

## One Huge Step Forward

Women Ordination Worldwide at the Dublin Ecumenical Conference (29 June-1 July 2001)

A report by Joëlle Battestini

WHAT A privilege to be at this extraordinary conference! We'd come to Dublin from the five continents, nearly 400 of us, women and men, lay and religious. The huge hall was filled with people who from Friday evening to Sunday morning heard outstanding speakers and celebrated their being together—the Spirit filled the room. Discipleship was a major theme of the conference, and it was evident that the four speakers, the organisers and the participants were living the Spirit then and there. This inaugural WOW conference had an energy that sprang from the response of the participants to the speakers, as well as from their communion of ideas and goals. At the conclusion of the final liturgy we all sang and danced and embraced each other with tears of hope and faith.

Here are some of the voices I heard which still echo loud and clear in my mind:

*'Be visible, be heard, be strong, be not afraid, fight prejudices.'*

*'You have reason to celebrate: you have great women leaders, you have solidarity. You are beautifully made in the image of God. You are rebuilding the Church. You are creating a new approach to discipleship.'*

My report is not a review of the theological content of the conference; it is merely a personal selection of some of the arguments I heard, and I quote the ones I particularly liked\*. They represent my own appreciation of the input from these wonderful speakers. I focus on the points which spoke to me most clearly.

### Ecumenism

The movement for ordination of women in the Catholic Church is ecumenical. The presence of so many women from other denominations and from all sides of the world who had come to support us clearly showed that the issue is an important one in other religions and other cultures.

*'We are on this journey together.'* Rose Hudson-Wilkin.

*'I could never have dreamed of the degree of bonding between Protestant clergy women and Roman Catholic nuns as I am seeing right now.'* Joan Chittister.

Question from a participant to Joan Chittister: *'what practical ways do you advise for ecumenism to work on that issue?'*

Summary of Joan's reply:

Change happens by volcanic eruption at the top, or by small groups' work at the grassroots level. The world has changed mainly through small groups' work. There must be perceived eruption from the bottom. One must start with very small *cross-cultural cells* (my emphasis), which will get bigger, until they lead to a national conference, and, later on, to an international conference such as this one.

### Arguments against ordination:

The argument that women cannot be ordained because of their biological make up is *'nonsense'* and *'deeply offensive'*. Mairead Corrigan Maguire.

*'Arguments against women's ordination are dishonest'. 'The Church should be ashamed of its discriminatory practices'. Rose Hudson-Wilkins*

*'To proclaim a theology of equality... and, at the same time, to maintain a theology of inequality, a spirituality of domination in the name of God that says that women have no place in the dominion of the Church and the development of doctrine, is to live a lie'. Joan Chittister*

### Discernment

We need a leadership of discernment. Joan Chittister community *'never operated on orders'* but on *'discernment'*. Benedictines see *'authority as relational'*.

### Joan Chittister on discipleship:

*'Obviously, discipleship is not based on sexism'*.

*'Christianity lives in Christians, not in books, not in documents called definitive to hide the fact that they are at best time-bound'*.

*'In the woman's question, the Church is facing one of its most serious challenges to discipleship since the emergence of the slavery question when we argued, too, that slavery was the will of God!'*

True discipleship demands great courage and authenticity. It is not built on power; it will not bring comfort, it *'is a very dangerous thing'* (...) *'to follow Jesus is to follow the one who turns the world upside down, even the religious world'*(...) *'Therese of Avila, John of the Cross and Joan of Arc were persecuted for opposing the hierarchy itself- and then, later, canonized'*.

### 'God is big, God is large'

(Rose Hudson-Wilkins and John Wijngaards)

There are people who believe their mission is to safeguard the Church, to act as *'gate keepers'* (Rose Hudson-Wilkin) to protect the Church against the disruption caused by women who bring the issue of ordination, but God is a much bigger God who does not need anyone to protect her.

### Celebration of womanhood (Rose Hudson-Wilkin)

*'Women (are) beautifully and wonderfully made in the image of God'*.

