

Leading

"We are not leaving the church, we are leading it."

Bishop Bridget Mary Meehan

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Spotlight: Clare Julian Carbone, MSW

Each issue of Leading will profile the life and work of one of our priests.

I was raised and educated a Roman Catholic in Brooklyn and Queens, NY. To this day, I still recite a Hail Mary when I hear the sound of sirens, as the nuns taught me to do. As a child at home when I washed the dinner dishes, I would imagine the tall glass I was holding to be a chalice, and proceeded to drink the last bit of "wine" from it as the priest would at Mass. The archetypal images of my sacramental Catholic faith were indelibly inscribed in my soul.

When I was young, I also desired to be a nun and later in life was led to enter the Poor Clares. Due to a persistent interest in Interfaith dialogue, the ordination of women, and the right of gays to marry, it was deemed that, "I did not fit their charism."

After having completed an MSW degree, the thought of priesthood occasionally entered my mind. I was reading a book by John Sanford ... a Jungian therapist and an Episcopal priest. My heart opened in recognition as I resonated deeply with the combination of that calling. But each time I thought to pursue priesthood, I felt an internal check that



Clare Julian Carbone

date for the priesthood. I came to view this encounter and invitation as the Divine outer confirmation I had strongly believed should precede one's call to priesthood.

How could I say no to God?

Conduit describes my calling... "I am a hole in the flute through which the Christ breath flows," as the Sufi mystic Hafiz so eloquently wrote. I am called to be a clear space for the sacred exchange to happen; to continually release blockages of resentment and judgment, so that the Christ breath may flow naturally and bless those before me.

"If we take the world's enduring religions at their best, we discover the distilled wisdom of the human race."

Huston Smith

this was the one vocation which we personally should not pursue. This call must come from God by way of some outward confirmation.

In 2014, I attended a Conference on Women's Spirituality in Salt Lake City. Recognizing Fr. Roy Bourgeois, I made my way down the aisle to greet him. During our conversation, I met Janice Sevre-Duszynska, ARCWP. We talked about callings, and she eventually invited me to contact Bishop Bridget Mary Meehan. Shortly afterwards, I was received into the Association and became a candi-

As my life unfolds here in Salt Lake City, I find many opportunities for inclusivity and relationality. As the Hospice Chaplain, for instance, I become more deeply aware of the journey our souls must all take back to its Creator, no matter what spiritual tradition we may claim. Following our second Interfaith Prayer Vigil this past September 11th, I was approached with the request to facilitate more vigils, as they had become a healing balm and source of solidarity. We are in the process of developing this ministry naming it, *All Are*

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Clare Julian Carbone, MSW, is a former contemplative nun who currently lives in Salt Lake City and loves working as a Hospice Chaplain. She completed Reiki Master training and is a committee member of Archetypology of Everyday Life. Clare is actively involved in Interfaith dialogue, prayer and peace efforts in All Are One Interspiritual Prayer Alliance.

New News

Although the allusion to the following information is disturbing, good has come from it.

The few of us remaining, who lived through WWII and its horrors, are the most distressed by the reincarnation of senseless prejudice ... the desecration of Jewish grave sites and the burning down of Muslim mosques. Yet, lately, in a Philadelphia graveyard, over 100 headstones were broken or over turned. Jewish Community Centers and schools, at this writing, have been threatened by at least 135 bomb scares. Mosques have been burned and vandalized.

The good news? The reaction.

Linda Sarsour of MPower Change and Tarek El-Messidi of CelebrateMercy, prominent American Muslim activists, immediately sent out word that donations would be accepted to reconstruct the damage done to Jewish cemeteries. Although they hoped to collect at least \$20,000, donations have far exceeded their expectations.

