Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Summary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who We Are</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Entity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What We Do</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims and Objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Projects</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the Magisterium - Pushing the Boundaries for Doing Theology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and Achievements</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Spirituality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Women’s Ordained Ministries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on Church Authority; Sexual Ethics; Spirituality, Science and Faith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarly Publications</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Declarations and Media Appearances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine of Siena Virtual College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it Legitimate to Re-Examine Some Papal Teachings?</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Case Study - Is Slavery God’s Will?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We Make A Difference</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costing and Financing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning for the Future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How You Can Help</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Donations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsor a Topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Make a Donation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo credits</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrons</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For more than 30 years now the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research has worked to foster Christian education around the world. At the beginning, our primary focus was spirituality and the practice of Christian prayer. Since 1998 we have expanded that area to include the provision of academic research and pastoral material on issues about which the hierarchy has actively discouraged discussion. For many of those issues are highly pertinent to the human and Christian development of people worldwide.

Among the reasons why I agreed to join the Institute as director in September 2014 were precisely the past achievements of the Institute. What makes me even more excited, however, are our future prospects. Far from becoming less relevant with the passage of time, what we are doing is, if anything, more needed than ever.

At a general level, this is because theology, like other relatively under-developed disciplines, is poised for a sustained period of more rapid progress than was possible in the past.

There is, however, a more strategic reason. In an ideal world the work of the Wijngaards Institute would be carried out within that wonderful galaxy of educational and research institutions that Catholics throughout history have set up.

Sadly, this is only rarely the case. Many Catholic authorities – bishops, educational institutions, individual theologians – are reluctant to allow free public discussion concerning some of those issues, for fear of antagonizing the Vatican or undermining their careers and even jobs.

As long as this situation persists there will be a need for institutes such as ours. WICR is a private educational charity, and can therefore maintain full independence from external pressures. This has made it possible for us to build vast online libraries of high quality academic research on precisely those issues which are the least openly discussed in the Catholic Church.

We believe that if a teaching is sound, it can only be strengthened by exposure to the relevant scriptural and historical evidence as well as theological arguments, even and indeed especially when it appears to go against present-day Catholic beliefs. Our websites provide both the academic research which should inform those discussions, and an online forum to facilitate that discussion.

We cannot stress enough how timely what we are doing is. Since the election of Pope Francis in 2013, the Catholic Church has been gently encouraged to pick up the critical self-examination started with the Second Vatican Council. But unless Catholics deepen their knowledge of theology, the task of purifying their tradition will be severely hindered.

This booklet is designed to show you the variety and value of what we do. But we will only be able to continue our work if we increase our financial support from people like you. Our tiny staff ensures small contributions go a long way. Thank you very much for your interest and support. I invite you to review our development plan, and continue with us on our journey.

Dr. Luca Badini Confalonieri
Director

Letter from the Director
Executive Summary

Research is at the heart of the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research (WICR). Since 1983, WICR has grown to become a small but global network of volunteers spread around the world. Our focus has been the provision of academic and educational resources to Christians in general and Catholics in particular: laypeople as well as clergy; academics as well as non-experts; from the first as well as the developing world.

We have been doing so by means of a series of videos, books, websites and online courses. While our original focus was producing educational material on Christian spirituality, since 1998 we have expanded our mission to providing both scholarly research and more accessible summaries about those controversial topics which are the least discussed by authorities in the Catholic Church. They include questions to do with:

- Ordained ministries for women (e.g. traditional arguments against women in holy orders, the position of modern scholarship);
- Church authority and governance (e.g. collegiality, the meaning of ordination, the integration of expertise in ecclesial decision-making);
- Christian sexual ethics (e.g. the meaning and purpose of sexuality; sexual orientation and LGBT; family planning and artificial contraception; and so on);
- the relationship between science and faith;
- the interpretation of the Bible.

One of our websites, www.womenpriests.org, which brings together the historical evidence about the ordination of women to the diaconate and the priesthood, has grown to become the largest online library on that topic in the world.

In 2007 we founded the Catherine of Siena Virtual College (CSVC), which offers affordable university-level online courses on leadership and the role of women in society. Under our direction more than 1,100 students enrolled, mostly women (90%), and from developing countries. Such a rapid growth has meant that it became difficult for our small team to provide an adequate infrastructure to do justice to its great potential. For this reason, in September 2014 we decided to hand over the management of CSVC to Roehampton University, London.

If nothing else because of the sheer number and global reach of its membership, as well as because of its worldwide network of parishes and educational institutions, the Catholic Church exercises a very large influence in many parts of the world. As a consequence, our research and educational material supporting reform from within on issues concerning gender equality, a more enlightened sexual ethics, and more democratic and accountable structures of church governance can have a very significant impact. And with your help, they will.

