

# FOR THE LADIES

## Women-Church Conference Will Deal With a Host of Controversial Issues

**Topic Includes: Religious Establishment Attacks on Feminism, Feminism and Racial/Ethnic/Religious Diversity, Sexuality and Homophobia, Violence Against Women, Women and AIDS, Clergy Abuse of Women, Combatting Racism and White Privilege, Sexism in Religious Institutions, Women's Health Issues, Balancing Family and Work and More**

Mt. Rainier, MD...The Third U.S. Women-Church Conference, Women-Church: Weavers of Change, slated to take place in Albuquerque, NM from April 16-18, 1993, will deal openly and frankly with a host of controversial issues facing both religious institutions and U.S. civil society. Topics ranging from sexism in religious institutions to homophobia will be addressed by speakers and other present-

ers at a conference that emphasizes and celebrates the racial, ethnic and religious diversity of women.

More than 2200 women (and a few good men) will grapple with difficult subjects such as the religious establishment's attacks on feminism, clergy abuse of women, sexuality and homophobia, racism in religion and the women's movement, women and AIDS, domestic violence, the exclusion of women from religious ministry, balancing family and work and women's health issues as they relate to plans for a new national health care system. These topics will be addressed by speakers, artists and leaders of sacred rituals.

Sexism will not be analyzed in isolation, but related to social evils such as racism which permeate the women's movement

as well as religious institutions. Sr. Marie de Porres Taylor, SNJM, a former President of the National Black Sisters Conference who is currently an assistant to the Mayor of Oakland CA for Job Training and Employment called the church "a sinful institution when it continues to harbor racism and sexism," "Black women," she said, "Experience these two oppressions as a double blow to their relationship with the church." Sister Taylor will lead a focus session at the conference on "Women in the Church."

Speakers plan to mince no words. One of the leaders of a focus session on domestic violence, Attorney Genevieve Chato, Esq., a member of the Navajo Nation living in Kayenta AZ said, "Men too often have been taught that violent power is a way to solve problems. The re-education of men is as essential to ending the epidemic of domestic violence as caring for the women who are its victims." Attorney Chato has represented women who are victims of violence in both the state courts of Arizona and New Mexico as well as Navajo tribal courts.

Religious institutions of all denominations will receive intense critical scrutiny. "Feminist theology is under worldwide at-

tack by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, fundamentalist preachers and Protestant churches," said Dr. Elizabeth Schussler-Fiorenza, a feminist theologian and scripture scholar from Harvard Divinity School who will lead a session on feminist theology. "In this climate, women are claiming feminist liberation theologies as their own. The rise of many women's voices in the world of theology and ministry makes this a unique moment for creative theological develop-

ment," she continued. Dr. Schussler-Fiorenza is well known for her landmark work in scripture, *In Memory of Her*. A collection of her essays on the "discipleship of equals" is about to be published.

Issues will not be limited to U.S. boundaries but addressed from a global perspective and schools will be challenged to act as agents of change. Dr. Linda Augustin Simunek, a native of the Philippines who currently lives in Miami FL and serves as

both a dean and a professor at Florida International University, said, "The needs of women and children are not being met anywhere in the world. Our educational system must actively prepare citizens who will take the responsibility to change that reality in both church and civil society." In addition to being an educator, Dr. Simunek serves as a pro-bono attorney for the Miami Women's center and Camillus House, an institution (See Women-Church, Page 18)

## CONGRESSMAN TO AKA 'RENEW YOUR COMMITMENT TO A 2ND GENERATION OF MINORITY YOUTHS'



**JOB CORPS TRIBUTES** — U.S. Rep. Louis Stokes (D., Oh.) joins Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) international president Dr. Mary Shy Scott of Atlanta, Ga. as she displays one of the proclamations presented to AKA during its first national Job Corps summit held recently in Cleveland. Sharing the moment (L-R) are AKA officials Ms. Cornelia Owens, Far Western regional director and Mrs. Diana Shipley international Nominating chairman, San Diego, Ca.

Cleveland, OH.—"America today and America 2000 will be two different worlds, and minority youths need you more than ever before to prepare them for this changing nation," U.S. Rep. Louis Stokes (D. OH.) told members of Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA).

The remarks from the senior member of the Ohio Democratic delegation came during the opening session of AKA's first National Job Corps Summit, held

March 6 in Cleveland to evaluate AKA's success in operating the Cleveland Job Corps center and to examine its role and responsibility as a federal contractor. The day-long event (proclaimed by Cleveland Mayor Michael White as Job Corps Center day in Cleveland) also featured a morning forum, an afternoon tour of the center, and an evening rededication service.

"Be proud that you were in

the forefront (AKA has operated the Center since 1965)," Congressman Stokes said, but "know that you can't stop now."

You must renew your commitment to a second generation of minority youths because you have a special responsibility to continue to touch the lives of youths for whom the Job Corps is the first chance they have ever had in life," Rep. Stokes said.

Calling Job Corps "the one organization that is making a significant impact in trying to prepare disadvantaged youths for 2000 and beyond," Rep. Stokes said "AKA and the Cleveland Job Corps center are here to stay."

Rep. Stokes said his confidence had been bolstered by the inclusion in President Clinton's budget of \$133 million to add four Job Corps centers and \$30 million to maintain and repair the existing 106 centers.

More than 300 AKAs joined AKA international president Dr. Mary Shy Scott of Atlanta, Ga. and international Job Corps chairman Dr. Gloria Smith of East Lansing, Mi. for the summit.

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