



Newsletter

Golding Centre for Women's History, Theology and Spirituality

[The Golding Centre is situated within the Faculty of Theology and is named to honour the women Annie and Belle Golding and their married sister Kate Dwyer, women of the late 19th and early 20th centuries whose activism was underpinned by wide reading and in-depth research. Writing and public speaking were integral to their efforts to promote political and social reform. All were committed Catholics.]

Editorial

Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran – Feminist!

It is to the credit of Luke Foley, leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council of NSW, that he paid tribute to Cardinal Moran in an official speech in the Legislative Chamber in August this year on the occasion of the centenary of the death of the Cardinal declaring: “I believe Patrick Moran to be one of the most significant figures in the Colony and then State of NSW in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.” Foley elaborated on this statement, highlighting Moran’s support for the working man, and finally concluded: “The fact that the centenary of Patrick Moran’s death last week passed without comment from our media and political establishment ... says much about our society’s lack of a public memory today.”

Foley, however, saw Moran through male eyes and did not think it worthy of mention that Moran has been nationally and internationally acclaimed for his very public support of the vote for women. In 1897, as a candidate for the forthcoming Federation Convention, he stated: “For many years I have been in favour of extending to women the same privilege as enjoyed by men in the matter of suffrage or voting at the municipal and parliamentary elections. I consider that they are entitled to the right.”

In 1909 Moran readily responded to a woman suffrage support request from K.H.Shannon, Hon.Secretary of the Irish Women’s Franchise League, stating “I am quite in sympathy with the movement for women’s suffrage ...” Likewise in 1911 he willingly supplied Vida Goldstein (leading woman suffrage agitator in Victoria) with a supporting letter to take with her to England where she was going to give support to the women there in their campaign for the vote. In relation to this Moran noted in his diary:

Commendary (sic) letter of women’s suffrage in Australia given to Miss Goldstein proceeding on a peace mission to England. Unquestionably woman’s suffrage has worked well in Australia It is said that our Catholic women vote much more resolutely than the Protestants, as the example of the nuns encourages them. (Voting was not compulsory at this time.)

In 1934 Florence Barry, Hon. Secretary of the St Joan's Social and Political Alliance in England, read a public advertisement placed by the then Father Eris O'Brien in a London Catholic paper requesting information in connection with Cardinal Moran whose life he was preparing to write. Florence Barry enclosed a woman suffrage leaflet with her letter to Father O'Brien stating:

In the days when we were fighting in this country for woman suffrage this leaflet quoting Cardinal Moran's views was a tremendous help to us in fighting the ridiculous idea held by some Catholics that woman suffrage was against Catholic principles. I hope therefore that when writing the Cardinal's life mention may be made of his advocacy of woman's suffrage in the days when it was an unpopular cry.

In January 1911 at the opening of the first Catholic Educational Conference, which Moran convened, he expressed his delight that, for the first time, nuns were attending such a public gathering. He stated "I have said that the Church is unchangeable in her doctrine but changeable in her discipline", and went on to point out how appropriate it was that the nuns should participate in such an occasion and proceeded to give historical depth to his position on women:

It is nothing new in the history of the Church that Christian womanhood would achieve grand triumphs in religious teaching. St Catherine of Alexandria, by her learned disputations with the pagan philosophers of that great Grecian school, gave no less glory to the faith than did her heroism in martyrdom. St Brigid and St Ita in the far-reaching influence of their schools, were second to none of the great Apostles of religion in Ireland. It is a marvellous thing in the lives of the Irish Saints that St Brendan, St Colman and a whole host of other great Bishops received their early training in the School of St Ita.

After that he moved on to the subsequent centuries highlighting among others St Catherine of Siena and St Teresa of Avila and the founders of religious orders in the 19th century. He referred enthusiastically to the contemporary situation asserting that: "In the summer schools in America some of the best lectures were given by nuns" and he praised the Australian nuns' contribution to their own Australian Congresses. especially that of 1909.

Moran saw women as equals and there is ample evidence that he respected their opinion. He had a long standing friendship with Mary Maher, a relation by marriage, at whose home he usually stayed when in Ireland. They corresponded regularly but as yet the many extant letters documenting this friendship have not been considered worthy of analysis nor any effort made to research the life of Mary Maher, who was active in the revival of the Church in Ireland.

Moran's relations with the clergy were not without its problems and is a complex story in its own right. While clergy are reported to have found Moran distant and unapproachable there is on public record the following comment of a Sister of Mercy who had dealings with him when she was working in the Kilkenny Workhouse in his diocese: "He was very kind to us. I could not, even to this day get over my timidity with bishops and big people but I was never afraid of Cardinal Moran and could speak up to him unreservedly." Over a decade later

the social and political activist Rose Scott (non-Catholic) felt confident to ask Moran for his support in dealing with a recalcitrant all male prison committee.

