

Oxford Vatican Scholar Asks Pope to Be First Woman Admitted to Vatican's All-Male Diplomatic Academy

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University Heights, Ohio - August 8, 2007, Serene Ecclesial Lady, Dna. Maria St. Catherine De Grace Sharpe, a lay member of the Roman Catholic Ecclesial Order of the Society of Mary (Marist Order) and the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and an Oxford-trained pontifical ecclesiastical diplomatic scholar who has been quietly specializing in the study, research and analysis of Roman Catholic/Holy See/Vatican State pontifical ecclesiastical international and diplomatic affairs for over 25 years, and is currently living in University Heights, Ohio writing a scholarly treatise on the Holy See's 306-year-old policy, practice and procedure of the systemic exclusion and gender apartheid of Catholic women from formal and official admission to the still all-male (and priest only) Roman Catholic professional pontifical ecclesiastical foreign service ministry and diplomatic mission apostolate of the Universal Church of Rome, has written a formal letter to the Roman Pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI asking to serve as the first Provost and/or Undersecretary for the Formal and Official Integration and Admission of Women into the Catholic Church's Global Professional Ecclesiastical Foreign Service Ministry and Diplomatic Mission Apostolate. Lady Maria St. Catherine, a former U.S. Intelligence Officer, Analyst and Instructor and a former Human Resources Specialist for Recruitment and Staff Development at American University who is a member of the Association for Diplomatic Studies & Training in Washington, D.C. wants to establish formal recruitment, training and development procedures for Catholic women to be officially admitted to the Church's diplomatic and international human rights training academy, the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy (PEA), which has historically served as the official portal for admission to the Church's heretofore all-male foreign service. Since the PEA is also a residential facility for priests in ecclesiastical diplomatic training, qualified Catholic women would be granted non-residential admission to the Holy See's diplomatic training program with the Vatican possibly renting a few rooms in the Albergo Santa Chiara, a hotel immediately across from the PEA which sits near where St. Catherine of Siena died. St. Catherine of Siena is considered the first lay ecclesial woman diplomat in the Church, her body lies in the Santa Maria Sopra Minerva Dominican Church which also sits across from the PEA. Saint Catherine of Siena is Lady Maria St. Catherine's ecclesial namesake. She was born in Madrid, Spain on her April 29th feastday and baptized in a Church of St. Catherine of Siena. 2007 marks the 660th anniversary year of the birth of St. Catherine of Siena in 1347, and the 630th anniversary of the return of Pope Gregory from Avignon, France to Rome in 1377 under St. Catherine of Siena's forceful urging and exhortation.

Lady Maria St. Catherine's letter to Pope Benedict XVI was prompted by ten critical reasons, 1) the Papal Secretariat of State, H.E. Archbishop Tarcisio Cardinal Bertone's announced to the media on July 19th that the Roman Pontiff was contemplating appointing qualified Catholic women to a number of high positions within the Roman Curia at the Vatican State, 2) the fact that the *raison d'être* of the Catholic Church's diplomatic service, *de jure* and *de facto*, foremost has always been and forever is, the protection of the dignity of the human person; 3) the fact that the 2007 World Day of Peace Message of Pope Benedict XVI is "The Human Person, The Heart of Peace," 4) the fact that 2007 marks the 40th anniversary of Pope Paul VI's 1967 Papal Encyclical "Populorum Progressio" (On the Progress of Peoples) and the 20th Anniversary of Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter on the former, "Sollicitudo Rei Socialis"-- papal documents exhorting the Church to take firm and effective measures to realize global social developmental progress; 5) that paragraph 29 of Pope Paul VI's 1965 Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) states that all forms of discrimination (including that by gender) must be "eradicated" as "contrary to God's intent" as they "cause scandal" and "militate against against social justice, equity, the dignity of the human person, as well as social and international peace"; 6) the UN's 1973 International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid categorized all forms of systemic discrimination, segregation and exclusion as forms of "apartheid" and condemned all forms of apartheid as a crime against humanity; 7) as evidenced by its own archival history the Holy See has formally and officially excluded Catholic women from equal employment opportunity admission to the Church's diplomatic and human rights training academy, The Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy since the Academy was founded under Pope Clement XI in April 1701, and has thereby systemically excluded by gender apartheid all Catholic women from formal and official equal employment admission to the Church's professional foreign service for over three centuries; 8) the Holy See affirms itself in its diplomatic rhetoric as "a friend of " and "the conscience of "humanity," and has formally confirmed the "indispensable role of women" and the critical need for the