“Professor René van Eyden, Utrecht University: I wholeheartedly support the valuable work you are doing. Religious organizations are always in need of purification, and the Catholic Church is no exception. Our Church harbours unacknowledged cultural prejudices and sexist biases that need to be identified and addressed. That is what you do. In your work you show rigorous scholarship, unswerving loyalty, and courage – all in great measure. I wish there were more prophetic institutions like the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research!”
The Wijngaards Institute is an international not-for-profit Christian educator founded in 1983 by Dr John Wijngaards, then a Mill Hill missionary. We are an international network of about 20 part-time volunteers dedicated to researching and making accessible information about key areas of Christian theology where the official Catholic teachings and practice are in need of reform. Those volunteers include university professors, researchers, translators, leaders in commerce and industry, religious, clergy, teachers, and so on. They work in institutions from Canada to Indonesia and China, and contribute, each in their own way, by providing free ad hoc assistance with regard to academic research, translations, and fund-raising.

Only two members of the Core Team receive a modest salary: the director and the administrator. They are part of an eight-strong Core Team of volunteers based in our central office in Rickmansworth, a town situated north-west of London on the Metropolitan Line. The team coordinates the contributions of all our co-workers worldwide.

Legal Entity

For practical reasons, the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research consists of four registered Charities in three different countries:

- ‘Housetop Trust’ and ‘Housetop Care Limited’ in the UK (Registered Charity numbers 326421 and 1053251 respectively);
- ‘Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research Stichting’ in the Netherlands (KvK no. 41056067);
- ‘Housetop Center for Women’s Ministry’ in the USA, a registered 501(c)3 non-profit, charity no. 1748475.

Donations to any of those charities are eligible for tax relief in the relevant country.
What We Do

Aims and Objectives

We work to inform, inspire and educate people about complex issues which are challenging Christians everywhere, and about which a process of discernment is currently ongoing. We carry out independent academic research on central issues that affect the credibility of our Christian faith, and publish our findings online. By doing so we are helping the Catholic Church implement some of the reforms it needs. Currently we are examining questions around women and ministry in the church; sexual ethics (meaning and purpose of sexuality; sexual orientation and LGBT; family planning and birth control, etc.); and Church governance (collegiality, clergy-lay relationship; etc.).

In order to make available to as many people as possible high quality information about those issues we:

- Provide an online library of scholarly and pastoral resources on disputed topics within Christianity;
- Provide summaries of the research in 26 languages, among which many are widely used in developing countries for the purposes of reaching the widest possible audience;
- Obtain copyrights permissions so as to be able to offer for free as much content as possible;
- Abide by the best scholarly standards: All the relevant evidence on a given topic is presented, together with the full range of plausible interpretations.

We do not directly campaign for church reform – rather we gather the scholarly evidence necessary to address complex theological issues that will help the Church take mature decisions.

The goal is to create a sort of scholarly Wikipedia on those issues, powered by the theological community at large, and acting as a clearing-house for significant contributions from established and budding scholars alike, and experts from any relevant discipline.
contributors, who volunteer academic material, suggestions, or indeed criticisms.

Our main tool for change is information and education, particularly in those areas where institutional censorship within the Catholic Church is the strongest. We do so by bringing to the fore evidence challenging some specific aspects of received Catholic teachings whenever they appear to go against scripture, Gospel values, or historical evidence. This information service we carry out through our websites that include online libraries, key-points and PowerPoint presentations, podcasts, picture galleries, online interactive courses, historical analyses, facilitated discussion groups, and agreed statements by renowned Catholic scholars.

Unless Catholics deepen their knowledge of theology, the task of purifying their tradition will be severely hindered.

Jackie Clackson, Trustee since 1984: The right to choose is not to lose the thread of my own growing where words of fear begin to tear the fabric of my knowing.... who has the right? or is it MIGHT? which sets its sight on choking the fragile growth renewed by knowing faith INSPIRES.... not rages. Far from the hollow words absurd which thunder their attention for me the voice of God within -so valuable to mention- is in my heart and mind the way to act with fine intention
We are currently fund-raising for a 3 year Renewal Project to help transform WICR into a modern, financially self-supporting organization. The total projected cost of £120,000 (i.e. £40,000pa) includes:

- Renovation of our websites in terms of functionality, layout and accessibility from mobile devices. This will require moving them on to a new Content Management System (WordPress). Given their size, this is going to be a very significant undertaking.
- Expanding our online outreach to an annual target of 1M combined visitors to our websites.
- Increasing our presence on Facebook and Twitter.

Those projects are part of a larger process of consolidation. Our existing websites host a wealth of resources. But their usefulness is greatly diminished by the fact that much of that material is not readily accessible. This is because the original system for organizing the content of the website cannot cope well with the remarkable amount of material which is being added through the years. As a consequence, some of it, while very valuable, has become quite difficult to reach through the internal website navigation.

Developing the Magisterium: A Dedicated, Scholarly Wikipedia on Theology

In addition, we are developing a ground-breaking initiative which builds on our past experiences bringing together Catholic scholars in the drafting and signing of agreed statements. We will employ the potential of the wiki software to enable professional theologians to cooperate in drafting research reports. These will come in the form of both ‘green papers’ – aimed at consultation (e.g. of the entire church or of a specific sector such as medical doctors, economists, laywomen, etc) – and ‘white papers’, offering authoritative reports. The latter will enjoy the authority generally assigned to peer-reviewed, independent, evidence based, academically rigorous scholarship.