Cardinal Moran was not perfect but he had a mature, life-giving, genuinely Christian relationship with women. He was truly a feminist in the best sense of that pithy, useful word which must be rescued from simplistic radicals! The Golding Centre celebrates this fact with gratitude on the occasion of the centenary of his death.

Feature

Essay

Edith Stein the Feminist

Part II – Relationship between Men and Women

The Feature Essay in our Newsletter in April this year focused on Edith Stein the Feminist as she described this dimension of herself in her biography. Part II of this subject will concentrate on her insightful reflection upon the different natures of men and women.

As mentioned previously, matriculating brilliantly, Edith initially chose psychology as her major field of study but soon transferred to philosophy. After a brilliant university career she was awarded her doctorate in philosophy *summa cum laude*. There followed a career in lecturing, teaching and research. Edith was especially interested in contemporary problems, including the nature of woman, the education of women and their various roles in the wider society.

She pointed out: ‘The radical feminists in their concern to achieve equal rights for women minimised the differences between the sexes and concentrated on their shared nature. On the other hand, the early German feminist Helene Lange, whom I admire enormously, throughout her life insisted that “the dissimilarity of the sexes must be emphasised in order that the feminine nature be freely developed and properly formed”.’ (S 155) This is the position taken by Virginia Woolf.

Edith indicated that the “nature versus nurture” debate, concerning the differences of the sexes, was alive and well in her day. (S 145) But she observed: “Thankfully, in comparison to the earlier discussions of this topic, tendencies to completely deny woman’s uniqueness have diminished. Women have become free to be concerned with such issues as the significance of woman’s intrinsic value in national life.” (S 33, 247)

She commented on the second account of the biblical creation myth which states “but no helpmate corresponding to him was found for Adam”, pointing out that the Hebrew expression used in this passage is barely translatable - *Eser kenegdo* - which literally means “a helper as if vis-a-vis to him.” Edith explained: “One can think of a mirror in which man is able to look at his own nature. The translators who speak of a ‘helpmate suitable to him’ perceive it in this way. But one can also think of a counterpart, a *pendan*, so that, indeed they do resemble each other, yet not entirely, but rather, that they complement each other as one hand does the other.” (S 59)

Edith also pointed out that the fact that man was created first did not indicate a pre-eminence any more than any person of the Trinity in God is pre-eminent. (S 60) She went on: “It is not a question here of sovereignty of man over woman. She is named as companion and helpmate and it is said of man that he will cling to her and that both are to become one flesh. This signifies that we are to consider the life of the initial human pair as the most intimate community of love.” (S 60)

Edith voiced the belief that, although man and woman were both affected by original sin, man had the more perverted “drive for perfection” emanating from his original sin. She elaborated: “This has far-reaching consequences for mankind especially in marriage and the workplace. This relentless seeking for ‘perfection’ by man produces a one-sidedness in his development and consequently the deterioration of other qualities, producing such aberrations as brutal authority, as in domestic violence and sexual promiscuity.” (S 70-1) She added: “Men tend to have very narrow interests compared with the usual broadness of interest and sympathy of women.” (S 71)

Edith also connected the one-sided development of man, the male, with the devastation of the earth, and she elaborated: “Instead of reverential joy in the created world, instead of a desire to preserve and develop it, man seeks to exploit it greedily to the point of destruction or to senseless acquisition without understanding how to profit from it or how to enjoy it.” (S 70) Edith went on to point out: “Woman, as a result of her special emotional gifts, is better protected by nature than man against a one-sided development of faculties.” (S 96)

In her balanced way, she then added: “On the other hand woman is less qualified for outstanding achievements in an objective field, achievements which are always purchased by a one-sided concentration of all spiritual faculties; and this characteristic struggle for development also exposes her more intensely to the danger of fragmentation. Then, too, the one-sidedness, to which by nature she inclines, is particularly dangerous: unilateral emotional development.” (S 96)

She continued: “A woman shares with man the powers to understand, enjoy and act; but she also shares the same degenerate desire for the possession of things through violence, a desire which falsifies, distorts and destroys. Her reverent joy in the things of this world may degenerate into greed, leading her, on the one hand, to the anxious, avaricious scraping together and hoarding of things for which she has no use; and, on the other hand, a lapse into a mindless idle life of sensuality.” (S 73-74)

Edith underlined the difference between the soul-body relationship of man and woman: “Woman’s soul is present and lives more intensely in all parts of the body and it is inwardly affected by that which happens to the body; whereas, with man, the body has more pronouncedly the character of an instrument which serves in his world and which is accompanied by a certain detachment.” (S 95)

The special love which Edith had for the theatre was evident when she cited Nora in Ibsen’s *The Doll’s House* as an example of the longing that women in general have to give and to receive love and consequently to be raised above a narrow, day-to-day existence into the realms of higher being. In her view: “A woman performs her role as a companion to man better and is a more competent mother if she does not lose herself in association with her husband but cultivates her own gifts and powers.” (S 92-3, 110)

Edith said that she was convinced that the centre of the life of man and woman was God and she commented: “There is a natural relationship between the nature of woman and the unique essence of religious life. It is a specifically feminine yearning to give herself completely to the other.”