But women need to find a true image of themselves in the Church.

*'We must never allow ourselves to be victims'. 'Let us not be afraid, women, to celebrate our womanhood'*.

*'We have solidarity'*. We should thank the *'quiet'* and the *'strident'* women, we should also thank the men, and the bishops and the priests who support us.

*'We are not breaking up the Church, we are giving it a new lease of life'.*

*'This whole issue for me is not about women's rights or what is good for women, it is about what is good for humanity and the Church at large'.*

*We are on the winning path. We are fortunate to have great women leaders.* (John Wijngaards).

### **Be active, be visible**

Focus on the cross, be active and be out there at work.

Like Mary we are listening to the call and we *'want the Church to stop being a stumbling block'*. (Rose Hudson-Wilkin).

*'It is time to bring into the light of day the discussions that lurk behind every church door, in every seeking heart'.* (Joan Chittister).

Women must be outspoken, even *'strident'* (Rose Hudson-Wilkin), and visible at every level of the Church; they must take on all possible responsibilities.

*'We have earned the right to be strident'... 'We have made painful sacrifices to stay'.* (Rose Hudson-Wilkin).

Promote everything we can do to make the gifted women visible as: *'nobody can deny the Holy Spirit in women like Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin!'*. (John Wijngaards).

A participant from Germany reported about a group of women who have systematically attended ordinations of male priests wearing purple stoles. Nowadays, young priest invite these women to their ordination. John congratulated them and recommended the following formula for publicity:

- *'Create a public event*
- *Pray to the Holy spirit that it becomes controversial*
- *Give interviews to the press'.*

Joan Chittister also argued we should contemplate a wide range of actions to promote ordination:

*'The task of the present in a time such as this is to use every organization to which we belong to develop the theology of the Church to a point of critical mass. We need a group free of mandates that will organize seminars, hold public debates in the styles of the great disputations on the full humanity of Indians, hold teach-ins, sponsor publications, write books and gather discussions around the topics of the*

*infallibility of infallibility and the 'Sensus Fidelium'.*

### **Be informed: John Wijngaards' plea**

Change will happen with educating everyone.

Sectarian attitudes and myths and prejudices are to be tackled.

We should take up arguments against ordination. We should demolish false myths about ordination of women in a systematic way and be prepared to argue from a traditionalist agenda

Promote integrity: *'We have become a community of cowards. We have to have the guts to speak out'.*

### **Training for ordination**

*'And the task of the present is not preparation for ordination in a Church that either doubts – or fears – the power of the truth; that would be premature, at best, if not downright damaging'.* Joan Chittister.

This stance on training for ordination triggered the following question from Dr. Raming to Joan during question time: *'are you not fond of preparation for ordination? Some women want ordination right now'.*

*Joan replied that she had not meant to imply we should stop encouraging women to train for theological preparation to ordination, but the lack of support when the preparation ends is an issue: what does a woman do with all this energy and nothing to channel it? We need groups prepared to take that energy and channel it. But, right now, we have to do more than preparing for ordination'.*

*A young English woman who has had a vocation since she was a teenager and has done preparation for it, told John Wijngaards how frustrated she feels and how tempting it is for her to be ordained in another Church. She asked his advice.*

*John replied with tremendous emotion in his voice: 'look back in history and see how these things have often unfortunately demanded sacrifice, and perhaps at the Gospel where Christ says the grain has to die (...) I know it is a cruel thing to say, but it is true, the grain has to die often in order to bear fruit'.*

*John Wijngaards, like Joan Chittister, sees that the long term goal requires sacrifices, because the cause is larger than the individual's desire to be ordained.*

### **Aims of the movement of ordination of women** John Wijngaards:

The movement aims at transforming the whole Church from within. The movement should stay firmly within the body of the Church. The movement needs to sustain a programme of education for change.