Increasingly since the 1950s most secular democracies have set up Scientific Advisory Committees precisely to enable governments and civil society to access scientific knowledge in the most independent, impartial and comprehensive manner. Our initiative aims to achieve a similar goal in the field of Catholic theology. Indeed, it is our hope that the theologians participating in these collaborative endeavours will eventually contribute to setting up a peer-reviewed, independent Theological Advisory Committee at the service of the hierarchy and the Catholic Church at large.

"Wikipedia is an educator's fantasy, all the world's knowledge shared voluntarily and free in a format theoretically available to all, and which anyone can edit."

Cathy N. Davidson

WE ARE LEVERAGING THE POWER OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY WORLDWIDE TO PRODUCE THEOLOGICAL REPORTS BENEFITING FROM THE LATEST SCHOLARLY RESEARCH
Our Institute was established as an educational charity in 1983 by Dr John Wijngaards. Named Housetop Centre for Adult Faith Formation, it was based in the Catholic archdiocese of Westminster, England. The inspiration for the name came from Jesus’ injunction that we should proclaim his message from the housetops (Matthew 10:27).

Work on Spirituality

During our early years we focused on producing resources for spirituality. Nation-wide research in the UK produced material for a video course on the practice of meditation: The Seven Circles of Prayer (1987), winner of the award for ‘Creative Excellence’ at the 1987 Video Festival in Elmhurst, Illinois, USA.

It was followed by two other video courses: Peace in your Home (1988) on ways of fostering prayer in the family, and Loaves of Thanksgiving (1989) on re-vitalising the celebration of the weekly Eucharist.

Our Walking on Water (1990-1992) video courses for training community leaders has been adapted by catechetical centres in all continents and translated into 14 languages. They comprised three textbooks and nine 30 minute short stories on an accompanying video. The stories were filmed in Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya and the UK. Again, several of those videos won awards.

In 1995 we published How To Make Sense of God. The course book received a prize from the Catholic Press Association (USA) for ‘best adult reading’. The accompanying video film Journey to the Centre of Love comprises 5 episodes of approximately 45 minutes each. It won two major awards, and we have made its English version freely available on our YouTube channel and on our website www.mysteryandbeyond.org.

Our latest video course focused on Christian marriage. We produced For Better, For Worse in 2000 with academic advice from INTAMS. It was broadcast on the Belgian Catholic television network KTRC in autumn 2000 under the title Tussen Man & Vrouw (‘Between Man & Wife’). It is being distributed in the UK and Ireland by Veritas Publications.

Cardinal Basil Hume OSB, Archbishop of Westminster (1976-1979), was one of our friends. In 1977 he welcomed the publication of Did Christ Rule Out Women Priests? by John Wijngaards as useful for discussion. In 1989 he presided over the launch of our video course Loaves of Thanksgiving and said:

“This is an excellent tool for reflection and discussion on the Eucharist. It leads to a further exploration of the deeper meaning of the Eucharist. This course helps to achieve what the Church is looking for; that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious and active participation that is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.”
Work on Women’s Ordained Ministries

The initial focus of Housetop on creating educational material on Christian spirituality eventually expanded to tackle the discrimination of women in the church, as one of the biggest factors affecting Catholics’ material and spiritual growth worldwide. Our clash with traditional views came to a head in 1994 when the Vatican declared that the exclusion of women from the ordained ministries was definitive and should no longer be discussed (John Paul II, ‘Ordinatio Sacerdotalis’).

We felt that the Pope’s judgment in that regard not only overlooked key evidence from the New Testament and church history, but was also based on mistaken theological arguments that were indebted more to embedded patriarchal prejudices and ideology than to the liberating Good News of Jesus Christ. It provoked a response in conscience from John Wijngaards who in 1998, in protest, resigned from exercising his priestly ministry.

We decided that our specific contribution to the debate in the Church would be to focus on the academic arguments: to provide reliable guidance to priests, teachers, professors, students, lay leaders, religious and general church members. The Housetop team decided to make full use of the then rapidly growing potential of the internet, and in 1999 created a website gathering the historical evidence as well as the scholarly arguments for and against the ordination of women. This first website, womenpriests.org, has grown to be the largest collection of academic material on that topic in the world, with over 10,000 documents accessed annually by more than 500,000 Catholics worldwide from 212 different countries: laypeople as well as clergy; academics as well as non-experts; from the first as well as the developing world. Through it we present in full the case for women’s ordination from the points of view of scripture, theology, tradition and church teachings. We also provide all the reasons the Vatican gives to justify the exclusion of women. In doing this, WICR serves the Catholic Church worldwide by helping its members (lay and clerical alike) judge for themselves what makes sense on either side of the debate.