She went on to warn: “When such self-abandonment is directed to a person instead of to God, it can easily become perverted because no human being can really fulfil that yearning.” (O 47) She added: “Everywhere about us, we see in the interaction of the sexes the direct fruits of original sin in most terrifying forms: an unleashed sexual life in which every trace of their high calling seems to be lost; a struggle between the sexes, one pitted against the other, as they fight for their rights and in doing so, no longer appear to hear the voices of nature and of God.” (S 76)

Edith certainly agreed that woman generally was gifted for motherhood. She pointed out: "Her body and soul are fashioned less to fight and to conquer than to cherish, guard and preserve." (S 72) Nevertheless Edith held that marriage cannot be considered to be the basic vocation of woman. She explained: "The New Testament holds up the ideal of virginity ... from the point of view of the Catholic faith ... it is impossible to consider marriage and motherhood as woman's exclusive vocation." (S174)

Edith explored the complex relationship between husband and wife pointing out: "Part of the wife's natural feminine concern for the right development of the beings surrounding her involves the creation of an ambience, of order and beauty conducive to their development." (S 77) She acknowledged: "The wife in accordance with her nature is called to carry more than half of the load involved in raising a family. But the wife craves for an unhampered development of her personality just as much as she does to help another toward that same goal." (S 77)

Edith emphasised that the father, as a Christian, must take responsibility for the spiritual education of the family and promote not only the development of the talents of the children but also those of his wife: "Should the husband try to confine his wife to a sphere too narrow for her talents or should he relinquish her entirely to the merely sensual life, he would carry a great share of responsibility for the atrophy of her higher life, for pathological disturbance, for an excessive dependence on husband and children (one which becomes a burden to them), and for the desolation of her life if one day she is left behind on her own." (S 76)

Edith explained: "The concept of marriage on a Catholic foundation must be further developed. The discussion concerning sexual problems, involving the psychology, pedagogy and pathology of sex has spread so extensively and has already made such a powerful practical impact on the upbringing and education of the young, in health care and way of life generally, that it is necessary to come to an understanding of all these trends on the basis of Catholic thought." (S 137-8)

Edith added: "We must do this critically i.e. not negatively but in a thorough and serious analysis of what is acceptable and unacceptable for us. We can learn a great deal from modern research methods. This would be a great support to people of good will outside the Church seeking to live by the Christian or natural law." (S 137, 139)

She did state firmly: "Only subjective delusion could deny that women are capable of practising vocations other than that of spouse and mother. The experience of the last decade and, for that matter, the experience of all times has demonstrated this. There is no profession which cannot be practised by a woman." (S 47-8)

In the process of discussing the type of work that generally suited women, Edith declared: "One can say that the development of the feminine nature in the work place can become a blessed counter-balance, especially where everyone is in danger of becoming mechanised and losing his humanity." (S 48, 49, 82, 112, 113) She added: "Women can make a positive contribution to the so-called masculine vocations provided that they suit their own particular gifts and do not do violation to themselves as persons." (S 48, 49)

Edith put family life definitely before work for both husband and wife: "It seems to me a contradiction of the divine order when the professional activities of the husband escalate to a degree which cuts him off completely from family life. This is even more true of the wife." (S 79-80)

Edith asserted: "I see woman in public life to be a seminal spore bringing new life to the national body. Women tend to be protected naturally against the poison infecting the body of our society. The innate sympathy of woman serving in public life in the legislature or as a member of the government is able to counterbalance the excessively abstract procedures of

the bureaucracy.” (S 35) With conviction Edith stated: “The woman politician in Germany has already proved herself as a blessed counterbalance against the deterioration of masculine objectivity. Women more than men have proved themselves capable of surmounting party differences for the common good.” (S 258)

E. Stein, *Life in a Jewish Family – An Autobiography*, edited by Dr L.Gelber and Romaeus Leuven OCD, translated by Josephine Koeppl OCD, Washington, ICS Publication, 1986, 178. (Hereafter A.)

E. Stein, *Woman – The Collected Works of Edith Stein* Vol.II, translated by Freda Mary Oben, Washington, ICS Publications, 1987, 144. (Hereafter S)

Sophie McGrath (ACU – Strathfield Campus)

LETTER FROM LONDON

The 2011 H-WRBI conference in collaboration with the ‘Who Were the Nuns’ project held at Queen Mary, University of London on 23-25 June 2011 was a great success. More on the conference below from Christina Brindley. In other news, the website has moved to its new address at <http://www.history.ac.uk/history-women-religious/> thanks to the efforts of Dr Kimm Curran and Rebecca Volk. With the help of Kim and Rebecca we’ll be able to update the website more frequently. Next year’s conference will be in Dublin on 21-22 June 2011! The theme is ‘Vocation, Education and Care’ and the conference is being organised by Dr Deirdre Raftery of University College Dublin and Louise O’Reilly. Abstracts from those interested in giving a paper at the conference are due 30 December 2011. Please check out the Call for Papers on our home page.