### **About fear**

Pressure from the Vatican on Joan Chittister not to attend the conference has been reported widely in the media. But there were other pressures in Dublin for BASIC which hosted the conference, and the organisers had feared it could be most problematic. So, the success of the gathering, as Soline Vatinel said when she greeted us all on the first evening, was indeed a 'miracle'! To conclude this report, I will quote some of Soline's reflections after the conference:

*'I believe that the great gift of the conference is that it banished fear. Fear, as we are so often reminded by Jesus in the Gospel, is the enemy of love. Unfortunately fear has been dominating our Church as coercion and punishment have been the rule. At the conference, courage shone brightly: I am thinking particularly of the courage of Sr Joan Chittister, her prioress and sisters, and also Sr Myra Poole, who had been threatened with severe penalties if they attended. But also the courage of many others, less public, but very real. No longer victims of injustice and exclusion, we found our strength and our dignity.*

*So the silence was broken, the deadly silence born of fear. " What you have heard in the depth of your heart, proclaim on the rooftops." A voice was given to the priestly call of women; in fact it was given many voices, in many different languages...'*

Soline Vatinel, *Some personal reflections in guise of appraisal*, WOW Conference Website July 30th 2001.

When I left the conference, I went back to Paris where I had been on study leave. I could not help talking to everyone about it. I was on a high, I was glowing inside. Back in Australia, I went to Canberra to say good-bye and to report to my wonderful and much loved friend Marie Louise Uhr. I told her that she, who started it in the Australian Catholic Church, could be pleased, that women had just taken a huge step forward toward ordination.

But we have to keep up moving forward...

## HOW DOES MINISTRY WORK?

by John Collins

Among numerous small Christian communities eucharistic gatherings occur whether an ordained minister is available or not. In a day or two from when I write an excommunicated Roman Catholic woman is to be ordained a priest by a bishop of the Old Catholics so that she can provide eucharist for the community to which she belongs. This community used to be her parish until the bishop disowned it as schismatic. Notwithstanding, the community appears to flourish.

On October 27, 2001, the Synod of the Anglican diocese of Sydney overwhelmingly resolved that a motion be put to the next General Synod in Australia in 2004 calling for “lay and diaconal presidency at the Lord’s Supper”. The motion has long been on the make in that city (since 1977 in fact). I recall putting in my pennyworth in a letter to *St Mark’s Review*, the Canberra journal, over ten years ago when one or two theologians were debating the issue in those pages.

The previous archbishop of Sydney, Harry Goodhew, intended to block the current move, but his successor, Peter Jensen, is prepared to support it provided the move is safe from a legal point of view. On the other hand, a previous Anglican primate, Keith Rayner of Melbourne, and the current primate, Peter Carney of Perth,

have expressed grave concern at the damage such a move would do to the church locally and to the Anglican communion internationally. And both primates adopted their positions for theological reasons.

Some five years ago the same matter occasioned expressions of shock and horror in the letter columns of *The Tablet*, the London Roman Catholic journal. At that time too I found myself contributing a pennyworth. My critics would have been surprised at the line I took. They consider my books to push a conservative – indeed, a hierarchical – line in ministry, whereas my letter indicated that a rightly commissioned “lay presidency” would be fine by me. It even suggested that a lay presidency might do wonders for the vitality of the church (and I had the Roman Catholic Church in mind).

How could I say such a thing, most Roman Catholics and Anglicans would ask. Any response by me to that question will unavoidably be grounded in my research into the nature of ministry in the first churches. But before that, another response is quicker to deliver.

It is this: the present division of ordained and lay is cultural and entirely artificial. The division stands propped on two legs, one being theology and the other the accidents of history. The latter included such ephemeral items as, in one instance, the political advantages 4<sup>th</sup> century emperors could take from endowing an ecclesiastical hierarchy and, in another instance, the rise a few centuries later of an Arab prophet whose successes would smother the life of the Eastern churches, this being a development which would leave the “Great Church” of the West to grow along ancient Roman lines.

