

Christian Brother writes in support of sisters

Alice Popovici | May. 15, 2012

Brother William Brynda, of the De La Salle Christian Brothers in Glencoe, Miss., has sent *NCR* the following letter for publication, in support of Catholic sisters the Vatican criticizes in a recent report. Brynda said he also sent a copy to Archbishop Peter Sartain of Seattle, who has been appointed to oversee the Leadership Conference of Women Religious going forward.

Brynda writes:

When will the patriarchal hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church come to recognize and affirm the dignity and giftedness of women, especially the U.S. sisters, who through their charisms, gifts and talents have stimulated the development of the spirit, teachings and practices of the Second Vatican Council during the past 50 years? These consecrated religious, through their lived experiences, have chosen to live the gospel of the good news by caring and providing for the poor, the marginalized and the dispossessed. They have a commitment and dedication to the building of the kingdom through their care and concern for the people of God, which is the church as defined in the Second Vatican Council.

The primary responsibility of any person is to follow one's conscience as expressed in a personal relationship with their God. The U.S. sisters have done this. Another need is for collegiality, or the sharing of one's knowledge and experience, as well as authority for a greater understanding of God working in the present world among the people of God. The Holy Spirit can choose any instrument or person to be a messenger or prophet, whether laity or ordained, to bring about the greatest good in the world.

It appears that the patriarchal hierarchy feels threatened by the leadership, gifts and talents of the U.S. sisters and has to appeal to their own power and authority from the canon law which they themselves created. Is it any wonder, in reading the new testament, why we find Our Lord so angry with, and having such strong dislike for the "hard-heartedness" of the scribes and the Pharisees? (Mark 3:5) The God of the Second Vatican Council is a loving, compassionate and understanding God for all of the people of God.

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