At this conference we will also be discussing the future of H-WRBI. H-WRBI has always operated with an informal structure but perhaps as H-WRBI enters its second decade of life, it is time to consider a more formal structure and importantly new leadership. We hope that some interested members with new ideas and energy will consider a more active role in guiding H-WRBI to greater strengths in the years to come.

The following Report of our 2011 Conference is courtesy of Christina M. Brindley, Manchester Metropolitan University:

The tenth annual conference of the History of Women Religious in Britain and Ireland (H-WRBI) network was held at Queen Mary, University of London. The theme for this year’s conference was ‘Identities, Organisation and Exile’ and was held in conjunction with the AHRC funded Who Were the Nuns? (WWTN) Project. The first half of the conference was dedicated to twelve invited papers relating to the WWTN project, followed by a further fourteen papers submitted to this year’s H-WRBI conference. The first day saw presentations by Caroline Bowden and Michael Questier, who gave a broad outline of the aims and outcomes of the WWTN project, as well as a demonstration of the prosopographical database of all the nuns at the exiled English convents, 1600-1800, constructed by the project. It was also announced that the project will publish a six-volume series of previously unpublished manuscript materials with Pickering & Chatto in 2012/13. In addition to her introductory presentation, Caroline Bowden touched upon the subject of ‘nearly nuns’: those women which the WWTN project research has shown were in attendance at the convents, but for one reason or another never professed. In contrast, Katharine Keats-Rohan presented a paper on almost the polar-opposite subject: what it was which constituted the ‘ideal nun’.

A number of the paper-givers made use of the WWTN database to shed light upon their own areas of research. James Kelly presented his findings in the tantalisingly-titled paper, ‘Essex girls abroad’. My own paper surveyed Lancashire women at the exiled English convents, while Marie-Louise Coolahan also made use of the database in her investigation of Irish nuns and archipelagic identities. An interdisciplinary panel on art and design was offered on day

two, which consisted of papers from Amanda Haste on the role of music in modern Anglican monasticism, Kate Jordan on conventual architecture and Ayla Lepine on embroidery in Victorian convents. Elizabeth Perry also gave a paper in the final session of the conference which investigated an illuminated manuscript showing the nuns' exile from Syon Abbey. Also in the final session, Jenna Lay looked at manuscripts produced by the nuns of Syon, literary culture and the construction of identity.

A great number of the papers touched upon literary topics. Victoria Van Hyning presented on the subject of the Louvain Chronicles and the Life of Margaret Clement. Other papers also focussed upon the writings of individuals: Genelle Gertz looked at Barbara Constable, while Jaime Goodrich considered Lady Mary Percy. Nicky Hallett examined life-writing in the annals of the English Carmelites, while Elizabeth Patton analysed various editions of the spiritual biography of Fr John Cornelius written by Dorothy Arundell. Laurence Lux-Sterritt used Carmelite documents (as well as manuscripts from the Poor Clares and the Sepulchrines) in her review of the concepts of divine love and spiritual longing in the early modern English convents. Ping-Yuan Wang diversified the literary theme with her paper investigating the circular letters produced by the Visitandine nuns in Brussels. Conventual letters were also utilised as source material by both Emma Major, who explored the responses to convents by Protestant women in the eighteenth-century, and Richard Williams, who discussed Mannock Strickland and the finances of the English convents in exile.

Contrary to the usual pattern at H-WRBI annual conferences, the vast majority of papers this year related to the early modern period. However, one panel focussed specifically upon papers discussing medieval subject areas. Kimm Curran surveyed and appraised the methodologies employed in investigating medieval nuns, while Janet Jones looked at the family backgrounds of nuns from the six convents of medieval London. Finally, Elizabeth Makowski studied the conflict between, and eventual merger of, the Franciscan nuns at Waterbeach and Denny. Additionally, three papers addressing the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries focussed on the impact of revolution and the political engagement of nuns. Caroline Watkinson discussed the impact of the Glorious Revolution upon the English convents in exile. Carmen Mangion outlined the experiences of three English convents in Paris during the French Revolution; subsequently, Tonya Moutray presented her research upon literary responses to the same conflict.

After a few technical difficulties with the microphone, which was very necessary in the echoing environs of The Octagon (designed by the Victorian architect E.R. Robson and formerly home to the library of the People's Palace, which brought greater access to education in London's East End), the conference continued without delay. H-WRBI hosted a book stall throughout the event, diligently managed by Liesbeth Corens, which at the close of the conference had raised £142 towards the relocation of the H-WRBI online pages to the Institute of Historical Research website. A further £80 was raised through donations contributed in thanks for the visit to Malplaquet House, which was organised by Victoria Van Hyning.

