

Bestman John Foley is a

DIMINUTIVE AUSTRALIAN WOMAN AUDITOR AT VATICAN COUNCIL

Says Church Can Use Help, Experience

By **FATHER JOHN P. FOLEY**
Rome Correspondent, Catholic Standard and Times

ROME—The appointment of women auditors at the Second Vatican Council, one of their number said here in Rome, is a call to women to exercise their responsibility, to give their point of view and to contribute their experience in the Church.

Miss Rosemary Goldie, executive secretary of the Permanent Committee on International Congresses of the Lay Apostolate (COPECIAL), told The Catholic Standard and Times in an interview that the Council also provided an excellent opportunity to develop collaboration among Sisters and lay women in the one apostolate of the Church.

One Apostolate

"Sometimes," she said, "there is created the false impression that there are two apostolates in the Church—one for Religious and one for lay women—but now we have an opportunity to stress a point we all feel deeply—that we are cooperating in the Church's one apostolate. Now, we can seek new ways of developing our contributions together in regard to the work of the Church in the modern world."

Miss Goldie, a diminutive Australian of 48 who looks little more than half her age, has spent the last 19 years in Europe. For six years, she directed the work of Pax Romana (an international Catholic student organization) at Fribourg, but since 1952 she has been working with COPECIAL in Rome.

What is her work as executive secretary of such an official-sounding organization?

Variety of Tasks

Miss Goldie described her work as organizational and documentary.

From the documentary aspect, her office has gathered so much material on the theology of the lay apostolate and on the work of lay apostles that the office of the "Permanent Committee" was called upon to help the Council preparatory commissions which treated of the role of the layman.

Her primary organizational function is to prepare for international lay apostolate congresses, to advise in the programming of local meetings and to maintain contact with the various lay movements in the Church.

of an interpreter, although she noted that several Council experts have volunteered to summarize the speeches for the lay auditors.

"But I," she said, "prefer to listen directly. It is possible to get more out of the discussion that way."

In addition to a "listening knowledge" of Latin, Miss Goldie is also fluent in French and Italian.

She emphasized, however, that the auditors have not merely been listeners. The group of lay auditors holds weekly meetings, and the

women auditors have had one meeting and plan one more before the end of this Council session.

To Maintain Contacts

"We also plan to maintain contact during the intersession period," she noted, "to develop the themes of importance to women at the Council."

She admitted that it would not have been possible for laymen to play the active role in the First Vatican Council which they have at Second Vatican. Regarding the participation of women, she said that had been made possible only due to the development of the role of women in the world, which

Pope John XXIII called a "sign of the times."

Referring to her size, she recalled that the same Pope John had nicknamed her "la piccina"—"the little thing."

Noting the existence of ecumenical contacts during the Council, she said the non-Catholic observers and the lay auditors had been guests at a reception at the beginning of the Council session and that Sister Mary Luke and she had joined the wives of the Protestant observers for tea.

Wide Interests

She noted that her office maintains a regular contact with the laity department of the World Council of Churches. Turning her attention to the

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Experience of Women

discussion of the Church in the modern world, she pointed out that lay people are being drawn much more into the ongoing thinking of the Church in the world. While admitting that the schema on the Church in the world did not and could not give the laity all the answers, she said that a new realization is developing that the whole Church, including the laity, must work together to solve the problems of the modern world.

She emphasized that formation to an awareness of the obligation of the lay apostolate must begin at the grass-roots level—in the family and in the school. She noted that it is important for lay people to take

advantage of opportunities for theological formation.

The documents of the Council, she noted, stress the duty of all to be active in the apostolate. While it is noted, she said, that organization is not an end in itself but only an instrument of the apostolate, it is also true that the apostolate of the Church is essentially a community apostolate.

"What should be developed," she said, "is the idea of the diocese as the people of God in a specific area. While lay movements have helped to give a sense of community, the problem is how to get every Catholic to feel an individual responsibility to the apostolate."

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Founded Under Pius XII

The office she heads was formed 12 years ago by Pope Pius XII, who had sponsored the first World Congress of Lay Apostolate. The organizer of that Congress, Vittorio Perrone, a leader in Italian Catholic Action, later became director of UNESCO and now a member of the Church Commission on Social Communications.

At the Second World Congress of the Lay Apostolate Miss Goldie maintained much of the theological work was done which was used by the Council in its consideration of the laity. Now, she said, the Council will be able to give an official theological and doctrinal basis to the lay apostolate.

Third World Congress

When and where will the Third World Congress of the Lay Apostolate be held?

Miss Goldie stated that it will be convened in Rome within a year and a half after the Council's close.

"We hope," she said, "that it will be held around the end of 1966, and it will be held here in Rome because it is such a rare and important event and because it gives the delegates an opportunity to hear the Pope."

Daughter of Journalists

As the daughter of two journalists, Miss Goldie was amused by her headline-making appointment as a Council "auditress" (the term she uses to describe a 'lady auditor').

"For the first few days," she recalled, "we were the novel of the Council. We were besieged by photographers and bishops—and to this day many of the bishops' speeches include references to the 'auditrices' (to the 'sorores' ('sisters'))."

Because her office had been founded by the Holy See to specialize in the work of the lay apostolate, she admitted that her appointment as 'lady auditor' was not absolutely unexpected.

"The actual news, however," she recalled, "moved me very deeply. Although I had been following the Council from the preparatory stages, it was quite different to be in the session themselves."

Understands Latin

Miss Goldie admitted that she can follow the Latin discussions at the Council without the aid of an interpreter.

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