When the mosque in Victoria, Texas, was burned to the ground, "Jewish Community members walked into my home and gave me the key to their synagogue," said Dr. Shahid Hashmi, a surgeon who in 2000 helped found the mosque. Most interesting, many donations to help rebuild the mosque came in multiples of 18. Strange. It was discovered that these came from people with Jewish names. To them, this number 18 and multiples of it, are sometimes referred to as "chai", meaning "life". That is not only an apt word, but a touching one.

We are living in turbulent times. Listening to the news non-stop is anything but pleasant. However, once in a while, overriding the usual murders and mayhem, good news pops up ... such as "Love your neighbor as yourself," and reading about people who are really doing it. ♦



Mary Bergan
Blanchard

From the Editor

Our spring theme is inclusiveness ... acceptance, kinship, perhaps friendship (if we're lucky) with others different from ourselves. Spotlight follows Clare Julian Carbone through a childlike devotion to Catholicity, to some years in a monastic life, to searching for spirituality in eastern religions, and finally back to the Catholic Church as an ordained priest, where in Salt Lake City, she now heads up an ecumenical group, *All Are One Interspiritual Prayer Alliance*. They, like us, embrace the theology that women and men are equal before God.

Get to know your faith. It lives. Each of us who reads *Leading* is at a different stage of her or his spiritual life. All should be fed. New News will keep you up to date. The history of the Liturgy, Part Two, continues in this issue, and contemporary sacramental theological theories are explored in the Book Review.

"... love is not a vague sentiment, but means taking care of another to the point of personal sacrifice."

Pope Francis

Happy reading. ♦

Mary Bergan Blanchard, MEd, LPC. Wife, mother, grandmother, teacher, missionary and author. Counselor at Parish Church for twenty years.

Ask Sophia

Q *I understand why women have joined together to become priests. What I don't understand is why you allow men to join your group. Don't they already have a road to priesthood?*

Patricia Smith Wood

A How can we champion equality if we are not prepared to accept it? Gender does not matter. Preparation and devotion to our principles do. We know why we welcomed them. So, I decided to ask our priests why they chose us.

Jim Lauder: "I initially challenged ARCWP to honor inclusivity, and allow me to join ARCWP. Thankfully and with openness, I was welcomed. It was a true and wonderful blessing in my life to join courageous women who advocate for their justice, and all kinds of justice issues on a global scale!"

Jim Marsh: "ARCWP is a movement begun by courageous, inspired women, and its vision is much bigger than a women's organization. It represents a paradigm shift in understanding and practice for Catholic Christians in the 21st century with its emphasis on a renewed model of ordained ministry of women and men, within inclusive communities of equals. I am delighted and awe-struck as I stand in mutual solidarity with my sisters, trusting we are making 'all things new'."

Edmond John: "I was ordained a priest in the ARCWP because it recognizes and accepts the call to priesthood of both men and women. I stand with women who have embraced their call to priesthood in service to the people of God." ♦

Patricia Smith Wood is a professional business woman, editor, and author of the Harrie McKinsey mystery series.

A Meditation: Christ is risen from the dead, Alleluia, Alleluia! Risen as He truly said, Alleluia, Alleluia!

These words were sung in every Catholic/Christian Church on Easter Sunday morning when we were kids. Catholic children were taught and firmly believed that this was the essence of their faith, the very foundation of Catholicism. Christ suffered, died, was buried, and rose from the dead, and in so doing gave us the promise of new life through the Resurrection.

Some Catholics still believe in this interpretation of the Resurrection. How do we share the vision *we* have? How do we invite them to pray with us, to celebrate liturgy with open hearts that embrace their faith in God in new ways? One common question is "How did we get from the ideals of faith we were taught

growing up, to this vision of the Cosmic Christ, the Divine Presence, the Holy Mystery and other "mystical" interpretations?"

We remember that the Presence of God, the Divine Presence, has always been a Sacred Mystery, part of the unknown. We believe that God is within us through the Holy Spirit, and we are one with this same Spirit. These traditional beliefs continue to be part of our new interpretations of the Resurrection as we are embraced by God for all time.