This second leg is rather longer than the first, a fact that goes much of the way to explaining why, increasingly, the church moves so slowly. Over recent years one has been gathering distinct impressions that the church is actually dragging that leg now. The condition has become more noticeable as the processes of globalisation have taken hold. These processes have not only brought to light the gross inequities among the planet’s economies but have

also revealed the not so pretty sight of the Last Lady of Europe, Mother Church, gathering her skirts about her in an attempt to insulate herself against the clamour for real inculturation, the unspeakable misery of the AIDS pandemic, and the backwash from the messy competition between love-making and procreation.

Had the church never taken on a civic persona in the failing Roman Empire but had instead continued to nurture Christian faith, hope and love in the households where it first experienced them in the century or two following Jesus, we would never have had a hierarchy, or a division of clergy and lay, or men (no women, mind) taking a punt on making the grade in lower or higher “orders” within the ecclesiastical society, or the burning of John Hus and Joan of Arc in the opening decades of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, or Cardinals Richelieu and Mazarin, or Pope Julius II riding out to war... or Martin Luther.

Which brings us to the other leg. Above one bookshelf in my study hangs a boldly enlarged photocopy of a phrase from Luther’s *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. He published this tract just 100 years after the deaths of Hus and the Maid of Orleans. The phrase proclaims, “It is the ministry of the word that makes the priest and the bishop.”

This theological grenade would have bounced off me in the years when I was working through my Dogmatic Theology in preparation for ordination to the priesthood. At that time my fellow candidates and I were knocking off one thesis (theological proposition not theological research) after another in tracts called *De Ecclesia* (About the Church) and *De Sacramentis* (On Sacraments – in particular, Holy Orders). The tightly knit theses – there were scores of them – formed a pattern of mind which we can call ecclesiastical but also a carapace over me to protect and isolate the brain. “Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Thinking had changed substantially by the time fifteen years later when work on a research thesis required that I examine what Paul of Tarsus meant by “the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:18). I came to that phrase after many intimate encounters with

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### INTERIM SECRETARIAT

A team of three will oversee this initial period.

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similar expressions of “ministry” in ancient Greek literature. In that strangely lush world, I came to appreciate that Greeks spoke of “ministry” when they wanted to identify a process of transmission. How do the enticing odours of roasting meat reach the revellers? How do colours pass through water? How does meaning pass from one language to another? How do gods get messages to mortals? How do lovers meet? In all cases, it was a matter of “ministry”.

Paul was inured to the usage and liked its efficiency. In 1 and 2 Corinthians he defended the very authenticity of his apostleship by appealing to the process of “ministry”. The argument was simple. He asked the Corinthians to reflect on their experience of the Spirit and of Christ. Our soulless translations represent his daring tactic with the words, “we would commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (2 Corinthians 4:2). What the tactic required was for the

Corinthians to come clean about religious insights and convictions arising from their encounters with Paul and his words. Paul was confident that upon reflection these recent devotees of Zeus and Dionysus would recognise in their new religious experiences an encounter with the God of Jesus, that they would acknowledge the encounter as the outcome of Paul’s interventions, and that, accordingly, they would acknowledge Paul as God’s “minister”.

Paul’s Greek word for “ministry” was “*diakonia*”. The process that he called “the ministry of reconciliation” was such as to open participants to the working within them of the reassuring Word of God. Ineffable, perhaps, but nonetheless real. In fact, the realness is why Paul did not hesitate to say he would die for it. Martin Luther was not the only one in succeeding centuries to experience the reality of “ministry” at work, but he was the first to see the relevance of the experience to the theology of the church and its orders.

This was his great gift to the church, even if he was never quite sure what shape the process should take in practice. Sadly, the next major reformer, John Calvin, tied the same reality up in an elitist, absolutist and authoritarian regime of pastoring. For centuries this was to choke off the liberating life of the Spirit. Today is well past the time when churches of all colours ought to have released the forces of “ministry” once more. A “minister” may not need ordination, but indubitably requires legitimation. Given such due process, through whatever channels, ministry works as people enter into a shared religious experience. And a church can live.