Jo Dixon, member of our Core Team:
I am involved in the justice and peace group as well as on the parish social committee and I encouraged my daughters to be altar servers. I work as a volunteer for the Wijngaards Institute because I want the Church to be alive and vibrant for my children and future generations.”
Work on Church Authority; Sexual Ethics; Spirituality, Science and Faith

Research on the arguments advanced since the Middle Ages against the ordination of women brought to the attention of the Housetop team the extent to which many of them stemmed from mistaken ideas affecting other areas of Christian thought and practice, from sexual ethics to church governance. As a result of this realization, Housetop decided to develop websites tackling some of those issues:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Umbrella Website</th>
<th><a href="http://www.wijngaardsinstitute.org">www.wijngaardsinstitute.org</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historical Evidence about the ordination of Women to the Diaconate and the Priesthood</td>
<td><a href="http://www.womenpriests.org">www.womenpriests.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.womendeacons.org">www.womendeacons.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Sexual Ethics</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thebodyissacred.org">www.thebodyissacred.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Authority and Governance</td>
<td><a href="http://www.churchauthority.org">www.churchauthority.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirituality, Science and Faith</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mysteryandbeyond.org">www.mysteryandbeyond.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Law &amp; Conscience</td>
<td><a href="http://www.natural-law-and-conscience.org">www.natural-law-and-conscience.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics &amp; Contraception</td>
<td><a href="http://www.catholicsandcontraception.org">www.catholicsandcontraception.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretation of Scripture</td>
<td><a href="http://www.interpretingscripturecorrectly.com">www.interpretingscripturecorrectly.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since 1999 our team has been at the heart of a successful online campaign of education and awareness-raising on some important topics of debate within the Catholic Church. Through our websites we provide a unique collection of books, articles, PowerPoint presentations, and videos of both a scholarly and a pastoral character.

Among the scholarly material we have relevant extracts from the works of the Fathers of the Church, conciliar decrees, papal documents, early, medieval, and modern theologians, saints, etc. We have also carried out original research which has brought to light previously unpublished primary sources: for example, the womendeacons.org website presents evidence of more than 100 women deacons, mostly from headstone inscriptions whose drawings lay forgotten in the British Library.

The more pastoral content, on the other hand, comprises videos, podcasts, picture galleries, online interactive courses, historical analyses, facilitated discussion groups, agreed statements by renowned Catholic scholars as well as key-point summaries of the academic content. Those summaries we have translated into 26 languages, including several widely used in developing countries, so as to reach as many sections as possible of our large Catholic community. This was made possible thanks to volunteer translators from all over the world.
What is unique about our material is that unlike most online library catalogues, we have obtained permission from authors and publishers to scan and upload complete texts. The fact that we provide that material for free is particularly beneficial to students and scholars from developing countries, who may not otherwise have a way of obtaining the original texts.

Many websites have a provisional nature: they produce content addressing the needs of the moment but which can easily get out of date. By contrast, we are building up open-access Internet libraries of documents which are likely to retain their value for a long time to come.

Scholarly Publications

The fruits of our research have not just gone online, but have also been published in a number of scholarly books, of which three are worth mentioning here:

Academic Declarations and Media Appearances

John Wijngaards’ work recovering the ancient sacramental ordination rites of women has been instrumental in raising the profile of the cause seeking restoration of the ordained women’s diaconate. In 2004 the Greek Orthodox Church in Greece did just that. In 2008, womenpriests.org spearheaded an international petition asking Pope Benedict XVI to reinstate the sacramental diaconate for women, which was eventually endorsed and co-sponsored by 26 Catholic movements representing more than 30,000 people from around the world. The petition was delivered to the Pope on October 1, 2008 during the Vatican’s Synod on the Word.

In March 2013 we launched in the British House of Commons the Declaration on Authority in the Church, signed by 216 Catholic scholars including Leonardo Boff, John N. Collins, Hans Küng, as well as members of the hierarchy such as Bishop Tom Gumbleton.

In preparation for the October 2014 extraordinary Synod on the Family, Pope Francis invited all Catholics to submit their experiences, insights, and evaluations on that subject. In response we prepared, with the help of moral theologians, the Catholic Scholars’ Statement on Marriage and the Family, which was signed by 87 academics, and sent to the Pope. This declaration contains a professional assessment of present Catholic doctrine and practice with regard to sexuality in life and marriage. It is available online at http://www.wijngaardsinstitute.org/statement/index.asp

Some of our staff have been interviewed by or published articles for several news outlet including, most recently, BBC Radio 4, the AP, the Washington Post, The Independent (UK), the Tablet, and the National Catholic Reporter, among others.

Catherine of Siena Virtual College

Finally, in 2007 we founded Catherine of Siena Virtual College (CSVC), which has been providing leadership courses to over 1,000 students in developing countries, 90% of them women. It grew to such an extent that it became difficult for our small team to provide an adequate infrastructure to do justice to its great potential. For this reason, in September 2014 we decided to hand over its management to Roehampton University, London.

CSVC has been the latest of many success stories achieved by WICR on a budget which is a fraction of that available to similar think-tanks. Thanks to a wonderful network of generous volunteers, freely giving of their time, it managed to punch far above its weight.