When we think of an expanding universe as a new perspective on so many traditional aspects of our faith, we can be easily befuddled. Getting by the first road block is accepting that the scientific knowledge that

changed our world has also changed our understanding of faith. The universe is more than what it seems, even more than we know today. But the Divine Presence, and all that it means, remains with us.

It is through prayer and contemplation that the scales are removed from our eyes. It is through reflection and openness that the Gentle Spirit comes to us and deepens our consciousness and acceptance of an expanding understanding of our faith. In this we come to understand the Resurrection as a personal experience in our lives. ♦

Dorothy M. Shugrue, MA Ministry, MA Clinical Psychology, MA Sociology, is a teacher, professor and first woman to be appointed by the Archbishop of Connecticut as a University Chaplain. She served as a Behavioral Health Professional for 28 years, four years as ARCWP Circle Leader, and currently is CL Advisor.



Liturgy

LITURGY: *leitourgia* in Greek, meaning “public service” or, “the work of the people.”

As Christianity became the state religion in the fourth century, several influences marked the liturgical prayer of the time. The Roman rule of law, formed and administered by men, along with Greek patriarchal beliefs, crept into the leadership and rituals of worship. This reality slowly invaded the common practices of prayer that resulted in women taking a secondary role in the liturgical setting. Meanwhile, the women who previously led prayers at liturgy – those who were already serving as deacons and priests according to their call, or “order” of ministry – continued to serve the faithful along with the men who came forward to control the state religion. However, it was the male presence that eventually came to dominate the Table of worship.

In the writings of St. Paul, there are conflicting messages about the role of women. Paul writes that women are to be commended in their faithful role of service to the community and in worship, even naming them individually. Then we read that women are to be kept silent and have no role in leadership within the sanctuary. To understand this contradiction, we discover that the writings of Paul were redacted, or edited, to reflect the change of thought that was adapted at a later time. With efforts to win over pagan soldiers who lived within the Roman rule, the Evangelist sought to convince them that Jesus of Nazareth was the Anointed One, the Christ. This was a very effective strategy in converting those under patriarchal law, as Jesus could then be understood as Ruler over all – a concept that gained respect by some Romans and fit nicely into their hierarchical model of power. This mindset made it possible for the Table to evolve into the sacrificial altar that offered Jesus as Paschal Lamb, Redeemer and Savior. This change of thought altered the original purpose for the early Table worship that included prayers of praise, blessing of the bread and wine, and rejoicing as a community in the Presence of Jesus.

As time moved forward, the liturgical ritual took on additional prayers and actions that would support the theological thoughts of

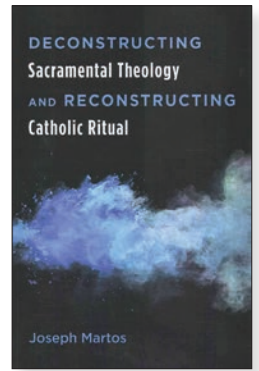
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Mary Eileen Collingwood, MTh, is a wife, mother and grandmother, who serves as bishop to ARCWP. She lives in the Cleveland, Ohio, area and serves the Community of St. Bridget as co-pastor.

Book Review

by Mary Theresa Streck

Joseph Martos’ new book, *Deconstructing Sacramental Theology, Reconstructing Catholic Ritual* discusses (1) the history of the sacraments, (2) the Catholic Church’s current “official” teaching on sacraments, and (3) creative ideas for recreating culturally relevant sacraments for the 21st century. Martos claims the sacraments over time “have become unmoored from the contexts in which they arose, and are actually historically relative.” He concludes, “Medieval Catholic theology of sacraments, although plausible in its day, is no longer acceptable.”



