

Disagreement Continues On Women's Ordination

An official of the Institute on Religious Life has challenged the Leadership Conference of Women Religious to explain its position regarding the ordination of women to the Roman Catholic priesthood as the result of a talk by its president before Pope John Paul II in Washington Sunday, Oct. 7.

In a brief talk, Sister Theresa Kane asked the pontiff to provide "the possibility of women as persons being included in all ministries of our Church."

The Pope had made clear the Church's opposition to the ordination of women to the priesthood during his six-day tour of the United States.

Sister Theresa's remarks have caused ripples across many religious communities of the nation.

In Rochester, the Committee for the Whole Ministry of the Church of the Episcopal Diocese has scheduled a prayer service for 7:30 p.m., Monday, Oct. 29, at the Interfaith Chapel of the University of Rochester.

Notice

Among the survivors of Mary A. Schledorn, whose death was reported here last week, are Irene and Frances Hill of Dansville, sisters-in-law.

The committee's chairperson, Dee Hanford Barrett, has written to Sister Joan Sobala of the Rochester diocese "to express the sisterhood and sympathy of the members of our committee toward all of the Roman Catholic women who are suffering so much pain over the recent pronouncements of Pope John Paul II."

"We do not simply watch from the sidelines as you suffer," the letter continues. "We, too, are diminished by statements which claim that large areas of the personal lives of millions of women are to be dictated by an exclusively male hierarchy."

S. Thomas Greenburg, chairman of the Communications Committee of the Institute on Religious Life, which has its headquarters in Chicago and which represents 90 women's religious communities in the United States, disavowed Sister Kane's remarks as an "insensitive appeal."

The Institute said, "The Leadership Conference of Women Religious bears a responsibility to publicly identify its own policy with regard to the attempt by its president to encourage discord and dissent in the Catholic Church at a time when the Holy Father is calling for unity and reconciliation."

Greenburg told the Courier-Journal that if the institute did not hear from the leadership conference by Monday (Courier-Journal presstime) it would be obviously confirming Sister Kane's action. We're smoking them out," he added.

Greenburg said the institute would issue a further statement if it did not hear from the conference by Monday.

Meanwhile, Sister Mary Conrad Mellon, OSU, pastoral minister at St. Mary's Church in Cumberland, Md., has begun a campaign to have all sisters who support the official Church position to write Pope John Paul, Vatican City, Europe 00120 to express their sentiments.

Sister Mary Conrad has sent a letter "to every Catholic newspaper in our country" in which she asked, "Will we all sit back and let our Holy Father believe that Sister (Kane) was really representing ALL of the Sisters in America? I plead with you (the letter was meant for "Sisters in Christ" to formulate your statement, get others to formulate their statements or to sign yours."

She said "there are thousands upon thousands of Sisters in America who are proud of their title of Spouse of Christ, and who in no way seek to be 'other Christs."

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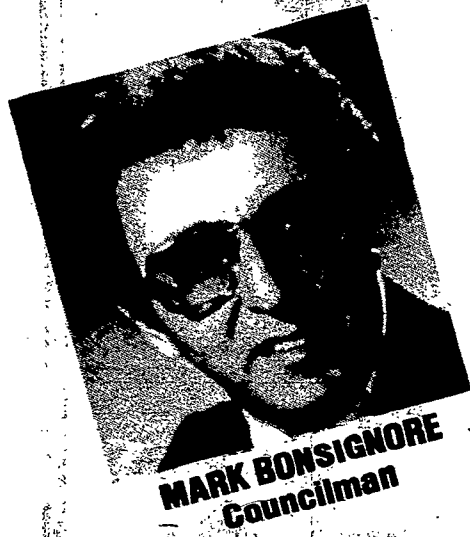
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