feminine genius of women in all global political, diplomatic and peacekeeping affairs and thus, has the highest moral, legal and diplomatic fiduciary obligation to ecclesiastical and international human rights rule of law compliance, regulatory oversight and transparent accountability to effect gender complementarity and gender equity in its own Church-state domains; 9) No state, without exception, must be allowed to sit at the United Nations, neither as a voting member nor as a permanent observer while guilty of a crime against humanity, a violation of the international human rights rule of law of the first degree; and 10) the Holy See established its Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations in 1964 and thus, has been sitting as a permanent observer at the United Nations for nearly 45 years while guilty of the crime against humanity of the ecclesiastical diplomatic gender apartheid of its own Catholic women citizens from the Roman Catholic ecclesial nation-state's ecclesiastical diplomaic service for over 306 years. The Roman Catholic ecclesial nation-state of the Universal Church of Rome remains the only sovereign in the 21st century to systemically exclude its own women citizens from equal participation and admission to the Church-State's own ecclesiastical diplomatic service.

Dna. Maria St. Catherine stated, "This is an unconsonable state of moral and diplomatic affairs. No sovereign entity must be allowed to sit as a member of the United Nations in any capacity while guilty of a crime against humanity. For the UN and the larger international diplomatic and legal community to continue to fail to publicly officially acknowledge and formally terminate this egregious state of ecclesiastical and international human rights affairs is a travesty of the highest order. This international human rights negligence by the UN has corrupted, and continues to corrupt, the human rights integrity of the UN and the Holy See, and will continue to debilitate the moral balance of powers on the international plane and commit moral, legal and diplomatic tyranny against the moral order until this state of affairs is terminated. The Holy See's deplorable state of ecclesiastical gender apartheid is proof that the UN has egregiously failed in its moral, legal and diplomatic fiduciary obligation to ensure that states sitting at the UN, whether permanent or obervatory, establish firm and effective systems of international human rights rule of law regulatory oversight, transparent compliance and accountability, and punitive enforcement within the multiple domains of their own sovereign states.

In order for the UN to remedy this egregious moral diplomatic state of affairs of the Holy See sitting at the UN guilty of a crime against humanity the new UN Human Rights Council has the highest obligation to immediately and summarily expel the Holy See from the United Nations family of organizations, and establish a Special Representative of the UN to the Holy See and a special UN IG team, to ensure that each office of the Roman Curia has proven that it has established a firm and effective systemic means for its Catholic women citizens to be formally and officially admitted to the Church's diplomatic service, with all rights fully accorded and accredited thereto, to end its criminal state of ecclesiastical diplomatic gender apartheid and the Holy See's current posture as an enemy of the state and of global humanity. Chapter I, Article II, paragraph 6 of the United Nations Charter states, "The Organization shall ensure that states which are not Members of the United Nations act in accordance with these Principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security." Allowing the Holy See to sit at the United Nations guilty of a crime against humanity is a breach of the international human rights rule of law and thus a failure to secure the moral and diplomatic integrity of the ecclesiastical and international moral order.

Lady Maria St. Catherine became the first Catholic women ecclesiastical diplomatic scholar and specialiaist in Holy See diplomacy to formally and officially apply to the Church's diplomatic service through the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See in 2004, and as The John Paul II Vatican Diplomatic Affairs and Ecclesiastical Human Rights World Scholar-at-Large for Social Development and World Peace has been serving as the first member and founding director of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Diplomatic Apostolate of the Laity of the Universal Church of Rome. In May of this year, Lady Maria St. Catherine participated in The American Academy of Religion's 2007 Eastern International Regional Conference in Canada with the theme of "Religion and International Affairs" presenting a lecture on "The Universal Church of Rome, the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Foreign Service, International Human Rights and Peace Diplomacy and Intelligence: An Analytical Study of the Fiduciary Role of the Holy See's Diplomatic Service In Enforcing Ecclesiastical and International Human Rights Rule of Law Compliance in Preservation of the International Moral Order for the Cause of Peace."

In 2005, on International Human Rights Day, December 10, Lady Maria St. Catherine had the pleasure of meeting the pope personally at a special audience held at the Vatican for members of religous institutes. In 2002, Lady Maria St. Catherine became the person, woman, American, European-born Catholic ecclesiastical diplomatic scholar and former U.S. Intelligence officer in U.S., Holy See, Spanish, European, U.K., England and Oxford Univeristy History to complete the Oxford University Foreign Service Programme's professional post-graduate diplomatic training program with a specialization in Holy See/Vatican Diplomacy and with a mark of Distinction in Political Science. Lady Maria St. Catherine is also currently completing the first ever sui generis global and universal ecclesiastical juris doctorate degree of divinity and diplomacy (Eccl.