“Pam Wearing, member of our Core Team: Our greatest challenge in the Church today, is to develop our understanding of the truths we have inherited in the light of knowledge beyond the ken of our forebears. Taking baptism seriously means being clear that the Church is the living Body of Christ and not a Vatican Museum. And actions speak louder than words. To paraphrase Eckhart, what use is it that Mary gave birth to Jesus 2000 years ago if we do not do so in our own time, as men and women who are called to change the world?”
‘The church is always in need of [reformation]’, as the Second Vatican Council observed (Unitatis Redintegratio §6). The laity, for its part, should be encouraged to contribute to theology. In that undertaking they should be accorded ‘a lawful freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought and of expressing their mind with humility and fortitude in those matters on which they enjoy competence’ (Gaudium et Spes §62). The Code of Canon Law later added that all Catholics ‘have the right and even at times the duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church and to make their opinion known to the rest of the Christian faithful’ (canon 212 §3).

Such an openness to critical debates is the result of some lessons from the past. History shows that church authorities - bishops, and even popes - have at times made serious doctrinal mistakes. Teachings were vigorously advanced as true, even as ‘divine law’, which were later to be rejected as erroneous and, ironically, even un-Christian. The attitude of key teachers in the Catholic Church towards slavery is a good case in point.

A Case Study - Is slavery God’s will?

In 1866, the Vicar Apostolic of the Galla region in southern Ethiopia asked the then Holy Office: ‘Is slavery in harmony with Catholic doctrine?’ It should be remembered that at the time slavery had already been abolished in Great Britain and all its dominions, in the USA, in Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Chile, Ecuador, Argentina, Peru, Venezuela and most other civilized countries. In spite of this, the Congregation answered with an emphatic ‘Yes’.

_Slavery itself, considered as such in its essential nature, is not at all contrary to the natural and divine law, and there can be several just titles of slavery and these are referred to by approved theologians and commentators of the sacred canons . . . It is not contrary to the natural and divine law for a slave to be sold, bought, exchanged or given._

_Instruction of the Holy Office, signed by Pope Pius IX, 20th of June 1866. Collectanea S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, no. 1293, 719, Rome 1907_

In other words, slavery is (a) in harmony with natural law, that is: human nature as created by God; and (b) in harmony with divine law, that is: with God’s will as revealed in Scripture. The present teaching of the Church is, of course, quite the opposite. Vatican II declared every form of discrimination - never mind slavery - as being ‘contrary to God’s intent’ (Gaudium et Spes §29, also §27, and the Cathechism of the Catholic Church §2414), and the Church endorses the _Universal Declaration of Human Rights_ which rejects all slavery as contrary to human nature. Furthermore, in December 2014 Pope Francis co-signed the _Joint Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery_ which reiterates that point even more forcefully and which urges all people of good will to actively fight against slavery.

How much has official Catholic teaching changed in little more than a century! This should make us aware that even papal teachings which may have been upheld for centuries and by different popes can be wrong and need to be challenged. We do so with an appreciation for, rather than disregard of, the authority of the Pope, the Bishops and others with responsibility in the Catholic Church. Hence we support reform through its legitimate authority structures.

Is it legitimate to re-examine some papal teachings?

Prof Catharina Halkes, Nijmegen, one of our Patrons, pioneer of feminist theology in the Netherlands.

_She left us a legacy when she died in 2011. Her message to us was: "I want you to achieve your aims. You are doing great work. It will take time. Don’t give up!"_
In an ideal world the work of the **Wijngaards Institute** would be carried out within that amazing galaxy of educational and research institutions that Catholics throughout history have set up. Sadly, this is only rarely the case. Many Catholic authorities – bishops, educational institutions, individual theologians – are reluctant to allow free public discussion concerning some of these issues, for fear of antagonizing the Vatican or undermining their careers and even jobs.

As long as this situation persists there will be a need for institutes such as ours. WICR is a private educational charity, and can therefore maintain full independence from external pressures. This has made it possible for us to build vast online libraries of high quality academic research on precisely those issues which are the least openly discussed in the Catholic Church.

We believe that if a teaching is sound, it can only be strengthened by exposure to the relevant scriptural and historical evidence as well as theological arguments, even and indeed especially when it appears to go against present-day Catholic beliefs. Our websites provide both the academic research which should inform those discussions, and a first-class online forum to facilitate that discussion.

We cannot stress enough how timely what we are doing is. Since the election of Pope Francis in 2013, the Catholic Church has been gently encouraged to pick up the critical self-examination started with the Second Vatican Council. But unless Catholics deepen their knowledge of theology, the task of purifying their tradition will be severely hindered. This is what we have been working towards for more than 30 years now, and with your help we will continue to do so for many more years.

Through our websites we provide both academic and pastoral resources on family planning and birth control.
Costing and Financing

Over many years the Wijngaards Institute has operated with only one paid administrator and relied on very generous support from many volunteers, not least John Wijngaards himself, acting unpaid as Director. But John Wijngaards (b. 1935) is aware of the need to provide for his succession and we have to restructure in order to continue our work. In late 2014 we appointed a new director and we are also investing in modernizing our websites.