**John N. Collins** wrote the groundbreaking study *Diakonia: Re-interpreting the Ancient Sources* (New York: Oxford University Press 1990), the popular *Are All Christians Ministers?* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press 1992), and numerous papers in scholarly journals.

### ***Mission in Today’s World***

By **Donal Dorr** (Orbis, 2000). Reviewed by **Cyril Hally**

**D**onal Dorr is an Irish member of St Patrick’s Missionary Society. He has become a resource person for foreign missionaries through the Irish Missionary Union. The book has emerged from an on-going dialogue with hundreds of “foreign” missionaries and “home church” people. Earlier drafts of many of the chapters had been responded to by members of the Irish Mission Union. Hence the final version puts into systematic form their emerging convictions which have not been fully articulated before.

Dorr begins with mission as dialogue. The Spirit is at work in the people being evangelised as well as in the evangelisers resulting in a two-way exchange of gifts. After a stimulating reflection on dialogue with “world” religions, Jews, Muslims, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions and the followers of Chinese religions, he devotes an entire chapter to dialogue with “primal” religions.

*“We have reached a point where the uncritical rejection of those religions is often replaced with an equally uncritical adoption of their beliefs, values, practices. Primal religion is not just one among many other religions but is the source from which all the historical religions spring and the place from which they draw sustenance.”*

*“As the process of secularisation advances (in the West), it is being challenged by a more recent growth in interest in ‘spiritual realities’. It is at this point that I see a convergence between primal religion and the deeper dimensions of modern Western life.”* Hence Dorr devotes an entire chapter to dialogue with the Western world.

I consider that these two chapters are of exceptional value to Christians of the region that this journal focuses on.

For many of the recipients of relatively recent evangelisation, their traditional systems of belief and cult still exert a

strong influence. They were never properly evangelised, but rather dismissed as superstition. Dorr’s articulation of some contours of the convergence between primal religion and the deeper dimensions of current Western life may be the key to open the door to genuine inculturation.

Dorr, in Part 2, reflects upon the contemporary aspects of practical mission – including peace and ecology.

An interesting comment upon evangelisation is what he calls an “undue stress on words”. *“Instead of thinking of Christianity as primarily news, it is helpful to think of it as life lived out in community.”*

In the chapter on the struggle for liberation he treats in a very insightful way of the critical issue of a “*just revolution*” reflecting on people’s struggles in Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

Accepting Segundo Galilea’s remark that liberation and reconciliation are complementary, Dorr looks at reconciliation from three points of view – the religious, the psychological and the political. His treatment of the psychological dimension, especially the healing of memories process, benefits from his personal involvement in the training of convenors of support groups and of co-counselling programs and of ritual. His discussion of the political aspect is realistic. *“It is wrong to take interpersonal reconciliation as a model for political reconciliation.”* *“Missionaries should have familiarity with all three approaches if they are to engage effectively in the mission of the church today.”*

In a thoughtful chapter on **option** for the poor, not **care** for the poor, Dorr, from a biblical perspective, makes an interesting distinction between social justice and an option for the poor. The latter refers to “*a spirituality inspired by the belief that God chooses the weak to confound the strong, and chooses the foolish to confound the wise.*” (1 Cor. 1: 27-28). In connection with the latter he attacks the Vatican and some church leaders.

**Continued bottom of next page**

From a Letter to the Editor

VIN UNDERWOOD from Mordialloc, Victoria, sent an e-mail to say he was struck by the statement that to be a Christian there are really only four defining beliefs which we must accept, which was contained in *A Welcoming Word* from ARC's interim secretariat.

Vin continues:

"I was particularly interested in the first of these, the Trinity. As I see it the Trinity is really a model for God that has been developed by Christians. I don't believe that Trinity necessarily expresses the reality of God because how can any of us say what God is like? Once Jesus was defined to be God by Chalcedon, the concept of a triune God seemed to follow by necessity.

"I think it has been a useful model in the past but I am not sure of its relevance for me at this point in time. I believe in God, the creator spirit, the nurturer, and the sustainer and in Jesus Christ, the man, whose divinity was recognised by the early Church. This recognition of Jesus' divinity gives us an insight into the possibility of our own divinity."