J.D. Div. & Dipl.) in Pontifical Ecclesiastical Law, Diplomacy & International Human Rights to be registered exclusively with the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education upon completion. Lady Maria St. Catherine completed the Oxford post-graduate diplomatic training programme as a requirement of her Eccl. J.D. and would like to include training at the Vatican's diplomatic academy as well, but knows that no one institution on earth has a monopoly on truth or divine wisdom.

Lady Maria St. Catherine is the former Founding Director of The Institute for the Study of Vatican International and Diplomatic Affairs, and a former (unpaid) special diplomatic attache (with permission from the then Papal Secretary of State, Cardinal Agostino Casaroli) with the Holy See's Permanent Observer Mission to the United Nations where she worked with, and trained under, the former apostolic nuncio to the UN (1986-2002), H.E. Archbishop Renato Cardinal Martino, the current President of the Roman Curia's Pontifical Council for Justice & Peace, the Vatican's administrative office tasked with ecclesiastical and international human rights oversight. Lady Maria St. Catherine also formerly served on the staff of the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, a private Washington, D.C. based foundation dedicated exclusively to promoting a professional U.S. Foreign Service, and is the former Assistant Director and Assistant to the Ambassador-President of The American Academy of Diplomacy (AAD) in Washington, D.C.

Lady Maria St. Catherine was privileged to receive a number of scholarship grants to Oxford's prestigious diplomatic training programme including one from the American Academy of Diplomacy and another from Secretary Kissinger, a member of the Academy. Secretary Kissinger had a private audience with the Roman Pontiff in September of last year and is currently serving as a political advisor to H.H. Pope Benedict XVI. This past April, Secretary Kissinger recently presented an address to the Vatican's Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences on "Current International Trends and World Peace" for their conference on "Charity and Justice in the Relations Among Peoples and Nations."

If appointed to the Vatican to serve as the first Under Secretary & Provost for the Integration and Admission of Women to the Universal Church of Rome's Catholic Professional Pontifical Ecclesiastical Foreign Service Ministry and Diplomatic Mission Apostolate, Lady Maria St. Catherine, who was mentored by, and a protege of, the Rev. Robert A. Graham, S.J., a Vatican diplomatic scholar and author of the classic treatise, "Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane" who passed away ten years ago this year in 1997, will be like her supporter, Secretary Kissinger, making history by changing the face of Roman Catholic/Holy See/Vatican state international and diplomatic affairs. In addition, if appointed, Lady Maria St. Catherine, will become the first European-born American of African-American ethnicity to hold such a high ecclesiastical diplomatic post in the Catholic Church in the history of the world--then again, it's not like she wouldn't have been groomed for it, her sui generis global and universal ecclesiastical juris doctorate degree will be the first ever in history to include among its distinctive characteristics pontifical ecclesiastical diplomatic engagement at the highest level in the life-long pontificate of a reigning pontiff, Pope John Paul II. It was he who stated, "diplomacy is an apostolate" and affirmed in his 1994 Apostolic Letter, "Women Teachers of Peace," that "Women have a full right to become actively involved in all areas of public life, and this right must be affirmed and guaranteed, also, where necessary, through appropriate legislation...In this regard I will continue to ask that more decisive steps be taken in order to recognize and promote this very important reality." He also affirmed that "Women have the right to insist that their dignity be respected. At the same time, they have the duty to work for the promotion of the dignity of all persons, men as well as women." Since, in the final analysis it is the natural right and human rights prerogative of global humanity to demand that the Church first be true to her own teaching before setting itself up as the global arbiter of international human rights oversight, it falls as a natural vocation to Lady Maria St. Catherine to exhort the Roman Pontiff to make ecclesiastical and international human rights rule of law compliance a foremost reality in the Church's apostolic mechanism of ecclesiastical diplomacy--afterall if humanity cannot expect the Church's own moral voice and authoritative arm of ecclesiastical diplomacy to be a loyal and true keeper of the moral and legal norms of international human rights rule of law compliance and social justice what veritable hope is there for secular diplomacy since the moral order is the first line of defense for the political, financial, legal and all the other "orders" of civilized society?

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