It is important to know the history of the sacraments because the sacraments as we know them today either did not exist in the early church, or took on a different meaning as they developed into the medieval rituals currently used in churches. The sacrament of the Eucharist is a perfect example. We have inherited two foundational understandings of Eucharist: Eucharist as sacrifice and Eucharist as sacred meal. Joseph Martos would agree with contemporary scholars who support the second understanding of Eucharist as sacred meal to be closer to the practice initiated by Jesus at the Last Supper. Martos carefully documents how that move from meal to sacrifice occurred over the centuries.

Why is it important to explore creative ideas for culturally relevant sacraments? Because some of the ritual language is out of touch with Catholic experience. Martos believes that if we do not continue to explore, the church “is destined to become a church of beautiful ceremonies that have little relation to the lives that people actually live.”

Many Christians are moving from a child’s faith to an adult faith as they read and listen to scripture scholarship that is now available in popular literature by authors such as: Diarmuid O’Murchu, Joan Chittister, Ilia Delio, Elizabeth Johnson and of course, Joseph Martos. Discerning Christians see the mismatch between their lived experience and the sacraments. It is harder to keep believing that only the baptized can be saved, that marriage is indissoluble, and men leaving the priesthood are ordained as priests forever. It is hard to believe that the church still does not embrace women as equals in ministry. Many have walked away from the Catholic Church and will continue to walk away until we address these important sacramental issues. ♦

Mary Theresa Streck, Ed.D, D.Min, is one of the founding members of the People’s Catholic Seminary, a seminary without walls (pcseminary.blogspot.com). She is a member of the Upper Room Inclusive Catholic Community in Albany, NY.

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“In Christ, there is no Jew or Greek, slave or citizen, male or female. All are one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

In 2002, on the Danube River, seven women were validly ordained Roman Catholic priests. The principle consecrating Roman Catholic male bishop, who ordained our first women bishops, is one with apostolic succession in communion with the Pope within the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, all qualified candidates, who are presented to our bishops for ordination, are ordained in apostolic succession by the laying on of hands. According to man-made Canon Law, the Church may consider us illicit, but our ordinations are valid.

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One Interspiritual Prayer Alliance. In our diverse oneness, we gather to pray for forgiveness and healing of ourselves and our world.

Both in my work as a Hospice Chaplain and Spiritual Care Volunteer, I am privileged to experience this sacred exchange via the offering of communion, anointings, prayer and sacred conversation with the most beautiful individuals who bless me more than they could ever know. I can't think of anything more sacred than human friendship. Why can we not just love one another and trust that we are each on the path to God best for us? There is so much to learn from one another's faith that can enrich our own.

As Thomas Merton said, “I will be a better Catholic, not if I can refute every shade of Protestantism, but if I can affirm the truth in it and still go further. There is much that one cannot ‘affirm’ and ‘accept,’ but first one must say ‘yes’ where one really can. If I affirm myself as a Catholic merely by denying all that is Muslim, Jewish, Protestant, Hindu, Buddhist, etc., in the end I will find there is not much left for me to affirm as a Catholic, and certainly, no breath of the Spirit with which to affirm it.” ♦

Liturgy, continued from page 3

the period. If a heretical strain of belief crept into the public's eye, the male leadership would counter the heresy through councils and ritual prayers that “corrected” it. Thus, the tone of the liturgical prayers took on sacrificial and atonement flavors that included many Christological references. People became steeped in thoughts of sinfulness and unworthiness. This created a distance between the common people and the ritual action and prayer.

The women priests of today are living a renewed priestly ministry. We are reviving the original Table worship and include all who wish to come and experience the Presence of Jesus in a loving faith community. ♦

This is Part Two of a continuing column that offers a brief history of liturgy in the Christian tradition and the roles women held in liturgical practice.



Tee Hee ...

George Bernard Shaw was asked by a woman friend to dinner. “Please don't discuss religion or politics, dear. Too tense, too, too disturbing.”

“No religion? No politics? How dull,” G.B. replied. “I decline the invitation but please, send me the dinner.” ♦

This anecdote is attached by lore to G.B. Shaw.



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