These additional costs mean that in summary our annual expenditure is going to rise considerably from about £60,000 per year to about £90,000. Our needs are not excessive, but we do need to fundraise an extra £40,000 a year for three years in order to cover the additional costs that the new projects outlined earlier require.

We work almost entirely with volunteers. Only two people, our full-time director and our administrator, receive a modest salary whose combined figure amounts to less than £50,000 a year. The only other expenses are the basic ones related to essential overheads:

- the costs connected to our (small) office premises: rent, insurances, gas, electricity, water, building repairs, council tax, etc;
- the office costs: telephone, postage, stationery, photocopying, printing, scanning, computer maintenance, software licenses, library charges, and so on;
- some professional fees: subscriptions to scholarly journals, financial auditors, fund-raising consultants, and so on.

All these expenses are necessary for us to function. We believe we are delivering very good value for money, thanks in large part to the work of our volunteers.

Planning for the future

Our current annual revenue comes in part from a small investment (about £10,000 a year), in part from grants from major donors (around £35,000 in 2013), and in part from a modest number of small supporters. Combined, they only cover about half of our current annual costs (about £90,000). So far we have tried to meet these costs by recruiting more sponsors and donors who each give us larger or smaller grants for a number of years. Our sponsors, who give us annual grants, are at present one religious congregation and some individual donors.

We are also trying to increase our revenue from crowd-funding. We have a small but growing number of Friends who support us with small regular monthly or annual donations, but at present this contributes only a minor proportion of our total funding. We are seeking to increase this support network over the next five years; however, this piecemeal fundraising makes heavy demands on the time and energy of our staff, energy that could more efficiently be devoted to creative work.

Should you be interested in having a more detailed breakdown of our income and expenditure, or any additional financial information, please contact us.
For the first time in the history of the Church, we can be connected through the internet. We have the capacity now – and a moral obligation – to contribute to the theological education of Catholics worldwide, so that they may better implement the Gospel in their lives. The growth and reform of the Catholic Church is a responsibility for all Catholics. Part of this requires challenging the mistaken views and prejudices that have crept into some Catholic teachings. Vatican II made provisions for critical and constructive contributions of that sort. Please, do not just stand on the sidelines. Join us. Be a partner, or support us financially.

Financial Donations

Your donation pays for the central office facilities that enable more than twenty volunteers to work for our websites. The estimated commercial value of the time voluntarily donated to our various projects, we believe, amounts to well over £150,000 a year. Any donation you give us will benefit from such a multiplier/leverage effect. You can either make a one-off donation, or you can enlist as one of the following:

- **Supporter (£5 a month);**
- **Friend (£10 a month);**
- **Sponsor (£25 a month);**
- **Golden Sponsor (£100 a month).**

For more on how to donate, please see the relevant section below. As a small thank you for your charitable gift annuity, you will receive:

- **our quarterly newsletter;**
- advance notice of any initiative we organise (e.g. academic conferences, new websites; new online petitions; new academic ‘white papers’ or public statements by Catholic scholars);

Finally, you will always be most welcome to meet-and-greet our volunteers and director at our offices in Rickmansworth. Your journey and stay are not included, but we are happy to advise you. Please consider making a donation today. If possible, please set up a recurring monthly or yearly donation to us via PayPal. We have charitable/non-profit status in the Netherlands (ANBI), UK, and USA. This means that donations coming from taxpayers in any of those three countries are tax deductible. Likewise, if you pay taxes in any other EU country, you should be able to benefit from the tax deductions for charitable giving applicable in your country.

---

_Rev William Baynes, Ecumenical Associate:_

“I believe that the survival of catholic Christianity – possibly even of Western Christianity – depends upon the ability of the Roman Church to use the Petrine Keys [Matt. 16:19] to ‘unbind’ herself from modes of culture, philosophy and governance which are no longer appropriate. The Institute supplies consistent torque.”

_Alicia Baranowska, volunteer translator:_

“I am a Polish-born Roman Catholic now working in Brussels. I can’t exactly remember when it occurred to me for the first time that women could be ordained. I think it must have been around 2004, when I found in the Bible information of Phoebe the deaconess. I am happy to help because I strongly believe women should be ordained and the Catholic Church updated.”
Sponsor a Topic

You can either give us a general donation, or you can fund any of the following specific topics which you would like us to expand on our websites:

- **Women's Leadership and Ministry in the Church** (not just ordination, but inclusion in all decision-making bodies and positions);
- **Sexual Ethics** (including the theology of Marriage, Divorce, Family Planning, Sexual Orientation, LGBT, etc);
- **Church Governance** (greater collegiality and accountability, better integration of experts in the decision-making process of the church).

You are welcome to get in touch and suggest additional topics which you would like to support: if we deem we can do it, we will be happy to take your suggestion onboard. Your donations will contribute to the costs of acquiring copyright permissions, and of hosting those documents on our websites.