The second day of the conference hosted two special events. Firstly, Kathleen Sprows Cummings (Associate Director of the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism, University of Notre Dame) introduced the book launch and wine reception for the edited collection, *Gender, Catholicism and Spirituality: Women and the Roman Catholic Church in Britain and Europe, 1200-1900* (London: Palgrave, 2010), by Laurence Lux-Sterritt and Carmen Mangion. This was followed by a screening of *A Question of Habit*, an informative and entertaining documentary film deconstructing cultural images and popular perceptions of women religious, introduced by its director, Bren Ortega Murphy.

The conference delegates were refreshed and refuelled throughout the three days by two lively conference dinners, three lunches and a steady stream of tea & coffee, pain au chocolat,

mini-doughnuts, cake and wine - not necessarily in that order. The conference panels flowed smoothly throughout and came to a close with thanks given to Caroline and Carmen for their time and effort: not only in organising this year's conference, but for all the time they have spent managing and maintaining the H-WRBI network over the last decade.

Dr Carmen M.Mangion
Birkbeck College
University of London

Book Review

Anne Hetherington and Pauline Smoothy (eds), *The Correspondence of Mother Vincent Whitty 1839 to 1892*. Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 2011. Pp. 391. ISBN 978 0 7022 3935 9

This book, meticulously annotated and edited and impressively produced, contains over 430 letters written to, by or about Mother Vincent Whitty, leader of the first group of Mercy Sisters to come to Queensland. It also provides an invaluable resource for those interested, not only in the remarkable spread of the international Mercy institute and its outstanding contribution in Queensland, but also in the wider phenomenon of the resurgence of religious life for women in 19th century Ireland and the dynamic factors in its growth. Among these we see clearly reflected in these letters the encompassing resurgence of Catholic social and ecclesial life in Ireland itself, together with the continuing poverty – exacerbated by famine – of the less fortunate, a field for the wide scale educational and social relief initiatives undertaken by these women. In addition, with the services they developed and were ready to provide, women religious came to comprise a significant strand in the contemporary stream of Irish emigration – a participation widely reflected among these letters.

Ellen Whitty was born in 1819 into a Wexford farming family able to provide their gifted children with social opportunity. Ellen herself received a good education, her sister Mary married an Edward Lucas, who served as an M.P. for Meath and was a brother of the founding editor of the London *Tablet*, while their brother Robert, educated at Maynooth, was Vicar General of the Westminster Archdiocese before joining the Jesuits, becoming English Provincial then an Assistant to the Jesuit General in Italy. A number of his letters to his sister or about her appear in this volume. In 1839, Ellen entered the Mercy community at Baggot Street, where the historic convent - to become the central powerhouse of the Mercy movement - had been built by foundress Catherine McAuley. Formed by Catherine herself in the religious life and in constant attendance on her during her final illness and death, Ellen was herself appointed Mistress of Novices in 1844, a post she held until 1849 when she was elected Mother Superior of the community and third successor to Catherine McAuley. Completing the allowable two terms in 1855, she was then elected Mother Assistant and again appointed Novice Mistress, holding these two posts until her departure for Brisbane. Many letters in this volume, written over many years by her former novices and those who lived in community with her, evidence the personal affection and deep respect in which she was held.

These letters also attest to the continuing stream of young women seeking to become Mercy Sisters -of whom a small minority either left or were dismissed - and to the rapid spread of Mercy communities. This spread illustrates an interesting dynamic. As other newly founded

congregations of women increasingly from the early 19th century adopted a centralised form of government, Catherine McAuley chose otherwise in selecting the older Presentation model where each new foundation became independent of its founding house. This decentralised mode of spread, together with their non-enclosed religious lifestyle and their variety of ministries, enabled a truly outward dynamic. Communities soon spread in Ireland, England and Scotland, these in turn becoming centres for further expansion in a multiplying effect. Overseas, Mercy communities soon followed in the paths of Irish migration to Newfoundland, the United States and Argentina. In 1846, the first Australian Mercy

foundation was made in Perth, long letters from there to M. Vincent in Dublin being of particular interest to Australian readers. What do these letters reflect? Evidently adventurous young women - all volunteers - articulate, frequently humorous, spiritually committed and strongly bonded. With many family interconnections evidenced, they came principally from a broadening stratum in Irish society able to provide an education for their children and, though the Mercies were more flexible than older institutes, the required dowries for their daughters.