It is good that Vin shares his views on the concept of the Trinity and we hope that others will feel free to join in a discussion on this and other doctrines, that may not be relevant any more and should be abandoned or, perhaps, need reformulation or should be replaced by new ones (if required).

## International Observations

[www.womenpriests.org](http://www.womenpriests.org) is a large library on the subject of women's ordination – and related subjects – to which library many scholars from many countries are also contributing.

*The Last Monopoly of the RC Church* is the literal translation of the title of the book that Prof L. Laeyendecker wrote in 1999 on the instigation

of the Eighth May Movement in The Netherlands. The sub-title is *Changing Relations between Clergy and Laity*. Unfortunately the book has not (yet?) been translated into English, but I want to "quote" from it from time to time.

The first monopoly is that of the Only True Religion. This ended (did it?) at the time of Vatican II.

The second monopoly is that of the World Interpretation. The Church's monopoly on the interpretation of the reality of the world and cosmos came under great pressure through the emancipation of sciences in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and we have now experienced that Galileo was vindicated and even Darwin has been accepted as a proper scientist.

The third monopoly is that of the Ordained Office whose power was more and more reinforced and centralised. Eventually this monopoly will also disappear and many movements in the present world work in that direction.

**Jim Taverne**

## Book Review

John Wijngaards *The Ordination of Women in the Catholic Church* with the subtitle *Unmasking the Cuckoo's Egg Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd ISBN 0-232-52420-3).

Systematically, in clear language, with great scholarship, Wijngaards refutes the arguments used in *Inter Insigniores* and the Apostolic letter *On Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men alone* (22 May 1994): Jesus selected only men to be his apostles, the constant practice of the Church, which imitated Christ in choosing only men and her living teaching authority which has constantly held that the exclusion of women from the priesthood is in accordance with God's plan for his Church, the priest on the altar represents Jesus who was a man, etc.

Wijngaards explains why there is no basis for the refusal to ordain women found in the Scriptures. He shows that for centuries women were ordained deacons with exactly the same ritual as men and he reasons that the function of representing Christ can be entrusted to women just as well as by men.

Wijngaards points out that the first collection of Church Law by the monk Gratian in Bologna (c. 1140) was based on Roman Law and that: "Women were hemmed in on all sides in Roman Law. The Roman principles that thus became enshrined in Church Law and Church practice were:

In many sections of our law, the condition of women is weaker than that of men;

Women are excluded from any civil and public responsibility and therefore can neither be judges nor exercise any authority,

Women are under the tutelage of men because of the infirmity of their sex and because of ignorance about matters pertaining to public life."

These are still the underlying principles of present Church Law.

"The spurious parent bird that laid the egg was none other than secular pagan prejudice, a prejudice enshrined in Roman Law. The host 'parent' bird treats the cuckoo's egg as its own. With typical cuckoo hatchling ruthlessness, the intruder killed off truly Christian initiatives of women's ministries."

At the end of each chapter, Wijngaards lists readings from his website. There are many quotes from or references to Scripture, Decrees from Vatican II and earlier Councils, Apostolic letters and works from theologians, old and modern.

At the end of his book Wijngaards affirms that "the need for reform in the Catholic Church does not limit itself to the question of women's ordination. Other important issues are outstanding, such as the ban on artificial contraception, the maintenance of obligatory celibacy for clergy in the Latin rite, the role of the laity in Church administration and in the pastoral apostolate, the legitimate authority of bishops conferences, ecumenism, dialogue with other religions, recognition of homosexuals to mention just a few". I recommend *The Cuckoo's Egg* warmly!

**Jim Taverne**

There is a most innovative chapter to mission as "power of the Spirit". Accepting that there are kinds and uses of power that are oppressive or manipulative, Dorr identifies five different styles or modes of missionary activity each of which "involves the exercise of a specific kind of prophetic power which comes from the Spirit of God" based on trust in the Spirit.