How to Make a Donation

There are several ways you can make your donation:

- **PayPal**: please visit www.jwresearch.org, there you will be able to make a one off donation, or register for a monthly or yearly donation;
- **JustGiving**: please visit https://www.justgiving.com/housetopcare/;
- **Cheque**: please make your cheque payable to ‘Housetop Care Ltd’ and post it to Dr Luca Badini Confalonieri, 111A High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 1AN;
- **Mobile Phone**: If you would like to make an SMS donation to WICR then simply text the number 70070 the code PRST44 £2/£5/£10 (choose an amount: e.g. PRST44 £5). WICR will receive 100% of your donation.
- **Phone**: Please feel free to call and speak with Jos if you would like to donate over the phone. Call +44(0)1923 779446 between 9 am and 5 pm Monday through Friday. Or leave a message anytime and he will get back to you.

Should you wish to help us in an even more lasting way, you might want to make an endowment gift, or leave us a legacy.

Legacy

It is important to plan for future ownership of our material belongings after our death. Dying without making a Will is best avoided. It can produce awful family arguments; your partner, family and friends might receive something more, less, or different from what you would have wanted; charities won’t get a penny and, as a consequence, your estate may be liable for a greater inheritance tax. (If you live in the UK, and are thinking of leaving us a legacy, you may be interested in the information below on Inheritance Tax).

What is Inheritance Tax and Are There Benefits to Be Had?

In the UK, inheritance tax replaced death duty or capital transfer tax. Currently it is levied on estates
with a net value (after debts have been paid, the costs of administering your Will settled and all tax exempt gifts distributed) at over the sum of £ 325,000 at a rate of 40% (UK rate for 2014/2015). There are a number of exemptions which can be made whilst you are alive - do seek professional advice.

All gifts to charities, such as Housetop Care Limited, are free of inheritance tax so, almost invariably, the estate will pay less tax if gifts are given to charities. Furthermore, HM Revenue and Custom has recently introduced a specific reduction to the rate of inheritance tax down to 36% (from 40%) where a charitable gift has been made via the deceased’s will.

If you are a taxpayer of or resident in another country, please get in touch with us and we will be happy to help.

What types of legacies can you leave the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research?

There are three main types of legacies:
- a **residuary legacy** which is the gift of all or part of the residue of your estate. The residue is what is left after all debts, taxes, costs and specific and pecuniary bequests have been paid;
- a **pecuniary legacy** which is a specific sum of money;
- a **specific bequest** which is a specific item (such as jewellery).

You will find a template for each of those kind of legacies in Appendix 1.

Baroness Françoise Holvoet Bourguignon:
“Progress since Vatican II? Yes, there have been shifts in the meaning of words, attenuations, understatements, declarations of good intention (e.g. Mulieris Dignitatem), but a woman is nevertheless still disqualified from dealing with the sacred. She may be a consumer of it, but she has only access to it through middlemen. The sacred is controlled by men who create their own hierarchy, who fix the rules, who organize its ceremonies and bestow its honours, who co-opt themselves; it is they who plan and publish its documents, who meet in synods, it is they who count on the fear they never cease to instil.”

Volunteering

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, ‘The harvest is abundant but the labourers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out labourers for his harvest. Go on your way!’ Luke 10:1-3

Nowadays, the possibilities of working remotely are much greater than they were even only twenty years ago. And the flexibility involved is also very great. Our greatest need is for translators, moderators of online discussion forums, and web-developers. Whether you are able to contribute only a few hours a month or you can work almost full time, if you are passionate about what we do, if you have talents that you think we need to have, please get in touch. Ask friends and parishioners about whether they would like to join too. We provide resources in 26 languages and our websites are accessed from more than 220 countries. Wherever you are, whatever your native language, chances are you can help.
Appendix 1- Types of Legacies

Residuary bequest

‘I give all (or a % of) the residue of my estate to Housetop Care Limited, Charity No 1053251, to be used for its projects and I declare that the receipt of their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge’.

Pecuniary bequest

‘I give free of tax to Housetop Care Limited, Charity No 1053251, the sum of [words and figures] to be used for its research, and I declare that the receipt of their Treasurer or other proper officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge’.

A codicil [= an addition to a Will]

‘I [Name] of [Address] declare this to be a (first/second/etc.) codicil to my will dated [date]. In addition to any legacies given in my said will I give Housetop Care Limited, Charity No 1053251, 111A High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1AN, UK, the sum of [amount] (or specific item to be given) to be used for its projects and I declare that the receipt of the Treasurer or duly authorised officer shall be a full and sufficient discharge. In all other respects I confirm my said will and any other codicils thereto. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand this [number] day of [month/year]’.

[Your signature]

‘Signed by the said [name] as a codicil to his/her last will in the presence of us who at his/her request in his/her presence and of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses’

[Signatures, Names and Addresses of both witnesses]
Available at www.churchauthority.org. Its 216 academic signatories include Professors Ursula King, Paul Knitter, Paul Lakeland, Francis Oakley, and Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, among others.

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) we call on all other members of the People of God to assess the situation in our church.