M. Vincent, as Rev. Mother at Baggot Street, was involved in some serious undertakings: her positive response to the request for Mercy Sisters to nurse at the Crimea and her travelling to London to see the Secretary for War in connection with this - her own Mercy sister Anne being a volunteer and also later for the foundation in Argentina; her agreeing to Mercy Sisters staffing the long-founded Jervis Street Hospital in Dublin; and her initial steps towards the foundation of Dublin's Mater Misericordiae Hospital. In the course of all this, as several letters here reveal, her own desire for an overseas mission remained persistent. Dr James Quinn who, among his other involvements, had been for some ten years a chaplain at Baggot Street, lost no time in seeking to secure her for his new mission as first bishop of Queensland, created a separate colony in 1859. The community, however, voting in chapter, would not allow Vincent to go, until at Quinn's request Cardinal Cullen intervened, advising that she be allowed to go if it were her wish.

So it was that Ellen Whitty, with five companions, accompanied Quinn on the long sea journey to Brisbane arriving in May 1861. Despite the bishop's early esteem, differences soon arose as he sought to micro-manage the tiny resources available for his projected educational provision. This led to his demoting M. Vincent and appointing a much younger superior in her place. As her letters reveal, she put the needs of the challenging new mission field before her own feelings - a principled resolve which was to win out. Her moral authority in the community continued to be respected and relied upon. Quinn himself, in Ireland in 1870, unsuccessfully seeking further staff and resources for his diocese, urgently sent for her, knowing the esteem in which she was held. She came, not only securing volunteers for her own community, but smoothing avenues for Quinn. Mother Assistant from this time until her death in 1892, M. Vincent was behind every further foundation and new work of her growing Mercy congregation - a new term and a significant one. A general move, which Quinn supported, in Mercy overseas foundations was, at least within a diocese, to keep further houses linked to their founding house in a centralised pattern. Vincent agreed with the bishop in this. She saw her Brisbane foundation spread extensively west and north, where, with its own bishop in 1882, Rockhampton became the head house for a congregation in that diocese.

The final letters, from around Australia and abroad, written, firstly, on the occasion of M. Vincent's Golden Jubilee of profession (1891) and then on her death the following year, reveal the qualities others consistently experienced in her: spiritual integrity and commitment, strength and intelligence, graciousness and openness, and predominantly a sense of being personally valued.

Rosa MacGinley

(ACU – Brisbane Campus)

Celebrating 10 Years of GC Annual Colloquia

This year we celebrated ten years of colloquia organised by the Golding Centre with the intention of contributing to the development of a strong research culture within Australian Catholic University (ACU) by celebrating and sharing the fruits of recent doctoral studies and published books.

Women's history cannot be done in isolation from mainstream (mainly men's) history which is a significant part of women's context and, in the last analysis, there is no area of history which does not impact upon the lives of both men and women. It is a fact of history, however, that most men manage very nicely, as they see it, to produce satisfactory history without even wondering about what women were doing or thought about in relation to the areas of their research. Hence the inadequate nature of the history which is generally available as a resource to public policy makers and others looking to it for guidance.

It can be seen from the following list of colloquia programmes from 2002 -2011 that a most interesting range of areas of research were shared from a variety of tertiary institutions with an increasing number coming from ACU. Added to this the structure of the colloquia involves the conversation, following the formal presentation, being led by a person with a special expertise or interest in the area under discussion. This provided for the involvement of members from other tertiary institutions and from the Friends of the Golding Centre.

In the anonymous evaluations the day has been invariably declared stimulating, interesting and enjoyable. The friendly atmosphere is frequently commented upon. This year the MC for the day was Dr Lesley Hughes (University of New South Wales), a founding Friend of the Centre, and we celebrated with High Morning Tea and High Lunch with the highest standard of hospitality provided as usual by our good friends from Mt St Mary Campus Canteen.

Colloquia Programmes 2002 -2011

2011 - * Dr Margaret Quane rsm (Australian Catholic University), 'The contribution of St Therese of Lisieux, Doctor of the Church, to articulating a spirituality of faith for the modern age, focusing on female *wellbeing*'.

* Dr Robyn Hanstock (University of New England) 'Women's way of learning in social situations outside of educational institutions.'

* Dr Anthony Maher (Australian Catholic University), 'Victorian Modernist, Maude Petre and her "Way of Faith"'.

2010 - * Dr Marie Crowley (Australian Catholic University), 'Evelyn Underhill(1875 – 1941), religious writer, spiritual director and exponent of Christian spirituality'.

* In exploring the education of the Catholic middle class in Australia Mary Ryllis Clark drew upon her recently published book *Loreto in Australia* and Dr Janice Garaty (Australian Catholic University) spoke to her thesis 'A History of Holy Cross College, Woollahra 1908-

2001: 'A Micro-Study of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Sydney in the Twentieth Century.'

* Dr Michelle Connolly (thesis, Graduate Theological Union Berkeley), 'Disorderly Women and the Order of God: An Australian Feminist Reading of the Gospel of Mark'.