Part 3 is devoted to re-visioning mission to the nations. The 1850-1960 crusader model "who has a blade for a splendid cause" is giving way to a solidarity image that is "far less likely to become ... distorted by arrogance or feelings of superiority".

In the discussion on the purpose of mission, Dorr distinguishes two categories of missionaries:

- those who focus primarily on the building up of the

church both as community and its institutional aspects; and

- those who are primarily concerned, not about church, but certain key Christian values – living these values, giving witness to them and promoting them in society, i.e., those who give priority to witnessing to reign of God values.

Dorr believes it can be very liberating for many missionaries to make this distinction.

In Part 4, Dorr focuses primarily on the frontier challenges in the Third World. The real distinction between evangelisation and genuine development, he argues, should be maintained. He concludes with valuable comments on "moving on, or staying on", and "bringing it back home."

## GREETINGS FROM ARC'S INTERIM SECRETARIAT

May the Spirit of the Christ Child fill you with joy and enlighten your appreciation of all creation. May you all participate in the ethos of Christmas and the love which abounds at this time of year.

As for ARC, it is in its infancy and we wish to commend to all of you the possibilities of forming regional groups. Organise yourselves in the most workable way to become more aware followers of Christ and conduits of his Spirit. Towards this end we highly recommend your reading of ARC's brochure, which, besides historical and intentional details, offers several ideas to explore such as: What is a human being?; What do you think is the essence of the Church? What is the meaning of Eucharist in your life?

ARC has an excellent panel of Roving Ambassadors who are willing to visit you to share their knowledge on all manner of topics. They will stimulate you to ponder and discuss, even to disagree.

We hope that Think Tanks will be formed to meet regularly, perhaps rotationally each member preparing the topic of the day using the recommended book, Rome Has Spoken, or some other chosen text. ARC has Expert Consultants available to advise or otherwise assist or even be part of the Tank itself.

Finally, mark on your calendar 4-7 October 2002, time of our FIRST CONFERENCE. You would not want to miss it.

Bless us all with the humility to grow with Baby Jesus

**Barbara Campbell, Ted Lambert  
and Jim Taverne.**



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### **ROME HAS SPOKEN, is the recommended reference book for all ARC members.**

Available from the Eremos Institute Bookshop for \$49.95. SPECIAL DEAL to ARC Members: \$45, plus \$4 postage. For those who are ALSO Eremos Members: \$40 plus \$4 postage. Order by phone, email, fax or post from Eremos Institute, 16 Masons Drive, North Parramatta NSW 2151

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### **ARC's First Conference 4-7 October 2002**

(Labour Day in NSW, SA and ACT)

at Abbotsleigh, Wahroonga, NSW



**Chairperson: Paul Collins**

**Keynote Speaker:  
Tissa Balasariya**

### **Lighter Signs of Life in Other Places**

#### **Cocktail lounge, Norway:**

LADIES ARE REQUESTED NOT TO HAVE CHILDREN IN THE BAR.

#### **Information booklet about using a hotel air conditioner, Japan:**

COOLES AND HEATES: IF YOU WANT CONDITION OF WARM AIR IN YOUR ROOM, PLEASE CONTROL YOURSELF.

#### **Doctor's office, Rome:**

SPECIALIST IN WOMEN AND OTHER DISEASES.

### **Two more Speakers, and Workshop convenors, to be announced.**

*Events will include a Eucharistic Meal, Ecumenical Service and one evening's light entertainment (from participants).*

**Mark this on your calendar.**

**This conference is not to be missed!**

#### **Car Rental brochure, Tokyo:**

WHEN PASSENGER OF FOOT HEAVE IN SIGHT, TOOTLE THE HORN. TRUMPET HIM MELODIOUSLY AT FIRST, BUT IF HE STILL OBSTACLES YOUR PAS-SAGE THEN TOOTLE HIM WITH VIGOUR.

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**YES**, I would like to become a member of ARC (  ) tick

Send to: Australian Reforming Catholics Box 228 AVALON NSW 2107.