

The ACWR Alert

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ARCHIVISTS FOR CONGREGATIONS OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS

DEATH CLAIMS NOTED HISTORIAN

The worlds of archives and history lost a true friend and dedicated worker when death came to Sister Evangeline Thomas on December 30, 1990, while visiting relatives in Washington, D.C. during the Christmas holidays.



A member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas, Sister Evangeline was born on December 16, 1903 in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, entered the congregation in 1921, and earned her masters and doctoral degrees in history from Catholic University of America in 1934 and 1936. She served as chairwoman of the history department at Marymount College, Salina, Kansas for 32 years and was involved with many other activities on the college campus and in Salina.

In 1948, Sister Evangeline wrote and published her major history of the Concordia Congregation titled FOOTPRINTS ON THE FRONTIER. Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, the Catholic historian, observed, "If every religious community in the country were to have as fine a volume as this, the history of our religious orders would be very well served."

From 1976 through 1983, Sister Evangeline directed a national archives project for the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. The fruit of that work was the publication of WOMEN RELIGIOUS HISTORY SOURCES: A GUIDE TO COLLECTIONS OF MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVES IN THE UNITED STATES. In this book she stated, "The women religious have made a notable and varied contribution that has touch virtually every aspect of American life over nearly two centuries. These women represent a heritage that should not be lost or forgotten. That heritage should be enlarged, cultivated and woven into the fabric of American religious and social history in a way that will endure."

At the time of her death Sister Evangeline was involved in a comprehensive study of the social, cultural and religious impact of the Sisters of St. Joseph in North America which was being sponsored by the CSJ Federation.

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ACWR COMMITTEE FORMED

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception dawned bright and clear in Wichita, Kansas on December 8, 1990, as members of either the Ad Hoc Committee or the newly formed Task Force of the Archivists for Congregations of Women Religious (ACWR) came together at Mount St. Mary's Convent to finalize the organizational model for ACWR and to formulate action plans for 1991.

When the work of the day was completed, those present voted to merge the two committees into one which is now called ACWR Committee with Sister Rosalie McQuaide as chairperson.

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ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP IN PLANNING STAGE

A workshop on records retention schedules is being planned for the ACWR Roundtable at the Society of American Archivists' convention to be held between September 25-29, 1991, in Philadelphia. Will those archivists of congregations of women religious who have records retention schedules, please send a copy to Sister Emma Cecilia Busam, OSU, Ursuline Sisters Archives, Mount Saint Joseph, Maple Mount, Kentucky 42356? The sharing of these will assist in the design of an interesting, helpful workshop for all in attendance.

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SHOWN WHILE MEETING AT MOUNT ST. MARY'S IN WICHITA, KANSAS ARE SISTERS ROSEMARIE KASPER, JOSEPHINE KENNELLY, EMMA CECILIA BUSAM, ANNE COURTNEY, RITA KING, MARY MARGARET SWITLIK, ROSALIE McQUAIDE, CARM TERNES, DOROTHY CROPPER, AND BEATRICE WEISNER. SISTER RITA KING IS WORKING UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF SISTER ANNE COURTNEY AND ACCOMPANIED HER TO WICHITA.

55TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS SEPTEMBER 25 - 29, 1991 ADAM'S MARK HOTEL, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

ALL ARCHIVISTS OF CONGREGATIONS OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THIS SAA MEETING AND PARTICIPATE IN THE ROUNDTABLE WORKSHOP AND IMPORTANT ACWR MEETING.

CSJ FEDERATION HISTORY PROJECT BEGINS

SPONSORED BY THE U.S. FEDERATION OF SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH, THE FEDERATION RESEARCH COMMITTEE IS IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING PLANS AND GATHERING INFORMATION TOWARD A UNITED STATES-CANADA COLLABORATIVE HISTORY PROJECT WHICH IS TO BE READY FOR PUBLICATION IN THE MID-90S.

WITH THE WORKING TITLE OF RELIGION AND SOCIAL CHANGE: THE IMPACT OF SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH IN NORTH AMERICA, THIS COMPREHENSIVE STUDY WILL PROVIDE EXPLORATION IN DEPTH OF THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SHAPING THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT SINCE 1836. TO ACHIEVE THIS, THE RESOURCES OF NEARLY THIRTY WOMEN'S CONGREGATIONAL ARCHIVES WILL BE TAPPED INTO AS WELL AS EXTENSIVE ORAL HISTORIES BEING OBTAINED WHEN THE PROJECT IS READY FOR THIS ASPECT.

TELLING THE STORY OF AN UNCOMMONLY WIDESPREAD AND DIVERSIFIED CONGREGATION SUCH AS THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH IS A HUGE UNDERTAKING AND DEPENDENT ON THE COLLABORATION OF EACH ST. JOSEPH CONGREGATION.

ALL ARCHIVISTS WHO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER ARE REQUESTED TO COMPLETE THE ENCLOSED APPLICATION FORM FOR AN ACWR DIRECTORY. THE ACWR COMMITTEE NEEDS UNIFORM INFORMATION FOR EACH ACHR MEMBER AND WILL BE GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE THIS.

ACWR extends sympathy to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Concordia, Kansas. May Sister Evangeline Thomas rest in peace.