2009 – * Dr Catherine Thom rsj (Broken Bay Institute), 'Two women, two men, two lives – Cornelia Connolly and Mary MacKillop'.

* Dr Trish Madigan (Sydney University), 'The Impact of fundamentalism on women's lives and their responses to it in Roman Catholicism and Sunni Islam'.

*Dr Damian Gleeson (Notre Dame University), 'The professionalisation of Australian Catholic social welfare, 1920-1985'.

2008 – * Dr Jennifer Herrick (Sydney University), 'Trinitarian Intelligibility in the Contemporary arena.'

Professor Peter Wilson (Australian Catholic University) 'An assessment of the life of Clara Schumann (Wieck) in the light of her correspondence and diaries.'

* Dr Judith Godden (Sydney University), 'Lucy Osborn: a lady displaced, Florence Nightingale's envoy to Australia.'

2007 - * Pauline Shaw (Australian Catholic University), 'Mission Through Journalism: Elizabeth Hayes and the *Annals of Our Lady of the Angels*'.

* Joan McBride (University of New England), 'A constant Gospel in a changing Church – the Marist Sisters in Fiji, 1892 – 1990.'

* Antionette Baldwin (Australian Catholic University). 'Heeding the Voices – Through Learning to Healing', a response to the NSW Parliament 1998 inquiry into Adoption Practices in NSW 1950 -1998.

2006 – * Teresa Pirola (Catholic Institute of Sydney) , 'The Bishop and Mary: Two Symb of the Church: A Comparative Study of Episcopal and Marian Representation.'

* Noelene Brasche (Sydney University), 'Leaving the Country Without Leaving the Country – Reading Australian Indigenous Life Narratives as a Discourse of Diaspora'.

* Marie Crowley (Australian Catholic University), a history of women Carmelites in Australia , 'From Tourcoing to Parkes: A Journey of Hope'.

2005 – * Jull Blee,(University of Ballarat), 'Giving the Laity a Voice Through Fiction: Irish Catholic Ballarat as told through the novel *The Liberator's Birthday*'.

* Anne Player (Australian National University), 'Bishop Lanigan of Goulburn and the making of a Catholic People, 1867 – 1900'.

* Peter Quinn (Sydney University), 'Unenlightened efficiency: the administration of the juvenile correction system in New South Wales, 1905 – 1988'.

2004 – * Catherine Thom (Australian Catholic University), 'The relationship between men and women in Celtic society in general and in some ascetic communities in particular'

* Jennifer Carpenter (Centre for Medieval Studies, University of Toronto), "'A New Heaven and a New Earth": The *Vitae of the Mulieres Religiosa*'.

*Lesley Hughes (University of New South Wales), “‘To labour seriously’”: Catholic Sisters and social welfare in late nineteenth century New South Wales’.

2003 – * Sandie Carroll (San Francisco Theological Seminary), ‘Teaching About Mary’.

* Mary Ryan (Macquarie University), ‘History of the Sisters of Mercy, Bathurst, 1966- 1909’.

* Carmel Davis (Macquarie University), “‘Space and Spaciality” in the works of the mystics Richard Rolle, the *Cloud of Unknowing* and Julian of Norwich’.

2002 – * Kerrie Hide (Australian Catholic University), ‘Julian of Norwich - a woman for all seasons’.

* Marilyn Kelleher (Sydney University), ‘Compassionate Samaritans: Active Benedictine Women in NSW, 1857-1877.’

* Janet Currie (Australian Catholic University), ‘Bringing Meaning to Life – the spiritual health dimension as part of holistic health.’

Conferences

Second International Conference on Religion and Spirituality in Society, 20-22 February, 2012, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

The Religion and Spirituality in Society Conference sets out to describe, analyse and interpret the role of religion and spirituality in society. The bases of this endeavour are cross-disciplinary. The intellectual project is neutral with respect to the agendas of particular religions or explicit counterpoints to religion such as agnostic ism or atheism. This Conference serves as a forum for those interested in the pursuit of scholarly conversation surrounding the key issues that impact the relationship between religion and society. The conference is intended as a space for careful, scholarly reflection and open dialogue while recognizing that a tension exists between the academic conversation and the practice of religious and spiritual traditions.

For full details of the Conference see <http://www.religion-conference.com>

Colonial Girlhood/Colonial Girls Conference, 13-15 June 2012, University of Melbourne

Settler colonies and colonies of occupation, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa and the Caribbean, held out the possibility to experience freedom from, and the potential to reconfigure, British norms of femininity. This conference seeks to draw together international scholars for a multidisciplinary examination of how colonial girlhood was constructed, and redefined, in both British and colonial texts and cultures. Since girlhood in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries extends from childhood to the age of marriage, it represents a complex category encompassing various life stages and kinds of femininity, as well as differences based on class and race.

