s Illinois Area. Her one-year term as president of the council expired May 2, at the end of the council’s meeting.

[UMNS]

“I believe our human family is scared to death. Fear has found us and we are not prepared...Our fear is jeopardizing our faith.”

Women's Ministries Network Meets In Austin

by Marcia McLean

The Rev. Maylin Biggadike, Anglican priest and economist, was the speaker for the Southwestern Network for Women's Ministries Spring 2003 conference at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest in Austin, TX in late April.

This group initially formed to encourage women who felt called to be priests to come together from a variety of dioceses and support systems in Texas. The meetings now draw women and men who share accomplishments, concerns and visions of lay and ordained ministries, as well as supporting women from the Diocese of Fort Worth, where Bishop Jack Iker does not ordain women or license women priests to function.

The Rev. Biggadike is a Ph.D. candidate in Christian Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York, and is currently investigating the impact of globalization on women and the poor, specifically women in South America.

This year's program was *the Theology of Wealth and Poverty, The Impact of Inequality on the Human Capability to Function*. It began with a Friday night lecture, followed by two Saturday lectures and time set aside for evening prayer and Eucharist, Sarah's circle, and meals together. The Rev. Biggadike encouraged interaction from the audience who brought experience from street ministries, corporate careers, consumer and humanitarian watchdog groups, small and large churches, and their own struggles with the best use of money.

The group started with statistics that give numbers to the pyramid shape of wealth distribution. Worldwide this concentrates great wealth in a small number of people at the top and leaves a large number of persons/ countries at the bottom (i.e.: the gross national product of the 47 least developed countries is equivalent to the income of the richest 250 people.)

But to define a rich person as having billions and a poor one as \$1/day was a distance too great to

grasp. So the audience together decided being rich meant "plenty of food, needs were met, clean water, choices, safety, health, access to medicine and insurance, a place to live, access to beauty, privacy, ownership, leisure time, freedom to express beliefs, a stake in and protecting the status quo, education and voting rights, some certainty about tomorrow, power." To be poor meant a lack of most of the above plus "indignities in searching for daily needs, invisibility, crisis orientation, vulnerability, social unacceptability".

Most of the audience decided they were rich, and that set the tone for discussing what Christianity gave them to help in the process of making daily decisions about money, envisioning their use of resources and affecting change in larger groups.

Key concepts included family lessons about money, emotions, Scriptural paradoxes, sharing vs. giving, and the concept of 'mammon'. It appears there may be an arrogance in people's personal communication with God as God's directive is heard as "help them"—the poor—vs. standing *with* all those who ask for God's presence in their lives.

The Rev. Biggadike referenced Emmanuel Levinas and encouraged the audience to read the works of more radical world economists. One priest said it was easier to get her parishioners to talk about sex than money.

The Rev. Biggadike is a graduate of the General Episcopal Theological Seminary in New York and serves as Associate Priest at St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

Anyone interested in receiving more information should contact Patty Turney at Pmt4tex@aol.com, or Marsha McClean, 1821 Martel Ave. Ft. Worth, TX 76103.

Marsha McClean is a member of the Fort Worth Chapter of the EWC.

"...threshold consciousness is not about ideas. [It is] about stepping past what we think we know and into an entirely new relationship with the many possibilities of being, the ultimately singular and limitless mystery of being. Above all, it is about freedom and the affection for all existence that only genuine freedom brings."

JANE HIRSHFIELD

Psalm 139

as spoken-word Poetry

by Carol Brorsen

O, Inescapable God, you have searched me and known me.
You see into the core of me.

Past the walls I've built to keep others from really knowing me,
past the facades that I have it all together.
Even past the rubble of the walls built and not-so-long-ago torn down that
once kept you at a safe distance, just in case you really were the bully
some make you out to be.

You know when I take a nap on the couch in the middle of the afternoon,
when I hit the snooze button three times in a row,
all the fantasies I do not share,
all the dreams I dare not dream, because they might not come true,
and then how many rivers would I have to cry.

But when I do cry, alone in my bed, alone in the shower,
alone and longing to be held,
sitting in the pews knowing my real place is behind the altar,
standing outside the church pounding on its doors, you are there.
With a hand on my shoulder, crying with me.

Your presence is all around.
Reaching back through my past and stretching into my future.
You have always been, and you have always been with me.

When I try to grasp you, figure you out, cling onto you, I cannot.
But when I wait in the silence, I realize that you have me.
You embrace me.

Where can I get away from you?
If I leave the church, throw up my hands and turn my back
on the whole lot of organized religion,
I still see glimpses of you in the night sky, I feel you in the thunderstorm,
and those old Sunday School songs just won't get out of my head.

If I turn from my true self, you are there, with a mirror.
If I move to the other coast or another continent, even there you show up.

If I say, "The world is too much, surely no one will notice if I throw the
covers over my head and stay hidden in the darkness for awhile."
There you are, in the voice of my friend on the answering machine,
in the knock and note left by my neighbor wondering if I'm okay.

For it was you who formed my every part. You who measured my hormone
levels, linked my chromosomes, knit me together in my mother's womb. Some
days I'm your work of art, some days a real piece of work,
but always your works are wonderful.

And so I praise you, for I am fabulously and wonderfully made.

*Carol Brorsen is a student at Episcopal Divinity School; her version of
Psalm 139 was used in 'Claiming the Blessing: New England' morning
worship, May 3, 2003*



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