Many of the key insights of Vatican II have not at all, or only partially, been implemented. This has been due to resistance in some quarters, but also to a measure of ambiguity that remained unresolved in certain Council documents. A principal source of present-day stagnation lies in misunderstanding and abuse affecting the exercise of authority in our Church. Specifically, the following issues require urgent redress:

The role of the papacy needs to be clearly re-defined in line with Christ's intentions. As supreme pastor, unifier and prime witness to faith, the pope contributes substantially to the health of the universal church. However, his authority may never obscure, diminish or suppress the authentic authority directly given by Christ to all members of the people of God.

Bishops are vicars of Christ, not vicars of the pope. They carry immediate responsibility for people in their dioceses, and joint responsibility, with other bishops and the pope, for the world-wide community of faith.

The central synod of bishops should assume a more decisive role in planning and guiding the maintenance and growth of faith within our complex world. To execute its task, the synod of bishops needs to be given appropriate structures.

The Second Vatican Council prescribed collegiality and co-responsibility on all levels. This has not been realised. Priestly senates and pastoral councils, as envisaged by the Council, should involve the faithful more directly in decision making concerning the formulation of doctrine, the running of the pastoral ministry and evangelization in secular society.

The abuse of choosing for leadership offices in the church only candidates of a particular mindset, should be eradicated. Instead, new norms should be laid down and supervised to ensure that elections to such offices are conducted in a fair, transparent and, to the extent possible, democratic fashion. The Roman curia requires a more radical reform, in line with the instructions and vision of Vatican II. The curia should be retained for its useful administrative and executive roles. The congregation for the doctrine of the faith should be assisted by international commissions of experts who have been independently chosen for their professional competence. These are by no means all the changes that may be required. We also realise that the implementation of such structural revisions will need to be worked out in detail according to the possibilities and limitations of present and future circumstances. However, we stress that the seven reforms outlined above are urgent and their implementation should be started immediately.

The exercise of authority in our church should emulate the standards of openness, accountability and democracy achieved in modern society. Leadership should be seen to be honest and credible; inspired by humility and service; breathing concern for people rather than preoccupation with rules and discipline; radiating a Christ who makes us free; and listening to Christ's Spirit who speaks and acts through each and every person.
Photo Credits


Page 14: ‘Gordon (slave)’, credit: Photographers William D. McPherson and his partner Mr. Oliver, New Orleans, March 1863, CC BY 2.0 license, https://www.flickr.com/photos/11304375@N07/2512540213/.


| Patrons |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Prof Mario Ignacio Aguilar**, Chair of Religion and Politics at the School of Divinity of the University of St Andrews, Edinburgh, Scotland. | **Prof Leo Laeyendecker**, Sociology (Emeritus), Universities of Leiden and Amsterdam, the Netherlands. |
| **Prof Maria Pilar Aquino**, Theology and Religious Studies at San Diego University, USA. Co-founder of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States. | **Prof Peter C. Phan**, Ignacio Ellacuría Chair of Catholic Social Thought, Georgetown University, Washington DC, USA. |
| **Baron Dr George Holvoet**, PhD Law, MA Egyptology, BA Sinology & BA Assyriology, eminent Belgian linguist. | **Prof Rosemary Radford Ruether**, Carpenter Emerita Professor of Feminist Theology at Pacific School of Religion and the GTU, as well as the Georgia Harkness Emerita Professor of Applied Theology at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, USA. |
| **Dr Sharon A. Bong**, School of Arts and Social Sciences, Monash University, Selangor, Malaysia. Expert on Religion and Sexuality. | **Prof Michael Hornsby-Smith**, Sociology (Emeritus), the University of Surrey, England. Expert on the history of Catholicism in England. |
| **Prof Michael Hornsby-Smith**, Sociology (Emeritus), the University of Surrey, England. Expert on the history of Catholicism in England. | **Prof Kathleen Maas Weigert**, Carolyn Farrell BVM Professor of Women and Leadership, Loyola University, Chicago, USA. |
| **Prof René van Eyden**, Dogmatic Theology (Emeritus), University of Utrecht, the Netherlands. Leading member of Dutch Catholic reform groups. | **Prof Joseph Selling**, Moral Theology (Emeritus), Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium. |
| **Prof Mary Gray**, professorial research fellow at St Mary’s University College, Twickenham, London, UK. | **Prof Leonard Swidler**, Institute for Interreligious, Intercultural Dialogue, Philadelphia, USA. |
| **Prof Erik Jurgens**, Government Law (Emeritus), Free University of Amsterdam; former Assistant President of the Senate (Eerste Kamer) of the Netherlands. | **Prof J. Milburn Thompson**, Systematic Theology, Bellarmine University, Louisville, Kentucky, USA. |
| **Prof Jan N M E Jans**, Theology of Ethics, School of Humanities, University of Tilburg, the Netherlands. | **Prof Thomas O’Loughlin**, Historical Theology, University of Nottingham, England. |
| **Prof Ursula King**, Theology and Religious Studies (Emerita), University of Bristol, UK. | **Prof Guus Wijngaards**, eLearning, Inholland University, Rotterdam, Netherlands. |
| **Dr Astrid Lobo Gajiwall**, Head of the Tissue Bank, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai, India. | **Prof Ursula King**, Theology and Religious Studies (Emerita), Fernando Pessoa University, Porto, Portugal. |