Colonial girls occupy an ambivalent and sometimes contested position in British and settler societies. They are sometimes seen as a destabilizing force that challenges conventional expectations of girls as a disruption that can be contained. The emergent writings of British-born settlers about and for girls, which were usually published in England, contribute a further degree of complexity to the developing picture of the colonial girl. These texts both

perpetuate and occasionally challenge British imperial and gender ideologies, reflecting loyalties torn between “home” and new dominions.

Across national boundaries, the malleability of colonial girlhood is evident. In British print culture, Indian girls were often represented as victims of an unenlightened culture that offered poor educational opportunities, and Irish girls were frequently ‘hot headed’ and untamed. In each national context, the workings of colonialism produced different models of idealised girlhood, from which indigenous girlhoods were often marginalised.

Crucially the Empire itself was in a state of dramatic flux across what is often called Britain’s “imperial century”. The Empire grew substantially in size and in population in the nineteenth century and its expansion was integral to eventual movements toward independence for white settler societies. Imaginings of Empire and girlhood are both subject to radical change across the century, and reading the intersections and synergies in these transformations will prove mutually illuminating.

Scholars from Art History, English, Cultural Studies, History, Indigenous Studies, Education and cognate fields are invited to submit proposals that engage with any aspect of the intersection of British colonialism and girlhood in the period 1815-1930. Papers may be inspired by, but certainly not limited to, the following themes:

* colonial girls as representative of British imperial ideals; *tensions between imperial and national/colonial identities; *the circulation of feminine ideals between colonies; *print culture and the development of gendered colonial ideals; *indigenous girlhoods; *coming of age in the colonies; *colonial life as a threat to girlhood; *girlhoods and evolving nationalisms; *British representations of colonial femininity; *class and labour in the colonies; *the imagined role of colonial girls in the British Empire.

Abstracts of 250 words are invited and to be sent with a brief biographical statement to Dr Michelle Smith: msmith@unimelb.edu.au and Dr Kristine Moruzi: mmoruzi@ualberta.ca

ACHS Conference September 2012

The Australian Catholic Historical Society is holding a conference in 2012 focusing on 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. John Carmody, President of ACHS, reported that Professor Greg Craven, Australian Catholic University Vice-Chancellor, was enthusiastic about the idea and offered the co-operation of ACU and the use of conference/seminar rooms. The intention is to hold the conference in early September during History Week. To be kept informed on developments see the ACHS website: <http://australiancatholichistoricalsociety.com.au/>

Importantly, John Carmody observed that the hope is that this conference will engage university academics, their undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as senior students of history in Catholic schools. The ACHS President also observed: “With the passing of people like Professor Patrick O’Farrell and Professor Eric Sharpe (first

Professor of Religious Studies at Sydney University) there has been a decline in the attention given to research and teaching of religious questions in our universities.”

Of Interest

Maria Hill (NSW) is a female military historian and the first Greek-Australian to write about the campaigns in Greece and Crete. She examines the Greek campaigns from a ‘relational’ point of view rather than the more conventional ‘operational’ perspective. Her aim is to put human relations at the forefront of any discussions about these campaigns. She was invited to speak at the Jessie Street National Women’s Library earlier in the year when it was pointed out: “For too long military campaigns have been viewed through the prism of military strategy, as if people’s emotions, temperament and behaviour has no bearing on what occurs in the battlefield and beyond.”

‘For love or money: historical perspectives on gender and emotional labour’

The West of England & South Wales Women’s History Network held a conference on the above topic in July this year. Papers ranged across the following:

familial relations and relationship; paid and unpaid work; vocational work; carer and caring relationships; friendship; philanthropic and charitable work; social action; therapeutic and psychoanalytic work and relationships

Conference: Women and Religion: Doctrinal, Historical and Social Perspectives

A conference was held at the University of Bristol focusing on the above theme. The intention was to bring together doctoral researchers and early career academics from a variety of disciplines and fields to explore the role and place of women in religion encouraging research and collaboration at the University of Bristol and within other universities both within the UK and abroad.

It was pointed out that research on women and religion is often divided by religious or academic field, and often occurs at the margins of academic practice. This interdisciplinary conference was intended to expand the focus of research by sharing approaches and perspectives in different academic fields.

Women Religious Leaders in Japan’s Christian Century, 1549-1650

This book written by Haruko Nawata Ward was published by Ashgate in 2009. It is a thoroughly historically contextualised work which gives a voice to some of the Japanese women who provided crucial leadership in the spread, nurture, and maintenance of the Christian faith through their various apostolic ministries. Reviewer Dr Mara Patessio from the University of Manchester points out that the history of Japanese male converts and religious actors is well known, but a comprehensive study of their remarkable female counterparts has hitherto been unavailable.

**[This Newsletter is produced by the Golding Centre for Women's History, Theology and Spirituality.
Please address all correspondence to the editor Dr Sophie McGrath rsm, Email:
sophie.mcgrath@acu.edu.au.]**